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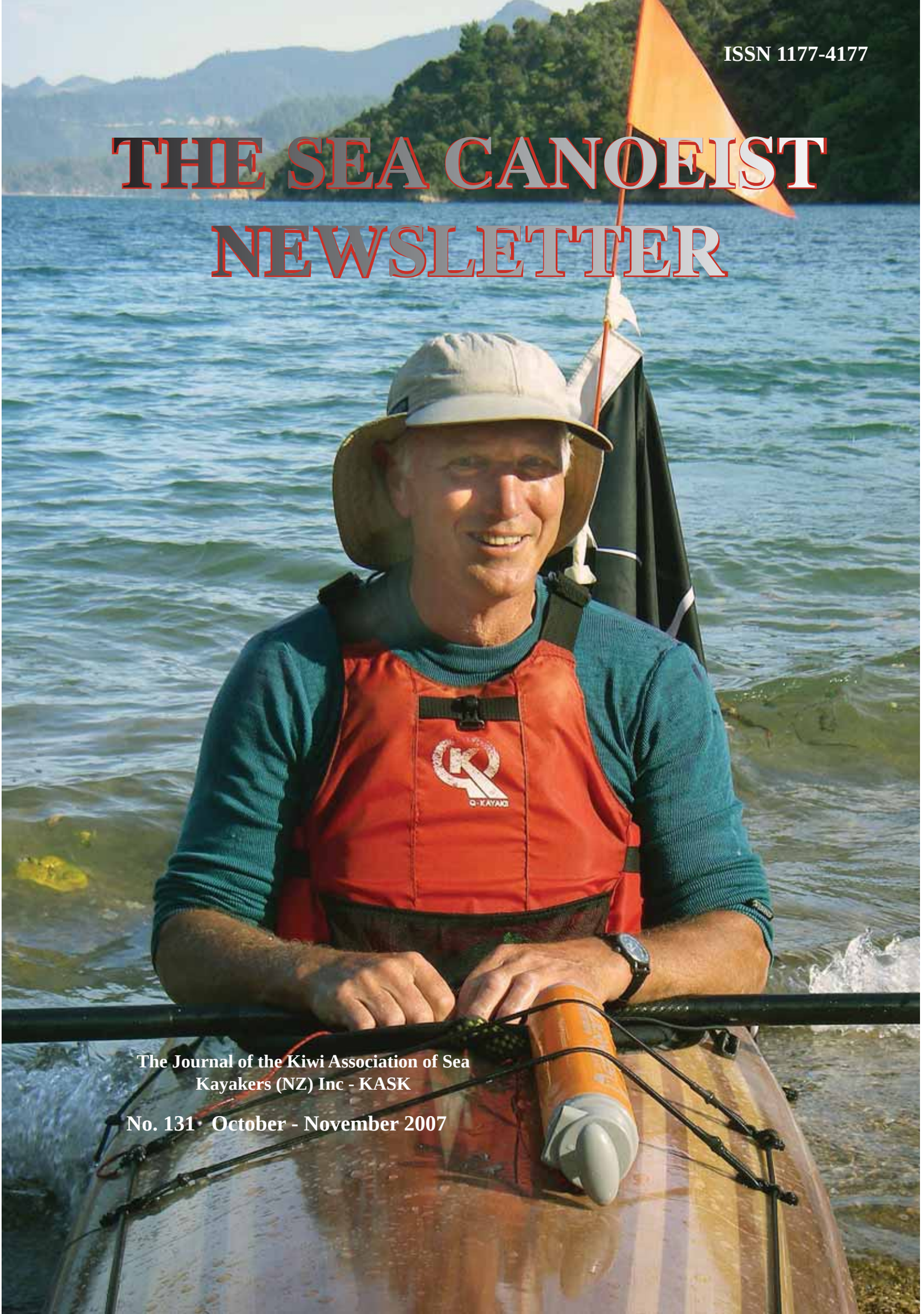
THE SEA CANOEIST NEWSLETTER



The Journal of the Kiwi Association of Sea Kayakers (NZ) Inc - KASK

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Photos at left:

by Mary Kirk-Anderson, of Freya Hoffmeister launching from Birdlings Flat, by the outlet of Lake Ellesmere, into rather violent bumper dumpers.
Top: Martin Fraser in the red shirt & John Kirk-Anderson with red helmet and yellow PFD, after launching Freya.
Bottom: JKA looks like he is saying, "Come on Freya, I know you are in there somewhere!" Although Freya and her black kayak are completely engulfed in the bumper dumper, she managed to reach the safety of the open sea without breaking body or kayak.

EDITORIAL

So much to write about and so little space this editorial.

Best wishes from Linda Ingram (photo below) our very efficient KASK administrator, and myself, for the Festive Season and the New Year.

Keep safe on the seas, keep your emergency communication equipment either on your PFD or very handy in a bail-out bag, and please remember if you start out as a paddling pod, to finish paddling in that pod.

ANDREW MCAULEY
Martin Fraser and myself attended the Invercargill coroner's inquest for Andrew. I have tried to picture the most likely scenario for what transpired on that Friday night in February, and made suggestions as to how emergency communication equipment should be carried by paddlers.

RAKE25VSKC
I have to hand it to the Victorian Sea Kayak Club. To mark 25 years since the finish of the Round Australia Kayak Expedition, they organized a superb day at Queenscliff, with a paddle in by Andy and myself, speeches, a plaque opening, and a procession led by a bagpiper to the Queenscliff Maritime Museum where *Lalaguli*, the kayak used for the Australian trip, will now go on permanent display. With my report on page 16, and a few photos, I have tried to convey the setting for the day and how moving the anniversary was at times.

FREYA HOFFMEISTER
A wait for big bumper dumpers at Birdlings Flat by Freya, and her time with Martin and Martin Fraser is described by Martin. The inside cover photos show clearly the violence of those big dumpers. As of today (19 December) Freya has completed what I view as the crucial stage around Fiordland, and as long as the brilliant La Nina summer continues, she should finish her South Island circuit by at Okiwi Bay (south-west of French Pass) in early 2008.

SAFETY
Thanks to committee member Julie Reynolds for attending the National Pleasure Boat Forum, recently held in Auckland. Her report and the overview by John Marshall on a draft kayaking strategy are worth seriously considering. Colin Quilter, whose 'opinion' piece is reprinted from the Auckland Canoe Club newsletter, poses a future possible scenario if draconian rules and regulations were imposed by kayakers. As long as New Zealand recreational paddlers and KASK continue to promote, publicize and push a safe kayaking message, we should keep the rules etc. at bay. It is far better to liaise and educate than to regulate.

THANKS
Big mobs of thanks to all the photographers and writers who have contributed to the newsletter this year.

Xmas elf, Linda Ingram

Thanks to all the contributors.
Contributions of articles and photos are requested for the next newsletter.

Cocer Photo: Max Grant arriving at Ratimera Bay in the Marlborough Sounds for the annual pilgrimage, in his brand new, home built wooden strip kayak. The apprehensive look on his face is the impending threat of his kayak being used as a log on the sacrifical fire.

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE
20 January 2008

SAFETY

Overview of Maritime New Zealand Presentation on Safety in Kayaking ONZ Forum 14 September 2007 by John Marshall

Colin Sonneveld and John Marshall of MNZ outlined the background to and process followed in developing the draft MNZ strategy on safety in kayaking, and summarised the key initiatives under the draft.

The strategy, it was noted:

- reflected the MNZ view that the stringency of a legislated rules-based approach was not justified
- recognised and supported industry-led developments to:
  - strengthen provision of entry level qualifications
  - bring greater structure and coherence to outdoor qualifications
  - extend safety management systems through third party audited quality brands
- covered both commercial and recreational kayaking.

The next steps were described: MNZ to reflect on comments to date and then circulate a formal draft for submissions and finalisation by the end of 2007. The various projects, as amended and prioritised in consequence of the consultation, would be rolled out over the next 18 months to 2 years.

As to the draft MNZ guidelines for commercial kayaking operations, circulated with the draft strategy, it was noted that MNZ's intended to finalise and publish these in the near future.

In discussion with forum participants, a number of concerns, observations and proposals were raised, including:

- the proposal that the key representatives organisations should engage with MNZ in a roundtable discussion, using, possibly, the WSNZ-convened non-powered craft forum, and including, possibly, representatives of secondary schools, which, it was noted, had not been consulted in the first round

- a provider of kayaking instruction concerned that the strategy did not address MNZ's responsibility to regulate and enforce minimum industry agreed (and coronially-endorsed) standards for commercial kayaking, noting, in particular, kayaking activities associated with commercial rafting operations and raft guides

- a number of participants observed that MNZ should do more to support, promote and endorse the standards for kayaking developed by national bodies.

- John Marshall is Manager for Environmental Research and Analysis, MNZ

- ONZ is Outdoors New Zealand

OPINION

Is Too Much Safety Bad for Kayakers? byColin Quilter

Auckland Canoe Club members recently assisted in trials on the water involving Coastguard and the Harbourmaster to find ways of making kayaks more easily seen. I was invited to join the trials but declined because I am philosophically opposed to too much safety for kayakers. This might seem a curious position. How could any reasonable person be opposed to safety?

My fear is that kayakers might in future have their freedom curtailed by regulations which are unnecessarily restrictive, or might even be there for another purpose. Pressure for regulation might come, for example, from the owners of powerboats who would prefer kayaks to be restricted to the fringes of the harbour so that high-speed boats can travel with maximal speed and minimal lookout. Such regulations will no doubt be introduced on the grounds that, "they are there for the safety of kayakers" but they actually serve more powerful vested interests.

Some years ago I wrote a fictional short story for the Auckland Canoe Club newsletter exploring what an over-regulated future might hold. It is reprinted here. Naturally, this story is told from my personal view, and might not reflect the opinion of the ACC committee.

It was a summer afternoon in February, 2020. Since global warming had accelerated these days of late summer had become hotter than ever, and now the paddocks on the far side of the creek shimmered with heat. The brown water flowed slowly upstream; I guessed the tide must still be rising on the coast a few miles away. We had dragged our kayaks through the blackberry and long grass to the riverbank; or rather I had dragged them, since my granddaughter Laura and her friend Hine,

both aged twelve, were too small for the task. The three of us stowed the sandwiches, the drinks and the tadpole net and were about to slide the boats into the water when the crunch of tires on gravel made us look back towards the roadside. A man of about my age, casually dressed, stood beside his bicycle.

