

# THE SEA CANOEIST NEWSLETTER

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**THANKS**

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- Iona Bailey
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- Colin Quilter
- John Seward
- Alan Singleton
- Su Sommerhalder
- Sandy Winteron

**DEADLINE FOR NEXT  
NEWSLETTER 16  
JANUARY 2009**

**EDITORIAL**

**KASK Logo Trademarked**  
Committee member Beverley Burnett arranged for trade mark registration of the KASK logo. Total cost included \$45 for a search and preliminary advice, then \$225 for filing under classes 16 and 41.

**KASK Logo Stickers**  
The KASK logo stickers are back in print. If you did not receive a sticker in your new membership care package, and are desperate for one, please email Linda at KASK.admin@xtra.co.nz

**Letter to the Editor**  
I received a four page letter from Auckland paddler Ian Calhaem, relating to safety issues and the ARC Section 2.17. As it is unclear if the letter is from Ian as an individual or from the president of the Auckland Canoe Club and representing the views of that club, I have decided to hold the letter over until written clarification is received from Ian.

**KASK WEBSITE UPGRADE**  
Leon Dalziel from baby-e, a web design firm based between Nelson and the West Coast, designed the new KASK website. It was created using a Content Management System (CMS) that allows the website to be edited and changed by KASK, rather than having to rely on a webmaster to make changes to the site. Pages and pictures can be created and edited, and the discussion forum moderated by key KASK members.

The brief to Leon was that the graphic design of the site should be attractive to website visitors, and that the site in general should reflect an informational resource for sea kayakers.

Because KASK is a non-profit organisation that relies on membership subscriptions, the KASK Membership Signup and membership benefits have been more prominently displayed on the website. Leon says, "I hope that KASK is seeing a higher number of membership signups as a result of the new site. If they are, I can tick that one off the list". He is also working on the search engine rankings to increase the amount of traffic the site receives.

The site is tracked using Google Analytics which provides very comprehensive statistics on website visitors. For the month ending 23 November, the site had 1,184 visits from mainly New Zealand traffic, but also from Australia, USA, UK, Germany and Singapore, with one visit from land-locked Slovakia.

Leon says he chose the system because of its flexibility. The homepage uses blogging functionality to manage the 'KASK News', and the Discussion Forum is also a plug-in to the system, rather than hacking together different bits that may not necessarily work well together. The Photo Gallery uses an elegant effect to show the enlarged version of the photo rather than the usual 'popup' windows, however with regards to Paul Caffyn's hair dye mishap, it shows much more detail than intended.

KASK has also had a cheaper 'non-profit' monthly fee negotiated with the hosting company, Digital Promotions. baby-e and Digital Promotions work closely together on many projects, and Leon is able to pull a few strings when required.

**LAST NEWSLETTER REMINDER FOR PADDLERS**

If you have failed to cough up the \$35 KASK subscription for the 2008 - 2009 year, you are exceedingly fortunate to be receiving one last newsletter. I forgot to include a reminder in the last newsletter. Not so this time.

THIS IS YOUR LAST, FINAL AND THERE WILL BE NO MORE NEWSLETTERS UNLESS YOU HAVE PAID YOUR 08/09 SUB. ALL KASK MEMBERS RECEIVED AN INVOICE. IF YOU HAVE OLD TIMER'S DISEASE (LIKE ME) WRITE A SWEET EMAIL TO LINDA INGRAM (our efficient administrator) TO CHECK IF YOU HAVE PAID.

**PHOTOGRAPH CREDITS**

*Cover: Richard Lineham, Wellington Sea Kayak Forum. Wet as a shag in a gale force nor-wester, but is Richard happy or what?*

*Photograph: John Kirk-Anderson*

*Page 2: Top - Andy Blake carving a good ride at the Lyall Bay surf session.*

*Bottom: Bruce Christenson lining a ride up in the soup at Lyall Bay.*

*Both photos: Sandy Winterton*

# LETTER TO THE EDITOR

## Comments re Observations on Cambridge-Hamilton Race

from Su Sommerhalder

Firstly I appreciated reading comments from someone who paddled the Race and Cruise from Cambridge to Hamilton. This annual event is attracting more entries each year. It is 'do-able' by paddlers with various skill levels, and rewards participants with changing scenery, a sense of achievement and a chance to take home a prize, regardless of placing in the competition. At the same time, this race is a fair challenge for competitive paddlers in the various divisions.

As in most kayak and multisport competitions, you will find some paddlers are not prepared for the conditions. They set out to have 'fun' without considering whether their skills match the task. However, to practice skills and become a better paddler, you have to start somewhere. The Cambridge-Hamilton event is an opportunity to improve paddling skills. You are amongst experienced competitors and rescue craft are on duty. Mishaps can occur, whether you are an experienced racing paddler or a beginner participating in a river competition. All entrants are expected to look out for fellow paddlers in difficulties and render assistance, regardless of their own placing in the race. Organisers compensate competitors involved in rescues for lost time. With over 300 craft on the river, it goes without saying that rescue boats are a necessity.

It was previously arranged, that the safety angle at this year's race briefing would be handed over to Kim from Environment Waikato. He had just finished his trip upstream from Hamilton and could give information and advice on the fast flowing Waikato River. We commissioned three rescue craft, with a minimum of two crew in each and briefed them on their duties.

Two of these crews have assisted us in this race in previous years, have

competed themselves and were white water kayaking instructors. The third crew was supplied by a multisport and kayak racing club. They all had a good working knowledge of this stretch of river. The Environment Waikato boat was also on rescue duty. All four rescue boats were at the race start in Cambridge. The Hamilton Harbour Master himself paddled the section from the Narrows to Hamilton in an open canoe. Most paddlers would not have seen any rescue boats for periods of time, as those boats were moving along with, or in between, pods of kayakers. This year's higher than

normal river flow was a challenge for competitors and organisers.

I welcome feedback if it assists in making next year's Cambridge-Hamilton Race and Cruise a better event.

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*Julie Reynolds towing the capsized paddler to shore. Photo: Alan Singleton*



Su's letter addresses concerns about race safety that were raised by Julie Reynolds in her KASK President's report in newsletter No. 136.

The two photos, supplied by Alan Singleton show Julie bringing the capsized paddler to shore and the safety boat that ignored her calls for help with the capsized paddler.

*The safety boat, with TV cameraman, retrieving the empty kayak. Photo: Alan Singleton*



## POINT OF VIEW

### **Houston – We have a problem!** **by Kevin Dunsford**

I was browsing the internet looking for a cheap sit-upon to use as a tender for my yacht when I came across this message in the safety topic of the Yak Yak fishing forum [http://www.fishing.net.nz/asp\\_forums/forum\\_posts.asp?TID=15847](http://www.fishing.net.nz/asp_forums/forum_posts.asp?TID=15847):

Posted: 31 Aug 2006 at 9:25am

**Put a light on.**

**I have barely seen several yaks on my way home into Weiti river - any spray on the window and fading light and choppy water = can't see any yaks.**

**It'd be a shame to have a messy paint streak and blood along the side of my boat when running over a yak.**

**Put a light on.**

**Cheers**

**Espresso**

Is it any wonder that regional authorities like the ARC and Environment Waikato, seeing posts like this, perceive a maritime safety problem that needs to be addressed? Regional authorities are powerless except to make bylaws, and that's just what the ARC did. Navigation Safety Rule 2.17 covering paddle craft in all their kingdom:

- Thou shalt ensure you are omnivisible
- Thou shalt wear bright robes
- Thou shalt reflect the power and the glory of the ARC in thou paddle blade
- Thou shalt don a 2 mile halo at night

Or words to this effect.

Do we care that the ARC is selecting the colours for our kayaking gear? Do we care that they are prescribing how we should prevent ourselves getting run over? Do we care that their prescription covers Eskimo-like kayaks, sit-upons, fishing yaks, diving yaks, racing K1's, surf kayaks, dragon boats and Maori war canoes?

I think we do care. In fact we care so much that this issue is the only issue in the last 20 or so years that is making us Auckland sea kayakers look at ourselves, our organisations and just how this whole mess came about. And looking at it from afar it seems to me that it can be summarised in one word - Apathy!

I'm apathetic. I leave whoever wants to run kayak clubs to get on with the job and leave me more time to get out kayaking. It is not until someone like the ARC tries to tell me how to kayak safely, that I throw my hands up in horror and ask how it all came to this. Apathy is the New Zealand condition. And where one regional body goes, the others will follow.

But Houston, apathy is not the whole problem. Neither is rule 2.17, it is just a symptom. The real problem is that we 'traditional sea kayakers', or most of us, have been blinkered to what is happening out there.

Here we are getting our trip leader training, attending Coastbusters and KASK forums, learning to roll in 30 different ways on both sides and generally upskilling - while all the time there has been a kayaking revolution going on.

Recently a kayak reseller estimated that there are about 100,000 kayaks out there. Yes, it is N.Z. we are talking about. That's equivalent to 2.5% of New Zealanders owning a kayak. But on Trademe, only one in 20 kayaks for sale is a 'traditional sea kayak'. Overwhelmingly most kayaks for sale are plastic sit-upons. The fishing and diving fraternity are buying them like there's no tomorrow. Kayaking is now the fastest growing water sport and has been for some time.

What McDonald's did to fine dining, cheap plastic sit-upons have done to sea kayaking. Ask anyone on the street what a kayak is and their first vision is probably a plastic sit-upon, maybe four fishing rod holders and a fish finder that costs more than a second hand car. We have lost the battle for the brand - 'Sea Kayak'.

Plastic sit upon kayaks are relatively cheap, almost indestructible and the perception is you don't need the same degree of skill to use them. Everyone who buys a kayak and uses it in the sea including fishing yaks, diving yaks, surf yaks and the rest is now a 'Sea Kayaker', and we need to be saved.

