

THE SEA CANOEIST NEWSLETTER

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(NZ) Inc - KASK



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**Thanks to all the contributors
and photographers, and to Sandy
Ferguson for proof reading.**

**Deadline for articles and
photos for next Newsletter
25 July 2011**

**Please email to the editor:
kayakpc@xtra.co.nz**

EDITORIAL

Where to with KASK?

A four-person steering committee has been established to look at where KASK is now re membership, expectations, promotion, publicity, projects etc, to look at what outcomes we should be looking for at the end of two years. Kevin Dunsford is leading this wee project – if you can help with thoughts and ideas of how to boost membership and show value for money with the annual membership, please email Kevin: kevin@cslnz.co.nz

KASK Administrator

Linda Ingram is retiring from this role as of 17 July. This is a part time, paid role – the role of KASK treasurer and secretary was amalgamated back in 2005. A replacement is sought in someone with experience in Word, Excel and Access software, and a bit of time in the evenings to follow up with new memberships and after 31 July, deal with a busy six weeks of membership renewals and banking. Basic accounting skills in terms of the annual financial reports are required. If anyone would be willing to pick up this role, preferably on a 5+ year plus term, please email Paul at (kayakpc@xtra.co.nz). I will miss liaising with Linda on a regular basis; she is heading to Canada for her annual holiday, then to Aussie for a grand tiki-tour with her partner.

NZ Kayak Magazine 60th Issue

New Zealand Kayak Magazine has celebrated its 60th issue since its first print run in 1997, with an excellent article by Ruth Henderson on the history of paddling in New Zealand since the late 1890s and the development of canoeing and kayaking clubs and organizations.

KIWI PADDLERS

Colin Quilter has a very readable report on his river/sea summer paddle

down the Wanganui River, thence down the west coast of the North Island to complete his trip at Petone in Wellington Harbour. John Gumbley has highlighted three West Coast (of the North Island) harbours, with an excellent guide of where and how to escape the madding crowds. Dennis Hynes has provided stunning photos of these harbours, particularly of the karst scenery in Kawhia Harbour, which I had no idea existed.

Doug Aitken writes of his visit to Fiordland, a trip with co-paddler Ben Warrick, when they experienced the full gamut of weather and sea conditions that only this magic part of New Zealand can throw at paddlers. The photos by Ben Warrick, in my view especially the two colour pics on p.23, show the magic remoteness of Fiordland and even when the weather is not the nicest, how the paddling can be so challenging yet so satisfying.

Tim Taylor

(www.nzkayaker.com/journal)
Tim, as of day 190 (4 June) of his paddle around New Zealand, is still waiting for surf to ease along 90 Mile Beach, not to mention waiting out today's gale warning forecast of 40 knot north-easterlies. He has 40 miles of open surf beach to The Bluff, then 27 miles to Cape Maria van Diemen where he can turn east for Cape Reinga, where two to three weeks of reasonable weather should see him finishing back at Wairamirino, where he started back in November 2010. Tim's timetable to finish by March was in my view was a tad ambitious particularly since it took me 86 days back in 1979 just to paddle around the North Island - and I had a support party on shore. However it is now less than three weeks to mid-winter with colder sea temperatures and shorter hours of daylight in comparison to summer paddling. I have no end of admiration for Tim's drive

PHOTOGRAPH CREDITS

Cover: A scenic gem hidden away from all but paddlers in Kawhia Harbour. Photo: Dennis Hynes (see destinations article on West Coast North Island harbours by John Gumbley on p. 9)

Top Left: Tim Taylor (middle) paddling past Oakura, just south of New Plymouth, on 30 April, with Mt Egmont in the background. Photo: Brian Jordan

Bottom Left: Kawhia Harbour; a flock of Royal Spoonbills on flat bedded limestone. Photo: Dennis Hynes

and determination but hope sincerely he is still gaining a semblance of enjoyment and pleasure from his trip.

OVERSEAS PADDLERS

Sandy Robson

Sandy has a new website (www.sandy-robson.com), which is covering her paddling trip of retracing the Oskar Speck foldboat voyage from Germany to Australia. Starting in 1932, Oscar took seven years and three kayaks to make his trip, only to be interned in Australia. Sandy's first stage is from Germany to Cyprus and she has allowed six months to complete this.

Stuart Trueman Around

Aussie Update

(nadgeekayaks.com.au/news-events/australia-by-kayak.html)

Nhulunbuy (Gove), north-west side of the Gulf of Carpentaria. 1 June:

The winds have been a bit fresh and have been kicking up the seas into short sharp waves, which make life a little uncomfortable on the water. It's also a bit of a lottery when you land as to how far you have to carry your stuff in the morning in search of the sea as the beaches of mud can stretch for quite a way.

The sharks have been giving the back of the kayak a bit of a going over. It does not matter how many times it happens it's still a heart stopper when I get a hit. I even pulled a shark's tooth out of the rudder when I landed in Nhulunbuy. Having a few day's rest before heading to Darwin at the weekend.

Gulf of Carpentaria - May

As far as I am aware this is the second time the coast of the Gulf has been paddled from the north-east to the north-west tips. I had a blast from the past when I met professional fisherman Steve Russell and his two sons. Steve remembers feeding two sea kayakers fish and chips on his dad's fishing boat when he was in his early teens. That was almost 30 years ago when Paul Caffyn paddled through.

(see SAFETY NOTE re Stuart's 2nd PLB failure, also on the website link above)

Paul Caffyn

KASK

President's Report May 2011

by John Hesseling

Firstly I would like to thank the organisers and participants of the Anakiwa Forum. As noted in the last *Sea Canoeist* those who attended considered it the most successful forum yet. I would also like to welcome Kevin and Debbie Dunsford to the committee and to thank Evan Pugh for his input over the last few years (see committee contacts column). I would like to encourage all paddlers to contact any of the committee with suggestions or any queries. We are presently waiting for the results of a funding application for regional training and for updating the website.

On May 12, 2011, Kevin Dunsford attended National Pleasure Boat Forum held in Auckland. Due to the current interest in KASK membership and recruitment, Kevin noted in particular a presentation by a research group looking into boating behaviour and use of PFDs. The word 'safety' was one of a few that obtained a negative reaction from interviewees (see report on p.5)

SAFETY NOTE

Stuart Trueman's GME Accusat

406/121.5 PLB Fails - Again

Stuart's previous PLB was reported to be waterlogged. He assumes its replacement has the same problem. An email from Stuart re a second PLB failure led to quite a vigorous debate between Stu and David Winkworth re the merits of sea kayakers carrying PLBs versus EPIRBs. Stuart argued that a PLB sold as 'waterproof' should remain so, like the deck camera he uses.

Dave wrote: From a design point of view, PLBs are way down on the specs for a true EPIRB. EPIRBs are designed (and licensed) to float upright and transmit untouched for 48 hours with a high standard of waterproofing. PLBs on the other hand only have to be able to transmit for 24 hours and satisfy the IPX7 rating which is basically: dustproof and waterproof to 1 metre for 30 minutes!

Webmaster's Report by Sandy Ferguson

There have been numerous additions to the KASK web pages over the last month. The main ones are additional Trip Stories and Cooking in the DIY section. This has a large part of Natasha Romoff's KASK forum hand-out included but obviously needs more. Recipes, hints, what you take on a trip, which is the best, port or wine etc. Send contributions to the webmaster. They don't have to be formatted or neat or even spell checked. If you know my postal address you can even send something on the back of an old envelope. What other website makes it that easy?

As for trip stories, I often put them up twice, one with and one without pictures so for those who don't mind how much they download or don't have a speed problem, they can look at or download the larger version. I'd suggest using "Save Link As" and it will download the PDF and you can read it later or reread it when ever you want to as it can save it to your computer rather than reading it on your web browser.

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SAFETY

Report from the 23rd National Pleasure Boat Safety Forum by Kevin Dunsford

The National Pleasure Boat Safety Forum, known as NPBSF, was initiated in 2000 by Jim Lott of Maritime New Zealand and draws together Maritime NZ, ACC, Water Safety NZ and representatives of all the major pleasure boating activities in N.Z. KASK is the forum member representing kayaking organisations. The purpose of NPBSF is to monitor safety trends and develop strategies for addressing key risk factors, including safety initiatives and recommendations for National regulations. This 23rd forum was special because it was Jim's last before his retirement when he will set sail for South America. KASK wishes Jim bon voyage and all the best for his retirement.

