

# Paddling torrent waters of Nahanni 'dream come true'

By Charlie Gibbs  
Herald Special

Paddling the rapids of the Northwest Territories in a canoe may not be everyone's idea of the perfect vacation. For Sandy and Ric Symmes of Terra Cotta, however, it's a dream come true.

For three weeks in July, the couple will be joined by four other canoeists on an expedition that has taken over a year to plan.

The group will start at the border of the Northwest Territories and the Yukon, and travel the Nahanni River down to Fort Liard, Northwest Territories.

"This is a dream for us," said Sandy Symmes. "But there is so much preparation that is involved".

Accompanying the Symmes, who have an extensive background in canoeing, will be Ron Reid and Janet Grand, authors of Canoeing Ontario Rivers, Judith Kennedy, who works for Bird Atlas, and Peter Crevel.

"The trip will be so interesting, because we each have similar interests," Mrs. Symmes said. She said that each member of the group has a specialized interest in various canoe-trip related fields, such as nature study, flora or wildlife.

The six-member team will be taking all their own equipment, food, and clothing; enough to last them 21 days away from civilization.

The Symmes' interest in canoeing and nature stem from over ten years experience canoeing and backpacking across Canada. Mrs. Symmes is a leader for Canadian Nature Tours, an organization of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists. Canadian Nature Tours takes beginner

through advanced-level canoeists on week-long trips, canoeing the river systems of Ontario and Quebec.

One of two trip leaders, Mrs. Symmes is responsible for a group of ten people from all walks of life, who are all united by one thing: the desire to better understand and appreciate nature.



**CAMPING OUT** - Without all the comforts of home, Sandy Symmes (above) and her husband Ric will spend their summer vacation paddling by day and camping by night, cooking over an open flame. Mrs. Symmes is a canoe trip guide for Canadian Nature Tours. (Photo submitted)

"The diversity of canoes is amazing," Mrs. Symmes said. "It's the people that I enjoy. You take a group of strangers for seven or eight days, living together, and at the end of the week, there is a great bonding".

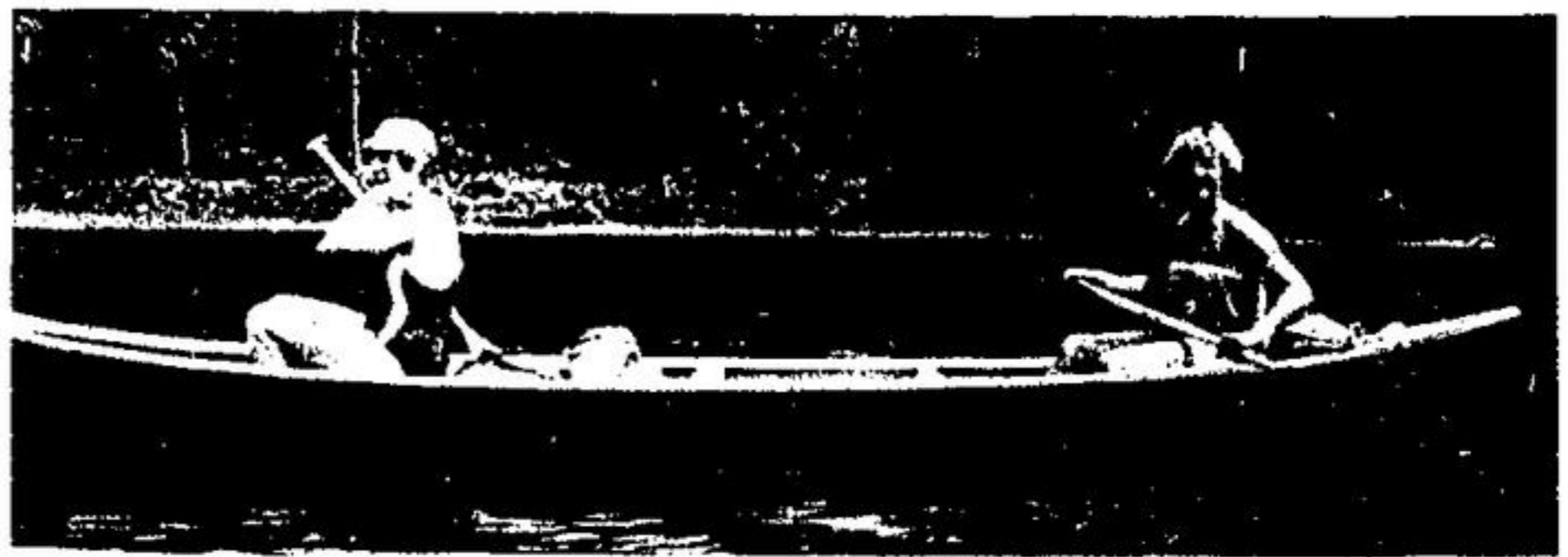
Canadian Nature Tours have been booked solid for this summer. Often, trips get filled up to one year in advance. Mrs. Symmes offers an explanation:

"People are becoming more aware of the vanishing wilderness, and people are becoming more aware of fitness. The sport of canoeing combines both".

Canadian Nature Tours ranks the various river systems of Ontario into novice, experienced novice or intermediate, and advanced levels. This summer, Mrs. Symmes will be leading several "warm-up" trips in June for private groups, on the Duomoine River and the Pickering River. She will then proceed with her husband Ric to the Northwest Territories for the Nahanni trip, which is meant purely for the Symmes' own enjoyment. Following that trip, Mrs. Symmes will be leading a trip on the Missinabi River for the last week in August, and on the French River for the second week in September. Both the Missinabi and the French River trips have been booked solid.

"Canoeing is really taking off as a sport," Mrs. Symmes said.

Although there are several organizations available which lead beginner canoe trippers, Mrs. Symmes stresses that Canadian Nature Tours is the only group that combines nature study with canoeing. On her trips, Mrs. Symmes will stop the group on the trip to examine a



**BACK TO NATURE** - Sandy Symmes steers a canoe often booked up one year in advance. "People are becoming more aware of the vanishing wilderness and people are becoming more aware of fitness," she said. (Photo submitted)

rare flower or observe nature wildlife common to the area.

"We take the time to appreciate nature," she said.

Canadian Nature Tours also prides itself in the fact that all cooking is done over an open fire, and customers sleep in tents at designated campsites along the river. Although the trips do have a timetable, scheduling is loose enough to permit day stops for backpacking, canoe portaging or white-water rapid canoeing.

All trip leaders for Canadian Nature Tours are experienced naturalists, and have background training in proper canoeing techniques and safety.

The Federation of Ontario Naturalists is an umbrella organiza-

tion of local naturalists clubs. In our area, Mrs. Symmes is vice-president of the Halton-North Peel Naturalist Club, who meet at Harrison Public School in Georgetown every second Tuesday of the month at 8 p.m.

The club tries to appeal to a broad range of interests, involving all areas of nature. For example, the club has sponsored day hikes, as well as guest speakers. Botanist Wayne McShane spoke to the group on Ontario orchids, while Bruce Duncan spoke about hawks in October.

Mrs. Symmes' involvement in nature does not end with the Naturalist club, however. She also does bird and nature talks to school children in the Halton and Peel regions.

"Children must be able to see the importance of nature. We teach them to appreciate a flower, but not to pick it," Mrs. Symmes said.

Sandy Symmes is chairman of the North Halton Board, Halton Social Planning Council, and is currently enrolled in an Ornithology correspondence course through Cornwall University. She is a physical and occupational therapist by trade.

Mrs. Symmes is married to Ric Symmes, and has three children: Robin, 19; Scott, 17; and Jennifer, 11. She is admittedly an "environmental lobbyist", and asks the rhetorical question, "How can someone appreciate nature, and not try to protect it?"

"If you love something, you have to be willing to fight for it."

## Hospital gets grant

The Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital will be saving more by improving its energy efficiency, thanks to assistance from the government.

The hospital will receive \$8,750 to modify a heating ventilation system and \$12,000 to recover heat from flue gas to pre-heat feed-water.

Twenty-six hospitals in all will share \$1 million in energy management grants, courtesy of the Ministry of Energy. The projects are expected to save up to \$1 million per year in energy costs and pay for themselves in an average of three years.

## In the hills

### On your mark

Are you gearing up those leg and heart muscles for the annual Mayor's Road Race?

