It’s that time of the year again, the start of a new paddling season. During the winter we continued the pool sessions at the Aquarena, and some brave paddlers have been venturing on the ocean, but most of us have put the kayaks and canoes aside to await what we hope will be the warmer days of spring, summer and autumn.

During the winter, your executive has been working behind the scenes. Our partnership with Transport Canada has already been of immense benefit to the club and its members. Because of this funding it was possible to offer the Level 2 Sea Kayak training last fall for nine club members at a significantly lower cost. The same is true for 18 people who will be participants in the wilderness first aid course which is scheduled for the latter part of April, about the time that this edition of Ebb and Flow should reach you. Next year a swift water rescue course will be offered. We have been getting requests from non-club members for these courses, but there is such a demand within the club that places fill very rapidly.

Wednesday evening presentations at the Marine Center started in February and there should be one or two remaining. Executive members have started organization of the Retreat, the Skills School, a booth at the Newfoundland Sportsman Exposition and the St. John’s and Central Safety Days.

I want to remind club members to keep reviewing the website and our Facebook pages to keep informed of club paddles and other events. The coordinators for canoeing and kayaking will soon have a schedule of proposed paddles and outings for the season which will be posted on both the website and on Facebook. Club members will also receive e-mail notices reminding them of the events and of any changes that should occur.

I want to take this opportunity to wish everyone a good paddling season. Have fun! Be safe!

The logo represents the canoe and kayak community, with a canoe and kayak paddle. The blue, with waves, is our environment in which we play. The overall image harkens back to the native heritage of Newfoundland and Labrador. While the red of the paddler’s head is reflective of the energy, action and passion we have for paddling it has a steep historical value as the colour represents primal life forces. The Beothucks were referred to as the “Red Indians” as they would paint their bodies and clothing with red ochre. Shanawdithit, the last known Beothuck, said the spirit world of her people included a “Great Spirit,” a “Powerful Monster” from the sea. Our logo celebrates our first people through artistically incorporating a monster like spirit which runs through the logo.

(Hats with the logo - $15 from the PNL Board.)

**Membership:**
- pnlpayments@gmail.com
- Membership - $20
- Family Membership - $25
- Associate Membership – $50
A kayaker from Lewisporte has been recognized with the 2016 Austin Anthony Making Waves Award

An initiative of Paddle Newfoundland and Labrador (PNL), the award recognizes Chris Vincent’s promotion of safe paddling in the province.

Vincent’s efforts include organizing Central Newfoundland’s Safety Day, instructing kayaking courses for schools in Gander Bay and at the Women in the Outdoors sessions at the Max Simms Camp in Bishop’s Falls. He also runs clinics and delivered presentations on water safety and canoe handling to children at the United Church Camp in Loon Bay. When contacted by phone about the award, Vincent said it came as a total surprise.

“I didn’t even know I was nominated,” he said.

Vincent has been sea kayaking for about 14 years and has been a PNL member for over a decade.

He takes pleasure in offering safety sessions to both children and adults. Reaching people of all ages is crucial, he said.

“It’s always nice to give presentations to children,” he said. “I always want to get the safety messages out to people as young as possible. But, most of the people who are trying kayaking for the first time are adults.”

Vincent also enjoys taking to his kayak for time on the water. Much of his sea kayaking is done in the Lewisporte /Twillingate/Change Islands/Fogo Island area of the province. However, he has also kayaked in the St. John’s and surrounding area as well as other parts of the province.

Kayaking brings with it exercise and relaxation and is both calming and soothing, Vincent said.

“If you’re out there on a really nice day it’s very enjoyable. The scenery, the wildlife, the icebergs – there are just so many things to see,” he said. “you can get in a lot of places in a kayak or a canoe that you can’t get in (in larger boats). You can do a lot of exploring.”

PNL has chapters in St. John’s as well as central and western Newfoundland and offers indoor safety and practice sessions to canoeists and kayakers.

“We have new people coming to the sessions all the time and some of the veterans (Vincent included) take the time to show them some skills and help introduce them (to the sport) in a nice, safe environment,” he said.

While the award came as a surprise, Vincent said, “it is a tremendous honor for me to be recognized by my peers for my efforts in promoting safe paddling in our province”.

danette@nl.rogers.com
There is a belief, perhaps commonly held, that Labrador, especially its northern domain, is “the Land God Gave to Cain”. It is an ascription which Jacques Cartier gave the entire north shore of the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Ostensibly, he was alluding to Genesis 4:11–16 which tells us that, as punishment for having killed his brother Abel, Cain is condemned to survive a barren land.

Cartier may have known scripture, but it seems he gave little assessment to the place he perceived only as bleak and desolate. He may have been right about Cain’s reward all the same. It just seems that he had such a limited expectation of a deity he might have thought a merciful God.

Just possibly, the allusion to “barren” elicits an excess of subjectivity anyway. Indeed, who would argue that destiny’s plan for the biblical Cain might have been not just to survive but to thrive.

Could there be a better place to embolden and to renew the human spirit than this arctic oasis?

Did the land not testify to an ancient and gifted human occupation — where two great contemporary aboriginal cultures, the Innu and the Inuit — have endured?

These questions were answered, of course, long before the twin-engine Otter carrying kayaks and provisions for two weeks — and four eager paddlers and hikers — touched down on the runway at Saglek Bay. The expedition would take us on a 200 kilometer, circuitous marine route to ply the land and the waters south of the resettled community of Hebron. Our destination was Grimmington Island, where are situated the highest mountain elevations (on an island) in North America — namely Bishop’s Mitre and Brave Mountain.

Each of us had visited parts of Labrador on previous occasions. Now, having unloaded the plane, and shook off the wait in Goose Bay, each of us could reflect on our reasons for coming this far north.
In the interior, indigenous Innu tribes found reason to remain, as did the Inuit who settled the coast (and still inhabit it today). On the face of it, nothing more need be said — except that, historically, we have assumed that life for all the aboriginal peoples has been harsh and unforgiving. Surely, modern society has gotten that much right!

