



Jan 1989

January '89 Newsletter

VICTORIAN SEA KAYAK CLUB c/- POST OFFICE, MALACCOOTA. 3892

Dear Members & Friends,

And another Happy New Year in store for us all eh? First off, good news on Incorporation- Yes, it's done at last...good work Frank Bakker!!

In lieu of the President's report this quarter, see article in the "Age" & you'll see why Lazza's been so busy.

The AGM was great fun. Good turnout, very lively discussion then supper, followed by the Greenland video, which never ceases to amaze!

All the Best for '89

*Sally Barton.*

Secretary-Treasurer

Minutes of the VSKC Annual General Meeting 5/11/88

PRESENT: Joe Stanley, Richard Gruber, Robert Barton, Paul Mileham, John Basemore, Gail Bloomfield, Georgie Bloomfield, Earle Bloomfield, Mark Treggellas, Steve Cawshaw, Larry Gray, Helen Morkham, Fiona Raitt, George Raitt, Robyn Anker, Keith Anker, Colin Addison, Frank Bakker, John Stomps, Francesca Armstrong, Didi Winth, Fiona Barton, Beda Barton, Sally Barton.

APOLOGIES: Dave Cregan, Cath Hannon, Ian Dawes, Malcolm Cowall, Dick Morris

The Minutes of the previous AGM were read.

Moved Earle Bloomfield

Seconded Frank Bakker

"...that the Minutes be confirmed..."

Carried.

the President's and Vice-Presidents' Reports were then given.

Moved Frank Bakker

Seconded Joe Stanley

"...that these reports be received..."

Carried.

The Secretary-Treasurer's Report was then given

|   |               |
|---|---------------|
| Bank Balance at AGM 20/2/88                       | \$75-00       |
| Income  | \$320-00      |
| Total   | \$395-00      |
| LESS Secretary-Treasurer's out-of-pocket expenses | \$250-00      |
|   | bal. \$145-00 |
|   | interest 2-51 |
| Present Bank Bal.                                 | \$147-51      |

Moved Fiona Raitt

Seconded Keith Anker

"...that the Secretary-Treasurer's Report be received..."

Carried.

Moved Sally Barton  
Seconded Joe Stanley  
"...that a vote of thanks to new members for their contribution to the Club be recorded..." Carried.

All positions were then declared vacant, but with the consent of the meeting and in view of the fact that the office-bearers had not served a full term, the executive was unanimously re-elected.

President Larry Gray  
Vice-President Earle Bloomfield  
Vice-President Frank Bakker  
Secretary-Treasurer Sally Barton

Moved Colin Addison  
Seconded Sally Barton  
"...that we appoint a representative to liaise with the VACA and other relevant organisations...." Carried.  
Colin Addison was appointed to this position.

Moved Keith Anker  
Seconded Joe Stanley  
"...that the AGM be held over the 1st weekend in November..." Carried.

Moved John Basemore  
Seconded Robyn Anker  
"...that membership subscriptions be due and payable by the 1st of October so that everyone will be financial in time for the AGM..." Carried.

Regarding Incorporation still to be effected;  
Earle Bloomfield volunteered costs and Frank Bakker volunteered his services to organise same.

Moved John Basemore  
Seconded Robyn Anker  
"...that the Club put together a publicity "flyer" to promote the role of the Club in Sea Kayaking...." Carried.

The Meeting closed at 10:05 pm.

*Quite a cosmopolitan issue this one, from Alaska to the Amazon... keep Mark's map for future reference, eh? Sal.*

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PHIL SOWERDALE

# Rhymes Times

## Bruce's Northwest Adventure - 1988

*(Courtesy Dave Huxtable-LK.)*

"Dear Chris-- In all the excitement, it's hard to sit down & write; but I've promised an opening letter for the 'TIMES'-- so here goes."

to all my friends:

I'll begin by apologizing for the form letter format - but there are almost 40 of you on my mailing list; and I wanted to send you all an in-depth report of my summer's travels and experiences as I paddled Alaska and British Columbia's inside passage this summer.

This letter is reaching you thanks to the planning & efforts of my friends Wendy White; who took care of the masthead and Chris Peterson who re-types and copies each edition. Any spelling or punctuation errors are of course, his fault!!

Chris also sees to the addressing and mailing of each copy - wanted to reach all my good friends this summer -- and grateful for their help. Thanks to Chris & Wendy

Bruce

I'm on the solarium deck of the M.V Columbia, flagship of The Alaska Marine Highway fleet. I am in the company of about 60 other travelers, who are "camped" on the chaise lounges and deck space of the solarium area.

This is the domain of the foot passenger. Others of the 200 or so passengers may have staterooms; but here on the covered and heated upper deck on the stern of the Columbia there is a community of new friends and seasoned Alaskans. Some are bound for work in the fish canneries or fishing boats - others for backpacking or sightseeing in that beautiful wilderness.

7 or so others, like myself, have our sea kayaks stowed below in the auto deck, and are looking forward to experiences in this beautiful wilderness and ocean through which our ferry is passing.

