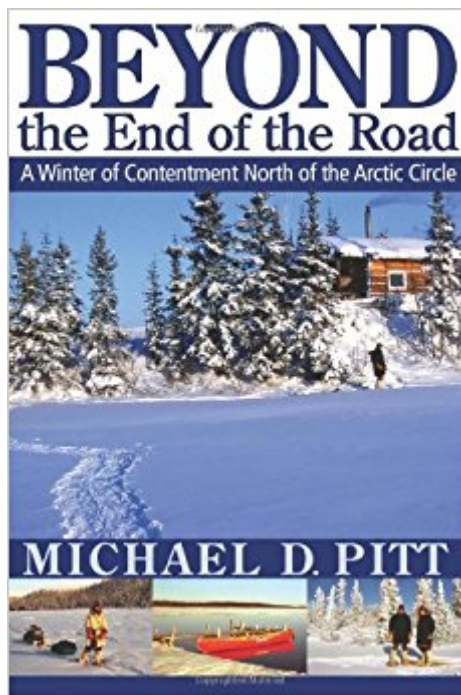




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# Beyond The End Of The Road: A Winter Of Contentment North Of The Arctic Circle



## Synopsis

Join Kathleen and Michael Pitt as they leave the comfort and temperate climate of suburban Vancouver to spend an isolated winter north of the Arctic Circle. With neither power nor running water, over 40 kilometres from the nearest community of 75 people, this middle-aged couple learns to embrace temperatures that regularly fall below minus 40 degrees. From their home base in a small, one-room cabin, they seek the challenge of winter camping and the adventure of expeditions across the ice. In January 1999, the Pitts flew by Twin Otter to Colville Lake to pursue Michael's life-long dream of living beyond the reach of roads and concrete. By the time the ice went out of the lakes and rivers in mid-June, their lives had been changed forever. Michael and Kathleen Pitt had been paddling the rivers of Northern Canada for ten years. Yet their experience seemed incomplete. Summer is for visitors. Michael needed to spend a winter in the North, where rivers, lakes and muskeg remain frozen for 7 to 8 months of the year. Only by following the winter trail did Michael believe that he could truly know the character and soul of Canada's vast, seemingly limitless Northern landscape. "A mesmerizing account of the North's beauty and the winter Michael and his wife Kathleen lived in a tiny cabin above the Arctic Circle. Well-written and insightful, this book will delight anyone who has explored the northern latitudes or dreams of doing so." -- Julie Angus, author of *Rowboat in a Hurricane: My Amazing Journey Across a Changing Atlantic Ocean* "Personal, humorous and witty, Pitt has crafted an Ode to Winter, sharing with us practical tips of wintercraft, philosophical musings and personal observations on life, the North and the majesty of Winter." -- Alan Fehr, 21-year resident of Arctic Canada and Superintendent of Prince Albert and Elk Island National Parks

About the author, Michael D. Pitt Born and raised in California, Michael D. Pitt emigrated to Canada in 1975 to accept a position at the University of British Columbia as a professor of grassland ecology in the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences, where he eventually served as associate dean for eight years. In 1981 he married Kathleen, who worked at the university as an administrator in Information Technology Services. The lure of a rural lifestyle, however, with golden sun reflecting on winter snow, inevitably proved irresistible. Kathleen said goodbye to commute traffic, deadlines, memos and office walls in 2000. Michael escaped 18 months later. They now live on 565 acres in the Aspen Parkland near Preeceville, Saskatchewan, where sled dogs Brownie, Grey, Sailor and Slick help them operate Meadow's Edge Bed & Breakfast. Kathleen and Michael Pitt are authors of *Three Seasons in the Wind: 950 km by Canoe Down Northern Canada's Thelon River*, published in 1999.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

If you like the wild places and enjoy seeing the vastness of creation then this book will satisfy you. It will become a classic for many of us. Well told tales with charm and wit with a lot of surprises. Don't pass this book by, it's one you will want to own and reread.

It is said that we're not on this earth for a long time so we should have a good time.