Fatalities

There were 11 fatalities from 11 recreational boating incidents in the 10 months from Jan to Oct 2010; five in vessels less than 6m; seven may have been avoided if victims wore lifejackets or were clipped on; seven may have been avoided if waterproof comms had been carried and two involved alcohol. Three were victims of two kayaking incidents, both on fresh water. Eighty percent of all recreational boating activity is in fresh water and thirty percent of drownings are in lakes.

Survey

Over the summer, 1500 boats leaving ramps were surveyed, particularly powered boats although kayaks were included. Surprisingly, 9.8% of kayakers did not carry sufficient PFDs for the people on the craft, compared to 5.4% for inflatable boats. Seventy seven percent of kayak skippers carried at least two pieces of communications equipment, but 20% carried no communication at all. Unfortunately there was no breakdown of kayak types, an issue that will be addressed in future surveys.

Kayaking fatalities

From KASK's fatal incident reports over the last 29 years, maintained by Paul Caffyn and presented to the NPBSF, the average paddler fatality is a male solo paddler between the age of 20 and 39 years with an average age of 35. Apart from a rare collision, usually on a lake, drowning (sometimes associated with hypothermia) is the most common cause of death. In most cases this occurs after being separated from their kayak or paddle craft. In 50% of incidents over the 29 years, the paddler was not wearing a PFD. In 89% of deaths, the paddler was not carrying emergency communication.

The correspondence between the results of the survey and kayak fatalities is obvious. Kayakers need to carry, and preferably wear a PFD and also have one or more waterproof pieces of emergency communications equipment attached to themselves in case they are separated from their kayak.

Research into wearing of PFDs

Last season Maritime New Zealand publicised the need to wear PFDs and lifejackets. Many people remembered the ads with 'Pine Tree' Colin Meads addressing the macho barrier that men are not wimps for wearing lifejackets; however the ad had no call to action. Likewise, many men saw the ad with the family setting off on a fishing trip as promoting a message that kids should wear lifejackets but adult males did not need them.

Maritime New Zealand commissioned Synovate Research to look into the psychology of getting the message across about wearing PFDs. The results were presented by Grant Story at the NPBSF and were extremely informative. Based on in-



depth interviews with 40 boaties, including kayakers, this is a summary of what they found:

The words and phrases boating people feel strongly about are:

fishing, pleasure, relaxation, fun, company, family time and friends – in that order.

Neutral phrases were:

Water and fishing gear.

However words that invoke negative responses are:

costs, bad weather, safety checks, cleaning up, kids (the need to look after them) and lifejackets.

Positive aspects that influence boaties, in order of importance

Conviviality – how boating makes men feel relaxed, a release from their daily routine and obligations. They feel happy and re-energised and connected to friends and family members,

Belonging – Camaraderie of boating, surrounded by mates, fishing as a shared experience, togetherness, brotherhood, taking care of others, traditions and feeling good, all indicating peer acceptance and friendship.

Security – Men talk of boating as a therapy "When I head away from the shore I can feel my worries falling off me". Security is withdrawing into a mental space, free of worry and responsibility. Focusing on protection and security fits well for this need but forcing people to comply works against this need.

Vitality – Some men talked about the adventure, about the feeling of being alive and energetic, the ultimate freedom to explore and take on nature. An ultimate goal



Colin Meads

for some is to sail the world. Vitality is about stepping outside the comfort zone, taking a risk. This was particularly strong from some kayakers – the solo experience, vitality and freedom, taking on a challenge. I am sure some male KASK kayakers would be familiar with this sentiment.

What else is like boating?

Responses include:

ski trips, holidays, sports events, golf, road trips, hunting – but nothing else truly compares. This illustrates the power of the experience of boating and kayaking.

Positive phrases about lifejackets and PFDs:

children (when they wear life-jackets we can forget about them) and one-for-all. Neutral phrases: safety, optional to wear. Negative phrases: hot, cost, necessary evil, emergency situation, too bulky to fish in, uncomfortable.

Men talked about control:

lifejackets as necessary evils, part of required equipment but detract from the joyous experience of boating. To wear a lifejacket is almost an admission you are at risk but most men feel in control of the situation.

Men who wear lifejackets have accepted they are at risk or want to set a good example.

Security:

Men talk about lifejackets from a practical perspective – they know they can save lives, lifejackets make some men feel more secure – but lifejackets are more accepted when men feel they are protecting their wives and kids. The security need is about withdrawing into a mental space free of worry and responsibility. Passengers said they take their lead from the skipper. However some passengers said they don't feel comfortable if the skipper is wearing a lifejacket - it suggests he is not in control.

Key motivators to wearing lifejackets were:

I was brought up wearing it; If the skipper gives one to me I wear it; no argument, it's just not worth it (kayakers); the kids say, if I'm not wearing one, why should they?; I found one of those inflatable ones; He told me he wouldn't sail without lifejackets and I had to wear them.

In summary, the pull for wearing PFDs is between the heart and emotional state - you want to be free -

verses the logical and reasoning state - it is a necessary evil. You can expect more graphic ads on TV as Maritime NZ has allocated \$700,000 to develop and implement a PFD wearing campaign for next season. After PFDs, some budget has been allocated for designing the next major campaign on carrying emergency communications equipment.

Licensing of small craft

Periodically this thorny issue emerges. This time the Transport Accident Investigation Commission recommended boat licensing to the Ministry of Transport after a collision between a jet boat and a jet ski on the Kawarau River. The Minister referred the matter to the NPBSF for a recommendation but the forum decided to wait for the Coroner's report so it may consider the matter at the next forum. Maritime NZ has investigated licensing overseas but has found no instances where licensing improves safety outcomes so is inclined to promote education over licensing.

I'll report on more from the forum in the next KASK Newsletter.

Kevin Dunsford

CONSERVATION

CONSERVATION BRIEFS from John Gumbley

Some post-KASK Forum Queen Charlotte Sounds trip observations:

Mushrooms - Consumers Beware

Tim Taylor's diary at Cannibal Cove, Queen Charlotte Sound - April 2011:

Friday was pretty similar but unfortunately I woke at around 5am feeling crook and promptly had a massive spew out the door of my tent. This soon followed by a big round of diarrhoea, which left me feeling less than ideal. The previous night I had eaten a bunch of wild mushrooms, that I still maintain were just ordinary field mushrooms, but everyone seems to think otherwise. As it lasted for only the

morning I reckon that it was most probably caused by lack of general hygiene that is pretty common when you are camping. But I got over it so who cares? A massive thanks to all the KASK and BASK kayakers who looked after me and spent time sharing their own experiences.

When we saw the mushrooms that Tim had collected from the forest, we were all very wary – they sort of looked (peeled and smelt) like field mushrooms, but the gills underneath were pale grey and let's face it, we were not in a 'field'.

There are over 7,500 species of fungi in New Zealand, found on land and in both fresh and saltwater. Some are threatened species and many have

still to be taxonomically described. The term mushrooms refers to the reproductive part of some types of fungi. Toadstool is the vague name for something like a mushroom but usually poisonous or inedible. The best way of having a mushroom identified is to collect a sample for an expert to identify but, unlike some countries, NZ has no comprehensive list of edible/inedible fungi and their ill-effects are often not known.

Few have died in New Zealand from eating mushrooms/toadstools but there have been some recent cases where serious illness has been presented *pers. comm.* Dr P Buchanan and Dr D Hood.

The golden rule when considering the edibility of any fungi is:
IF IN DOUBT DO NOT EAT IT.

Puffballs are a familiar type of New Zealand fungi. Their Maori name is pukurau and in earlier times, Maori cooked and ate them when fresh and applied the spores to burns. The town of Waipukurau, in Hawkes Bay, takes its name from the fungus. To eat them when they are not fresh (and going grey) will make you very ill as a friend of mine can attest!

Useful references:

www.teara.govt.nz/en/fungi
and www.landcareresearch.co.nz

New Zealand Fur Seal How are They Faring?

It is always a treat, to paddle the coastline and come across seals especially pups. Queen Charlotte is no exception for seeing seals. Mainland New Zealand has four species of seal of which the NZ fur seal is the most common.