My destination is Juneau, Alaska, where I'll meet my friend Richard Almon. Richard is flying up with his folding kayak from Southern Calif. and will join me for a 10-day trip to Glacier Bay. My reading tells me that I'll see alot more than some of the world's largest tidewater glaciers in Glacier Bay. There is also abundant wildlife: humpback whales, killer whales, brown bears, and eagles and waterfowl by the core.

After our trip is over in Glacier Bay, Richard will fly home, and I'll cross Icy Stright to the Northern Coast of Chichagot Island, here my friend Al Blair lives. Al has been a commercial fisherman in Alaska since 1981, and is based on a small island in Elfin Cove. I've been invited to join him aboard his boat for a 72 hour Halibut opening but from what the fisherman here say, I'm not sure if Halibut fishing is a priveledge or punishment!!

It'll be good to see Al again, and the beautiful cove he lives in, but I'll soon be on my way south -- which is the main focus of my summer's trip.

⑤

# Rhymes Times

## Bruce's Northwest Adventure - 1988

I intend to spend 3 months on the INSIDE PASSAGE, paddling my 17 foot sea kayak from Juneau to Port Townsend, Washington. Along the way-- there'll be many stops, local people to meet, and hopefully a few other kayakers to camp and paddle with. I'm planning to take a ferry, with my kayak and gear, over to Skidegate in the Queen Charlotte Islands, once I reach Prince Rupert, British Columbia.

The Queen Charlottes lie about 60 miles off the mainland across the Hecate Straights, and consist of two large islands fringed by many smaller islets.

If I can pry myself away from these islands, I'll continue my trip south back @ Prince Rupert. Otherwise I'll spend more time in the Q.C. Islands and skip a stretch of the B.C. coast via ferry -- arriving again at Port Hardy on the north eastern corner of Vancouver Island. My journey will then continue southward, along a more popular but still mostly wilderness stretch of the INSIDE PASSAGE.

This trip is the culmination of planning, dreaming and preparation over the last couple of years-- dreams inspired by repeated paddling trips to the lovely Pacific Northwest and discovering over time how accessible this ocean and wilderness region is to a self-propelled and self-contained kayaker.

Kayakers young and old have traveled all or part of the route I will follow this summer-- beginning perhaps 8000 years ago in seal skin and wood kayaks. Present-day paddlers are more comfortable, with their 20th century technologies; efficient campstoves, fiberglass kayaks and paddles, and synthetic fiber sleeping bags, but we're no less governed by the whims of sea and weather.

I'll be making important decisions daily-- perhaps hourly. There will be some real hazards: rapid tidal currents in the narrow passages, wind and weather, the large Alaskan brown bears... but I've prepared as best I can for the expected trouble; and trained to be able to cope with the un-expected.

More likely, my stories will revolve around the incredible scenery, interesting and friendly people, and abundant wildlife I'll encounter.

I promise to be a good correspondent--even if the pages are a bit rain-spotted-- I'll get real enjoyment from including you all on my trip.

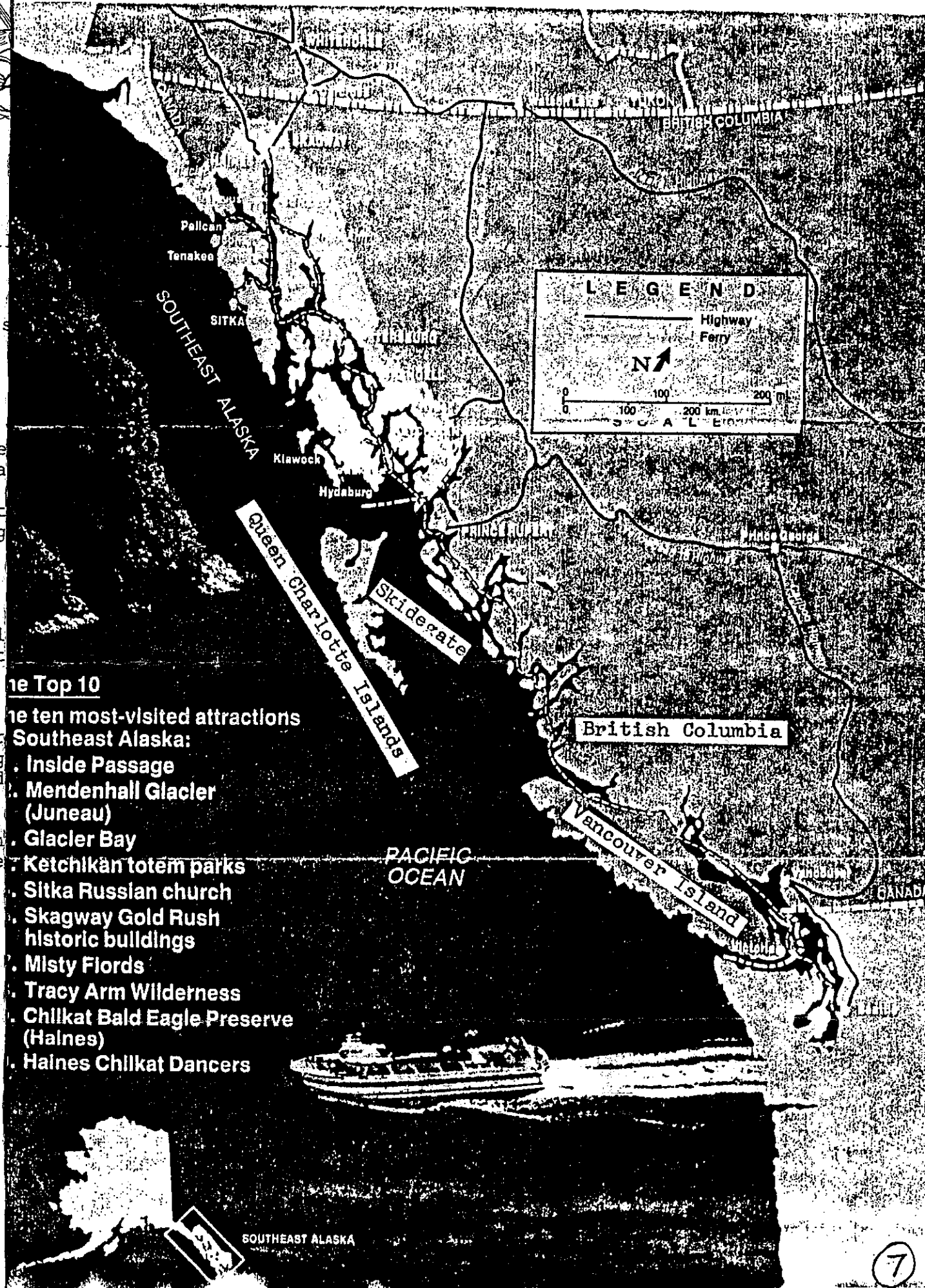
Thanks again to my family and friends for all their help, love and support. A trip like mine is not accomplished completely solo!!