But even here, the unwarranted assumption leads us to ask: who are we to judge?

The question is given context — almost from the start of our expedition. Arrival in Saglek was met with quick dispatch to Hebron, 200 KMnorth of Nain. One would be surprised how quickly and easily notions of what is important can be transformed. All it took was descending darkness and the generous gift of a Labrador tent ready for occupancy — for which we were very grateful to Jenny, one of Hebron’s small number of summer residents!

But it was the next morning’s tour of the ancient community — especially the much newer, but still old, Moravian Mission House (1830) — which provided a more studied assessment of the question.

The Moravian building had been given precedence over the re-establishment of Inuit sod shelters, perhaps sensibly given that 19th century wood construction had come very close to defying restoration. The sheer act betrayed its impermanence alongside the remnants of an ancient culture that thrived without the construction techniques of the Europeans.

Yet, it was neither the Moravian project nor even the graveyards giving evidence of European settlement from 1829, not the Inuit sod houses nor the ancient rock graveyards, which testified to lives lived, a respect for family as well as for community — for even here, the evidences of life found no association with notions of barrenness, endurance, hardship, or deprivation.

That proof was manifest in the pride exhibited by an Inuit elder and carpenter working on the restoration project. He led our eager group to one site, and then another, sharing with strangers stories of the old ways, and some much more recent. He spoke not as might the historian or the archaeologist, but as one who had also endured, one for whom it was personal. After all, he was in the place of his ancestors, where he was happiest and where he evidently belonged.

In 1956 and 1959, the Government of Newfoundland — without consultation — forcibly relocated the people of Nutak and Hebron.

As deeply moving were the artifacts of early Inuit life and culture, and even those relatively modern — especially the Moravian Mission House and the remnants of the Hudson’s Bay Company store, the latter giving way to the elements — none quite affirmed the love of place as did the sentiments expressed and inscribed on bronze plaques, erected in 2005.

Written in both Inuktitut and English, and prominently mounted where they give homage to those who have passed on, the plaques echo the earlier proof of a people who had truly lived, loved, and laid down roots — roots that ran so deep that the experience of having them torn apart caused in those that remain, and their offspring, a pain so hurtful, so deeply profound that, unacknowledged, the wound simply would not heal.

The Government’s statement read in part: “As a result of the closures and the way they were carried out… the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, on behalf of the citizens of the province, apologizes to the Inuit of Nutak and Hebron…”

Inscribed, also in bronze, is a Letter of Reply from the people of Hebron and Nutak. Its message possessed a pride undiminished and a yearning for reconciliation. It states: “We have waited 45 painful years for this apology, and we accept it because we want the pain and the hurting to stop. Hearing your apology helps us to move on.”

Continued the Reply: “When we, the Inuit of Nutak and Hebron, were evicted from our homes, we carried with us much that is precious and good: the spirit of our ancestors, the beauty of our land, the treasure of our language and the love of our God who gave us hope for our future. These are the things that we want to pass on to our children in a spirit of humility and forgiveness.”
And while the expression of heartfelt loss is absolute, as is the priority that what is “precious and good” should be passed on, the need for liberation from the hurt and for closure remained undiminished.

The Inuit spokesperson adds: “It is in that spirit that I say to all those who had a hand in the closing of Nutak and Hebron, and who promised that this was done for our benefit: We forgive you.”

The three words of forgiveness seem less a powerful message of absolution than a reclamation of authority by a dispossessed people, one still proud, having not forgotten who they are, their connections, and the primacy of their claim to the land of their ancestors.

Then, too, the statement manifests a human sophistication that is noble precisely because it speaks to the strengths that emerge from both culture and character. There’s no cry of deprivation here — no evidence of an aboriginal community embittered by climate, barrenness or circumstance. There is only the lament of an entire people “unceremoniously ripped” from their moorings.

Indeed, it is impossible for us to draw any conclusion except that the Inuit were and are a people positioned not on the fringes of history but at its very core. Rather than weakened, they must have been enriched and strengthened by forces we think excessive and unbearable — a fact that finds terminus in Jacques Cartier’s words, “The land of their ancestors.”

To be fair (for me) a couple of weeks slogging kayaks over boulders masquerading as beaches, and performing the seemingly endless grind of making and breaking camp — always with a thought to the day’s paddle or hike — might strike some observers as a parsimonious prerequisite to any right to such comment. While I will admit that any pretensions to being a seasoned scout disappeared by day two of the expedition, I took some comfort (in case we were marooned) in having located place names like Harp Peninsula, Cod Bag Island, Napaktot (Black Duck) Bay, and Seal Bight — all of which speak to an ample bounty, even if not one easily accessible.

Still, the thought of having to keep my kayak upright as I quietly descended upon and speared a day’s food, watching the seal or whale bolt, keeping it tethered until it was exhausted, seemed a matter best left for later contemplation. After all, the satellite phone was never out of reach.

Those reflections often skipped to thoughts of our good fortune that the trip co-ordinator had exercised amazing judgment in choosing possibly the warmest two weeks of the year to undertake the journey — notwithstanding the fact that, at night, my sub-zero-rated sleeping bag still warranted high-tech underwear, socks, fleece, and sometimes more. That required planning. Luck is finding scattered bits of driftwood for a fire to take the chill off the morning or evening air. No one needed reminding that, within a few mere weeks, the first blushes of snow might be seen, changing the landscape again — evoking thoughts of sparse settlers digging in for another long winter.

Indeed, it was impossible not to think of those people in a Darwinian sense and applaud their intelligence, resilience, character, good judgment, and the effort each generation undertook to shape the next one.

