

The Rankin River Canoe Run



Participants Janice, Bill, Bob, Sandra, Trudy, Roberta, Hub, Lee, Joe and John.

Janice: Saturday April 19/97. Participants Janice, Bill, Bob, Trudy and Roberta are in the van with the canoes on the trailer. Hub, Lee, Joe and John are bringing up the rear in Hub's blue car. We left Bayfield at 4:20 PM.

Roberta: Trudy is all worried about her backpack getting "Dirty", and we are not listeneng.

Trudy: Rechecking maps-small discrepency in length of portage. Is it 30 or 300 meters?

Bob: Hopefully my map is right "30". Nice sunny day but cold wind out of the north west. Packed enough for a month! Janice: 8:45 PM. We are almost at Oliphant. It is snowing! and wet! We picked up Sandra and her kayak and stopped for coffee in Port Elgin. Too bad some people didn't pack in plastic. We had to stop and empty part of the trailer into the car so their gear wouldn't get wet. (A lesson here) By the way there is snow on the sides of the road in spots and the ice is all in on the shore of Lake Huron here. Arrived and said hello to Geogina. Set up tents and warmed up by a campfire, some good stories and off to bed.

Sandra: Let me tell ya... there is snow everywhere the next A.M. At least 3" of it to be exact. Wet, damp feet aplenty. Lovely hairstyle Janice! Comb ain't gonna help much either. We just passed a guy driving a snowplow. Did he take a double look at our canoes! Nobody got wet mind you,- damp yes, but not wet,- through the night. So now we are all packed up, bellies full & warmed up with hot tea/coffee. It's time to bail out of this warm nest. Aahhhh!...

Bob: On the water at 10:30AM. Water very cold, not much wind, but snowing fairly hard at times. 1st lift out on county rd.13 at the top of Boat Lake. Had lunch, buns and cheese. 12:30PM. Moved vehicles from check point to Sauble Falls. 2:00PM. Bill, Janice, Hub, Lee, John and myself left in canoes. Trudy, Sandra, Roberta and Joe met us at Bud's camp. I wimped out and we set out there at 4:00PM. Portaged canoes out the drive to the trailer at the road. I need a lot of work to get in physical shape. Stopped at the Falls to look at the river.

Trudy: A good experience. First snow canoe. Looking forward to a non winter canoe expedition.

Joe: It was a cool canoe trip. I mean that in 2 ways. First time I can think of that I was canoeing in the same lake that had ice on it when it was snowing. It's scary that it's snowing 2/3 of the way through April. John's rainsuit was left at home.

Janice: We dropped Sandra off and Roberta stayed to help her. Had a great meal at a "fish" restaurant in Port Elgin. (Sandra recomended it.) Good food. Home just before 9:00PM. We would like to thank Georgina for letting us camp on her lawn and for her great morning coffee. It's too bad we weren't able to conquer the Rankin River but Bill and I will go again in the spring. No time this year. My new

sleeping bag is great. Camping and canoeing in the snow was fun. I wouldn't want to fall in the water though. Used the emergency blankets to help keep Roberta dry and warm. Lots of layers to put on and take off is the only way to go.

Bill: I enjoyed the trip and the company. I was surprised to see ice on the small lakes. Down by Bayfield it was all gone and we only went a few hours north. Unfortunately we were told the Rankin couldn't be done because of all the deadheads at the start of the river and it was hard to find the start of it. I think it can be done at this time of year when the water level is this high so the dead heads are well under water. Janice and I played around the mouth of the river years ago and the water was at least 3 feet higher than it was then in the summer. I hope to go back next year and try again and I can picture the sky will be blue and the air will be warm and the wind will be at our backs.

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