Recent research indicates that while nearly exterminated through sealing, they have been re-colonizing areas of their former range throughout New Zealand and Australia. Estimates

suggest 100,000 individuals may exist, which puts the current population just under 10% of the pre-exploitation (c 1800) estimate of 1.5 - 2 million. In general they are re-colonizing south to north. As such, there are areas in the south where they are relatively stable.

There are also situations where populations are showing evidence of decline to varying degrees. Banks Peninsula and Kaikoura coast are in a phase of exponential growth. Around the North Island more breeding populations are turning up and numbers are slowly increasing but seem to be in the early phases of recolonisation.

Refer www.DoC.govt.nz website for useful references. Louise Chilvers of DoC is acknowledged.

Fur seals and penguins could both be seen in Queen Charlotte Sound. They do appear to co-exist although occasionally fur seals have been observed regurgitating or defecating penguin remains. While there is occasional consumption of blue penguins by fur seals, this has not been noticed in significant amounts and is nothing of concern where colonies of both co-exist.

A New Zealand fur seal ready for a nap after a morning fishing in Milford Sound. Photo: Belinda Mulvany

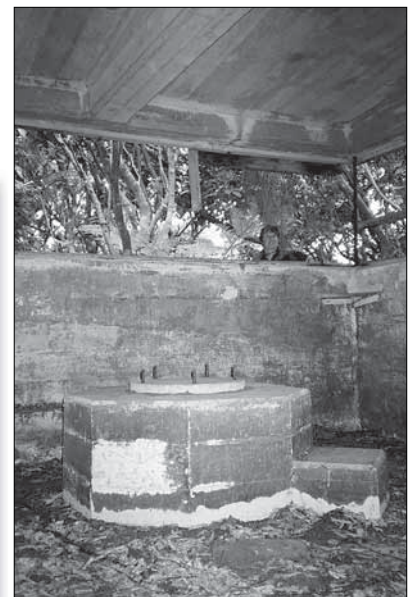


Marlborough Sounds World War II Gun Emplacements

We visited the two large gun placements on Blumine Island.

During World War II a number of large-gun emplacements were built in the Marlborough Sounds, to provide protection for a (never used) secure anchorage for the US Navy in Queen Charlotte Sound. The Blumine emplacements were constructed in 1942, proof-fired in 1943 and later that year dismantled. The full battery was dismantled in 1945. The gun emplacements there, also at Maud Island, Post Office Point and Maraetai/Whékenui (Tory Channel), had a firing range covering the whole of the Marlborough Sounds.

Other islands in the Sounds had observation posts with Long Island having submarine cables spanning the width of Queen Charlotte Sound. Today, concrete emplacements, magazines and barrack sites can be seen. Photographs of the northern half of Blumine Island taken in the 1940s show the land to be almost denuded of native forest (see photo below). DoC has a useful brochure



Above: 65 years after the forest cover of Blumine Island was cleared for the establishment of roads, gun emplacements and barracks, this view from inside an observation post on the island shows how the regeneration of forest cover now blocks the view of Queen Charlotte Sound. Photo: Susan Cade

***For a two page DoC brochure on the Blumine gun battery, see:**
www.doc.govt.nz/upload/documents/science-and-technical/blumine.pdf

that includes reference for further reading*. The *Price of Vigilance* by Kerry Neal and Nola Leov (1999) is also helpful.

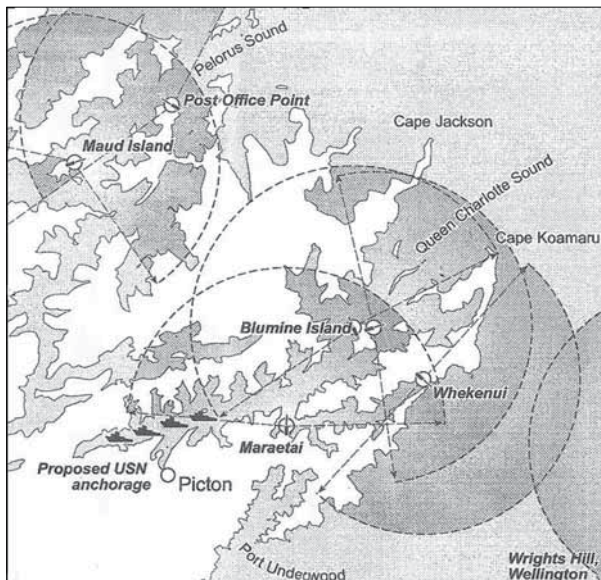
When we paddled past Long Island, we spotted a pipe extending out from the eastern shoreline. Checking the pipe out, we discovered it led to the concrete (submarine detection) generator bunker. There we met up with the DoC Kiwi Recovery team who were using the shelter. The kiwi crew were monitoring Little Spotted Kiwi. Little Spotted Kiwi were trans-located to Long Island in 1982 - two kiwi from D'Urville Island and two from Kapiti Island were moved to this mammalian-pest free island. Now 52 kiwi can be found although the D'Urville stock might not have survived.

Location of Public Conservation Land and Paper Roads

The Walking Access Act came into being in 2008. The Walking Access Commission set up by the Act had as its first task, the setting out of a system that shows DoC-administered land, esplanade reserves, marginal strips, reserves and formed and unformed 'paper' roads in NZ.

Map below shows sites of Marlborough Sound gun emplacements, and their ranges, put in place to protect a proposed anchorage for the US naval fleet.

Map: Chris Edkins



The system enables you to view information on either a standard topographical map or an aerial map. See www.wams.org.nz. The Access Commission has also produced a brochure titled *Guidelines for the Management of Unformed Public Roads*. The brochure informs you about your rights and obligations when using unformed roads – to obtain a copy email: contact@walkingaccess.govt.nz or www.walkingaccess.govt.nz.

Be aware that there are accuracy issues. In a map check I made, while generally accurate, there were sections up to 20 metres out when compared to surveyed land data. Note: not all Crown land has been verified by ground survey.

Conservation Management Strategy - Having your say

Many DoC conservancies are commencing a public consultation process for their 10-year Conservation Management Strategies (CMS). I suggest you check out: www.DoC.govt.nz/cms - see CMS consultation by region.

Conservancies preparing a CMS include Northland, Auckland, Waikato, East Coast/Bay of Plenty, Tongariro/Whanganui/Taranaki, Wellington/Hawkes Bay, Canterbury,

Southland and Chatham Islands. The website for each conservancy will advise you on how you (or your organization) can get involved, and provide updates on progress of the CMS and timeframes for their completion.

Conservancies will invite you to state what you think about the management of (key) *places*, what activities you do at these places, what do you want these *places* to look like in 10 years time and finally, what would you do to make this happen. You might wish to comment on other places not listed in the proposed CMS and/or on other conservation-related issues.

Are there particular *places* and issues you wish the KASK Committee to make submissions on?

John Gumbley
 KASK Conservation Contact
gumbleyj@wave.co.nz



Above: The clearance of native vegetation on the northern end of Blumine Island for early sheep farming, shows the access road for building of gun emplacements, magazines, observation posts and barracks. Photo: taken in 1944 by NZ Aerial Mapping.

Below: From inside gun emplacement number one (on the foreground ridge in the above photo) showing the result of 65 years of the island revegetating. Photo: Susan Cade



DESTINATIONS

WAIKATO - WEST COAST - NORTH ISLAND HARBOURS

by John Gumbley

The harbours of Kawhia, Aotea and Raglan (Whaingaroa) and Port Waikato each offer some very pleasant day or weekend kayaking – when the tides are right. Here are some trip options, what to see and where to stay.

Kawhia, Aotea and Raglan harbours are drowned (from the last glacial period, circa 12,500 years before present) river valleys and as such their distal arms are ideal to explore so long as you have gauged the tides right. The upper reaches of arms drain very very quickly when the plug is pulled but they are usually the best places to try and paddle to. Best because they tend to be in native vegetation and have a feeling of remoteness about them.

Kayaking anywhere in the harbours, including the lower reaches of the Waikato River at Port Waikato, is best with an up to date map or GPS, preferably a recent aerial map showing the location of sandbars. Of course checking the tidal cycle is critical to taking advantage of the 1-2 hours of full tide at the upper reaches. Best to put in towards the harbour mouth, up to three hours before the full tide and ride the tide in & then back again.