"Hello. Going for a paddle, are you?" His question didn't seem to need a reply, so I nodded and turned back to the boats.
"Excuse me," he said. "There are a few things I need to ask you. Are you the leader of this party?"
I looked at Laura and Hine. "Am I the leader?"
"Yes," said Laura. "You know where the tadpoles are."
"Well then. I need to make sure that you have a Level 3 Trip Leader's Certificate from the New Zealand Sea Kayaking Safety Authority, and that your boats comply with the Inshore and Protected Waters Minimum Equipment Standard for sea kayaks."

I could feel a sense of rising irritation. "And who the hell are you?"
He smiled benignly. "I'm an Honorary Sea Kayaking Safety Inspector," he said. "There are hundreds of us, up and down the country. It's our job to make sure you enjoy your sport safely. Here's my Identity Card." The card he handed me was impressive; dark blue with a logo in gold lettering on the front: *SMERSH (Standards for Maritime Enjoyment, Recreation, Sports and Hobbies).* Lost for words, I passed it to Laura.
"Mister, these aren't sea kayaks," she said. "And this isn't the sea. It's a creek. With tadpoles. You're not the boss here."
"She means you're exceeding your jurisdiction," I added.

He ignored me, and spoke to Laura. "Well young lady, if you look at what you call the creek, you'll notice that the current is actually flowing up the river, not down it. That means the current is affected by the tide, and according to Paragraph 3, Regulation 39 in the SMERSH Safety Manual, that means this creek, as you call it, is legally part of the sea!"

An unpleasant note of triumph had entered his voice. "And that also means that your kayaks must meet certain minimum safety standards. For example, they must each have two bulkheads, pressure-tested to 35 kilograms per square centimetre. And a maximum cockpit volume of 160 litres. Then there's the Personal Safety Equipment that each of you needs to carry." He was reading from the Safety Manual. "Category 5 Buoyancy Aid, whistle, paddle float, two red hand flares, one orange smoke flare, Approved First Aid Kit."

He turned to me. "And for you, a Level 3 Trip Leader's Certificate requires you to be able to eskimo roll, demonstrate two different types of assisted rescues, and be able to swim 100 metres wearing a buoyancy aid and sprayskirt, without losing your paddle."
"Mister," said Laura, "you've lost the plot. This creek isn't anywhere deeper than my tummy. And in the middle of it, you could touch both banks with your paddle. How can grand-dad eskimo roll if his head's in the mud on the bottom?" She turned to me.
"Come on, grand-dad. Let's go home and get a videodisk about kayaking instead. There's a cool disk called "Deliverance" which has got lots of canoes in it, plus a guy who gets shot right through with an arrow, and there's sodomy in it as well."
"What on earth do you know about sodomy?"
"We learned about it in sex education at school. Miss Jones told us it's when...."
"Never mind!"

The Safety Inspector was fidgeting; something else was on his mind. "Look," he said. "I don't want to spoil your fun. But even if I allowed you on the water, there's nowhere to go nowadays. This bank as far as the sea is Maori Land, so you can't land on it. The other bank is part of Russell Coutt's estate, the guy who made a fortune winning the America's Cup twenty years ago. So you can't land there either."

The flat sense of stalemate hung in the air. Suddenly I felt tired and hot. Perhaps a canoeing videodisk was better than the real thing after all. Then Hine spoke. She'd been silent until now, but her brown eyes had missed nothing.

"Kia ora, Inspector," she said quietly. "This is my land, and you are standing on it. I hope you don't plan to stay long. These boats look like kayaks, but they are not. They are waka. Paddlers of waka are exempt from wearing buoyancy aids because they are culturally inappropriate. Whatever "bulkheads" and "maximum cockpit volumes" are, waka don't have them. Nobody can eskimo-roll in a waka, and we don't swim in sprayskirts. Have a nice day Inspector, and I hope you enjoy your bike ride."

So we ended up on the river after all. It may have been a bad day for the safety regulations, but it was a great day for tangata whenua!

Colin Quilter is a greying ex-sailor who lives in Auckland. He paddles a home-built 22 year-old plywood Sea Bear which has carried him along the North Island east coast from Cape Reinga to Wellington, and along the South Island coast from Cape Farewell to Kaikoura. When the day comes that he doesn't enjoy paddling he'll quit; but it hasn't happened yet.

THE 'BUGGER!' FILE

One Lemon Missing
A paddle from Makara to Titahi Bay

by Bill Anderson

I work in the same building as Peter Rawlins. Peter is a member of the Manawatu Tramping and Skiing Club and is also heavily involved in Search and Rescue. He coordinates many of the local SAR call outs and has a pretty good understanding of why things go wrong in the outdoors. In a chat I had with him recently he talked about how no accident is really just one thing going wrong. As he put it, "It's a bit like those pokey machines – you need to get a whole row of lemons for something really bad to go wrong." On our recent trip from Makara to Titahi Bay we got through a situation where, lucky for us, there was one lemon missing.

Mana Recreational Forecast: Today, 2 Sept: Northwest 25 knots gusting 35 knots, changing southwest 20 knots late morning then easing to 10 knots in the afternoon … Rough sea easing to moderate late morning and to slight in the afternoon … Swell: Northwest 1 metre dying out today. Southwest half a metre for a time today.

Yes, it was going to be windy. On the way down it didn't seem like it would be. Grant, Jan, Max and I headed off at 8.15 and with four big sea kayaks on top I was expecting to get pushed around a bit by the wind. It didn't happen. We couldn't help but notice that there was no wind whatsoever and I began to wonder if I had been a bit harsh in asking two others not to come on the basis of the forecast. We met Mike, Douglas (both from Wellington) and Will (from Northland) at Mana, dropped a vehicle off at Titahi Bay and headed down to Makara.

At Makara the wind was coming down the valley in big gusts – the southerly had kicked in, in the time it had taken to get from Mana to Makara.

We felt reasonably comfortable about the trip – the wind was behind us and we weren't terribly exposed. The day wasn't cold and the southerly wasn't really bitter. The swell wasn't large and the chop had whitecaps but was manageable.

On the water the wind was okay overall. There were some large gusts. The Met Service tells us that gusts are about half as strong again as the mean speed, so we should have been expecting gusts of up to 30 knots. We certainly seemed to be flying northwards.

The shore was mainly rocky with the occasional steep bouldery beach and the hillside rose sharply immediately from the beach. I noticed that we weren't doing as much talking as normal. There was an air of concentration about everyone, and there were certainly times when that concentration was needed.

About a third of the way up we passed a headland in quite strong gusty conditions and immediately entered a piece of water that was very confused. The wind was blowing off-shore at this stage as the shore fell away to our right. After some time we all started heading in-shore, pushing into the wind somewhat, seeking the shelter of the coastal hills. We got to within 100 metres or so of the shore and continued northward, approaching the next headland, while the wind continued its off-shore push.

Within about 500 metres or so of the headland the wind swung around and quite violent gusts suddenly started hammering us toward the shore. I was out front with Jan, with the others not too far behind. We were inside the curve of the headland and needed to push out to get around the rocks while the wind kept pushing us on-shore. Jan and I had rafted up for a brief moment when suddenly a huge gust of wind nearly tore the paddle from my grasp – I lost the grip of my right hand and just hung on with my left. It was the same gust that blew Grant over.

I didn't see what happened next but … it seems … Grant went over and lost his paddle. I heard a shout of, "Paddle" and Jan and I started to turn around to see what was happening. The wind kept on hammering away.

With the help of Max and Douglas, Grant got up and started pumping his boat out. Mike got the paddle but had trouble controlling two paddles in the conditions. Mike attempted to throw the paddle to Max and Grant but it didn't make it and got blown further away. Grant got out his split paddle and started putting it together.

He had his paddle together and was nearly ready to paddle again when another blast of wind came. He attempted a support stroke but he hadn't had time to adjust the feather of the paddle properly and his support stroke didn't work. The rocky shoreline was looming, with the combined swell causing a reasonable break onto some large rocks. With Grant in the water a second time, and the wind continuing to drive onshore any boat not being paddled, it was time for Max to leave Grant and get clear.

By this time Jan and I were on our way back. We saw Grant in the water and noticed a steep beach just south of where he was heading into the rocks. Jan shouted that he would head into the beach – on which there was a reasonable dumping surf. He landed, surfing sideways up the boulders. The remaining five of us stood off the shore.

Grant, still in the water, was threading his way through the rocks, gathering a number of bruises and gouges in the process, and had his boat still in one piece (it was plastic after all). Max headed off around the headland to see if there was another landing place on the other side – like me, he had a glass boat. I watched him head off leaning sideways at about 30 degrees into the wind. Mike and I stayed with Will who admitted to being at the edge of his ability and Douglas who was feeling a little tired.

To cut to the chase … Jan helped Grant and together they got the boat back to the beach where Jan had landed and then both successfully launched and made it out to join us. The six of us then headed around the headland in a wind that seemed to have moderated

just a little. We saw Max making his way on foot back around the headland and signalled for him to join us. The rest of the trip was relatively uneventful. It was a strong wind to be sure, but more moderate and definitely not as variable in direction. We were all still concentrating though as the expected moderation in wind seemed to be taking a bit longer to come through than we had anticipated.

Back at Titahi Bay we wondered about what had happened. What were our lemons? Here are my thoughts. Should we have gone? I still feel comfortable with the decision to take to the water but we learnt some things.

First and biggest lesson – we needed paddle leashes. You certainly don't want one on whitewater but on the sea, a paddle leash is necessary. Only one of our party of seven was using a paddle leash (it wasn't me).

Second, we should have moved further off shore immediately the wind swung around to be pushing us onshore.

Third, always take Jan along in a plastic boat – well, be prepared for a rough landing regardless of the construction of your boat. I'm not too sure what would have happened had I had to land my carbon/Kevlar on the beach where Jan did. I did have some repair tape with me, but …

Fourth, in retrospect, I don't like the thought of what might have happened to Jan's head had he overturned while surfing in across the boulders. Perhaps it would be useful to take at least one crash hat on these day trips along the coast. I think the missing lemon was the fact that the swell was only one metre – any larger would have made it very uncomfortable for Grant and landing might not have been advisable. A good trip though. Special thanks to Jan.

