

The Bow Line

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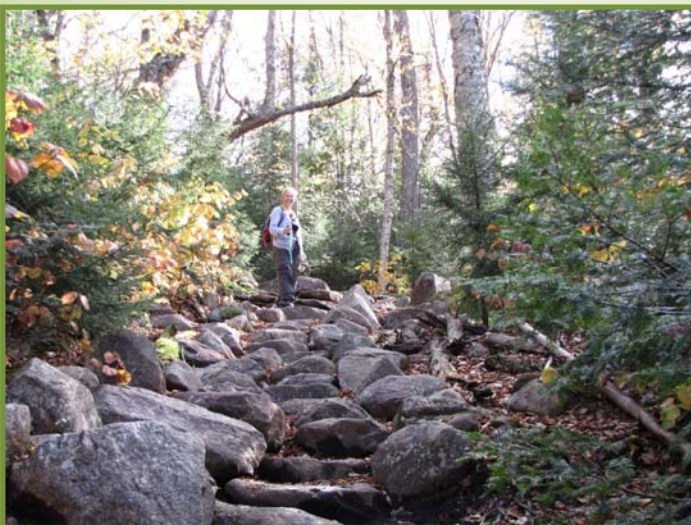
President's Message

Don Whittaker

It has been a busy summer with 4 major commitments made by many paddlers for the Adirondacks, Magnetawan, Massasauga, and Trent multi-day trips. Those adventures take a lot of planning, and often involve considerable personal expense, to ensure routes and accommodations are safe and attractive. Our club is very fortunate to have good people, willing to make the efforts involved.

We are also indebted to those paddlers willing to lead our Day Trips; those who are willing to commit in March and April, to lead paddles as much as 6 months into the future – and to be there when their time and place arrives. They are actually the true strength of our organization. Without their commitments to an annual paddle schedule, we would very likely not have a Club at all.

On behalf of our Executive, I wish to thank all of our Leaders for providing all of us with a good paddling year.



Blue Mountain Trail, Adirondacks

Wrapping Up Another Year

By Tammy Chambers

Here we are at the end of another paddling season, and it doesn't feel like I've paddled as much as I would have liked to. Do you feel the same way?

Maybe it's because we had several paddles cancelled due to bad weather conditions, G20, a marathon, poor attendance, etc.

However, we still did have some great paddling opportunities. Once a month, we would paddle the recreation canal in Welland. As we returned back to the bridge area, the pots would be burning in the water, spectators on both sides of the canal, and we would sit in our boats watching the IlluminAqua performances. This paddle was always greatly attended, and enjoyed by all.

Tuesday & Thursday evenings seemed to be the most popular times for our club. After a day at work, relaxing on the waters of the Welland River, Black Creek and Chippawa Creek proved to be fun times. Meeting for a coffee after the paddle was a great way to end the evening.

For the club members who are able to paddle the multi-day trips, we explored the The Massasauga, The Adirondacks, Saugeen River, and the 3rd part of the Trent Canal System. We also had a 1-day paddle on the Magnetawan River, which was a very successful fundraiser for Sick Kids.

Weekends are a great time to get out for a paddle. They are a break from the busy work-week, and an enjoyable time to spend with a group of people with common interests.

Our Ad-hoc paddles on Wednesdays, have always been my favorite. Unfortunately, they were not very popular this year. The weather, work, dragon boat training, health issues, vacations etc. seemed to keep this core group from getting together. Or, was it you, Dave? Did you jinx our Wednesday group?

What are some of your favorite kayaking spots? This year I went on the Nith, and because I had a boat that I didn't mind getting scratched-up, and I had a blast. To prepare for next years schedule, I'd love to hear where you'd like to paddle, and maybe you would consider being a trip leader.

Volunteer Leaders are a necessity in any club. We would like to thank all of you who volunteered your time and efforts to help make, "The Peninsula Paddlers" a great organization.

“The Massasauga”

Don Whittaker

August 21 – 25, 2010

The group of 10 paddlers met in Grimsby and started a 4 hour convoy to the Park’s entrance at Pete’s Place. After checking in with summer employees (who were very confused with the paperwork and \$ costs for 10 people on 2 campsites), we then proceeded to the private Moon River Marina to park our vehicles and launch our boats. When only half packed, it rained heavily for a short time, getting some of our gear wet. It’s amazing, how much gear gets crammed into our touring kayaks.



We then paddled 7.5 km on various compass bearings through Captain Allen Straight and onward, to our campsites on an appendage island off the southwest corner of Sharpe Island, where tents were pitched in time for a 6 pm dinner and evening relaxation. Our campsites were only reserved in early July, late in the usual Park reservation system, and were sight unseen until we reached them. They were adequate, but 335 is well above the waterline and requires a climb up bare rocks that are slippery when wet. Although near 334, there was no path between them and required a paddle from one site to the other for campfires or other group enjoyment.