Port Waikato

While there are several launch spots between Tuakau and Port Waikato, I suggest launching at the Port Waikato boat launch near the general store. From here it is a 4 km paddle to near the bar before you can then return on the incoming tide and clockwise paddling up the (northern) true right bank to the start of a myriad of islands 10 or so kilometres upstream. Paddling amongst the maze of islands (known locally as *the windies*) is a fascinating venture amongst numerous whitebaiters shanties – no rates, rent, building permits, power and other trappings for the few people who live here permanently. Lunch can be had on the verandah of

any vacant whitebaiters stand. The whitebait season (July-August) sees the populace grow but fishers love the lifestyle with some coming back for 50+ years.

Amongst the willows and other riverine vegetation it is quite easy to get somewhat lost in an area which changes with storm events and high river flows. Paddling upstream to the end of the main complex of islands and back to the store is about 35 km. Be aware of the tides and those westerly winds that can get strong in the more exposed last 10 kilometres on the way home, causing standing waves. Williwaws are a feature in rough weather – I leave Evan Pugh to explain about how his hat went missing. If anyone spots a pink hand-embroidered hat, just contact Evan.

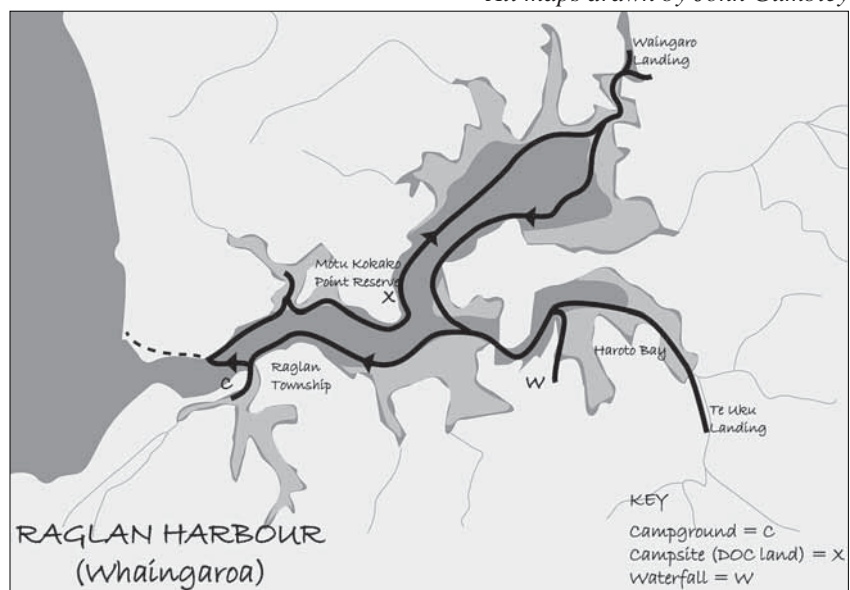
Three years ago a group of us kayaked from Cambridge to Port Waikato (144 km) in a day -19 hours. It was a real treat night kayaking on a full moon and out-going tide in the lower reaches of the Waikato. Cruising past the whitebaiters shanties, figuring out which channel to head down, listening to wildlife and seeing fish constantly jump out of the water – I had an eel draped around my sprayskirt at one stage.

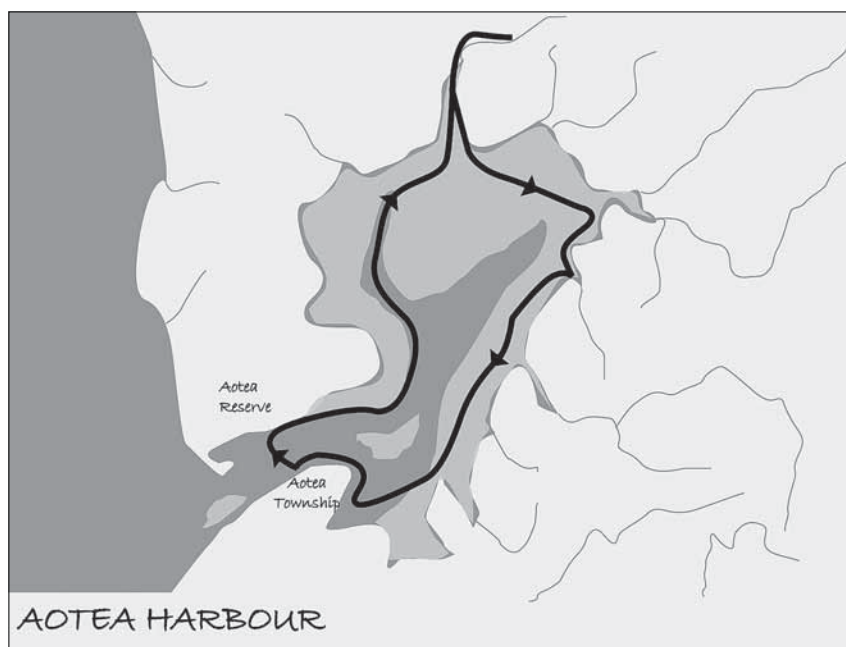
Raglan (Whaingaroa) 'the long pursuit'

Raglan is 48 km west of Hamilton and the township has several places to stay including two campgrounds. For kayakers I suggest the Te Kopua Campground which enjoys both easy walking access to the town (across the foot bridge) and launching spots. Kayaks can be hired in Raglan at the main wharf. Raglan is a nice town to visit and the Raglan Hotel can offer great entertainment - Midge Marsden *et al* plus the usual cafes.

Launching near the foot bridge, cross the harbour to the northern shore, perhaps leaving kayaks (well above the tide line!) and walking out to the wild west coast to see firsthand the notorious Raglan bar. Fallen limestone blocks are good to paddle around on the northern shoreline but to venture to the Waingaro Landing inlet, it pays to pick the main channel. On all of these harbours DoC administers only small patches of public conservation land but the Motukokako Reserve is a good lunch spot. There is space for a small tent or two but there is no freshwater. The Waingaro Arm is great in spring when the kowhai are flowering and tuis are going ape. You may even see a seal and you will almost certainly

All maps drawn by John Gumbley





set the shallow water boiling after cruising over stingray.

The Te Uku Landing is also worth checking out with limestone formations and patches of bush along the way. Staying in the main channels, the waterfall (that tumbles over Karioi lava) at Haroto Bay is worth a visit; 25 -30 kilometre day trip usually but there are good half day trips as well. Sometimes orca can be seen in the harbour.

Conditions have to be good to venture to the open ocean but it is a spectacular coast between Raglan and Ruapuke.

Aotea Harbour

The great sea-voyaging waka

Aotea is a small settlement about 20 minutes drive from Kawhia. The settlement does not have a store or accommodation.

Again a tricky place with the tides; I suggest launching at either the northern edge of town or the boat launching area immediately east of the township although here there is limited parking.

Crossing the harbour, watch out for standing waves and eddies and soft sloppy sandbars. Landing on the DoC administered Aotea Scientific reserve is not permitted. As tempting as it might be to land and climb the dunes, the whole area is waahi

tapu to the six marae around the harbour. It is also a sensitive site ecologically with the biggest (but seriously threatened) population of West Coast NZ dotterel found here.

It is essential to stay in the main channels and the best cue to knowing where the sandbanks are, is to note where the flocks of swans are loafing. Skirting sandbars, paddle up the northern-most arm under the road bridge for about 100 m to reach a secluded fresh water swimming hole. The estuary has a range of wetland vegetation types, with whitebait stands along the way. The eastern side of the harbour has pockets of

limestone outcropping with a few small white sandy beaches. Take care on returning back around to the town because the current can be strong and not a good place to be if amongst the mussel farm paraphernalia.

Kawhia Harbour

A place that has seen a multitude of dramas and change in its human history.

Kawhia is the spiritual home of Tainui and the waka rests here. One of the few coastal resorts that offer laid back nostalgic good-old-days atmosphere. The rat race definitely stops on the other side of the hill.