Sincerely,

Bruce

(b)

(to be continued)



### The Top 10

the ten most-visited attractions

#### Southeast Alaska:

- Inside Passage
- Mendenhall Glacier (Juneau)
- Glacier Bay
- Ketchikan totem parks
- Sitka Russian church
- Skagway Gold Rush historic buildings
- Misty Fjords
- Tracy Arm Wilderness
- Chilkat Bald Eagle Preserve (Haines)
- Haines Chilkat Dancers

# The Folding Kayak

Courtesy George Raiff

He was called the Mad Tailor of Rosenheim. Every day after work, in his small shop near Germany's Bavarian Mountains, Johann Klepper would design climbing clothes and tents. Because the sport of climbing was relatively new to Europe at the turn of the century, his labors were appreciated by only a few, and more often than not he was laughed at and made the brunt of jokes. Most of the townsfolk thought it was ridiculous to struggle up a mountain—unless you'd forgotten something on top—and upon seeing their tailor dressed in mountaineering knickers and cape heading for the hills, they thought for sure that the poor man had gone crazy.

To the further puzzlement of his neighbors, Klepper then took interest in another unconventional sport—river running. Every major valley in Bavaria has its river, and in Klepper's time there was usually a narrow-gauge railroad running alongside. Whenever he rode the trains, Klepper stared longingly at the pretty mountain streams. Wouldn't it be wonderful, he thought, if he could take his boat on the train, get dropped off upstream, and float back down to the rail station? However, when he asked about checking in his boat as baggage, he was politely, but firmly, told that it was impossible.