The Race takes place in just a few more weeks, June 14, and will have runners sprinting up local streets.

Today, Halton Region is expected to give approval to the town's recreation department to use a portion of Mountainview Road near Sargent Road for the race.

### 4-lane bridge

The Ministry of Transportation and Communications is committed to constructing a new four-lane structure on Steeles Avenue over Highway 401, Halton was told.

The Regional Chairman received a letter from Minister Ed Fulton last month that says his staff are working on pre-contract engineering and approvals for the work.

"While it now seems improbable that the construction could be carried out in 1988, every effort will be made to tender this work as soon as it is possible to do so," the Minister's letter says.

### Think about it

Thinking about volunteering? The Halton Centennial Manor has a variety of jobs waiting for you.

The Milton-based seniors' residence requires help for card parties, a newsletter, bingo, picnics and day trips and much more.

For more information call 878-9141.

### Swimming up

All Beavers, Cubs and Scouts of 1st Glen Williams met on the property by St. Alban's Church last Tuesday evening for a swim-up and going up ceremony.

The outdoors made a beautiful setting for the Beavers moving up to Cubs and the Cubs graduating to Scouts. 1st Glen Williams group served lunch and refreshments in the church hall following the ceremony.

### Pork representative

Bob Allison, a representative of the Halton Pork Producers Association has been ratified as member of the Halton Agricultural Advisory Committee. Mr. Allison is a Georgetown resident.

### Swedish design

The mechanically-cleaned bar screens for the Georgetown Water Pollution Control Plant will be of Swedish design, Halton councillors learned last week.

A Canadian company licensed to manufacture the screen in Ontario, Arla Incorporated, has been selected to supply this equipment at a cost of \$92,622.

The Water Pollution Control Corp. has been chosen to supply the fine bubble aeration system at a cost of \$383,340.

These items are required for the expansion of the Georgetown Water Pollution Control Plant.

## Walk to the moon and aid CF kids

Put on your most comfortable clothes, a wide-brimmed hat and you'll be all set for a walk to the moon.

The day is Sunday, May 24, and take-off time is 9 a.m. from the Zellers store in the Georgetown Marketplace.

Everyone's invited to join in the 10 mile "Moonwalk" to raise money for cystic fibrosis research. It's the second year Zellers is putting on the fund-raiser, and already 75 people have registered for the walk.

Zellers Associate Manager George Cardoso is one of them. "Oh yes, I'll be there," he said with a smile. He's bringing his wife and in-laws along. They will take the distance with him last year too.

He has some hints for walkers. Wear cotton socks, comfortable shoes, and clothes that aren't too skin-exposing as you could get a bad burn on a sunny day.

Most of all, once you start, don't stop or sit down, because then your feet can become numb and you'll not be able to get moving again, Mr. Cardoso says.

There'll be first aid along the route, provided by the Georgetown Track Club and cars to pick up those who can't take another step. There will be water stations on the route and lots of energy foods like chocolate bars, apples, frozen fruit drinks. Half-way through the course will be washroom facilities.

Starting from the Zellers store, walkers will travel along Sinclair Avenue to Mountainview Road (Ninth Line) to Sideroad 5, to Eighth Line (Main Street) to Maple Avenue then up Highway 7 and back to

Zellers.

Last year, the Georgetown Zellers was able to raise \$2,700 through the Moonwalk for cystic fibrosis. That's with 33 walkers. This year's goal is to raise \$10,000. The company has also raised its goal from last year's \$300,000 to \$1.5 million.

"We hope the more information people get about cystic fibrosis people become aware and more participate," Mr. Cardoso said.

Cystic fibrosis was a disease the associate manager had heard of but not paid much attention to until the Moonwalk project was taken on by Zellers, he said.

"Moonwalk has brought more awareness to us and the rest of the staff," Mr. Cardoso said. "Especially this week, with that fellow who had a heart and lung transplant."

Cystic fibrosis is the second leading child killing disease in Canada. It is an inherited disease of the mucous secreting glands. Children with CF used to die at around 11 years of age. Now they usually live to 20. The mucous in the lungs makes breathing gradually more and more difficult, despite daily attempts to loosen and cough up the mucus.