As visitors, our preoccupation was not with the vicissitudes of survival. We wanted to experience the sheer fascination of this remote part of the world — located, relatively speaking, in our backyard — a place always accorded respect within our own culture, in part due to that remoteness and to the extremes of temperature, wind, and sea state which inspired fear, at times, but always fascination.

Here, the superlatives most always measure up to their billing. But there is one absolute. This part of Labrador is so different, so unspoiled and unpopulated, that whatever you thought about its power or its magic, the place where your feet set down always seemed to feel the first touch of humanity.

This was especially true as we trekked over the hills of Ferdinand Inlet with grasses, bushes and other vegetation asserting themselves with surprising frequency. Three Mountain Harbour, a climb of modest elevation, exposed beclouded mountain tops while still affording spectacular vistas, as if warning the sea of their overbearing presence.

Sunday Run, the name conjuring thoughts of a gentle afternoon drive, claimed the protection of Finger Hill Island to calm the Labrador Sea. Here we were also introduced to the Kaumajet Mountain Range — an array of peaks, each seemingly in competition for notice, rising quickly out of deep ocean depths. This is where you also get an early sense of what lies in wait on Grimmington Island. But that’s for later; right now, a mountain climb is rewarded with a view of five waterfalls in the distance. Taken together, the images seem excessive — except that the experience of sensory overload seems all too common.

The mountain range at Napaktok (Black Duck) Bay also demands singular focus. The hiker’s footpath consists of kilometers of slate stone, one-half inch thick, and likely dozens of feet deep. The tiles represent an entire mountain peak that, 3.4 million years ago, rose haughtily, mocking the ocean depths. This is where you also get an early sense of what lies in wait on Grimmington Island. But that’s for later; right now, a mountain climb is rewarded with a view of five waterfalls in the distance. Taken together, the images seem excessive — except that the experience of sensory overload seems all too common.

Arrival at Grimmington Island, our most southerly destination, aroused an exaggerated sense of expectancy. The anticipation had been building months before the Lab Air charter set down in Saglek. Two of our number, TA and Marian, had branded the expedition “Paddle2Peaks” — giving it an air of challenge — as if a state of enabled fascination wasn’t enough.

Brave Mountain and Bishop’s Mitre rise to 4032 feet and 3400 feet elevation, respectively. The Island is approached with some foreboding, perhaps because magnitude always
conveys a certain gravitas. At Grimmington, it’s as if even the mountains’ shadow has weight. Aptly named, Bishop’s Mitre radiates the sensation one often feels when entering a cathedral, except in this case a single overbearing tower stands erect, like an unyielding finger, reminding us that the far superior lord to which it is attached has the power to incite solemnity as much awe.

Grimmington is a place where the camera resolves the most ardent attempts at description. Metaphor is challenged when the word “awesome” seems a lazy attribution for a temple to the gods. I’m not sure if there was a mystic among us. But, in a place evoking such profound spirituality, how would anyone have noticed?

Of course, thoughts of tomorrow’s climb suppresses all others. I ask myself, again, why I would expect to follow one of our number who is an expert climber, having ascended a good many mountaintops. I am hopeful that she, and the others, are mindful that everyone defines themselves from a different (possibly lower) elevation, each claiming their own Everest.

After a steep climb at the start, followed by a long and energetic scramble over rough boulder-laden terrain, the trek continued rise after rise using the rough and often deep river bed that time had cut into the centre of the mountain. Feet shuffled over ice-filled gullies, now slightly slushy — which made them passable without crampons — thanks to a fortuitous sun. At 1500 feet, this humble(d) writer sat content, knowing he ought to save some “juice” for the descent, as the others — better fit — went higher.

The payoff included a close-up view of the remaining elevation as it towered over us, forcing heads and eyes to scan the majesty above. An about-turn afforded a perspective which stretched as far as the eye could see. Imagine the Kaumajet Mountains, Turtleback Back Island, Cod Bag Island, and a few icebergs, for good measure — all in a single frame!

The next morning, an anxious reluctance confirmed that it was time to head the kayaks north, by another circuitous route that took us to some ‘old’ destinations and some new ones, including Soapstone Island and the area west of the Harp Peninsula. Again we allowed ourselves to be bedazzled. A dozen or so gigantic icebergs hid inside Takkatat Fjord — yes, this one Fjord — the large bay providing ample room to weave the kayaks between “bergy bits”.

It is one thing to be impressed by the icebergs’ gargantuan size; quite another to hear them groan and strain and crack under their own glacial mass; then, at night, to hear them crash and roll in an otherwise noiseless place — as if the cacophonous sounds of an arctic orchestra demanded an audience, preferably one wide awake.

A few days later, in contrast to the “noise” heard in that city of icebergs, the discord at Torngat Mountains Base Camp and Research Station was both brief and deliberate. With fog capping the mountains at Saglek Bay, a phone call to the helpful Manager of the Camp — who met us at the very start — produced a Zodiac. A short boat trip began to the northern part of Saglek Bay, providing a chance to satisfy a long-held curiosity as to the conveniences afforded visitors to Torngat Mountains National Park.

A community of yurts and tents, including a large version of the traditional Labrador variety with comfortable elevated beds, greeted our arrival. Showers, a fine meal, and a gathering place where we could hang out, read, or just relax, also contrasted with the service-less demands of camping. Even entertainers were part of the deal — three in fact. Each one effortlessly created harmony and gave mimic to the elements, to the forces that created the Torngats, occasionally allowing discordance to magnify the sometimes irreconcilable and unequal powers that have long impacted aboriginal life.

It wasn’t planned, but it was a stroke of good fortune. We arrived as an awards ceremony got underway to recognize Base Camp staff who had successfully completed courses in GPS navigation, safety, and food service, among others.

