Canoe Tripping
A Handbook of Lore and Skills

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CANOE TRIPPING GUIDES
of
BIRCHBARK EXPEDITIONS BSA
ALGONQUIN PROVINCIAL PARK

2018 EDITION

Detail from The Howl of the Weather by Frederic Remington
Courtesy of the Frederic Remington Art Museum, Ogdensburg, New York
A masterpiece by world renowned artist Frederic Remington, *The Howl of the Weather* brings wilderness canoe tripping into powerful focus. In it, a family of Chippewa Indians paddling home braves a storm on the St. Lawrence River. Everyone who canoes “has been in the picture,” has battled *La Vielle* (the voyageurs called her *Old Lady Wind*), and has come away with a renewed respect for the forces of nature.

Painted predominately in the blues and grays of a north country storm, the visual image is one of water everywhere—in the breaking waves, in the rain-filled sky, even in the windswept, low hanging cloud that repeats the pattern of the crashing whitecaps below. One is drawn into the scene; you can almost feel the wind blowing the canoe down the mile-wide river. Your heart races as the Natives strain to guide their fragile birchbark to a destination somewhere beyond the scene. You hope they reach land safely.

Famous for his incredibly realistic paintings and sculptures of the vanishing American West, Remington’s bronzes of the horse are unsurpassed in their detail and emotion. What is little known is that Remington actually spent most of his life in New York State, where his art brought to life the lumberjacks, trappers and “habitants” of the Adirondacks. He enjoyed immortalizing those who lived in the outdoors confronting the forces of Nature. He called them “men with the bark on.”
An adaptation of Frederic Remington’s painting, *The Howl of the Weather*, was created to serve as the logo for the advanced canoe tripping program of the Boy Scouts of America, called BIRCHBARK EXPEDITIONS BSA. Canoe voyages are conducted each summer in Canada’s Algonquin Provincial Park and on the remote wilderness rivers of Northern Ontario. The success of the program is directly related to its outstanding Guide staff.
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Credits


*Le Pays d’en Haut*, back cover: by the author.

Photographs and sketches in the book are by the author unless otherwise noted below:


RISK ADVISORY

Participation in BIRCHBARK EXPEDITIONS BSA canoe trips involves a certain degree of risk and can be physically, mentally, and emotionally demanding. Participation in these activities is entirely voluntary and requires participants to abide by applicable rules and standards of conduct. Parents, guardians and adults must carefully consider the risk involved and give consent for their child(ren) and/or themselves to participate in these activities.

To allow participation, parents, guardians and adults agree to release the Boy Scouts of America, the local council, the activity coordinators, and all employees, volunteers, related parties, or other organizations associated with the activity from any and all claims or liability arising out of this participation.
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Sun rising through the morning mist.
Big Trout Lake. Troop 262 - July 2005
DAWN

Light kissed the night; the night did blush
Men saw the blush, and called it Dawn.

The Magic Time of the Day

As a Guide, I like to awaken at False Dawn. False dawn occurs when the birds begin singing about one hour before actual dawn, somewhere around 4:30 in July. Then the birds go back to sleep and awaken again at first light.

Arise at false dawn, like the Voyageurs of old, and I find an enchanting Algonquin. Everything is pitch black. The air may have a cold nip in it. All is quiet, except for the hoo-hoo hoo-ooo-ooo an owl, or the yipping and howling of a far off wolf pack, or the splash of a trout in the middle of the lake, or possibly the plaintive tremolo of a loon calling its mate.

When I arise at false dawn, I like to build a fire with a few strips of birchbark I carry with me all the time. (I always remove birchbark from fallen trees; never from live standing trees). Or I may use some balsam pitch I gathered the night before. The night before I also filled the coffee pot and set it on the grill. I stored my tinder and kindling in a plastic bag, tucked the larger logs safe and dry under the tarp. Usually with one match can get a cheery fire blazing in the morning, and within fifteen minutes water will be boiling for breakfast. Soon the aroma of perking coffee fills the morning air.

Then the rooster crows, and the rest of the crew wakes up, packs their sleeping bags and tents and comes to the fire to be warmed. While the others are striking camp, I wash up and get ready for the day.

The animals are also moving early in the morning. One summer, we were camped on the beach at the Pen Lake sand hill. Across the lake from us was a swamp. Peering across the misty lake at dawn, we were treated to an awesome scene: a mother moose and her calf swam across the lake and then walked their gangly walk up to shore to vanish into the forest beyond.

Before you know it, the food bag is taken down, the bear bag ropes are coiled, the canoes are in the water and loaded, and everyone is enjoying a leisurely breakfast. We put the fire out—dead out—and test it with a bare hand. We also pick all the unburned food and shards of foil out of the fire pit, so it is left in better shape than we found it. Finally we strike the dining fly, and get into our canoes.

If I am lucky, I will leave my campsite just as it is getting light, and the morning mist is burning off the lake. The lake looks surreal, with the mist hovering over the surface. After a half hour paddling the sun peeks over the horizon, the mist vanishes and the lake is bathed in bright sunlight. The surface of the lake, even a giant lake like Opeongo, is often like glass and perfect for paddling. It is six o’clock am. Dawn is over; the day has begun!
Galeairy Lake Access Point  Note the stripper canoe, hand crafted by Guide Ed Pozniak. Troop 849 – July 2010

Canoe Lake Access Point  Troop 48 – July 2004

Smoke Lake  Troop 849 - July 2011.
PADDLES IN THE WATER!

The beaver slapped his tail in a warning to kin;
And the lordly moose blithely continued his meal in the marsh.

Early the First Morning

The Voyageurs found that the best time of the day for traveling is very early in the morning. (Remember, they regularly travelled on Georgian Bay and Lake Superior, veritable inland seas)

Fortunately, Algonquin’s lakes are not that big! However, the the winds on the larger lakes tend to begin after the air is heated and the air currents begin to move. Often, but not always, the wind will blow from ten o’clock in the morning until five or six o’clock in the evening. On large lakes, like Smoke Lake, Big Trout Lake, Lake of Two Rivers and Lake Opeongo you could become windbound, and need to stay in your campsite until the wind dies down again. So the weather often dictates how and when it is best to travel. Birchbark Expeditions crews typically like to get out early; they are often on the water by 8 am; sometimes by 7 am; and occasionally by first light, which is about 5:30 am in Algonquin during July. By lunch time you could have most of the day’s paddling behind you, and the best campsites are open. Now that’s the way to go!

The Access Point

Your crew will take off from one of many Access Points in the Park. Popular ones include Canoe Lake, Smoke Lake, Rock Lake, Lake Opeongo. (While Base Camp on Whitefish Lake is not an official Access Point, some crews do begin and/or end trips there. The official Access Point for Whitefish Lake Base Camp is Rock Lake) Most of these access points are within one-half hour drive of Base Camp, so you’ll be ready to go in short order.

We’re off!

Soon you will finally be slipping your sleek Old Town tripping canoes into the water. You and your paddle partners will don your PFDs, float your canoe, and load your packs. Then, like the fur traders of old, you will dip your paddles into the water and soon put distance between you and the shore. In a little while, you will be turning a bend into a new and distant place. You are paddling in Algonquin Park.

Wet Footing

We use the same method of loading and unloading canoes that the Voyageurs and Indians of two hundred years ago used. It is called wet footing.

Walking directly into the lake or river is the safest way to handle your canoe. It is safe on the canoe, because the bottom, or hull, of the canoe does not touch anything but water. While a canoe is an exceptionally strong craft on the water, it is fragile when it is out of the water. So cradling the hull in the water is the gentlest method of treating your canoe.

Wet footing is also the safest way for you to walk around canoes. Often the beginning and ends of portages offer poor footing. The bottom of the lake or river may be muddy, or rocky, or slippery, or full of logs...or all of these! Stepping directly in the water gives you the best footing possible. Seasoned trippers use the wet foot method, because it helps to prevent twisting an ankle or slipping and falling on sharp rocks or hidden logs.

Once you get to camp, you will like to change out of your wet shoes, dry your feet and put on a dry pair of socks. That is the best and only way to trip in the summer. It is the mark of a seasoned canoe tripper.
Heading east on McIntosh Creek, the entrance to the vast marsh called Grassy Bay. 2004.

Open Lakes with no portages: 3 miles/hour.
Mix of Lakes and Portages: 2 miles/hour.
Creeks and winding rivers: 1 mile/hour

The Lake Louisa Islands. Photo: Ed Pozniak.
Which way do you go?

Your Guide will give you pointers on the first day as to the best ways to travel across the lakes and down the rivers of Algonquin. The trail signs you run into will not be the colorfully painted steel road signs you see on the streets at home. Instead your Guide will show you how to read Nature’s trail signs.

Using your map you will note where the lake narrows…where the river enters the lake…where the hills fall into a valley giving a hint where the river finds its way out of the lake. Then you will look at the water and terrain ahead of you and match the hills and shoreline of the terrain to those on your map. Your Guide usually keeps his compass in the map case, so it can always be oriented to north. Navigating takes a bit of practice, but when you learn how to do it, it gives you a great feeling of pride that you can find your way in the wilderness.

The lakes are usually easy to find your way around. But when there are many islands on the lake, it is easy to get mixed up. Keep a sharp eye on your map and on the terrain, noticing land features along the way. It helps to look behind you from time to time, so you get a good feel for the lay of the land.

Travel along the shore. Don’t go forward unless you know where you are for certain. If you get disoriented, go back to where you were last certain of your location.

The marsh called Grassy Bay near White Trout Lake is vast and featureless to the untrained eye. McIntosh Creek and the Petawawa River both empty into Grassy Bay. The marsh is 4 miles long and up to 2 miles wide. If you proceed carefully you will be able to distinguish the island near the junction of the two river systems. Using your map is important here.

Travel Speed

Generally you will paddle at a set speed. Even experienced trippers use the following standards to help them clock how far they can travel in a given day. First, look over the map. Will you be traveling over big lakes, over many portages, or through a winding river? Each type of travel has its own speed.

Portage Signs

Portage Signs are the only man-made signs you are likely to run into. They are positioned at the very end of the portage. But do not rely solely on the portage sign. You will feel better if the portage is where it is supposed to be. Look at your map, and look at the terrain, to see if they match. In times of high water, you may be able to paddle into the creek or stream farther than the sign. In times of low water, you may have to disembark into the muck as many as twenty five yards before the portage sign. Portage lengths are marked in meters. One meter is thirty nine inches, three inches longer than a yard.
The dining fly provides protection from rain and wind. Stake one side down into the wind. Note the bear bag hanging in the background. And the stoves under the trail grill. The pancakes were great. Troop 849 - Pen Lake sand hill, 2004.

“THE ALGONQUIN TARP”

1. String a 50’ nylon cord between two trees.
2. Use a Lark’s Head to secure line to ridge of tarp.
3. Tie lines to trees with slippery taut line hitch.
4. Stake bottom edge to ground through grommets.
5. Tie 25’ nylon cord to front corner with slippery bowline.
6. Tie off corner lines to trees with slippery taut line hitch.

IF THE WIND SHIFTS, DROP THE FRONT AND RAISE THE BACK.
SETTING UP CAMP

It’s my favorite campsite. A sheltered cove for the canoes, a hemlock wood, a granite promontory to sun on, a view of beautiful Lake Louisa. Someone even built a table out of a giant flat rock.

Setting up Camp

After a good day’s paddle, your crew will start to look for a campsite. Ideally it will be on a point with a breeze to keep the mosquitoes away. If your site has a promontory of granite Pre-Cambrian Shield, the oldest bedrock in Canada, that is good, because it offers a place to dry off clothes and bask in the sun.

You’ll unload your canoes and pitch the dining fly, even if it looks like there will be no rain. Storms can come suddenly in the north country, and you’ll be glad you were prepared with a well pitched tarp.

A couple of Scouts will look for a good location to hang the bear bag, which we will talk about in detail later.

Then a couple of Scouts will go to fill and purify water for the evening meal.

A few Scouts should also gather firewood for the evening campfire, or to dry out wet clothing.

When you pitch your tent, first look UP. Are there any widow makers? Widow makers are dead trees which the Algonquin loggers of the 1800s dreaded. When the logger chopped them at waist level, the vibrations would cause the tree trunk to break ten or twenty feet above their head. When the tree fell on the unwitting logger, it made his wife a widow.

You’ll also want to avoid pitching your tent under solitary trees, which may act like lightning rods in the event a thunderstorm rolls in.

Time to have fun

After camp is set up, explore the island or mainland where you are camping. You may want to go for a swim—using the Safe Swim Defense Plan, of course. You’ll find the water generally very warm in July, and cooler—but still enjoyable—in August. You may want to test your fishing skills, or plan out tomorrow’s route. Some crews like to get into the canoes and explore the bays and islands of the new lake they are on.

Your Guide will be happy to take you out to practice canoe strokes and improve your technique. By the end of your trip, with some personal instruction, you may become a pretty good paddler.

You will find yourself going to bed while it is still light. Up North in July, the stars don’t come out until 10:30 pm or later. Long summer days are a treat on an Algonquin Park canoe trip.
There is a Certain Excitement

as you approach the portage. When the lead canoe reaches the portage, the paddlers stop in water deep enough so the canoe is still floating...to avoid running the canoe up on the shore, which does great damage to the stem, or leading edge of the canoe.

The stern paddler sets his blade in the water and holds it tight against the gunwale, as the bow paddler and middle paddler climb out. As they climb out of the canoe, they take two packs with them and set them far enough on shore and off to the side, so as not to block the portage path.

Then, they come back to the canoe and carry it a ways up the path, perhaps 60 feet, to make room for the other canoes and avoid congestion at the take-out.

Wetfooting

Portages can be slippery places. Twisting an ankle or cutting your foot can cause serious problems on a canoe trip. Wetfooting is the best way to be safe. The Voyageurs never beached a canoe with the hull touching the ground, because the fragile birchbark would tear. They would wet foot it even when the water was icy cold in May and November. Fortunately, you will be canoeing in the summer, when the water temperature is much warmer. Look lively.

You will find it best to try to move quickly at the entrance to a portage, as this is one place where you can get jammed up. Sometimes you may meet another crew coming down the portage, and the congestion can cause you to misplace gear.

Place gear to the side of the trail

The crew usually places its gear in a packline or a pile to the side of the trail, for easy access and to prevent forgetting a piece of equipment. All dangles should be put inside the packs, because the portage is where things get forgotten and left behind. Remember: rest paddles upright against a tree or pack! If you lay them on the ground, they can blend in with foliage and be overlooked when you leave.
Easy on the shoulders

The weight of a canoe should rest squarely on your shoulders. One thing that can cause a sharp pain is when the two-inch wide thwart presses into one of your bones on your neck or shoulder.

We have looked for the best way to portage, or carry, the canoe, and have settled on this revision of the old tripper’s yoke. It can be custom fitted to your shoulders and takes just minutes to assemble.

1. Lay your paddle blades across the center thwart, with the shaft of the paddles across the front thwart. This forms the shape of the yoke.
2. Loop a portage rubber band over the paddle shaft, then under the thwart, then back up over the shaft. It makes a secure binding.
3. Loop another portage band around the blade of the paddle, then under the center thwart, then around the blade again. This secures the blade to the thwart.
4. Roll up or fold your kneeling pad and stuff it under the space between the portage band and the blade. This pads your yoke.

There…you have packed away two paddles and kneeling pads; and have made a yoke that is extremely comfortable and adjustable for most trippers!

Inserting the kneeling pads to cushion the paddle blades. These blades will be moved closer together to fit comfortably on the shoulders and around the neck. At the beginning of the 510 meter McIntosh Lake-to-McIntosh Creek portage. July 2004.
Portaging a Canoe

Old Town 17-foot Penobscot royalex tripping canoes weigh 65 pounds. If you are carrying a fanny pack and two paddles, you will be carrying about 75 pounds on your back. If you learn the proper technique for hoisting and lowering a canoe, you will not hurt yourself. Pay close attention to your form.

Three-man hoist
1. Two paddlers help each other put on their Duluth packs. Then they position themselves at the bow and stern thwarts of the canoe. The third paddler, who will portage the canoe, positions himself at the center thwart, where the yoke is attached.
2. At the canoe portager’s signal, all three lift the closer gunwale up to their thighs, keeping the far gunwale on the ground.
3. Then, all three paddlers reach to the far gunwale, or as far as they can reach on their thwarts.
4. At the canoe portager’s signal, all three paddlers lift the far gunwale, so that the closer gunwale rests on their thighs. Now comes the tricky part.
5. At the canoe portager’s signal, all three paddlers use their thighs to “kick” the paddle up and roll it onto their shoulders, in one smooth motion.
6. The bow and stern paddlers hold the canoe in the air while the canoe portager settles into the yoke. Then the bow and stern paddlers step away, and the canoe portager is ready to go.
7. The bow paddler walks ahead of the canoe portager, to spot difficult footing for him. The stern paddler walks behind to lend assistance if needed.

Two-man hoist
If there are only two paddlers to hoist a canoe, then they both position themselves at the back of the canoe, both facing the bow. Keeping the bow on the ground, they roll the stern end up over their heads. Then they “walk” down the gunwales with their hands. When the yoke is high enough, the canoe portager gets into position, and then the other paddler gently lets go of the canoe and steps away.

Ready to portage, the first paddler steadies the canoe while the canoe portager sets the yoke securely on her shoulders.

If you pack properly, you can carry all your gear in your pack, without a slew of dangles.

Le Posé. Snack break on the portage. The canoe on the left was set down. The canoe on the right is resting in the fork of a tree trunk, for ease in getting out and into position. This way you do not have to lift it again to resume the portage.
The One-Trip Portage

At the end of the lake, a yellow sign appears. It marks the beginning of the portage, a forest path that links one northwoods waterway to another. The canoe is a marvelous craft. Strong and seaworthy, it is also light enough to be carried from lake to lake. Portages made exploring the length and width of North America possible by natives, explorers, missionaries and fur traders. You will learn the highly efficient skill of a true canoe tripper: the one-trip portage.

One item per person

Each canoe carries three people. One person carries the canoe; the second carries the Duluth pack with clothing and sleeping bags and tent for three; the third carries a food or kettle pack. If you have packed carefully and have trained well, you will be able to fly across the portage.

1 mile + 1 mile = 3 miles

If you cannot carry your equipment across the portage in one trip, you will need to make a two-trip portage. BUT you will actually take three times as long and travel three times as far in doing so.

