

25-26 August MINDEN (GULL RIVER)

Ken Coburn, (416) 767-5845; book between 6 and 23 August.

The world-class whitewater course on the Gull will challenge the expert paddler and provide an exiting run through fast, technical rapids. A thrill for even the most jaded boater. Limit six canoes.

1-3 September SOUTH GEORGIAN BAY LOOP

Jasper and Mary Megelink, (416) 877-0012; book between 19 and 28 August.

We will meet Saturday morning at Oastler Lake Provincial Park. This will be a leisurely flatwater loop through the magnificent lakes southwest of Parry Sound. Suitable for canoeists capable of paddling 18-20 km a day with a few short portages. Limit five canoes.

1-3 September OTTAWA RIVER

Dale Miner, (416) 730-8187; book before 21 August.

This is the trip for the whitewater aficionado. The rapids are big and the holes are deep and demand respect. Expert paddlers will find a challenging weekend in store for them on the Middle and Main channels of the Ottawa. A nearby campsite for apres-canoe gourmet cooking is available. Limit six canoes with crews who don't mind getting wet.

15-16 September MAGNETAWAN RIVER

Hugh Valliant, (416) 699-3464; book before 8 September.

This is an exploratory trip for the organizer, a reconnaissance in anticipation of running this wildwater river after the rafters have finished, next spring. The 22 km between Ahmic Lake and Wahwashkesh Lake will offer plenty of spots to play, or maybe walk, depending on the water level. A trip for experienced paddlers who enjoy the unknown. Solo paddlers welcome. Limit four canoes.

16 September ELORA GORGE

Dave Sharp, (519) 621-5599; book before 10 September.

At this season, the fall rains are beginning to refill the Grand River. The Gorge has many small rapids providing ample opportunity to practice and improve your whitewater skill. Suitable for intermediate paddlers. Limit six canoes.

22-23 September LOWER MADAWASKA

Ken Coburn, (416) 767-5845; book between 10 and 18 September.

This fall trip down the Lower Mad is always a delight whether you enjoy playing in the rapids or relaxing and looking at the autumn colors. Overnight camping on the river. Intermediate paddlers. Limit four canoes.

6-8 October PETAWAWA RIVER

Diane Hamilton, (416) 279-0789; book before 28 September.

This fall trip down the Petawawa from Lake Traverse to Lake McManus, through Algonquin's fall colors, is a classic.

Don't forget your camera. Limit four canoes with crews experienced in cold weather tripping.

14 October ELORA GORGE

Ken Coburn, (416) 767-5845; book between 8 and 13 October.

Often the water level is quite high at this time of year so we could have an exiting trip. Whitewater play for intermediate paddlers prepared for colder weather. Limit six canoes.

20 October SOUTH GEORGIAN BAY

Hugh Valliant, (416) 699-3464; book before 12 October.

A flatwater trip suitable for novices who are prepared for inclement weather. The trip will begin north of Six Mile Lake Provincial Park and run west to McCrae Lake where we will set up a base camp. We will then paddle to Georgian Bay Island National Park. Along the way we will see a historic shrine and a wooden cross. Limit five canoes.

A note from the Outings Committee. Firstly a heartfelt 'thank you' to all our trip organizers. You give a lot of pleasure to trip participants. For those of our members who feel that they would like to organize a trip but are not quite sure about what is involved, give me a call and find out how easy it is.

If you have suggestions for routes that would be interesting, particularly in the Pickerel-Magnetawan area, for either one-day or two-day trips or longer, we would welcome your input. New route ideas are always interesting. If you have difficulty contacting one of the organizers, please feel free to phone me, Roger Harris, (416) 323-3603.

THE PIECE OF GRANITE

Back from the river and unpacking. Noticing how light the bags are. Stuffed stitch-busting full on my way up. Now the bags are almost pathetically light. On most vacations the reverse is true. You come back with more than you leave with. Panama hats, straw hats, art work. Different coming back from the river. There you leave with more and come back with less. Much less. Food mainly, but you also come back with less clothes, less fishing gear, less camping equipment. Offered willingly as donations to the river god or taken arbitrarily. Tolls for the right of passage.

What comes back extra? A piece of driftwood, some pictures or slides, a piece of granite, several pages of notes. The sum total of the herculean effort of 20 days of river travel.

Looking at the little pile of extra and what value one would place on it. The piece of granite now held so lightly so far south of its birthplace has treasure value. Midas's millions are less desirable than the vision of adventure you can conjure up by holding the piece of granite in your hand. The wind, the cold, the campsites, the sunsets, the fish, the big brawling river all permeate from the granite rock to you. Osmosis of the best kind.

Greg Went