

HISTORY



Figures 10 & 11

WHEN THE FRAME IS COMPLETE, THE WOMEN GET THEIR TURN: TO THEM FALLS THE TASK OF PREPARING THE SEALSKIN COVER. THE SEALS MUST BE SKINNED, THE FAT & FLESH REMOVED, AND THE HAIR SCRAPPED OFF. FOR THE NEXT STEP THE SKINS MUST BE KEPT CONTINUALLY WET, AND AS DIFFICULT, LONG AND TEDIOUS SEWING IS INVOLVED. IT IS NORMAL TO MAKE THIS STAGE A KIND OF SEWING BEE INVOLVING QUITE A FEW SEAMSTRESSES. THE PREPARED SKINS ARE SEWN TOGETHER ON A RACK, AS IN FIGURE 10, USING WATERPROOF STITCHES THAT ONLY GO PART WAY THROUGH THE SKIN. THE SKINS ARE THEN TRANSFERRED TO THE UPSIDE-DOWN KAYAK FRAME WHERE MORE SEWING TAKES PLACE.

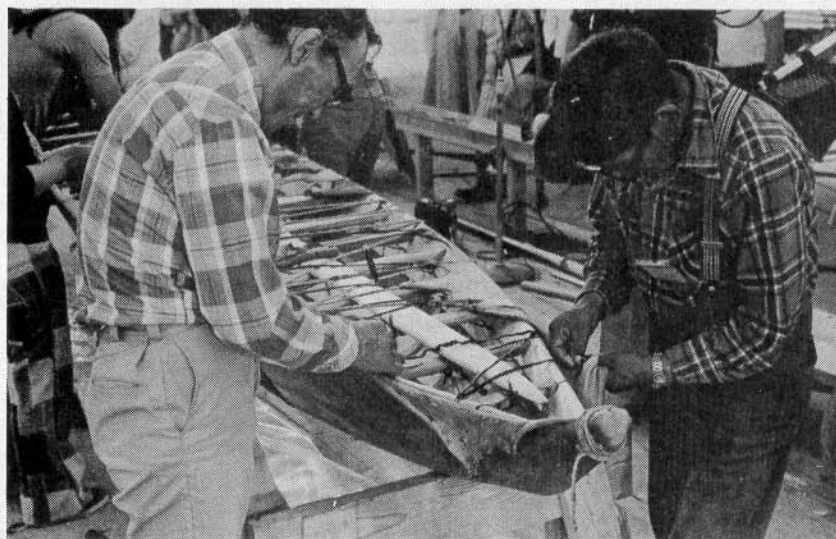


Figure 12
NOW IT IS AGAIN THE MEN'S TURN. PLACING THE KAYAK RIGHTSIDE UP, THEY PULL THE SKIN UP OVER THE GUNWALES AND LACE IT TOGETHER WITH A KIND OF HEAVY DUTY BASTING LINE.



Figure 13
THE WOMEN, IN LESS-THAN-TRADITIONAL GARB, RETURN WITH MORE PREPARED SEALSKIN TO SEW ON AS THE DECK COVER.



Figure 14
THIS PRE-1921 PHOTO WAS TAKEN ON THE EAST COAST OF HUDSON BAY NEAR WHALE RIVER, NORTHERN QUEBEC. THE SEALSKIN FLOAT VISIBLE IN THE FOREGROUND MAY HAVE BEEN ATTACHED TO A RECENTLY HARPOONED SEAL.

CREDITS

The line drawings, figure 1, are courtesy of Parks Canada ethnologist Eugene Arima. Figures 2-4 and 7-13 are courtesy of the Ontario Science Centre, Toronto. Figures 5 and 6 are by the author. Figure 14 is by R.C. Harrison, courtesy of the Glenbow — Alberta Institute of Calgary, Alberta.

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An Annotated Bibliography of Kayaks (41 pages) is available for \$8.00 from David W. Zimmerly, 193 Holmwood Ave., Ottawa, Canada K1S 2P3. Plans for kayaks, other than the Povungnituk variant, are also available — write for a list.