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**DEADLINE FOR NEXT
NEWSLETTER
17 NOVEMBER 2010**

EDITORIAL

KASK Membership Renewal

A second request for prompt membership renewal will accompany this newsletter, but only for those recalcitrant paddlers who have yet to renew. This will be the last newsletter posted out to the 2009 -10 membership list. Please renew promptly.

For a voluntary organization that has been representing recreational sea kayakers throughout New Zealand since 1992, KASK continues to need your financial support, not only for the newsletter but to enable committee representation at national forums and to continue to develop safety initiatives and training.

(Those who have already paid will not receive the 2nd notice.)

KASK Forum 2011

The annual gathering is back to Anakiwa in the Marlborough Sounds, for the weekend 1 – 3 April. The Outward Bound School is a superb venue, right by the shore of Queen Charlotte Sound, and the tucker is scrumptious. Sunday night will be an overnight camp-out.

An email registration form has been sent out to the KASK email member listing, and is also on the KASK website. Evan Pugh and Helen Woodward are working on the program – already with a great list of speakers and instructors. If you can help with either on-the-water instruction or are willing to help the forum committee over the weekend, please email Helen at: h.woodward@xtra.co.nz

Safety

Sandy Winterton has written a timely reminder on the importance of including your contact details in, or on your kayak, after he and Susan Cade found an abandoned sit-on-top kayak.

Ion Bailey's Bugger! File article highlights the need to always take a minimum of two means of emergency marine communications.

Iona recently had a paper published in the 'Wilderness and Environmental Medicine Journal' titled 'An Analysis of Sea Kayaking Incidents in New Zealand 1992 - 2005'. The abstract conclusions noted:

All incidents were complex events with many variables interacting in different ways and all had the potential to be serious and life-threatening. Human actions were more important than physical events and young men were most often involved. Staying with the kayak after capsizing and wearing a PFD may have reduced the severity of an incident.

Rolling

Mike Scanlan's article is encouraging for those paddlers who lack confidence when rolling or who have yet to learn to roll. My view is that following a capsized, a paddler's prime recovery method is to roll, quickly and efficiently. And as Mike notes, practice to be able to roll, not just in the calm water of a swimming pool, but also in real gnarly conditions. A combat roll is the term often used for a roll in bad conditions; a roll that is a conditioned instant response, attained both through physical practices and mental visualization.

Overseas Reports

Paul Hayward's article on a recent trip to SE Alaska, is a grand insight into how thorough research and planning provide a key to a successful and incident-free expedition.

Jillian Wilson's article and stunning photos of her trip to South Georgia made me so envious. I know the cover photo features neither kayak nor paddler, but what a photo.

Paul Caffyn

PHOTOGRAPH CREDITS

Cover: On the northern coast of South Georgia, beautiful adult King penguins stand close by a mob of youngsters. See story on page 15. Photo: Jillian Wilson

Facing page: Both photos of Mike Scanlan practicing rolls with his wing paddle. See story on page 9. Both photos: Dennis Anderson

KASK

President's Report October 2010 by John Hesseling

Summer has finally arrived with sunny warm weather so it's time to get out the shorts and to sort out summer paddling gear.

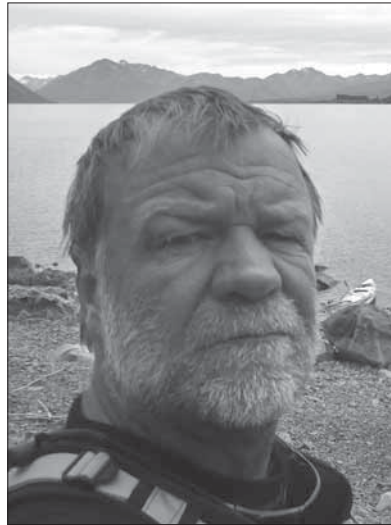
Over the last few months, KASK committee member John Gumbley has been in discussion with the Department of Conservation with a view to KASK being recognized by DoC as an approved recreation associate. This will mean that KASK members may be entitled to discounted rates for back country hut passes and hut tickets. We hope to have this finalized before the end of the year.

I am waiting for responses from sea kayaking clubs and regional networks regarding mechanisms by which KASK can represent a greater number of paddlers especially at a national level. A possibility includes a category of KASK membership for clubs or for regional networks.

Repeal of Foreshore Act

In August we were sent an email by the Coastal Coalition outlining their views on the repealing of the Foreshore and Seabed Act 2004. They were also seeking contributions to a 'public information campaign to alert New Zealanders to National's separatist plans'. They are proposing to use a high profile public information campaign utilizing direct mail, newspaper ads and billboards.

Because this issue is likely to be of interest to sea kayakers I have done some basic research. I have referred to the Coastal Coalition website and to the Maori Party website for an alternative view. From their web site 'The Coastal Coalition is an umbrella group formed to unite individuals, groups, businesses, and organizations who feel strongly that the foreshore & seabed is the birthright and common heritage of all New Zealanders and should remain in Crown ownership'.



John Hesseling (self-portrait)

The following is a background on the NZ Marine Coastal Area Bill (Takutai Moana) Bill 2010 from the Coastal Coalition website:

The foreshore and seabed is a massive resource that comprises around 10 million hectares – one third of the land mass of New Zealand. Horizontally it is the distance between the average spring high tide waterline and the 12 nautical mile territorial limit. Included are the beds of rivers that belong to the coastal marine area. Vertically it is the airspace above this zone and the water, subsoil, bedrock and other matters like mineral wealth below.

The foreshore and seabed were vested in the Crown when New Zealand adopted British common law in the 1800s. As a result of a Court of Appeal decision in 2003, which was widely misrepresented to imply that Maori 'owned' the foreshore and seabed, the Labour Government affirmed Crown ownership through the 2004 Foreshore and Seabed Act.

The National Party wants to repeal Crown ownership of the foreshore and seabed in favour of Maori interests. They believe this will cement a long-term relationship with the Maori Party.

Under National's bill, corporate iwi will be given effective ownership of the foreshore and seabed, not through a rigorous Court process but through negotiation with government Ministers. Their rights would include the power of veto over other coastal operators, and the potential for widespread

development – resorts, mining, aquaculture, and so on.

The **Maori Party website** advises that the new NZ Marine Coastal Area Bill (Takutai Moana) Bill 2010 fulfils their election promises and that the Bill does the following:

This Bill reopens a door that was slammed shut in 2004. The Bill is not a full and final settlement, but it opens up a pathway to allow mana whenua and Crown to negotiate a settlement.

This Bill corrects a major injustice by repealing the Foreshore and Seabed Act 2004 and restoring mana whenua access to the High Court to seek formal recognition of their mana and tikanga (clause 53). As an alternative to the High Court, the Bill allows for iwi to negotiate directly with the Crown (Ngati Apa was trying to achieve this in 1997 when they took their case to the Maori Land Court all those years ago).

The Bill ensures that our country's beaches will not be sold to foreign investors. The Bill presumes iwi will still have their mana recognised even if their adjoining land has been confiscated. The Bill provides for the exercise of the right to delegate or transfer use rights in accordance with tikanga (clause 54). The Bill will be subject to public submissions through the select committee process.

The Bill presumes that tangata whenua maintains customary interests unless the Crown proves they have been extinguished.

The Maori Party web site advises how the rights of New Zealanders will be protected: None of the rights of mana whenua are in conflict with the rights of all other New Zealanders to use the beach or swim or take part in any other recreational activity.

None of these rights are in conflict with existing port activities, fishing, navigation or aquaculture rights. The Bill does not take away rights but recognizes and protects the rights of Maori and all other New Zealanders to the NZ marine coastal area.

I have not tried to judge the issue but to present some information from both sides. Sea kayakers should monitor the progress of the NZ Marine Coastal Area Bill (Takutai Moana) Bill 2010 and make submissions as appropriate.

Victorian Sea Kayak Club Forum

The Victorian Sea Kayak Club is holding a sea kayak forum from 12 to 14 November 2010 at Anglesea west of Melbourne and have invited New Zealand kayakers to attend. I will be attending as will Paul Caffyn who will be presenting his East Greenland trip slide show as well as promoting the 25th Anniversary Edition of The Dreamtime Voyage. I am sure that one of us will prepare a report on the forum in the next newsletter.

John Hesseling

John received an email response from Te Ururoa Flavell re the Maori party point of view.

Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana) Bill

Public submissions are now being invited on this bill. You can make your submission online:

This bill repeals the Foreshore and Seabed Act 2004. The bill is available for download:

<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/bill/government/2010/0201/latest/viewpdf.aspx>

Print copies can be ordered online from Bennetts Government Bookshops. The committee requires two copies of each submission if made in writing. Those wishing to include any information of a private or personal nature in a submission should first discuss this with the clerk of the committee, as submissions are usually released to the public by the committee. Those wishing to appear before the committee to speak to their submissions should state this clearly and provide a daytime telephone contact number. To assist with administration please supply your postcode and an email address if you have one.

The closing date for submissions is Friday, 19 November 2010

Te Ururoa Flavell
Member of Parliament for Waiariki
Maori Party Whip

Webmaster's Picks from Sandy Ferguson

There's been more tapping on the computer than paddling, not helped by a bit of shaking to make one stirred. Though everything, power, phone and broadband failed for a couple of days, Civil Defence suggested checking on their web site for situation reports. However we still managed to find some kayaking related items.