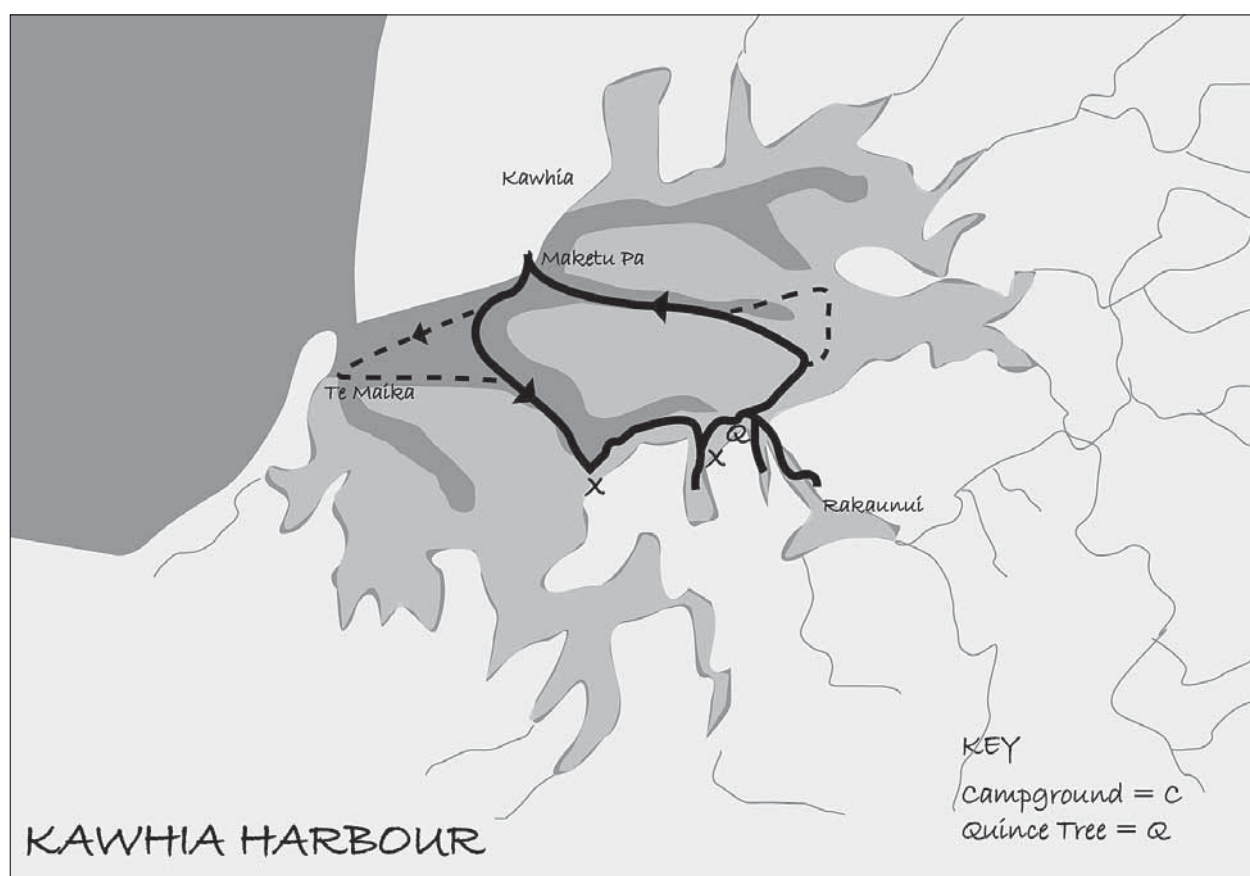
The campground is within easy walking distance to launch a kayak – at the boat launch near Maketu marae. The campground offers reasonably cheap camping and bunkroom accommodation but it pays to book over January. Kawhia is a busy place during the Kawhia Kai Festival (in early February) and of course the whale-boat races over the New Year. Both great events with the latter involving several days of racing for which last year was the 100th anniversary. Three of the boats were built in the 1880s and are still racing.

From the main boat launch, paddle to Te Maika and go ashore near the jetty, paddle out to the mouth of the harbour (if conditions allow) and re-

A lunch stop in the magic karst (limestone) landscape of Kawhia Harbour.

Photo: Dennis Hynes





turn. Or, skirting the shallows around Te Motu Island, head to the fascinating limestone outcrops which extend for several kilometers on the southern shoreline. It is great paddling in and around the formations in very clear water.

A couple of small campsites are marked but the land is possibly privately owned, and choose your site carefully otherwise it is a long wait until the tide turns. The biggest codlin moth-free quince tree is to be found here. All the inlets have channels that allow paddling but Te Waitere and Rakanui inlets are the biggest and most interesting. Rakanui has some nice forested sections. The islands near the entrance of Rakanui Inlet offer good lunch spots. Follow the main channel when returning.

An evening meal in the restaurant in the town is a great way to relax – the freshest of flounder is served, apple and rhubarb pie not too shabby. Sit outside and avoid the widescreen rugby and enjoy kids playing in the street in the dark. Neil Diamond-free

music too as I recall.

The Tonaparutu and the Mokau rivers to the south also offer good paddling. All the harbours are popular for fishing. See you there.

PS: A fascinating read is *The Tides*

What better way than by kayak to explore the channels between the outcrops of laminar bedded limestone in Kawhia Harbour.

Photo: Dennis Hynes



of Kawhia (and its sequel *The Pathways of Taranaki*) by historian Tom O'Connor (Reed 2004). The novel introduces the reader to the enigmatic figure of Te Rauparaha. Set in late 18th century, Kawhia is the prosperous heart of the Ngati Toarangatira. But, beyond the border ominous changes threaten to drive the iwi from their coastal stronghold. Compelling reading that transports you to the tribal living of the time and fascinating references to Kawhia and Waikato place names.

John Gumbley

Paddling Biography

John Gumbley

I live beside the Waikato River near Ngaruawahia, occasionally commuting by kayak the 25 km from my workplace in Hamilton to home.

Messed about in small kayaks for years but having decided I no longer needed to spend money on children's violins etc., I finally bought my first sea kayak only about 6 years ago. Soon after I was given Evan Pugh's name and then joined the Bay Asso-

ciation of Sea Kayakers.

BASK (and Evan) have been great for providing both company and the opportunity to see those parts of New Zealand that can only be really appreciated by kayakers; Great Barrier, D'Urville Island, Coromandel and Hauraki Gulf and quite a few lakes and rivers - Taupo, Waikaremoana; few South Island lakes too. I have really only scratched the surface and am keen to improve my skill level from that of a novice. Multi-day trips are a treat.

I have worked as a geologist and over the past decade or so as an ecologist with Department of Conservation Waikato Conservancy. Having drilled or conducted geophysical surveys on many Waikato lakes in the past, I can only now say now that I know more of what's in the lakes than under them.

My main work focus is on wetland restoration (lakes, rivers, swamps and peat bogs) but I have had the absolute privilege of working in the Antarctic, Sub-Antarctic islands and a number of New Zealand's offshore islands. This country is amazing but I must get on the water more often. Many thanks BASK/KASK.



John Gumbley.

Photo: John Hesseling

New Zealand Trip Reports

Fiordland - Dusky Sound to Doubtful Sound

by Doug Aitken

photos by Ben Warrick

& Doug Aitken

(see also colour plates on p.23 & 24)

Ben and I, both from Christchurch, had this trip planned for a while. We went in April due to available holidays from work and other commitments. After some concerns about the approaching winter weather, the locals in Te Anau said it was a good time of the year – often being calmer in autumn than in summer.

We wanted to see the formidable coast of Fiordland and the Southern Ocean, as well as explore Dusky Sound – one of the most remote and beautiful areas of New Zealand.

Day 1: 18 April

We had 340 kg and the weight limit was 280 kg (including bodies and boats). We got this sorted with Southern Lakes Helicopters being very accommodating and agreeing to fly us in the bigger Squirrel helicopter with all our gear.

After a great flight in - views of the spectacular Fiordland mountains with a fresh coating of snow - we landed on the small helipad at high tide at Supper Cove. We hadn't packed the boats before this so were relieved to see everything fitted inside the hatches – and we were off on mirror calm water into the heart of Dusky Sound. After paddling round the South Side of Cooper Island, past Acheron Passage and the north side of Long Island, we got to Duck Cove not long before dark.