For example, the portage from Florence Lake to Louisa Lake in the south of Algonquin is 1725 meters, about one mile. On a portage you can walk that distance in about 30 minutes.

But suppose you need to do a two-trip portage. First, you will carry your canoe to Lake Louisa – one mile. You will go back to your starting point then, empty handed – two miles. Finally, you will carry the rest of your gear to Louisa – three miles. The two-trip portage took not 30 minutes, but three times that long, an hour and one half!

Organization is key

Seasoned canoe trippers have no “dangles” in the canoe. Water bottles, rain coats, snacks—all your personal gear is packed in the Duluth pack or in the day pack. That way, you can move quickly and efficiently at the portage.
Portaging through the Forest

Once the canoe is loaded your canoe team can take off. The last person out should check the landing to be sure nothing is left behind. You can portage 1,000 meters in about 20 minutes. It helps if you give a little bounce, or spring in your knees with each step; it lessens the impact on those joints.

Le Posé - Taking a Break.

If you get tired along the way, you can set the canoe down on the ground, reversing the above procedure. An easier method is to look for a tree that forks a few feet above your head. Carefully walk the bow into the fork of the tree and rest the canoe. Then step out from underneath the canoe and breathe a deep sigh of relief. When it is time to continue the portage, just step back into the yoke and back away from the tree. This method eliminates the hardest part of hoisting the canoe: the lift off the ground. Experienced Guides use this method all the time.

The End of the Portage

Just about when you feel you cannot walk another step, you notice something blue through the trees. It is your destination lake! A rush of adrenalin surges through your body, and you find the strength to finish that last hundred yards. At last, you are there.

But now what? You used the last bit of energy you had to reach the end of the portage, and you don’t have the energy to remove the canoe by yourself.

Teamwork is important

When a canoe reaches the lake, those already there should hop into action. One person should go to the bow, and another to the stern. They hold up the sides of the canoe as if they were also portaging it. At the canoe portager’s command, all three lift and roll the canoe back to their thighs, and then to the ground. The canoe portager thanks his buddies for their help, and no one gets hurt because everyone helps. Also place your packs on the side of the path. When the time is right, first carry the canoe to the water. Then load your packs and hop in. The portage is over!
Learn From Your Guide

Watch your Guide. He may have a few “tricks of the trade” that make the portage a thing of beauty. As with most things, these advanced methods are also the least tiring and the most efficient!

- Solo Hoist. As you get stronger, you may be able to hoist the canoe onto your shoulder without any help. **ONLY ATTEMPT A SOLO HOIST WHEN YOU ARE PROPERLY TRAINED AND SUFFICIENTLY STRONG.**

- Hoist while standing in the water. Guides like to assemble the portage yoke and hoist the canoe while they are still standing in the water at the beginning of the portage. The most difficult part of the lift is from the ground to your thighs, and the Guide lets the water help him here. The distance to lift the canoe is much less because the water floats the canoe near your thighs.

- Walk into the lake at the end. At the end of the portage, the lazy Guide may walk his canoe right into the water and set it down on the surface of the lake. When he sets the canoe down, he doesn’t need to bend all the way down, because the water raises the landing zone to the level of his thighs.

- Set the packs directly in the canoe. Then his lazy partners will take off their packs and place them directly into the canoe. Now they are ready to go! Once you use the Lazy Guide’s Method of Portaging, you may find yourself liking it.

- Always carry certain items with you. You will rarely find a guide without his matches, bug dope, knife, whistle and map—even while he is portaging. That’s good safety practice for all to follow. Lose your way on the portage once and you’ll see why!

Appreciate the portage.

It is the gateway to wilderness. Only those hardy enough will venture over a long portage, and that is what keeps the wilderness wild.
(1, 2, 3) Rubber bands cut from tire inner tubes hold the rolled-up kneeling pads onto the paddle blades and thwarts. Straps fasten shafts to front thwarts. (4) First, lift the gunwale to your thighs. (5) Reach across and grab center thwart. Keep your back as straight as possible. (6) Rock the canoe into position. Get steady, then “kick” canoe up with your knees. (7, 8) The canoe rolls up onto your shoulders.
W
indbound

Paddling in the wind can be extremely difficult. In fact, the Voyageurs, paddling ten-man, 36-foot long Montreal Canoes, were wind bound on Lake Superior one day out of three in the month of July, and one day out of two in August. They had a name for being windbound, degradé. Their manhood was insulted because la vielle, old lady wind, had gotten the better of them. They felt “degraded.”

If you find yourself windbound…relax. Find a campsite and cook dinner at lunch time. Often the wind dies down at 6 pm, and it may be possible to get some paddling in just before nightfall. That is a time honored technique for handling large lakes and wind.

Paddling into the Wind—Flag your Canoe

There are two times when you should be cautious on a windy day. The first time of caution is when the wind is against you. When paddling into the wind, it helps if the bow (front) of the canoe is heavier than the stern. The wind will “flag” your canoe, pivoting it around the heavier end. So if you’re “bow heavy,” then the wind will blow your stern into proper position, like a weathervane.

Stay low in the canoe. Your tripping canoes are meant to be paddled either sitting or kneeling. But when the wind is rough, it always helps to keep your center of gravity low. It makes the canoe more stable in the water and may prevent you from capsizing. It usually gives better control of the craft.

Feather your paddle. Feathering means turning your paddle so it slices the wind on the recovery. It saves energy if you remember to feather.

Stay on the lee side of islands. You can use islands and points of land to advantage when you are paddling in a wind. The islands break the force of the wind, so you will find it easier to paddle behind islands and points, whenever you can.

Quartering. Do not let the big waves hit your canoe on the side, “broadside.” The force of the water will swamp your canoe. Generally it is wise to quarter whether you are paddling both into the wind and with the wind.

Paddling with the Wind.

The second time you should be cautious is when the lake is a mile or more wide and you are paddling with the wind. By the time the wind reaches the far shore, the waves may have turned into big whitecaps with swells deep enough to swamp your canoe.

Do not let yourself get exposed to a big stretch of open water with the wind at your back. If the wind is strong enough, you will not be able to control the canoe, and you may find yourself blowing past the point you were trying to reach to shelter your boat.

Beware on Big Lakes

Smoke Lake, Lake of Two Rivers, and Galeairy Lake are notorious for wind. They all lay from northwest to southeast, the same direction as the prevailing wind.

Opeongo Lake’s East Arm is four miles long and one to two miles wide. The North Arm is three miles long and three miles wide. The wind can be strong even off the dock at the Access Point at the southern end. One crew swamped just off the dock.

Sailing

When conditions are right, your Guide may tell you it is safe to hoist a sail. It is a way to speed down a lake and let the wind work for you! Just remember to approach the forces of Nature with respect.

ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS

If you are prepared, you can enter the forests and lakes of Algonquin with confidence. Still, experienced woodsmen are always aware of the following:

LIGHTNING

If you see lightning or hear thunder when you are paddling, get off the lake. Lightning is attracted to the highest point. On a lake, canoes and paddlers are the highest point. When you take shelter, do your best to avoid solitary trees, as they can act as lightning rods. If the storm is passing, you can pull to shore and spread out so one lightning strike hopefully will not strike everyone. Grab your kneeling pad and stand or squat down on it and wait out the lightning.

MICROBURSTS.

Algonquin has been subjected to occasional microbursts. These sudden downdrafts of wind usually accompany a summer storm. A microburst comes suddenly and leaves just as quickly. In the summer of 2005, one microburst toppled twenty red pine trees at Camp Pathfinder on Source Lake. The trees were 80 feet tall. That same summer another microburst toppled thirty equally tall, mature trees at Algonquin Outfitters on Highway 60 just to the east of the park. It is important to be off the water during a microburst. Waves can whip up quickly and the accompanying rain can diminish visibility greatly. In the summer of 2006, a Birchbark Expeditions crew paddling down northern Ontario’s Missinaibi river was overcome by a microburst that practically capsized their canoes and reduced visibility to twenty five yards.

SUNBURN

The long hot days of summer can create several heat related problems for the unprepared. Ears, nose and the tops of your knees are particularly vulnerable to painful sunburn. Your Guide most likely will be wearing a broad brimmed hat, a long sleeve shirt and long pants to protect himself from a sunburn. You would be wise to follow his lead. A blister on an unprotected shoulder can knock you out of commission on the portage.

DEHYDRATION AND HEAT EXHAUSTION

Too much heat with inadequate water is a recipe for disaster. You will know you are drinking enough water if your urine is clear and copious. If your urine is dark and of low volume, take it as a sign of dehydration, and start drinking right away. Frequent drinking is the best way to prevent dehydration.

The intense physical exercise of a canoe trip added to dehydration can give you a wicked headache and make you feel nauseous. You may feel weak and tired. That is a sign of heat exhaustion: a condition to be taken seriously. Get into the shade, rest, drink water and have some soup (the salt of which may help restore your sodium levels). In the northwoods, the most effective ways to ward off heat exhaustion are by making sure you are properly hydrated, and by wearing a hat and sunglasses.

LEECHES

Bloodsuckers (leeches) were once used to bleed people as a medical treatment. In fact, they are being used again to help remove blood from bruises. However, you may not wish to have one attach itself uninvited onto your leg or foot.

A leech sticks on the skin tightly. It injects a chemical that thins the blood, so when it is removed, the wound “bleeds like a sucker.” Leeches can be tricky to remove from the skin. The surefire and best way is to sprinkle them with table salt. The second best is to burn them off with a match. The third best way is to smother them with shampoo.

Wearing socks is the best way to avoid having a leech attach to the flesh of your foot. Leeches are found quite commonly in Algonquin, so wear socks!

By the way, a pregnant leech will have perhaps sixty baby leeches. Should you pull a pregnant leech off, you may burst the leech and have many baby leeches stuck to your skin. I have seen that happen twice in the same year, once on Welcome Lake and once at the end of the Thunder House Falls portage on the Missinaibi River. Salt is the best remedy. Then wash the area with soap and water.
Guardians of the Wilderness

They say that mosquitoes in the far North can drop a full-grown moose. The Voyageurs often complained of the intensity of black flies and mosquitoes, sometimes lighting smudge fires at both their head and feet to provide some relief. The modern day tripper has more resources available to help him.

Black Flies and “No-see-ums” are generally out as soon as Spring arrives in Algonquin. They peak in May and June. Mosquitoes are at their worst in June. They subside greatly in July, and are virtually gone in August. Spiders are present all season long, particularly in protected areas.

Clothing

On a canoe trip, consider bringing light-weight long pants and a long sleeved shirt. They help protect you from mosquitoes and black flies. When you visit areas with ticks and fleas, wear shoes, not sandals. For added safety, tuck pants into socks. By the way, bugs like dark colors, so it helps to wear light colors.

Look Before You Sit

When using the box latrines, or when sitting down in the woods, it is a good practice to LOOK FIRST. If you notice cobwebs, take a stick and clean them out before you sit down.

Permethrin

Permethrin clothing treatment products are subject to EPA pesticide registration performance requirements. They are very helpful in controlling nuisance mosquitoes and black flies.

Apply permethrin-containing insect repellents to clothing, shoes, tents, mosquito nets, for greater protection. Permethrin is not labeled for use directly on skin. Most repellents (like DEET) are generally removed from clothing and gear by a single washing, but permethrin-treated clothing is effective for up to 6 washings. Permethrin on your clothing may help reduce the amount of insect repellent you need to use on a portage.

Using DEET Safely

DEET is toxic when ingested and may cause skin irritation in sensitive persons. High concentrations applied to the skin can cause blistering. However, because DEET is so widely used, a great deal of testing has been done, and over the long history of DEET use, very few confirmed incidents of toxic reactions to DEET have occurred when the product is used properly. DEET is also available in a controlled release formula. The possibility of adverse reactions to DEET will be minimized if you take the following precautions.

▪ Use enough repellent to cover exposed skin or clothing. Do not apply repellent to skin that is under clothing. Heavy application is not necessary to achieve protection.
▪ Do not apply repellent to cuts, wounds, or irritated skin.
▪ After returning indoors, wash treated skin with soap and water.
▪ Do not spray aerosol or pump products in enclosed areas; do not inhale the aerosol.
▪ Do not apply aerosol or pump products directly to the face. Spray your hands and then rub them carefully over the face, avoiding eyes and mouth.

Tips

▪ Use an insect repellent on exposed skin to repel mosquitoes, ticks, fleas and other arthropods. EPA-registered repellents include products containing DEET (N,N-diethylmetatoluamide) and picaridin (KBR 3023). DEET concentrations of 30% to 50% are effective for several hours.
▪ DEET formulations of 30% are recommended for both adults and children over 2 months of age.
▪ When using sunscreen, apply sunscreen first and then repellent. Repellent should be washed off at the end of the day before going to bed.
▪ Inspect your body and clothing for ticks during outdoor activity and at the end of the day. Wear light-colored or white clothing so ticks can be more easily seen. Removing ticks right away can prevent some infections.

(Information on DEET and Permethrin obtained from Center for Disease Control (CDC) website www.cdc.gov 01-22-2012)
West Nile Virus

The West Nile Virus is contracted from a bite from an infected mosquito. It is not contagious, but could be transmitted by a blood transfusion. It takes 3 to 6 days to show signs of the disease, and some people have no symptoms. About 1 in 5 people who become infected actually show symptoms. These are mild flu-like symptoms, intense headache, eye pain, fever (20%), stiff neck and muscle weakness, joint pain, swollen lymph nodes, skin rash, encephalitis (rare), paralysis of limbs (10 cases in Mississippi, Louisiana and Michigan). Usually people recover fully. There is no treatment for the virus, so prevention is important.

Light colored clothing, long sleeved shirts and the use of DEET are recommended. West Nile Virus has been found in Ontario. (From: Ontario Ministry of Health – www.health.gov.on.ca 01-22-2012)

Lyme Disease

Lyme disease is an infection that is carried by ticks and is transmitted to people by the bite of infected blacklegged ticks. Typical symptoms include fever, headache, fatigue and a characteristic skin rash called erythema migrans. If left untreated, infection can spread to joints, the heart, and the nervous system. Lyme disease is diagnosed based on symptoms, physical findings (e.g. rash) and the possibility of exposure to infected ticks; laboratory testing is helpful in the later stages of the disease. Most cases of Lyme disease can be treated successfully with a few weeks of antibiotics. Steps to prevent Lyme disease include using insect repellent and removing ticks promptly. It is a good idea to check your body regularly for ticks. (From: US Center for Disease Control www.cdc.gov 01-22-2012)

Removing Ticks from Your Skin

Remove a tick from your skin as soon as you notice it. Use fine-tipped tweezers to firmly grasp the tick very close to your skin. With a steady motion, pull the tick’s body away from your skin. Then clean your skin with soap and warm water. Throw the dead tick away with your household trash.

Avoid crushing the tick’s body. Do not be alarmed if the tick’s mouthparts remain in the skin. Once the mouthparts are removed from the rest of the tick, it can no longer transmit the Lyme disease bacteria. If you accidentally crush the tick, clean your skin with soap and warm water or alcohol.

Don’t use petroleum jelly, a hot match, nail polish, or other products to remove a tick.
Bears, Raccoons, Squirrels and Skunks

If it is food, the creatures of the forest are interested—real interested. It is wise to keep your food away from them, because an encounter with an animal can deprive you of your food at best, and turn ugly at worst.

Scavengers

Generally bears leave campers alone; but if an area is heavily used by campers, there may be a local bear who regularly scavenges for food. You want to keep him away. The bear usually is interested in your food, but may see you as an obstacle if you are in the way. Raccoons can chew through your packs and make quite a mess. Skunks, even if they don’t spray, have an acrid musk that lingers in the air long after they have left the area. If a skunk feels threatened it will spray. Skunks can ruin your gear and clothing if they spray.

To Discourage Scavanging Bears:

▪ Do not put food in your tent.
▪ Be careful when you cook. Keep a clean cooking and eating area.
▪ Gray Water is water made dirty by dishwashing. Pour gray water back from your campsite, through a sump bag filled with a bit of leaf matter, and pierced with small holes. After the water is poured out, treat the sump bag as garbage.
▪ Do not put food into the latrines. Animals are attracted to the food. Burn or pack out the food instead.
▪ Burn all burnable garbage as soon as possible. If you can not burn it, then pack it out until you can burn it or dispose of it properly.
▪ Remove smellables from your pockets and pack each night. Smellables include soap, gum, chapstick, candy, toothpaste.
▪ Hang smellables along with your food and garbage in the bear bag at night.

Rogue Bears

Certain bears are predatory; they are called Rogue Bears. It does not happen frequently, but it does happen. They are usually solitary four- or five-year old males. The difference between a rogue bear and a campsite bear, is that a rogue bear will attack a human, apparently without provocation. Rogue bears are extremely rare. About 37 people have died from bears in the last 100 years in North America—the occurrence is not frequent given the number of campers in the Northwoods.

Rogue bears—all large males—attacked campers on three separate occasions in Algonquin. In May 1978 one predatory bear in the north of the Park killed three boys who were fishing. A second time, in October 1991, a rogue bear killed a man and woman camping on Bates Island, in Opeongo Lake. In July 1997 a rogue bear dragged an eleven year old boy out of his tent, but was beaten back by the boy’s camp counselor; Park rangers shot the bear the next day.

Confrontations with Rogue Bears

What Algonquin Park recommends in the event of a bear visitor is the following:
▪ Confront the bear. Your group should appear aggressive to the bear. Stay together, so you appear larger.
▪ Get out of your tents.
▪ Make a lot of noise.
▪ Flash your lights in their eyes.
▪ Give the bear a wide berth.
▪ Give the bear a clear escape route.
▪ Back off gradually, but do not run.
▪ Get into your canoes if you can.
▪ With a predatory bear, do everything in your power to make the bear think twice about attacking you. Be aggressive, yell, throw rocks, hit the bear with sticks, use bear spray if you have it.
▪ If you get attacked, fight with everything you have.
Panic

That is what comes naturally to us when we realize we are lost. As a woodsman, it is important to control the feeling of panic, so you can use your energy constructively, and find your way again.

Chances are slim that you will end up lost. You’ll be paddling with the other canoes in your crew. Sticking together is one of the best ways to avoid getting lost.

But suppose you do find yourself totally confused. Your heart will start beating fast. You may find yourself breathing faster and feel a bit dizzy. And a feeling of dread and panic may engulf you. What should you do?