Having paddled the waters of Hebron, Takkatat, Jansen, Ferdinand, and Kaumajet Inlets and trekked some of the land around those places, too, it seemed obvious that what had begun under the auspices of the Torngat National Park — in the cause of preserving and respecting the land, and in pursuit of international tourism (and the jobs and incomes that accompany this growing industry) — we had been given a glimpse into an “incubator” of eco-tourism, one of the world’s best kept secrets, in one of its most special places.

Is there a conclusion to this story? Several fit, but only one affords the opportunity to come full circle and to give final address to Jacques Cartier. I would say this:

If this is the land bestowed upon the biblical Cain, it was given by a generous God — not one who calculated deprivation, hardship, or exacting punishment, nor any of the miseries to which the word “barren” is inextricably linked.

Even the cynical Cain would be humbled by the grandeur of a place too magnificent to warrant address, where the mountains and fjords defy any normal sense of scale — where even a demanding and unpredictable, though bountiful,
Labrador Sea still commands reverence alongside the Kaumajets.

This is surely a complex and challenging land. It may well be a place where humility is the best survival instinct. Yet, in its barrenness, it still leaves room for Labrador tea, for mushrooms and grasses and plants, for the ubiquitous black bear and for the much rarer polar bear (about which much could be said, but will be left for another telling). Here, though, all of this just seems normal.

Little wonder the Inuit call it "Nunatsiavut". It is an all encompassing word. Translated, it means "our beautiful land". It is a description at odds with that of the French explorer. Indeed, we might rightly conclude Cartier simply never visited this place, his route possibly having kept him farther south.

Perhaps, it doesn't matter. Long before Cartier, the land was claimed by aboriginal culture and psyche, by aboriginal bone and sinew. Any other claim is merely that of a visitor. But while I may not have earned the right to profess attachment to a place aptly named Nunatsiavut, as have the Inuit, I can understand far better, now, what it means to belong.

- Des

2017 Retreat - your chance to try SUPs
(Pictures of Mike and Andrew Kay taken in Qidi Vidi by Alick Tsui)
The Straits
By Ken Campbell

The Pacific Northwest is both a source and a destination in the sea kayaking world. There is nowhere else on the planet where this mix of conditions, scenery and accessibility is enjoyed by so many paddlers. Puget Sound, with its 3000 kms of shoreline and sheltered waterways is a year-round favorite with the kayaking crowd, its islands and its convoluted passages seemingly made for exploration in small boats. The Cascadia Marine Trail, a collection of campsites designated for human-powered craft, winds through the sound and the San Juan Islands making multi-day paddle trips easier to plan. On the other side of the Olympic peninsula, the rugged open coast with its sea caves and wilderness beaches, tests the abilities of more experienced kayakers.

Between these two kayaking destinations, however, is Washington's other coast, a 135-mile stretch of shoreline along the Strait of Juan de Fuca. The section from Port Townsend in the east to Cape Flattery in the west contains some of the most scenic and interesting paddling spots in the state.

Fort Worden State Park is currently the most westerly point on the Cascadia Marine Trail. This sandy beach at the end of the waterway is an ideal put-in, whether you plan to traverse the entire length of the strait or just go out for the day. Traveling west around the Point Wilson lighthouse, the shoreline quickly changes to high cliffs that hide virtually all homes and development. In the near distance lies Protection Island, a national wildlife refuge, the nesting area of approximately 70% of Puget Sound's seabird population. The hills farther off to the north are on Vancouver Island, and on a clear day, the buildings of Victoria are clearly visible.

Human population on the Strait tapers from east to west. Sequim and Port Angeles are the largest towns along the way, and burgeoning growth in the local housing market has seen the separation between the two shrink steadily. The area has been "discovered" by retirees and vacationers, and the result is more construction, more cars and more people.

West of Port Angeles though, the situation is markedly different. Places like Lyre River, where deer watch from the brush above the river mouth and gulls squabble in the shallows, offer a view into the wilder side of the coastline. Another great choice for a day paddle is to put in at Salt Creek, about 10 miles west of Port Angeles, and head west past Agate Bay to Whiskey Creek. Although there are portions of the shoreline that are private property, there are many pristine beaches along the way that are ideal for kayak launching and landing.

Eight miles of perfect wilderness paddling lie between Pillar Point and Clallam Bay. Bald eagles are constant companions, and it isn't unusual to see a gray whale along this stretch from time to time, especially during the peak migration months of April and October. The coastline here is marked by extensive rock gardens, with sandy beaches behind.

The town of Neah Bay on the Makah Indian reservation is the last outpost on the way to Cape Flattery. Here the swells of the open ocean are more evident; the flat water and protected conditions typical of the areas further east has given way to a more coastal feel. Kayakers who paddle west from Neah Bay should be comfortable in surf and inclement weather. Although the water and wind may be tranquil during the summer months, it is not uncommon for fierce storms to strike at any time throughout the year.

From Neah Bay to the tip of Cape Flattery is a distance of about seven miles, but the feeling of paddling among the stacks and caves of the cape is more like being on another planet. Time, wind and water have all come together to create a fascinating collection of rock sculpture that can only be seen from the water. Some of the caves are massive, with ceilings that rise sixty feet overhead, while some are cracks in the rock that only allow for limited exploration. There are stone arches that rise high above the breaking waves, and tiny pocket beaches hidden behind intricate rock gardens.

(Note: Kayaking at and around Cape Flattery requires advanced paddling skills. Get the knowledge and experience you'll need before you go and always wear a helmet.)

Although the conditions in the strait are usually not as demanding as those found along the open coast, they are not as protected and easy-going as those that typify most of Puget Sound either. Paddlers who are looking to do the trip between Port Townsend and Cape Flattery should be comfortable in swells and surf launching and landing, and should be able to paddle well in windy conditions. The weather along the length of the strait varies considerably from place to place, but for planning purposes, conditions and surroundings become more demanding the farther west you go.