Day 2: 19 April

Most paddling days we got up at 5 and were on the water at 7. As much to avoid sandflies as to make the most of the daylight hours. So on this day we got across to the 'Many Islands' and Luncheon Cove by mid-morning. It was overcast weather



Approaching the moored yacht in
Luncheon Cove.

with some shafts of sunlight and rainbows, and 10 -15 knots of variable wind. In historic Luncheon Cove, we found a yacht resting at a mooring. We were asked in by Jim and Regane for morning tea which was much appreciated. After an hour in the warmth of their cabin we set off round the west side of Anchor Island where we found a chunky swell rolling in from the SW, reflected waves coming off the rocks, and a chop from the 15-20 knot northerly wind.

The torrential rain was the last straw – after getting about 500 m up the west side of the island we turned and went back to Luncheon Cove. The rest of the day was spent on Jim and Regane's yacht – drinking tea and wine, and enjoying being out of the elements.

Torrential rain in Luncheon Cove



Day 3: 20 April

We had a good forecast for two days before another front was due from the north. Going round Anchor Island was still bouncy from the reflected waves, but once we got clear of the island and headed up the east side of the Five Fingers Peninsula it eased off and we just had a 2-3 metre swell rolling in behind us (see also the colour photo of Doug on page 24).

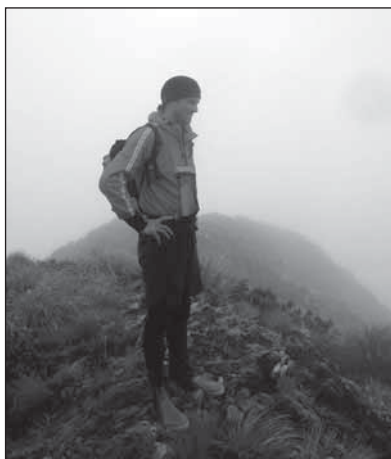
This area between the peninsula and Resolution Island is great. The Five Fingers themselves are some of the most dramatic scenery I've ever seen from a sea kayak. They are big – and getting pounded by huge swells. The swell was running right up to Parrot Island and gradually dissipated beyond. As the bay began to narrow, a pod of around 40 dolphins came to check us out. They were small – possibly Dusky dolphins.

The tide was high so we got right up to the portage between the peninsula and the island. A sunny but short lunch break (sandflies) was had at the isthmus, while listening to the chatter on the VHF of a fishing boat as they too had lunch in the shelter of Woodhen Cove. After a short portage it was off round the north side of Resolution Island. The first 3km were quite bouncy but it eased as we got some shelter from the south-west swell.

We got into Disappointment Cove on the NE corner of Resolution Island in the late afternoon. It is a beautiful little bay – with a sandy beach, and grass to camp on.

Day 4: 21 April

The forecast was for light winds before a northerly wind was to set in later in the day. It was calm conditions as we paddled across the mouth of Breaksea Sound and onto the west coast. Coming out of the shelter of



Misting out on a view from the top of Mt. Wales on Resolution Island; 974m above sea level. Note wetsuit booties and paddling clothes.

Breaksea Island you feel the ever present south-west swell. We made good progress up the coast for 15 km before a 15 (gusting 20) knot northerly started blowing. Our options were:

1. try pushing on for Dagg Sound 10 km to the north while the sea got rougher
2. do a big surf landing into Coal River and risk being stuck there for several days
3. paddle back with the wind to Disappointment Cove.

We chose option 3. Six hours of paddling and back at the aptly named cove where we had started from.

Day 5: 22 April

In and around the bivi hut all day. Wet and windy outside. We had plenty of food, a book each and a bottle of single malt so we managed.

Day 6: 23 April

Strong northerly winds were forecast for next few days – so we decided to climb a hill on Resolution Island - Mt. Wales. Ben was keen on this - he being Welsh. The DoC hunter's paths were marked but it was still rough, wet and steep going. We got up over Mt. Wales (974m) and had great views into the interior of this huge island. DoC are making a big effort to trap stoats, shoot deer and make this a predator-free island, and so have a network of marked paths. We stayed in a DoC bivi at 600 m and walked down in the pouring rain the next day.

Day 8: 25 April

The weather was calm – calmer than the forecast suggested – but we decided to let the seas settle down for a day. We went for a day trip into Breaksea Sound and had a chat with a crayfish boat crew – which was good considering we hadn't spoken to anyone for five days. Sitting around the boat were lots of big sea birds, they didn't even move when we paddled right up to them – after some research we reckon they were mollymawks – a type of Albatross. It was great to see these beautiful birds so close in such a wild place.

Day 9: 26 April

We headed north up the coast again. The forecast was SW winds 25-35 knots, very rough sea at times, and six metre swell easing. Not ideal. The actual conditions were much better. We had a 15 -20 knot following wind for a while, then it died off to a light breeze. The swell was 4-5 m but we were paddling 1-2 km offshore so were not affected by the reflected waves from the shore. The scenery was amazing - lots of sea stacks and cliffs with whitewater all around them. It was a cloudless day and the sea seemed to be more blue than the grey/black of our previous attempt. We paddled into Dagg Sound about 1 pm.

We decided to go inside here and not round the outside to Doubtful for several reasons. I had a really sore back after sitting in the boat for so long; also the conditions we had were so much better than the forecast that I felt as if we would be pushing our luck to stay on the outside coast for another four hours. With hindsight, we should have rested in Dagg for a few hours or until the next day – because the conditions stayed good, and the portage from Dagg into Crooked Arm was terrible. It took us most of the rest of the day to get all the stuff across the gap into Crooked Arm – but as a reward I got to see a kiwi in the bush – it didn't run away, I could have picked it up!

Day 10: 27 April

Paddling up Crooked Arm at 7 am on flat calm water was great. The sun coming up on the hills above us,

as we stayed in shade deep down in the fiord. We got to the junction of Crooked Arm and Doubtful Sound proper about 10 am – to find a 25-30 knot SE wind howling down the fiord. We waited for a few hours to see if it would ease, and it did a bit – so we set off into a 15-20 knot head wind, with 20 kms to paddle! After quite a few hours of paddling from small headland to headland - giving a little shelter - it did ease a bit more and we managed to paddle into Deep Cove at 4 pm after a pretty tough last day. The hot showers at Deep Cove Hostel were much appreciated!

Day 11: 28 April

Billy, the hostel manager, harbour master, and sole full-time resident of Deep Cove drove us and our boats over the Wilmut Pass to Lake Manapouri – where we strapped our boats to the bow of one of the big Real Journey boats and were back in Manapouri by lunchtime.

Reflections:

This is a very do-able trip. The outside coast section is the obvious crux, and you do feel isolated out there, but if you have enough time to wait for the right weather and sea conditions, it needn't be too extreme. You can paddle up to Doubtful in one day – or you could stop in Dagg Sound and do the next 15 km another day.

Lessons Learnt:

Going down here, you have to expect to have a few days off the water because of the wind – we should have taken more tramping gear. Climbing hills in Fiordland in kayaking gear is not ideal but a dry bag and roof rack straps make a passable backpack, and neoprene boots and socks work well for wet weather tramping. Dry bags with shoulder straps are available and would have been perfect.

Paddle with good technique all the time or you risk getting tendonitis.

Don't rely on it being easy paddling just because you are in the Fiords. Our hardest paddling day was deep inside Doubtful sound.

Best bit:

Paddling up the west coast as dawn



A cracker day for paddling into Dagg Sound

broke to reveal a cloudless sky, combined with following wind and swell, and very dramatic coastal scenery, and a real sense of exposure, it is the best sea kayaking I've ever done.

Worst bit:

Portaging boats anything over a few hundred metres - don't do it!

Essential kit:

We got a text message each evening on a satellite phone, giving us the marine weather forecast.

We paddled in dry suits – good for safety and keeping sandflies off.

Party:

Doug Aitken and Ben Warrick. Ben was in a Paddling Perfection Sea Bear *Waitoa*, while Doug paddled a Tahe Marine *Reval*

Doug Aitken, self-portrait.



Emergency Kit carried between Doug and Ben:

- VHF handheld each
- Satellite phone
- Locator Beacon
- flares
- dye marker.

We had a small AM radio which sometimes picked up Radio NZ national for a forecast. We had Ben's girlfriend Cherie text the sat-phone every night with the Puysegur marine forecast.