Lost on the Hollow River

One time a friend and I were lost for the better part of a day and a night, when we lost the portage trail.

I had just turned seventeen. Al and I were exploring down the Hollow River in the southwest corner of the park. No one we knew had been down this route before, and we were seeking a way to go from our North Star Canoe Base on Algonquin’s Tea Lake to Camp Northern Lights, some 70 miles south. Without realizing it, we were looking for the little used portage on the wrong side of the river. Eventually we gave up looking for the portage, cached our canoe, and began slogging down river on foot, looking for Cross Corner Lake...but the lake did not appear where we thought it should.

Distances in the woods are often deceiving. You may have thought you walked a mile, when in reality you only covered one-quarter that distance. Bush-whacking through brambles is slow going, and distances covered are much less than you would think. Walking down a creek bed, with its slippery rocks and foot-grabbing logs, can take two or three times as long as you might normally walk on a sidewalk at home.

Soon it was dark. Well, Al and I spent the night in a swamp. We had only a trail tarp with us, and the mosquitoes were quite ferocious. There were moose tracks all around in the soft earth. Too tired to eat, we pitched the tarp on a small hillock of grass, and alternately sweated when we put our heads in the sleeping bags, and suffered from the mosquitoes when we stuck our noses outside our bags to get some fresh air.

When dawn broke, we found out we actually had reached the shore of the lake we were looking for; it was so overgrown with marsh plants that what looked like a lake on the map was actually a marshy area full of grasses and lily pads. We then went back a mile and a half to retrieve our canoe, and finished the trip with no further incident—even though we were a day late.

I learned a valuable lesson on that trip: It is a lot easier being lost with a friend, than being lost by myself. I always canoe with a buddy.

STOP!

1. Stop. Take a deep breath.
2. Think. What did I do wrong?
3. Options. What are my options?
4. Plan. Make a good plan.

Some things to remember.

- Always carry matches, your knife, and your map and compass, mosquito repellent, and your whistle ON YOUR PERSON.
- It is a good idea to have a bottle of water, and a candy bar or two, and your raincoat with you, in a day pack.
- Backtrack if you can. You may find the spot where you took the wrong turn.
- Stay put if you don’t know what to do.
- Don’t forget that people will be looking for you also. That is why we make trip plans. So, many times it is best to stay put and let them find you.
- If it looks like it may get dark before help comes, find a good place to settle down, and gather a lot of firewood. Light a fire and it will cheer you up.
- Travel with a buddy. It is less nerve wracking when you are lost with a friend.
Voyageurs! Know the following knots:

1. Square Knot
2. Sheet Bend
3. Taut Line Hitch
4. Bowline around your waist
5. Bowline around a tree (4 ½)

Guide Knots

When you are up to it, try your hand at the following six additional Guide knots:

1. Clove Hitch
2. Timber Hitch
3. Double Sheet Bend
4. Trucker’s Hitch
5. Alpine Butterfly
6. Bowline on a Bight

Algonquin Park, Highway 60. The knot was tied incorrectly. While traveling 50 miles an hour, the canoe slipped off the trailer, twisting the rack, almost hitting a hiker.
Cooking Stoves

Birchbark Expeditions issues two MSR single burner, *Pocket Rocket* stoves to each crew. When used properly, these lightweight stoves are powerful, very dependable and easy to use. Trippers also like them for their convenience. Sometimes, if the forest fire hazard is high, Algonquin Park will impose a natural wood fire ban and require the use of stoves for all cooking.

The MSR stove uses Isobutane-propane canister fuel, with the stove threading onto the canister.

How Much Fuel?

Experience has shown two 16 oz containers (or four 8 oz) is plenty of fuel for an entire crew for one week. If your crew leaves Base Camp with two stoves, and 32 oz of fuel, then you will have enough fuel to last for all of your meals for five days.

Stoves can be Dangerous

Your Guide will instruct you in the proper use of stoves. Here are the safety precautions necessary to use stoves while on your trip.

Liquid Fuel Stoves

Some Stove Tips

- Use stoves only with knowledgeable adult supervision.
- Only use approved fuel containers for fuel.
- Never fuel or operate a stove in a tent or building.
- Keep fuel containers away from lighted stoves and fires.

Lighting the Stove

- Check that the valve is closed before installing the stove onto the fuel canister.
- You can check the fittings with soapy water before lighting.
- Place the stove on a level surface to operate it.
- When lighting a stove, stay to one side – don’t hover over it. Light the match, then open the fuel valve wide, light the burner quickly, and then adjust the flame to a blue flame.

Cooking with the Stove

- Do not put too large a pot on the stove. Instead, use the fire grate issued to you and place the stove under the grate, and the pot on top of the grate. It is a much more stable platform for your pots.
- If the stove malfunctions, discontinue use and notify your guide.
- Do not leave a lighted stove unattended.
- ONLY COOKS should be near the stoves. When campers are walking around the stove, they may accidentally knock over the pot. Spilled boiling water can burn someone severely.

Refueling the Stove

- LET THE STOVE COOL COMPLETELY BEFORE REFUELING
- Check that the valve is closed completely Refuel
- Perform stove maintenance regularly.
- When not in use, keep the stove in its protective case, keeping the threads clean.

Camp Stonehaven. I poured the 5-gallon jerry can on the campfire, thinking it was water. It was gasoline.
A Irish Invention

Birchbark Expeditions regularly tests new equipment. One item that has gotten our attention is stove used by fishermen in Ireland, the Kelly Kettle.

A Highly Efficient Stove

The Kelly Kettle boils “2 ½ pints” of water as fast as a Jet-boil stove, and burns twigs no thicker than your thumb. It has a double wall chimney. The fire is built in a pan. The water is poured into the spout, which fills the double wall. As the fire burns up the chimney, it very efficiently heats the water. If the wind is blowing (which reduces the efficiency of liquid fuel stoves) the Kelly Kettle works even better, as the wind enhances the draft in the chimney. To pour you hold the wooden bail handle, and lift the cork and chain. It works safely. Guide Chris Walsh introduced the Kelly Kettle on his trip in 2007.

It is efficient for Birchbark Expeditions use, because most all our meals require only boiling water (despite the attached picture of a breakfast cooked on a stove). Its shortcomings are that a stove or fire works better for frying. Further, it is somewhat bulky, but that is offset by the elimination of one or two fuel bottles. A stove would still need to be used in case there is a fire ban in effect in Algonquin. It is easy on the environment, and no fossil fuels are used, just the renewable wood supply.

County Cork, Ireland. It boils “2 ½ pints” for tea. After fishing, the Irishmen went into the local pub for another 2 ½ pints of something a wee bit stronger.
Campfires

That’s what most of us think of when we think of camping. There is nothing quite like “jawboning” around a bright fire as the night grows dark, enjoying a hot drink, listening to the sounds of the night.

Knowing how to build a campfire can also help you in an emergency. It can dry out wet clothing. It can boil water. It can warm you. It can signal for emergency help.

If you can light a fire in the rain, you can light one in dry weather. Here are some hints that will help.

Wood in the Forest

The transition forest of Algonquin has many coniferous trees—pines, spruces, hemlocks, firs. They ignite like nobody’s business when dry. But coniferous trees burn poorly when the forest is wet and damp from a two-day rain. Their wood is soft, which causes them to absorb water like a sponge.

If it is possible, go uphill. Hardwoods like maple, beech and birch tend to grow away from the shoreline, up on the drier slopes. The grain of hardwood trees is tighter, so they absorb less water than coniferous trees. When a three-inch log is split open during the rain, you can often find dry wood.

The One-Match Fire

Resist the temptation to just grab a handful of pine needles and light them. You won’t have enough fuel to keep it going, and while you’re out looking for more, your fire may die out. Gather your fuel first.

Natural Fire Starters

As you walk along a portage, you may come across a fallen canoe birch tree, also called a paper birch. The bark from the birch is an excellent fire starter; and it is a good idea to keep a few pieces in your pack. Also, balsam fir trees have half-inch blisters of pitch on them. If you carefully puncture a few of them, you can use the pitch to light a fire. A teaspoon of balsam pitch will light with one match and burn for three to five minutes.

Fire. It warms me, dries my wet clothes, cheers me, gives me courage. If I gaze into it until the last ember burns out, it takes me into another world.

Wood Fires

1. Tinder-“Stuff You Can Light With a Match”

In dry weather, the small dead twigs of coniferous trees make good tinder. In wet weather, they become too damp to light. Try maple twigs instead. Better yet, split a log to obtain the dry interior wood, which can be used to light a fire.

2. Kindling

Generally the thickness of a pencil or your thumb, kindling can be foraged from fallen dead trees.

3. Fuel

Even wet logs will burn if the fire is hot enough. The trick is to have some dry logs burning while the wet logs are laid on top (a) to protect the fire from being put out by the rain, and (b) to dry out the wet logs so they will be ready to burn later.

Hudson Bay Axe

You can bring a small hatchet. Some Guides prefer a Hudson’s Bay axe, a long handled axe with a light 1 ½ pound head. These were the trade axes of the voyageurs, and are especially suited for tripping. Chopping wood is not necessary; a good saw will do that for you more efficiently. The axe is used to split wood. Be sure it is done under qualified supervision.

Finding wood

Please do not cut live trees. It is against Park regulations. Also, green wood has a high water content, and doesn’t burn well. Instead look for dead wood. Walking into the forest 100 yards from your campsite should bring you to an area where wood is more plentiful. If you camping on on an island, the wood supply may be very limited. If you paddle off the island to the shore, you often find a lot of wood.

Tomorrow’s fire

Woodsmen often keep tinder and kindling in a plastic bag at night. Larger logs can be kept under the tarp. That way, if they will build a fire in the morning, the materials will be ready to go. If it rains during the night, it doesn’t matter, your wood is dry.
**Beaver Fever**

Giardiasis (GEE-are-DYE-uh-sis), known in canoe country as “Beaver Fever,” is a diarrheal illness caused by a one-celled, microscopic parasite, *Giardia lamblia*. Once an animal or person has been infected with Giardia, the parasite lives in the intestine and is passed in the stool. Because the parasite is protected by an outer shell, it can survive outside the body and in the environment for long periods of time.

**Symptoms of Giardiasis**

Canoeists who do not wash their hands are susceptible to getting infected by giardiasis. So are canoeists who drink unfiltered or untreated water.

Symptoms normally begin 1 to 2 weeks after you get infected. They include diarrhea, gas or flatulence, greasy stools that tend to float, stomach cramps, and upset stomach or nausea. These symptoms may lead to weight loss and dehydration. Some people with giardiasis have no symptoms at all. (source: Center for Disease Control (CDC) 01-22-2012)

**Prevention**

Giardia can be prevented by practicing good hygiene.

- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water. If you are not able, then at least use a hand sanitizer.
- Wash hands after using the latrine.
- Wash hands before eating. Keep a bottle of hand sanitizer available for meal times.
- Do not drink untreated water from lakes, rivers or streams, especially those near beaver dams (hence the term “beaver fever.”)
- Do not let your water bottle sit in the bottom of the canoe. Just think of what you stepped in at the last portage. That dirt is likely in the bottom of your canoe. If your nalgene bottle touches the dirt in the bottom of your canoe, it may become contaminated.
- “Pour the Gorp” Don’t let your crew mates put their hands in a bag of food (like gorp or snacks). If you buddy did not wash his hands he may infect the food, which you in turn touch. Instead, POUR the food from the bag into your hand.
- Sterilize your water bottle. When boiling water at dinner time, submerge the mouth of your nalgene bottle in a pot with boiling water to help sterilize the threads and mouth of the water bottle.
- Be extra careful to not contaminate the out-flow end of a pump filter. The filter is only useful if the water going out does not get contaminated again. Adults should supervise the use of a filter until they are confident the youth use it properly.

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*Big Trout Lake. The veteran guide dipped his cup into the lake, and drank a satisfying draft of cool water, the same way he had done a hundred times before. This time he got sicker than a dog.*
Water Treatment comes in four forms. Sometimes they are combined.

1. **BOILING** is heat. It kills viruses and bacteria.
2. **FILTERING** is mechanical. It removes particulate and bacteria, but not viruses.
3. **IODINE** is chemical. It kills viruses and bacteria.
4. **UV Treatment** uses ultraviolet light. It kills viruses and bacteria.

All water treatment should be done under the supervision of an adult.

### Boiling water

“Boiling is the surest method to make water safe to drink and kill disease-causing microorganisms like Giardia lamblia and Cryptosporidium, which are frequently found in rivers and lakes (EPA Office of Water 816-F-06-027 Aug 2006).” It can be done at supper time. It is not as fast as using a filter or chemicals, but it is the “gold standard” for water purification.

Both the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recommend to heat your water to a rolling boil for one minute (at altitudes above one mile, boil for three minutes).

### Filters

Filters have pros and cons. Especially nice for murky water, they filter out particulate matter, making water much more palatable.

Filters do not kill viruses (which are reportedly rare in North America). You need to treat filtered water ALSO with chemicals to kill viruses. Filters tend to get plugged up and otherwise jam, and they sometimes they break. A crew may want to use two filters. If a filter is not used properly, you could still contaminate your water. Use coffee filters over intake end to help keep the filter from clogging.

The CDC recommends using a filter that has an absolute pore size of at least 1 micron, or one that has been NSF rated for “cyst removal.” Popular filters included *Pur*, *Katadyne* and *MSR Filters*.

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<th>Provided Treatment System</th>
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<td>Birchbark Expeditions supplies crews with an MSR Auto Flow water filtration system.</td>
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### Operation

First and most important is starting with the cleanest water possible. This usually means taking a large pot of collapsible bucket out away from shore to get your water supply. Some camp sites have rocky shorelines that allow dipping close to shore – use good judgment to source your water. Pour your dirty water into the filter bag, filling half-full, then roll the top of the bag a couple times and hang from a tree branch or ever-present nail in a tree, just above your head. Use the pinch valve to control the flow of water.

### Back-flushing

Highly efficient and gravity fed, the system will easily filter plenty of water for your crew. However, it will require daily back-flushing (pushing clean water backwards through the filter element) using a large syringe, included in the system. It’s also a good idea to back-flush the system before the trek with the potable water found in basecamp. The procedure will be demonstrated during shakedown.

### Air in the Lines

Gravity-fed systems are susceptible to air being caught in the lines. To avoid getting air in the lines, you should prevent the system running completely dry. Your guide will demonstrate how to purge the lines of air and restore flow.
Backup System
Birchbark Expeditions also supplies each crew with a Sawyer Squeeze Water system as back-up. The Sawyer system is ideal for purifying water when out on the water or when the gravity-fed system would be impractical.

Operation
As with the MSR system, start with the cleanest water possible, filling the bag with water away from shore. Screw on the filter assemble, checking that the rubber washer is inside the filter inlet and hand-tighten. Open the outlet valve and squeeze the bag to force water through the filter. Note that the first use of the filter will incur significant force to “wet” the filter and force the air out of the system. Subsequent uses will be much easier than the first – don’t get frustrated if the filter is very slow at the start.

Interchangeable Parts
Note that parts can be Sawyer system can interchanged with the MSR system, allowing filtering to continue in cases where the MSR system is clogged.

BYOF? (Bring Your Own Filter)
Some crews have water filters they know and trust and prefer to use their own systems on their Birchbark Expedition. Just a few simple rules for BYOF:

1. The system must be able to purify sufficient water for the entire crew for an entire week.
2. The crew should have spare parts or a spare system in case of a failure of the primary system.
3. All members of the crew should have knowledge of the system operation.
4. The system operation should be reviewed with your guide before departure, checking for proper operation.
5. Check your crew for allergies with chemical systems – Iodine is often the active ingredient in many systems.

Water Treatment
Stay Healthy!

Veteran canoe trippers are usually very clean. They know what can happen if they become ill on a canoe trip in the wilderness. Sanitation becomes very important to them. Here are a few tips.

The Northwoods Bath

Nothing is quite so invigorating as a Northwoods Bath. Good trippers do not bathe directly in the lake, because they do not want to contaminate the water. Instead, fill the large pot with water and seek a location away from shore. While wearing your swimsuit, have your buddy dump the water over your head! Lather up with biodegradable soap. Then have him douse you again. It’s cold, but you get to return the favor to your buddy as he washes up!

Washing Dishes

2. “Dry clean,” your dishes with part of a paper towel, or leaves. Then burn the towel. This will enable you to use less water to wash your dishes.
3. Dish Water. Put part of the boiling water into the mid-size 4-quart pot, with some biodegradable camp suds. Add some cold water to the pot to make it warm, but not boiling.
4. Rinse Water. Put the balance of the boiling water into the 8-quart pot. Add a sanitizing agent. Leave this water very hot. Use the hot pot tongs or sticks to retrieve your dishes, so you do not burn your hands.
5. Let the dishes air dry.

Garbage Disposal

Please do not put food into the latrines. That practice will attract bears, skunks and other animals. Instead, (a) only cook what you can eat, to minimize extra food; (b) pack out excess food, until you can build a hot fire to burn it completely; (c) after the fire is completely out, CAREFULLY test it with your bear hand, then (d) pick out all unburned bags, foil shards, and unburned food. Pack these in your trash bag, to be disposed of at base camp.

Wash your hands with soap and water before dinner. Your mother is right.

Keeping Clean

Campsite Latrines

Algonquin Interior latrines are located about thirty yards from the campsites. They are box latrines. The cover opens up to provide privacy for the camper. Please use the latrines whenever they are available. It maintains the cleanliness of a campsite.

Cat Hole Latrines

Should nature call when you are away from a campsite, then go into the woods 200 feet (70 meters) from a water supply. With your heel, kick a hole into the duff or soil about 8 inches deep. After you have relieved yourself, place the toilet paper in the hole and fill the hole with the duff.

Feminine Hygiene

Feminine hygiene products should be disposed of in the box latrines, rather than in a cathole latrine.

IMPORTANT! Care for your Feet

Check your feet every day. Usually a good time is after the day’s paddle when you set up camp. That is the time to wash and dry your feet, and rinse out your socks. Toenails should be trimmed short, to help prevent splitting.

Do not walk around the campsite or go swimming barefoot. Sharp rocks, logs, broken glass, leeches and clam shells can inflict injury on your feet. A foot that has an open wound cannot heal properly on a canoe trip, being constantly wet from stepping in and out of the water. This can create a SERIOUS problem for you and for your crew members. For that reason, open toed shoes and sandals are not recommended; they often invite a split toenail, a jammed toe, or an unpleasant leech.