A bit of **Canoeing History**, a short list of **books**, click on the titles to get a synopsis:

http://www.dngoodchild.com/divide_for_canoeing_and_small_boat_voyaging.htm

More History:

http://www.doitadventure.com/wwkayak_history.php

<http://www.kayakgrancanaria.com/en/archivos/314/>

http://www.puravidapatagonia.com.ar/historia_eng.php

A few expeditions are listed on this site:

<http://exploreseakayaking.com/expeditions.htm>

Building Greenland Kayaks

For those wanting more information on building a SoF Greenland kayak:

<http://www.instructables.com/id/Build-a-Greenland-Kayak/>

Australia

Ozzy kayaking stories and information:

<http://nadgeekayaks.com.au/articles.html>

Weather

This one is good, giving swell forecasts around the country, satellite pictures, live cam etc. The swell chart forecasts, when you move the mouse over them, give swell details as well as forecast windspeed and direction.

The isobar chart shows what is happening west as far as west Australia:

<http://www.marineweather.co.nz/>

Great White Shark

And for something different, "Great White Shark attack". Obviously sharks don't like plywood otherwise the paddler wouldn't be around to take the pictures. The bite was over the bulkhead and about over the paddler's foot.

Kayak – ply with glass over:

http://duane.smugmug.com/Other/Shark/13192523_R4nrZ#957503235_o37iy

If you roll your mouse over the pictures you will get the titles, which will tell you the story. The full story is also on the Nick Schade building discussion group site. When I paddled this area a few years ago I saw the seals but not the shark(s):

Fastest K1 Kayak in the World

Finally, for a bit of excitement – "Real go-fast", what more can one say. Fit foils to your kayak and beat a K4. You really need broadband to download this. Apparently the design is by the designer of the wing paddle:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bQRtgEIs--k>

Sandy Ferguson

(An SoF kayak - I had to check with Sandy - is a Skin on Frame Kayak)

THE 'BUGGER!' FILE

Paddler lost in the Ruahines and rescued at Mt Maunganui by Iona Bailey

On Saturday 3rd October 2010 a male kayaker from Tauranga was saved, but nearly lost, by his emergency signalling devices.

A local man, aged in his mid 40s, got into trouble paddling along the main beach at Mount Maunganui. He was paddling on a new lightweight surf ski south from Leisure Island to Omanu in the morning, a route he had travelled frequently.

The weather was sunny and visibility excellent. According to the Tay St Weather Buoy, the water temperature was 13°C, Air temperature 15°C. The wind speed was between 9 and 16 knots from SW and the tide was outgoing, with a surf wave height of 0.5m.

The man decided to paddle close to shore because he was alone. Dressed in a Farmer John wetsuit and polypropylene top, and wearing a PFD, he carried an emergency bag with waterproof marine radio, EPIRB and two smoke flares.

When attempting to turn around at Omanu, his surf ski caught a wave and he capsized. The man made several unsuccessful attempts to climb onto his surf ski. His paddle leash was attached to his surf ski, ensuring that he was able to hang onto his boat. He then realized that he had drifted, due to the wind and tide, about 1.5km off shore. Fleeting (fortunately) he considered swimming to shore, but fortuitously decided to set off a flare. He remembers having trouble working out how to use the flare, which he attributes to the cold starting to affect his speed of thinking. He then activated his EPIRB and tried to lie across his surf ski hoping to be rescued. He didn't think to use the radio - again he thinks this decision was caused by him becoming cold.

The National Rescue Centre had by this time received his signal but due to operator error, had misread one digit. They sent a helicopter up to the Ruahines! Meanwhile the Police had received three 111 calls from people on or near the beach who had seen the flare. Local surf club lifesavers in an IRB rescued the paddler about 20 minutes after he set off the flare. By this time he was feeling very cold and shivering but soon recovered after a hot shower at the Surf Club.

This story highlights the importance of being prepared for an unplanned event and carrying signalling equipment, which in this instance surely prevented a tragic outcome.

The cost of flares, EPIRB and marine radio are small in comparison to the cost of an expensive kayak and other paddling accessories and nothing compared to the cost of losing a life.

However the story also tells us that it is unwise to rely on just one method of signalling as even an EPIRB may not be foolproof. It is interesting that the cold temperatures quite rapidly affected the paddler's decision-making and thought processes.

Iona Bailey

SAFETY

INCLUDE CONTACT DETAILS ON YOUR KAYAK

by Sandy Winterton

Location: Camp Bay, between Eastbourne and Pencarrow, eastern shore of Wellington harbour.

Susan Cade and I were out for a morning walk along the eastern shore of Wellington harbour south of Burdens gate (the end of the sealed section) on the Eastbourne to Pencarrow lighthouse road. We walked south along the gravel road for 2 to 3 km and then returned along the beach.

At about 9.00 am we were 5-600m south of Burdens gate, and noticed an unusual shape close to shore. As we approached it became clear that it was the nose of a small boat. From the water's edge we could see that it was the bow of a sit-on kayak protruding vertically out of the sea a few from the shore. The bow of the boat had a triangular hole in it as an integral handle (see photo on page 7).

We retrieved the boat and dragged it up the beach. The kayak was a *Feel-free Nomad*, a small sit-on-top kayak with fishing rod holders. It was moulded polythene with blue ends and a white centre section. Both hatch covers were off but attached with cords. Fishing line was tangled around the top of the kayak and the hatch retaining cords. A yellow plastic fishing lure was entangled in fishing line, along with a plastic bag and weed.

All evidence suggested that the kayak had been out fishing and had subsequently been blown to shore. The previous evening had been calm and the weather when the boat was found was a 10-15 km/hr onshore wind.

We phoned the Coastguard who took down some information. A few minutes later the police called back and took more details of the incident and of myself. They then rang back again to double-check the location. We left a note on the boat stating that it should not be touched and that the Coastguard had been informed, and took a photo with a camera phone.

Once back in Eastbourne, we saw an IRB cruising close to shore and the Coastguard rang once more to check a few details. That was the last we heard of the matter, which, as far as we were concerned, left the whole incident unresolved.

What had happened? Was someone about to go fishing but a wave dragged the kayak out to sea before they were ready? Had they finished their trip and the wind whisked their craft away? Did someone have a minor scare that made a good story in the pub soon afterwards, or had a re-

ally serious incident occurred? We could only speculate.

What would have helped the angler, coastguard, police and ourselves:

- the kayak was not a very seaworthy craft; OK for a light person in calm weather but it would probably have been inadequate for a heavy paddler or in significant waves. Sit-ons seem to range from toy boats to serious ocean going craft. Do owners recognise the difference?

- wave skis have thigh straps or waist belts, but sit-ons seem not to have any means provided to keep paddler and boat together. A leg or paddle leash would have improved the chances of keeping the angler in contact with their boat.

- assuming it was a serious incident, a VHF or mobile phone (suitably waterproofed) would have helped to get assistance, and a flare would have been particularly useful at night, near a well-populated coast.
- trip details should have been left with family or friend in case the paddler got in trouble.

Had the owner's contact details been displayed on the boat, we, the Coastguard and/or the police could have called to check if all was well. This is a very simple precaution that costs nothing and can have great benefits. All kayakers are encouraged to label their boat with contact details for themselves and their contact person.

Had the owner's contact details been on the boat, we could have established that all was well and dropped off their boat to them. As it was, they may never have got it back.

In an incident of this type, if a boat is lost, the owner should contact rescue services or maritime radio to let them know. This simple action could prevent a costly and unnecessary search.

In an ideal world, the Coastguard or Police would have called us back, perhaps 48 hours after our initial report, to let us know if they had found out anything. As it was we still have no idea if the incident was serious or not.

Sandy Winterton



The sit-on-top kayak found by Susan and Sandy near the eastern entrance to Wellington Harbour.

*Contact details marked on the kayak would have made the job of tracking down the owner easy, and allayed fears that someone was missing.
Photo: Sandy Winterton*

ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF WHY CONTACT DETAILS SHOULD BE ON OR IN YOUR KAYAK

Kayak Found at sea 11 August 2010

A kayak found at sea near Motiti Island on Wednesday is unlikely to belong to missing Ohope resident, 71 year old Marquis John Reed Jeffery. He was reported missing on July 7, after being last seen kayaking on Ohiwa harbour on June 29.

Marquis' kayak is described as a single seat, orange plastic moulded 'Viking' kayak. The kayak may have had a black canvas soft seat attached with the words 'Viking kayak' on it. The paddle has a black aluminium shaft with white blades. The kayak found by an anonymous fisherman near Motiti Island is a yellow two-seater Aqua II. It has no visible marine growth that would be consistent with it having been in the sea for a month. The salvaged kayak was brought to Tauranga by the Manutere, skippered by Brett Keller.

"We didn't even find it," said Brett. "We got it off another boat that found it just outside Motiti, and that's about it." The kayak was picked up by the harbourmaster and taken to Mount Maunganui police.

Aerial, sea and shoreline searches of the Ohiwa Harbour and coast from Ohope to Opotiki have been conducted by police, search and rescue volunteers, coastguard and the missing man's family without finding Marquis, his kayak or paddle.

Most of the area was searched on foot with watercraft searching waterways and estuaries and double checked with land based searchers. A helicopter was also used.

(from the SunLive Local news)

SAFETY

Submitted by Paul Hayward:

The following is from the PaddleWise Paddling Mailing List. It is part of a discussion following the recent death of two young women kayaking in Maine's (USA) very cold waters - on a summer's day when the rising wind (to 19 knots) led to their being unsuccessful in completing their short inter-island paddle. They had some skills, were wearing light clothes and PFDs. The discussion has been how (or if) such deaths can be prevented or minimized.

SOFT SKILLS vs HARD SKILLS

Nick Schade said:

While I agree that skills are important, I don't see them as being much different than gear. They can lead to a false sense of security.