Probably most of us have dreams of something that we would really like to do before we leave this earth, regardless of where we think we might be going. In "Beyond the End of the Road", Michael Pitt takes us along with him and his wife, Kathleen, as they live their dream. Do you ever wish that you lived in a time before cell phones, video games and constant traffic and what seems like never ending noise then this is the book for you. Michael makes you feel that you are with them as they experience the beauty and solitude of nature during the winter and spring in northern Canada 100 km north of the Arctic circle and 40 km from the nearest settlement. It is not a story of loneliness but a story of peace and contentment and an appreciation of nature and all that surrounds them. It is not a book that you feel the need to rush through but more like a gentle stroll as you walk along with Michael and Kathleen each day as they live their dream.

Michael Pitt takes us to a place on our planet where, as Jack London once wrote, "life is a barren struggle with cold and death." He then proceeds to convince us that we might want to live there too. When I finished reading the final chapter I couldn't help but contrast this book with Jack London's stories of the old Yukon that I had devoured as a boy. The people in Michael Pitt's book are some of

the same characters found in Jack London's stories, perhaps with the rough edges smoothed over. Bern Will Brown, the Catholic priest could be a likeness of Father Roubeau, a Jesuit priest in London's short story The Man on the Trail. Or Ron the Constable from Fort Good Hope a, modern creation of the mounted policeman in the same story. However, I could not find a place for Michael and Kathleen Pitt in a Jack London story. While exposed to many of the same life threatening hazards, Michael and Kathleen have instead shown us the extraordinary beauty of a part of our world brimming with life that most of us will never visit in our lifetime. He writes "...this simple beauty of winter, with its quiet collage of sun dazzled snow white, forest green and sky blue is unsurpassed. I am thrilled, on nearly a daily basis to be surrounded by so much beauty." To be sure, Michael writes about the hazards of a cabin fire, of falling through the ice, of their isolation 40 km from the nearest settlement, of cold that could quickly and silently overwhelm them without logs to feed a small stove that heated their 14 x 14 foot cabin. But the book does not dwell on the hazards of life, rather it highlights the joy and contentment that Michael and Kathleen discovered living in this isolated winter wilderness above the Arctic Circle.[ASIN:1609101170 THE MOUNTAIN OF SEVEN GABLES]

These enthusiastic comments have come in recently..."Michael Pitt combines the bravado of a 19th century explorer with the sensitivity of a modern day man in this masterfully woven tale of an ordinary, middle-aged couple who leave their comfortable city life to spend the winter in a remote, one-room cabin in the Canadian Arctic." -- Tracey D. Hooper, Wildlife Ecologist, Victoria "Pitt's writing struck me as a wonderful blend of Henry David Thoreau and Farley Mowat -- a treasure of logical philosophy and dry humor, perfect for the armchair adventurer." -- Bruce T. Batchelor, Outdoors author and publisher, Victoria. "Michael Pitt's new book is an inspiring story of a couple fulfilling a dream of arctic adventure through all seasons -- perceptive, funny, personal and captivating." -- Dan Burnett, Wilderness Canoeist & Lawyer, Vancouver "This is one of those very rare books that will not only take you on a thoroughly entertaining, thought provoking, real life adventure Beyond the End of Michael and Kathleen's Road, but will also provide you with insights into your own Road. This is a very well told story and more than that, an inspiration." -- Bob Gibbins, Avid Outdoorsman and Chartered Accountant, West Vancouver. "This story would also interest those who are not outdoor-recreation enthusiasts, as a tale of how to make your dream come to life - by planning and hard work - and how that dream may lead to other, more profound changes in a person's life." -- Alan Thomson, Past President, Recreational Canoeing Association of BC and Retired Physician, Victoria

I was on the edge of my seat! Even though I met Michael and Kathleen and know that they're well after this amazing life experience...this well-written and compelling story had me on the edge throughout! Why? The idea of living off the grid as they say, of being in a mostly frigid environment (which Michael often calls 'warm') for many months had me worried the other shoe would drop. With beautiful images of vast, lightly populated areas, I was held captive awaiting each new day's dawn. Through Michael's words, I was able to hear the silence. I am especially curious now to read much more on native peoples of the north, who have been so misrepresented. Only near the end of his journey, does Michael become keenly aware of the unique perspective difference between whites and native peoples. Thanks for sharing your story - it's a great read!

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