A favorite combination of our Guides is a thick pair of wool socks (even in July) covered by a sneaker or water shoe that has a good grip on the bottom. Guides do not generally wear boots, because they are not necessary in Algonquin. A good pair of sneakers or water shoes covers the toes and allows your foot to “feel” the ground, offering a more confident step in sloppy portage entrances.
**Kettle Pack Items issued by Birchbark Expeditions**

### STOVE GRATE 12” x 20”
(slips in behind gear)

### NYLON TARP 12’ x 12’

### Plastic Water Carrier

### ROPE #1
50’ 5/16” Nylon

### ROPE #2
50’ 5/16” Nylon

### STOVE #1
- 8-Quart Pot
- 4-Quart Pot with lid
- 2-Quart Pot with lid
- Large Frying Pan (lid)
- Small Frying Pan
- Metal Plates

### STOVE #2
- Coleman Dual Fuel (Packed inside #10 tin cans)

### STOVE #3
- Coleman Dual Fuel (Packed inside #10 tin cans)

### STOVE #4
- Coleman Dual Fuel (Packed inside #10 tin cans)

### COOK KIT
- Spatula
- Spoon
- Ladle
- Hot Pot Tongs
- Rubber Gloves
- Nylon Scrubbie
- Camp Suds

### CHEF KIT
- Spatula
- Large Spoon
- Ladle
- 8-ounce measuring cup
- Hot Pot Tongs
- Rubber Gloves-pair
- Nylon Scrubbies
- Camp Suds-bottle

### Fuel Bottles
- 1 21” Folding Saw
- 3 45 Gallon Contractor Bags

### Water Purification Tablets
- 1 Bottle Water Purifying Tablets

### Other Crew Equipment issued by Birchbark Expeditions
- 17’ Old Town Penobsct tripping canoes
- Paddles
- Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs)
- Builer
- Sponge
- Two (2) 20-foot painters per canoe
- Eureka 3-man Timberline tents

### TOTAL WEIGHT ≥ 30 LBS

**Crew should bring:**
- 200’ nylon cord (for tarp pitching)
- 1 Pair Fire Gloves
- Water Filters (optional)
  - Water Carrier (optional)
- Hudson Bay Ax (optional)

**STOVES**
- 2 Coleman Dual Fuel Stoves
- 2 #10 Tin Cans
  - To protect stoves
- 2 Metal Plates
  - Use as lids for tin cans
- 1 12” x 20” Stove Grate
  - Important for stabilizing pots
- 4 Fuel Bottles-aluminum
  - 1 for each day on the trail
- 1 Fuel Filter

**LOW TECH STOVE ALTERNATIVE**
- 2 Kelly Kettles
  - 1 Kelly Kettle replaces 1 Coleman stove and 2 fuel bottles

**TARP**
- 1 12’ x 12’ Dining Fly
- 8 Stakes

**BEAR BAG**
- 2 50’ Lengths of 5/16” Rope
- 3 5/16” pulleys
- 1 Carabiner

**COOK KIT**
- 1 8-Quart Pot and Lid
- 1 4-Quart Pot and Lid
- 1 2-Quart Pot and Lid
- 1 Small Frying Pan
  - Good for setting desserts

**CHEF KIT**
- 1 Spatula
- 1 Large Spoon
- 1 Ladle
- 1 8-ounce measuring cup
- 1 Hot Pot Tongs
- 1 Rubber Gloves-pair
- 2 Nylon Scrubbies
- 1 Camp Suds-bottle

**OTHER**
- 3 45 Gallon Contractor Bags
  - Use 1 to line Kettle Pack;
  - Use 2 to line two Food Packs
Hanging The Bear Bag

Each crew is issued three pulleys and two 50-foot shanks of 5/16" nylon rope. Guide Carl Skompsinski perfected a method that enables even a small person to hoist the food packs high in the air.

1. Throw a weighted 50’ nylon cord over a limb that is at least twelve feet above the ground. Use a nylon cord, because it is lighter and easier to throw than the 5/16” rope.
2. ROPE 1. Tie the first shank of 5/16” of rope to the cord with a sheet bend. Then pull the cord and rope over the limb. Now untie the cord and put it away; you no longer need it.
3. Tie two pulleys to ROPE 1 and keep those pulleys down by the pack for now.
4. Tie the third pulley directly to the pack with a one-foot length of rope.
5. ROPE 2. Tie the second rope to the pack, lace it through one of the upper pulleys, down through the pack pulley, and back up through the second upper pulley.
6. With the pack on the ground, pull ROPE 1 up to the limb, and tie off the rope. This will become a stationary rope.
7. When it is time to hoist the bear bag, pull on ROPE 2, hoisting the bear bag. Tie it off.

Mechanical Advantage

One pulley – changes direction of the force.
Two pulleys – cut the force to ½ (and doubles the distance the rope has to be pulled).
Three pulleys – cut the force to 1/3 (and triples the distance the rope has to be pulled).
Non-Resident Fishing Licenses

Anyone who lives outside of Canada is considered a non-resident for the purposes of fishing license regulations. Most non-residents need a fishing license to fish in Ontario. Specifically:

- **Non-residents 18 years of age and over** must purchase an *Outdoors Card* and a *Fishing Licence*. Both are purchased at the same time. The Outdoors Card is good for 3 years, and the licence is good for 8 days or 1 year.
- **Non-residents under 18 years of age** may fish without a license if accompanied by an adult who has a valid Ontario fishing license. Any fish caught are part of the catch and possession limit of the adult who holds the license. As another option, non-residents under 18 years may purchase a license and any fish caught apply to the catch and possession limits of that license.

Types of Licenses

- **Non-Resident Sport Fishing Licence Tag** is for anglers who wish to have full catch and possession fishing privileges. The limits are indicated on the Division/Species Table with an “S.”

Note: Canadians use the British spelling: licence.

- **Non-Resident Conservation Fishing License** is ideal for the angler who wishes to live release the majority of the fish caught, or in the case of certain species (muskellunge, Atlantic salmon, sturgeon and aurora trout), all of the fish caught. Catch and possession limits are specified on the Division/Species Table with a “C.”

Catch and Possession Limits

The catch limit is the number of fish you are allowed to catch and keep in one day. The possession limit is the number you are allowed to have in your possession on hand, in cold storage, in transit, etc. Possession limits are the same as one day’s catch limit except where otherwise specified. For some species there are no limits. In these cases no reference will be made to a limit in the fishing summary. If you catch a fish after reaching the daily catch or possession limit for that species, the fish must be released immediately back to the water. There are also size limits. The use of live bait is prohibited in Algonquin Park.

Additional Information

You can find out more from the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources booklet entitled *Recreational Fishing Regulations Summary* and from the website: [www.mnr.gov.on.ca](http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca) or call: 1-800-387-7011.

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Go deep for lake trout in the summer.
Canoe Tripping Ethics

As more and more people enjoy the outdoors, we must be careful not to “love it to death.” Do your best to put into practices the following:

1. Plan Ahead and Prepare

Plan your travel so as to minimize damage to natural and cultural resources you find along the way, things like a loon nesting site, an Indian pictograph, an old logging machine on one of the portage trails.

2. Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces

Sometimes you’ll find a campsite that is closed to camping, usually in heavily used lakes; the Park management has determined that the site needs some years to recover. Algonquin terrain often involves a thin layer of “duff,” old leaves, pine needles and organic material on top of bedrock. As such, the land and islands you camp on may have a fragile soil covering. Blueberry bushes and alders help to prevent erosion of the thin soil. Whenever you can, go gentle on the earth so the next generation of campers will also be able to enjoy Algonquin.

3. Dispose of Waste Properly

Simply put: “If you pack it in, dispose of it properly, or pack it out.” We’ll cover sanitation in greater detail in the section marked “Wilderness Camping Tips.” The Algonquin can and bottle ban was implemented many years ago. The happy result is that few of Algonquin’s campsites are littered today, saving thousands of dollars in cleanup costs, and preserving the beauty of the area for all campers.

4. Leave What You Find

Allow others a sense of discovery, and preserve the past. Some plants are endangered, some historical artifacts enhance the enjoyment of a trip for everyone. Do your part to continue the legacy for others who follow.

5. Minimize Campfire Impacts

Please use the campfire rings you will find in most of the Interior campsites. The rings lessen the damage to the surrounding ground cover. They also helps insure that you do not unwittingly start a duff fire, which is created when a fire burns along a root system of the trees in the heavy peaty soil. All Birchbark Expeditions crews are supplied with two gas stoves. Convenient to use, they are easy on the wood supply, particularly in heavily used campsites.

6. Respect Wildlife

Perhaps you will come across a cow moose and calf feeding in the shallow waters of a marsh. Quite likely you will be startled by a loon popping up out of the water after a long dive for food. If you are lucky, you may be able to witness the “dance of the loons” on a lonely lake. Maybe you’ll even see a ground squirrel swimming across a lake. In the numerous streams of Algonquin you’ll have a good chance of spotting a beaver near his lodge. Give wildlife a wide berth and don’t scare them needlessly. If you paddle quietly, especially in the morning, you’ll have a greater chance of observing the forest and waterway dwellers.

7. Be Considerate of Other Visitors

Other canoe trippers come to Algonquin for the same reasons you do: to get away from the bustle of city living, and to drink deep draughts of unspoiled nature. Considerate trippers don’t spoil the experience for others; and do their best to keep noise down and respect others’ privacy. Don’t forget, you are also an ambassador for Birchbark Expeditions, and your efforts will keep our good name in high esteem.

8. Do a Good Turn

Offer to help when you see someone in need. Swing into action when another tripper is in distress. It builds the confraternity of wilderness outdoorsmen and women, and—who knows—someday you may be the one who needs a hand.

Leave No Trace

C

Take only pictures; leave only footprints.
Wilderness Canoe Trips require extra care when you go swimming. If you abide by the principles of the Safe Swim Defense, you should be able to enjoy the exhilarating experience of swimming in the lakes of the northwoods.

1. Qualified Supervision
   An adult, over age 21, needs to supervise all swimming activity. Lack of proper supervision is one of the leading causes of aquatics mishaps. Dashing off to the swimming hole with a couple of friends is appealing to boys, but it is also a prescription for disaster. The better way: use adult supervision.

2. Physical Fitness
   The adult in charge should know about any conditions that may affect a person while he is in the water. Say you have someone who has EPILEPSY in the group…you should know what action to take in the event of a seizure. Also, be aware of potential danger signs. HEART CONDITIONS may exhibit shortness of breath, pain in the chest, arm or jaw; general weakness, nausea, pallid skin. DIABETIC REACTIONS may include disorientation, incoherent speech. ASTHMA may cause wheezing, shortness of breath and panic. ALLERGIES can be signalled by shortness of breath and swelling of face or limbs.

3. Safe Swim Area
   It is difficult to find a perfect swimming area on a canoe trip. Still, you can go for a swim if you check the area carefully before swimming. Be particularly careful of logs, sharp rocks and fresh water mussel shells, which can cut your feet. DIVING – The Boy Scouts of America recommends no diving on a canoe trip. Jumping should be limited to heights of no more than 5 feet. WATER CLARITY should be 7 feet deep for jumping. Activity in turbid water, where a 12 inch white disk at a depth of 3 feet is not visible from above the surface, must be limited to surface swimming only. Clear water exists when a

4. Lifeguards
   On a troop canoe trip, you can swim without a BSA lifeguard as long as you maintain tight adult supervision, everyone wears shoes and personal flotation devices (PFDs), you have swimmers ready to assist. EQUIPMENT – A 50- or 100-foot shank of rope is advisable to have nearby. It is a good idea to have canoes available, should you have need of it.

5. Lookout
   The lookout does not need to be a swimmer. He does need to keep a sharp eye out on all the swimming, to alert the lifeguard of any problems.

6. Ability Groups
   On a canoe trip, everyone must be a swimmer. This requirement makes maintaining a safe swim session that much easier in a wilderness setting.

7. Buddy System
   Make a point to always use the buddy system. Get a sudden cramp in your leg while swimming, and you’ll be glad your buddy is around to help you. You can keep an eye on each other, and have more fun.

8. Discipline
   Rules should be fair, simple and applicable to all, even adults. Qualified Supervision and Discipline are the first and last elements of the Safe Swim Defense: all the other points depend upon them.

It is very difficult—and dangerous—to perform a swimming rescue. Be smart; swim safe. And make your buddy swim safe, too.
Canoe Trips require a special focus on safety

The following principles—developed by the Boy Scouts of America through years of experience—will help you conduct a trip that is both fun and safe.

1. Qualified Supervision

Your canoe trip requires supervision by a mature and conscientious adult age 21 or older—usually your unit leader. There is a minimum of two adults for any one group. At least one adult must complete BSA Safety Afloat and Safe Swim Defense training and rescue training for canoes (which we do the first day at Base Camp, weather permitting), and must be trained in CPR. It is strongly recommended that all units have at least one adult or older youth member currently certified as a BSA Lifeguard to assist in the planning and conducting of all activity afloat. Red Cross Wilderness First Aid is also recommended.

2. Physical Fitness

All participants must be physically fit enough to participate in an Algonquin canoe trip, and they must follow any special precautions required by physical limitations.

3. Swimming Ability

For Birchbark Expeditions, all participants must be classified as BSA Swimmers—the 100 yards test. This is necessary because of the remoteness of your trip and because of the lakes and rivers upon which you will be traveling.

4. Personal Floatation Devices (PFD)

A properly fitted PFD must be worn while on the water canoeing, going for a paddle after camp is set up, and while swimming. This precaution greatly enhances the safety of your canoe trip.

5. Buddy System

While on your trip, always swim with a buddy; and always canoe with a buddy canoe. Today, you may rescue your buddy; tomorrow your buddy may rescue you!

6. Skill Proficiency

When you go on a canoe trip, you should be sufficiently trained so you know how to use a canoe safely. That is the purpose of the canoe practice at Base Camp, and one of the reasons we have a Guide accompany your crew for the whole trip. PLEASE NOTE: ALGONQUIN PARK TRIPS DO NOT INVOLVE WHITEWATER CANOEING OR RUNNING RAPIDS. That type of trip requires special, additional, and intensive training.

7. Planning

By the time your crew puts their paddles in the water, you will have developed a Float Plan, which identifies the waterways you will be paddling. Someone at home, as well at the Birchbark Expeditions Staff should know your intended location at all times. You will want to do your best to anticipate emergencies and be prepared at all times.

8. Equipment

Each person wears a PFD and has a paddle. Each canoe has a spare paddle, a bailer and a sponge, and a 20-foot rope, called a painter, both at the bow and stern of the canoe.

9. Discipline

We want to keep the fun from being interrupted by tragedy. Rules are meant to be reasonable and fair, and apply to both youth and adults. If you follow them carefully, you should have an enjoyable voyage!
To continue to protect participants
the BSA has listed 16 points which embody good judgment and common sense:

1. Qualified Supervision
   The supervisor should be sufficiently trained, experienced and skilled in the activity to be confident of his/her ability to lead, teach and respond effectively in the event of an emergency.

2. Physical Fitness
   Neither youth nor adults should participate in activity for which they are unfit. To do so would place both the individual and others at risk.

3. Buddy System
   It is always best to have at least one other person with you and aware at all times as to your circumstances and what you are doing in any outdoor or strenuous activity. Buddy portagers, buddy canoes.

4. Safe Area or Course
   Determine that the course or area is well-suited and free of hazards.

5. Equipment Selection and Maintenance
   Equipment should suit the participant and the activity and include appropriate safety features. It should be checked and properly maintained.

6. Personal Safety Equipment
   Every participant should have—and wear—appropriate safety equipment, and should be dressed for the circumstances.

7. Safety Procedures and Policies
   For most activities there are common sense procedures and standards that should be observed.

8. Skill Level Limits
   Supervisors must recognize minimum skill level requirement for any activity, and be sure that none are put at risk by attempting activity beyond their ability.

9. Weather Check
   Weather variables and the appropriate response should be understood and anticipated.

10. Planning
    Good planning minimizes risks and also anticipates contingencies that may require emergency response or a change of plan.

11. Communications
    Communicate effectively with participants; and also anticipate need and methods of emergency communications.

12. Permit and Notices
    Appropriate permits and notifications should be directed to parents, Council, law enforcement, and others as needed.

13. First Aid Resources
    Training and first aid supplies adequate for the specific activity should be available.

14. Applicable Laws
    BSA policy generally exceed legal mandates; but the supervisor should ensure compliance with statutes.

15. CPR Resource
    The BSA strongly recommends that a CPR-trained person be part of the leadership for any BSA program, and especially for one involving strenuous physical exercise and remote locations.

16. Discipline
    No supervisor is effective if he or she cannot control the activity and the individual participants. Youth must respect their leader and follow his or her direction.

Wear a belt…and suspenders.
Driving a vehicle does not mix with
Drugs and Alcohol, Tailgating, or Fatigue

Drugs and Alcohol
- Drugs and Alcohol are the #1 killer of Teens
- What senses do you use to control your car?
- When you use drugs or drink
  - Vision impaired
  - Loss of concentration
  - Slower reaction time

Alcohol
- For a person 140 to 150 lbs
- Less than 2 ounces can make you DWI / DUI
- Before you drink and drive think of:
  - Court Costs
  - Loss of Insurance
  - Felony Conviction
  - Permanent Record
  - Damage to Reputation
  - INJURY TO INNOCENT PARTIES

Fatigue
- Can’t stop yawning?
- Can’t remember the last few miles?
- Can’t keep eyes open?

You are fatigued. Here is what happens:
- Your mind wanders
- You’re drifting out of your lane
- You’re jerking the wheel to stay on course

Solution to Fatigue
1. Drive Rested
2. Drive in daylight
3. Take breaks every 75 – 100 miles
4. Have a “co-pilot” sitting next to you.

Tailgating
- 30% of Collisions are Rear End
- 2 Second Rule (it takes 2 seconds to react)
- Stay 2 seconds behind the car ahead of you

60 mph = 90 feet per second
2 seconds = 180 feet = length of an airplane
BEFORE YOU BEGIN TO STOP

When Driving:
- Avoid Drugs and Alcohol
- Avoid Tailgating
- Avoid Fatigue

Smart Choices

Think of consequences.
**Let’s Get Ready!**

Those who have canoed the lakes of Algonquin for many years, will tell you that they derive great pleasure in preparing for the next trip. It is a chance to evaluate what worked on the last trip and what should be changed on this next trip, pore over maps to find a new and exciting canoe route, and hone up on tripping and camping skills, and perhaps buy a new piece of equipment. You should look on this preparation time as a great part of your trip. So let’s begin!