For the purpose of discussion I like to break skills into two types "hard" and "soft". "Soft" skills are those that are fuzzy and difficult to evaluate. They are things like ability to stand at a put-in, look out at the water and determine whether your abilities are good enough to paddle safely. "Hard" skills in contrast are easily defined and easy to evaluate. They can be tested with a simple pass-fail criteria. For example "can you roll?", if the answer is "yes", you can put a little check mark on your list next to "Are you wearing a life jacket?".

These skills are "hard" because they are also brittle. They can fail easily and completely. They are typically what are taught in kayaking classes. They are often marked by addition of stars or by another checkmark on a rolling list.

In the same way that wearing a life jacket or carrying a paddle float are severely limited in the safety they can provide, hard skills are only as good as the paddlers' ability to judge when the skills are a good match for the conditions. I have seen many very good rollers with lots of checkmarks on their list end up swimming when confronted with large breaking surf, a long bongo slide, a nearby rock or

cold water. You don't necessarily know how your hard skill will break until you experience the condition that breaks it.

Gear is easy. You take your card to the store and you buy your cool new toy. This is often money well spent. A life jacket is very simple and does its job reliably and can make a huge difference - extending life from mere moments to many minutes.

Hard skills are also fairly easy - despite my choice of terms. You can take a class and do a little practice and in a little time adding a function to your list that is good. You can not necessarily count on it working when the s#!t hits the fan, but you will never regret having the ability.

Soft skills are much more complicated. What does a 15 knot northwest wind translate into when there is a mile of fetch? What is a 2 foot wave like when it is passing over 4 feet of water? How will my kayak respond to an 8 inch chop vs a 8 foot swell? What difference does it make to go with the wind vs into the wind vs across the wind? What will the weather do after that front passes through and how long will those conditions last? The only way to add these skills is experience. You can read a lot of advice and listen to stories of others' experiences and study maps, charts and tables. You can research things off the water and practice things on the water, but most importantly, you need to get out there and experience it for yourself. Without actual experience, it is just abstract knowledge. Time on the water will make it concrete and real.

This accumulation of soft skills is fraught with risks because until you experience something you don't really know if the hard skills and gear you have are up to the task. Thankfully, most of us survive this and either quit in fear or go on to try riskier things.

It is possible to paddle an open recreational kayak safely year round in Maine wearing street clothes and no PFD - if you know enough about judging conditions to pick your days, put-ins and destinations. There are also times when someone wearing a life

jacket and dry suit and all the gear, who can do 31 different rolls on each side of the boat, should stay home. Making that determination requires the soft skills.

The two girls who lost their lives could have had a perfectly safe paddle the day they went out, dressed as they were, if they had known how to match their abilities to the conditions. If they had made it home last weekend, they would have been vastly safer paddlers than when they left that morning. Unfortunately, the accumulation of soft skills did not happen in time to keep them alive.

Nick Schade

Guillemot Kayaks

TECHNICAL

Sprayskirt Shrinkage Survey by Barbara Leslie

The Northland Canoe Club was chosen at random by Rotistics New Zealand to participate in a survey on Sprayskirt Shrinkage. In the interests of safety a placebo group was not considered.

The history of this important and unique study, lies in anecdotal evidence that when summer (or indeed any season) kayaking starts, significant numbers of paddlers find difficulty in sliding their skirts over their maximus glutei. The purpose of this study is to prove or disprove this theory. Funding has been provided by Kentlucky Fried Chocolate Chips in association with Pizza Farm fried noodles on double pastry.

The importance of this research cannot be overestimated with spray-skirts costing on average \$150, waterproofing spray \$17, costs associated with regular skirt maintenance checks skyrocketing, cockpit coaming Warrant of Fitness checks now the same as for 500cc motorcycles, not to mention the New Zealand Small Boat Bureaucratic Bollocks Association's plan to introduce car registration type legislation and other P.C. ideas currently commercially sensitive and naturally regarded as

NZSBBB's intellectual property. Anyway, suffice to say there is a cost/benefit/loss scenario to be considered.

The results have a margin of error of approx 50% (sorry 5%). Over a three week period 30 club members were consulted. A consent form was signed by all members and they obligingly agreed to publication. No individuals would be identified. The methodology involved rounding out the results using Sequel and Squall computer systems. (I kid you not!) The ensuing results were outstanding:

-95% of respondents reported skirt shrinkage.

-85% reported skirt shrinkage after a paddling gap of 2 weeks (the other 16% after 3 weeks)

- 15% reported no shrinkage if they paddled twice a week (note 12% of these people were not telling the truth as they don't paddle twice a week)

Conclusions:

1) Regular paddling prevents skirt shrinkage. This is scientifically proven to relate to water/material/sun/tide/moon and wind issues.

2) Regular paddling and being aged under 40 prevents shrinkage (unfortunately no one questioned fitted this age range)

P.S. A, possibly soon to be ex, friend informs me that I should stick to nursing while he does the mathematics.

Barbara Leslie
Reprinted from *Paddle News*,
December 2006 - Newsletter of the
Northland Canoe Club

TECHNICAL

The Road to Rolling by Mike Scanlan

see also colour photos on page 2, taken by Dennis Anderson

Yesterday (9 July 2010) was my 66th birthday and to celebrate I took my sea kayak out and did 80 rolls (40 each side) in a rather cold ocean, making a total of 2000 rolls (1000 each side) since February. I have needed two attempts on about 20 rolls but not had to wet exit. At November 2009 this would have seemed an improbable dream.

Rolling is an acquired skill that most sea kayakers would love to have and many set out to attain, but most get stuck somewhere along the way, short of their goal.

I suspect it goes something like this:

Paddlers who would like to be able to roll? -	Most
Paddlers who do a rolling course at a pool in a small kayak -	Lots
Paddlers who progress to rolling their sea kayak -	Not so many
Paddlers who regularly roll their sea kayak in the ocean -	Less
Paddlers who practice rolling in rough conditions -	Even less
Paddlers who learn to roll from both sides -	A lot less
Paddlers who can reliably roll from both sides in rough seas -	??

My journey in rolling started about six years ago with pool instruction in a polo kayak – it wasn't hard and pretty soon I could hand roll. (right side only)

The real difficulties started when I took my sea kayak to the pool. Although my cockpit was customised to a snug fit and I had good thigh braces it took a lot of effort to roll it and even the instructor only just made it up (he was not a sea kayaker).

After a while I moved my rolls to the ocean which was much more intimidating, and even though I usually got up, the rolls seldom felt smooth and controlled.

I spent a winter doing weekly roll sessions at the pool, with a wave ski friend, and using a Greenland paddle but good technique still eluded me. When I did do a nice roll, I could not tell what I had done differently

On three occasions, on big trips, a roll saved me from having to swim, but I knew I still had a long way to go.

Nothing changed until December 2009 when a Phys-Ed teacher friend, who has taught thousands of high-

schoolers to roll, offered to take me in hand. Dennis cannot roll himself but he knows what it takes.

Starting off with my right hand roll, Dennis soon coached me into a roll that for the first time felt smooth, controlled and pleasurable. At last I felt that I understood exactly what actions my body was required to do and my confidence soared.

Then we shifted to a left hand roll, and I felt like a newborn baby with absolutely no idea how to tell my body what to do. This persisted for quite a while, especially in initiating a good paddle sweep, but gradually, with patient coaching, it started to come together.

After about 6 sessions (all in the sea) I still hadn't quite got it but felt I now knew what I had to do. Then it all came together and I started coming up with a smooth relaxed left hand roll.

The feeling of accomplishment was amazing.

Dennis had not coached a sea kayaker before and I think he was just as excited as I was.

I continued with weekly solo 100 roll practice sessions (50 each side), which took a bit of self-discipline, but I was now on a roll (sorry).

The rolling sessions had their humorous moments - like the people on the beach who expressed their concern at my lack of skills since I kept capsizing.

I then left the goggles at home to make it more realistic, but kept the nose clip and started using earplugs and a swimming cap when my inner ears got sore from the repeated impact of capsizing.

I also made the rolls more realistic by capsizing on one side then working the paddle slowly under and across the kayak and rolling up on the other side, and targeted rough conditions to practice in.

(the most likely scenario to capsize your kayak is side-on to surf/chop/wind and if this happens you will not be able to roll back up against the waves/wind but will need to complete a 360° and come up from the other side, which is why you need a left and a right hand roll)

Rolling sessions are now a fun workout and excellent for flexibility. Sort of an aquatic Pilates session.

Looking back at my long and laborious road to rolling, and watching others trying to learn, I have concluded that;

The breakthrough for me was the repeated one on one coaching sessions that were close together so that the learning process was a continuum rather than sporadic.

And that: **Anyone can learn to roll, and from both sides, but to do so takes:**

- A strong resolution to reach your goal
- A customised snug cockpit and good thigh braces
- A good coach
- Repeated, frequent, one on one sessions with the coach

Followed by:

- Heaps of ongoing practice to wire in correct 'muscle memory' and build up confidence
- Progressing to practicing in the same conditions you are likely to capsize in – wind, waves and surf.

The body and brain have to learn to work together to consistently perform a choreographed manoeuvre, while hanging upside down in the ocean, with waves, wind and a degree of fear thrown in.

The road to rolling is not a quick trip to the corner dairy, but the rewards are worth it and you can get there if you want it enough.

Mike Scanlan

ROLLING WITH A WING?

When I queried Mike if there was any difference between rolling with a conventional paddle versus a wing paddle, he responded:

'I think that every paddle will have a different feel when used in a roll and that the differences will be more noticeable between a wing, Greenland and a conventional blade.