Doug's Paddling Biography

Doug is of Scottish origin and has been living in Christchurch for two and a half years while working as a teacher. He started sea kayaking on the River Forth near Edinburgh six years ago and then ventured out to the east and west coasts of Scotland. He has paddled round Banks Peninsula, been to Doubtful Sound on a previous trip, and several times to the Marlborough Sounds.

Doug's bucket list includes Cook Strait, D'Urville Island and a trip to Stewart Island. He also helps run the Wednesday evening paddle group around Christchurch which any paddlers are welcome to join (douglasaitken@hotmail.com). By the time you read this Doug will be a new father so he may not be seen in my sea kayak quite so much for a wee while!

New Zealand Trip Reports

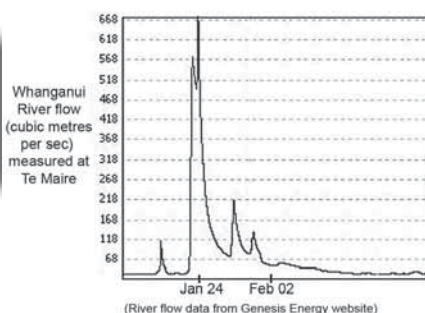
Taumaranui to Wellington Colin Quilter

It's often said that too much of anything is bad for us. Too much to eat, too much to drink, too much work, too much television - all detrimental to health. What to say then about a fellow - such as me - who has spent the holidays of the past 26 years paddling the same old canoe around the same old coastline? A lack of imagination, at least, downright unhealthy at worst. So this year I decided to try something a bit different. A trip along New Zealand's longest navigable river and then a paddle along what is arguably our longest beach (115 km from Wanganui City to Paekakariki near Wellington, a continuous stretch of sand interrupted only by the mouths of a few rivers).

I started in Taumaranui, feeling like a novice because I've had little experience of rivers. There is a pleasant campground (the Taumaranui Holiday Park) on the Whanganui riverbank about 6km upstream from town, and after I had stayed a night there the owner agreed to let me leave my car there for a nominal sum. One could not normally start paddling at the campground because the river is too shallow and rocky; the usual start point is at Cherry Grove in Taumaranui itself, or (if the river is low) at Ohinepane 21 km downstream of Taumaranui.

However a week before my arrival the Whanganui had experienced its biggest flood in six years. Data on the Genesis Energy website shows that at the peak of the flood on January 24 the river flow reached more than 20 times its usual volume and the river level rose about 10 metres higher than normal.

When I arrived on 2 February, the river was still carrying about twice its usual summer flow, so I was able

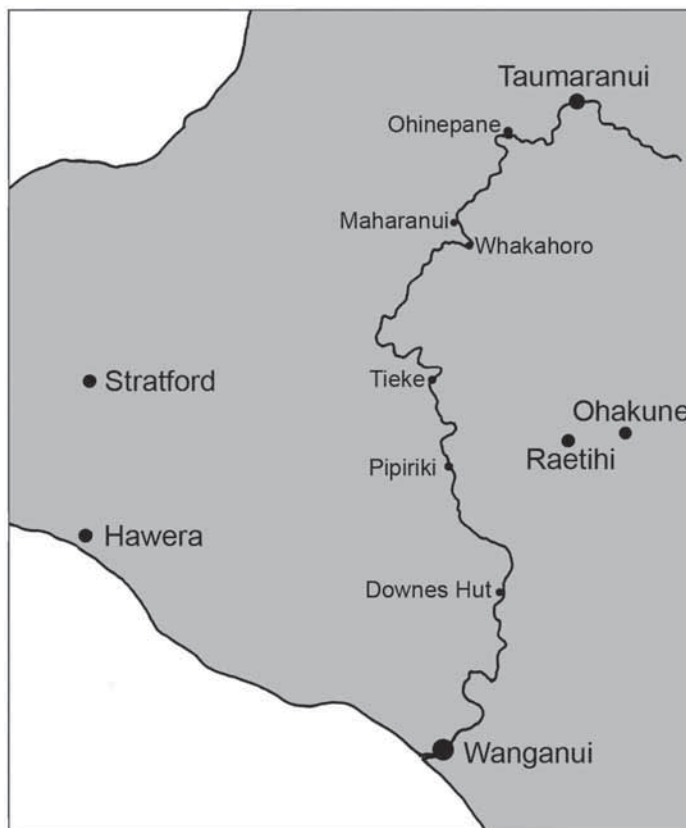


to launch my kayak at the Holiday Park itself. Even so the first few kilometres required care, especially as my old plywood *Seabear* is not well suited to bouncing down shallow rapids. In one place where the channel ran beneath willows, hard against the right bank, I got out of my boat and waded cautiously past them in shallow water. The *Guide to the Whanganui River* (now in its 18th edition, and available from DoC or the I-site in Taumaranui) warns that 'low-hanging willow branches.... are perhaps the greatest hazard in the river.' The risk is that you can get swept beneath them, knocked out of your boat, and then held under water by the river flow, pinned against branches or roots.

As I travelled downstream, several tributaries added their water to the main river and it quickly became

wider and deeper. I soon discovered that the deepest channel is always on the outside of each curve in the river, and I found that my *Seabear*, loaded with camping gear and food for a fortnight, cruised through the rapids with ease. The current was running, on average, at about 2 km/hr which added to my usual paddling speed of 5 km/hr so that even though I was in no hurry, and made many stops for photographs, the landmarks on the river began to slip past. By mid-afternoon, with little effort, I had reached Maharuanui Campsite (5 km upstream from Whakahoro and 58 km from my start point), and I stopped there for the night.

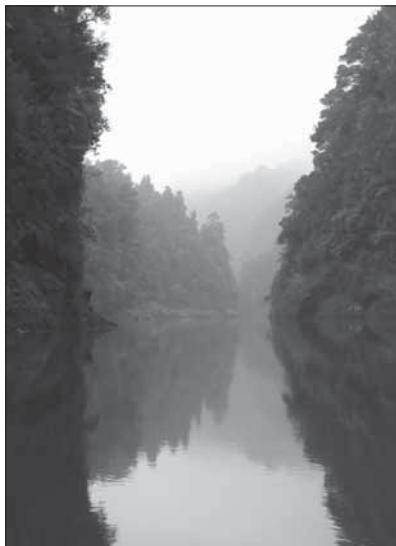
Like all the huts and campsites on the Whanganui, Maharuanui was high above the river. Anything lower down on the riverbank would be washed away in the floods. Canoeists are warned to drag their boats high up the riverbank in case the river level rises overnight. As a solo paddler I was at a disadvantage, having no-one to help me drag my kayak up to a safe height. The best I could do was to pull it a metre or two up the bank, face it upstream, and tie a long rope leading upstream from the bow to a tree high on the bank.



Next morning in mild, overcast weather I reached John Coull Hut at lunchtime and stopped there to have a chat with the hut warden Esther. I asked her why there were so few people on the river, (having seen just one other party) and was astonished when she told me that 37 people had spent last night at the hut. The explanation, of course, is that since everyone is moving along the river in the same direction it is quite possible to paddle for long periods without overtaking or being overtaken.

During the afternoon I reached the landing for the 'Bridge to Nowhere' track. I was tempted to leave my kayak afloat there while I did the walk, but the sight of a large branch floating downstream caused me a sudden loss of enthusiasm. I could easily imagine my boat entangled by the branches and swept away downstream, so I left the landing and paddled steadily on.

The Mangapurua campsite came into view, its approaches washed out by the flood; and then later in the afternoon I reached Tieke. A dozen Canadian canoes were hauled up on the beach and the sight of people milling about there persuaded me to cross to the run-down campsite at Ramanui on the opposite bank, where I had the grassy terraces to myself and a peaceful night.



'The Place of Cliffs' - in the Whanganui River gorge below Tieke



The middle third of the river is entirely surrounded by forest. The rapids, mostly small, are separated by slow-flowing sections as in this photo.

Below Tieke the river enters a splendid gorge, Te Wahi Pari ('the place of cliffs'). Here the brown water was deep and slow-moving, confined between rock walls with overhanging ferns on each side. In the early-morning mist it was a scene that might have remained unchanged for centuries. Since I had made an early start I had it to myself. After a while the river opened out again and I encountered the five big rapids (the largest on the river) which lead down to Pipiriki. As expected the old *Sea Bear* sailed through them like a battleship. I can't take any credit for this, I just pointed her vaguely in the right direction and let her do the work.