Most people would have given up the idea right there

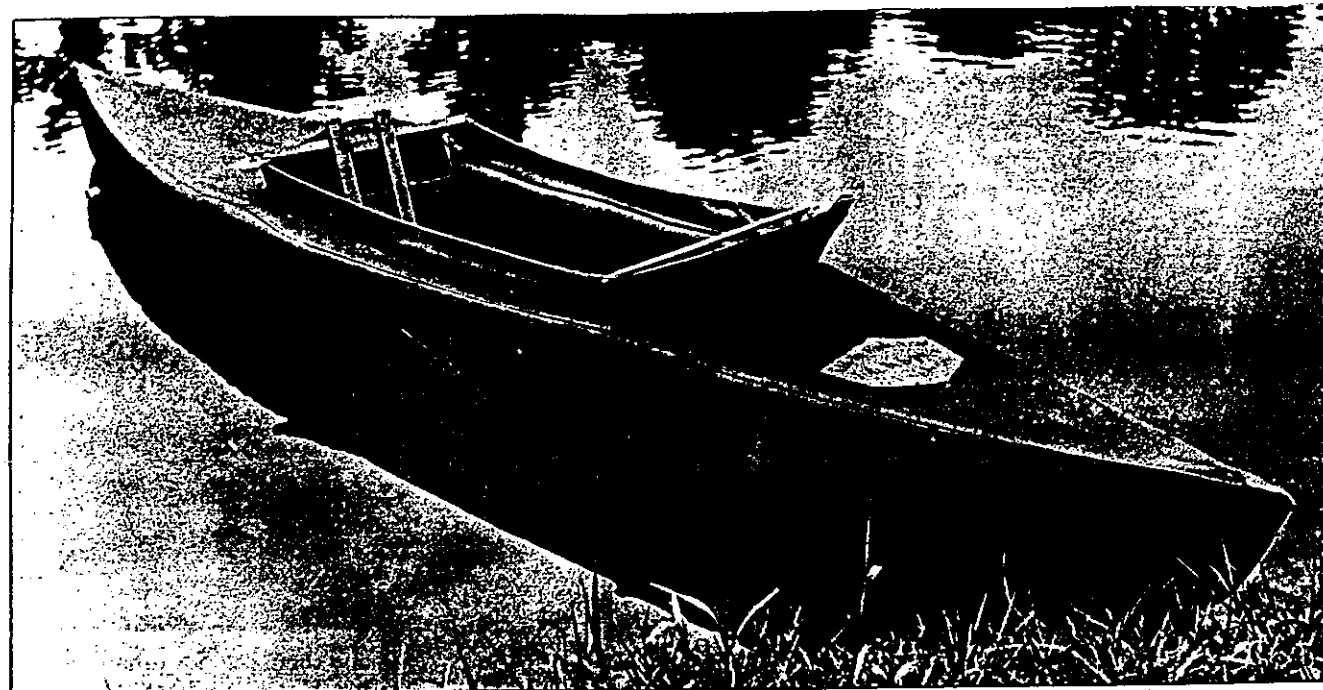
by Larry Rice

and then, but not Johann Klepper. He became more determined than ever to paddle those hard-to-reach rivers. But how was he going to get his boat on the train?

The skilled tailor was used to solving problems, and he set out to design a collapsible boat that could be easily transported anywhere. He studied many different craft used in Europe, and although each had its particular advantages, none lent itself well to what he had in mind. Besides being portable, the boat had to be durable, easily repaired in the field, seaworthy, and light. After much searching, Klepper found the design he needed—the Eskimo kayak.

The Eskimo kayak's proven seaworthiness, ease of paddling, and simple construction impressed Klepper. Eskimos have long put their kayaks to the ultimate test during hunting expeditions, paddling out of sight of land in frigid polar waters.

Klepper discovered that there was good reason for the kayak's success. The slender design has the most efficient weight-to-load ratio and performance per pound of material of virtually any craft; a 60-pound boat is easily capable of safely carrying a 200-pound paddler and two weeks' worth of gear. What's more, by use of a covered deck and tightly fitting sprayskirt, water is kept outside the boat, allowing the occupant to stay warm and dry inside.



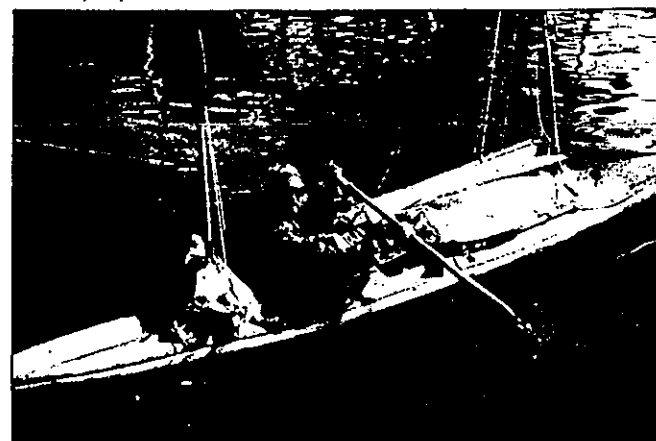
The first! This is the original Klepper folding kayak. Several others of the same vintage are on display in museums.

Always one to improve things, Klepper found some ways to modify the ancient Eskimo design. By replacing the traditional driftwood and stretched animal skins with a bamboo skeleton and canvas hull, the boat was made stronger and lighter. And by designing the boat to be wider than its Eskimo counterpart, he was able to increase storage space and stability. Klepper ceased production of his climbing gear and plunged headlong into making his dream boat a reality.

The skeptics who had been teasing Klepper during this latest project stopped laughing in 1907, the year Johann Klepper's folding kayak was completed and introduced to the public. It wasn't long before the Klepper kayak proved its worth. People began discovering how enjoyable it can be to float down a river or paddle along the seashore, and orders for the folding boat soon began to pile up faster than the tailor could fill them. Klepper was on his way to becoming a national celebrity—also a millionaire. And soon his little tailor shop was expanded into a substantial factory just to keep up with the demand.

At first glance, the folding kayak of today can be mistaken for Klepper's original model built over 75 years ago.

Dr. Hannes Lindemann paddled his Klepper Aerius II for 72 days to successfully cross the Atlantic in 1956.



Howard Johnson

The materials have been improved, but the basic design has withstood the test of time. Instead of bamboo for the skeleton, modern folding kayaks use about 30 handcrafted parts made of air-dried and aged mountain ash and laminated Finnish birch. And replacing the all-canvas covering of yesteryear is saltwater-resistant canvas for the deck and rugged Hypalon rubber for the hull.

Klepper wanted his boats to be assembled with a minimum of fuss, and in this he succeeded admirably. During assembly, the hardwood skeleton is connected by interlocking parts and is slid into the canvas and rubber cover. Two built-in air sponsons, running the length of the kayak, are then orally inflated. The air chambers not only stretch the hull taut, but also make the boat virtually unsinkable, even with paddlers and gear aboard. A beginner can put the boat together in around 30 minutes and take it apart in even less time. Amazingly, no tools are needed during the entire operation. And for sailors, a 55-square-foot rig is available that can be mounted in minutes, providing a combination that's hard to beat.