Bill Anderson

MY FIRST TIME

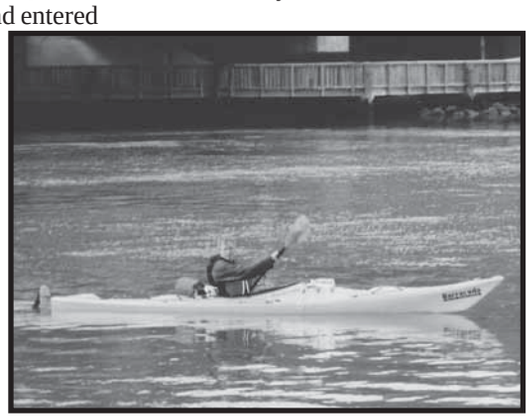
by Peter Van Kuyk

My first experience in a kayak was at Graeme Dingle's Outdoor Pursuits Centre in the central North Island, on a school trip around 1973. For the past 2 years in October, I have competed in a kayak leg of the Multi-sports race at Days Bay in Wellington Harbour, using a friend's kayak for training and a hired Penguin for the race. I really enjoyed being on the water and seeing the scenery from a different angle, as well as balancing: paddling skills / sea conditions / what to take. After a 3-day family canoe trip down the Wanganui River early this year, my wife encouraged me to buy two sea kayaks, as we have two teenagers, and everyone could make use of them, and there are so many suitable paddling locations around Wellington. We bought a Penguin and a lightweight Barracuda.

After a few trips to Petone beach and Somes Island, I heard of a Yakkity Yak club trip on 26 May to Mana Island, off the coast of Titahi Bay. Unfortunately on the day, no one turned up due to strong winds, and I didn't have a cellphone with me so I was not contactable. I decided to go out anyway, but not to Mana Island. I used to live in Titahi Bay 20 years ago, so knew the area very well, and headed around the peninsula to Paremata and the Pauatahanui inlet. There was quite a large northwesterly swell banging up onto the rocks for the first half hour, which had me a bit worried, but I figured that the worst that could happen if I tipped out was I'd have to swim to the shore and walk back to my car. After 30 minutes I had passed the most exposed section and entered Porirua Harbour and then Pauatahanui inlet, passing a couple of dragon boats with outriggers. A friendly chap on the launching ramp took my photo for me.

Finally I stepped ashore at the memorial to the US Marines base (1942) off Grays Rd, and phoned home from a nearby house to advise of my changed route. Returning the same way I'd come was a pleasure, as the wind was dropping and the sun was out - all the houses along the harbour looked great. I stopped at a small sandbank near the Mana marina for some scroggin, and then carried on to Titahi Bay, where I noticed an echo of the waves was bouncing back from the rocky coast, creating a turbulent current around the kayak. With weary arms I paddled into Titahi Bay beach, happy to have survived a trip to the edge of my comfort zone, and not caused anyone any trouble. After loading the kayak onto the roofrack, I walked up Mt Cooper (near the 2YA radio mast) to the lookout, to see what the waves looked like from there. Well, just like 20 years ago, it looked as flat as! So it is very hard to tell how big the swell is, until you take a boat out onto it. A kayak went slowly past, way below me, and it looked very small and insignificant.

The next day was slightly more windy, so the Yakkity Yak club decided on an easy trip from the Porirua Rowing Club to the Pauatahanui inlet, avoiding the open sea. This was an opportunity for me to meet 3 experienced kayakers, and to see a Garmin GPS receiver and some flash jackets and booties. I am not a member of the club, but they gave me a very warm welcome and answered all my questions.
Peter Van Kuyk



Peter at the Paremata bridge

KASK REPORTS

National Pleasure Boat Forum Report by Julie Reynolds

On Tuesday 4 of December I attended the Maritime New Zealand National Pleasure Boat Safety Forum, as the representative for KASK. Although I was unable to attend the full day, it was very interesting to hear about the excellent work being done by the different interested bodies. There were attendees from the following sectors, Maritime NZ, Water Safety NZ, Underwater NZ, ACC, Search & Rescue, Wellington Regional Council, Auckland Regional Council, Queenstown Lakes Council, NZ Police, Auckland Police Maritime Unit, Coastguard, Yachting NZ and Ministry of Transport. Each group is actioning some excellent initiatives around safety and education.

The key points of interest for me were the discussions around kayak safety on our waters. Maritime NZ is working with a group of interested parties on developing a Code of Practice for all commercial kayak operators. This appears to be getting good support and buy in from the different participants. The biggest issue appearing to be how to have best practices for water safety complied to, by the likes of backpackers and motels who provide kayaking equipment to guests without proper instruction or checks in place.

Another key issue that was discussed at length was the use of sit on tops and the lack of appropriate skills and safety awareness by this group. There is another Forum to be held in April for interested parties to further discuss the code of practice and in particular how to encourage and educate for safety with sit on tops.

I was shocked and disappointed when one of the attendees at this meeting contradicted all that was being discussed, by claiming that he never wears a PFD on his sit on top as he finds it hinders him in surf. Given we had just been discussing the issues around safety, and in particular rescues and drownings, and how we could encourage retailers of all non powered pleasure boats to include PFD's in the purchase and safety reading material, I felt his comments were detrimental and ignorant.

However apart from that one individual there appeared to be a very real enthusiasm to help initiate a code of practice and to back all safety focussed activities. Some of the points made pertaining to the Code of Practice development were; who would endorse this, how to obtain more accountability, how to create active networking within the sport, training systems, minimum qualifications for instructors, basic competencies, safety plans and guidelines and finally how would this Code of Practice be enforced.

All in all it was very good to know what's going on behind the scenes and also important I think to pass on how pivotal to our enjoyment of this sport safety and education is.

The last thing we want to see is restrictive legislation when it comes to water sports so it's in every ones best interests to be involved and active when it comes to safety and education. Setting good examples and passing on sound knowledge is all a part of this. If we are seen to be responsible for our sport we will be left alone to thoroughly enjoy it.

If anyone would like to pass on thoughts or comments pertaining to the implementation of a Code of Practice with would I'm sure be most appreciated.

Webmaster - mail to:
susan.cade@xtra.co.nz.

NEW ZEALAND TRIP REPORTS

The Pilgrimage 2007 by Diana Parr

Neither Mecca nor Jerusalem. This year's pilgrimage on the holy dates of 24 and 25 November 2007 was to the sacred site of Ratimera Bay, in the Ruakaka Bay Scenic Reserve in the Marlborough Sounds.

The 15 pilgrims travelled in small groups; some by car (usually a 4wd station wagon or van) or inter-island ferry and then the final leg by sea-kayak. While some pilgrims travelled by night following the stars, the more sensible ones waited for daylight.

The purpose of the pilgrimage seems unclear but concentrated on the Saturday evening ceremony of 'dancing with the stars' and consumption of sacred liquids. There were also some unusual sacraments of a flag and a boogie-box. The dancing costumes were mainly acquired from Tradme, an opshop or the $2 shop. The men were mostly in suits, some two and some three piece, some suits even had tails. Above the waist there were two styles, those with bow ties and those exposing their chest hair. They must have missed the waxing session but maybe they knew that it didn't help Steve Gurney in the telly version of dancing with stars. The women were all beautiful, and poised; dressed in the finest jewellery, frocks, feathers and fine shoes. Fortunately the night was warm as there was more flesh exposed than usually worn by those more comfortable in polypro, polar-fleece and bootees.

The attire judging had a certain gender bias; Cathye Haddock was the judge for the men's category and Conrad Edwards for the women's. While they may be excellent kayakers, Cathye and Conrad's knowledge of dancing couture is limited. You may have guessed I didn't win. With my pink sequin number and feather boa, I was the spitting image of Candy Lane. Being the mathematical type Conrad wrote a lot of numbers in his little

From left, Diana Parr, AJ, Melanie Grant, Paul Caffyn & Alison Turner

black book. Bribery was permitted - alcohol was mentioned/ encouraged. As Alison won the women's category, I think some bedroom favours may have been granted. Max and Sandy co-won the men's category. It may have been Max's glasses and Sandy's hat or maybe some bribery or other form of corruption. Conrad and Cathye are a shady pair. Bring back the real dancing with the stars judges; Brendon, Carol-Ann, Alison and Craig. If there had actually been a category for dancing, Susan Cade would have won.

Sunday started with a bit of a dawn chorus with the addition of Polynesian drum music from the boogie-box. Thanks AJ. Breakfast was impressive - coffee, bacon and eggs that other people made smelt much better than my muesli and fruit. All too soon, the formal flag lowering ceremony was over. We kayaked towards Picton. Someone decided to add a little side trip to find some historic gold mine. Yeh right. But it was true. The first mine entrance was at sea level into a small cave. The other entrance was supposedly inland near to a bach.

Paul Caffyn, in full-charm mode, persuaded the bach owner to take us bush-bashing on a guided tour of the remote overgrown hole. Maybe it will become a new pilgrimage site.

The annual KASK pilgrimage isn't mentioned on Wikipedia but a link took me to a site which, with a bit of a stretch, could apply to sea-kayaking and the aims and objectives of KASK.

'Going on pilgrimage, that is to say, leaving home to create a path that leads to a chosen (or given) goal, real or imagined, has always been and will always be a dangerous business. The naïve pilgrim who sets off unprepared, that is to say, without a clear goal and the well-designed and practiced skills needed to achieve it, will surely fail and come to grief. The true pilgrim who achieves her goal enters a truly wonderful and joyful reality.' http://www.vwsp.eu/

It was a weekend to remember.
Thanks for a lovely trip.
Diana Parr

The Pilgrimage 2007

by Max Grant

Mike, Dave, Diane, Melz & I set out from Picton in brilliant sunshine after a good ferry trip across Cook Strait. As we headed out across Queen Charlotte Sound the kayaking became more challenging as we were hit by a strong NW wind.

After battling into the wind for three hours we finally arrived at the Ratimera Bay DoC campsite where we were met by 11 other enthusiastic sea kayakers. We were there to celebrate the annual Sea Kayakers' Pilgrimage and formal dinner party. The dress theme was 'Dancing with the Stars', and by 7pm we were dressed and performing in front of the judges, Cathye Haddock and Conrad Edwards from Wellington.

After great displays by the contestants and many drinks/dances later, winners were announced; 1st Women:Alison, equal 1st Men:Andy & Max.