The Auckland Regional Council (ARC) and Environment Waikato (EW) are responding to what they perceive as a growing problem. Boaties are scared of running down kayakers and getting blood on their boat and their hands. The ARC have us on their rule books as the category 'paddle craft' and feel that they have to prescribe to us how to be safe. You can be sure that in five years time, when the rule is reviewed, they will expand their prescription - unless we nip this over zealousness in the bud - right now.

Houston, this may be bad - but we have an even bigger problem. We 'traditional sea kayakers' are now a lost minority in the kayak scene. We may have skills, we may have experience, but we don't have organisation. We don't have a voice!

Traditional canoe club membership has dropped drastically in the last few years. Auckland Canoe Club is down from about 500 to just a few hundred. KASK is down to about the same. On the other hand Canoe and Kayak's Yakity Yak 'club' is estimated by Pete Townend to have about 2,000 members. And Johnson Outdoor Canoes runs a club for kayak fishermen. There's an obvious trend to commercial 'clubs' or organisations. Commercial resellers have funding to attract new members, provide discount on sales, run kayak trips and training - individuals don't need to participate in club overheads, paying for clubrooms and time in committees.

But only a small percentage of New Zealand kayakers are in clubs, commercial or otherwise. If we estimate there are 5,000 sea kayakers in clubs of any sort and over 100,000 kayaks out there - that's only 5% of kayakers represented by clubs.

So where are all the new 'sea kayakers', ahem 'paddle craft', getting their information and knowledge from? Go to the New Zealand fishing web site and check out the Yak Yak Yak forum sponsored by Johnson Outdoor Canoes. Check the number of views 33,918 for this one topic, it's astounding:

Rigged Kayak photo's  
by Boulder, 30 Aug 2006 at 10.06pm  
369 33918

New sea kayakers are getting their knowledge online. Because many of them are interested in fishing, they go to the fishing web sites. In the safety section of the same site there are 3,000 views over 56 safety discussion points. Kayaking has become a means to an end, not the end itself.

Fishing and diving kayakers are organised. Through online forums they discuss issues and may motivate one another on issues they feel strongly about – they have a voice. But where is ours? Where are the forums for us traditional sea kayakers in NZ? If we disagree strongly about an issue such as the one at the moment with ARC, how do we go about informing other kayakers?

At a meeting a couple of weeks ago in Auckland nine kayaking organisations came together to discuss the ARC's new rule 2.17. All nine organisations represented were 100% opposed to the new rule and want to have it overturned - revoked. So the discussion turned to how to do this. We soon realised that apart from KASK we have no other common forum to represent our views.

Over the next few years there are some very important issues that will affect us sea kayakers. For example the ARC, and no doubt other regional authorities, is currently forming guidelines for accepting Aquaculture applications. They are pleading for representation from kayakers and say it may significantly affect us.

The ARC would also dearly love to have us all registered. As a first step they tried having us put names on the

back of our kayaks, until the stupidity of the rule was pointed out to them. Now we have to put our identification details 'somewhere on the kayak'. Why? So they know who is flagrantly not compiling with rule 2.17.

Currently all jet skis in Auckland and the North have to be registered. Every yacht that races is registered and all other vessels now have to have their names on both sides.

The Coastguard also want all vessels registered, as 60% of boaties helped, give false names, which makes it hard to recover costs. There is a creeping authoritarian disease spreading and we don't have a representative voice to oppose it.

We can't leave this voice to commercial concerns. Kayak resellers have other objectives, such as making a profit from us. The more gear we have to buy and put on a kayak the better for them. Kayak resellers and operators rely on good relations with bodies like the ARC for their very survival. We can't expect them to voice our interests and protests to regional authorities; we have to do it ourselves.

KASK currently is the only voice for 'traditional sea kayakers'. But its membership pales into insignificance compared with the online fishing kayak voice.

Should we join the kayak fishing lobby?

Should KASK get funding and step up to represent us all?

Or should we just leave it to the commercial kayak businesses and continue with our comfortable apathy?

One thing is sure. If we don't speak with one voice, sea kayakers will have to accept whatever rules and regulations authorities decide to inflict on them.

Houston - Are you listening? We have a problem.

Kevin Dunsford

## SAFETY

From: Colin Quilter  
Sent: 23 October 2008  
(first printed in the Auckland  
Canoe Club newsletter)

### **Subject: How the new bylaw affects safety for kayakers**

To: John Lee-Richards Harbourmaster  
Dear Harbourmaster

The ARC Navigation Safety Bylaw 2008 came into force in July. Section 2.17 prescribes three actions that kayakers must take to ensure they are visible to other craft. I believe that two of those actions actually decrease safety for kayakers. Since I know that you have a genuine interest in safety on the water, I am writing to explain what, in my view, is wrong with the new bylaw. This will take some time; I hope you will bear with me.

I have been sea kayaking for 22 years. Weekend trips have been on the harbour and inner gulf, (including about 500 crossings from Tamaki Drive to Rangitoto). On longer trips I have paddled all of the North Island's east coast from North Cape to Wellington, and the South Island coast from Cape Farewell to Kaikoura.

During those 22 years I have had two near-collisions on Auckland Harbour. Both involved high-speed motorboats, (one a fast ferry). On both occasions sunstrike was undoubtedly the cause. The motor vessel was travelling into the sun, and I was lost among the dazzling reflections. Both occasions were terrifying. I was deeply shaken by the experience, and gave a lot of thought to how I could make myself more visible. Since in that situation I was seen only in silhouette, I decided that wearing black clothing was the best way of enlarging my silhouette. However black is not a good colour at other times, for example in dim light when bright clothing is an advantage. I looked for a compromise, and decided on a blood-red colour which is dark enough to make a good silhouette but bright enough to be visible at dusk

or dawn. Fortunately, this is a colour which is common in buoyancy aids and paddle jackets. My present PFD is that colour, and when the cloth faded I re-covered it with new material of the same colour.

The new bylaw specifies a high-visibility vest or PFD (I presume bright yellow, orange or pink). This will be excellent in dim light but deadly in sunstrike. Based on my personal experience, and my fear of collision, I will not comply with the bylaw.

You might be sympathetic to this argument because in the November 2006 issue of the Harbourmaster's News you described the running-down of a kayaker between North Head and Okahu Bay by a launch steaming straight into the setting sun. You identified sunstrike as the cause. I guess you would also agree that Auckland Harbour with its east-west orientation is almost uniquely bad for sunstrike. In the morning a procession of boats head eastwards from Westhaven straight into the morning sun. In the afternoon, after a day of fishing and drinking beer they all return straight into the afternoon sun. The combination of sunstrike, speed, a salt-encrusted windscreen and a high blood-alcohol level is potentially lethal for kayakers. High-visibility clothing will make this problem worse, not better.

The second issue concerns lights for kayaks at night. Again, I need to explain some personal history. About 20 years ago I joined a group who paddled regularly on the harbour at night. We experimented with various forms of lighting: torches, fixed or flashing all-round lights, strobe lights, etc. Many, especially the all-round lights, were home-built. After numerous trials most of us settled on the same solution, which was for each kayak to carry two lights. One a reasonably powerful torch (eg. Eveready Dolphin), and the second an all-round white light (torch bulb powered by alkaline batteries) mounted on a 1-metre mast behind the cockpit.

We used the lights in the following way. Oncoming powerboats of concern were recognised by their red and green sidelights. When they were a mile or two away we stopped

paddling and aimed the torch straight at the vessel. Usually within a very short time the powerboat would alter course, indicating that it had seen us. We then resumed paddling, confident that our fixed all-round lights, though relatively weak, would continue to show our position.

This is an excellent system. The torch allows a kayaker to be seen at a far greater distance at night than by day, and I often felt that it was safer crossing to Rangitoto at night than making the same trip in daylight.

On the principle that if a little is good, more will be better, we tried fitting much brighter all-round white lights, of the type now specified in the bylaw (range at least 2 nautical miles). However we abandoned them, for three reasons:

- 1) A paddler showing a bright all-round light destroys the night vision of his companions who are paddling alongside.
- 2) The extra current drain required a lead-acid battery which was heavy and expensive.
- 3) The brighter light achieved no useful purpose because a torch was the method of choice for warning an oncoming vessel at a range much greater than any all-round light could achieve.

For these reasons, based on my own experience, I will continue to use a torch and my 20 year-old all-round white light even though the latter is not bright enough to comply with the bylaw. For the same reason I will be unwilling to paddle alongside anybody who does have a compliant light, in order to preserve my night vision. Fortunately none of my friends own a compliant light; as we discovered 20 years ago the necessary battery capacity makes these so expensive that few kayakers will purchase them.

Thank you for having the patience to read this far. Despite my negative feelings about the new bylaw, I appreciate the genuine efforts you are making to improve safety on the harbour. In particular, the speed restriction on the

inner harbour is an excellent initiative which I hope you will have the resources to enforce.

If there is a chance to review the bylaw in future, can I suggest that "recommended guidelines" would be better than bylaws? Such guidelines would establish a standard of good practice for kayakers, but would allow old fellows like me to continue with slightly different methods which we have found, through long experience, to be equally effective.

I hope you won't mind if I copy this letter to other interested parties. The bylaw has prompted a lot of discussion among paddlers, and it may be that others will wish to give you their opinion.

Best wishes, Colin Quilter

#### Follow up email from Colin

Hi Paul

I got together with many of the long-term Auckland Canoe Club members yesterday when we escorted swimmers on the harbour. All of the folk I spoke to expressed reservations about the sub-bylaw dealing with visibility of kayakers. Some who were involved in the 'trials' organised by Ian and the Harbourmaster told me that, from their understanding, both Ian and the Harbourmaster intended that the process would generate 'recommendations' or 'guidelines' for kayakers; not a bylaw. Somehow, much later, the recommendation was converted into a bylaw.