To meet the requests of a growing number of recreational paddlers, Klepper stuck with two primary models: the single-seat Aerius I, with a beam of 28", a length of 15', and weight of 59 lbs; and his favorite, the Aerius II, with a 35" beam, 17' length, and a weight of 70 lbs. Both boats fit into two golf-bag-sized carrying duffles and can be stored in a closet or in the trunk of a car—or, if you are like Klepper, in the baggage compartment of a train.

A neophyte examining a folding kayak for the first time might be somewhat skeptical about the boat's ability to withstand heavy use and rough seas. The trend in canoe and kayak construction lately has been to make them as indestructible as possible, and compared to materials like ABS, Kevlar, and Ram-X, wood and canvas seem to have the strength of wet tissue paper. But Johann Klepper designed his boats to last, and that they do. There are approximately 50,000 Aerius IIs in use today, including some more than a half-century old that are still going strong.

With covered deck and built-in air sponsons, the folding kayak is unmatched for seaworthiness among self-

propelled craft. Add to that a foot-controlled rudder and a low profile for minimum windage, and you have a boat that can be out in conditions that would ground most other small craft.

For this reason, adventurers and explorers have long included the folding kayak as part of their expedition equipment. Starting in 1909, the Klepper has been involved in numerous daring feats. In that year, Britisher C.E. Layton crossed the English Channel, the first person to ever do so in a self-propelled craft, in what he described as a "stable but leaky" Klepper.

In 1923, adventurer Karl Schott went a step further. He set off in a two-seat Klepper down the Suez Canal, made it across the ocean to India, and finished his journey by rounding India to Singapore. The two-year trip took him through equatorial sun, high winds, corrosive saltwater, and rocky landings, but both he and his boat arrived in nearly mint condition.

Arctic explorer Roald Amundsen took along Klepper folding kayaks to the North Pole on his 1926 expedition, as did Admiral Byrd during his quest to reach the South Pole in 1928. The folding kayaks were chosen because they could be transported by dogsled and assembled when needed to cross open channels in the pack ice. One of the Byrd kayaks was discovered in 1968 by the Klepper Company, and was still in near-perfect condition.

The first attempt to cross the Atlantic Ocean in a paddled craft was also in 1928. Captain Römer embarked in a specially built, 23' Klepper that was large enough to carry sufficient supplies for the anticipated three-month journey. Although he was a man of great courage and skill, these qualities were not enough to get him across the ocean; he was lost at sea near the Virgin Islands. Nearly 30 years passed before someone tackled the crossing again. In 1956, Dr. Hannes Lindemann paddled for 72 days in his blue Klepper before making it safely across.

Other voyages involving Klepper kayaks may not have been as epic, but were just as interesting, nonetheless. In their book, *Kayaks to the Arctic*, the Nickerson family described their 1965 adventure following in the path of Sir Alexander Mackenzie, a fur trader who paddled into remote regions of Canada in the 1700s. Using three Klepper folding kayaks, the Nickersons covered thousands of miles of interconnecting lakes, rivers, rapids, and streams until they finally reached the Arctic Ocean. Except for a few easily mended punctures and broken fittings, the boats looked no worse for wear after their arduous journey.

Even with a wide selection of excellent boats to choose from, many of today's wilderness boaters prefer folding kayaks over all other designs. Veteran Alaskan kayaker Sepp Weber has paddled most of the 53 rivers discussed in his guidebook, *Wild Rivers of Alaska*, in a rubber and canvas Klepper. In this region, where there are few, if any, roads or rails, access to the rivers and lakes is restricted to aircraft. This is when the folding kayak's compactness is fully appreciated. Commercial airlines rarely will carry a rigid boat, and bush pilots refuse to lash canoes to their plane's pontoons due to safety factors and stringent FAA regulations. However, all air carriers will gladly carry a collapsible kayak, usually at no additional cost.

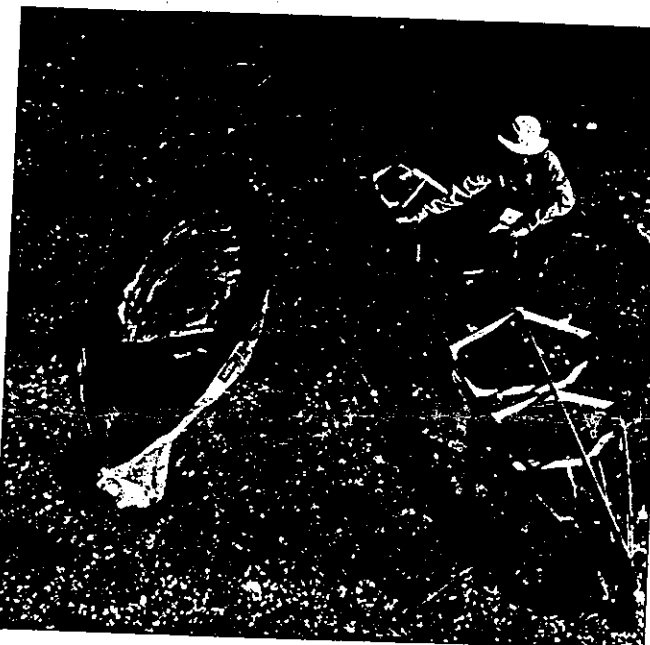
There are times when even a pontoon-equipped bush plane can't land safely near the chosen wilderness lake or river. Three experienced smoke-jumpers solved this dilemma in 1976 when they and their bundled-up Kleppers parachuted out of a plane that circled 1,500' above a remote Alaskan river. Everything arrived on the ground undamaged, and they paddled the 100 miles out to civilization.