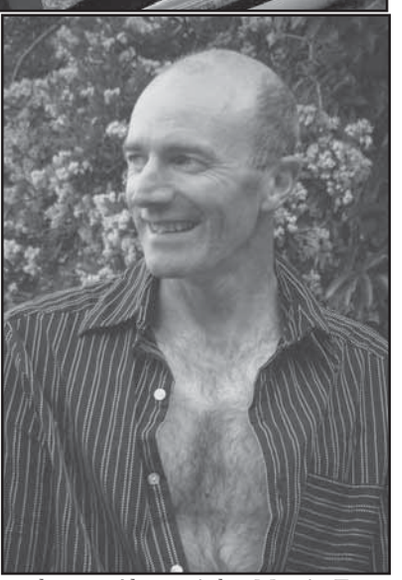
The following morning we were awoken to the dawn chorus of AJ's outrageous pounding drums from the Cook Islands. This was not such a great part of the weekend, but the

The gorgeous couple who should have been winners of the Dancing with the Stars evening at Ratimera Bay, but scored poorly because of the photos of the judges which appeared in the previous newsletter. Photo: Max Grant

terrible noise had the required effect and everyone was up, breakfasted and ready for the formal flag downing before setting off back to Picton.

On the way back we stopped in at David's home where he showed us through an old gold mine which was very interesting. Melanie made friends with a couple of Little Blue Penguins and then it was back the ferry terminal for our trip back home to Ashhurst.

It was a most enjoyable weekend and so good to catch up with old friends and share a good fun evening with them. Our thanks go to AJ and Paul for organizing such a great gathering.
Max Grant



Above left: Max Gramt with eye goggling glasses. Above right: Martin Fraser who should have won best dressed male dancer for sheer growth of chest hair. Below: AJ, Fiona Fraser & Bevan Walker

SOUTH ISLAND CIRCUMNAVIGATION

Freya Hoffmeister
by Martin Fraser

We got a phone call at 1430hrs on Saturday 3 November 2007

"Freya is going to be landing at Te Oka Bay in two to three hours, can you pick her up?"

A flurry of activity ensued. We threw together what we thought would be appetising for a paddler who had been out for a week, lots of fresh salad and fruit with some bread rolls and meat then we departed for the bay. We wondered what we would encounter, what would Freya be like? We tried to imagine a female version of Paul, but it was hard to erase the moustache.

We didn't have to wait long to find out, she got to the bay only about 10 minutes after we did. She pulled in to shore and bounced out of her kayak looking like she was stopping for a quick break before dealing to another 70km. She could have had the decency to look at least a little bit tired and sore. We all lugged her pile of gear to the car and then her kayak which was also no lightweight. The picnic meal was well received, and despatched with gusto. Once all packed up we headed for home, just over an hour's drive away.

Freya had decided to take Sunday off from paddling and then continue on Monday. I think that is a decision she will rue right to the end of her trip. Sunday turned out to be a picture perfect day for paddling, and Monday and Tuesday were rubbish. She spent most of Sunday catching up with her electronic admin, then she attended to her gear. The kayak needed a bit of a patch up due to some leaking into the cockpit. The holes were pretty easy to find and she had repair equipment with her, so it was easily sorted.

We got a tour through her gear, which was really amazing. Pretty much everything she had was provided by sponsors including the kayak. Even after such a short time you could see that the sand and salt would take a toll. Equipment that survives a trip like this is definitely tough. Her waterproof camera shutter was making a sound which sounded suspiciously like it had sand or salt in the mechanism. A soak in fresh water for about 10 minutes seemed to sort it out though.

Freya Hoffmeister at the Motunau River mouth, about to head off on a beeline for Okains Bay on the north side of Banks Peninsula - 2 November 2007. Photo: John Kirk-Anderson

I commented on how heavy her life jacket was. She had a deadly looking pocket knife, a marine radio, an EPIRB, flares and lots of miscellaneous other stuff, no wonder it weighed so much. This collection would rival John de Garnham's life jacket.

We went through her other bags, all colour coordinated and labelled. She had a staggering array of re-charge devices to keep her in touch with the world, three fresh water containers plus another one which sits in her cockpit. She also had a copy of Paul's book which she was studying each night to glean any tips she could as she makes her way around the coast.

Freya paddles wearing a dry suit, which she really rated. She said she gets cold feet though. Her trick to deal with that is to pour hot water down the inside of her neoprene over boots. We were curious as to how she dealt with getting her kayak up unfriendly landing spots considering the weight of the kayak. She has to unload it to move it on land, and if the landing spot is rocky then she may even have to break the kayak down into its three parts and carry it up separately. Imagine that after a hard day's paddle.

We told her that she couldn't be going up the West Coast without first sampling some of their fine delicacy. We managed to procure some whitebait. She was pretty hesitant about it, but Martin insisted and I pointed out that it could be worse – in some countries she would be getting proffered sheep's eyes. When she agreed to try one patty, she didn't realise that it was going to be the same size as her dinner plate. I am not sure if she was being polite or just putting on a brave face, but she finished her patty.

Monday's forecast wasn't very good, so Freya stayed and got her visitors visa extended while she had the opportunity. We dropped her off before work on Tuesday. Te Oka Bay didn't look very inviting at all, and she ended up spending a pretty long day on the beach watching to see if the sea would abate. She ended up paddling around into neighbouring Tumbledown bay.

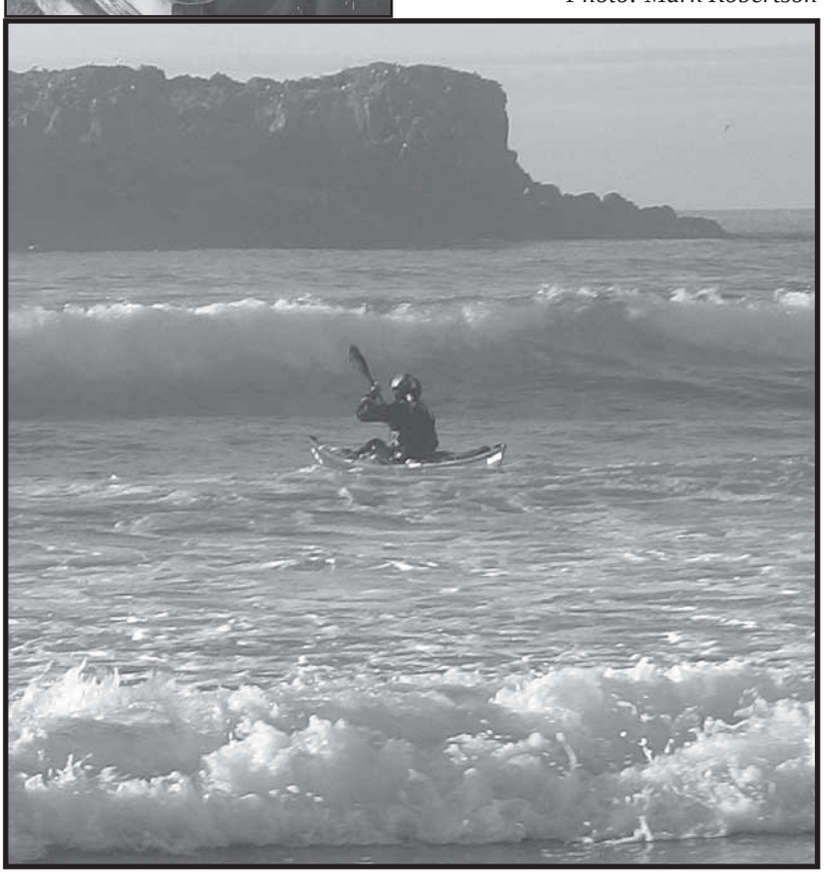
Freya displays a healthy respect for the mission she has set herself. She is very focussed on her goal, but realistic about her limitations as well. It was great to meet her and we enjoyed her stay with us.

She is proud of her huge biceps, I hate to think how big they will be by the end of the trip.
Martin Fraser

Above: Freya, arriving at Cornish Head, north of Dunedin -rugged up for a cold south-westerly day.

Left: Freya's three piece kayak

Below: Freya launching from Smaills Beach, near Dunedin.
Photo: Mark Robertson



Andrew McAuley After the Inquest

by Paul Caffyn

Back in early February, three Kiwi paddlers headed down to Milford Sound to form a waterborne welcoming committee for Andrew McAuley when he finished the first kayak crossing of the Tasman Sea - Martin and Fiona Fraser from Christchurch and Paul Caffyn from the West Coast.

Unaware of Andrew's VHF radio call for a rescue made at 7.13pm NZDT on Friday 9 February, I was stunned by the news when a television news crew shoved a camera in my face as the reporter broke the news early next morning. Although Martin and Fiona had yet to meet Andrew, they were inspired by his endeavours. Andrew and I some years ago were the 'living legends' speakers for an evening south of Sydney, which was organized by the New South Wales Sea Kayak Club. With my two aborted attempted crossings of the Tasman in a double kayak, I felt I needed to be at Milford to meet Andrew.

Keeping in touch with Martin and Fiona subsequently, we decided to wing our way to Sydney for a fund raising dinner in June, which was to help Vicki McAuley and son Finlay. It was a surreal evening for the three Kiwis but very worthwhile as $35,000 was raised (see Martin's report pp 6-7 in newsletter No. 129).

On 6 December, when I noticed a brief newspaper note re an inquest to be held for Andrew at Invercargill on 10 December, I emailed Martin and Fiona, as I felt we needed to attend the inquest, in some ways for some sort of closure. Martin was able to attend and arranged flights, while I made the long drive south.

In the small Invercargill coroner's court, Martin and I were the only paddlers attending, along with Police, media, three Maritime NZ officials, the kayak builder Paul Hewitson, Vicki McAuley, Andrew's mum and dad, his brother Mike and sister Juliette.

Afterwards Martin and I were pleased to have made the effort to attend, as we able to listen to most of the briefs of evidence presented by the Police, Rescue Coordination Centre New Zealand (RCCNZ), Vicki McAuley and Paul Hewitson.

Up 'till then, details of Andrew's paddle and fateful evening had been obtained from media coverage, views on several websites, emails and rumour. One malicious rumour from up north claimed Andrew had radioed of being menaced by sea monsters. I felt it was essential for an un-emotive, rational explanation of what happened to Andrew to be written.