'All my recent rolls have been with a Lendal kinetic wing and this blade definitely offers very good support as it moves through the water. I took out my wife's touring paddle recently and found that while my right roll with it was fine, the left roll was pretty sketchy, so there will be a technique difference with radically different paddle blades. I find that, with the good support from my wing paddle, I roll up with a lot in reserve compared to the 'only just up' rolls I remember from my Greenland paddle. My roll is still primarily about body rotation and rotating the kayak by pulling the opposite thigh in, rather than leaning on the paddle however I think that the support from the paddle is still an important ingredient in providing the resistance to roll up against.

'As I said in my first email – The reason for writing this article is to en-

courage paddlers to persist in getting a reliable roll, as I believe very few that start out actually get to the point of a reliable left and right roll in bad conditions.

'PS I will be up to 4000 rolls by the end of the week. No wet exits. It's not all that often that you get a solid feeling of accomplishment about something but I do feel good knowing that I now have a solid roll, especially after spending so much time over the years trying.

Author's Pen Portrait

Mike spent 35 years living and working around Gisborne as a farm Vet. Like a lot of paddlers, he progressed through tramping, climbing, sailing, rafting and surfing to sea kayaking and plans to keep on paddling. At Gisborne he teamed up with John Humphris (mostly) and paddled to Cape Reinga over five summer trips, plus innumerable kayak surfing sessions on the great Gisborne surf breaks. Now based at the more tranquil waters of Kawau Bay, he pursues snapper from his much loved Beachcomber and wonders why he sees so few sea kayakers at this magical place only one hour north of Auckland.

The rolls' photographer (colour photos on pages 2) was Dennis Anderson who was also my rolling coach - I am the paddler doing the rolls.

Mike Scanlan - self portrait



NEW ZEALAND TRIP REPORTS



A lone paddler off Jackson Bay with a backdrop of the Southern Alps.

Queen's Birthday Weekend A West Coast Kayak Trip

by Andrea Farminer

(photos: Maggie, Chris and Suds)

Our plan was to drive to Okuru, just south of Haast, and our base for the weekend, and then head to Jackson Bay on Saturday and explore the coastline southwards, weather permitting. If the weather permitted again, we'd head off to sea Sunday but it seemed more likely we'd have to move inland and explore a bit of the Westland 'interior'. Leaving the bright lights of Wanaka behind, Chris and Alan skilfully negotiated a slippery Haast Pass and we reached the rather dimmer lights of Okuru late in the evening.

After a respectably early start and breakfast on Saturday, we packed our kit for the day, did a quick weather check and headed off south to Jackson Bay. The weather was fairly calm and, even better, so was the sea.

We launched off the beach and headed at a leisurely pace towards the headland, passing a few larger rocks with seals on them and admiring the views of the nearby coastal bush and snow-capped mountains further afield. Once round the slightly choppy headland we paddled steadily on down the coast and passed our first bay

– Smoothwater Bay followed by Hominy Cove and then Stafford Bay.

The coastline was made up of small stretches of beach broken up by outcropping rocks which we generally avoided paddling too close to as the strong swell made conditions a little tricky in places. On the way we passed some interesting caves (explored on the way back by Sue and Jan) and a small rocky beach area, which was covered with seals of all sizes.

Our target was Stafford Hut and, after about a couple hours and some quality map reading, we approached the beach where the hut was thought to be. However, it wasn't visible from offshore and so after some deliberation and discussion which involved the usual sea kayaking hand gestures - i.e. waving, shouting across a long distance - we eventually following Sud's lead and made some nice surf landings and went in search of the hut.

The bush surrounding the Stafford Hut



After negotiating a lagoon and small river crossing, the DoC hut came into view and what a view it was – a newly renovated hut set in picturesque bush with dancing fantails to match.

After a relaxed lunch we headed back up the coast, this time hugging the shoreline a little closer; this involved Jan and Maggie taking on some of the more challenging paddle throughs - Suds admirably taking a breaker on the head in Smoothwater Bay and yours truly nearly crashing a rock, all the while Chris snapped away recording our 'adventures'. Back in Jackson Bay, Maggie, Jan and Chris stopped for a bit of fishing and soon after Chris hauled up a rather attractive, but smallish red cod, which was returned safely to the sea.

After getting the boats back on shore and everything tidied, Maggie noticed a small 'shack' just opposite with an interesting 'for sale' sign... a mere \$450,000. Hmm, nice view but definitely a doer-upper! After a nice walk on the beach at Neils Beach we headed back to camp.

After a scrumptious group dinner, the evening was spent sociably in card games, wine, laughter and me trying to stay awake to a respectable ten o'clock. All in all, a great days paddling.

A Sunday paddle on Lake Ellery

The West Coast is known for its rain. And rain it did, almost all day. However, since when did a spot of torrential rain put off a group of adventure-seeking sea kayakers? Not today. We put the boats in near the top of the Ellery Creek and paddled off in search of new water. As a newcomer, I still haven't (luckily) got used to the amazing, almost prehistoric feel of some parts of New Zealand and to me this was just that – dark, still water surrounded by a dense canopy of bush, wisps of mist curling upwards and the odd bird calling off in the distance.

As we paddled round a deep bend the creek opened out into the top of Lake Ellery with a stunning, if misty view of the enclosing mountains. To me it felt like the lake was ours and off we paddled. After a slightly damp lunch break at the far end of the lake we paddled further round and back up to the creek.

As the day was still young and Maggie, Sue and Jan were keen to explore some more, they continued down the creek to join the Jackson River with the intention of then paddling down into the Arawhata River where Suds, Chris and I would meet them at Neils Beach. We waved them off in the rain and set about loading the boats. Once done, we raced round to the road bridge over the Arawhata just in time to see the girls pass by underneath and carry on down the amazingly blue, wide waters of the river. We drove on to Neils beach and soon enough Jan, Sue and Maggie happily appeared. With not much let-up in the rain, we headed back to the lodge.

On Monday we walked along the Haast to Paringa cattle track up to Blow Fly (Blue River) hut; a super walk through the bush with lots of birdlife including some friendly Bellbirds, a bridge crossing over the rushing Moeraki river and lunch at the hut. Once back at the cars, we headed south again to Haast calling into the excellent DoC visitor centre and then eastwards towards Wanaka. Driving through the Haast Pass, this time in daylight, was especially



The team at Neils Beach. From left: Chris, Maggie, Jan, Andrea, Sue, Suds)

lovely as fresh snow had fallen quite low along the valley and made it picturesque.

Author's pen portrait:

Andrea hails originally from the UK where she spent a lot of time digging holes, scaling ladders and dangling off bits of historic buildings (interspersed with the odd bit of scuba diving and motor biking) but is now firmly working her way to becoming a Kiwi through the back-door approach of undertaking a three year research degree at Otago Uni looking at the different concepts of value in recreation and tourism on some of the South Island's rivers. A keen but still rather green sea kayaker, she is always open to the offer of a paddle (and preferably the boat as well) and hopes one day to complete a role in style rather than panic.



Andrea Farminer

OVERSEAS REPORTS

Innocents Abroad Alaska without the Cruise Ship

By Paul Hayward

Over a glass of red in Juneau, Natasha summed it up – we aimed high and we managed to pull it off. I won't say nobody was more surprised than us; but with a lot of luck and a dash of good management, we came back with our hides intact and our happy-meters off the scale.

We set out to go and paddle our own canoe (well, all right, kayak) in Alaska; an area with a number of challenges that seldom present in our usual New Zealand coastal paddling. Part of this was pure wish-fulfilment and part was an awareness that the bucket-list doesn't wait forever.

We saved money where we could (second-hand folding kayak and dehydrating our own food), but were willing to spend a bit to make the trip something to look back on with a smile.

In line with a wise old Kiwi paddler's dictum – visualisation was given free rein for months before the trip. We tried to think of the rough spots and come up with answers. By the time we set off, we had lots and lots of answers – but had we been asking the right questions ?

Cold water was a frightener. Alaskan sea-water in summer is as bad as New Zealand ever gets in mid-winter. Up where the glaciers calve directly into Glacier Bay – it was going to be much colder. Cold can prey on the mind as well as the body – and cold wet feet are nobody's idea of a good time. The obvious answer was a pair of drysuits – and that was our biggest single expenditure. Natasha got good advice from Diane at Anakiwa and I got lots of good advice from Phil & Mark in Auckland. Then I got really



Frame of FC double with lots of dry bags figuring out where they will live. Photo: Paul Hayward

lucky and was alerted to a near-virgin suit in the US – which was trailed and then bought and posted to me by a pen-pal in Connecticut. On a snowy mid-winter's day in 2009, Natasha climbed into my suit and we gently threw her into a freezing trout stream just next to the Chateau. She came out smiling – saying “I want one”. We gulped and melted some plastic.

Drysuits need practice. You can overheat, but you can work out how to avoid it. The secret is in what you wear underneath – and how you manage your exertion. Tramping in rain gear is no different, sometimes it's going to be hot & sweaty – you slow down a bit, or you live with it.

Where to go? Well, Alaska has a huge coastline. We decided, after lots of reading and discussion, that South East Alaska looked good. Lots of paddling options, some traces of old Russian history and a perfectly adequate supply of sea otters, whales, bears, mountains & glaciers. There are a couple of good books (Jim Howard's is one) on SE and we read them and picked the brains of those kiwis who had gone before (special thanks to Gerry, Stephen & Paul).

Plan A firmed up into a paddle north from Sitka (the old capital of Russian America) along the coast, in and out of the islands and up into Glacier Bay National Park – some 400 km and



All 6 panniers in place - approx 100 litres of gear restrained

about two weeks (plus a few days for bad weather). There are only three tiny settlements on the way – none with road access – much like Milford Sound was, before we dug the tunnel.