Currents can be a factor at various points along the way, but tide height is usually the more critical variable. Because most
of the beaches are very shallow and there are so many boulders and rock outcroppings along the shore, there are many places that are virtually inaccessible at low tide. Plan to start and end your day at high water if possible, and you will cut down the amount of boat and gear hauling you'll have to do.

There are no permits required to kayak any section of the strait, except at its western end. Paddlers launching anywhere on the Makah reservation need to purchase and display a tribal recreation permit, available at most retail locations in Neah Bay.

For a unique paddling experience that showcases some of the best that the Pacific Northwest has to offer, a mix of civilisation and wild country, it is good to know that there are still places like this one, Washington’s other coast.

Ken Campbell is a kayaker, author, filmmaker and PNL member, currently living in Tacoma, Washington. In the summer of 2000, Ken paddled around Newfoundland, an amazing 91-day journey that he still thinks about almost every day.
In the summer of 2017, TA Loeffler, Mark Dykeman, Des Sullivan and Marion Wissink, spent two weeks paddling in Northern Labrador. Labrador is affectionately referred to as the ‘Big Land’ and as our intrepid paddlers explained, it has big waters as well...especially from the perspective of a kayak. Furthermore, Labrador has big bears...black ones and white ones!

TA’s presentation (with her three paddling friends in attendance) on February 1st was Paddle NL’s first of a five winter presentations. By the time of their first strokes, our members had already had quite an expedition involving flights, a truck from St. John’s to Happy Valley-Goose Bay and a two hour flight from Happy Valley-Goose Bay to Saglek. Travelling from St. John’s to Saglek, from one corner of the province to another, is the distance equivalent from Toronto to the Alberta border...with a lot fewer people.

TA described the trip to Saglek including side visits to the museums in North West River and the municipal council office in Happy Valley-Goose Bay, complete with a canoe constructed by Mr. Joe Goudie suspended from the ceiling. Saglek, with its** runway, was established during the cold war as one of many across northern Canada to warn of possible invasions.

TA has the ability to tell a story in a pleasant fashion, and easily held the attention of the 45 who were fortunate enough to attend the evening. Of course, her outstanding photos of massive landscapes, sunsets, wet paddlers, seals and guns helped to keep the audience riveted! Guns, bear fences...yes, and pictures of black bears! While describing landscapes which looked like the Grand Canyon, wonderful hiking and open ocean crossings, it was apparent the group was wary of bears. One day there was an abundance of seals...should they be concerned the seals might attract bears or was the fact the seals were relaxing on rocks an indication they were not aware of any bears in the area? They later learned from native residents the abundance of seals was a good omen...the seals would have not been so casual if there were white bears in the area!

TA informed the group they were lucky to experience the best weather of the summer, even though the temperature dropped to middle single digits in the rain. The flies were not bad. In two weeks, they saw two planes and a helicopter...no other boats. It was apparent the remoteness, the untouched landscape, the lack of human activity and being with friends were the main attractions of going so far at significant expense. TA explained to me the dangers of a such a trip convinced her for the first time to always wear a personal location device on her body. If someone got in trouble, or she was separated from the group, she would not hesitate to contacting the gang with the yellow helicopters...mistakes can be costly. The group also had satellite radios and were able to obtain timely weather forecasts. They also had with large scale maps. It was clear the group had conducted extensive research to ensure a safe trip.

On return to Saglek, the group learned there could be delays in the return of the charter plane. Tents were erected and in the morning, following a windy night, TA decided to check the boats. As she went around a derelict building from the cold war days, she looked up and there it was...a white bear, a polar bear, just 12 feet away. She backed up slowly, “polar bear, polar bear, POLAR BEAR!” Within a half a minute, Mark went from deep sleep to shooting at gravel in front of the bear. We knew from their attendance, they all survived! Whether it’s bears or paddling in such an unforgiving environment, the morale of the story is to never let your guard down!
Finding Farley: My Love Story
A review by Hazen Scarth

It was abundantly clear throughout his presentation Ed O’Reilly has a passion for cruising the waters of Newfoundland’s south-coast aboard his Fisher 37’ motorsailer. Ed explained his love affair was in part stimulated by Farley Mowat’s book, Bay of Spirits, A Love Story written in 2006. Mowat’s book is about his love story with his wife Claire, who he met in St. Pierre. The book is based on Mowat’s time on the south coast during the late 50s and early 60s. Ed explained he has read the book at least three times and refers to it during the travels along the southwest coast. Indeed, the book features plenty of detail of the coastline, including difficult docking and descriptions of reefs and other navigational challenges. More importantly, Farley Mowat provides a vision into the people and the places of a time prior to Resettlement.

Although a kayak and a Fisher 37 have little in common, Ed frequently made observations of what it would be like to paddle the coastline and recommended several references which would make for a safe and more interesting trip. These references include:

- Weather forecasts: Environment Canada, Windfinder (St. Pierre Airport), and Smart Bay (Placentia Bay)
- Environment Canada’s Marine Weather Guide
- The Cruising Guide to Newfoundland; Cruising Club of America
- Coastal Cruising in Newfoundland; Rob Mills
- Places Lost; Scott Walden
- Facing the Sea, Light Keepers and their families

Ed’s presentation included incredible photography with clearly illustrated maps, including distances, which made it easy for the 35 in attendance to follow Ed as he described his experiences and landscapes, notably fiords, from the Burin Peninsula to Burgeo. Ed also read from Mowat’s book which helped give the audience a sense of the place and its people…a love affair shared by Ed and Mowat.

We were shown a beautiful picture of Sagona Island with a narrow, shallow channel. In Jersey Harbour, close to Harbour Breton the audience learned of a prosperous community, now abandoned, settled by fishermen and merchants from the Jersey Islands. All that remains are meadows, a cemetery and the rusted skeleton of the trawler, the Rupert Brand II.