Paul Hewitson, the kayak builder, gave a very plausible explanation of what may have transpired after 7pm on 9 February. One of the stainless steel rods, which allowed Casper (the fibreglass bubble) to pivot forward, from the aft deck, to cover the cockpit coaming, was damaged a few days earlier. When paddling, the bubble lay on the aft deck, but for sleeping, Andrew would slide into the cockpit, reach back with his arms and pull it over and clip the bubble onto the cockpit coaming. The bubble acted as an anti-capsize device while Andrew attempted to sleep.

As Andrew's daily reporting time was 7.30pm (NZDT) Paul thought it likely Andrew was setting up for night running, and making ready to send his GPS position to his support team via the satellite phone when he capsized on the evening of 9 February 2007. Vicki McAuley thought a rogue wave capsized Andrew, but with south-west winds of 20-25 knots creating a chop on top of the ground swell, any breaking wave could have rolled the kayak over.

Andrew had been capsized up to six times during the preceding 30 days, but had always successfully recovered. As Paul Hewitson noted, if the bubble was only held on by one of the stainless steep rods, it would have acted as a drogue or sea anchor when Andrew attempted to right the kayak on the evening of 9 February. Then if Andrew was unable to disconnect the other bubble arm, his plight was then desperate. He was in the water, unable to right the kayak.

Andrew then had no choice but to call for a rescue, especially with sunset about an hour away. The choice was either, a call on the VHF radio or pull the pin on the EPIRB. If Andrew was in the water along side the capsized kayak, I can picture his difficulty of blindly feeling around initially for the EPIRB, which was later found in a pocket in a cockpit side pocket when the kayak was recovered. Vicki McAuley said the cockpit 'pockets' were mesh, and would have been difficult to access by feel in the capsized kayak.

The VHF radio is assumed to have been in the aft compartment, as the aft hatch was off but still tethered to the recovered kayak. After failing to access the EPIRB, it appears Andrew removed the rear compartment hatch, located the radio and began transmitting his rescue call at 7.13pm (NZDT). This rear hatch cover was not on deck, but on the bulkhead immediately aft of the cockpit. With priority for the radio call, and the hatch cover not replaced, the rear compartment would have slowly flooded, leaving only the bow compartment to keep the kayak afloat. It would have been so difficult for Andrew to keep in contact with only the bow above water level.

From 7.13pm, when the RCCNZ received the rescue message, the train of subsequent events was included in a detailed 27 page brief of evidence to the inquest, from John Seward, current Operations Manager for RCCNZ.

The following notes are my personal views related to the subsequent search, based on listening to the inquest statements, along with recommendations that I presented in an oral submission to the Invercargill coroner.

Search Initiation Time

Both Vicki and Paul stated that tasking of a search for Andrew was delayed by the RCCNZ. I believe they are correct but there are mitigating factors. Firstly it was believed the VHF rescue call was from the D'Urville Maritime Radio. Two hours elapsed before confirmation that the call was

in fact from Fiordland Maritime Radio. Andrew's text message, along with his updated GPS position, from the Thursday evening was from a confident paddler who anticipated being off St Anne Point at precisely 9am on Sunday morning. His position on the night of 8 February was 67 nautical miles WSW of Milford Sound.

Most of the VHF rescue call on channel 16 at 7.13pm on 9 February was inaudible, but the words 'my kayak is sinking' and 'I need a rescue' were clear. The Maritime Operations Centre (MOC) operator tried to obtain a position, with success.

A light aircraft crash off the west coast of the North Island with a continuous EPIRB signal added to an additional delay in initially tasking a search for the VHF kayak call. The RCCNZ wad advised, by the Australian Rescue Coordination Centre (AusSAR), on 18 January, that Andrew was 193nm off Tasmania but he had lost his GPS tracking device and one of his satphones. AusSAR requested Andrew turn back or offered to drop a replacement satphone or aviation band radio, but with a requirement for both a helicopter and backup fix wing, the cost to Andrew would have been very substantial. Given prevailing westerly, winds ocean current and swell, it would also have been a very long battle for Andrew back to Tasmania.

There were two further complications; firstly an anonymous phone call to RCCNZ at around 1320hrs on 8 February, with a person with an Australian accent saying he was researching arrangements for emergency treatment of a person canoeing from Australia to New Zealand. Andrew's support team said they had no knowledge of the call and the clarity of the call indicated it was not made at sea. Secondly, lack of knowledge of Andrew's VHF radio call sign, if in fact he had a VHF radio in his kayak, and difficulty in identifying Andrew's voice by Andrew's support team caused I believe a lack or urgency is tasking an urgent search.

Despite the complications, by 10.39pm (NZDT) three fishing boats were on the way to search a parallel track to Andrew's estimated track based on his previous night's GPS position and a dead reckoning position for the time of the VHF call. The Southern Lakes helicopter was on its way from Te Anau to join the search at 11.29pm, but there were problems due to sea haze. Two fishing boats continued to search for Andrew through the night and were stood down at 11am next day.

Conditions for Friday 9 December, from the skipper of one of the searching fishing boats, were a southerly had blown up in the afternoon, and it was 20 knots at the coast and would have been up to 25 knots out where Andrew was. The current drift would have been 0.05 – 0.75 knots to the north, with a short sharp chop.

An Orion located Andrew's kayak at 7.25pm on 10 February, 42.5nm on a bearing of 270˚true from St Anne Point, at the southern entrance to Milford Sound. Floating upside down, with the stern submerged and no sign of Andrew or the bubble, it was recovered by a cruise ship and taken to Deep Cove in Doubtful Sound. An EPIRB was located inside the cockpit. The kayak was structurally sound with the only observed damage a bent stainless steel rod that had held Casper (the bubble).

The rear compartment was flooded. The hatch cover was not in place but still attached with a retaining cord. Neither immersion suit nor PFD was found.

The search for Andrew was finally suspended at 8pm on 12 February.

At the inquest, other issues raised were differences in the dead reckoning positions for Andrew after his radio call, as calculated by Paul Hewitson and John Seward of RCCNZ, and Vicki stating she may have been able to identify the voice had the full version of the tape been played to her on the Friday night. Both Paul and Vicki were uncertain if Andrew had taken his immersion suit with him on the second attempt.

Although I have neither seen the photos of the kayak and equipment recovered, nor been able to view the recovered video footage taken by Andrew, I would like to suggest the following:

1. Andrew's PFD was an inflatable model. If you recall John Kirk-Anderson's opinion of 'blow ups' in the last newsletter, unless a PFD is inflated it will offer no support at all.

2. In an inflated PFD, Andrew would have increased his chances of being found, even if he had succumbed to the cold

3. With a combination of survival suit and inflated PFD, his survival time in the water would have increased further

4. Separated from the capsized kayak, without an inflated PFD, not wearing an immersion suit, with legs almost atrophied after 30 days in the cockpit, cold water, wind chill from the 20-25 knot southerly wind, and breaking chop, I believe 30 to 60 minutes would be pushing the limit for Andrew's survival.

Recommendations

I suggested to the coroner that, for both kayak expeditions to remote regions such as Fiordland and open water crossings, emergency communication equipment such as an EPIRB, VHF radio, satphone, mobile phone and flares should be carried either on a paddler's PFD or carried in a 'bail-out' bag which can be secured around a paddler's waist or wrist during in deteriorating conditions.

Summer of 2007/08

With three attempts by overseas women paddlers to paddle around the South Island this summer, in communication with RCCNZ we have established a protocol for VHF radio call signs, and for EPIRB contact information and details of the proposed trips to be supplied to the RCCNZ.

Freya Hoffmeister, who is well on her way to be the first woman to paddle around the South Island, has her 406EPIRB, VHF radio, emergency light and flares all attached to her PFD or lifejacket.

Ridding Rats and Restoring Birdsong to the Bay of Islands

from Pauline Moretti

Project Island Song

A plan to restore wildlife in the eastern Bay of Islands is set to involve one of the most ambitious pest control programmes ever attempted in New Zealand.

The Department of Conservation is planning to eradicate rodents and stoats from the islands in the eastern Bay of Islands (Ipipiri) as part of a bigger vision to restore the area to a healthy ecosystem, allowing for the reintroduction of native flora and fauna.

The first step is to remove the rats and stoats from the islands. They eat everything from seeds, plants, birds' eggs, chicks and insects to lizards. Rats can be prolific, especially on Urupukapuka Island, as campers well know! Ship rats and Norway rats are across the whole island group. Kiore are present on Moturua. Mice are not known to be present. Stoats are also on the islands.

The plan is to drop brodifacoum, a commercial rat poison, from helicopters using GPS. An aerial drop is required to ensure every rodent is exposed eg. ship rats can live on cliffs of up to 70 degrees. This is too steep to access for trapping. The Department is confident benefits far outweigh the risks.

The best time to kill rodents is when they are at their hungriest, during winter months when populations are at low levels. Weather permitting, the operation is planned to take place between June and September 2008. A follow up poison drop will take place 7 – 10 days later to eliminate any survivors. Stoat eradication will also follow. Some stoats will die by eating poisoned rats but ground trapping and use of trained dogs will be necessary to make sure all stoats have been removed.

All the islands in the chain from Motuarohia (Roberton) eastwards, including Moturua, Motukiekie, Okahu, Waewaetoria, Urupukapuka, Poroporo and all their associated islets will be treated (See map below). As Norway rats and stoats can swim it's important to treat all these islands as well as adjacent mainland properties. A mainland pest control area is being set up, funded by the Northland Regional Council and coordinated by the Guardians of the Bay of Islands, to prevent reinvasion from the mainland.

Two years after the eradication it's hoped to reintroduce birds such as bellbirds, kakariki, kaka and saddleback. Visitors will have a similar experience to that of visiting Tiritiri Matangi Island. The islands will be singing once again. It's also likely that over time birdlife will spill over to the mainland as seen at Bream Head, with kaka and kakariki arriving from the Hen and Chickens.

Project Island Song is a shared vision with DoC working in partnership with the Guardians of the Bay of Islands (community conservation group) and Ngati Kuta and Patukeha (tangata whenua) with support from island landowners.