How to survive the bears? Alaskan brown bears are not your average Teddy. It is quite possible to come to think of grizzlies as akin to a psychopath in a Kenilworth. Fast, unstoppable & bloodthirsty. As a bugger-factor, they need to be managed. Baranoff, Chichagoff & Admiralty Islands (they're each about twice the size of Stewart Island) have the world's densest population of bears and the Rangers in Glacier Bay believe they have 5,000 within the Park alone.

The bigger the party of humans, the smaller the bear 'problem'. That's the accepted wisdom, but we were going to be just two. So Natasha became our bear expert – reading and psyching herself up to repel boarders with a small can of capsicum-derived 'bear-spray' and a VERY positive attitude.

All food (indeed, all smelly stuff like toothpaste and sun-screen) needs to go into bear-proof canisters. This is wise everywhere in bear country and obligatory in the Park. Cooking gets done 100+ metres from the tent and often in the intertidal zone – to keep aromas away from where we sleep. Campsites get chosen as least-likely-to-be-on-a-bear-trail. Offshore islands make less inviting campsites for the bears – and thus more-so for us. Lots of fairly level-headed Alaskans treat bears just as seriously as we treat earthquakes – so we didn't feel too paranoid.

What to paddle? We were planning to push a few boundaries. We didn't know

the route or the seas or the weather (at first-hand). We wanted a boat in which we had confidence. We were going to be taking a lot of gear and we wanted to know we could pack it all in. We wanted the flexibility to abandon Plan A if weather or fear pushed us towards Plan B or C or Z. So we decided to make life difficult and take our craft with us – instead of opting to rent. I'd do so again – for all those reasons.

We first thought of emulating a number of kiwi couples, who have journeyed far with take-apart doubles. Alas, the airlines are pricing that out of reach – as Conrad warned us. So we looked at folders instead – something of a rare breed in New Zealand since we've all got cars. Undoubtedly Feathercraft is the Benz of the folding world (even if it is made in Vancouver). They are a no-compromise boat, lovely and strong, with a price tag to match. I looked for used singles for more than a year, with no luck here or in Australia.

Finally, we spotted a double on TradeMe and took it for a test paddle. Ten years old, pampered by a Swedish cruising couple, their K2 had actually been to Alaska already – so how could we say no. We brought it home, gave it a little TLC and took it out in 30 knots against the tide under the Harbour Bridge – and came away laughing. It was going to look after us.

How to lift it? The K2 was going to be a heavy beast when full, there was no getting away from it. We put out feelers to people who might be able to join us in Alaska (blatant ulterior motive!), but they all had other plans or commitments. In the end it was good to tackle it with just the two of us.

We had a hell of a lot of ‘stuff’ to fit in – everything that flew out of NZ with us came along for the paddle, since we weren’t planning to circle back and pick it up. Food needed to live in three big bear-proof canisters.

There weren’t going to be any stores along the way, so we carried 16 days of food with us. We needed to treat and carry water (sounds silly in a rainforest, but the preferred offshore islands are dry) and the streams all have Cryptosporidium from the elk. Then there were tarps for the rain - one for the tent and a small one for the cooking area. The list was long.

We had lots of fun with drybags – pushing them into the frame of the K2 on the lounge floor – until it looked like we might just fit it all in. We were aiming for a clean deck and we just squeaked it.

All up, the spreadsheet said we’d be pushing off from shore with about 140 kg of boat and gear. That’s not something I can run up the beach any more – even with Natasha’s help. So, we needed to think how to lighten ship fast when landing. Lightening ship quickly needed some thought, if you don’t want it to happen a bit too automatically in a messed-up surf landing.

So I borrowed an idea from the very nicely implemented wooden ‘pannier’ compartments that I’d seen in on Bevan’s big expedition double. He

made these to use the volume between the paddler’s legs and the side of the kayak – quite a considerable volume in a big double.

I made up 6 yellow rip-stop nylon panniers that sleeve over the kayak frame (the gunwales) and each fit a 15 litre drybag, retained by a drawstring with a slider. With any luck, there should be a photo of them somewhere nearby. They hold the stuff (even the heavy water bladders) securely in the right places, they weight almost nothing (total 270 grams) and they work fast. Natasha and I could hit the beach and have 4 x 15 litres of drybags and two water bladders out of the kayak jolly smartly.

With our unloading skills honed by practice and a sturdy set of NZ wheels, we never had a problem getting the kayak up above high watermark and safely tied to a (hopefully) immovable object for the night. We were pretty good about tying the kayak to something; even at lunch we’d find a decent anchor stone. After all, it’s a long walk if you get that wrong.

Well, I’ll stop this ramble here for now. Your fearless editor may twist my arm again, as there were a few other issues – pilotage, foodstuffs, comms, spares & repairs and power for gadgets – not to mention Alaska’s curious tides and the novel ways they extend one’s ideas of the possible. Thirteen knot ebbs in the North Inian Islands... whee-ha !

Paul Hayward

5am 59° north - Paul with all the kayak and gear bags at Juneau, waiting for the ferry to depart. Photo: Natasha Romoff



OVERSEAS REPORTS

Kayaking Canada - A (Very) Brief Encounter By John Gumbley

In June, I spent three weeks in the United States on business (investigating invasive fish eradication) but left some time to do just three days of kayaking on both Vancouver Island (near Victoria) and on North Vancouver.

My first night in the States was spent in the coastal city of Bellingham, about one hour’s drive from Vancouver airport. I thought I had arrived in Mecca with so many cars parked in town that evening with canoes and kayaks strapped on car roofs, but it was the day of the annual 30th May Ski-to-Sea event that attracts heaps of paddlers. Bellingham is described by Outdoor Magazine as the ‘City of Paddlers’. Scanning the craft, I noted almost all were fibreglass (and thinking of Dave Winkworth’s comment in the KASK newsletter post the 2009 forum in which he takes manufacturers to task on deck stretch cords and inadequate deck-lines) I could not help think how woeful the US craft were in that respect. Some flash kevlar sea kayaks had no deck-lines!

Unfortunately I did not have time to kayak in the States, where I was travelling in Washington and Oregon, but I was amused by the tale a mate told me. He went hunting for deer one Saturday in the mountains with his crossbow - scored a deer but noted out the corner of his eye a cougar stalking him. After a rather hasty laundry change, he exited stage right and went into town and straight to the local farm merchandise store. Fifteen minutes later he walked out with: ‘... a coffee, newspaper, 100 rounds, a firearms permit and a handgun’. For the rest of the weekend, every bottle and can that remotely looked like a cougar was severely missed or otherwise dealt to. On Monday he advertised

the gun on-line and swapped it for a second hand kayak a few days later.

Back to Canada, Vancouver Island, Victoria and the South Island Sea Kayaking Association:
(www.siska.ca).

I borrowed a kayak from a club member and went on one of their club trips. But, first I had to sign a four page document and have this witnessed and signed by a club member and then the trip leader asked me if that was indeed my monicker ... before joining them. Stripping out the *notwithstanding*s and *aforesaid*s it fundamentally said, 'Pleeease don't sue us'.

So, after a detailed safety briefing and assurances that we are all Level II (able to do a self/group rescue) 25 of us ventured out in flat seas along the coastline. Air temperature 25° C and water temperature about 10 degrees. Most had dry suits, the rest wetsuits. We went out to some islands a few km offshore and had a leisurely paddle back to the coast and along to base -15km. Lots of talking (usual story those at the front eager for exercise and yakkers at the (way) back.

Interesting wildlife -Canada geese, various LBJs (ornithological term: *little black / brown jobs*), seals. The kelp interesting with tennis ball sized bladders of the end of 10-20m+ long stems and good to ram. Very pleasant day if you are not in a hurry, along with a latte debrief. Mostly fiberglass kayaks with a few kevlar craft. Greenland paddles owned by a few, including some split.

With the Siska contact, I went out again along the coastline for another 15 or so km and saw bald eagle, sea otters, herons, Pamela Anderson, Pamela Anderson (tiring after a while), heaps of Canada Geese etc. A peri-urban coastline that was easy on the eyes.

There are lots of books and tourist brochures promoting kayaking. I hired a kayak for a day (Can \$70 + local & national taxes of 15%) and on my own, had a good workout on

North Vancouver, getting away from houses. You did not have to go to far to be surrounded by forest and quiet paddling. The hire company supplied split wing and tourer carbon paddles after I mentioned I was thinking of buying. I have found it cheaper to buy full carbon Epic paddles in NZ than in Canada or Australia. Kayak gear in Canada a bit cheaper but don't forget to add on local taxes. Vancouver city itself has a few hire kayak places.

Puget Sound and Vancouver Island look fabulous places to kayak. I await nice friend(s) to win Lotto and do the decent thing, after all I would.

John Gumbley

A Visit to South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands November 2009 by Jillian Wilson

SOUTH GEORGIA

Suddenly there it was, with jagged mountains appearing ghostly through swirling dark clouds. Mysterious, bleak, aloof and inhospitable. I was surprised by my reaction to my first sight of South Georgia. Beautiful? Yes, but with a wild barrenness that somehow caught my breath. I could hardly believe I was there; even the cold seemed unimportant. But, if I'd been in a lifeboat looking for a landing place I think

my first glimpse would have been mixed with huge apprehension about the chances of finding a safe landing spot. I wondered how Shackleton and his four companions felt when they first caught sight of Annenkov Island, and then King Haakon Bay.