Ed told us the South Coast has a well deserved reputation for fog and the best time to paddle the coast is August. He spoke of winds and how sea conditions quickly change. One notable event was a day when shortly after he said goodbye to a couple of kayakers he observed rough sea conditions even though the wind was only 10 knots. He was so concerned he attempted to inform the paddlers by radio, without success. Ed clearly impressed upon us this coastline is unforgiving with few landings, funnelling winds and an ocean with a long fetch which reacts quickly, indeed violently to winds which would usually be considered as moderate.

Ed chatted about friendly communities; some quiet while others a beehive activity as a result of the area’s aquaculture industry. Ed acknowledged how fortunate he is to have a warm comfortable bunk and I think, could not quite understand how we could paddle the coast and sleep in tents; on sites which were neither flat or soft!

The photos of the coastline and the fiords were magnificent, however Ed also encouraged us to hike the mountains which rise abruptly for more than a 1000 feet from the ocean. The fantastic hiking opportunities were also acknowledged by some of the attendees.

Richards Harbour, Cape La Hune, Rencontre East, Facheux Bay, L’anse Flamme (Dorset site) Pushthrough, Dawson Point….there were more! In all likelihood Ed’s presentation will encourage trips to the South coast of this Island!
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How did you become passionate of paddling and the outdoors?

Growing up on Vancouver Island, I spent much of my youth on the shoreline and poking at intertidal life. I was always curious about the magical creatures under water and when they were unveiled at low tide.

I was introduced to kayaking in outdoor programs through school and summer adventure camps. There was something about being in control of my own craft which drew me to the sport of kayaking. (I first learned to paddle a canoe.) I was fortunate to have parents who inspired me to pursue outdoor activities.

I knew my work would take me on outdoor adventures. I feel lucky to have been encouraged to follow my dreams and create my own reality, even though it may not always be the most common or ‘usual’ path. If you asked my friends and family, they would tell you they are not surprised I have chosen the ‘road less travelled’.

There is something unique about traveling on the ocean by way of kayak. The pace of the paddle, the rolling dance of the seas and the adventure of being between land and water, has kept me inspired and passionate in kayaking. It is difficult to explain, but I feel a sense of calm and excitement arriving at an isolated beach, which would be difficult if not impossible to access by any other means. Perhaps it is the spirit of the explorer which fuels me!

You have travelled throughout the world? Any favourites?

Kayaking has taken me to many beautiful places around the world. I have had the opportunity to explore much of Canada (and now Newfoundland!) parts of the US, Chile, England, Wales, Scotland, Malaysia, Tasmania, Australia and Spain. I love the differences each place has to offer and the simple similarities between people, no matter where they are from. The people certainly make the place and this is what keeps me interested. I find magic in every place I paddle and to give one place more status over the other, would seem unfair. My favourite impressions about each place is what sets it apart and makes it special in its own right. Sometimes I arrive at a place and have my breath taken away with the feeling I never knew I wanted to be there until I had finally arrived. Yes, every place has its own majesty!

What would be some of your greatest experiences; paddling a kayak you’re your travels/outdoor experiences?

One thing which I continue to learn through my adventures, is that no matter what kind of sport or adventure, things rarely turn out how you expected them. The ‘Epic’ is the flower of uncertainty - so told me a fellow paddler and mentor John Dowd. The adventures of uncertainty take us away from the elements of life we can control and throw us into the beauty of the unknown. This is where we learn about our selves, the way we deal with challenges and often show us that we are stronger than we once believed.

Here are two of my greatest paddling experiences:

My first wilderness trip (in a sea kayak) was amongst the Gulf Islands off the east coast of Vancouver Island at the age of 13. I loved the camping part and felt at home on the beaches surrounding the island where I grew up. However, the physical challenge of paddling all day felt, at times, too much work. I wanted to quit! Then one day, as we paddled...
along the sandstone shores of the small islands, a power boat sped by producing a large wake. Suddenly, I found myself being pushed forward with a 'zoom' as each wave hit my stern carrying me forwards at a speed greater than I could accomplish under my own power. This was my first experience with surfing a sea kayak and as I forgot all about how tired my arms were, I began to enjoy working with the elements rather than against them. It was on this day I fell in love with the kayak.

Fast forward... last year I began to do more challenging solo paddles, in places unknown to me. During my stay in North Wales, I headed out for a few paddles along the cold and rough coast of the Welsh coastline. These waters are marked by serious tidal flows, howling winds and unforgiving weather (especially during the winter). I often paddle with others as a social activity, which involves group decision making and looking out for each other, but now I was making my own decisions, for me with no backup! The psychological challenges were significant and I learned a lot about my own abilities to persevere in challenging and unknown conditions. I learned about my mental game, my coping abilities to make decisions to get me safely home, or...This has solidified the knowledge of my own thresholds for danger, and also my strength in adversity when all you have to call upon is yourself and your experience.

What types of boats do you paddle?

All of them! Here are a few:
- I surf a Sterling Progression on the BC coast
- My current touring boat is a Seaward Legend.
- Racing boat, fun and speedy, is a Rockpool Taran
- I surf a short little Bullit XS High Performance boat made by Mega.
- tiny river playboat in the rivers on my island and across Canada
- I have a cedar strip canoe from my childhood in my backyard (all it needs is some new canvas)
- Paddle surf skis…? (I'll ask Kate to tell us about surf skis when she arrives)

Kate, how do you encourage others to take up paddling...whether it be canoe or kayak?

Paddling is accessible to many, regardless of physical ability. It is adaptable and acts as a unique way to see the world. It is not often people are provided the opportunity to view the land from the water. Passion is what drives most people and so I see my job as one who helps fuel that passion and focus it to the goals of individuals. I once had someone tell me, reluctantly, they didn't really enjoy rough water paddling. I think I may have laughed, not at them, but at the idea that they needed to like all kinds of paddling in order to be a real paddler. To me a paddler is defined as someone who enjoys exploring the world by way of water, in whatever mode suits them, not someone who can paddle the hardest or roughest water out there.