One of the more unusual odysseys made by a folding



Left—For easy portaging, the folding Klepper can be packed onto a small, collapsible boatcart.

Below—Unpacked again, the hardwood skeleton is connected by interlocking parts and slid into the rubber and canvas cover.



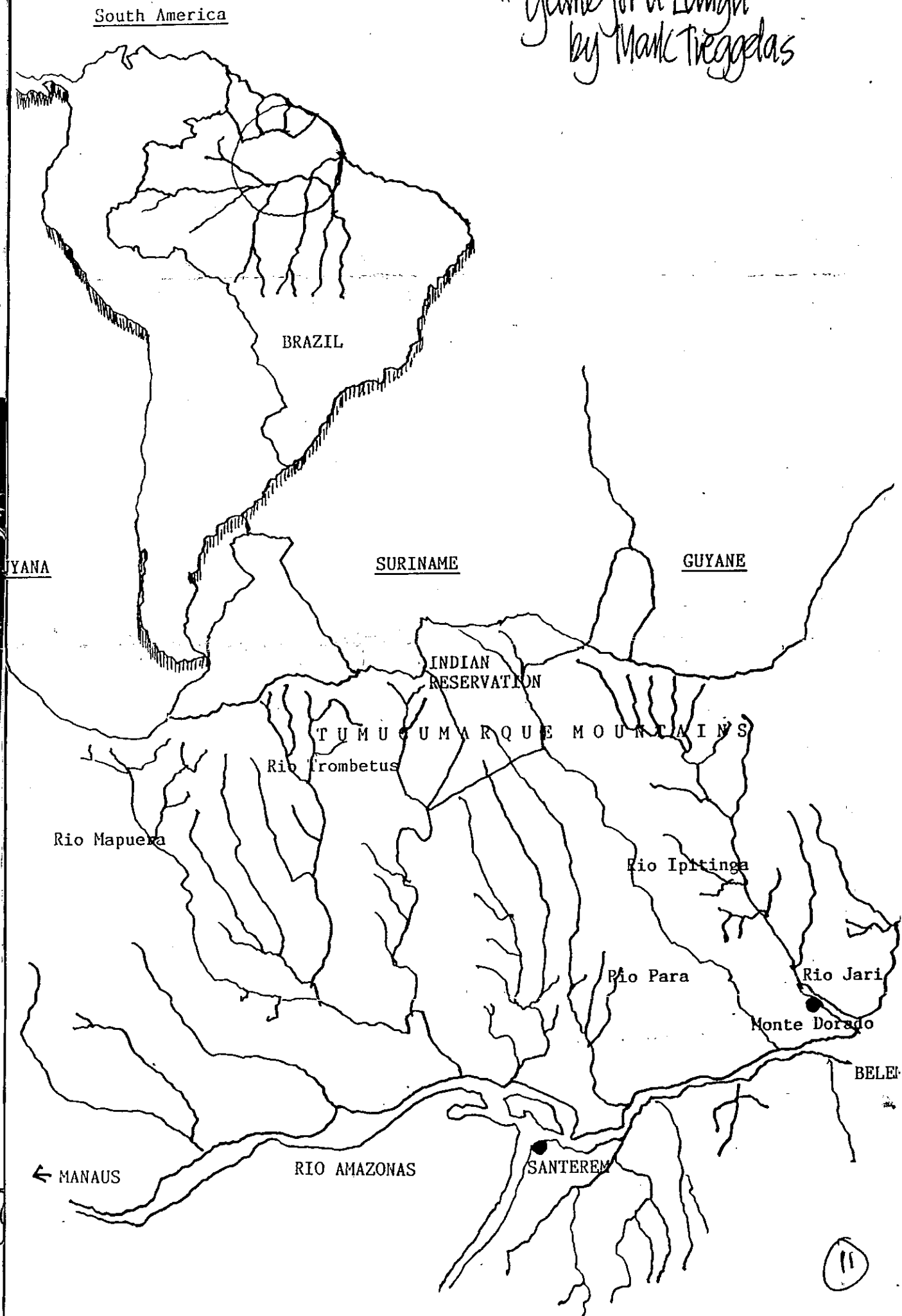
Larry Rice

kayak in recent times involved a group of men traveling in the Sahara outback. Along with their boats, they were transported by camel deep into the desert near the Blue Nile's source. One can only imagine the astonishment of the camel drivers when these intrepid kayakers assembled their boats near the shore and blissfully paddled away through the undulating dunes!