**Who is Eligible?**

Birchbark Expeditions offers canoe trips designed specifically for older Scouts and Venturers and their adult leaders. To participate you must (1) be at least 13 years old by September 1st of the year of your trip, (2) be a First Class Scout—if you are a Boy Scout, (3) be a registered member of the Boy Scouts of America as a youth or adult, and (4) be classified as a swimmer prior to arrival at base camp.

**Parental Permission**

If you are under age 18, you will need to get your parent or guardian to give their permission for you to attend. Be sure to have them (1) complete the Parental Informed Consent and Release Form included in this package. The form needs to be signed by them in the presence of a Notary Public, who will also sign the form. This form gives permission for you to participate in Birchbark Expeditions, and permission to cross the Canadian border with your Scout leader. It also gives consent for emergency medical treatment should you need it, and it gives Birchbark Expeditions permission to use your photograph or image in future promotions.

**Medical Exams**

Because of the sometimes intense physical nature of a canoe trip, and because you may be in a remote area for part of your trip, it is important to get checked out by your doctor before your trip. Since this is an advanced adventure, you will need a special medical form.

ALL participants—both youth and adult—MUST bring a completely filled out **ANNUAL HEALTH AND MEDICAL RECORD - Parts A, B and C**, completed within 12 months of your trip. The 4-page form can be downloaded from the National BSA website: [www.scouting.org](http://www.scouting.org) > Information Center > Scouting Forms. Or you can obtain one from your leader.

**Adult Leadership**

A minimum of two adults (one of whom must be at least 21 years of age) is required for each crew. If you are coming with a co-ed Venture Crew, then the crew must have both male and female leaders who are least 21 years old.

**CPR, Youth Protection, Safety Afloat, Safe Swim Defense**

Remember, that Birchbark Expeditions canoe trips can take you into remote areas, away from roads, telephones and formal swimming areas. To prepare for your adventure, at least one leader must have completed training in **Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), Youth Protection, Safe Swim Defense and Safety Afloat**.

This is a good time for as many of your crew members to qualify in these areas. The more people trained, the greater the safety margin on your trip. It makes you better prepared, and that is what the Scout Motto encourages us to do.

**Wilderness First Aid**

Although it is not required, we strongly encourage one or more of your troop or crew to complete a **Wilderness First Aid** course offered by the American Red Cross. This excellent course trains you in first aid as you will need to know it when help is **not** just a phone call away…when help is delayed.
Swimming is a great life-long sport. It is close to a perfect exercise.

Swim Test

Everyone needs to qualify as a swimmer prior to going on a Birchbark Expeditions trip. It makes sense, because you will be on the water for many hours each day, and knowing how to swim will make you more confident on the lakes and rivers of Algonquin.

To qualify as a swimmer, you must be able to swim 100 yards (75 yards any forward stroke, and 25 yards in a resting backstroke) and to float motionless for one minute.

Non-swimmers and beginners cannot participate in a wilderness canoe trip. Your leader will complete the Crew Roster and Swim Test Certification form prior to your trip, signed by a BSA lifeguard. If you are not a swimmer, be sure to talk to your leader. He or she may be able to arrange a time where you can build up your swimming skills to where you can become a swimmer. Consider the requirement as an incentive to become a stronger swimmer. Swimming is a superb life-long exercise.

BSA Lifeguard

BSA Lifeguard training is strongly recommended for at least one member of your unit. Why not get a group of your buddies together and go swimming at a community pool. And when you are able, qualify for BSA Lifeguard. You’ll be glad you did.

Swimming Precautions in Algonquin

Algonquin is a remote wilderness area. Two unique safety precautions are necessary while swimming on Birchbark Expeditions canoe trips. Adults and youth should abide by these rules:

1. Wear water shoes while swimming. A cut on your foot from a sharp rock, a mussel shell or a log can abruptly end your trip. Wearing shoes—even while swimming—is the best way to keep your feet protected.

2. Wear your PFD while swimming. Because the lakes at your campsite may be unfamiliar to you, and because there is no established camp waterfront area, the PFD adds a tremendous safety measure to your unit swim.

Swimming at Pen Lake. The water was warm and the Scouts used the buddy system. A lifeguard in a canoe was close by. Since there were three swimming, the buddies “tripled-up.” Use principles of Safe Swim Defense and have a good time. Troop 849 - 2004.
Physical Conditioning

During a typical Algonquin day your body will get a good workout. You will be stooping low to get in and out of your tent, and to load and unload your packs. You will be lifting gear and food packs that may weigh over fifty pounds. You will be walking in the water, perhaps in mud or on rocks, carrying packs to your canoe to load it, and reversing the procedure at the beginning of the next portage. If you are able to do so, you may be carrying a sixty-seven pound canoe, plus paddles and a fanny pack, over a rough northwoods portage. And most certainly, you will be carrying a fifty pound pack over that same portage. And don’t forget…you will be paddling mile after mile on all sorts of water—small lakes, large windswept lakes, and meandering streams.

Canoe tripping puts a varied strain on your body, sometimes working muscles that haven’t been used in a while. Sometimes youth have not been physically active, and the activities of a canoe trip will be new to them. Sometimes adults have been “sitting behind the desk” for too long, and their once strong muscles have lost strength because of lack of steady use. Whatever shape you are in, let your upcoming trip be the impetus to get yourself into top physical condition. The first step is to check with your physician before starting any physical fitness program. Why not start today!

Stretching

Stretching exercises will help you make your body limber for the upcoming week-long workout. Start today, so your muscles will have a full range of motion by the time your trip begins. Stretching before exercise is more for injury protection. Stretching after you work out will focus more on long term flexibility. Walk a bit to warm up the muscles. Do long stretches; it takes 12 to 15 seconds for the muscle to completely relax during a stretch, so the real benefit come after those initial 15 seconds. Breathe and relax. The stretch should never hurt. On a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being excruciating pain) your stretches should always be at zero.

Muscle Building

Lifting a canoe or a pack is tough. Paddling a canoe for eight hours a day is hard on your shoulders. Push-ups and pull-ups are free exercises, and they work too. Do as many as you can, three times a week. It only takes a few minutes.

Weights. If you have some 10 and 20 pound weights, practice with them to build up important arm and shoulder muscles. Do three sets of 5 to 10 exercises. Use weights only three times a week, to give muscles time to rest and repair.

Situps and crunches work your torso muscles. Start by laying on your back. Bend your knees, keep feet flat on the floor, and place a small rolled towel under your back. Do as many crunches as possible in 60 seconds, three times a week.

Heart and Lungs

Stamina is important, particularly when you find yourself on a long paddle fighting a headwind. Cardio-vascular exercise is the best way to build your endurance. Swim. If you can’t get to a pool, then run. If your joints can’t handle running, then walk. The best is forty five minutes of cardio workout three times a week.

Targets

- Pushups……10 is good; 16 is better; 25 or more is best
- Pull-ups…… 2 is good; 5 is better; 10 or more is best
- Situps …….(Improve number of crunches you can do in 60 seconds)
- Mile run/walk..15 minutes is good; 10 minutes is better; under 7 minutes is best
- Swimming..100 yards is good; 250 yards is better; 500 yards is best.

When you exercise, measure your progress against yourself.
Regular Exercise

To enjoy your trip you will need to be in relatively good shape. You do not need not be a super athlete, and you do not need to devote hours a day to exercising. But do make a point to begin a life-long program of exercise three times a week. When you exercise, your body will respond well in many ways.

Stretching

A sudden jerk while unloading a pack from a canoe, or a slip on a wet portage trail can put sudden strain on your body. A muscle can be strained or pulled, particularly the back, knees and ankles. Pulling muscles is a concern especially for adults. Too many hours at the desk, combined with not enough stretching exercise leaves the muscles tightened. Work your body back into shape. It is well worth the time, physically and psychologically.

Blood Pressure

If you have significant elevated blood pressure, called hypertension (150/95) you should be treated before going on your Birchbark Expeditions trip, to reduce your blood pressure as close as possible to normal (135/85). You should continue on blood pressure medication while participating in the canoe trip. Hypertension can increase the risk of angina or stroke. You may be carrying heavy loads, and participate in bursts of energy—for example, when you are paddling on a large lake trying to buck a headwind, or when you are loading and unloading at the portage.

Height and Weight

If you exceed the following height and weight chart, you are probably at risk to develop health problems. Use your upcoming trip to motivate you to lose weight and get into shape. You’ll experience greater energy, less fatigue, and enjoy life more. And you will be able to canoe trip for many years to come.

If you fall within the limits below, you are more likely to have an enjoyable trip and avoid putting undue stress on your body.
**Personal Gear List**  
1 Week Canoe Trip  
Summer-Algonquin Park

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wear in the Canoe</th>
<th>Fanny/Thwart Pack</th>
<th>Wash Kit</th>
<th>Extra Clothing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hat with brim</td>
<td>Sunglasses w/ Sport Strap</td>
<td>(Share with buddy)</td>
<td>Dry Bag 10” x 18” for packing clothing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wicking T-Shirt</td>
<td>Small Note Book w/ pencil*</td>
<td></td>
<td>Long Pants (nylon blend)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light Long Sleeve Shirt (bugs,sun)</td>
<td>5 Energy Bars (1 per trail day)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Fleece Jacket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wicking Underwear</td>
<td>Medication* (give to leader)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Knit Cap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Pair Shorts (nylon)</td>
<td>Sunblock #30 or #45</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 Wicking T-Shirt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belt (nylon)</td>
<td>1/2 roll Toilet Paper*</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 Wicking Undershorts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wool Socks</td>
<td>Water bottle-1 quart (nalgene)</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 Bandana (also use for first aid)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watershoes – (closed toe sandals)</td>
<td>Rain Jacket (NO PONCHOS)</td>
<td></td>
<td>2-Good Pairs Wool Blend Socks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bandanna</td>
<td>Drinking Cup (12-ounce size)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Camp Shoes (pair of old sneakers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watch (optional)</td>
<td>Spoon and Bowl</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eyeglasses w/ Sport Strap</td>
<td>Pocket Knife</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grocery Bag for organizing clothes to wear on Day 1</td>
<td>Matches/Lighter*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chapstick</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Whistle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bug repellent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Head Net (optional)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Small map*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Camera (waterproof)*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extra battery for camera*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Headlamp (waterproof)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>…with extra Batteries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10’ piece of paracord</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* Protect these items from wetness with a sturdy zip-lock bag or other water-tight container.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sleeping**

- Sleeping Bag (Hollofil dries well) (Warm to 35 Degrees Fahrenheit)  
- Nylon Stuff Sack or Dry Bag - 10” x 18” for sleeping bag  
- Compression Sack is best  
- Sleeping Pad (super thin, 20 x 48”) ONLY for Adults with creaking bones

**Miscellaneous**

- Small bottle Camp Suds- (biodegrades)  
- Tooth Paste (sample size)  
- Desenex Powder  
- Hand Cream (sample size)  
- Comb or brush  
- Small Pack Towel-microfiber sports towel or “Sham-Wow”

**Travel / Night Before** (leave in car)

- Gym Bag for gear  
- Uniform (wear on Saturday)  
- Clothes for ride home  
- After-trek towel, shaving kit & toiletries  
- $40 cash for souvenirs, meals  
- Sharpie permanent marker

**DO NOT BRING**

- Aerosol Cans (danger of puncture)  
- Ponchos (dangerous in water)  
- Illegal Drugs  
- Alcohol  
- Firearms or Weapons

**YOUR CREW SHOULD BRING:**

First Aid Kit, 2 compasses, 1 pair gloves, 200 feet of Nylon Parachute Cord, Extra Zip-lock Bags, Indelible Marker, duct tape, Extra heavy duty 39 gal plastic bags, Hudson Bay axe (optional).
The Duluth Pack

The favorite pack of canoe trippers is named for the city in Minnesota where it was first manufactured. A *Duluth Pack* pack is made large, to carry lots of gear. It has soft sides to conform to the hull of your canoe; and it is frameless so it won’t puncture the canoe body. Birchbark Expeditions uses a high quality nylon version of the famous Duluth pack.

Space Limitation

The Voyageurs of old were limited to a small pack of personal items, the size of a modern day airline carry-on case. Space in the canoe was needed for hauling trade goods. If a man was taller than five feet six inches, he could not become a Voyageur. His legs took up too much space! Today, tall Scouts are welcome on trips, but gear still must pass the size test.

10” by 18”

Bring two stuff sacks, each one 10” x 18” or less. All your belongings should fit into those two sacks. Compression sacks are very helpful for packing.

Stuff Sack #1 - Waterproofing Your Sleeping Bag

Put your sleeping bag in two plastic garbage bags, squeeze the air out, and seal. Then put the garbage bags in a nylon stuff bag to protect from puncture. 39-gallon lawn and leaf bags seem to work just right.

Stuff Sack #2 - Waterproofing your Clothing

To keep your gear dry follow this foolproof method:
1. Seal all clothing in plastic bags. shirts, dry shoes, etc. Squeeze out all air. Zip-lock bags work well.
2. Put all these bags inside a heavy duty trash bag.
3. Put the trash bag inside a stuff sack. The stuff sack protects the plastic bag from puncture.
4. Put the stuff sack inside your Duluth Pack.

Small Fanny Pack

Bring one small fanny pack for your water bottle, sun glasses, raincoat and sundries. The loaded fanny pack should weigh just a few pounds, because you will carry it with a Duluth Pack on the portage. Keep your camera sealed in two plastic bags.

Watch out for “Dangles”

All items should be packed inside your packs. Tying items onto the outside of a pack make it difficult to load and unload your equipment in the canoe and may damage the equipment.

Hold a personal equipment shakedown.

A few days before your canoe trip, lay out personal equipment so everything can be seen at once. Check against checklist. Make sure you have all the essential items; there is no store on the trail. Remember that extra unnecessary items carried by one person put an additional burden on everyone else.

Travel Clothes

In one bag place your canoe trip gear. A fabric grocery bag works well for this. In a separate gym bag pack your travel-home clothes. This minimizes opening and closing your canoe pack prior to the trip. Bring extra plastic bags. Heavy duty bags are best.

Packing the Duluth Pack for Three (3) Persons.

Approximate weight: 50 pounds. 30"W by 36"H. Stuff Sacks or Dry Bags for personal gear and sleeping bags each measure 10” x 18” or less.
Day 1…Sainte-Marie

Saturday, your first day starts with a paddle in a ten-man Voyageur canoe through Wye Marsh. When you disembark you will step into the French fort and mission called *Sainte-Marie Among the Hurons*. You’ll spend the day there immersed in the seventeenth century struggle for the continent. All meals are provided in the beautiful *Restaurant Sainte-Marie*. Church services are held Saturday night, followed by a final gear shakedown.

Day 2…Base Camp

On Sunday crews travel to Algonquin Provincial Park. On the way in, you can stop in the bustling town of Huntsville for last minute items, visit one of several old-time canoe outfitters to “get in the mood,” and lunch at the magnificent *Algonquin Nature Centre* (because of the different travel schedules among the crews, this lunch is on your own).

Then, on to Birchbark Expeditions Base Camp which is situated in the Whitefish Lake campground, conveniently located on Highway 60 between the Canoe Lake Portage Store and the Algonquin Visitor Center. The lake provides an ideal sheltered location to hold our pre-trip canoe training. Our opening and closing campfires are held here. And on Sunday at Base Camp you will meet your Guide, who will stay with your crew for the entire week.

Days 3 through 7…The Interior

At last! Early Monday morning crews leave Base Camp for five days of canoeing in what is called *The Interior*. Motor boats are banned beyond the first access lakes, so on Monday you will be in a remote wilderness section of the park. There are literally hundreds of lakes in Algonquin, and dozens of canoe routes. We will custom design a trip to your crew’s desires and experience levels. Get ready for unsurpassed canoe tripping! Our Guides are specially trained to help you become an expert canoe tripper, the hallmark of which is the “one-trip portage.” Through the use of careful packing technique, and specialty lightweight equipment, most crews traverse the often rugged portages in one trip.

Day 7…Closing Campfire

Sometime on Friday you will arrive back at Base Camp. You’ll have a chance to take a hot shower in new, modern shower houses, do a little souvenir shopping, eat a good meal, and participate in the “Baptême du Voyageur” at the closing campfire, when you receive your Birchbark Expeditions patch.

Day 8…Au Revoir!

On Saturday, after an early breakfast crews head home. Safe voyaging!
Our Guides make the Program

Algonquin Park canoe trips are memorable because of the incredible wilderness you paddle through, because of the moose, beavers, otters, eagles and loons you may meet along the way, and because you share these good times with your buddies. There is another bonus—a great bonus—in store for you: the Birchbark Expeditions Guide Staff.

Your Guides are well seasoned woodsmen

Your Birchbark Expeditions Guide has canoe tripped in Algonquin for many years. He knows camping and canoeing intimately, and is a great resource for many of the things you may need advice on: pitching tents so they stay dry in a downpour, building fires in the rain, paddling on windy lakes, navigating through island studded waterways, finding your way through Grassy Bay marsh.

Your Guide is well skilled in canoeing, and can give you tips to make paddling a pleasure. He can teach you how to keep your food and gear safe from the critters. He may know a lot about the history of the area and share it with you. Most of all, your Guide is a woodsman, who can teach you some of his “tricks of the trade,” and who can unlock some of nature’s secrets. Our Guides enjoy living in the woods, so they can share ways with you to learn the ways of the woods, things you can’t get in a book.

All Birchbark Expeditions Guides have been individually selected for canoe tripping skills, for ability to work with young people, and especially for their sound judgement. They are friendly, and many of them have been Scoutmasters themselves.

Your Guide stays with you for your whole trip

Our program is set up so that, barring an emergency or an unexpected event, your Guide will stay with your crew for your whole trip.

Your Adult and Crew Leaders run your show

The Guide does not replace your adult leader. Unless it is a matter of safety or program regulations, your Scoutmaster or Crew Advisor is the final authority on your canoe trip. You’ll probably find that the Guide and adult leader get along just fine, because they both are looking out for the safety of everyone. Your Adult Leader knows the crew members the best, and the Guide knows canoe tripping. That makes for a great combination!
Training for everyone – Youth and Adults!