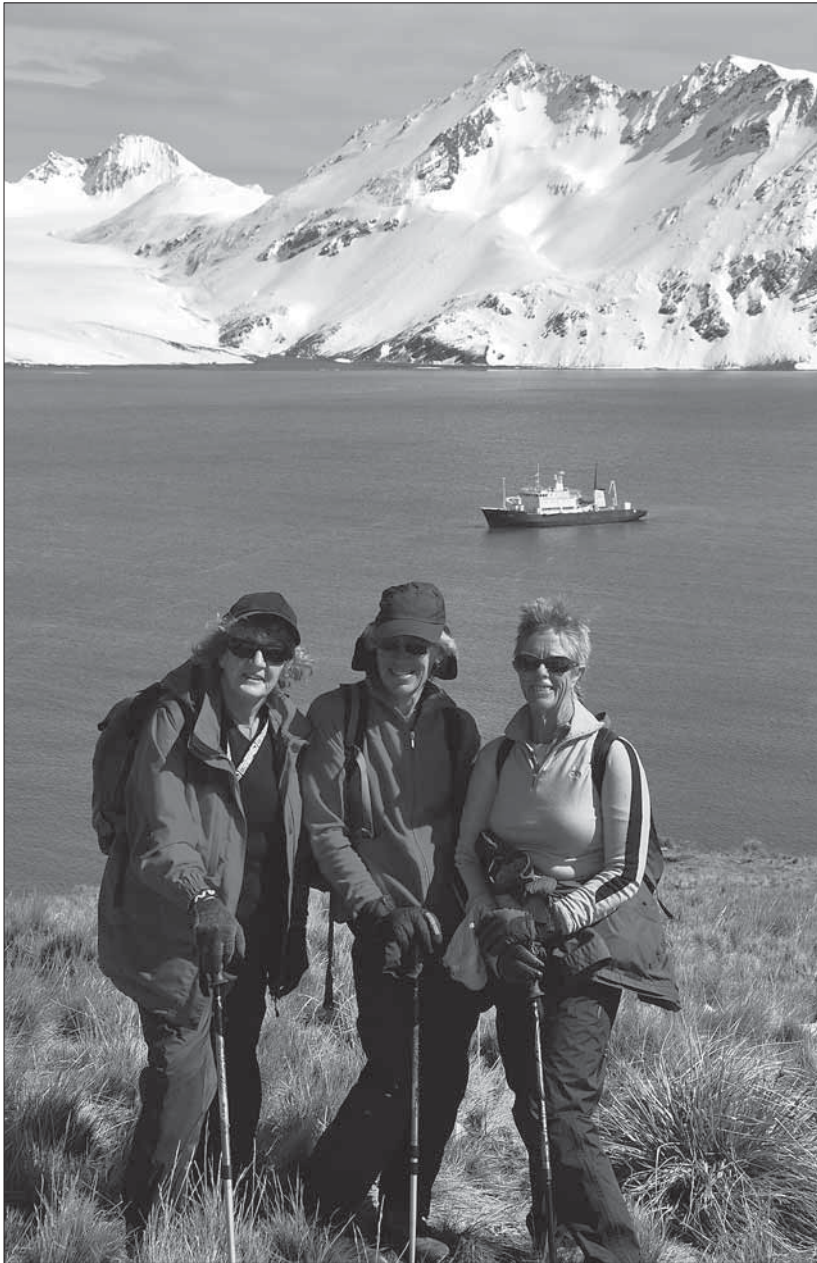
We arrived at South Georgia from the Falklands early in the morning. We'd left the dangerous Shag Rocks some 900kms behind the previous day. The crossing was lumpy, but highlighted by ever-present petrels and albatrosses, swooping and diving all around the Polar Pioneer, our home for three weeks.

Why my fascination with South Georgia? Is it Shackleton's story of bravery and endurance, or the amazing achievement of NZ's Adventure Philosophy team, or my own love of mountaineering. Capt James Cook certainly summed up my feelings with his "... a land doomed to perpetual frigidness, whose savage aspects I have not words to describe". For me, there was an allure, a drawing, which I just had to satisfy if I possibly could. I would happily have forgone the rest of the trip down to the Antarctic Peninsula if I could have stayed on in South Georgia; maybe "just because it's there".

There were three of us from the Canterbury Sea Kayaking Network on board, Marie Cooke, Miriam Preston, and myself, all down on the ship's log as kayakers. We made the

A derelict longboat at Grytviken, with the spire of the Norwegian church in the background. Photo: Jillian Wilson





On South Georgia, from left: Miriam Preston, Marie Cooke & Jillian Wilson

most of the many paddling opportunities that there were, getting close to the wildlife (almost too close at times!) and thrilled to be amongst the soaring mountains, glaciers, bays, rocky outcrops and unpredictable seas. Our first paddle was at Herkules Bay, on the Northeast coast, where we were given a taste of some of the sights we'd see during our five days round the island; macaroni and king penguins, and elephant seals. Those macaroni penguins are so engaging with their curly yellow 'eyebrows'. And the size of the male elephant seals beggars belief; more about that one later.

Our first landfall was at Grytviken

(Pot Cove) a former whaling station, a burial place for 67 explorers (Shackleton amongst them) and whalers. It is now home to an excellent Museum, plus the Fisheries Scientific Station run by the British Antarctic Survey at King Edward Point – plus many seals, penguins and the carnivorous pintail duck. It's hard for us to comprehend that whaling was once a respectable profession. When Leith Whaling Station closed in 1965 there had been 175,250 whales killed in the waters around South Georgia since 1904; we saw very few whales on our whole trip. There has been a massive cleanup at the Grytviken Whaling Station, initiated by the Falkland Islands and

South Georgia Government. The cleanup was costed at £10 million and aimed in particular at the asbestos health hazard, plus oil debris.

Marie and I managed to be first to the Grytviken cemetery, feeling privileged and moved to have a few quiet moments at Sir Ernest Shackleton's grave. We also walked around to the other side of the bay, to Hope Point, where some of Shackleton's men built a cross in his honour, after his death on board the *Quest* in Grytviken, in 1922.

We had a good look around the rusting whaling station ruins, the church and the museum, plus had an enjoyable visit with Ainslie Wilson from Golden Bay, who runs the Grytviken Museum. I noticed I'd previously bought a photo of the little Norwegian church, which turned out to have been taken by Ainslie Wilson. She obviously has more talents than just being able to live in a remote environment, and run the museum.

The next day saw us back up at the Bay of Isles, visiting Prion Island where we paddled around the shoreline, and then visited fledgling wandering albatrosses. Many of the 'baby' chicks were enormous and put on a great performance for us, flexing and stretching their wings in preparation for their first flight in just a few more weeks. We also saw a pretty wee South Georgia pipit, the only type of songbird on the is-

Shackleton's grave at Grytviken





Carnivorous Pintail Ducks on the late winter snows of South Georgia

land. A stropky fur seal was standing guard at the start of the track up to see the albatrosses, but we managed to sneak past.

There may be only one songbird, but there are hundreds and thousands of king penguins, which we saw standing moulting on the Salisbury Plains. If they weren't moulting they were feeding their impatient squawking babies, who look like mobile brown feathery balls. The adults clumped together moulting, the fat round brown fluffy babies congregated in brown kindergartens, and they all set up a huge din of squawking, honking, screaming and desperate wing flapping. We had to keep dragging our eyes away from them too, because not to was to risk being spread-eagled over a seal, or mass of seals. We didn't want to risk the ire or the teeth of the seals, particularly the elephantine elephant seals. They had their own chorus of bellowing too. Salisbury Plains was incredibly beautiful, and the wildlife was startling, but it was anything but peaceful. I haven't mentioned the skuas either. They were pretty busy following their carnivorous habits cleaning up the beaches. And screeching.

Following Salisbury Plains we had the marvellous fortune of a beautiful day to walk in Shackleton's footsteps over the Shackleton Gap from Fortuna Bay to Stromness. The snow made it heavy going in spots, but Marie and I benefited from the fitness

built up trekking in Peru, and didn't find it too hard – Marie was usually right at the front! The top was 1500 feet, with magnificent views, including seeing the Polar Pioneer steaming around to Stromness to pick us up. I'm quite sure we had far better conditions than Shackleton, Worsley and Crean. We were fortunate that our crew had changed the departure time of our climb, to make the most of the morning's fine weather. Had we left later we'd have been caught by the thick snowstorm that swept in just as the last walkers were climbing back up the gangplank.

Any lack of real challenge that there'd been with the paddling dis-

appeared with the visits to Ocean Harbour and Gold Harbour. Marie went out in a red double kayak with Australian Ian, and they decided to land and walk around the Ocean Harbour whaling relics a little way inland. I was a few metres along the beach, and was alarmed to see an elephant seal lumbering up out of the sea immediately behind them as they walked away. It reared back and roared in fury at the sight of this bright red interloper on the beach, immediately in front of him. I thought he was going to crash down right on top of the kayak; it would surely have been smashed.

Instead he just flicked it aside, and with the kayak rocking crazily, he lurched on past. The photo will show you just how massive he was in comparison to the double kayak – and you thought a double kayak was large?

The events of our next adventure happened at the entrance to the lagoon at the base of the Bertrab Glacier in Gold Harbour. Al Bakker, our kayaking leader, gave us very precise instructions for getting over the break from the ocean into the lagoon, which we all managed to follow successfully, if not very gracefully. What a relief! We missed an encounter with an icefall off the glacier by about 10 minutes; lucky us, it could have been tricky.

On Elephant Island, a Gentoo penguin gathers stones for her nest.



However, coming back over that bar two hours later, with the tide having dropped and the swell and waves outside having increased markedly, was a different story. Those waves over the break were 2.5m – 3m, and breaking. Some heart-stopping moments later the 2 boats with us three Kiwis and one South African girl were out beyond the breakers, joining the 2 boats that had gone through ahead of us, all of us having to cope with the heaving muddled swell out there.

The last double with two South African girls wasn't so lucky. Their kayak capsized at the top of a wave and they had a very rough 20 minutes or so in the water. They were separated and washed ashore, before being rescued by Al, and Sergei (the very handsome) Russian zodiac driver. The rest of us had a challenging paddle back to the ship, struggled out of our kayaks (the kayak being held fast by 2 more Russian seamen), and floundered headfirst into a zodiac.