Paddling takes us out of all that we know, plunks us into a foreign world and can often show us things about ourselves we didn't know were possible. This is the inspiration I take from paddling and it is what I encourage others to experience as well.

The Retreat draws all skill levels to Terra Nova National Park...how about a couple of thoughts as to what you could offer to a such a variety of people/skill sets?

Foundational skills are the essence of a good paddler. I often find we spend loads of time on fundamental skills, even in advanced courses, which will serve each paddler in more challenging paddling conditions. My hope is through using a student centred learning approach and offering a venue for paddlers to explore how their own particular bodies work with their crafts, they can build their confidence and connectedness, to their craft. My intention during much of my coaching is to help lead students towards their own learning outcomes in such a way that they become more independent learners, and can build the skills and confidence they need to coach themselves. If successful, I may work my way out of a job!

Why are you interested in making your first trip to NL?

I am excited to visit your Province as I have found Newfoundlanders to be nice, genuine and accommodating...wonderful people! Being a Canadian from the opposite coast, I am excited to experience a different place, the beauty of the unknown and I have no doubt I will soon realize why I have always wanted to travel to Newfoundland. Hopefully, this will be an introduction to other trips to explore your beautiful coast and meet the paddling community!

If you were the Minister of Environment what would be your priorities in protecting/improving the Environment in which we paddle.

Oh my, this questions feels so very big and so very relevant...I am overwhelmed ! Our environment is what links all of us in a global way. Regardless of our backgrounds we all rely on the environment to give us air to
breath, water to drink and food to eat. As an outdoor enthusiast my knowledge of the inherent beauty and value of the environment feels highlighted. Surely there needs to be a balance between business and resource protection so perhaps the best thing we could do for the environment would to give voice to the environment. This might look like 'paying' the earth back for all that we take from it. I wonder what our economy would look like if the earth had a banking system similar to ours with transaction reports and debit summaries. I wonder if we would be in the red or black and what it would look like to pay the debts?

On Sunday night you will be our keynote speaker at our banquet. On Saturday, we will meet for a social and an opportunity to learn from your knowledge and experience. What can our paddlers anticipate?

Well, at the banquet I would like to offer a slide show of one of the following trips:

- Scotland/the UK or
- the west coast of Canada (Vancouver island padding)
- or Tasmania/Australia

What areas do you think would be of most interest?

I don’t think we could go wrong with Tasmania/Australia; however Great Britain would also be interesting! I’ll seek input from our paddlers to see what they would prefer.

For Saturday night, the more technical/social part of the weekend, I suggest an interactive sessions about about one of the following:

- how to be a better learner
- ‘safer sea kayaking’- interactive workshop in group decision making and problem solving
- ‘navigational workshop’ i.e. compass use, charts and trip planning
- perhaps how I cook salmon over a bonfire?!

Thanks Kate….we are looking forward to hearing of your experiences and learning skills which will increase our love of paddling and of the outdoors.

Thank you Paddle NL for providing the opportunity to travel to Newfoundland and Labrador. I am looking forward to meeting paddlers and learning about Newfoundland and Labrador!
The Paddle Newfoundland Labrador (PNL) Board formed a Safety Committee in Fall 2016 to help ensure our safety practices were in line with Transport Canada Requirements, Paddle Canada Recommendations, and the Club’s Insurance Policy. The members of the Committee include Dale Butler, Dave Hickey, and Alan Goodridge.

The Committee’s goal, in addition to ensuring our practices meet the above stated objectives, is to ensure our policies and procedures are clearly stated, can be consistently applied, and are as streamlined as possible. The safety of participants in our various activities is of utmost importance and the Committee wants to ensure that the procedural requirements are clear, concise, and easily understood.

To this end, the Committee has considered and taken action on the following:

- **Safety, Health and Environment Policy** – A new policy has been drafted that clearly states the responsibilities of trip leaders, sweeps, and participants related to safety, health, and the environment. The Safety Committee will bring this to the Board for approval in March 2017. Once approved, the membership will be emailed and it will be posted on the PNL Website.

- **PNL Insurance Policy** – The Committee has reviewed PNL’s existing insurance policy to ensure that it covers all of the various activities that are organized by the Club. The Committee is also reviewing coverage amounts and will make recommendations to The Board, where its feels changes are warranted.

- **Checklists and Waivers** – The Committee has reviewed the existing checklists, forms and waivers used by the Club and is in the process of updating them to be more consistent and concise. The Committee’s goal is easy-to-use forms and checklists that ensure PNL meets its safety (and insurance policy) obligations. The Safety Committee will bring these forms to the Board for approval in March 2017. Once approved, the membership will be emailed and it will be posted on the PNL Website.

- **Checklist and Waiver Storage** – Storage of completed checklists, plans and waivers is a critical component of PNL’s safety guidelines. The Safety Committee is creating a central location for storage of these documents and is drafting procedures that ensure completed documents are saved. Once finalized, details will be emailed to membership.

- **Trip Leader and Sweep Orientation** – The Safety Committee is proposing orientation sessions for members who will be leading and/or sweeping trips on behalf of PNL. This will help clarify the expectations of each role for the membership. The Safety Committee is working on a ‘Trip Leader Kit’ to facilitate this meeting. Once finalized, details will be emailed to membership.

- **First Aid Kit Review and Renewal** – As part of the effort to overhaul and introduce new safety policies, procedures and checklists, it is critical that PNL complete an inspection and subsequent update all of its First Aid Kits. The Safety Committee will open each of PNL’s three club first aid kits, inventory their contents, and purchase any missing or expired items. Participants must be confident that the group first aid kit is in ideal condition, when participating in Club events.