You won’t want to miss the fun-filled and action-packed training day planned for you. Emphasis is on learning by doing. This is a perfect time to learn essential skills you’ll use on your Birchbark Expeditions trip.

Location and Time

For crews within driving distance the Shakedown is generally held the second Saturday of June. Check for details.
9:00 am to 4:00 pm
Camp Scouthaven
Crystal Lake, Arcade, NY 14009
(585) 492-4429

Please Bring:

- **Pack**, completely packed. We will be throwing it into the lake for a waterproofing test.
- **Rope** – 8 foot shank for knot tying.
- **Medical Exam** – be sure parents and doctor sign it.
- **Swim suit and Water Shoes** – Your shoes will get wet. An old pair of sneakers is fine.
- **Change of clothes** – No swimming or swamping is planned, but bring them just in case.
- **Lunch**.
- **A hearty snack** – you’ll work up an appetite.

Paddling Techniques

In the canoe and on the lake, you will have two sessions of paddle instruction by experts.

Portaging

Carrying a canoe over a forest trail can be difficult. You’ll learn our time tested methods to portage safely and quickly. This is a new session for most trippers.

Knot Tying

Learn the 4 ½ voyageur knots. Practice them until you can tie them behind your back & blindfolded. 1-square knot, 2-sheet bend, 3-taut line hitch, 4-bowline around your waist, 4 ½-bowline around a tree.

Bear Bag

You’ll practice the best method we know of hanging food to keep it away from critters. The “Skompinski Pulley” is an engineering marvel designed by one of our Guides.

Dunk Test

Make sure your gear is waterproofed according to the instructions in the section on Hints on Packing Gear. You will throw it into the lake for one hour to see how well you did.

Map and Compass

Navigating in the wilderness requires that you know how to use a map and compass well.

Fires

Tips on using liquid fues and on lighting wood fires.

Swamping

No swamping of canoes is planned for this session. You will get a chance to practice canoe rescue at Algonquin. However, DO bring water shoes for canoeing.

Safety Afloat, Safe Swim Defense

If you know and abide by these time-tested safety measures, you should have an enjoyable canoe trip.
In 1640 twenty percent of the population of New France lived at Sainte-Marie – in peace with their Huron brothers.

**Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10:30 am</td>
<td>Check-in at Wye Marsh Nature Reserve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30 am</td>
<td>Optional Tour of the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30 pm</td>
<td>Lunch at Restaurant Ste. Marie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30 pm</td>
<td>Living History Program at Ste. Marie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:00 pm</td>
<td>Dinner at Restaurant Sainte-Marie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00 pm</td>
<td>Evening Program at Sainte-Marie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:30 pm</td>
<td>Mass at Martyrs Shrine(Catholics)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scouts Own (other denominations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00 pm</td>
<td>Final Gear Shakedown at Wye Marsh Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00 pm</td>
<td>Lights out!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Canal and French buildings at fortified Sainte-Marie**

**Saturday starts early.**

You’ll leave the United States early in the morning. At about 7:00 am you will cross the bridge to Canada for the 3½ hour drive to historic *Sainte-Marie*. The program starts at *Wye Marsh Nature Reserve* where you can to hike through a transition forest marsh.

**Meals**

Your first meal is lunch, in the beautiful *Restaurant Sainte-Marie*, decorated as a seventeenth century grand room. Usually Saturday’s dinner and Sunday’s breakfast are also served in the restaurant.

**Historical Program**

After lunch, you will walk through the gate and enter the seventeenth century French and Huron mission of Sainte-Marie. Get ready to step into history.

**Religious Services**

After the evening program at the Fort, religious services are held. Catholics will go to the *Martyrs Shrine* across the highway, and those of the Jewish, Protestant and other faiths will conduct their “Scouts Own” at Wye Marsh.

**Final Gear Shakedown**

After services, everyone assembles in the meeting room at Wye Marsh. There your Guide will conduct your final equipment shakedown. This is a most important session. You’ll want to pay close attention, as all gear has to be waterproofed and fit into your three-man Duluth pack. Then, after a full day, lights are out at 11 pm. There is another full day in store tomorrow, so it is best to get a good night’s sleep.
On to Algonquin Provincial Park — canoes, outfitters and incredible nature.

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Schedule

7:00 am  Breakfast at Restaurant Ste-Marie
7:45 am  Medical Check
8:00 am  Leave for Algonquin (3-hour drive)
11:30 am  Stop in Huntsville for last minute supplies. Visit an old-time Outfitter.
1:00 pm  • Stop at Portage Store for LUNCH (KM 14.5).
         • Obtain Tour Permit at Canoe Lake if starting at Canoe or Smoke Lake
         • Stop at Algonquin Visitor Center for tour and LUNCH (KM 45)
         • Obtain Tour Permit at Rock Lake if starting at Whitefish Lake
2:30 pm  Check-in at Whitefish Lake – Birchbark Expeditions Base Camp
3:00 pm  Paddle Practice with your Guide
6:00 pm  Dinner
8:00 pm  Opening Campfire
10:00 pm  Lights Out

Quick Stops on the Way to Base Camp

The town of Huntsville, Ontario is the gateway to Algonquin. There you will find a large Canadian Tire department store where you can purchase supplies. A&P and Independent are two large grocery stores in town. You may wish to stop by Algonquin Outfitters, on Hwy 60, an old-time canoe outfitting post. Langford Canoe, on Hwy 60 near Hwy 35, sells beautiful wood and canvas canoes.

Algonquin Visitor Centre

The multimillion dollar Algonquin Park Visitor Centre is an exciting museum of the natural history of the Park. It also has a reasonably priced cafeteria.

Locations on Hwy 60 in Algonquin are measured in kilometers (KM) from the Park’s West Gate. Whitefish Lake campground’s location is KM 36.9 (the Hwy 60 distance from the West Gate).

---

Day 2
Traveling to Base Camp

Interior Camping Permits

Permits for your canoe trip have to be obtained at one of several Access Point Offices. Pick yours up at the Access Point, which services the starting lake for your trip. The time to pick up the permit is on Sunday, on your way into Base Camp. You’ll need a roster of crew members, and the license plates of your vehicles, including your Guide’s vehicle. Take care of this paperwork now, and save a lot of time later.

The Canoe Lake Access Point Office (KM 14.1) services both Access Point #5 (Canoe Lake), and Access Point #6 (Smoke Lake).

The Rock Lake Access Point Office (KM 40) services both Access Point #9 (Rock Lake), and canoe trips starting directly from Birchbark Expeditions Base Camp on Whitefish Lake.

The Opeongo Lake Access Point Office (KM 46.3) services Access Point #11 (Opeongo Lake).

Fishing Licenses

This is also the time to purchase a Canadian fishing license if you plan to fish. Details can be obtained at the Ranger Station.

Prescription Medications

You may wish to give all presecription meds to your Adult Leader for safekeeping. Both Leaders and the Guide should know of any special medications as your trip may take you several days’ paddle away from the civilization of the Highway 60 corridor.
Birchbark Expeditions BSA Base Camp

Birchbark Expeditions Base Camp is located at the Whitefish Lake Campground (KM 36.9). At Base Camp you will be assigned your canoes, PFDs, paddles, tents and crew equipment. After you pitch your tent, grab a paddle and a canoe. Now for some fun!

PFDs on all Water Activities

But first, select a well fitting Personal Flotation Device (PFD). On Birchbark Expeditions we wear PFDs for all water activities. That means, whenever you are in a canoe, you need to wear your PFDs. And whenever you go swimming, you need to wear a PFD. Your Guide wears a PFD on all water activities, and all youth and adults are likewise required to do so. The reason is that on a wilderness trip like Birchbark Expeditions, there is no formal swimming or boating area and oftentimes the swim areas are not groomed as they might be at summer camp. Wearing PFDs is a safety measure that makes sense.

Buddy System Used Here!

There are many advantages to using the buddy system. If your buddy gets into trouble you may be able to help him. And suppose YOU get a cramp in your leg while swimming; you’ll be glad a buddy is around to give you a assist. Especially because we are away from any formal swimming area, it is critical that everyone uses the buddy system while swimming.

Buddy Canoes

Picture this: The canoe ahead of you gets brosrized by a big wave on a big lake. In the blink of an eye the paddlers are in the water; their canoe has capsized. Fortunately, you are within close range and you quickly paddle to the swamped paddlers and give them assistance. This is one (rare) example of why we stress using the buddy system.

Paddle Instruction at Base Camp

On a canoe trip we use buddy canoes, for the same reason we use the buddy system while swimming—as a first class safety precaution. Since most Birchbark Expeditions crews paddle with nine people and three canoes, the canoes should “triple up.” One canoe should always be able to reach another canoe quickly in case of an emergency. Be especially cautious on windy lakes...stay very close together, as it is most difficult to paddle upwind to aid a swamped canoe. The closer we are together, the easier it is to help.

Paddle Practice

Base Camp is situated on a perfect training lake. It is actually a widening of the Madawaska River, and is about one-half mile across and one mile long. It is sheltered from strong winds that often plague the large lakes; and it is well suited for you to get an introduction to paddling in an actual Algonquin lake. At the south end of the training area the river narrows again before it opens up into Whitefish Lake itself.

Your Guide will take your crew out to practice paddle strokes. It will feel great to finally be paddling. Don’t worry if you cannot master your strokes at this session. You’ll have plenty of time to perfect your strokes on your trip, and your Guide will give you plenty of tips to make your strokes easier and more efficient.

Swamping Practice

Once everyone has gotten comfortable paddling, your Guide will instruct you on how to perform a canoe-over-canoe rescue. Your three canoes will group together, and while one canoe swamps, the second will perform a canoe-over-canoe rescue, while the third will be there to stand ready to assist. It will feel good to cool off in the pleasant water, and your confidence will increase once you have successfully swamped and been rescued, and have rescued your buddy canoe in turn. This is a most valuable exercise to build your confidence on the water. Your Guide will be with you, and so will your crew mates. If weather does not permit safe paddling instruction today, we will do so during the trip itself.
C

how time!

All that paddling made the voyageurs of yesteryear mighty hungry. Fortunately modern day canoe trippers do not have to have a monotonous diet of peas, beans and corn. You’ll find the dehydrated and freeze dried meals tasty (generally) and nutritious. You’ll also find that it is best to follow cooking instructions carefully, if you don’t want any surprises.

Gas Stoves
Your Guide will show you the safe way to fill and fire up the lightweight gas stoves. The stoves run on white gas (also sold as Coleman fuel), and are quite dependable. The important thing is to use them under adult supervision and to treat them with respect. Stoves can explode if mishandled. Also, make sure your cooking area is away from traffic; a pot of boiling water can cause a severe burn if it is accidentally knocked over. Everyone should always be extra careful around stoves, fires and boiling water—ALL THE TIME.

The Dining Fly (The Algonquin Tarp)
Each crew is issued a 12’ x 12’ lightweight trail tarp. Your Guide will show you optimal ways to set it up. The dining fly will be your only shelter for the next six days, so you’ll want to pitch it correctly.

The wind literally can shift 180 degrees during the day in Algonquin. For that reason, most Guides set up the tarp with one side dropped into the wind. Should the wind shift, the dropped side can be raised and the other side can be dropped. This is a handy technique when the winds are fickle.

Vehicle Parking
Vehicles are removed from your immediate campsite and parked in designated Overflow Parking Areas while your crew is at Base Camp. This safety measure also relieves congestion around the campsite.

Non-emergency Medical Treatment
Your crew vehicles are also available for use to drive a crew member to get medical treatment in Huntsville, should someone require non-emergency medical treatment.

Base camp is located just off paved Highway 60, and is about one hour drive (50 miles) from the hospital in Huntsville.

Serious emergencies are covered in a separate section of this Voyageur Handbook.

Restrooms and Showers
There are clean latrines at the Birchbark Expeditions Base Camp, one for men and one for women. In addition, there are individual, tiled showers with hot running water—a real treat in the backwoods. You’ll find the shower a short drive from Base Camp in the adjacent Pog Lake campground. The showers are maintained by Algonquin Park, and we appreciate it if you do your best to leave them in better shape than you found them!

Campfires
Because of the high use of the Whitefish Lake campground, the Park does not allow scavenging for wood in the forest around Whitefish Lake Campground. We obtain wood for Base Camp from the Whitefish Lake camp office for a nominal fee. Also, you cannot bring firewood into Algonquin, because the Park is trying to control the spread of insect pests in the wood. Of course, on your actual canoe trip in the Interior, scavenging for wood is allowed.

If time and weather permit, we’ll have a good Voyageur campfire, and sing a few “chansons.” Then, it’s time to hit the sack. Tomorrow is the day we’ve been waiting for.
Welcome back to Base Camp!

Friday is a day loaded with opportunity. One of the most important advantages is the opportunity to sample the program features along the Highway 60 corridor. They can provide a welcome change of pace to the week’s strenuous paddling, and introduce you to the “other Algonquin”.

Hot Showers!

Base Camp, Canoe Lake, Rock Lane and Opeongo Lake all have clean, hot showers and indoor restrooms. Base Camp also has garbage disposal facilities and clothes washing machines.

Get a Good Night’s Rest

Relaxing on Friday gives the drivers a chance to get a good night’s rest before they tackle the 300 mile trip home. If you leave on Saturday, then you can get an early start and drive fresh, as opposed to traveling on Friday afternoon after a long day of paddling, only to run into Toronto’s Friday rush hour traffic.

Opportunity for a Longer Trip

Several crews have been anxious to get on the canoe trail early. Instead of foregoing the terrific program day at Sainte Marie, a crew can get an extra day of paddling in on Friday, especially if they do not have to leave for home on Friday. It is a great opportunity to spend an extra day in the Interior, because they have a place to land and camp at Whitefish Lake on Friday night.

Equipment Cleanup

Each crew should take thirty minutes to wash out the canoes, and hang the life vests and packs out to dry for the next week’s groups.

Conservation Good Turn

Friday may be a good time to perform a one-hour service project for the Park.

The Loggers Museum

For a first hand look at the life of a nineteenth century logger, be sure to visit the museum near the East Gate. It’s free and you won’t be disappointed.

Algonquin’s Interpretive Trails

For outstanding self-guided nature trails, check out the following trails. They are mostly about 1 to 2 miles long: Hardwood Lookout Trail (hardwood forest ecology); Peck Lake Trail (lake ecology); Big Pines Trail (old growth white pines; remains of an 1880’s logging camp); Spruce Bog Boardwalk (northern spruce bog ecology-fascinating); Beaver Pond Trail (visit two beaver ponds). Usually the days spent on the canoe trip do not allow time to take in a nature trail—but Friday afternoon may provide a good opportunity to “take a hike!”

Fresh Food

The Portage Store at Canoe Lake, and The Mad Musher in Whitney are both about a 15-minute drive from Base Camp at Whitefish Lake. They offer good meals at reasonable prices, and the crew can spend an extra few minutes at the Portage Store Outfitter on Canoe Lake, or at Opeongo Outfitters in Whitney, en route to The Mad Musher.

Program Evaluations

While the trip is fresh in your mind, muscles and memory, Friday is the ideal time to give us your valuable advice on how we can improve Birchbark Expeditions for next year. We take seriously every recommendation offered by our Adult advisors and Scouts and Venturers. Your comments make us better! You’ll find an evaluation form at the back of this book.

Closing Campfire

At the closing campfire patches are presented to the participants and le Baptême du Voyageur, the Voyageur Baptism is performed.
United States

- Greater Niagara Frontier Council, BSA
  Council Boy Scout Service Center
  2860 Genesee Street, Buffalo, NY 14225-3131
  W: (716) 891-4073  Fax: (716) 891-4008
  www.wny.scouting.org

- Bob Blatz, GNFC Staff Advisor
  bob.blatz@scouting.org
  W: (716) 512-6213  Fax: (716) 891-4008

- Alan Percy
  Program Co-Chair, Birchbark Expeditions
  birchbark@wnyscouting.org
  H: (716) 662-0925  C: (716) 830-5966

- Dave Bliss
  Program Co-Chair, Birchbark Expeditions
  birchbark@wnyscouting.org
  H: (716) 838-3048  C: (716) 480-4807

- Camp Scouthaven, BSA
  Route #98, Freedom, NY 14065
  (716) 492-4429

- Schoellkopf Scout Reservation, BSA
  Burroughs Road, Cowlesville, NY 14037
  (585) 591-1171

- Stonehaven Camp, BSA
  Albright Road, Sanborn, NY 14131
  (716) 731-5959

Canada

- Algonquin Provincial Park
  PO Box 219, Hwy #60
  Whitney, Ontario, Canada K0J 2M0
  www.algonquinpark.on.ca
  (705) 633-5572 Information Line
  (705) 633-5583 Park Staff West Gate
    (8:30am-4:30pm)
  (613) 637-2780 Administration East Gate
    (8:30-4:40pm)

- Birchbark Expeditions Base Camp
  Located at Whitefish Lake Campground
  Algonquin Provincial Park
  The Base has no phone. For emergencies call:
  GNFC Scout Service Center, Algonquin Park, or
  Ontario Provincial Police

- Ontario Provincial Police (OPP)
  (Also, call OPP for night-time Emergencies)
  1 (888) 310-1122 or +1 (613) 283-2313

- Huntsville Hospital
  100 Frank Miller Drive
  Huntsville, Ontario, Canada P1H 1H7
  (705) 789-2311

- Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre
  PO Box 100, 11160 Hwy #12 East
  Midland, Ontario, Canada L4R 4K6
  (705) 526-7809  www.wyemarsh.com

- Sainte Marie Among the Hurons
  PO Box 160, Midland, Ontario, Canada L4R 4K8
  (705) 526-9193  www.hhp.on.ca

- Restaurant Sainte Marie
  PO Box 160, Midland, Ontario, Canada L4R 4K8
  (705) 527-4162
Algonquin Park Procedures

“Although Algonquin Park does not operate search and rescue patrols, they will respond if they are contacted. During the summer months there are 20 rangers working throughout the Interior, and there is an aircraft that they use for various management purposes. There are also other campers, so help is usually close at hand. Three signals of any kind, either audible or visible, constitute the universal call for help. Also, if a Park aircraft is in your vicinity, a smoke fire could help to attract the pilot’s attention.