There have been in the past few years a number of other astonishing voyages involving Klepper kayaks, but don't think you have to paddle exotic rivers or cross oceans to appreciate the folding boat. The vast majority of Klepper users prefer exploring rivers, lakes, and seashores closer to home. But wherever you go, and however you get there, remember: there's one thing that makes the folding kayak stand apart—and that is, you can take it with you. Which, after all, is exactly what the Mad Tailor of Rosenheim would have wanted you to do.

Larry Rice is a wildlife biologist with the Illinois Department of Conservation. His articles have appeared in *Adventure Travel*, *Backpacker*, *Wilderness Camping*, *Canoe*, *Alaska Magazine*, *Michigan Out-Of-Doors*, and *National Parks magazines*.

"Game for a Longh" by Mark Treggidas



It all started around July 1982 in London. I had just returned from a one trip through Africa and the Middle East and was working and looking towards South America before returning home. After doing a small article in a book about Africa, the publisher Hilary Brandt invited me to a meeting of the Globe Trotters Club, which brings publishers, authors, and explorers together for a once a month meeting followed by a meal where everyone gets rather drunk. It was there that I met John Harrison, a twenty eight year old Englishman with a degree in South American sociology. Fluent in both Spanish and South American Portuguese John had done five Amazon canoe expeditions including a solo. He was planning one to an unexplored area of the Amazon next year and was looking for someone to go with. It was the opportunity of a life time, and one I just couldn't pass up.

It took almost a year to complete the logistics of the trip. A year filled with hope, dispare, set backs, money problems, yet everything offset by our desire to complete what we had started. Our reason for the trip was basic enough. All we really wanted to do was get back to nature in a way few people have tried. To go into an area where no other white man has been, with unknown dangers, having to live and survive with outside help has an intangible attraction that is irresistible. I lay awake at nights thinking or dreaming about the Amazon and all the mystery and challenges that its name congers up in the imagination. Investors, however are reluctant to shell out large quantities of money for those reasons, so other ones had to be found.

The river we had picked to canoe up was the Rio Jari. It lies in the top right hand corner of Brazil, starting in the Tumucumarque mountain ranges which border Brazil with British Guana, Suriname, and French Guinea, and ends at the town of Monte Derado on the main Amazonas river about halfway between Santarem and Belem. We had to canoe up it because the Tumucumarques were unexplored and as far as we knew had only been visited once before by a Frenchman named Marphre in the late sixties who disappeared and hasn't been seen since. An indian found his diary in the forest and it was later published by his father into a book called "Jorney without return". His last entry said that he was starving to death to the point where he had to kill and eat his pet dog, and where unable to continue, he was going to attempt to swim back along the river (about 200 miles) to civilization. The book would prove to be an omen to us, but at the time was fascinating reading.

In the late 1970's Daniel Ludwig, one of the worlds richest men bought a tract of land in Brazil the size of Belgium. Manufactured a woodpulping mill in Japan, and floated it up the Amazon. A remarkable achievement. However, problems arose with the Brazilian Govt which eventually forced Ludwig to sell out to Brazilian subsidueres. Several organisations were interested in finding out how the project had effected the ecology of the area, and seeing that the river he put the plant on was the Jari we would be in a first class position to report on it. Also in the late 70's a tribe of Indians were "discovered" living in the Tumucumarque mountain ranges by Surinamese missionaries. They were unique in that their main diet was honey and that they had not yet learnt to make fire, which was carried in balls of moss by the woman. They were called the "Aiquereu" and were intergrated into one of the local Indian tribes. After a short time though they disappeared, apparently unhappy with their lot and noone's seen them since.

At last we had a suitable scientific reason for the trip. To be the first westerners to cross from Brazil into Suriname. Check out the ecology of the lower river and find a lost tribe. Sounded easy, at the time. Some funding came through, some did but finally in June of 1983 we left England and flew to Manaus, the capital of the Amazon

The canoe we took with us was an 18 foot open style Canadian. It was pre-fabricated in ply, and we were to assemble it somewhere in Brazil. The flight across the Atlantic was eventfull. We flew from London to Paris, then changed for a direct flight to French Guinea. Somewhere over the sea we lost power to one of the engines, so we had to wait in Cayenne for two days while they repaired it. Air France put us up in a star hotel, all expenses paid which was just what we needed, a nice lieurelly vacation to South America. It was tiring stuff, lazing around the pool, sipping drinks, chatting up topless french bathing beauties, but we managed to endure it. In the evening we collected the fibreglass resin needed to assemble the canoe, then took a boat down to Santarem.

Passenger boats along the Amazon are a unique and pleasing experience. They're full of sleeping facilities are provided by yourself in the form of a hammock. Once you have learnt, (you lie diagonally), it is as comfortable as a bed. I have slept in. Meals are communal, and included in the price. Its extremely relaxing just lying in your hammock reading, or watching the bank slip slowly by. Then down with all the other passengers eating fish, rice, salad, and other Brazilian food such as Farihna. The Amazon river is constantly changing and always fascinating. At Manaus its eight miles across, a deep milk coffee color. It is there that it meets the Rio Negro, a river the color of coca cola. Where the rivers meet they flow side for miles down river before they finally mix. Fish swimming from one side to the other become stunned and float to the surface where they are collected by local fisherman. Two days later we arrive at Santerem, a largish town at the mouth of the Tapagos river. We bought our supplies and found a boat to take us to Monte Dorado, and the start of our journey to Surinam.