My partner Ailsa Duffy has also written to the Harbourmaster seeking details of the consultation process which was followed before making the bylaw. **The draft version of the bylaw made available to the public did NOT contain the present section dealing with visibility of kayakers. If the proper consultation process was not followed the bylaw cannot be enforced.**

I sent a copy of her letter to a few others in the campaign; that is copied below for your interest. We will have to wait for the Harbourmaster's explanation to see whether this will be a possible line of attack. I'll keep you posted.

## SAFETY

### WELLINGTON FORUM VISITS to RCCNZ and MOC by Sandy Winterton

One of the sessions offered at the recent November Wellington mini forum was a visit to the Rescue Coordination Centre New Zealand (RCCNZ) and Maritime Operations Centre (MOC). Both come under Maritime New Zealand and share one floor of a building about half an hour's drive from the forum venue.

A party of committee members reconnoitred the venue on Friday, and a convoy of forum-ite cars headed into the heart of the Hutt Valley on a seriously windy Saturday afternoon. To keep the group size manageable, we divided in two, one half to each operations centre before changing ends at half time. The two organisations we visited are separate entities but work closely together.

The classification system for incidents changed at mid year. RCCNZ is now responsible for Category II incidents covering covering land, air and marine rescues and typically deal with about 1200 incidents per year on their own or in conjunction with the Police.

John Ashby was our Search and Rescue Officer guide on Friday, and the Saturday visit was hosted by Mike Roberts and Conrad Reynecke.

RCCNZ is responsible for an area of about 6% of the earth's surface, from the South Pole well up into the tropics – an area of about 30 million square kilometres, very little of which comprises terra firma. With just two or three officers present, the area is one of the the most thinly resourced Search and Rescue Regions (SRRs) in the world.

Although the RCCNZ officers can do things the old way with charts, maps and navigational instruments, they have a number of impressive hi-tech aids to provide more information and to speed things up, including TracPlus

– a system where vessels that carry a tracking device can be monitored by RCCNZ. Four large wall monitors can be configured to display various data including activated distress beacons such as EPIRBs, on any of three different frequencies. Distress beacon signals are picked up by either satellites (RCCNZ knows their pass times and can display their paths on screen) or by aircraft. During our visit, one Canadian registered beacon was active in the Pacific and there were two others that had apparently been set off by accident in aircraft.

Automatic Identification System (AIS) is another tool that RCCNZ uses to track and provide details on commercial vessels. We saw one of the inter-island ferries, and could tell at a glance its name, destination, and number of passengers on board. AIS is very accurate, as we saw when John zoomed in on the Kaitaki inter-island ferry. We could see it was at its berth in Wellington and even which end was the bow.

A new search planning tool is under trial and we were given an impressive demonstration of its ability to predict the most fruitful areas of sea in which to search for a vessel or person. A scenario was run to look for a kayaker last seen at 3.00 pm off Wellington heads, two days previously. Software gathers real time wind, tide and current information over the period and simulates the possible paths that the kayaker could have taken by tracking possible routes on screen. At the end of the simulation, the highest chances of locating the lost person were highlighted on the shores of the south coast round to Lake Ferry, but possible paths could have taken them round Cape Palliser and up towards Honeycomb Rock. There were many parameters that could be applied to refine the search, such as kayaker in boat, in water wearing a PFD, adrift and unprotected etc.

The RCCNZ has other databases, tools and aids to assist in searching and retrieving people lost, hurt or in other serious situations such as a medical emergency. Locating the person is the first challenge. This has become easier in recent years with the advent

of EPIRBs. Advice from the RCCNZ team is to always carry one when paddling, tramping etc., preferably with an inbuilt GPS. If buying one, only consider 406 MegaHerz (MHz) models as those using 121.5/243 MHz will not be reported by the satellites from 1 February 2009. They pointed out that while \$700 or so may seem a lot when considering a purchase, it seems a bargain if you're bobbing up and down in the briny or injured while tramping with nobody for miles. Other tips are to set off the beacon where you have a clear view of the sky, and be aware that one of the main satellites is north-east of NZ over the equator and so it can't 'see' beacons on the western side of steep terrain such as cliffs or mountains. Point the aerial upwards (important if you are in the water) and leave your EPIRB turned on. It is a mistake to try and preserve battery life by turning it off, as searchers keep losing the signal. If an EPIRB is set off inadvertently, the owner should call the police or RCCNZ as soon as you can and advise them of the mistake.

Activated beacons are detected by satellite or by aircraft. 406 MHz beacons send a signal that identifies the owner, and GPS enabled models give an accurate location too, as long as they can see a satellite. The position of a beacon without a GPS function is resolved after more than one satellite pass or by aircraft using direction finding equipment.

Within moments of a signal being received, the RCCNZ has information to hand about the owner. This data comes from the registration details that owners submit when purchasing, so if EPIRBs change hands, or if the owner's contact person or other important data alters, updated details must be lodged.

An example was given of how a hunter near Te Anau was rescued at dusk within a couple of hours of receiving injuries that would probably have resulted in his death if he'd stayed out overnight. Another story told of an expensive search that eventually found a 20 year old locator beacon that someone had thrown out thinking it was inoperative.



With heads full of three letter acronyms and the electronic wizardry available to the RCCNZ we progressed to the Maritime Operations Centre where our guide for both visits was Daniel Nicholson. The centre is run and the staff employed by Kordia (previously Broadcast Communications Ltd.)

A room with five staff at different stations, big screens, high tech broadcast gear, and a billion buttons, dials and gizmos greeted us. The MOC serves an even bigger area than their neighbours - the 50 million square kilometres of Navigation Area 14 (NAVAREA XIV).

The centre answers all distress calls within their huge patch and is also 'Taupo Maritime Radio' – this is due to the requirement to give the station the same name as the place the transmitters are located, but which sometimes results in people headed to the central plateau calling to ask what the weather is like outside.

The team monitors six high frequency channels mainly used by offshore vessels and 28 VHF channels including emergency channel 16 for coastal waters, and all call on this channel made anywhere in NZ waters are dealt with from the Hutt Valley. The centre also receives information from RCCNZ about EPIRB activations, which is viewed using one of the same data display systems as we had seen previously.

One of the functions of the MOC is to record trip reports (TRs). On getting underway vessels should lodge a departure TR to identify their vessel, their departure point, where they're headed and advise the number of people on board (POB). On reaching their destination they should lodge an arrival TR, at which time the report is closed by the MOC team. They handle 100-250 TRs daily, and a small percentage are never closed. Sea kayakers should be aware that no action is taken by the MOC just because an arrival TR has not been reported. The TR system may seem to be designed for larger vessels, but it was interesting to hear that the MOC team recommends that kayakers lodge TRs even when the trip may be fairly minor. There was



*Rescue Coordination Centre New Zealand - Search and Rescue Officer Christine Wilson coordinates the response to an incident. Photo: John Kirk-Anderson*

certainly no feeling that additional TRs would be unwelcome.

A VHF radio can be a life saver and can also make your trips more interesting and informed as you can listen in to radio traffic ranging from TRs to full-on emergency situations. Anyone who has a VHF is well advised to register for a radio call sign and to do a course to obtain a marine VHF radio operator's qualification. The course covers correct procedure and will give operators the knowledge necessary to use their radio with confidence and to best effect. Details are available from Coastguard Boating Education.

The team handles about 1000-1200 incidents per year including distress calls, missing vessels, flare sightings and incursions into the Poor Knights marine reserve exclusion zone.

Distress calls increase significantly in summer as more people venture out, and while there are sadly a significant number of hoaxes, every call is treated the same. Other problems dealt with include 'open mikes' when a microphone has somehow become jammed in transmit mode, which can block others from using the channel.

Another service provided is regular weather reports for the vast region covered. Trained team members record forecasts for different areas which are broadcast at specified times

on assigned channels. These are regularly updated and play an important preventative role in keeping vessels safe.

We looked at some stats from 2006 which included 103 distress calls, 890 significant incidents, 133 hoaxes and 43 medical emergencies. There were 270 navigational warnings (logs, containers, ice bergs) from coastal and deep water vessels.

When a vessel uses a radio call sign, the MOC staff can immediately call up details of the vessel and the owner including emergency contacts. This information must be kept up to date when the owner's details change if the MOC is to handle distress calls in the most efficient manner.

All in all it was a great insight into two services that provide people with information to keep themselves safe, to track their movements, and the stunning technology that allows those that have come to grief to be located and rescued.

Our huge thanks to both teams for the time they spent with us and the services they offer to all those who step outside the front door.

Sandy Winterton - 9 November 2008

(Thanks to John Seward, Operations Manager for RCCNZ, for proof reading Sandy's excellent report)

## WELLINGTON MINI-FORUM

1 – 2 November 2008

by Beverley Burnett

Wellington weather was unusually calm and warm for the month of October, right up until the 31<sup>st</sup>, and then ... and then ... on November 1<sup>st</sup>, the first day of the WSKN mini-forum, the Wellington region was nearly brought to a standstill by 140 kph winds. Power lines snapped, roofs lifted, a van rolled on the Rimutaka Hill Road, and two cars were blown off a road in Wainuiomata. At the Sea Cadet facility at Cog Park, the mini-forum went on regardless, and all 30 participants turned up in spite of the weather.