“If darkness is approaching, make camp along a lakeshore or in a clearing; the more visible you are, the easier you will be to find. If you are traveling with a group, stay together, and reassure the other members of your party. Do not wander aimlessly off into the bush. Traveling at night is especially foolish and should not be attempted.

“Serious injury or sickness may require more immediate action on your part. In some circumstances, it may be advisable to leave the injured person and paddle out for assistance. If you are forced to leave someone behind, make them as comfortable as possible, leave someone with them who can continue to signal for help, and be sure that you know exactly where they are.”

(The above Algonquin Park Procedures are from “Canoe Routes of Algonquin Provincial Park” map.)

Note: This information, “In Case of Emergency,” is also found in the Leader’s Packet

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY
Ontario Provincial Police 888-310-1122
Algonquin Park Headquarters-East Gate
8:30 am - 4:30 pm (613) 637-2780

Boy Scout Procedures

At times during your Algonquin trip you will be a day or two from help. Please exercise sound judgment and take the prudent course of action.

▪ Follow the procedures outlined in the official Algonquin Provincial Park canoe routes map issued to you (see adjoining column)

▪ Cell phones generally do not work in the Park, because of the mountainous terrain and lack of transmitting towers. Sometimes they do work.

▪ Crew leaders provide routine first aid. Get additional help from other groups.

▪ For emergencies requiring medical or police attention, you must get to the nearest Algonquin Provincial Park Access Point office, where you can place the emergency phone calls. Access Point office staff will assist you.

▪ As you paddle out, try the cell phone on lakes near Hwy 60 where reception may be obtained.

▪ Note the locations of Youth Camps and cottages. They may be able to offer assistance.

▪ After Hours Park staff may not be present at Access Points after 8:00 pm.

▪ If you reach a phone after hours, then call the Ontario Provincial Police at 1-888-310-1122. They will assist you from there.

▪ Then call the Greater Niagara Frontier Council to explain your situation.

If an air evacuation is required, it is considered an air ambulance. You may wish to confirm with your health insurance carrier about coverage. It is also a good idea to carry your health forms with you so benefits can be verified and treatment can be administered.

If an evacuation is necessary, it is best to be near the shore of a body of water large enough to land a float plane. You will need to use good judgment about deciding to transport an injured party with your crew, or to wait until professional help arrives.
Welcome to the Lakes of Ontario!

You are about to enter a world that offers you an awesome experience of wild and unspoiled nature. This vast canoe country casts such a spell on adventurers, that those who know Algonquin best—the Birchbark Expeditions Guides—keep coming back year after year, in all the seasons of the year…to fish for hungry lake trout right after spring ice breakup, to enjoy paddling the warm waters of summer, to soak in the beauty of a stunning autumn day and chance upon a bull moose crowned by antlers so big a child could sit in them, to showshoe through the silent snows of winter following the tracks of the Algonquin wolves.

Canoes Everywhere

In the summer you’ll see canoes everywhere, for the canoe is the time-honored method of traveling the lakes and rivers of Canada. When you dip your paddle into one of Algonquin’s pristine lakes, you’ll feel a kinship to those who went before, and you will become a modern day Voyageur. And if you are like most of us, you’ll want to come back again and again. Algonquin is one beautiful slice of God’s creation.

You’ll be immersed in an area that is world famous for canoeing. You’ll see hundreds of travelers, cars loaded with canoes, old-time outfitters supplying trippers with all sorts of gear, and hundreds of canoes. Algonquin is a canoe tripper’s paradise.

Bull Moose

Ontario’s oldest Provincial Park

Algonquin Provincial Park is the oldest and most famous provincial park in Ontario and one of the largest in Canada. It is three hundred miles – six hours – from the Niagara Falls USA/Canada border, and encompasses an amazing variety of landforms.

Situated on the ancient Canadian Shield (the oldest bedrock in Canada), Algonquin stretches across 7,725 square kilometers of wild and beautiful lakes and forests, bogs and rivers, cliffs and beaches. The vast interior, accessible only by canoe and portage, is populated by beaver, moose, bear, wolves and loons.

Remote, yet Accessible

One of the Park’s official brochures sums up the canoe tripper’s experience, “Hear the call of a loon echoing from the rocky lakeshores, gaze at the sunset silhouetting a solitary pine, and watch a beaver forging a rippling wedge across a glassy pond. A fish splashes, a moose raises its massive head to stare at passing paddlers, and high above a windy cliff, a croaking raven surveys a landscape of lakes, forests, streams and bogs from horizon to horizon. At nightfall, two canoeists look up from their flickering campfire and drink in the wild music of wolves wafting over the ancient hills. This is Algonquin Provincial Park.”
God, Gold and Glory

The New World was vast, unexplored, and peopled by many different tribes. From the beginning the European nations befriended some tribes and antagonized others. The quest for riches, adventure, glory and conversion to the faith—and the life-and-death competition with the English and Spanish—propelled the hardy Frenchmen to venture farther and farther. They wanted to be the first to discover the Northwest Passage, that elusive and never-found route to the riches of the Orient. In the process, they explored the great North American continent, and they explored it with a craft new to them, ideally suited for the rivers, streams and lakes that led to the Rocky Mountains and to the Gulf of Mexico, perfected by the Native Americans—the marvelous birchbark canoe.

In 1615 a young scout, Étienne Brûlé, pioneered the route past the Lachine Rapids on the Ottawa River. Three weeks later he was standing on the shores of Georgian Bay with Samuel de Champlain, and opened what would become the major canoe route of the fur trading Voyageurs. Brûlé also traveled through Lake Ontario, over the ancient Niagara Portage through the future site of Buffalo, New York, and down the Susquehanna River. He was the first white man to reach Lakes Ontario, Erie, Huron and Superior.

Hurons and Iroquois

The French allied themselves with the Algonquins, Montagnais and Hurons. To complicate the situation, Champlain’s 1609 battle with the French and the Iroquois forever established enmity between the two nations. Later, the Iroquois would trade with the Dutch in New Amsterdam (now New York City) and compete for the same beaver pelts as the French. As the French traded farther west, the Iroquois attempted some futile trading agreements with them, and then ended up raiding fur trade parties, sometimes with a thousand warriors. The fierce and powerful Iroquois Confederacy first obliterated the Hurons of Georgian Bay, and then the Neutral and Erie tribes along the Niagara River, and would travel thousands of miles by canoe on their war parties.
The Story of French Canada

The Missionaries

In 1639 French Jesuits started a settlement on Georgian Bay. It was to be a model French-and-Native community. The French brought animals and farming techniques. The Hurons taught the French how to raise maize, beans and squash. At one point sixty-six Frenchmen lived at Sainte Marie, one-fifth of the whole French population of Canada! In the historian’s mind two factors doomed the community: new diseases killed many of the Hurons; and the incessant and ever increasing raids by the Iroquois continually threatened the settlement. By 1649 the Iroquois had killed eight Jesuit missionaries.

Father Isaac Jogues and lay missioner René Goupil were killed along the Mohawk River in what is now New York State. Father John de Brebeuf and six other missionaries were killed near Sainte Marie. In 1649, the small colony burned the settlement so it would not fall into the hands of the enemy, and the Hurons dispersed, some to Montreal with the Jesuits, and some to points farther west.

The Explorers

Thirty years later, in 1679 Fr. Louis Hennepin, the chaplain to René-Robert Cavelier Sieur de La Salle, was the first eye witness to write about the thundering falls of Niagara, which lay ten miles upstream from the Fort Denonville (Niagara) at the mouth of the River. His writings brought the marvels of the new continent to inquisitive European readers.

La Salle built a brigantine, called the Griffon, on the shores of the Little Niagara River, and was the first to sail on the upper Great Lakes. He then explored, by canoe, the Mississippi River all the way to the Gulf of Mexico...claiming in 1682 the whole Mississippi River and its tributaries for Louis XIV, King of France. New France now wrapped around New England and met New Spain in the Gulf of Mexico.

In 1763, at the end of the French and Indian War, New France east of the Mississippi watershed was surrendered to England. The government became British; but the people remained fiercely devoted to their national heritage. To this day in Quebec, but also in parts of Ontario, the predominant language is still French.

Brown Gold

The French never found the gold that the Spanish found in Mexico and South America. What they did find was the richest harvest of beaver pelts in the world...in the cold Canadian climate, and they trapped a fortune for the crown and the investors of Europe. Throughout the 1700’s and first part of the 1800’s the fur trade flourished.

The Voyageurs

After the fall of New France to England, trading eventually evolved to fur brigades of 36-foot Montreal Canoes, manned by 10 or 12 Voyageurs, leaving Montreal at the first ice break-up in May to travel the 1,500 mile water route up the Ottawa River to lake Nipissing, and down the aptly named French River to Georgian Bay – the very route opened by Brûlé and Champlain. From there the hardy voyageurs would travel along the north shore of treacherous Lake Superior, sometimes shortcutting twenty miles across bays to save time and distance.

An enormous rendezvous was held at Grand Portage, at the western end of Superior in August, where tons of Montreal trading goods...
were ex-changed for beaver pelts from *le pays d’en haut*, the north country.

Then the brigades would rush back to Montreal attempting to beat the November freeze-up. The voyageurs’ incredible journeys became legendary, and spending a year or two as a colorful Voyageur became a rite of passage for adventure-seeking young men of New France.

The French temperament was well suited to working with the Indians. Some Voyageurs wintered over in the north country, and would take the smaller *canots du nord*, north canoes, and travel farther west into Athabaska country as far as the Rocky Mountains. There they would trade with the tribes and come back to Grand Portage in time for next year’s rendezvous. These Voyageurs learned the survival skills needed for the harsh winters from the natives, and came to be known as *les hommes du nord*, or Men of the North.

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**Beaver Hats**

Were not what you might think. They were not “fur” hats as such. The skin itself was discarded and the short, inner hairs of the pelts were pressed into felt to make hats of the finest quality, highly desired by kings, soldiers and noblemen. From “The Fur Trade,” by James Marsh.

Beaver pelts were harvested for their fur, which made the best felt for the large and grandiose hats worn in Europe for centuries by bourgeoisie and nobility. Then, in the late 1800’s the fashion changed. Large, exaggerated hats fell out of style, and the centuries-long fur trade came to humble halt.

**A Living Heritage**

While fashion may have fueled the fur trade, exploration for the route to the Orient and missionary activity also contributed their own driving forces. The French largely got along with the natives; and many married Indian women. French surnames are liberally sprinkled all throughout Canada and parts of the United States, attesting to the wide range of the French explorers and voyageurs. The names of La Salle, Marquette, Joliet, Dusquesne, Hennepin, Champlain, Brûlé, Duluth are all names which tell of the rich heritage left to us by the French explorers, missionaries and Voyageurs.

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**Castor canadensis**

The Beaver can grow to 55 pounds. Drawing from “The Fur Trade,” by James Marsh

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The Year was 1639...

It had been 24 years since the explorer Samuel de Champlain first reached Georgian Bay, opening the continent to the fur trade. Quebec had been established; however the interior of the continent still had no permanent French settlement.

That year, Sainte-Marie was founded by French Jesuits in the land of the Wendat, or Huron people. The mission was designed as a retreat for missionaries and a refuge for Christian Hurons. It also stood as an example of French culture in the isolated heart of New France.

800 Miles from Quebec

During its 10-year existence, Sainte-Marie was the only European community in what is now Ontario. It was the site of Ontario’s first hospital and first European style farm. By 1649 Sainte-Marie housed 66 Frenchmen, one-fifth of the population of New France at the time. Constructed by French craftsmen, Sainte-Marie was built using stone and timbers from the surrounding countryside. Some items, like candles, books, and small amounts of iron came from Quebec by canoe, a hazardous four week journey. The addition of cattle, chickens, pigs and gardens made the isolated mission virtually self-sufficient, even though it was 800 miles inland from Quebec.

The Beaver Wars

The Hurons had no resistance to the European diseases brought to their land by the newcomers. Measles, smallpox and influenza killed many. The situation was compounded by the rekindling of traditional rivalries between the Hurons and the Iroquois living in what is now New York State. The contest for dominance over the lucrative Georgian Bay-Ottawa River fur trade route further fueled the life-and-death struggle.

In 1649 Fathers Jean de Brebeuf and Gabriel Lalemant, along with hundreds of Hurons were captured and killed. As neighboring Huron villages were destroyed by the fierce Iroquois, the Jesuits prepared to leave their mission home.
The End of Sainte-Marie

In June 1649 they packed their most precious possessions (including the relics of the slain Fathers Brébeuf and Lalemant) and set out by canoe for Christian Island, burning Sainte-Marie to the ground lest it fall into the hands of the Iroquois enemy.

Traveling by canoe to Christian Island they established Sainte-Marie II. After a winter of terrible hardship and starvation, the Jesuits decided to abandon their mission. Accompanied by a few hundred Christian Hurons, they returned to Quebec in 1650. The wilderness claimed the ruins of Sainte-Marie. And the once strong Huron people were obliterated from their ancient homeland by the twin terrors of disease and Iroquois ferocity.

Today Sainte-Marie is reconstructed on its original site. Costumed interpreters tell the story, revealed through archaeological findings and the writings of the 17th century Jesuits themselves. Eight Frenchmen who died between 1642 and 1649 have been recognized as saints, and Martyr’s Shrine, across the highway from Sainte-Marie, is dedicated to these Canadian martyrs.
**A Long Tradition**

It may be the fact that the Greater Niagara Frontier Council is outlined by the Niagara River, a major strait that pours the upper four Great Lakes over the thundering Falls, and through a canyon carved by its mighty force on its way to Great Lake Ontario.

It may be the Council’s proximity to the Canadian Northwoods, to which adventure seeking Scouts are naturally attracted. It may be the intense interest of adult Scouters, who recognize the tremendous outdoor training potential of water and wilderness.

Whatever the reasons, Greater Niagara Frontier Council has enjoyed a long and legendary association with canoeing, spanning more than 60 years.

**Camp Northern Lights 1946 to 1987**

In 1946, the Niagara Frontier Council purchased beautiful Camp Northern Lights, with 3,000 feet of shoreline on Lake Kushog in Minden, Ontario.

*Northern Lights* offered troops one week of traditional summer camp followed by a week-long canoe trip through the “Big Circle” and “Little Circle” chains of lakes – Kushog, St. Nora, Sherborne, Big Hawk, and Little Hawk. In 1967 two staff members explored and opened a new route, the grueling 70-mile “North Star to Northern Lights” trip.

**North Star Canoe Base 1940s to 1967**

In the 1940’s North Star Canoe Base was acquired by the Buffalo Area Council, in the heart of Algonquin Park, a vast wilderness area situated in the transition forest of the Canadian Shield and which contains the headwaters of five river systems. *North Star* was located at the Tea Lake Dam, 70 miles north of Northern Lights. Troops paddled out of the Base all through Algonquin Park.

**Delaware River Trips 1963 to 1973**

In the 1960s and 1970s, the then combined Greater Niagara Frontier Council sponsored an annual Memorial Day weekend white water trip down the Delaware River from Hancock to Port Jervis, New York on the Pennsylvania border.

**Niagara-Algonquin Voyageurs 1976**

In 1976 the Niagara District sponsored a week long canoe trip in Algonquin Park. Four troops and one venture Crew participated. After the success of the program, plans were laid to offer a tripping program to the Council at large. A 1979 pilot, the Schoellkopf Northwoodsmen, tested the format for a new canoe program to be run from Northern Lights.
**History of Birchbark Expeditions**

**Homme du Nord Programme  1980 to 1987**

Beginning in 1980 the *Homme du Nord* tripping program operated out of *Northern Lights*. A time of considerable exploration, the Guides and their provisional crews traveled light and opened up new canoe routes: the Raven Lake-to-Lake of Bays-to-Bracebridge trip; the Wren Lake-to-Shoe Lake loop; the Magnetawan River circle; and the Grundy Lake-Pickerel River-Georgian Bay circle. In 1982 one *Homme du Nord* crew traveled north 200 miles on the Missinaibi River to the salt water of James Bay. Along the way they set the record for traveling the farthest distance in one day—50 miles. Another crew opened the Mississagi River route, paddling south from the height of land to Georgian Bay.

**Birchbark Expeditions  2003 to Present**

In the summer of 2003, the Council put its paddles back into the water under the brand new *Birchbark Expeditions—Canadian Wilderness Voyages*. This high adventure features historical touring, state of the art equipment, and trips in Algonquin Park and Northern Ontario. Birchbark Expeditions also piloted a whitewater week down the Madawaska River, east of Algonquin. In 2006, a co-ed crew retraced the Missinaibi River journey to James Bay. Birchbark Expeditions received national recognition with an August 2006 story in *Boys’ Life* Magazine; and a May-June 2007 story in *Scouting Magazine*. The 260 mile Albany River to James Bay Expedition was successful in 2009; and the Missinaibi was repeated again in 2011.

The success of Birchbark Expeditions is directly attributable to its outstanding and seasoned Guides, a spirited corps of veteran outdoorsmen who have paddled Algonquin for years. They introduce the next generation to the Canadian Northwoods.
Voyageur

“Traveler.” A Voyageur paddled the 3,000 mile round-trip from Montreal to Grand Portage at the western end of Lake Superior — all in one season from ice break-up in May until freeze-up in November. Voyageurs worked for the North West Company, which later merged with the Hudson Bay Company.

Mangeur du Lard (mon-ZHUR doo- LARD)
“Pork Eater.” Tenderfoot voyageur on his first voyage. Called so because his diet consisted of pork and peas, carried from Montreal.

Homme du Nord (UM doo nord)
“Northwoodsman.” The most respected of all voyageurs. Instead of returning to Montreal, he paddled farther into Alberta and Saskatchewan as far as the Canadian Rockies, wintered there, lived with the Indians, and returned a year later.

Coureur de Bois (koo-RER de-BWAH)
“Forest Runner, Guide.” A Coureur de Bois was independent. At times he was a trapper; at times an interpreter. He was known for being an expert woodsman and for getting along with the Indians.

Portage (por-TAZH)
“Carry.” Canoes and goods had to be carried to the next lake. The voyageur packed goods into a 90 pound bale, and carried it with only a tumpline. Then he would throw a second bale on top of the first — 180 pounds in all, and dog-trot across the portage!

Pays d’en Haut (PIES don oat)
“The Northwoods.” An Homme du Nord wintered in the Northwoods wilderness, where the snow lay on the ground six feet deep, and where the temperature could reach 40° F below 0.