(...3)

VICTORIAN SEA KAYAK CLUB

Membership Application

NAME: . . . . . AGE: . . . . .  
 ADDRESS: . . . . .  
 . . . . . POSTCODE: . . . . .  
 TELEPHONE: . . . . . (W) . . . . . (H)

CANOEING QUALIFICATIONS (ACF or BCF): . . . . .

YEARS EXPERIENCE: . . . . . MAIN AREAS . . . . .

MAJOR EXPEDITIONS: . . . . .

Complete & return with Annual Subscription to:  
 Victorian Sea Kayak Club, 410 Station St., Carlton, Vic. 3053.

Enquiries: (03) 348.1059; OR c/o P.O. Mallacoota, 3889, or  
 Acting Secretary, 4 Oakwood Lane Tecoma, 3160  
 New Members \$15, Old Members \$10, Family Membership \$30-\$20 renewed.



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We passed Ludwigs pulp mill late last night. A modern, compact factory, mped in the middle of the Amazon. It looked like an alien space craft, shining with ight lights and humming with the sound of machinery. Arrived at Monte Dorado early e next morning and we quickly loaded the canoe to avoid any embaresing questions from rious officials. I don't think we realized just how much equipment and food we had with , and we eventually pushed off with only a few inches of free board showing above the ter. Once out of sight of the town we pulled into the bank and sorted out all our gear.

The Jari was wide and slow moving, a lovely deep brown in color and relatively ear. Hills rose sharply from both banks, revealing the reforestation project and asionally a house would dot the shoreline. The first few days were hard as we were th out of condition. The fishing was unsuccessful too, but we had expected that being close to the township. The weather couldn't have been better, with only a cloud or o in the sky and the tempreture just under thirty. Our first night was memorable, as st on dusk a troop of Howler monkeys broke the quiet with their calls. It was an amazing sound, like souls in torment. Later when I was asleep I was woken suddenly by e sound of something moving through the campsite. I swore it sounded like a human lking and I imagined a few of the more desperate locals looking to pilfer some of our ar, which was more than a little bit worrying. But the sounds moved off and I finally ll asleep. The next day John told me it was probably a Tapir looking for food, as icy make the same sound as a human walking through the bush. Sunburn is a real problem our sunscreen is soon washed off. Borashido's are plaging us too. I'm fast developing intense dislike for these insects. They're like a cross between a fly and a mosquito id draw blood when they bite. The bites swell up leaving feet and arms looking like isty lumps of flesh, the worst part is that they obviously havent been told about insect pellant.

We finally arrive at our first sets of rapids, San Antonio falls. They are a magnificent spectacle dropping over twenty metres, flanked by rain forest alive with the antics of several troops of Spider monkeys. We camped at the base of them and spent the est of the day swimming in the rock pools at the base of the falls. Portaging around nem however proved to be an excersise in maschocism. It entailed a four kilometre walk, 1 which started off scrambling up a jungle covered mountain slope at an angle of about fifty egresses. Then across a dried up river bed filled with huge boulders and finally a path hrough the jungle down to the river. Each trip loaded takes us over an hour to complete nd another half hour to walk back. Its bone braking work, and we curse the river for ll were worth. Finally we only have the canoe to go, but its getting dark and we still ave to sort out our gear, set up our hammocks, light a fire and cook dinner. Then to ound off a perfect day the heavens opened up, leaving us just enough time to pull our ear under the tarps before the storm hit us. Hungry, cold, tired and sore we dine on wo cups of rum and fall asleep exhausted. It rained all night.

Woke the next day and felt like shit. It took us almost an hour to light a ire. We hoped that that was the last of the rain, but another flash storm hit us just fter I had shot a small bird to us as fish bait. We've still had no luck with the fishing. et another storm forced us into a shallow creek and we made camp soon after. Two hours ater we got a fire going, god that first cup of tea tasted good. Finally went to sleep istening to animals walking through the the camp. The next morning we were woken by trange sounds so I grabed the shotgun and went to invesigate. It turned out to be an dolescent Howler monkey. He sat in the top layer of the jungle canopy, watching me. e was a beautifull orange, tan in color reminding me of an Orangitang. His voice box s a miniature amplifier and they can make more noise than any other animal. They have een heard over ten miles away, and when a troop of twenty or more sound off a couple of undred metres away from camp, the sound is defening.. Later that day we met a tchnician rom Monte Dorado. He was from Texas and sat in front of use guzzling ice cold cake ringing American, Commonwealth relations to an all time low. John caught our first fish ater that day. It was a beautifull grey and black stripped cat fish called a Pintardo. Its head took up almost half its body. Were getting fit now (at last), and dont feel ired after a full days paddle.

(to be continued next issue)