The TS Amokura Sea Cadet group is the proud owner of a new training hall and boatsheds in Evans Bay, Wellington. It has full disabled access, comes with hot showers, a large hall, two training rooms and a full kitchen. The site is absolute waterfront at Cog Park, a cove in Evans Bay, which is sheltered from the prevailing northerly, and somewhat sheltered from a southerly. The Wellington City Council spent a great deal of money on landscaping the surrounding grounds which are now a park, and providing ramp access to the beaches. The Forum Committee were fortunate to be able to hire the facility for the weekend.

The Committee members have a lifetime of experience with Wellington weather and had factored in plenty of 'Plan B' options for gusty conditions. Hardy Wellingtonian attendees and 'iron-undies' out-of-town instructor John Kirk-Anderson rolled up, put on their wet-weather gear and made the most of it.

JKA, New Zealand's pre-eminent kayaking instructor, was completely unfazed by extreme weather and took his class out into a sheltered area of water outside the building to practice manoeuvring strokes. He said "I thought it got windy in Wellington? Seriously, as the saying goes, hardship

doesn't build character, it reveals it, and it was great to see people don their kit and get outside to play."

Max and Melz Grant held the surf theory session which was a leadup to their Sunday on-water surf session. Richard Lineham started his Rescue and Towing session indoors, which segued to the water.

Paul Caffyn and Conrad Edwards, recovered from their gruelling Greenland kayaking expedition, held indoor sessions on weather, navigation and efficient paddling. Outside the windows, a riveting practical weather display included views from the airport of planes rocking wildly during takeoff.

Adaptive paddling champions Bob Wellington and Beverley Burnett were proud to offer the first inclusive kayak forum in New Zealand. Newbie disabled paddlers Joanna Maling and Jamie Corkhill took advantage of the opportunity and worked in dry sessions with Bob on Saturday morning (see feedback from Jamie and photo on p.11)

On Sunday morning Bob took Jamie onto the water in Bob's adapted kayak, and Joanna attended a beginner's session led by Doug Flux. The rails left behind at the old dry dock site proved perfect for sliding a kayak into the water. Jo and Jamie attended other sessions of their choice along with everyone else. Both left the forum waving WSKN membership forms saying, "I'll be back".

Our keynote speaker on Saturday morning was Wellington Harbour Ranger Grant Nalder, who has long been a friend of our Network. He spoke about safe use of the harbour and emergency communications. At lunchtime Grant braved the rain with his equipment that tested the buoyancy of lifejackets and PFD's. The Amokura cadets took advantage of the opportunity and brought out all their lifejackets for testing.

Then there was coffee and cake. Andy Blake brought in two wonderful cakes – carrot and banana. Oh yum! We needed all those carbs to fight the cold and rain.

Wellington is the national centre for Rescue Coordination, which runs 24/7 from a building in Avalon, Lower Hutt. Nine attendees took the opportunity to spend two riveting hours at the centre on Saturday morning. A report on that trip will be tabled separately, as will a report from the visit to Wellington Harbour Radio at Beacon Hill on the same day. Sadly, there was a search going on at the time for a missing boatie.

And then there was soup. Hot and very delicious leek and potato soup provided by Alex Lineham, wife of Committee member Richard. The soup and bread was an excellent pick-me-up for such a horrid day.

The Committee had run a photo competition prior to the forum, which was judged by professional photographer Simon Hoyle, a former network member. Fergs Kayaks kindly donated prizes. Before Paul Caffyn's evening talk, Simon presented each photograph on screen with comments on technical merit and a score from 1-10, and took the heckling with grace. He also showed examples of how cropping can improve an image.

Sue Cade won the majority of firsts and honourable mentions in the competition with her exceptional photographs. She won the Sea kayaking section with 'Focus', and the Open section with 'What You Got Mate'. Celia Wade-Brown won the Coastal Flora or Fauna section with 'Life Under the Kayak'.

On the first day of the forum prints of the photos were displayed so that people could vote for their favourite photo. Sue won the People's Choice section with 'Stormy Day', which appeared recently on the cover of *The Sea Canoeist* No.135).

Two of Conrad Edwards' photographs from Greenland were exhibited *hors de combat*. We held a caption competition for Conrad's photo of Paul standing in his kayak on ice and pointing into the distance. (see rear cover of newsletter No.136). Surprisingly (or not) it was won by Conrad, who collected a prize donated by Fergs, with 1<sup>st</sup> Runner Up to Prue Wellington, and Honourable

Mention to Melanie Grant. I can promise you that no bribes were offered to the judge (me), who was a little disappointed by this. Ironically, Conrad's prize was a book on planning long-distance kayaking trips.

Fergs Kayaks were kind enough to attend with a trailer load of new boats to try, and a rack of cool new gear for us to try on. By the time they left several items had been earmarked for Christmas presents, including the nice padded paddle holders.

Our Saturday night treat to ourselves was to have Paul Caffyn come up from the South Island and give a presentation on his and Conrad's trip to Greenland. Partners of forum attendees and some guests attended, because an opportunity to hear Paul doesn't come very often.

Sunday dawned cold, but calm. As the day went on, the wind picked up to a snapping 15 knot southerly, from which Evans Bay is partially sheltered, and the sun came out. The jackets came off and the sunscreen went on.

Max and Melz' surf group headed off to Lyall Bay with glee. The southerly wind makes Lyall Bay ideal for surf. Every participant in the session came back with ear-splitting grins, sunburn, and reports of waves half- to-one metre to play in, although the size of the waves seemed to get bigger with every report that came in.

And then there was cake. We didn't think we'd get that lucky two days in a row but Andy Blake provided another two delicious cakes for morning tea. Happy tummies make happy paddlers.

The group paddles to Oriental and Scorching Bays had been cancelled on Saturday, and weren't offered on Sunday so that the on-water sessions could all take place. Forward paddling, manoeuvring strokes, adaptive paddling and beginners' sessions all took place in the morning sun.

And then there was soup. Alex provided delicious roast-vegetable soup, and we took the chairs and tables out into the sun to eat. What bliss.

The last two sessions on Sunday afternoon were Safety Planning by Richard Lineham, followed by a further safety session with John Kirk-Anderson. Several people commented that a theory session held outdoors in the sun was the perfect wind-down to a weekend of hard activity. Unfortunately the session took longer than expected because planes landed or took off from the airport every four minutes, causing a delay till we could hear again.

The only bad note for the weekend was the sight of a kayak powered by an outboard motor chugging past on Sunday afternoon.

As boats were packed and paddles stowed at the end of the day, we noticed a couple of committee members sneaking off for a paddle in the sunshine—a reward for a very successful weekend.

#### **Feedback from Jamie Corkhill**

Generally the world is designed for people who can walk and stand. This means that sometimes, daily use of a wheelchair can be a frustrating thing. This is not the case for a kayak. It is designed for someone to sit in. This makes it an ideal play thing for someone with a disability that impacts mobility.

*Jamie Corkhill, trying to convince the editor that it is not too cold to paddle. The sit-on-top kayak on the slipway has a moulded back support block and harness, designed by Bob Wellington, to allow Jamie to use his upper body strength for paddling. Looks like the bloke on the left is the one handicapped - second generation standing up - with knuckles dragging.*

*Photo: Beverley Burnett*





*Maritime Operations Centre - New Zealand's marine distress and safety radio network for NAVAREA XIV. Photo: John Kirk-Anderson*

four VHF radios on assigned channels (the main one is Ch 14 for shipping movements), a radar, wind meters on four wharves, a wave-rider buoy off Baring Head, and a computer displaying Wellington Harbour & entrance with Automatic Identification System (AIS) of any ships in the area (all large ships including Cook Strait ferries carry a transponder which sends a signal via satellite showing their name, dimensions, current speed and number of passengers). We watched the Santa Regina and Arahura enter the harbour, and if we had stayed until 6pm we could have seen the pilots boarding two container ships by rope ladder. The

Kaitake ferry requested a tug to assist with berthing in the high winds.

Beacon Hill's ability to actually see what was on the water and be in touch with shipping movements via radio and telephone make it an important contact when kayaking across the shipping lane or through the harbour entrance. Don't forget the tankers that tie up at Point Howard, and their associated tug boats, and the East by West ferry service (two catamarans) from Queens Wharf to Days Bay, sometimes visiting Somes Island, Petone Wharf and Seatoun Wharf. These go by the names of CityCat and CobarCat.

Harbour entrance web cameras and more information can be found at: [www.gw.govt.nz/section1541.cfm](http://www.gw.govt.nz/section1541.cfm)

### **Surf Session at Lyall Bay**

Sunday morning dawned overcast with very light southerly winds. Seven students and three instructors took their kayaks and surf helmets to the extreme western end of Lyall Bay. Max and Mel Grant had given a surf theory session the previous day, and Andy Blake gave an animated explanation of how to prepare to go on the water and how to get into your kayak quickly. Working in pairs, we started off learning to brace side on to small waves in 12 inches of water, progressing up to larger broken waves and then getting right out through the surf and coming back in, either surfing with a 'stern rudder' or hurrying through a quiet patch. After an hour the sun came out and it was a beautiful day, with the waves just right for learners. When we came off the beach at 12 noon, someone commented, "So why are we leaving now?"

When they got back to the Cadet Centre, you could tell who had been surfing because they all had wide grins from ear to ear. Thanks to Sandy Winterton who turned up with two cameras and took dozens of photos (see photos inside front cover).

**Beverley Burnett**

(Thanks to Brendan Comerford, of Kordia for checking Beverley's report)



*Instruction on surfing before the Lyall Bay surf session. Photo: Sandy Winterton*

## NEW ZEALAND TRIP REPORT A Coromandel Journey

by Robbie Banks

So much time, planning and preparation goes into the success of an expedition. No matter how small, the step is in the right direction, towards fostering resourcefulness, determination, and sense of satisfaction, of feeling the fear and still giving it a go. "When the timing is right it will happen."