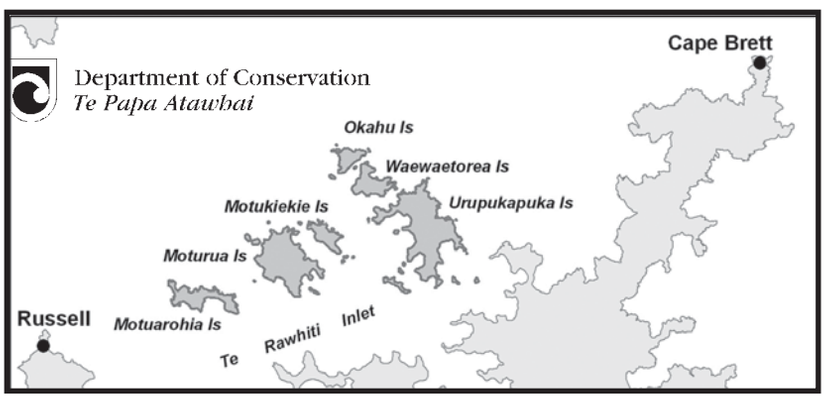
For the operation to be successful, prevention of reinvasion or introduction of other unwanted pests is critical. This is the most challenging part given the high public useage of the islands. It requires everyone to see its value and take precautions.

Above: Norwegian rat, Okahu. 2005 Photo: Stephen Cope

Left: Ship rat eating a fantail chick

Pauline Moretti is a DoC community relations ranger, based at Kerikeri

Below: Bellbird on the left & Tui



You can help keep the Eastern Bay of Islands Pest-free & Bird-rich

Just before leaving the mainland:
• Pack all food into sealed containers. Do not transport it in open boxes or supermarket bags.

• Clean and check all gear as close to departure time as possible to reduce the risk of rodent reinvasion. If unsure, unpack, re-inspect, re-clean if needed, and then re-pack.

• Pack all gear into rodent-proof sealable daypacks, overnight bags or solid boxes with no holes.

• Unroll and inspect any tarpaulins, tents or covers. These are known hiding places for rats, mice, insects and seeds.

• Clean and check all tools and machinery contaminated by soil e.g. spades, shovels. These should be free of all pests, dirt, soil, plant material and seeds.

• All footwear should be clean and free from soil and seeds.

• If you are kayaking, check it for rodent sign (e.g. droppings, gnawed food and cables) and insects, particularly ants.

• If you think a pest or weed has reached the islands, contact the Department of Conservation (Bay of Islands Area Office, ph. 09-4070300 or Russell Visitor Centre, ph. 09-4039005) immediately.

If you'd like to get involved join the Guardians of the Bay of Islands:
info@boiguardians.co.nz
They are also seeking donations to help with ongoing biosecurity costs. Send your donation to:
Guardians of the Bay of Islands Inc,
PO Box 367, Paihia 0247.
For the Guardians mailing list or to check progress see:
www.boiguardians.co.nz

The Department will provide an update in future KASK newsletters.

Pauline Moretti

HISTORY

RAKE-25-VSKC Queenscliff, Victoria 1 December 2007

by Paul Caffyn

The Planning
I lay the blame squarely on the shoulders of David Golightly and Peter Treby of the Victorian Sea Kayak Club for their dogged determination in convincing me that 1 December 2007 was an auspicious time to mark the 25th anniversary of a successful finish to RAKE, the 1982 Round Australia Kayak Expedition. When David and Peter first floated the anniversary project, 18 months earier, they faced a very difficult task in convincing me it was a rather good idea. Twenty-five years - the mere notion made me feel really, really old.

I emailed back saying I was very happy living life as a recluse on the edge of Lake Tasman. I neither wanted nor needed an anniversary and both the kayak *Lalaguli* and myself were still in good (the kayak) to moderate (me) working order. We were certainly not ready for what I considered to be exceedingly premature, stuffing and mounting on a museum wall.

David was polite and very persistent. I eventually surrendered to his charm, with a proviso there were no more people on the beach for the finish than 25 years ago when a total of 10 people, give or take a few, assembled to mark the finish of RAKE.

The next step in the anniversary planning was a begging email sent to kayak clubs throughout Australia and New Zealand asking for donations towards a plaque and a jolly good piss-up. This was despite me offering to pay for a bag of quick setting concrete, a tanalized fencepost and the cost of laminating and mounting the photograph of a very skinny and dehydrated kayaker following two days of paddling the Nullarbor Cliffs.

It is indeed fortunate that I am a co-signer for the Kiwi Association of Sea Kayakers' cheque account and the begging email was forwarded to me as a KASK committee member. I took offence and umbrage, particularly after one of the out of state VSKC members informed me that the erstwhile Victorian committee had decided that the club would pay for a plaque and piss up, out of club funds! Dark days followed. The club president accused the out of state club member of buggering a crocodile. Poor old Crocodile Winky was so upset by this heinous accusation, he had to sign up for six-week grief counselling course.

To ensure *Lalaguli*, the yellow kevlar Nordkapp used for the Aussie trip, would be in Melbourne in time for her final paddle, before going on display at the Queencliff Maritime Museum (QMM), I air-freighted her over early.

The Anniversary Day
I flew the original RAKE support team of Lesley Hadley and Andy Woods across to Melbourne on 30 November. We were hosted, chauffeured and fed and watered by members of VSKC. David Golightly, master of spreadsheet planning, had emailed a detailed schedule of when, where, how and who, but even so there were many surprises in store for us.

Just before 11am, two Nordkapps, Andy Woods and myself were dropped at a sandy beach, inside Point Londsdale, with a VHF radio to ensure we paddled in to Queenscliff at precisely midday. The day was a cracker, an ebb tide pushing out of Port Philip Bay but a light southerly breeze to counteract the drift. What caame as a complete surprise to me was the sight of two kilt clad pipers, who were warming up their chanters. As Andy and I launched, the pipers began playing 'Going Home,' a Scottish melody but perhaps better know as the largo or slow movement from Dvorak's New Word Symphony. This was the melody piped to Andy and myself as we paddled out of the Murchison River mouth at Kalbarri, Western Australia, back in 1982 by Kennie Wilson.

Ken and his daughter Sally had earlier flown to Melbourne, for two reasons, firstly to attend the anniversary and secondly so they could check the assembly of a three piece real scale wooden model of *Lalaguli* and myself. What is now termed the Kalbarri Carving, a really good replica of paddler and kayak, was also going on permanent display at the QMM. (See p.4 photo in newsletter No. 130). Now in his 80th year, Ken no longer had the puff for pipe playing.

On the water, the paddling was superb, no hustle and bustle or traffic chaos, just Andy and myself recreating the final leg of the Australian trip, from 25 years ago. Rounding the cliffed headland at Queenscliff, seeing the white jetty and a huge mob of people waiting was pretty good but the wail of the pipes from the top of the headland almost brought tears to my eyes.

Lesley was waiting on the sandy beach, and very special bottles of Seaview Brut de Brut were produced, one for drinking and one for spraying the paddlers. The RAKE team were then arranged for photographs, as for the finish 25 years ago, then proceedings moved to the top of the headland. Four strapping VSKC members solemnly carried *Lalaguli* up to a pride of place in cradles, before Lesley, Andy and I were allowed up the path and ushered to seats by a rostrum. Club President Les Bognar opened the ceremony, then the Mayor of Queenscliff, Pat Semmens, made a lovely speech. She was followed by Peter Treby who paid a superb tribute to the around Ozzie trip, which was so good at times I was tempted to look over my shoulder to see who he was talking about. Then it was my turn.

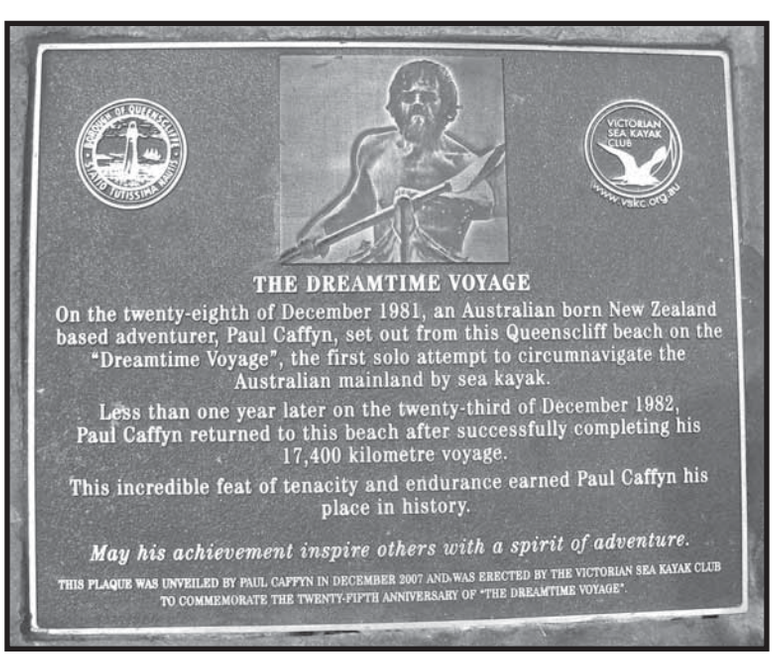
I tried to explain I was not ungrateful for all the hard work that David Golightly, Peter Treby, Les Bognar, the VSKC members and the good people of Queenscliff had contributed towards the anniversary but on New Zealand's South Island West Coast, where I had worked in the coal mines to pay for my habit, I was never allowed to get a swollen head. Following my return from completing the 4,700 mile solo trip around Alaska, I was back working at the Roa Mine, when

Lalaguli, *after her final paddle, on her way to the top of the headland for the plaque unveiling. Photo: Peter Costello*

one evening the mine manager and I stopped at a small local watering hole, the Buckshead Tavern. Supping our beers, I was introduced to a rather large local miner, who weighed around 25 stone. The manager introduced me and said, "Paul has just finished this huge trip around Alaska; a bear ripped open his tent one night, there were whales and walrus." The big bloke took a sip of his beer, before looking me in the eye and asking, "Alaska aye. Tell me who owns the pub up there now?"

To that point we were in the dark re 'the anniversary plaque', the funding of which had led to so much grief for poor old Crocodile Winky. Following my speech we were ushered to a tripod of carbon fibre paddles, supporting a draped black cloth. I pulled a cord to unveil the plaque, exposing a basalt boulder. Centred on top, the sight of the design and words on the plaque was another almost tears to my eyes moment (See photo).

Led by a piper and David Golightly, and followed by the four strapping blokes with *Lalaguli*, we slowly walked as a solemn procession through lunch-time picnickers to the QMM. I formally presented museum chairman Les Irving-Dusting and curator June Negri with a copy of *The Dreamtime Voyage* and the permanent loan of



The RAKE team back together after 25 years. Photo: Peter Costello

Lalaguli. Hauled up with stout ropes and wooden blocks, *Lalaguli* has had her last paddle but she now has pride of place in the very modern museum.