There are 25 cystic fibrosis clinics in Canadian hospitals, where CF research, diagnosis and treatment is done. Doctors don't know which gene is defective, causing the disease in a youngster. There is no cure for CF and no way to stop it.

If you aren't walking May 24, then Mr. Cardoso urges you to pledge support for a walker.

Registration and pledge forms can be picked up at the Zellers store.

## Mattie Spencer Meet the teacher

By CHARLIE GIBBS  
Herald Special

Mrs. Mattie Spencer has taught at Centennial Middle School for 13 years. She has been involved with language arts, math and her current role as the sole home economics teacher. Previously, Mrs. Spencer taught elementary school in Hamilton.

In 1969, Mrs. Spencer went on the teacher exchange program, and taught the equivalent of a Grade 2 class in Wales.

"It was a great experience," Mrs. Spencer said. "I'm going back this year."

Mrs. Spencer described the Welsh educational system as "quite different" but not the kids. "Children are the same all over the world," she said. "I had a great class."

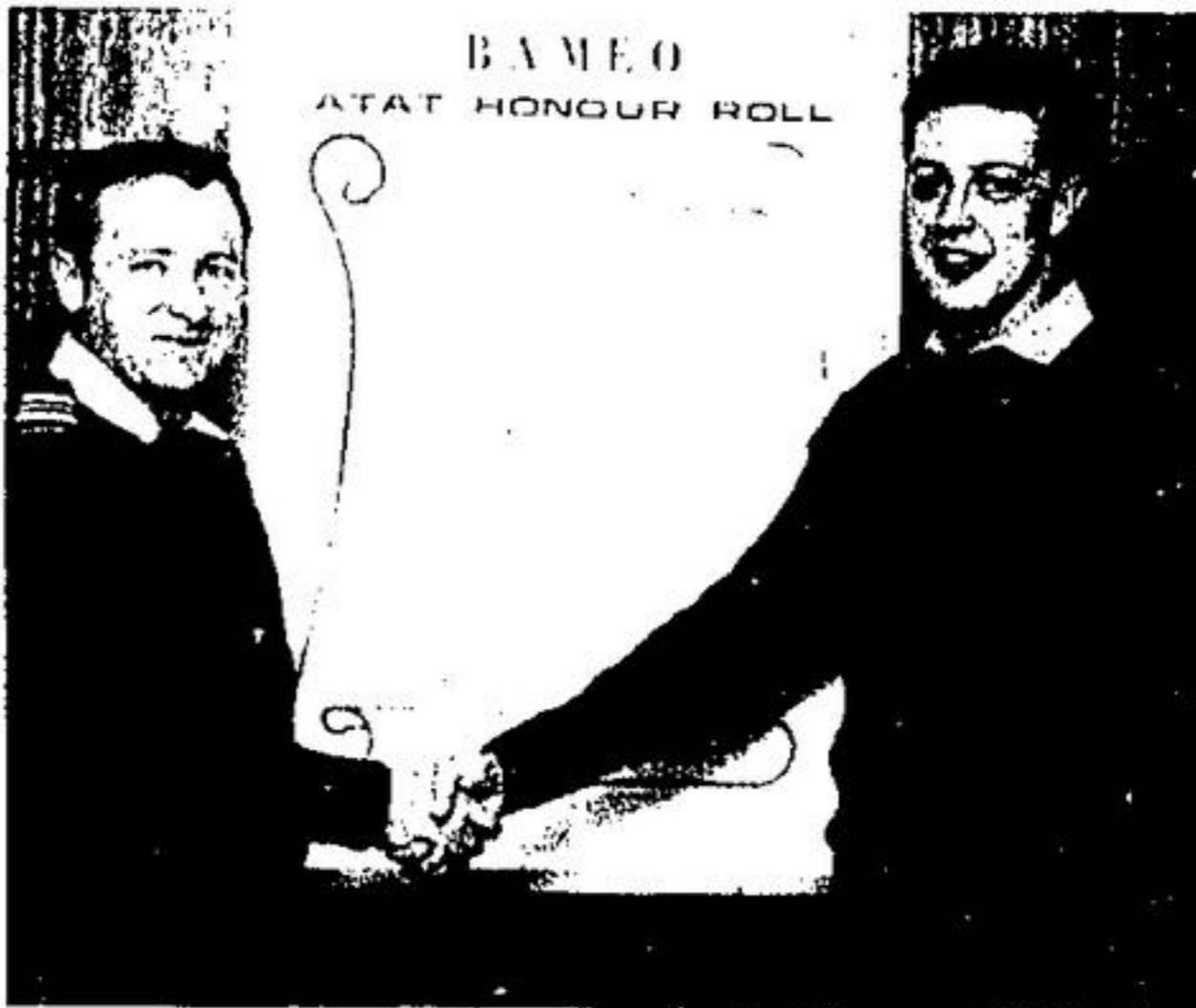
Mrs. Spencer runs a stuffed

animal club, and is a staff advisor for the Centennial Student Forum. She confronts her students with ambitious, challenging projects that do more than teach how to cook and sew.

"The program is based on child development in all its forms: physical, emotional, social, etc.," Mrs. Spencer said.



Mattie Spencer



## Makes the grade

Private Mark Staley, a Communications Radar Systems Technician at CFB Summerside is congratulated by Major Dick Jamer, the Base Aircraft Maintenance Engineering Officer, for his outstanding accomplishment during the writing of his trade advancement exam.

Mr. Staley's name has been added to the Aircraft Trade Advanced Training Honour Roll by virtue of his attaining 91 per cent on his most recent exam. Mr. Staley, a native of Acton, Ontario, enrolled in the CF in 1981. Since completion of basic trade training he has been at Summerside. (Photo submitted)

## Province honors our library volunteers

Norman Elson and Carol Lowe of Georgetown have been awarded 10 year volunteer service pins by the Ministry of Citizenship and Culture.

They will be receiving their awards May 31 at a special ceremony at the Royal Botanical Gardens in Hamilton.

The two residents are among 217 individuals receiving volunteer awards next Sunday.

The volunteers will be awarded trillium-shaped bronze, silver and goldtone lapel pins and certificates acknowledging 10 years of service with non-profit organizations. They will also receive First Day Covers of a new Canada Post stamp commemorating the work of volunteers across the country.