So my goal was achieved, 210 kms from Fletchers Bay to Waihi Beach .Solo. Now I am home again.

Why did I choose to go solo? I ask myself this question many times, and I dose gently off to sleep with the words from Joy Cowley fresh in my mind, 'Darkness holds the sound of night, of the sea breathing in and out through the window of my soul'.

Sometimes I struggle to find the words to describe the experiences and feelings of being alone on the sea, or sitting quietly on a beautiful deserted beach, feeling like no one else in the world exists.

After all, our daily lives seem to be taking on a complexity that is forever stretching the capacity of our minds, hearts and souls. The fast paced era and technology overruns our lives and any time spent out in the open spaces, living totally in the moment, is definitely worth treasuring.

There is an unexplainable profoundness to being at the mercy of the elements while totally alone - both empowering and humbling. Since attending a slide show by Paul Caffyn two years ago my interest and desire to paddle solo has been rekindled.

Why do these experiences allow me to so easily be in the moment? At peace with life simplistic in its beauty.

A neologism I found for the purpose of attempting to articulate this, 'Environment organism' - you are your environment



*Robbie Banks in disguise as a mermaid*

and your environment is you. That when the connection is made, I find equilibrium within myself without even having to try!

It just is, simple and true, so the compromise of forgoing company and safety in numbers is the luxury of having the quiet and space to just be. Away from the trappings of society, no traffic jams, no four walls to encapsulate and stifle the adventurous streak.

This is not an article about the technicalities or safety of kayaking, it is a personal perspective from a woman kayaker, extending her kayaking experiences.

When Paul Caffyn asked me if I had written up on my January 2008 Coromandel solo, I had to confess that, no I hadn't. Although I was on an absolute high from achieving a personal goal, that had been in the planning for some time, ever since hearing Paul speak at our local kayak club about his adventures around Greenland.

Then the feats of the two Aussie dudes James and Justin kind of made my challenge pale in comparison. And if that wasn't enough the European chicks hit the country and the race was on to circumnavigate the South Island.

I wondered to myself, who are these super human people and what motivates them to take on such challenges? An attempt to write anything at all about my wee trip down the Coromandel fizzled away.

Then came the time to experience Coastbusters 2008, and the International Kayak Week in February 2008 followed by the KASK Forum at Ohope. Mark Jones and Sandy Robsons' words sent a tingle or two down my spine. They were both encouraging of kayakers to embrace new challenges and live their dreams. No matter how small or large those challenges are, they are stepping stones to a more enriched life of experiences and special memories. What life changing experiences they have all been, listening and learning from so many inspirational kayakers.

I had to pinch myself when Sandy Robson joined me and a fellow clubbie Rex on an early morning paddle from Martins Bay to Tawharanui. We couldn't resist giving Sandy a quick tour around Kawau Island, since she was flying out that afternoon to Aussie. Sandy sure made the most of her last day, surfing it up at Tawharanui, leaving it to the absolute last minute to get off the water. It was most entertaining watching Paul Hayward running up and down the beach calling, "Sandy, Sandy come back - you've got a plane to catch!"

"Just one more wave OK," replied Sandy and off she went.

Then came five days hanging out in the Bay of Islands with AJ from the Netherlands, setting ourselves challenges each day from a night paddle to Urapukapuka Island, remote camping at the cape and pulling our kayaks up the rocks at the DoC hut. I always wanted to go there but was not tempted by the long hike ! Kayaks are way more fun.

A short break of domestic life before the KASK Forum, surfing it up on Friday, listening to the Crocodile dude, Dave Winkworth, and having the opportunity to fine-tune rolling skills, hearing the famous Justine chuckle while dining on evening feasts with fellow kayakers.

Hanging out with all these cool people, with a wealth of experience, is dangerously motivating. I knew it would be big trouble to attend, that it would spur me on to make bigger paddling plans!

But the real trouble started when I plucked up enough courage to talk to Babs Lindman, when I found out she was heading back to my home town for a few days. I just couldn't resist offering to meet up. We went kayak surfing, ate Copenhagen cones in alleyways with 'no eating ice cream here' signs, oops! I corrupted Babs - she broke the ice cream law!

Hiking in the rain and mist, gleaning photographic tips, and hot swims and girlie talk, I think we could get into a bit of trouble together if she had stayed any longer! So another friend made and farewelled too soon. I'm sure she will be back.

To cut a long story short, that's why a Coromandel trip report faded away, until Paul Caffyn sent me an enquiring email. So if you're still with me here it comes:

To paddle alone or not to paddle alone? Many nights spent lying in bed wondering why?

Numerous dates set for the big trip and the weather bugged the plans again! My mind racing, finding strategies to remove the stumbling blocks of work, children, time precious time.

Before I knew it, two years had almost slipped by! (Many weekend trips achieved but not the big kahuna). I remember Paul's comment about wishing he had done more when he was in his prime, and I know how easy it is to let the everyday humdrum take over.

Yet another plan was hatched to go for it! After the Xmas break when two other paddlers were willing to join me, A ha - finally come to my senses, safety and socialising in numbers. But then, kids are going away to their dads, the sun is shining and my sister's bach at Rings Beach is beckoning. I know the plan is to wait until friends can join me, but I quietly warn them that I am taking my gear. If the weather is right I've just got to give it a go! Take one day at a time and see how far I can get?

My sister and niece drive me to the top, along the winding roads to Fletch-

ers Bay. It has been a long day, having to stop off in Coromandel while Rachel sorts out some work details. We look out across the Firth of Thames, white caps are whipping the water as we listen to my theme song, 'Time for a Cool Change'.

Neither Marlene nor Rachel are kayakers, and it's dawning on me that they have no idea what I am doing, even though I have printed off copies of all my charts, rest stops and emergency get out points and stuck them on the fridge door back at the bach. I know their only role is to dump me at the top and head home, and hopefully I will re-surface at Rings Beach in a few days. (At this point they think I am only paddling back to Rings, not going the whole way). I figured it is better to just take one day at a time, each day of paddling being a bonus with no pressure. Just be in the moment, that's the plan.

No support crew will be greeting me each night. This is it, all alone, enough gear loaded to last for a week or so, only water top ups required.

The tide is slack, perfect for the short evening paddle around the Pinnacles to Stoney Bay, just enough paddling to get into the groove and soak up the experience of being alone. I choose to remote camp rather than using the DoC camp at Stoney.

After all the adrenalin and angst of packing, I feel free and easy cruising along alone, a liberating feeling to be loaded up, free to explore a new adventure is underway ye ha! Like

a turtle with his home on his back, the freedom to go where you wish unencumbered from excess.

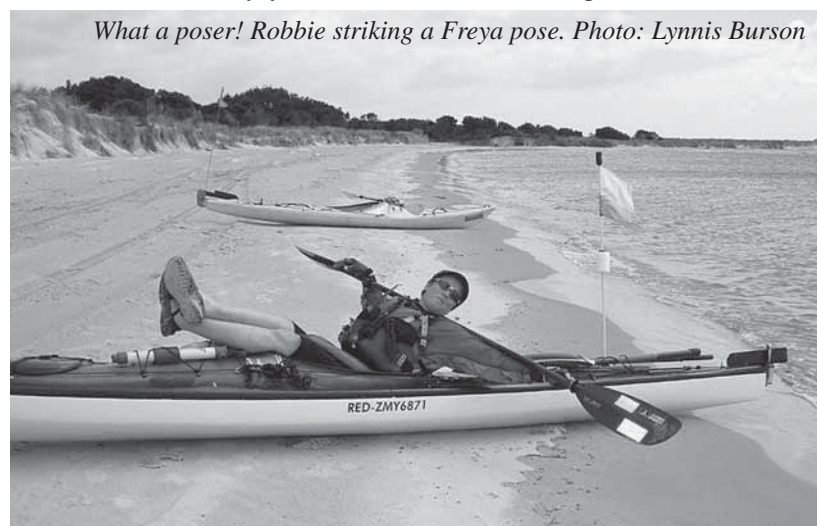
The Pinnacles tower above me and my feelings are of total satisfaction and a little smug, to be leaving the noisy campers and jet skis behind.

I call in at Stoney to say hi to Peter and Jeanette, friends of mine who run the camp. They invite me to dinner, tempting - I say, thanks but prefer to remote camp around the corner, may paddle back later after pitching the tent.

Once I am nestled in my cosy camp, with no sign of another soul around, I don't want to leave and paddle back to Stoney, just sit and soak up the peace, while sipping away on a glass of Cab Sav, and woofing down a dehy roast lamb dinner. Sweet satisfaction - I crawl into bed remembering the last time I was here, eating red potatoes and sharing wine with friends, foraging through the creek bed searching and finding a Hochstetter frog. Then fall asleep dreaming of the next day ahead.

The dawn chorus of native birds is astounding, and music to my ears. I'm having a party in my mind and heart, feeling light and happy. The weather gods sure are shining down with silky calm seas as far as I can see. The VHF confirms ideal paddling conditions and if any wind at all, it will be behind me. The phone reception is nil and I don't mind.

All distances, estimated times and planned stops are clear in my mind and backed up on laminated charts.



The main goal is to enjoy the trip along the way, the luxury of not working to any timetable, but the one I wish to create for myself - plenty of daylight hours ahead, yet I can't wait to be on the water. After recording the bird life and carrying the unloaded kayak to the water's edge over rocky boulders, I load up and head off around the cliffs. After passing Port Charles, the peace is broken by the beep of a text message, I'm not truly alone. A message from my sister saying there is a guy behind me on a sit on top also paddling solo - you'll know him when you see him, he has a big curly moustache! His name is Royd.