Avant (ah-VANT)
“In the Front.” The bowman had to shout commands, and to watch out for rocks in the rapids. Only an experienced voyageur could be an Avant.

Gouvernail (goo-ver-NIGH)
“Sternman; Governor.” The Gouvernail was the boss in the canoe. He was known for his experience and ability to lead the voyageurs on a safe trip.

La pipe (la peep)
“The Pipe.” Every hour the Voyageurs would take a break, and smoke a pipe. It gave them a chance to sing and relax.

Chanson (shan-SONE)
“Song.” The Voyageur sang when he was happy, homesick, in love, or scared to death. He sang around the fire, on long lake paddles, and as he shot treacherous rapids. A bonus was paid to a Voyageur who could not only paddle but also lead a song!

Posé (po-ZAY)
“Rest.” Long portages were broken up into 20 minute segments, when a pipe could be enjoyed if the mosquitoes were not too severe.

From The Voyageur, by Grace Lee Nute
Alouette (The Skylark)

CHORUS
Alouette, gentille alouette
Alouette, je te plumerai

Je te plumerai la tete - (Je te plumerai la tete)
Ai la tete - (Ai la tete)
Alouette - (Alouette)
Oh-oh-oh-oh............

Je te plumerai le bec - (repeat)
Je te plumerai le cou
Je te plumerai l’arile
Je te plumerai la pied

TRANSLATION
Little lark, pretty skylark
Little lark, I’m going to pluck you!

Land of the Silver Birch

CHORUS
Land of the silver birch, Home of the beaver
Where the mighty moose Wanders at ease

Blue skies and rocky shores, I will return once more
Boom did di a da, boom, boom
Boom did di a da, boom, boom

VERSES
See the Northern Lights, Smell the pine forest.
Hear the wild loon’s call Deep in the night.

I’ll build my birch canoe, Paddle clear waters,
Rush through the raging stream With greatest of ease

Out on a lonely isle, By the crackling fire,
I’ll sleep a peaceful sleep With stars o’er my head.

Deep in the winter night, Under the moon glow,
I’ll pull my toboggan Through the silent snow.

verses by Pierre and Etienne de Rosa

Our Paddles

Our paddles keen and bright,
Flashing like silver,
Swift as the wild goose flies,
Dip, dip and swing.

Dip, dip and swing them back,
Flashing like silver,
Swift as the wild goose flies,
Dip, dip and swing.
**Vive La Companie**

CHORUS
Vive la vive la vive l’amour
Vive la vive la vive l’amour
Vive l’amour, vive l’amour
Vive la companie!

1. Let every good voyageur join in a song
   Vive la companie!
   Success to each other and pass it along
   Vive la companie!

2. We paddle and paddle for miles everyday
   While singing a song every inch of the way!

3. A rock on you left and a rock on your right,
   But we still make it through with our skill and our might!

4. No portage is too long for a good voyageur.
   With rain and mosquitoes we love it the more!

5. We love the young maidens and they love us too.
   They cry when we leave in our birchbark canoes!

6. There’s no life so happy as Voyageur life.
   With six running dogs and more than one wife!

7. Now bigger and bigger our circle expands
   Known even by people in faraway lands!

 Verses 2 through 7 by Étienne de Rosa

**We are the Light of Scouting**

We are the Light of Scouting
We bring flight to eagles
We are the Light of Scouting
Throughout the world!

We will never be hiked under
Listen to our Scouting thunder
We are the Light of Scouting
Throughout the world!

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**Chevaliers de la Table Ronde**

*(Knights of the Roundtable)*

Chevaliers de la table ronde,
Guiton voir si le vin e bon.
Chevaliers de la table ronde,
Guiton voir si le vin e bon

Guiton voir, oui, oui, oui
Guiton voir, non, non, non
Guiton voir si le vin e boon.

*O knights of the Roundtable*
*Let us see if the wine is good.*

*O knights of the Roundtable*
*Let us see if the wine is good*

*Is it good? Yes, yes, yes!*
*Is it good? No, no, no!*
*Let us see if the wine is good!*

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*"Repairing the canoe" from* The Voyageur *by Grace Lee Nute*
Religious Songs

Holy, Holy, Holy

Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty
Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee.
Holy, Holy, Holy, Merciful and mighty!
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

Holy, Holy, Holy!
All the saints adore Thee,
Casting down their golden crowns
Along the glassy sea.
Cherubim and Seraphim
Falling down before Thee
Which wert and art and evermore shall be.

Holy, Holy, Holy!
Though the darkness hide Thee,
Though the eye made blind by sin
Thy glory may not see
Only Thou art holy,
There is none besides Thee
Perfect in power, in love and purity.

Holy, Holy, Holy!
Lord God Almighty!
All Thy works shall praise Thy name
In earth and sky and sea.
Holy, Holy, Holy, Merciful and mighty!
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Voyageur Grace

For food, for raiment,
For life and opportunity
For wind and rain
For water and portage trails
For friendship and fellowship
We thank Thee, O Lord.

AMEN

Here I am, Lord

REFRAIN
Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?
I have heard You calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if You lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart

1. I, the Lord of sea and sky,
I have heard my people cry.
All who dwell in dark and sin
My hand will save.
I who made the stars of night,
I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear my light to them?
Whom shall I send?

2. I, the Lord of snow and rain,
I have borne my people’s cry.
I have wept for love of them.
They turn away.
I will break their hearts of stone,
Give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak my word to them.
Whom shall I send?

3. I, the Lord of wind and flame,
I will tend the poor and lame.
I will set a feast for them.
This we know, as we go: God is nigh.

Thanks and praise, for our days
Neath the sun, neath the stars, neath the sky
We thank Thee, O Lord.

AMEN

Taps

Day is done, Gone the sun
From the lakes, from the hills, from the sky
All is well, safely rest. God is nigh

Thanks and praise, for our days
Neath the sun, neath the stars, neath the sky
This we know, as we go: God is nigh.

Go to sleep, peaceful sleep
Oh you Scouter, who labored now sleep
And may God grant you his peace
Go to sleep
How Great Thou Art

REFRAIN
Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee: How great Thou art! How great Thou art! Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee: How great Thou art! How great Thou art!

1. O Lord my God! When I in awesome wonder Consider all the worlds Thay hands have made. I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder, Thy power throughout the universe displayes.

2. When through the woods and forest glades I wander And hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees, When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur And hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze.

3. And when I think that God, His Son not sparing, Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in; That on the cross, m burden gladly bering, He bled and died to take away my sin.

4. When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart! Then I shall bow in humble adoration And there proclaim, my God how great Thou art!

Stuart K. Kline

Amazing Grace

1. Amazing Grace! How sweet the sound, That saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but now am found, Was blind, but now I see!

2. ‘Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, And grace my fears relieved. How precious did that grace appear, The hour I first believed!

3. The Lord has promised good to me, His word my hope secures. He will my shield and portion be As long as life endures.

4. Through many dangers, toils and snares, I have already come. “Tis grace has brought me safe thus far, And grace will lead me home.

5. When we’ve been there ten thousand years, Bright shining as the sun, We’ve no less days to sing God’s praise, Than when we’d just begun!

John Newton 1725-1807

Morning Has Broken

Morning has broken. Like the first morning; Blackbird has spoken, Like the first bird. Praise for the singing; Praise for the morning; Praise for them springing, Fresh from the Word.

Sweet the rain’s new fall, Sunlit from heaven; Like the first dew fall, On the first grass. Praise for the sweetness Of the wet garden, Sprung in completeness, Where God has passed.

Mine is the sunlight; Mine is the morning Born of the one light Eden saw play. Praise with elation; Praise every morning, God’s re-creation Of the new day.

Psalm 30:5  Eleanor Farjeon 1881-1965

God Bless America

God Bless America, land that I love Stand beside her, and guide her Through the night with the light from above.

From the mountains, to the prairies, To the ocean white with foam, God bless America, my home sweet home, God bless America, my home sweet home.
The flagship program of Birchbark Expeditions BSA, a 7-day, fully guided canoe trip in Canada’s Algonquin Provincial Park, which offers some of the best canoe tripping in the world.

Saturday
All-day tour of historic Sainte-Marie Among the Hurons, the 17th century French and Indian settlement on Georgian Bay, occupied for ten years during the exploration of the vast North American continent.

Sunday
Your crew arrives at our Birchbark Expeditions BSA Base Camp on Whitefish Lake, conveniently located on Highway 60 between the Canoe Lake Portage Store and the Algonquin Visitor Center. Many crews visit the magnificent Visitor Center for a indepth introduction to the Park (and a good meal). Whitefish Lake provides an ideal sheltered location to hold our pre-trip canoe training. Opening and closing campfires are held here. And on Sunday at Base Camp you will meet your Guide, who will stay with your crew for your whole trip.

Monday through Friday
On Monday your crew leaves Base Camp for five days of canoeing in the Interior. Motor boats are banned beyond the first access lakes, so within a day you will be in a remote wilderness section of the park. There are literally hundreds of lakes in Algonquin, and dozens of canoe routes. We custom design a trip to your crew’s desires and experience levels. Get ready for unsurpassed canoe tripping!

Algonquin
The oldest and most famous provincial park in Ontario, and one of the largest in Canada, is 300 miles (six hours) from the Niagara Falls USA/Canada border. Situated on the geologically ancient Canadian Shield, Algonquin sprawls over 3,000 square miles (2 million acres) of wild and beautiful lakes and forests, bogs and rivers, cliffs and beaches – a canoeist’s paradise. The vast interior, only accessible by canoe and portage, is populated by beaver, moose, bear, wolves and loons.

Birchbark Expeditions BSA Guides are all hand picked outdoorsmen. Most have been Scouts for decades and have canoed Algonquin Park for years. Our Canoe Routes of Algonquin Park is chock full of detailed Guide Notes describing 35 different routes our Guides have travelled.

A Scout’s first canoe trip - Algonquin Park

The One-trip Portage
Your Guide will help you become an expert canoe tripper, the hallmark of which is the one-trip portage. Through the use of careful packing technique, and specialty lightweight equipment, most crews traverse the often rugged portages in one trip.

Pre-Requisites for Scouts and Venturers:
- Age 13 by September 1st of the year of your trip
- BSA swim test (100 yards)
- First Class Scout or equivalent
The North American Martyrs Birchbark Expedition starts at the Shrine of the North American Martyrs in Midland, Ontario, Canada, where two days are spent touring the Martyr’s Shrine.

The expedition then moves to the lakes and forests of Algonquin Provincial Park. Each day you will paddle and portage to a new campsite deep inside the Park.

Each day Mass will be offered, and a spiritual meditation on topics of interest to young men will be conducted.

Spiritual Meditations
- Embracing the Cross
- Religion for Men
- Spiritual Battles
- Searching for Truth
- Escaping the Slavery of Sin
- Finding my Way

The North American Martyrs Birchbark Expedition is a physically active religious travel retreat, specifically designed for high school / college age young men. It combines spiritual exercises with exciting outdoor adventure. A Catholic Priest and a Birchbark Expeditions BSA canoe tripping Guide accompany each crew.

Canoe Trip Training in
Packing, paddling, portaging, camping technique, map reading, wildlife observation.
All canoe trip equipment is provided, including canoes, paddles, life jackets, tents, food, stoves, canoe packs.
Participants bring personal clothing and sleeping bag.

Day by Day Itinerary
Friday, Saturday
MARTYR’S SHRINE
“The Jesuits and the Hurons” by the Shrine Director
Mass at St. Ignace, site of the martyrdom of St. Jean de Brébeuf and St. Gabriel Lalameant
Canoe Trip Equipment Shakedown
Sunday
TRAVEL TO ALGONQUIN PARK & BASE CAMP
Algonquin Visitor Center
Base Camp set-up, Canoe Paddle Instruction
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday
ALGONQUIN PARK CANOE TRIP
Paddle and Portage in Algonquin

Pre-Requisites for Scouts and Venturers:
- Age 14 by September 1st of the year of your trip
- BSA swim test (100 yards)
- First Class Scout or equivalent

College Men must pass swim test and register as Scouters.
Contact your Campus Chaplain for details.
Whitewater Canoeing

What to expect:
Week-long intense training session in aspects of river canoeing designed to prepare you for paddling on Class 1 and Class 2 rapids, with particular emphasis on paddle strokes, maneuvers, and river safety.

Great training for River Expeditions
Excellent preparation for subsequent trips down remote northern Ontario wilderness rivers, which empty into the salt water of James Bay.

Along the way instruction is given to pass up to American Canoe Association (ACA) Levels 1, 2 and 3—Flat Water, Moving Water and River Canoeing by an ACA certified instructor.

The week finishes with a 40 mile trip on the Madawaska River.

Advanced
For experienced flat-water canoe trippers.

Pre-requisite:
As this program concentrates on whitewater technique, it is best offered after a crew has had at least one successful Birchbark Expeditions BSA flatwater Algonquin Park canoe trip.
Moose Factory, at Moosonee, was founded in 1673 as one of the first Hudson Bay Company trading posts. The Missinaibi-Moose River canoe route was once an important fur trade route connecting James Bay to Lake Superior. Furs worth fortunes were paddled and portaged from inland posts over this express route to Hudson Bay and European markets.
There can be no life so happy as that of a Voyageur.

The French Fur Trade
produced a number of colorful characters, who became the stuff of legend over the course of some two hundred years. Their common characteristic was the birchbark canoe, that wonderful watercraft that made traversing a vast continent possible from Atlantic Ocean to Pacific and all the way down to the Gulf of Mexico.

Voyageur
The Voyageur was the backbone of the fur trade, the engine that made possible incredibly long journeys through the wilderness. The beginner was called a Mangeur du Lard, “pork eater” because his diet consisted mostly of pork and peas or beans. At the end of his first voyage, he was ‘baptized’ as a Voyageur. Voyageurs were strong, skilled canoeists and camped under their canoes for months at a time.

Homme du Nord
An Homme du Nord (say “um doo nord”) was a Voyageur who wintered over in the northwoods. The French translates to Northwoodsman. He was looked upon with awe by Voyageurs, because he had survived trapping furs and camping out through the long Canadian winter, when temperatures often reached 30°F below zero.

To become an Homme du Nord you must know how to handle a canoe like a master. You must paddle your canoe solo for a mile. You must load, portage ¼ mile, and unload a canoe by yourself. And you must go on a second trip.

Coureur de Bois
The most adventuresome of the French Canadians was the Coureur de Bois (say “koo rur de bwah”) which translates as Forest Runner. It was often difficult to tell him apart from the Indians with whom he often lived. The Coureur de Bois was independent, preferring to trap on his own, away from the structure of the fur trading companies. He was often employed as a Guide and Scout because of his knowledge of the wilderness canoe trails.

The coureur du bois, Étienne Brûlé, showed Champlain the way to Georgian Bay, opening up the major canoe rouet of the fur trade. He was likely the first white man to make it to the site of Niagara Falls and Buffalo, New York.

Birchbark Expeditions BSA
The skills a modern day canoe tripper uses are much the same as they were when the continent was explored by hardy adventurers. Birchbark Expeditions BSA has assembled a collection of those skills, which, once mastered, will help ensure you have a safe and enjoyable trip in the wilderness. Join us! Become an Homme du Nord!

"Descending the Rapids"
from The Voyageur by Grace Lee Nute
Homme du Nord  (Wilderness Canoe Tripper)  Say "um doo nord"

1. Knot Tying
   - Tie the following 4 ½ Voyageur Knots blindfolded and behind your back:
     A. Square Knot
     B. Sheet Bend
     C. Tautline Hitch
     D. Bowline around your waist
     E. Bowline around a tree (½)

2. Liquid Fuels
   A. Complete Liquid Fuels Safety orientation

3. Firebuilding
   A. Use pine or balsam pitch to light a fire, using two matches.
   B. Using an axe, split a 3” diameter log 3” for kindling

4. Packing
   A. Pack personal gear for a 1-week canoe trip
   B. Pack gear to be waterproof: dunk-test it for one hour
   C. Explain what foods to take on a canoe trip, and why
   D. Pack food and a kettle pack for a 1-week canoe trip.

5. Camping
   A. With another person, pitch a crew dining fly
   B. Show how to make a fly secure against the wind
   C. Explain chemical, filter, ultraviolet light and boiling methods of purifying water.
   D. Explain how to wash dishes on a canoe trip
   E. With another person, hang crew food in a “bear bag”
   F. Explain the 8 points of the Leave No Trace
   G. What is The Risk Zone, and how do you avoid it?

6. Swimming
   A. Swim 100 yards
   B. With a buddy, and while wearing a life jacket, swim 50 yards towing your swamped canoe.
   C. Explain the 8 points for a Safe Swim Defense and why it is important for a wilderness canoe trip.

7. Canoeing
   A. With another person, swamp and right your canoe.
   B. Demonstrate a canoe-over-canoe rescue
   C. Demonstrate bow, draw, cross bow draw, back, sweep and J-strokes.
   D. TANDEM canoe-paddle ½ mile in the bow, paddling on one side
   E. TANDEM canoe-paddle ½ mile in the stern, paddling on one side
   F. SOLO paddle ½ mile, paddling only on the right side of your canoe
   G. SOLO paddle ½ mile, paddling only on the left side of your canoe
   H. Portage a canoe ¼ mile with another person

8. Pathfinding
   A. Orient a map
   B. Identify 10 map symbols
   C. Take a degree reading
   D. Using your map and compass, navigate a canoe across a lake to the portage.
   E. Identify the North Star and 4 constellations

9. Lost
   A. Make a list of items to carry on your person whenever you go on a wilderness canoe trip.
   B. Explain the STOP acronym (Stop, Think, Options, Plan)
   C. Explain why the buddy system should be used when portaging.
   E. Explain what “buddy canoes” are and why you should use them.

10. Voyaging
    A. Explain the 9 points of Safety Afloat course
    B. Plan a canoe trip of 4 days, listing lakes, portages and emergency exit points
    C. Go on a canoe trip of at least four nights, camping in at least 3 different campsites during the trip
    D. Sing 3 Voyageur songs

"Le Portage"
From The Voyageur by Grace Lee Nute
Lo, there are birch canoes coming afar;
Voyageurs paddling and singing their songs;
Shouldering wearily o’er the portage;
Camping at twilight, asleep before long;
Wilderness sojourners, dawn finds them gone.

Le Pays d’en Haut
(The Northwoods)