The ceremony will honor volunteers working for a broad spectrum of local non-profit organizations within the scope of the mandate of the Ministry of Citizenship and Culture. This included arts groups, heritage conservation agencies, public libraries, community information services, multicultural groups, ethnocultural groups, citizenship services, and programs by and for Native people.

Joanna Miller, president of the Ontario Association of Volunteer Bureaux and Centres said, "The awards ceremonies highlight the celebration of Volunteer Week and enhance the positive image of volunteerism. I join with the Ministry in honoring this most important sector of Ontario volunteers."

Volunteer Week, held April 26 to May 2 this year, is intended to celebrate the work of volunteers across the province and encourage more involvement in the future.

"The Volunteer Service Awards encourage Ontarians in many walks of life to direct their energies and diverse talents towards developing the potential of our communities to the fullest," Dr. Munro said.

"By recognizing the volunteer achievements of the past, we are looking to the challenge of the future - the challenge to foster a spirit of mutual respect and understanding among all our citizens."

## Honey run

Runners take note The Credit Valley Marathon Club is holding its

ninth annual Bread and Honey 15 kilometre run June 6. Join Club members at Streetsville Secondary School on Joyram Street, Streetsville, at 8:15 a.m.

Then it's on to Lansdowne Park where all 2,000 youngsters plus officers are treated to hot lunches, followed by a sightseeing tour of the nation's capital.

The final stop of the day is at the parliament buildings where photos are taken. The patrollers are then given a tour of the buildings.

The final day finds the students just as busy. They are all up early for breakfast then bused to the parade marshalling area next to the Supreme Court. Sharply at 10:15 a.m. the 2,000 patrollers from across Canada plus another 6,000 patrollers from the Ottawa Valley parade past the Parliament Buildings.

The President of the Hamilton Automobile Club, Mr. A. U. Oakie, responsible for the first Jamboree 28 years ago says, "These young delegates to the annual CAA school patrol Jamboree are representatives of thousands of young students who protect their classmates daily at school crossings. The Jamboree helps to focus attention on the important service rendered by school patrollers day in and day out in all kinds of weather."

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