I make good time and stop for a stretch at Potiki Bay. Looking down towards Little Bay, I can make out boats and people, and feel reluctant to join the holiday crowds. So the plan is to bypass them all and head around the point where I know there is no road access, in the hope of a second night of remote camping. People are fishing and swimming as I cruise on by. I decide to stop for a quick swim and some lunch. Everyone is so friendly and a family stop to talk and ask where I am going? They look a little confused and disbelieving when I answer. A couple are trying to open a drink, but don't have a bottle opener, so I offer them mine and join them for a beer in the sun.

It's relaxing and fun, but the thought of peace and quiet and a beach to myself is enticing me to move on. Just as I am launching, a wiry looking dude with an impressive moustache approaches me. It is Royd. We chat for a while and plan to rendezvous the next day at Whangapoua. His partner Jenny is following him down the coast in a campervan and his plans are different from mine, as he needs to stop where Jenny can access him with the bus.

I desire to know the coastline intimately, to explore, to let my imagination fly with the Shearwaters, and drift with the little blue penguin that floats off my bow.

A realization - my pursuits and future goals are to become rich in experiences and to continue to embrace the chal-

lenges of the ocean in all it's changing faces, from the smoothness of a clear warm day, to the excitement of riding the swell with the wind whipping my face and salt spray flying.

It is not long before the excitement of a decent surf landing wakes me from my dreamy state. Will my fibreglass boat fully loaded cope with a dumpy landing? Or will it crack up? Who knows, we will soon find out?

I sit behind the breakers, studying the waves. Do I have some fun and surf the face or do I play it safe and sneak in between the sets? Looking carefully for telltale signs of submerged rocks, I allow time to watch the swell rising and falling, looking for the best landing.

I make my run cleanly, put the power on and surf in - not a soul on the beach and I exit quickly before the dumpy waves grab my boat.

My adrenalin is pumping - my mind tricked into survival mode - from the sound of the surf breaking, triggering the memory of a near death experience on a grade 5 rapid a few years back. Another challenge I am constantly working on, to alleviate the triggered anxiety, to work through it and just enjoy the buzz again.

A quick explore finds a perfect campsite complete with a circle of campfire stones, Nikau palms and flat grass, very romantic spot but the only mate to share it with is 'Yub,' my yellow understanding ball - AKA Wilson from the film 'Castaway'.

I've found a new ritual of casually unpacking while sipping on a celebratory glass of red. It is entertaining to observe how quickly I become euphoric on one small glass of wine.

The Oyster Catchers & Dotterels frolic on the sand, and I join in for an early evening swim. Then off in the distance I can see a dinghy rowing towards the bay. Where have they come from? Hope it's not the owners arriving to find a loner kayaker has taken over their pad?

I greet them at the shoreline, willing to grease and beg to stay! They are a



*Robbie with a very poor imitation of a Freya headstand in her kayak cockpit. Photo: Lynn Burson*

young trendy looking couple. He has taken his new girlfriend out in his dad's tinny trying to impress, by setting a long line and catching a feed for dinner. As the story unfolds, they are looking for my help. The dude threw a line overboard while the motor was still running and it tangled around the prop. I lend them my knife and help them untangle the mess. I am tempted to let them launch themselves but feel sure it will end in further carnage, and the chick is definitely not keen to get her feet wet. She is squealing and complaining about the waves spraying over the bow, oblivious to me holding the bow into the waves in chest-deep water while her man fires up the motor!

I am pleased to wave them goodbye, and interested to observe, not a life-jacket, spare water or a tool kit in sight, but their wetsuits & sunglasses were pretty groovy! Mmmmm - say no more.

As I wander back up to camp, I am thinking, 'Today has been more social than my average week or maybe even month that I experience in the city.' Mmm interesting aye?

The night brings new challenges, in the dark and alone, the sea sounds so loud and close. I have tied my kayak to a tree to ensure it greets me in the morning. The bay is long and exposed to the sea - my imagination is growing, dreading a rising swell and pumping waves.

The reality in the morning is concerning. The surf has increased. I know I can handle it. The biggest concern is

getting a clean launch with a loaded kayak with no one to assist.

Timing is crucial, as is the positioning of the kayak. I take my time packing, a constant eye turned to the surf. One last long coffee, sipped while watching and observing the waves, then the time comes. I have to leave. My nerves are getting the better of me. Just do it!

What an anticlimax! Everything goes like clockwork and I am through. I think someone is watching over me? "Thanks mate," cheers I say under my breath, face lit with a big grin.

Lunch stop at Kennedy Bay, where I meet some other paddlers who turn out to be Royd's brother and wife, cruising the coast for the afternoon in support of Royd. We continue together to Whangapoua, sharing a cup of tea in their travel home.

Then it is time to continue onto Rings Beach. The afternoon breeze kicks in, with an uncomfortable side chop accompanying me all the way. Small motor boats are whizzing in and out across the bar, and I am pleased to have a chopper flag and reflective tape on my paddles. Some launches venture way too close for comfort, oblivious to the wash they cause!

At last I arrive at Rings Beach with no arrival party in sight - the buggers are all up on the hill, enjoying an afternoon swill. I know this is a dumper beach and somebody to catch my bow would be a very comforting thought right now.

Again the adrenalin builds I take a deep breath and go for it. OK - another smooth landing - my ability is there, just the mind that is playing doubting games, and what do you know the arrival party ascends!

Hugs and merry Xmas cheer all around, they invite me to join the party. When I break the news that tomorrow I'm going to carry on, they look at me as if I have lost my mind! "But what about the Dudes concert?" Rachel says, "I have bought you tickets for tomorrow night!"



*Robbie and daughter her Jessie, being interviewed by BOPT reporter Julian Beresford. Robbie's caption noted, 'Just where she likes her men, on their knees'.*

*Photo: Sid Salek*

"No worries. I can kayak down to Whitianga, you can drop my car off and I will drive to Coroglen pub for the concert and carry on with my trip the next day OK?"

OK - yep that's a plan.

They disappear back to their party, leaving me alone to clean up and repack, wash gear, and replenish water supplies. I am quietly pleased to be left alone. I feel good, my muscles are feeling strong and enlivened, the softness of city life feeling a long way away.

And so the solo journey continued, with many magical days to follow; a two day stopover at Slipper Island for New Years, swimming with the dolphins both days.

A rough windy crossing to Whangamata, and another two nights remote camping at a secret bay, shared with a friendly entertaining family that asked me to keep their location quiet.

On the second last day I hiked up the hill to soak up the view of the coastline, a pleasing sense of satisfaction washed over me, that finally the goal had been achieved.

The last day I was feeling reluctant to be going back to the city so soon. Fellow kayakers are meeting me down the coast, so I slip out onto the sea with my two trusty companions, the *Challenge Five* that has carried me this far and of course my mate Yub smiling back at me from the deck bag.

I spy some black specks in the distance that slowly turn into my mates, Big Steve, my boss from B.O.P. Canoe & Kayak, Irene, Dennis and Gayle. The atmosphere is one of quiet greetings - we just turn around together and head back to Waihi Beach. I find it strange to talk - I just want to soak up the last day for all I can.

Steve has a bottle of bubbly stashed in the truck, but a liquor ban is in force and the idea of getting arrested while guzzling wine, standing next to the Canoe & Kayak truck just isn't a good look. So we restrain ourselves and settle for a non-alcoholic beverage at a local cafe.

Steve and Irene drive me back up to Ha Hei, to pick up my car. A sneaky drink or two in the back of the truck finally gets my talking gases going and the stories start flowing. I am delivered to my friends Vivian and Andrew, and they have never seen me in such a state before! Rather tidily and chatty - much to everyone's amusement!

Now I am back in the city. Thinking if someone offered me a million bucks to wipe the experience, I would say no! (Well maybe I would take the money, buy a cute house beside the sea and then go do it all again!)

Cheers and happy 2008 may it be full of happiness and many hours spent kayaking on the deep blue sea.

Robbie Banks



## WHAT MAKES A GOOD TRIP LEADER?

by Iona Bailey

I was recently privileged to participate in a 139 km kayaking adventure from Coromandel to Whitianga with a group of people from BASK (Bay Association of Sea Kayakers). The group was led by Evan Pugh, who is also a KASK committee member. We had rather inclement weather with gales, rain and cold but in large part due to the excellent leadership of Evan, we had a wonderful time with lots of fun and adventures.

So what are the attributes of a good leader that I observed on this trip?

1. Pre trip briefing. We were told to prepare for 30 km per day paddling. This didn't quite prepare us for Day 1 – 34 km into a 20 – 25 knot headwind. A nine hour marathon, but Evan was always encouraging and optimistic; chirpily singing out: 'Just around the next corner.' (Many times). (Another positive attribute: Humorous) Lucky Wendon was on hand with soup at Fantail Bay.

2. A regular kiwi bloke. Well very regular - mince and wraps on Monday, Mince and wraps on Tuesday, mince and wraps on Wednesday etc..... But of course all prepared with a minimum of resources and maximum enjoyment.

3. The feral touch. Lynniss, was impressed with Evan's feral good looks (but preferred gorgeous Graeme). Evan took this on the (feral) chin of course and never turned a hair (He was more than supported by Phil and Mike, who also opted to remain feral for the duration).

4. Embraces the difference between group members. And talking of bracing we did lots of that on this trip, especially on Day 7 crossing the Matarangi Bar and around to Opito Bay in 25 knot plus tail winds and a 0.5 – 1m chop coming from every direction. OMG

thank you Nigel Foster and JKA for all that skills training.

5. Up before the sparrow fart at 5 am to be precise to check the VHF Marine Forecast and wake up the crew for a 6.30 am start to beat the wind (well attempt to).