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### Paddle Safety Event 2017 - Volunteers Needed

Paddle Newfoundland and Labrador, in conjunction with the City of St. John's Outdoor Recreation staff, is proud to announce that a Paddle Safety event will take place again this year and attendance is FREE!!

The event is scheduled for Tuesday, July 18th, 2017, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Rotary ‘Sunshine’ Park (in the event of inclement weather, the event will take place Thursday, July 20th, 2017).

This family fun event allows you to see certified instructors perform rescue demonstrations, take rides in canoes and kayaks, and try Stand-up Paddle Boarding. All of the equipment needed will be provided to participants and there is no charge to attend. It’s sure to be a fun event that you won’t want to miss!

(For PNL Members: We need your help! We will need PNL Members to help with event registration, life jacket fitting, paddle distribution, on-water kayak rescue demonstrations, and general on-water support. If you are able to assist, please contact the PNL Board at: paddle.nl@gmail.com).
There is no easy way to stay fit – training requires work and you have to put in the time. However, there are strategies we can all take to make time more effective and efficient. Training approaches should be goal specific and as focused as possible. I have mentioned a few practice planning ideas in the past to various kayakers, coaches and athletes. As a result, I was intrigued to find out more about the Motionize as I learned it was being developed. The innovative technology was an exciting development. Many of us have experimented with video use on the water and with programs such as Coaches Eye for training but, the Motionize goes a step further. Integrating virtual and audio feedback into your real time paddling practice provides some new insights into what you are doing on the water.

This past summer I managed to contact the Motionize folks who kindly loaned me the Edge. Included in the kit were: a paddle sensor, kayak sensor, sensor mounts, a RAM X grip mount (for attaching phone), mounting stickers, chargers, leashes and instructions. This model requires you use your own waterproof bag – but there is a waterproof case available in another model.

The essential component is the software and the ability to transform your smart phone into a feedback unit. Once attached and mounted you need to upload the free app available through the appstore if you have an Apple phone. This was all straightforward and easily done. The app linked to the kayak sensor and paddle shaft sensor. The sensors are paired to the phone via Bluetooth. I was prompted to provide some personal data: height, weight, kayak dimensions, paddle type and length. Through the software connections paddle motions are recorded. The photos above are data available for a 26 minute block of time.

Distance is tracked and data can be reviewed after the workout. During the workout data is shown on the screen, if you choose to or are able to glance down at it mid paddle. Naturally, you are more focused on the feel of the stroke, but on breaks you can review, reset or change without much difficulty.

Despite outside conditions I could hear audio feedback. This could be an area for some improvement since
comments were similar in nature. Blocks of time can be preset and an alarm sounds completing the circuit.

I found that without much trouble, even on the water you could refine strokes and identify what might otherwise be subtle differences in technique.

Post workout analysis takes a bit of time to review the data. But I found it quite interesting and useful. One technical piece of information that is hard sometimes to appreciate from the cockpit is that a shorter stroke can be more efficient and effective: I found my stroke length was longer than what I would have estimated. The written Motionize feedback was still hard to reconcile with standard Paddle Canada stroke teaching – on the unit it suggested I should exit at the knee line. I will be following up on this more but haven’t been able to discuss this fully with the manager at the time of writing.

A safety bonus is the built-in feature of an emergency contact at the press of a button.

On one occasion, I had a technical glitch with re-charging the sensors. Support staff were quickly available to assist. Check out: https://www.motionizeme.com/

And recently Motionize partnered with Quickblade to make technology available to SUP paddlers: https://vimeo.com/200112435

If you like technology, enjoy searching for innovative approaches to learning/teaching and are interested in expanding training options - keep the Motionize in mind. Feel free to contact me and give it a try.

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**Gear Tip: Is your Electronic Device Waterproof?**

By Dale Butler

Many times when buying electronic devices, we wonder if the device is waterproof, or just water resistant. The IP Code (or Ingress Protection Rating; sometimes called International Protection Rating) is the international standard that rates the degrees of protection provided against the intrusion of solid objects, dust, and water.

Often, this standard is referenced as the "PX"Rating. The image to the right is an example of an IPX rating contained in headlamp specification.

The IPX Rating, as it is referred, allows for two rating units (i.e. IPXY). The "is used for particle (dust) ratings (not addressed here) and the "is used for water ratings. For example, If something has a dust rating of 6 (dust proof) and a water rating of 4 (splashing water), you write it as IP64. For most outdoor gear that we purchase, there is only a water rating, thus ‘PX’

For the water rating variable, there are 8 different levels representing different levels of water resistance. The table below explains all 8 levels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Short Description</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IPX0</td>
<td>Not Protected</td>
<td>Device is not water resistant at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPX1</td>
<td>Dripping Water</td>
<td>Device is able to sustain some water drops that are falling vertically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPX2</td>
<td>Dripping Water when tilted up to 15°</td>
<td>Device is able to sustain some water drops when the device is tilted up to and including 15°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPX3</td>
<td>Spraying Water</td>
<td>Device is able to sustain water spray up to 60° from the top of the device</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPX4</td>
<td>Splashing Water</td>
<td>Device is able to sustain splashing water from any direction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPX5</td>
<td>Water Jets</td>
<td>Device is able to sustain water from water jets at any direction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPX6</td>
<td>Powerful Water Jets</td>
<td>Device is able to sustain water from powerful water jets at any direction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPX7</td>
<td>Immersion up to 1m</td>
<td>Device is able to sustain immersion in water up to 1m for up to 30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPX8</td>
<td>Immersion beyond 1m</td>
<td>Device is able to sustain immersion in water over 1m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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If owning a water proof device is critical for your needs, you should ensure you purchase a device with an IP rating of IPX7 or IPX8.

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ADVENTURE
The 2017 Subaru