

*In the North of Our Lives* is an account of a six-person, fourteen-month canoe expedition in 1977-1978 across what was then the Northwest Territories. The group began their journey in the southeastern Yukon, crossed the Mackenzie Mountains, ascended the Mackenzie River and then paddled the length of Great Slave Lake. From the tiny village of Reliance at the eastern end of Great Slave Lake, they crossed the forest-tundra transition and entered the Barrenlands. They eventually reached a small cabin and patch of spruce along the Thelon River, some 1,600 miles to the east of where they had begun their journey 10 weeks earlier. There, at Warden's Grove, 180 miles from the nearest habitation, they spent the next ten months, preparing for the winter, exploring the Barrenlands with their sled dog team, and waiting for spring, with its thaw and returning animal life. The group's winter sojourn was interrupted by the disintegration of Cosmos 954, a Russian nuclear satellite that disintegrated over the Northwest Territories in January, 1978. Two members of the expedition stumbled across debris from the satellite about ten miles from Warden's Grove. With this absurd discovery, the expedition was thrust - momentarily - into the news, and had to leave Warden's Grove. Group members were allowed to return about two weeks later, and in July they began paddling the remaining 600 miles to Chesterfield Inlet on Hudson Bay, which they reached in August 1978.