

FOR SHORT-NOTICE TRIPS, CHECK THE WCA WEBSITE BULLETIN BOARD

Suddenly find yourself with a free weekend and want to go paddling? Need a partner for an upcoming trip? Take advantage of our website bulletin board (<http://www.wildernesscanoe.ca>) to post notices for impromptu trips or partners required. Also, bookmark this page to regularly check for new posted outings. This service is a valuable addition to our regularly published quarterly outings list. We encourage members to use it. However, please note that only members may post notices. As these activities are not pre-screened by the Outings Committee, they are considered privately organized affairs and we can take no responsibility for them.

REVIEWS

PADDLING THE BOREAL FOREST: Rediscovering A.P. Low by Max Finkelstein and James Stone, published by Natural Heritage/Natural History Inc., P.O. Box 95, Station O, Toronto, Ontario, M4A 2M8, www.natural-heritagebooks.com, 2004, softcover, 299 pages, \$26.95 CAN or \$19.95 US.

Reviewed by Elizabeth Sinclair

Considerable research by Max Finkelstein and James Stone reveals a great Canadian who has largely been forgotten. This book aims, primarily, to educate and entertain us a little along the way, with oft-humorous and humble mention of the authors' current retracing of a canoe route followed by A.P. Low.

Albert Peter Low (1861-1942) made important contributions to Canada as a geologist, geographer, ethnographer, climatologist, conservationist, naturalist, bureaucrat, author, explorer, surveyor, and cartographer of Labrador and Quebec. His skills awarded him posts as geologist and director for the Geological Survey of Canada (GSC), commander of the Neptune sailing ship, founder and deputy minister of the Ministry of Mines, and briefly, senior bureaucrat in Quebec and Labrador,

The book is written in Max's familiar and earthy style. It has much ambition as a biography, a history of exploration and development in Labrador and Quebec, an ecological treatise on the bounty of Canada's wilderness and man's ravages upon it, and a trip report that seeks to relive the subject's experience and, perhaps, complete the journey that Low had to abandon. So detailed is the biographical and historical focus of this book, that the reader can lose track of the current trip. It begins with a background and account of Low's mapping of vast amounts of shoreline (almost 1,400 miles). Emphasised is his contribution to the GSC and his skill and stamina in wilderness travel by snowshoe, sled, canoe, and sail. In chapter 9, Max and Jim drop from a Twin Otter to pick up the trail where Low had to turn back ("Low's Gap"). Their route is Lake Naococane to James Bay via the Eastmain and Rupert rivers (Quebec Hydro will dam the Rupert in the near future). Their advantages are the 1:250,000 map and plenty of modern equipment, (though certainly not the weather).

This carefully studied work is much more about Low's contributions, his dedication, competence, and accomplishments than the authors' self-effacing travails and triumphs in the wild. Not a quick read, the book (first edition copy-editing needed) merits inclusion in a library of Canadian history for its illumination of a Canadian hero.

EVERY TRAIL HAS A STORY: Heritage Travel in Canada by Bob Henderson, published by Natural Heritage/Natural History Inc. (address see review above), 2005, softcover, 286 pages, \$26.95 CAN or \$19.95 US.

Reviewed by Toni Harting

The author is a well-known member of the outdoor education profession and is published regularly in various journals and other publications. In his numerous travels throughout Canada he has amassed an impressive collection of stories and other information on a wide range of subjects, some of which he presents here in his enthusiastic and charming style. The range of subject matter is impressive indeed and covers all seasons. It deals with diverse activities such as canoeing (but no trip reports), skiing, snowshoeing, hiking, exploring, story telling, you name it. Who would not be curious to read a story with the intriguing title, *Dog Sledding: Old Canadian Ambiance or Hermits I'd Love to Have Me?* Obviously there is a tremendous amount of research required in producing a book like this, which is made clear by the approximately 40 pages of notes/references and extensive index.

The many black-and-white photographs range from so-so to adequate. The quality of the reproductions in the books is barely acceptable too much of the time, which unfortunately is sometimes the case in books published by Natural Heritage. The 15 maps are excellent, though.

In his Preface the author writes: "There is an adventure of the spirit I am hoping to convey in these pages." He certainly is successful. All in all, a remarkable book, filled with knowledge and insight, that demands to be widely enjoyed. As James Raffan concludes in his Foreword: "It's just the thing for a long winter's night or a long lingering read by campfire light." More than that, it's a fine book to read anywhere, any time.