6. Never missed a pre launch briefing. "The wind is forecast to get up to 25 knots later" ...and it always did...every day. The briefing was always precise: he made sure a leader and tail end charlie were appointed, estimated time and distance to snack / rest stops and destination and advised the group to stay together and take the pace from the slowest paddlers. (Well except Graeme who travels twice as fast as anyone else with half the effort – must have been the daily shave and moisturizer?)

7. Responds to the needs of the group. One of our group needed to get back home for Saturday night for a HOT DATE. Well Evan with the support of the group realized the importance of this important event and made sure we arrived back in Whitianga before lunch on Saturday.

8. Advanced paddle skills. Shit Happens, Linda H and there was Evan in a flash to rescue her from a perfectly executed half Eskimo roll.

9. Thoughtful and helpful. It was so nice of Evan to offer to move the tents submerged in the paddock after the rain. And provide a large weatherproof tarp under which to escape the wind and weather. And always on hand to help lift and carry boats. What a man!

10. Leads by example. Evan was a swampy (referring to the camping spot chosen by Evan and some of the group) who despite much derision from the Coasters (referring to the camping spot of the rest of the group) maintained his humour and bonhomie.

11. Skillful. Evan's paddling skills are impressive. Whilst I was being tossed around like a cork in a washing machine, Evan was surfing the waves and making encouraging noises. Mind

you, Mike was even more impressive - he kindly stayed close by me (in case of a half Eskimo roll event?) and proceeded to calmly pass the time by taking photos. And Rex caught fish.

12. Knowledgeable and prepared. Evan has kayaked many many kilometers in New Zealand. He is well equipped and carries all the necessary safety and emergency equipment (including his apron of course – see photo below). He had paddled, or attempted to paddle around Coromandel twice before.

This experience was invaluable when planning for each day to account for tides, wind and rocky hazards when negotiating the coastline and plan places to stop and rest. Graeme also knew the area well and was a great support - when we could see him.

13. Pre trip planning. We were so pleased that Graeme's family allowed us to stay in their bach at Opito Bay. The hot showers, comfortable beds and magnificent BBQ (thanks again Wendon and Rex) were amazing.

There is much, much more that I could add but suffice to say the trip was awesome, the company excellent and that it would not have happened without our great leader!

Thank you Evan.  
Iona Bailey



*The glorious trip leader wearing his wishful thinking BBQ apron.  
Photo: Iona Bailey*

## OVERSEAS TRIP REPORT

### Solomons Sojourn by David Fisher

(see also colour photos on p.23)

Warm tropical water and a sheltered lagoon lured us to the Solomon Island's Marovo lagoon in August 2007. Initially inspired by an article in *The Sea Canoeist Newsletter* in 1998, this area had been on our wanted to go to list for a while, but 'ethnic tension' in 2000 and subsequent unrest meant we had shelved these plans until this year.

The Marovo Lagoon is off the SE coast of New Georgia Island in the Western Province of the Solomon Islands. Our trip was based out of Uepi resort, a small island on the outer barrier reef that had a great reputation for SCUBA diving and snorkelling.

Our plan was for eight days paddling round the Marovo lagoon with a local Solomon Islander guide organised by Kayak Solomons based from Uepi.

After a days 'orientation' at Uepi which included familiarising ourselves with the Perception Sea Lion single plastic kayaks and some rolling practice in the warm 30 degree water, we packed our gear in dry bags supplied and headed off the next day.

Our first days destination was 18 nautical miles away. Not sure of how we would find paddling in the warm 30 degree air temperature, we headed off at 20 knots under outboard power to the Mindeminda group of islands 5 miles closer to our destination. We were four paddlers, Diane, David, Zane an Australian guy and Rodily our local guide.

It was warm and sunny with only a slight breeze as we wove our way through the Mindeminda Island group, then we had a three mile crossing to the next point. Rounding this point, some of the houses of Patutiva village were lined up alongside the water, and children waved or paddled over in their dugouts to say hello. We lingered here

while Zane and Rodily carried on. Our lunch stop was on the beach by Seghe airport, where we had flown in two days earlier, then we headed off again continuing south, now into a 10 knot headwind, paddling past little islands that lay along our route.

We arrived at Matikuri Lodge built right on the waters edge (as these tourist lodges around the lagoon typically were). Here we had our own 'leaf hut' which was a short walk away from the main building where food was served on the verandah.

Next day we set off in calm seas to the Bapita area. After paddling across the bottom corner of the lagoon we paddled through a narrow channel apparently blasted by some New Zealanders to provide easier access to the ocean for the locals. This channel led us to the open ocean beside a limestone island with undercut cliffs. We passed several dugouts mostly paddled by young people who seemed to be 'hanging out' or perhaps fishing in the area.

I (David ) was a little weary this day and later put this down to not drinking enough. I waded into the sea at our lunch stop to cool off and was disappointed to find the sea about the same temperature, but ducking under the warm surface layer I managed to cool off slightly.

Benjamin our host came to meet us in his 'motorised canoe' ie. a fibreglass boat with an outboard and we got a ride back to his Matikuri lodge.

Next day we headed back to Seghe and then paddled to Chumbikopi village on Marovo Island. This was where our guide Rodily lived, and most of the Solomon Island staff from Uepi resort lived in this village too. We were the first kayaking guests to stay in their accommodation, built to accommodate visiting religious leaders. The local kids hung around to be shoed off by the adults. We wandered along the village path that afternoon and watched a soccer game and admired their big new church.

Next day was our shortest scheduled day paddling on eastward to Rogasakena Lodge, about eight nautical miles by the map. Diane and I headed off ahead crossing the bays and then explored the coast by the points. While waiting in the shade under some trees a woman showed us some carvings that her son had for sale but we politely declined.

We stopped along the way and walked up to a waterfall guided by a local couple. The interesting part of this side trip was stopping to find and eat Ngali nuts on the way. These nuts are about the size of an almond and we crushed the hard outer shell between two rocks.

*Diane in camouflage sun protection clothing. Photo: David Fisher*



Ralph's place, Rogosakena, was a compact lodge with two bedrooms, small kitchen area along the back and we dined on the side deck. Diane and I had the best room on the seaward side that opened up on three sides. I lazed away the afternoon watching the local boat traffic including dug-outs, 'motorised canoes' and logging barges go past. Ralph didn't have the usual HF radio which is the standard communication around the Marovo Lagoon. However Batuna village was only a few minutes paddle round the corner so Zane paddled off with Ralph to communicate with Uepi about some antibiotics for an ear infection he developed SCUBA diving.

All the other lodges we stayed at had, or had access to an HF radio, typically powered by an old truck battery and charged by solar panel. Several places also had generators that were started up in the evening to power a fluorescent light to illuminate our dining table.

We had a longer paddle scheduled the next day and headed off island hopping south towards Ropiko Lodge. Zane had gone ahead in a 'motorised canoe' from Uepi that was ferrying his luggage down to Ropiko as he was flying out from there.

We were paddling south into a slight headwind island hopping beside islands about 0.5 to 2 n. miles apart. The Uepi boat returned after dropping Zane off and offered us a ride which we accepted, taking us about 5 miles along our route. Zane was waiting for us and the four of us set out again outside the main lagoon partially protected from the wind by an island to the east.

Our destination lay on the outer coast facing east and exposed to the prevailing south easterly trade winds. We paddled past two young girls in dugouts who we understood to be paddling home from school for lunch, about an hours paddle. In a limited conversation I gathered they had been studying maths that morning relating to the time of day.

The original Ropiko lodge buildings including the waterfront lodge had

fallen into disrepair, and we were accommodated in a western style building that reminded us of an Aussie batch with glass louvres and built high up on concrete piles so we could walk underneath.

Our initial calm to slight seas of the trip had changed to steady east to south east winds of 20 to 25 knots, which was good to keep any mosquitoes away, and we didn't use the mosquito nets supplied here. We had used mosquito nets at night in all the other lodges around the lagoon and we were taking Doxycycline antimalarial tablets as a precaution.

Next day was scheduled for a visit to a 'custom village' of Biche on the 'weather coast' exposed to the south east winds. Our arrangement was that Diane and David could paddle this section weather permitting but not Zane. A steady 20 knots or so of wind with

two metre swells meant that we travelled to Biche by 'motorised canoe', organised by Cory an Australian who runs nearby Wilderness Lodge with his local Solomon Island wife. Cory sent us off with his best boat driver John 'who hasn't rolled a boat yet' he told us later. Apparently most of his other local boat drivers have tipped the outboard powered fibreglass boats – not good for the outboard. John skillfully picked his way through the seas to Biche, where we landed on a rocky platform just awash in the waves.

After walking back from Biche to Ropiko the next day we had another day exploring the area on foot where Diane met a man finishing off a dugout canoe. The village had a high school where students boarded for the week and a grass airstrip nearby. Aid monies had recently set up what I refer to as an 'Internet café' a building with six laptops and a satellite dish complete

*A dugout canoe under construction. Photo: David Fisher*



with solar panels and a big battery bank. Courses were being run on Word, and email with internet access was available for about \$1 NZ per hour.

On our last day paddling there was just the three of us, Zane having flown out to Honiara and home that morning after delays waiting for the airstrip to dry out after the moderate rain we'd had. We paddled north inside the barrier reef islands. We negotiated to get a decent paddling distance in, getting away shortly after 8 am for a scheduled pickup at 1300 and about 14 miles paddling. All to soon it was over and we arrived at Radio Point with the Uepi boat was there a few minutes later and we were off at 15 knots back to Uepi.

We enjoyed the luxury of a cabin to ourselves with the use of the kayaks for the next two days, circumnavigating Uepi Island (easily done in less than an hour ) with a stop for a snorkel at the far end of the island, and a paddle round neighbouring Charapona Island and more snorkelling.