We scrambled up a rope ladder hanging down the side of a lurching and pitching ship – followed by many hugs and quick nervous grins once safely up on the back deck. We were later told by Al that kayakers weren't supposed to re-board the ship like we did in those sort of conditions. We agreed. But we did it!

We had a quick look into southern Drygalski Fjord, but could hardly see anything because of South Georgia's typical low cloud; but we'd been extraordinarily lucky to have had as much good weather as we did. Elephant Island was our last visit before the Antarctic Peninsula, and was another reminder of the epic journey of Shackleton and his 28 men on the *Endurance*. Unfortunately, because of more bad weather, we weren't able to land at Cape Wilde, where the *Endurance* team lived for 4 months camping underneath their boats.

We thought we weren't going to get more than a glimpse of Elephant Island either, but as we steamed down towards Cape Lookout the weather



Kayaks leaving Polar Pioneer for the eventful Gold Harbour paddle.

cleared, and we had a wonderful sunny and peaceful visit with the gentoo and chinstrap penguins on the cape, with a breathtaking backdrop of jagged mountain peaks. It was so calm, we could easily have put the kayaks in and paddled. A much larger island than I expected, it took us several hours to steam from one end of Elephant Island to the other.

Would I go back? Most certainly. I would love to. And I'd really like to spend more time on land, camping, if it was allowed. It would feel less like a casual fleeting visit. Somehow the formidable, mysterious and intriguing landscape of South Georgia doesn't fit with a casual and fleeting visit.

Jillian Wilson

Websites:

- <http://www.auroraexpeditions.com.au/site/home.aspx>
- http://www.sgisland.gs/index.php/Main_Page
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Georgia_and_the_South_Sandwich_Islands

Further Reading:

- South: the Endurance Expedition* by Sir Ernest Shackleton
- Endurance, Shackleton's Incredible Voyage* by Alfred Lansing
- Antarctic Oasis, Under the Spell of South Georgia* by Pauline Carr and Tim Carr

Photos:

All photos by Jillian Wilson

The rescue of the South African girls



BOOK REVIEW

Title: *Without a Paddle*

Subtitle: *Racing Twelve Hundred Miles Around Florida by Sea Kayak*

Author: Warren Richey

Published: 2010

Publisher: St. Martin's Press, N.Y.

Contents: 338 pp; one map, no photos

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Review: Tamsin Venn

Every few years, ACK (Atlantic Coastal Kayaker) runs an article on the top sea kayak races on the Atlantic Coast. The one that catches our attention without fail is WaterTribe's Ultimate Florida Challenge. The race is a corker; you must get 1,200 miles around Florida in a crushing 30-day deadline using only a human powered boat. Who would be crazy enough to do such a race?

Warren Richey, it turns out. A newspaper reporter from Plantation, Fla., with an eye for detail and interesting facts, Richey delivers a riveting log of his 19 days, 6 hours, and 48 minutes spent in his Current Designs Solstice GT sea kayak, 56 pounds empty, one meter downwind sail, racing around Florida.

As with any long race, and especially one facing so many challenges, the goal is to finish, not to win actually. But remarkably, Richey does win, well under deadline. It's not easy.

'The Florida Challenge is meant to be so tough you can't even call it a race. It is more a dare. Or a threat,' writes Richey. 'The challenge is to cover twelve hundred miles in thirty days or less. To travel that distance in a month means paddling around the clock with little chance to stop for a good night's sleep or to wait out bad weather. You just have to keep on truckin' no matter what.'

Steve Isaac, Chief, is the race organizer. His time in Vietnam left a gnawing need for action and challenge

– the thrill of being self reliant in difficult situations. As a result, he developed a series of adventure races in small boats – the Ultimate Florida Challenge being the biggest one and billed as the 'toughest expedition-style small boat race in the world.'

The race is both exciting and tedious, and by the same token, an account of this race could be quite tedious, but under Richey's able words, the account is riveting. The narrative runs parallel to challenges in his personal life, a recent devastating divorce, raising his young son, and a new relationship of which he is as terrified as the imaginary pythons he thinks lie in wait for him in the Everglades, ready to sink their three rows of teeth into him. All this he relates with good humor, humility, and hope.

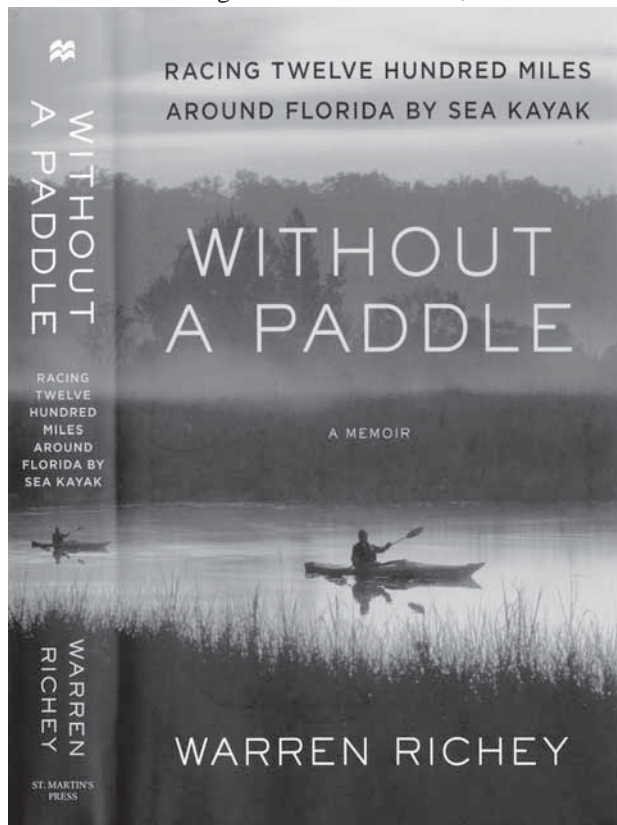
Richey's account covers the first year the Florida Challenge took place. Out of the 10 contestants, he is the only one paddling a hard shell sea kayak. Most of the entries are Verlen Krueger expedition canoes with Balogh sail rigs; there's one Feathercraft K1 and one shallow draft sailboat. The ability to sail is key, especially cutting across wide shallow bays from point to point. Each competitor has a race name - Richey's is Sharkchow in recognition

of his 'less than exalted status in the oceanic food chain.'

'Potential challengers are warned that along the way they may encounter headwinds, riptides, alligators, sharks, even Burmese pythons. They'll confront clouds of ravenous mosquitoes at night, scorching sun during the day, and the dismal prospect of facing all of it alone in a boat about the size of a coffin. It's enough to make you paddle even harder, if you haven't already passed out from sleep deprivation or been knocked unconscious by a leaping mullet.'

Along the way, Richey and his teammates encounter all of these (except maybe the mullet) and more: alligators that race with him, manatees exploding from sleep, threatening wind tunnels from Miami condominiums, getting sucked out the Intracoastal waterway by current, not to mention debilitating headwinds, fatigue, and pain.

Richey's descriptions are so compelling that you follow him right around Florida from the start in Tampa, south down the west coast to the Everglades, around to Key Largo, up the east coast, past Miami, Palm Beach, Sebastian Inlet, Daytona Beach, St. Augustine, Jacksonville, Amelia Island. On the St.



Mary's River, the intrepid trade in their paddles for wheels as they portage 40 miles along a two-lane highway with zero shoulder and whizzing cars, to reach the Suwannee River. You follow him down the Suwannee River, to the author's goal of the Suwannee Gables Motel.

Then it's back into the Gulf of Mexico at Cedar Key, and so past Anclote Key, St. Petersburg – where the author's mind is so fuzzy from sleep deprivation and fatigue, he's not sure he's reached St. Petersburg, Russia – and back to the start/finish line at Fort De Soto Park on Mullet Key. (He mistakenly lands at the wrong finish line!) Whew.

Richey divides the book nicely into different stages – 200 to 380 to the final 120 miles of the race. Along the way, we get interesting snapshots of Florida history and are treated to deadly headlines of alligator and python attacks as well as interesting facts about natural history.

Also Richey is no newcomer to the challenge. He had already made the Everglades Challenge an annual event, three years in a row. 'By the time Chief announced the inaugural running of the Florida Challenge, I knew how to get from Tampa to Key Largo, and I knew I could cover the distance in about four days. However, there is a big difference between racing 300 hundred miles and racing twelve hundred.'

'...a major obstacle in the Florida Challenge is trying to deal with the cumulating effects of physical exhaustion and sleep deprivation, combined with the gnawing desire to keep going as fast possible. At some point, something has to give. It is usually the mind that goes first. Confusion reigns supreme.' Wrong turns and getting lost are the consequence, losing precious time.

He covers the awkwardness of being both competitors and companions in the race, and actually races along with the Manitou Cruiser for several days. One of the best accounts is when they both spend the night on the mudflats in Florida Bay because they think the other is stuck and don't want

to abandon the other person. They discover their mistake in the morning.

Richey provides amusing accounts of how he keeps himself going; '... anyone who has traveled the Intracoastal Waterway in Florida from one end to the other most remembers the bridges. The trip from Miami to Georgia involves passing under eighty-two bridges, but it feels more like a voyage of a thousand bridges... The hour-to-hour strategy along the entire east coast can be summed up in four words. Get to that bridge. That's it.'

And, 'Paddling the Indian River was so boring it made me yearn for a chance to take the SATs. I started counting individual drops of water on my forward deck. After that, I enjoyed watching them evaporate.'