Mid-morning Sunday, we paddled 5 km., again by compass bearings, to Wreck Island, enjoying a 2 km Shannon-(self)-guided interpretive trail, viewing it’s amazing geological features. There are similar features scattered all over the Canadian Shield but there are so many varied structures on this one small island that it has actually been featured on several TV programs.

After lunch our paddle took us north east to a point between Wreck and Braiden Islands to view the sunken remains of the keel of a 150 ft. long side-wheeler, called the Waubuno, built in 1865 in Port Robinson. On November 22, 1879, the ship sailed from Collingwood for Parry Sound but was caught in a fierce snowstorm and sank with the loss of 24 people, several cows, a team of horses and miscellaneous cargo. A lot of wreckage was eventually found between the islands of Sans Souci and Manitou but nothing was ever found of the people and animals. After the somewhat depressing viewing of its keel, we journeyed back to our campsites via the north and east sides of Sharpe Island for a 12 km round trip, followed by dinner and a campfire gathering.

Monday morning, we paddled 7.5 km back to the Marina, where 2 of our party were scheduled to return to the Peninsula for their Tuesday jobs. The remaining 8, paddled north to Calhoun Lodge, within Blackstone Harbour. The lodge was established by Joseph Calhoun, a lawyer from Cleveland, in the 1940’s and operated until his death in 1972, eventually purchased to form part of Massasauga Park. Park authorities have attempted to make the buildings and environs a “destination site” for paddlers. It is interesting and has good tourism potential but appears to suffer from a lack of a major commitment. After lunch at the site we again returned to the Marina where another 2 more of our party abandoned us for their jobs down south -- leaving us with 6 people on our 2 campsites, after a 22 km round trip paddle.

Mid-morning Tuesday we paddled directly south across an open bay to what has become colloquially known as “Iron City”. Today it consist of 60-70 cottages grouped around a large central building originally established in 1882 as a “fishing camp”, by wealthy owners / managers of steel companies from the Pittsburgh area. Over the prior couple of evenings we had seen hundreds of late-night lights and thought we could hear music from across the water but on our scouting arrival this day we were told the prior night’s festivities were a farewell dinner and dance, and virtually every cottage was now vacated, with only a few people left patiently waiting for water taxis to take them to their land transportation. Most of the cottages are definitely upscale but are apparently only used in July / August and the rest of the year are guarded / maintained by a couple of permanent caretakers with young families. From Iron City we paddled west along to Loon Portage, which leads to 12 Mile Bay (we didn’t take it), appropriated a good campsite for lunch, and paddled back to our own campsites for a 10 km day’s paddle.



Upon returning to our site from the paddle, we were confused to see the site-equipped picnic table had been totally cleared of its various pots, pans, stoves, etc., which were scattered all over the ground. The table had also been moved 3 metres, from under the club tarpaulin and into an open, sunny area. To do that, one of the lines holding up the tarp had also been severed. Much debate ensued, with 2 theories developed: kids had done a bit of site trashing -- or we had been visited by a young bear (since there were smallish paw prints observed when we first occupied the site). Our tents had not been tampered with in any way, and none of our equipment was damaged, so the whole episode remains a mystery, caused by an “unidentified transient”.

Wed. morning we struck tents, packed our kayaks and returned the 7.5 km to the now familiar marina, and the drive home.

There are a lot of islands in The Massasauga and even with careful attention to compass and GPS it seems inevitable that a group will be “lost “ at least once, for a short time. Fortunately there are a lot of numbered campsites and cottages “grandfathered” into the park, so that directions can be eventually re-established.

If You Go!

By Garry Lumley



A quiet sanctuary in the middle of downtown Hamilton.

.....launch into Cootes Paradise from Princess Point, a Botanical Gardens park at the east end of Longwood Road in Hamilton, or launch at Bayfront Park. Then paddle across the Western end of Burlington Bay and under the high bridges to portage over a road into Cootes Paradise.

On our trip this year we went clockwise to enter a couple of deep bays to observe a large variety of birds. Eventually we kept out away from a fence where it was very shallow to then land on an island to eat lunch. We went around the island, past the fence, and into the Desjardins Canal which was dredged to take ships to Dundas. Approximately 1 km up, Phil and Tammy moved some logs so that we could enter Spencer Creek. We paddled past several fishermen and schools of fish to get quite near to Dundas. On our return trip, we bypassed the Desjardins Canal and followed the channel through 10' plus reeds to reach the shoreline, following it all the way around to the portage into Burlington Bay. This whole adventure took over five hours, as we needed to admire, identify, and photograph the birds.



