

About Us

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Ketter Canoeing

Generations of Expertise

Located on the banks of the Mississippi River in Brooklyn Park, Minnesota. We stock Wenonah Canoes and Current Designs Kayaks for sale and rental. We have the largest canoe and kayak inventory in Minnesota.

Our Philosophy

The Ketter Canoeing philosophy has always been "try before you buy." We're located on the Mississippi River, and have most models on the spot. Grab a couple paddles and PFDs, and walk out the back to the river for a test-drive. We're always happy to provide instruction in paddling techniques if you need it, too.

Knowledge is as Important as the Canoe itself.

When

you come to Ketter Canoeing, you get more than the largest in-stock selection of canoes in the area. You get the life-long cumulative canoeing knowledge of the Ketter family. The Ketter family has been intimately involved in canoeing and canoe innovations since the 1960s. (Read more about the Ketter Canoeing history.)

We have the expertise to help you select the right canoe for your use and instruct you in the proper techniques to enjoy using it. Listen to what our customers have to say about the Ketter Canoeing experience.

We

are avid campers, hikers, and generally enjoyers of the outdoors, but not canoeists, at least before this year. Last spring we decided to explore the paddling arts, especially in conjunction with camping. As rank amateurs and attracted by advertisements, we began our search at some of the large outlet camping and outdoors stores and were somewhat befuddled by the enormous selection and price range of canoes on the market. What we were unable to find, even at the more upscale retailers, was good first-hand knowledge about the various types of canoes, and more specifically which features would be best for our use.

We

probably visited half a dozen stores before calling Ketter Canoe. Ken mentioned that he had a vast number of canoes on site, so we decided to visit. After our experiences with other stores, we confess we weren't expecting much as far as sales expertise. We were very wrong. Ken asked the right questions, paid attention to what we wanted, and recommended the correct boat for the job. He took the time to educate us about the

different types of materials, seats, dimensions, and how these variables affected our use of the canoe. Most importantly, Ken and Beth have vast experience using canoes and being with people who use canoes. For this reason we believe Ketter Canoe has the most expansive and well-rounded knowledge of canoes and canoeing in the Twin Cities.

After

carefully examining the options available, we bought our We-no-nah Spirit II from Ketter's and have been delighted with our purchase ever since. We came in under budget and with the perfect canoe for recreation and camping. In the months since buying it, we have explored Minnesota and visited parks in areas that most people aren't privileged to see. If we had simply bought the first boat that matched our price range, we would not have the quality we now appreciate and we definitely wouldn't have the best canoe to suit our purposes. We have nothing but praise for the Ketter's and wholeheartedly recommend consulting them before buying a canoe.

Nathan and Maggie Hobbs

Saint Paul

Ketter Canoeing History

The

story of Ketter Canoeing is the story of a family's love for paddling. Living along the Mississippi, Karl L. and Betty Ketter taught their sons, Karl N. and Kenn, a love for the river and a love for canoeing. Karl L. paddled the Mississippi from Minnesota to Louisiana when he was 18 years old. So when Betty married him, she knew she was marrying a canoe enthusiast, and for the rest of her life, she was running the banks of canoe races for her husband and later her sons.

Karl

L. was interested in racing canoes before it received official status as a sport. He placed second in the 1947 Aquatennial Canoe Derby, first in the Flin Flon Gold Rush Canoe Derby in 1952 and 1958, first in the Flambeau Canoe Derby in 1954, and first the Clay County Centennial Canoe Derby in 1958. Between Karl L., Karl N. and Kenn Ketter, the racing trophies won over the years are too numerous to count.

In

1960, the Kettters met with other canoers to found the Minnesota Canoe Association, with the goal of bringing together supporters of canoe racing and promoting canoe racing through family canoeing. Shortly thereafter, the Kettters published the first article on how to build a woodstrip canoe, approximately four months before Popular Mechanics and Mechanics Illustrated caught on to the trend and published similar articles.

The Ketter Canoeing "Try before you buy" philosophy goes back to 1967, when Karl L. and Betty Ketter started Ketter Canoeing by going around the Midwest and getting two canoes from each manufacturer. Karl rated the canoes, publishing a quarterly magazine with articles about canoes and canoe racing. And of course, Ketter had canoes available for prospective buyers to try out. At that time, Sawyer Canoes outsold all others 10 to 1.

In 1969-70, Sawyer closed its doors. About the same time, We-no-nah Canoes came into being, and followed in Sawyer's footsteps. Ketter Canoeing became the very first dealer of We-no-nah Canoes. Because of We-no-nah's philosophy and Ketter's philosophy, it made sense that they worked together toward a high-end performance canoe.

Although Karl L. Ketter died after the first year of business, Betty Ketter and her sons, Karl N. and Kenn continued to run the business. Through the years, Betty became known as "The Canoe Lady" for her unflinching devotion to canoeing and racing. Canoe paddlers found a central gathering place at the Ketter home, and helpful advice as they paddled the Mississippi from the Ketter's backyard landing.

After Karl N. died in 1997, Kenn and his wife Beth Sikkema began again working with Betty and became the owners after her death in 1999. Today, Ketter Canoeing is still the best place to "try before you buy". Stop down and Kenn can set you up with a canoe, kayak, paddle, or other accessories, along with a lesson in paddling technique.

We have the largest inventory in Minnesota

As a distributor and a retailer for We-no-nah canoe and Current Designs Kayak, we need to carry a larger inventory than any one else in the Minnesota Area. By February, we will have shored up our inventory and carry between 250 to 300 canoes and kayaks.

We obviously carry more of the more popular models like the Minnesota II and fewer of the specialty canoes like the Fisherman. With regard to the more common canoes, we will also carry a number of canoes with various options, i.e. MNII with Kevlar ultra light core, flex core, flex rib, etc. We have a demo fleet of the most popular models for you to try on the river right here at Ketter Canoeing.

Also,
as the distributor, we serve as the shipper for Minnesota. We deliver all canoes and kayaks sold by dealers in Minnesota. Therefore we have a better handle on when special orders will be delivered.

By
September, we will reduce our inventory to approximately 100. This practice helps maintain that we keep in stock at least a minimal amount of almost all of the models made available by We-no-nah canoes.

Please feel free to call to find out if we have the canoe or kayak you want in stock, or how long it will take for us to get it.

For
more specific information on the various models manufactured by Wenonah and Current Design, please click on the following link, or call or email us to request a catalog. Please specify if you would like a Wenonah or Current design catalog.