Mounted on display panels were tributes from famous paddlers around the world. I had an inkling that VSKC had put a lean on paddlers far and wide to write kind words about myself, and whatever the bribes that were proffered, they certainly worked – glowing tributes were written by, for example, Justine Curgenven, John Dowd, Nigel Dennis and Sandy Robson. Many were from expedition paddlers who I have yet to meet. I find it hard to find words to describe what it feels like to read these lovely tributes - humbling, embarrassing, but also a hint of pride. The RAKE trip was low-key adventure, which became a marvellous way of life for Andy, Lesley and myself. The worst day of the whole year was the morning after the finish at Queenscliff. The long term goal or objective had been achieved – all that was left were the thank you letters, getting home to New Zealand and starting work again.

Concerned that some or all of the tributes were to be read out, I had prepared a grudging tribute from a cow cocky up in the back blocks of the Waikato, which I turned into an Australian sheep farmer, as I hoped Dave Winkworth would read it when the opportunity arose. On Saturday evening, at a yacht club on the opposite side of Port Phillip Bay, I donned a dinner suit and bow tie for a PP presentation on the paddle around Aussie but clean forgot to give Crocodile Winky the tribute to read out. As I thought it was so good when I wrote it, I include it below:

Testesmonial

This was received from Trevor, who is I understand a sheep farmer from way up the back of Coonabarabran. Trevor claims to have made the first circuit of the dam in his hill paddock in a corrugated iron canoe. However there is some doubt about the veracity of this claim, for I understand that after he pulled the sheet of iron off the shed roof, and folded it into half, he didn't plug the nail holes. The yabbies were getting to him before he finally abandoned ship.

'Gidday. Sorry I can't be with you tonight, but the sheep are lambing.

It gives me a moderate amount of pleasure to speak on behalf of this Caffyn bloke. However, I reckon it is a hellofa cheek to ask for testesmonial for a bloke who used a British designed kayak. Back in 1982, if he'd had family jewels the size of Cecil, that's the ram in the back paddock, he would have used a traditional Australian bark canoe. At least then he couldn't be criticized for barqueing up the wrong tree.

And this Caffyn bloke used a rudder! How bloody un-British! It is obvious his antecedents were sent to Australia by some of the finest legal brains in all of Britain. What about the age of heroic failure, the age of doing things the hard way, doing everything the British way, without a rudder!

And what about going the proper way around Australia? A bloke with family jewels the size of the Cecil, that's the ram in the back paddock, would have paddled into the prevailing winds.

And surely ewes Victorians could wait until this bloke has fallen off his perch before holding an anniversary.

I have heard from reliable under-the-cover sources this same bloke has put in place some very underhanded systems for stopping anyone else paddling around Oz. For instance word via the bush telegraph is he did a secret catch, training and release program of a bloody big crocodile at Cape Direction, the same croc that took exception to Sandy Robson's bottom. (Being of farming stock I think Trevor means kayak stern.)

But my straw hat is off to that bloke. Have a good piss-up. Sorry got to go. I see that that Bloody Cecil has got into the ewe paddock. Get out of it Cecil!'

The Speech

This next bit is what I was going to say, following big mobs of thanks to the Victorian Sea Kayak Club members, the Queenscliff Borough mayor and staff, June and Les at the museum, and all those folk who made a special effort to be there on that very special day.

'You will all be pleased to know that I am continuing to set myself new, challenges and goals – this year we spent six weeks paddling on the East Greenland coast.

Why? I still yearn to get away from the pressures of modern day life, back to a simple life of paddling and camping and where the big worry of the day is finding a sheltered landing with fresh water, a comfy campsite and enough driftwood to boil the billy.

In East Greenland this year – this was after a long break since the Malaya-Thailand trip in 2002 - I rediscovered the joys of expeditioning, dropping back into that mode of being out there in the wilderness, being totally committed, pitting our skills against the weather, ice conditions, and surviving in an icy hostile environment.

At the end of most days, I would slump forward in the cockpit and whimper, "I'm too old for this shit!" Without fail, after a wee sensation of medicinal whisky, a big feed of pasta, and huge bowl of tea, I would again feel that magic satisfaction of knowing I was still out there and doing it. My evening mantra led Conrad to suggest calling our expedition ITOFTS.

Some weeks after our return to New Zealand, I received a care package from Conrad, CDs with trip photos, and carefully wrapped, a coffee mug with the words, "I'm too old for this shit." The cheeky bugger!

I find it difficult to describe or talk about the 'thank god' feeling when escaping from massive breaking seas into the tranquil lee shelter of a bay or headland.

In Greenland, in addition to the freezing breaking seas, were the wind chill, massive icebergs calving, and not only the backwash from a cliffed shoreline but also off the backwash from the icebergs. The sustained intense concentration needed to manage balancing the boat in box seas, avoiding collisions with bergy bits, and staying on course and the successfully escaping from those conditions brought such 'safe at last' relief.

I have had so much pleasure from sea kayaking. For me it has never been about setting records, but setting goals, something tangible that would give me focus and something to strive towards achieving. I am fighting tooth and nail against the ageing process and have had to scale down the size of the trips and what I can achieve in a day's paddling. Long gone are the 50 milers of the Aussie trip or the 60 milers of the Japan trip. Now I am grateful for 20 mile days and a 30 miler is indeed cause for two evening tinctures of medicinal whisky.

It is essential that we encourage young people into undertaking adventures and, if possible, getting them onto the water. This will set the scene for the next generation of goal setters and achievers and give us the heartfelt satisfaction that others will experience the tremendous sense of achievement of a successful trip, the experience of pitting ourselves against the conditions and the sense of pride and satisfaction that comes at the end of a bloody good trip.

I am indebted to Lesley, Andy for their support and encouragement to complete the circumnavigation known as RAKE. I could not have achieved the trip without Lesley. Even on the days when I thought the sky was going to fall on my head, she remained supremely confident that I was capable of doing the trip. Andy paddled the Western Australia coast with me, and kept our old HQ panel van going through the four-wheel drive tracks of Southern Australia. I am still envious of his double page nude centrefold in *Overlander* magazine. The trip for all of us was a marvellous way a life – such a brilliant way to see the coastal scenery and meet some of the characters who live there.

There are three sections from the book *The Dreamtime Voyage* that recapture my feelings of elation and remind me just how far I pushed myself on that trip:

- paddling over the bar at Kalbarri after 34 hours along the Zuytdorp Cliffs
- Lesley's diary quote at the end of the Baxter Cliffs slog,
- paddling the huge tide race off Goulburn Island at night

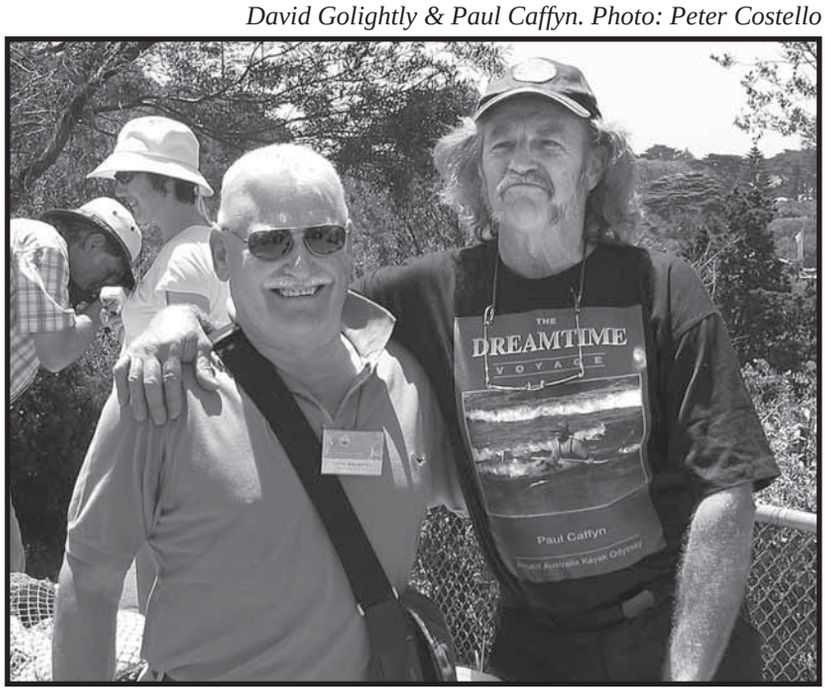
And my favourite colour photos – escaping from mongrel seas into Port Campbell and Andy mixing it with big breakers as he crossed the Kalbarri bar.'

The Pipers

Piped out from Point Londsdale, piped into the beach at Queenscliff, and piped during the slow march with *Lalaguli* to the museum, made the anniversary day very special for me, something which David Golightly had drawn from the book. No doubt David's Scottish ancestry also came into play.

Lindsay, the older of the two pipers was the teacher, Roy the pupil. Seven months earlier David had booked the two pipers for the Queenscliff anniversary. Part way through the day, David explained to me that Roy had contacted him mid week to say he could not play on Saturday as his father

David Golightly & Paul Caffyn. Photo: Peter Costello



had suddenly died back in Scotland. Roy had booked tickets to fly home for the funeral. I am a bit fuzzy on the next bit, but when Roy expressed bitter disappointment at having to cancel the anniversary engagement, his wife suggested he ring home (Scotland) to see if his Dad's funeral could be put forward a day, and then what about a call to the airline about moving his bookings forward a day. The result? The funeral was moved, and the airline accommodated a change to bookings. On top of all the RAKE anniversary celebrations, this made the day even more poignant to me. That Roy felt his role on the day was so special that he postponed his father's funeral, really brought home to me how some people viewed the significance of the Australian trip.
Paul Caffyn

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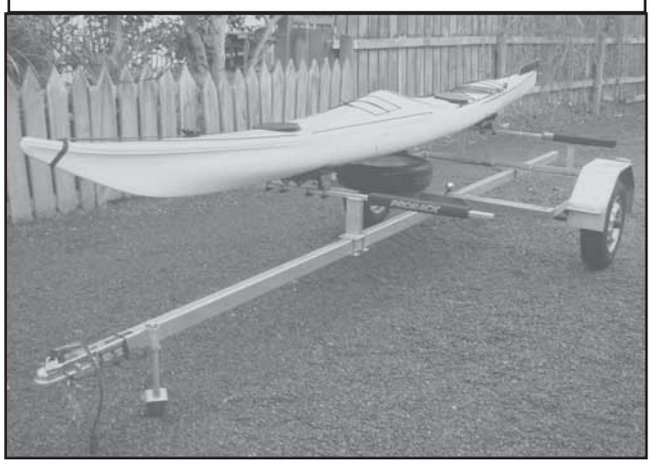

CALENDAR

KASK FORUM 2008

Where: Ohope Beach,
near Whakatane, in the Bay of Plenty
When: 25- 27 April 2008,
Anzac Day weekend.
Venue: Ohope Beach Christian youth camp 6kms east of Whakatane, perfect for surf training, a nice flat shallow beach with nice waves rolling in. Paddle destinations include Whale Island day paddle, leave from Whakatane, around rocks at Whakatane, Ohiwa Harbour and down to end of Ohope Spit for on-the-water sessions. The camp has a total of 80 bunks and 70 camp spots, a large hall and caterers on site.

