

CANOEING CLOSE TO HOME

You don't have to go to the upper peninsula, or even into the northern lower peninsula, to absorb the tranquil, sporty fun of canoeing.

There's a nearer spot—safe, nearly primitive in its shoreline, easy of access, ample in its facilities. It's the Huron River, only a half-hour's drive west of these suburbs.

You can bring your own canoe or rent one; take a short jaunt or camp overnight; take a whole Scout troop or go alone.

You'll find it a lot different from boating on a lake.

There are no outboard motor blasts, no blares from transistor radios; the Huron in most northern stretches is rarely more than waist deep; since everyone is moving downstream with the same current at the same speed, you rarely see other people.

If it's cold or windy, boating on an open lake is rough, but a river is sheltered by its banks, and so you have far more good canoeing days than lake-boating days.

THERE ARE TWO GOOD places to get information on canoeing facilities and maps.

They are the Michigan Department of Conservation, located in the Stevens T. Mason Building, Lansing, and the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority (HCMA).

HCMA is the five-county agency that operates a string of parks on the Huron and Clinton Rivers, the most famous being Kensington, west of New Hudson on I-96. You can pick up HCMA's excellent, free color maps and list of facilities either at one of its parks or from its office, 1750 Guardian Building, Detroit.

HCMA's maps divide the Huron into four segments: (1) Pontiac to Kensington, (2) Kensington to Dexter, (3) Dexter to Belleville and (4) Belleville to Lake Erie.

The Kensington-Dexter section is closest to home. A team in condition could do the 28 miles in a day if it worked hard.

THERE'S A RENTAL agency at the south end of Kent Lake. Prices: \$1 an hour, \$5 a day, other rates for groups; you can try the lake or portage around the dam and go southwest on the river. A pickup service is available.

With your own canoe, you can launch at the lake, at Kensington Road, at Sutherland Road, off Bishop Road in the Island Lake State Recreation Area, at the Conservation Department fishing site on Portage Lake, or at HCMA's Hudson Mills Metropark.

You can camp on an island in Kent Lake, at a site in the Island Lake SR Area, at an HCMA canoe camp south of Hamburg Road or in Hudson Mills Metropark.

You can pack chow and dine along the river bank. There are fishing spots, bluffs to climb, ever-changing scenery.

In a canoe you see nature a lot closer than in a boat or on foot. There are marsh birds and wood birds—species you never see or hear in suburbia.

You don't have to take a full vacation up north to go canoeing. The Huron River is just a half-hour away.

Sunday Edition

Section B

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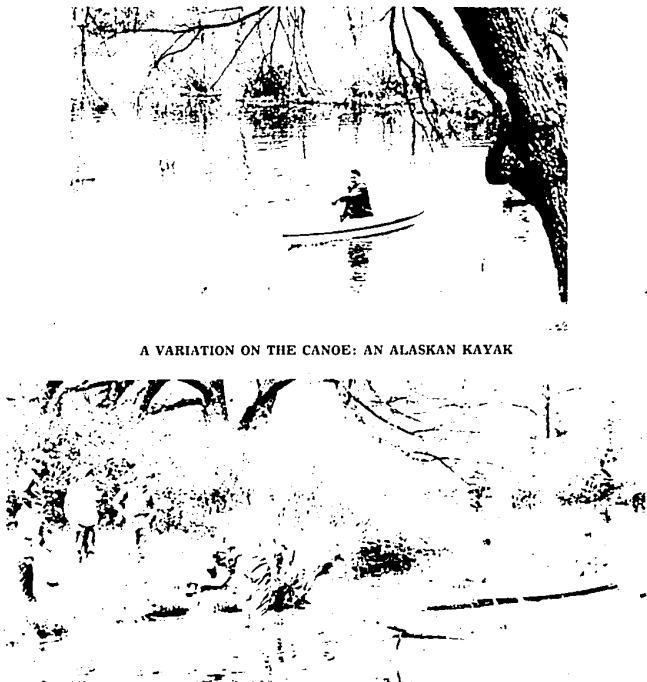
OBSERVER NEWSPAPERS



ENTIRE GROUPS FIND CANOEING AN EXCELLENT OUTDOOR ACTIVITY

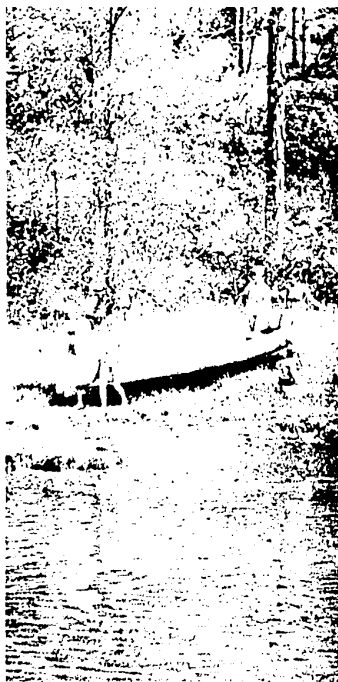


ACADEMY ROAD BRIDGE — LANDING SPOT



A VARIATION ON THE CANOE: AN ALASKAN KAYAK

BOY SCOUTS GET A LESSON IN HANDLING LIGHT CRAFT FROM ADULT LEADER



GIRLS, TOO, FIND CANOEING SAFE, EASY



CANOEISTS, PICNICKERS LIKE PROUD LAKE RECREATION AREA



STARTING POINT: BELOW KENT LAKE DAM