'Among my secret nutritional weapons are Snickers bars. Hikers on the Appalachian Trail swear by the regenerative power of the bars... It helped get places faster, this idea that once I'd arrived I could break out another Snickers bar.' We get caught up in his race to be the first across the finish line.

'Aside from winning, the biggest surprise for me was that all three of us – each in completely different boats with different strengths and strategies – finished so close to each other.' Manitou Cruiser (the same person on the Florida Bay mudflats) came in 50 minutes later; Wizard, five hours after him.

Memories accompany the miles: war reporting in Iraq, the bitter dissolution of his marriage, buying his first sea kayak – the divorce boat, the fear of asking Linda out on a date, hiking with his son in Montana griz country, playing chess with his grandfather, all of it well told and memorable.

I won't tell you how the end turns out. For that you'll have to read the book. And you'll enjoy every 1,200 miles of it.

This review first appeared in the September 2010 edition of *Atlantic Coastal Kayaker*.

BOOKS

'SOLO A Man. A Kayak. An Ocean.'

Vicki McAuley's new book 'Solo' is now on sale in New Zealand bookshops and the red sheds. I haven't had a chance to read Vicki's account of Andrew's life as an adventurer and his solo attempt as paddling across the Tasman Sea, but I have put a lean on Sandy Robson and Dave Winkworth for a review in the next newsletter. Sandy Robson emailed to say: 'It's a gripping book (for a sea kayaker anyway) and I think it really tells the tale of how Vicki felt through the whole experience as the support person and dealing with the grief afterwards. I found myself in tears a few times throughout reading the book. A good book for us to read before we head off on another adventure and leave loved ones at home.'

The book is a softcover, with a central colour plate section, and at 372pp, seems pretty good value for \$39.99.

THE DREAMTIME VOYAGE

After many years out of print, I have published a 25th Anniversary edition of the round Aussie book. Both soft-cover and casebound editions; the latter books being individually signed and numbered. The Aussie launch will be at the Victorian Sea Kayak Club annual gathering in mid-November. For more information, drop me an email to: kayakpc@xtra.co.nz

I also have a list of some 30 paddling titles in a new and second hand book *cattledog*. Email for details.

OWNERSHIP of FORESHORE...

Recently a book launch was held in Wellington for *The Gathering Storm Over the Foreshore and Seabed* written by Dr Hugh Barr, well known over the years particularly in tramp-ing circles as an advocate for conservation and public access.

For purchase details of 'The Gathering Storm over the Foreshore and Seabed - why they must remain in Crown ownership,' by Dr Hugh Barr email: trosspublishing@hotmail.co.nz

HUMOUR

Dog Training

I pulled into the crowded car park at the local supermarket and rolled down the car windows to make sure my Lab Retriever pup had fresh air. She was stretched out on the back seat and I wanted to impress upon her that she must remain there. I walked to the kerb backwards, pointing my finger at the car and saying emphatically, "Now you stay. Do you hear me? Stay! Stay!"

The driver of a nearby car, a pretty blond young lady, gave me a strange look and said, "Why don't you just put the handbrake on?"

Lazy Bloke

Before I sign off I'll just tell you a sad story about a friend of mine. His wife left him without any warning whatsoever. He had asked her to nip out to pick up a pint of milk from the local shop and she didn't return. I called him up on the phone a few days later to see how he was coping. He said he's been using that powdered stuff!

Curly Quiz Game

Well, I lost the Trivia Contest at our club meeting last night by 1 point. Not only did I get the last question wrong, but I was immediately asked to leave the quiz night.

The question was: "Where do women have the curliest hair?"

Apparently the correct answer is Fiji.

Terrible Habits

Three nuns were talking. The first nun said, "I was cleaning in Father's room the other day and do you know what I found? A bunch of pornographic magazines."

"What did you do?" the other nuns asked. "Well, of course I threw them in the trash."

The second nun said, "Well, I can top that. I was in Father's room putting away his laundry and I found a bunch of condoms!"

"Oh my!" gasped the other nuns.

"What did you do?" they asked.

"I poked holes in all of them!" she replied.

The third nun fainted.

Last Request

Mary Clancy goes up to Father O'Grady after his Sunday morning service, and she's in tears. He says, "So what's bothering you, Mary my dear?"

She says, "Oh, Father, I've got terrible news. My husband passed away last night."

The priest says, "Mary, that's terrible. Tell me, Mary, did he have any last requests?"

She says, "That he did, Father."

The priest says, "What did he ask, Mary?" She says, "He said, Please Mary, put down that damn gun!"

Drunken Confession

A drunk staggers into a Catholic Church, enters a confessional booth, sits down, but says nothing. The Priest coughs a few times to get his attention, but the drunk continues to sit there. Finally, the Priest pounds three times on the wall. The drunk mumbles, "Ain't no use knockin' - there's no paper on this side either."

The Power of Punctuation

An English professor wrote the words: 'A woman without her man is nothing' on the board and asked his students to punctuate it correctly. All the males in the class wrote: 'A woman, without her man, is nothing.'

All the females in the class wrote: 'A woman: without her, man is nothing.'

School Friends

Rachel, Clare and Samantha had not seen each other since secondary school. They rediscovered each other via a reunion website, and arranged to meet for lunch in a wine bar. Rachel arrived first, wearing camel Versace. She ordered a bottle of chilled Chablis. Clare arrived shortly afterwards, in grey Chanel. After the required ritualized kisses she joined Rachel in a glass of Chablis. Then Sam walked in, wearing a faded old Swandri, jeans and Ashley gumboots. She too shared the wine. Rachel explained that after leaving school and graduating from Otago in Classics, she met and married Timothy, with whom she has a beautiful daughter. Timothy is a partner in one of Auckland's leading law firms. They live in a 4,000 sq. ft house at

Milford, where Susanna, and their daughter attends The Auckland University drama school. They have a second holiday home in the Bay of Islands.

Clare graduated from Victoria University and became a Consultant Gynaecologist. Her husband, Chris, is a leading A&E Consultant. They live in Wellington and have a second summer holiday home in the Marlborough Sounds.

Sam explained that she left school at 17 and ran off with her boyfriend, Ben. They run a tropical bird park in the Waitakeres and grow their own vegetables. Ben can stand four parrots, side by side, on his willy.

Halfway down the 3rd bottle of Chablis, and several hours later, Rachel blurted out the her husband isn't Timothy. He's Tom and a clerk for Auckland City Council. They live in a terraced house in Ponsonby, keep a caravan at Orewa and Susan is a junior member of the local Amdram Society.

Clare, chastened and encouraged by her old friend's honesty, confessed that she and Chris are nurses at Hutt Hospital. They live in Petone and have a timeshare on the Gold Coast. Samantha confessed that the fourth parrot had to stand on one leg.

Youngster's Wire Truck

A firefighter was working on the engine outside the Station, when he noticed a little girl nearby in a little red wagon with little ladders hung off the sides and a garden hose tightly coiled in the middle.

The girl was wearing a firefighter's helmet. The wagon was being pulled by her dog and her cat.

The firefighter walked over to take a closer look. "That sure is a nice fire truck," the firefighter said with admiration.

"Thanks," the girl replied.

The firefighter looked a little closer. The girl had tied the wagon to her dog's collar and to the cat's testicles. "Little partner," the firefighter said, "I don't want to tell you how to run your rig, but if you were to tie that rope around the cat's collar, I think you could go faster." The little girl replied thoughtfully, "You're probably right, but then I wouldn't have a siren."

KASK

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

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

The Sea Canoeist Newsletter is published bimonthly as the official newsletter of the Kiwi Association of Sea Kayakers (N.Z.) Inc.

Articles, trips reports, book reviews, equipment reviews, new techniques, letter to the editor, and moments when the word 'Bugger!' was said singularly or often {referred to by some as incidents} are sought to enliven the pages of the newsletter.

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

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KASK Annual Subscription

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(\$105 for 3 years; \$175 for 5 years)
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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
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Make cheques out to KASK (NZ) Inc. and mail to KASK Administrator:
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New members: \$35 + \$15 = \$50

The 4th. 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
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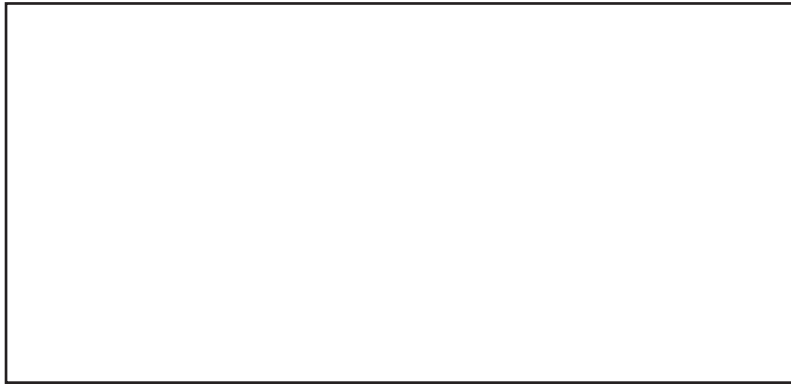
**KASK Website:
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*Top: Moulting King penguins cooling the webbed feet on Salisbury Plain.
Bottom: King penguins keeping a wary lookout - at Salisbury Plain - on the northern coast of
South Georgia. Both photos: Jillian Wilson*



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King Penguins at Salisbury Plain; South Georgia. Photo: Jillian Wilson

KASK MEMBERSHIP POLICY

Current membership fees are:

- \$35 for ordinary membership
- for new members \$35 or \$50 to include a copy of the KASK Handbook
- \$40 for family or joint membership (\$55 to include a Handbook copy)
- \$35 for overseas membership (PDF newsletter only);
\$50 for new o/s members plus cost of overseas postage for a copy of the KASK 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.