Independent paddlers should be able to sea kayak in the Marovo the lagoon if they arrange to get their own kayaks there. There were interisland freighters and a high speed ferry that travelled to and from Honiara.

We took our own split paddles; as these were lighter than the standard aluminium shaft ones supplied.  
References:  
www.kayaksolomons.com  
www.uepi.com

All distances referred to in miles, are nautical miles, = 1 minute of latitude (locally) = 1.85 km.

**Clarence River DVD**

Re Maggie Oakley's report in n/1 136, I emailed Maggie for information on where the \$10 from DVD sales was going to. 'The Clarence River DVD was made as a permanent record of what we need to conserve. OCKC is the Otago Canoe and Kayak Club; they were supportive of project and I pass \$10 from every sale to them for conversation work.'

# CALENDAR

## KASK FORUM 2009 February 20 - 23 ANAKIWA

Newsletter No. 136 included a registration form for the KASK FORUM. Do not delay in sending off your completed form and cheque. Evan Pugh was rather strict at the Ohope Forum when the registrations reached the maximum allocated. See also the KASK website for a downloadable registration form.

Two guest speakers on both Friday and Saturday nights as well as a day paddle on Saturday for those that do not wish to partake in the range of training sessions on each day. And don't forget the Sunday night camp-out at Mistletoe bay, and the real good food and accommodation which is all inclusive in your registration cost. Evan Pugh



Dave Winkworth, one of two notable Australian expedition paddlers who will be attending the '09 forum, will be showing slides of his recent trip from Karumba to Darwin, and running workshops on the water. This recent photo is of Dave in a Canberra hospital, with his wrist in a cast. But to learn if the injury was suffered in fending off an attack by a crocodile, shark or rabid possum, all will be revealed at the Anakiwa 2009 forum. As Dave is left handed, I reckon the photo was set up as an excuse for not being able to type a trip report for the newsletter.

### To think about for the 2009 Anakiwa KASK Forum ANNUAL AWARDS:

- Paddle Trophy Award for outstanding contribution to sea kayaking
- Paddle Trophy Away for outstanding contribution to the newsletter
- The "Bugger!" Trophy - worst or most embarrassing moment (send nominations in a plain brown email to Evan Pugh or the Editor)
- The Prestigious Foto Competition (bring your fotos to the forum. Details in the newsletter No.136)

### KASK AGM Saturday 21 February 2009

- Admin, finance and committee reports
  - Nominations for elected committee positions
  - Motions for the AGM
- (send committee nominations, and AGM motions to Linda Ingram, KASK.admin@xtra.co.nz or the mail address, 30 days prior to the AGM)

### POST-FORUM TRIPS

If you expressed interest in trips on your registration form, contact will be made via email to liaise re what trips are planned.

## CANTERBURY NETWORK ANNUAL OKAINS BAY WEEKEND - 2009

Okains Bay 'The Sea Kayakers' Gathering' - possible dates - 31 January - 1 February OR 14 - 15 February 2009. The earlier date seems to be preferable.

## HUMOUR

### Eggsacting Joke

John the farmer was in the fertilized egg business. He had several hundred young layers (hens), called 'pullets', and ten roosters, whose job it was to fertilize the eggs.

The farmer kept records and any rooster that didn't perform went into the soup pot and was replaced. That took an awful lot of his time, so he bought a set of tiny bells and attached them to his roosters. Each bell had a different tone so John could tell from a distance, which rooster was performing. Now he could sit on the porch and fill out an efficiency report simply by listening to the bells.

The farmer's favorite rooster was old Butch, a very fine specimen he was, too. But on this particular morning John noticed old Butch's bell hadn't rung at all! John went to investigate. The other roosters were chasing pullets, bells-a-ringing. The pullets, hearing the roosters coming, would run for cover.

But to Farmer John's amazement, old Butch had his bell in his beak, so it couldn't ring. He'd sneak up on a pullet, do his job and walk on to the next one. John was so proud of old Butch, he entered him in the Renfrew County Fair and he became an overnight sensation among the judges.

The result...The judges not only awarded old Butch the No Bell Piece Prize but they awarded him the Pulletsurprise as well.

### Aliens

Two aliens landed their spacecraft near a petrol station on the Nullarbor Plain that was closed for the night. They approached one of the petrol pumps and the younger alien addressed it saying, "Greetings, Earthling. We come in peace. Take us to your leader." The petrol pump, of course, didn't respond.

The younger alien became angry at the lack of response.

The older alien said, "I'd calm down if I were you."

The younger alien ignored the warning and repeated his greeting. Again, there was no response.

Annoyed by what he perceived to be the pump's haughty attitude, he drew his ray gun and said impatiently, "Greetings, Earthling. We come in peace. Do not ignore us this way! Take us to your leader or I will fire!"

The older alien again warned his comrade saying, "You probably don't want to do that! I really don't think you should make him mad."

"Rubbish," replied the cocky, young alien. He aimed his weapon at the pump and opened fire. There was a huge explosion. A massive fireball roared towards them and blew the younger alien off his feet and deposited him a burnt, smoking mess about 200 yards away in a cactus patch.

Half an hour passed. When he finally regained consciousness, he refocused his three eyes, straightened his bent antenna, and looked dazedly at the older, wiser alien who was standing over him shaking his big, green head.

"What a ferocious creature!" exclaimed the young, crispy alien. "He damn near killed me! How did you know he was so dangerous?"

The older alien leaned over, placed a friendly feeler on his fried friend and replied, "If there's one thing I've learned during my intergalactic travels, you don't want to mess with a guy who can loop his penis over his shoulder twice and then stick it in his ear."

### UK Child Support Agency

The following are all replies that British women have put on Child Support Agency forms in the section for listing father's details. These are genuine excerpts from the forms:

1. Regarding the identity of the father of my twins, child A was fathered by Jim Munson. I am unsure as to the identity of the father of child B, but I believe that he was conceived on the same night.

2. I am unsure as to the identity of the father of my child as I was being sick out of a window when taken unexpectedly from behind. I can provide you with a list of names of men that I think were at the party if this helps.

3. I do not know the name of the father of my little girl. She was conceived at a party at 36 Grand Avenue where I had unprotected sex with a man I met that night. I do remember that the

sex was so good that I fainted. If you do manage to track down the father, can you send me his phone number? Thanks.

4. I don't know the identity of the father of my daughter. He drives a BMW that now has a hole made by my stiletto in one of the door panels. Perhaps you can contact BMW service stations in this area and see if he's had it replaced.

5. I have never had sex with a man. I am awaiting a letter from the Pope confirming that my son's conception was immaculate and that he is Christ risen again.

6. I cannot tell you the name of child A's dad as he informs me that to do so would blow his cover and that would have cataclysmic implications for the British economy. I am torn between doing right by you and right by the country. Please advise.

7. I do not know who the father of my child was as all squaddies look the same to me. I can confirm that he was a Royal Green Jacket.

8. Peter Smith is the father of child A. If you do catch up with him, can you ask him what he did with my AC/DC CDs?

9. From the dates it seems that my daughter was conceived at Euro Disney; maybe it really is the Magic Kingdom.

10. So much about that night is a blur. The only thing that I remember for sure is Delia Smith did a program about eggs earlier in the evening. If I'd have stayed in and watched more TV rather than going to the party at 146 Miller Drive, mine might have remained unfertilised.

### Family Jewels

T. B. Bechtel, a part-time City Councilman from Newcastle, was asked on a local live radio talk show, just what he thought of the allegations of torture of the Iraqi prisoners.

His reply prompted his ejection from the studio, but to thunderous applause from the audience.

His statement:

"If hooking up an Iraqi prisoner's nuts to a car's battery cables will save just one Australian's life, then I have just three things to say,"

"Red is positive. Black is negative, and make sure his nuts are wet."

## 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:

**Editor: Paul Caffyn,  
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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:

**KASK Administrator  
PO Box 23, Runanga. 7841  
West Coast**

### **Correspondence/Queries to:**

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West Coast

**Send address changes for receiving the newsletter via email to Linda at:**

**KASK.admin@xtra.co.nz**

### **4th. Ed. KASK HANDBOOK Updated to March 2008**

For trade orders of this mother of all sea kayaking handbooks, contact Paul Caffyn, RD 1, Runanga, 7873, West Coast. Ph/fax: (03)7311806  
e-mail: kayakpc@xtra.co.nz  
Shop RRP: \$34.90  
Price to KASK members only, including p&p, \$22.50  
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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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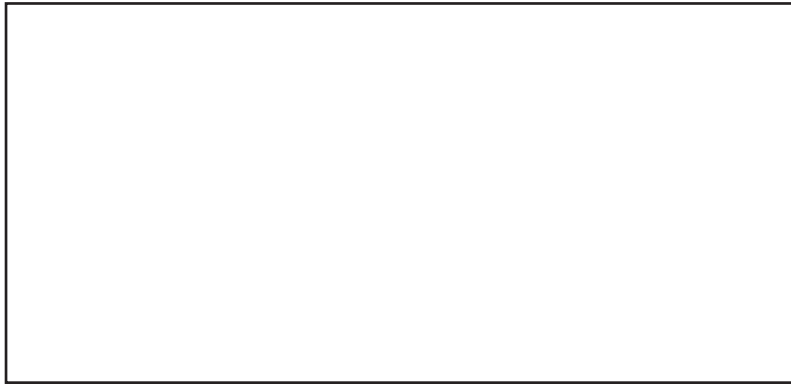
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*Colour photos on p.23: Above and below the sea at the Solomons. See story on p.18. Photos: David Fisher*



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*Gale north-westerly winds fanning whipping up williwaws behind the moored yachts, on day one of the Wellington Forum. Photograph: John Kirk-Anderson*

### **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.