“Thank you Trip Leaders”

Our club has been very fortunate in having a number of multi-day trips each year, with a small number of members willing to step forward and take on the daunting task of organizing these major trips.

The club would like to thank those multi-day trip leaders who have enthusiastically provided our club members with some very interesting and memorable adventures. For the 2010 paddling year, we had Don Whittaker lead the Massasauga Trip, Remo & Kara Petraroia with help from John Wolfenberg (Gary Zalefski, Lynn Leies, Jane Wolfenberg) head up Trent 3, John and Els Swart lead the Old Forge Adirondack Trip, and Cam Pelletier organized Grady's Paddle, a fundraiser, for Sick Kids Hospital.

In the past 5 years, we have been fortunate to have had: the Rideau Canal Trip Part 1 & 2 organized by John and Jane Wolfenberg; the Adirondack High Peak trips lead by John Wolfenberg; Billie Bear Trips with Bill Russell as trip leader; Bustard Islands and Massasauga organized by Don Whittaker; Algonquin Snowshoe trips and Trent 1 & 2 led by Remo & Kara Petraroia, and Old Forge Part 1 & 2 with Els and John Swart as organizers.

The multi-day trip leader soon learns there is much to do behind the scenes to prepare for it. Numerous hours are spent organizing the trip by preparing maps, planning paddles and hikes, finding accommodations, making phone calls for inquiries and arrangements ahead of time, preparing trip schedules and packages. A scouting trip is always necessary to check out all of the planned paddles (such as put in, lunch/break spots and take out points), as well as to discover the other interesting sights available in the area, and not to forget the most important thing - the “best places to eat”!

The best way to show our appreciation to these trip leaders is to acknowledge the work behind the scenes they have done, to thank them for all the effort needed to organize a successful experience, to cooperate fully during a trip to be flexible in schedule changes due to the inevitable glitches that will occur along the way, and to provide them with positive feedback to assure their efforts have been worthwhile.

Kudos to all those members that have stepped forth to take on the huge responsibility of organizing a multi-day trip. The club is always looking for members who would like to lead new multi-day trips in areas that they have found particularly interesting. An updated Multi-Day Trip Planning Guide will be available early in 2011.

There will always be club members willing to assist you.

Power Paddling

By Garry Lumley



For relaxed paddling I like to use a low angle stroke, but have found that it is not always suitable. Last fall, on the second leg of the Trent Canal trip, while crossing portions of Balsam Lake and Pigeon Lake we had to paddle into strong northeast winds for a considerable time. On the second day I thought that I was okay paddling along with John W. and Remo but I noticed that the gap to the main group ahead of us was getting very wide. I also realized that I was with the “sweeps” and that they were getting ready to tow me. Embarrassed, I turned on my onboard computer to Google solutions to my plight. The solution I found was to change my paddling style by keeping my top hand higher (like Phil) and to push more with my top hand. These actions accentuated my torso twist and gave me more power. It worked as I was able to catch up to the fleet and to stay with them, rather than becoming a burden to them.

In the off season I looked up some magazine articles on paddling techniques to discover that good technique makes paddling more efficient, thus easier, and permits one to apply more power when stroking, thus more speed. Paddling faster in adverse conditions means that you can arrive sooner and thus use less energy. Those Trent paddlers were tired after the tough paddles yet they were very upbeat by their achievement. Here are the basic points that I found:

1. Sit up straight (yes, Mother).
2. Wind up like a spring while reaching the paddle forward to plant the blade in the water at your toes. Rotate at your hips and turn your chest to the offside.
3. Power the paddle through the water by pushing with the onside leg to untwist your body. Your upper arm should be slightly bent and up around your shoulders, and the arm above the water should be straight (like Maureen’s). This will allow the blade to follow a diagonal path that parallels the bow wake.
4. Lift the paddle out at your hip. Keep the elbow higher or level with the paddle. Repeat the whole motion on the other side.
5. Some instructors promote a rhythmic constant fluid motion with the paddle (as most of us usually do), but others stress that the blade must be planted fully before power is applied (like Judy L). It may take up to a second to fully plant the blade during which time you may experience a gliding of the kayak, and when applied, the power of your uncoiling body will make the boat surge ahead. This is the technique that I like to use when I need to go fast.

Sources: Doug Alderson, Adventure Kayak, Summer 2008
Conor Mihell, Adventure Kayak, Early Summer, 2010
Sea Kayaker, August 2003

Thanks!

I would like to thank all of the members who have taken their time to compose and send in articles and/or photographs for the Newsletters, providing some very interesting pictures and great reading. It’s wonderful to be able to share in your experiences, both here and abroad.

Please feel free to continue to send any information you wish to have published in the Newsletter to lmlius@yahoo.ca.

I welcome your stories, and photos, and I know the membership looks forward to “spending a little time with you” on your adventures.

Lynn



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