For more information, email Evan Pugh at:
sheepskinsnstuff@xtra.co.nz

A pul-out Forum Registration form can be found in newsletter No. 130. Details for internet banking is included.

See also the KASK website at
www.kask.co.nz
and go the the Events page.

COASTBUSTERS 2008 SEA KAYAK SYMPOSIUM

Milford (Auckland) & Sullivns Bay

29 February to 2 March 2008

See the website:
www.coastbusters.org
for details. and a registration form.

If not internet connencted, mail queries to:
Coastbusters
POB 101-257
NSMC
(North Shore Mail Centre)

ANNUAL CANTERBURY SEA KAYAK NETWORK OKAINS BAY WEEKEND

2-3 February 2008- Okains Bay Weekend
(NOTE the changed date)
for more details email
Fiona Fraser at
martin.fi.fraser@actrix.co.nz

HUMOUR

Up the Scots!
E though I'm nae a Scot, I reckon this will appeal especially to the teacher types. The scene is Bishoploch Primary School. Glasgow.

Teacher: "Good morning children, today is Thursday, so we're going to have a general knowledge quiz. The pupil who gets the answer right can have Friday and Monday off and not come back to school until Tuesday."
Wee Murray thinks, 'Ya beauty! I'm pure dead brilliant at general knowledge so I am. This is gonny be a wee doddle!'

Teacher: "Right class, who can tell me who said, 'Don't ask what our country can do for you, but what you can do for your country?'"
Wee Murray shoots up his hand, waving furiously in the air. Teacher looking round but picks Jeremy Farqhuar-Fauntleroy, at the front, "Yes, Farqhuar?"
Farqhuar (in a very English accent): "Yes miss, the answer is J F Kennedy - Inauguration speech 1960."
Teacher: "Very good Jeremy. You may stay off Friday and Monday

and we will see you back in class on Tuesday."
Next Thursday comes around, and wee Murray is even more determined.
Teacher: "Who said, "We will fight them on the beaches, we will fight them in the air, we will fight them at sea. But we will never surrender?"
Wee Murray's hand shoots up, arm stiff as a board, shouting, "I know. I know. Me Miss, me Miss." Teacher looking round and picks Rodney Tarquin-Smythe, sitting at the front: "Yes Rodney."
Rodney (In a very, very posh, English accent): "Yes miss, the answer is Winston Churchill, 1941 Battle of Britain speech."
Teacher: "Very good Rodney, you may stay off Friday and Monday and come back to class on Tuesday."

The following Thursday comes around and Wee Murray is hyper, he's been studying encyclopaedias all week and he's ready for anything that comes. He's coiled in his wee chair, dribbling in anticipation.
Teacher: "Who said 'One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind?"
Wee Murray's arm shoots straight in the air, he's standing on his seat, jumping up and down screaming "Me miss. Me miss. I know, I know. Me Miss, me miss, meeeeee."
Teacher looking round the class picks Rupert, sitting at the front.
"Yes Rupert."
Rupert (In a frightfully, frightfully, ever so plummy English accent): "Yes miss that was Neil Armstrong, 1967, the first moon landing."
Teacher: "Very good Rupert. You may stay off Friday and Monday and come back into class on Tuesday."

Wee Murray loses the plot altogether, tips his desk and throws his wee chair at the wall. He starts screaming, "WHERE THE F@&K DID ALL THESE ENGLISH BASTARDS COME FROM?"
Teacher spins back round from the blackboard and shouts, "Who said that?"

Wee Murray grabs his coat and bag and heads for the door, "Bonnie Prince Charlie, Culloden, 1746. See ye on Tuesday Miss."

Onions & the Christmas Tree
The family is sitting at the dinner table. The son asks his father,
"Dad, how many kinds of boobies are there?"
The father,surprised, answers, "Well son, there's three kinds of breasts. In her 20s, a woman's breasts are like melons, round & firm. In her 30s & 40s, they are more like pears, still nice, but hanging a bit. After fifty, they are like onions."
"Onions?"
"Yes, you see them, and they make you cry."
This infuriated his wife and daughter so the daughter says,
"Mom, how many types of 'willies' are there?"
The mother, surprised, smiles and answers, "Well dear, a man goes through three phases. In his 20s, his willie is like an oak tree, mighty and hard. In his 30s & 40s, it's like a birch tree, flexible but reliable. After his 50s, it is like a Christmas tree."
"A Christmas tree?"
"Yes dear, dead from the roots up and the balls are for decoration only."

First Christmas Joke
Three men died on Christmas Eve and were met by Saint Peter at the pearly gates.
"In honour of this holy season," Saint Peter said, "You must each possess something that symbolizes Christmas to get into heaven."
The first man fumbled through his pockets and pulled out a lighter. He flicked it on. "It represents a candle", he said.
"You may pass through the pearly gates," Saint Peter said.
The second man reached into his pocket and pulled out a set of keys. He shook them and said, "They're bells."
Saint Peter said, "You may pass through the pearly gates."
The third man started searching desperately through his pockets and finally pulled out a pair of women's panties. St. Peter looked at the man with a raised eyebrow and asked, "And just what exactly do those symbolize?"
The man replied, "These are Carol's."

The Koala & the Little Lizaard
A little lizard was making his way down a bush track in the Australian outdoors when he heard a voice, "Hey ya lizard how are you?"
The lizard looked around and then up into a gum tree, "Gidday koala whatcha up to?"
"I'm smoking a joint. Why don't you climb up and join me?"

Well the lizard has never tried smoking cannabis before, so up the tree he climbs and spends a rather sociable afternoon smoking dope with the koala bear. After three or four joints, the lizard says, "O koala my throat is so dry I just have to have a drink."

So down the tree went the lizard climbs and ambles along a bush track to the river. At the river bank, he leans way too far over and falls in. Along swims an enormous crocodile who put his long snout under the little lizard and lifts him gently back onto the bank.

"Hey little buddy," said the crocodile, "What's up with you? How come you fell into the river?"
"I'm stoned Mr crocodile. I've been sitting up a gum tree smoking joints with koala and got really thirsty."
" Stoned?" asks the crocodile. "What's that?"

The wet and bedraggled lizard replies, "Oh go along the bush track and ask the koala. He's got plenty of dope and he'll share with you."

So the crocodile heaves himself out of the river and makes his way along the track to the gum tree where the koala was perched in a fork. The croc looks up and says, "Gidday koala, whatcha up to?"

The koala peered blearily down and said, "F**#!!! me - how much water did you drink?"

KASK

KASK, the Kiwi Association of Sea Kayakers (N.Z.) Inc., a network of New Zealand sea kayakers, has the objectives of:

1. promoting and encouraging the sport of sea kayaking
2. promoting safety standards
3. developing techniques & equipment
4. dealing with issues of coastal access and protection
5. organizing an annual sea kayak forum
6. publishing a bimonthly newsletter.

The Sea Canoeist Newsletter is published bimonthly as the official newsletter of the Kiwi Association of Sea Kayakers (N.Z.) Inc.
Articles, trips reports, book reviews, equipment reviews, new techniques, letter to the editor, and moments when the word 'Bugger!' was said singularly or often {referred to by some as incidents} are sought to enliven the pages of the newsletter.

Send in a plain brown envelope, or via cybermail to:
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KASK Annual Subscription

$35 single membership
($105 for 3 years; $175 for 5 years)
$40 family membership.
$35 overseas
A subscription form can be downloaded from the KASK website.
Cheques should be made out to:
K.A.S.K. (NZ) Inc. & mailed to:
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Send address changes for receiving the newsletter via email to Linda at: KASK.admin@xtra.co.nz

4th. Ed. KASK HANDBOOK

Updated to July 2006
For a copy (or trade orders) of this mother of all sea kayaking handbooks, contact Paul Caffyn, RD 1, Runanga, 7873, West Coast.
e-mail: kayakpc@xtra.co.nz
RRP: $ 34.90 including p&p
New members: gratis
Make cheques out to KASK (NZ) Inc.

The fourth edition of the KASK Handbook, is a mammoth compilation on all aspects of sea kayaking in New Zealand, by many of the most experienced paddlers in the Universe. Following a brief introduction, the handbook is divided into six sections:
- Kayak, Paddle & Equipment
-Techniques & Equipment
- The Elements
- Trips and Expeditions
- Places to Go
- Resources

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KASK Website: www.kask.co.nz

RAKE 25 -VSKC - 10 DECEMBER 2007
Top: Lalaguli on her last voyage. 25 years ago, Paul Caffyn paddled her into the beach at Queenscliff to complete the first kayak circumnavigation of Australia.
Below: Recreating the finish 25 years ago, Paul and Andy Woods gliding in to land at Qeenscliff.
Photo: Peter Costello

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Elegance and opulence at the annual Marlborough Sounds Sea Kayakers' Pilgrimage.
Photo: Rory Forbes

KASK MEMBERSHIP POLICY

Current membership fees are:
- $35 for ordinary membership
- $40 for family or joint membership
- $35 for overseas membership
- new members receive a free copy of the handbook
- members should endeavour to renew by 1 August
- the KASK financial year runs 1 August to 31 July the following year
- a subscription due notice and up to two reminders are sent out with the newsletters between June and October
- if a membership renewal is not received by 30 September, membership lapses
- new members who join between 1 June and 31 July automatically get their membership credited to the following year, receiving a 14 month membership
- the KASK committee puts its emphasis confirming renewals from existing members from July to October; and promoting new KASK memberships from November to February.