Pipiriki, where I stopped for morning tea, is the place where most parties leave the river - it's 145 km downstream from Taumaranui. I assumed that most trips end here because the next 100 km down to the sea would be comparatively dull and not worth the effort of paddling, and so my expectations for the remainder of the river journey were not high; but I was in for a pleasant surprise. I paddled steadily onwards and despite a period of heavy rain towards lunchtime, thoroughly enjoyed the trip. The river had enough rapids to make it interesting, and plenty of drama in the surrounding hills and forest as we wound our way southwards. I nearly missed seeing the settlement at Jerusalem because

only the spire of the church lifted above the riverside willows and almost nothing of Ranana and Matahiwi could be seen from river level.

Just as I was starting to feel like stopping a tiny red hut came into view high on the right bank, and I realised it was Downes Hut, a historic cottage renovated by DoC and available to canoeists and trampers. I landed downstream and carried my gear a couple of hundred metres up to the hut. It was charming and seemed to be seldom used, so I settled down happily for the night. The cottage was built by T E Downes, a River Foreman employed by the Whanganui River Trust which was established in 1891 to promote steamer travel on the river, and to create and maintain deep channels through the rapids for that purpose.

I slept in the next morning, and lingered over coffee. There was



Colin at Downes Hut. The fence is to keep wild goats from camping under the eaves of the hut.

no point in hurrying because at Parakino, 50 km from the sea, the tides begin to affect the river and the ebb tide would not commence until 2pm. So I dawdled downriver and landed for lunch at Hipango Park. This turned out to be an excellent campground, deserted and empty; it would be another good place to stay on the lower river. Below Hipango Park I started to see more houses and the river ran in long broad reaches between willows; this was perhaps less interesting, but it wasn't long before I reached the Wanganui Top 10 Holiday Park on the right bank at Aramoho, 6 km upstream of Wanganui city and about twice that distance from the sea.

I had covered 233 km in four easy days, and average of about 60 km per day. This was much faster than I expected; in fact reading the DoC pamphlet about the journey from Taumaranui to Pipiriki, it seemed that I had been travelling at about twice the speed of most parties on the river. I can put this down to three things: firstly I started early each morning out of habit, secondly the river was running a little higher and (I suppose) faster than usual, thirdly, and most importantly, a sea kayak is so much faster than the fat and heavily-loaded Canadian canoes used by most people on the river. Based on my experience, I think that a sea kayak (preferably plastic) is the ideal boat to use on the Whanganui. It makes easy work of the long slow sections between rapids, and easy work of the rapids themselves.

So, somewhat to my surprise, I found myself on the outskirts of Wanganui City just four days after leaving Taumaranui. The campground was clean, pleasant and shady; just as well, because conditions on the coast were windy and rough, and the forecast was not encouraging. I took a bus (actually two buses) out to the coast at Castlecliff and looked mournfully at three lines of surf rumbling in to the beach, and at the whitecaps offshore. Then I went to the cinema. Next day I looked at the forecast, then went to the museum. Next day I looked at the forecast, then went to the art gallery. Next day



I looked at the forecast, then went to the public library.

Next day, with the forecast still unsettled but feeling that unless I did something soon, I might take root in the campground for ever, I launched my kayak and headed for the sea. It was salt water or bust for me. A couple of hours downriver I turned the final corner so that the North and South moles came into view with the rivermouth between, to be greeted by the dismaying sight of breakers right across the main channel, wall to wall, and plenty of whitecaps beyond.

Too much for an old guy. I retreated back into the river, found a boat ramp, and wheeled my kayak 2 km through the streets of Castlecliff to a campground just behind the beach. I would not be comfortable there (the manager regarded trees as a Health and Safety issue, "They might fall on campers!") so there was no shade available) but at least I could visit the beach several times each day to keep watch on conditions at sea. And so another three days passed there, land-bound. But at last, after I had been ashore in Wanganui for a full week, the gods relented. I had served my sentence.

The wait ashore had been useful in another way, because when I arrived at Castlecliff the beach had been so thickly strewn with logs brought down-river by the recent flood that no-one could have launched a kayak through them. They were tangled, in their thousands, along the high-tide mark as far as the eye could see. However the council sent a bulldozer which spent two days clearing about 100 metres of beach in front of the Surf Club, and it was through this

gap that I dragged my kayak early on the eighth morning.

Though conditions were much improved there were still three lines of breakers, (indicating two shallow bars offshore) and getting through them took some care. I guessed that the surf would diminish as I travelled south, so I decided to stay in my boat and paddle for as long as I felt comfortable, without attempting to land for a break. The day passed easily enough as I paddled south. I had a light headwind, just enough to keep me cool. The coastal scenery was, to be honest, boring; an endless beach, backed by dunes and (usually) pine forest. As far as I could see there is not a rock, not a point or headland, nothing but sand between Wanganui and Paekakariki 115 km to the south.

I paddled for 9 hours, covering 43 km before, quite suddenly, I had had enough; and landed through gentle surf. My landing place was the same





Camped among the dunes on the endless beach of the South Taranaki Bight.

as every other part of the beach. I found a flattish spot in the dunes and camped on top of a patch of marram grass. Not an ideal campsite, but the evening was still, the sunset magnificent, and I had a pleasant night.

On along the coast next morning, more of the same. But sunny and calm and hot! There was no escaping the heat. At 3 pm I found myself at Waitarere where there is a campground, so I pulled ashore and retreated into the shade of a big macrocarpa tree. A skinny tabby cat begged me for food there. She pulled a face at the first mouthful of spicy salami but she was too hungry to turn it down.

Rain during the night. I walked to the beach at 6.30 am, didn't like the look of the grey sky and whitecaps, and went back to my tent for coffee and the morning news on the radio. The cat had tuna for breakfast (which she told me was a great deal better than salami). However conditions improved after a couple of hours and by mid-morning I was on my way again.

This was an interesting day. The wind was a light NW breeze, coming in from behind my right shoulder. I hoisted my sail without great hopes but immediately the boat felt lighter. As my speed lifted the apparent wind shifted forward so that it was now coming from slightly ahead of the beam, (a point of sailing which a yachtsman or woman would describe as a 'tight reach'). Since my kayak lacks a centreboard or keel, this is not a point of sailing which she should in theory be able to sustain, but as long

as I kept paddling ('motor-sailing') then along she went. The GPS showed that my speed had increased by about 40%, (from 5 to 7 km/hr) so I motor-sailed happily southward for about 6 hours and knocked off another 42 km.

The campground at Paraparaumu was so well concealed among houses behind the beach that it took me some time to locate. Once there, I found that every tent site had its own little utility building with shower and toilet, a unique arrangement which I approved of. On a neighbouring site I met Reg who is an 88 year-old retired bookbinder living there in a permanent caravan. We struck up a friendship which was good because a fresh headwind kept me at Paraparaumu an extra day.

When the wind relented I paddled south, soon meeting a rocky coastline, (for the first time since Wanganui) at Paekakariki. From there to Titahi Bay there are coastal settlements familiar to anyone who has driven along State Highway 1; but south of Titahi Bay the coast becomes much wilder, with grand headlands clad in bare rock and desiccated scrub. There were few places to camp, (just one good site on

The tent site with all the mod cons.



the southern side of Green Point) so I paddled on, reaching Makara Beach 10 hours (52 km) from Paraparaumu. I camped there on the roadside reserve, 200 metres up a fetid and sulphurous stream which emerges onto the beach; but it was a quiet enough night, so no complaints.

Makara was a critical point in my trip, because the next headland to the west (Ohau Point) is the gateway to Cook Strait. The forecast suggested that delaying my entry into the strait might be helpful, so I spent a contented day on the coast between Makara and Ohau Point, landing at every little beach and taking long walks up into the surrounding hills. There's much of interest here, for example the huge wind turbines which dominate the hill tops and ridge-lines, (and which I thought rather graceful as their enormous blades carved silently through the wind). On a hilltop west of Makara I



found the site of 'Fort Opau', where two 6-inch guns were installed at great expense in 1941 to guard the northern approaches to Cook Strait; the guns were removed in 1944, having fired only the shots necessary to calibrate them. Nothing remains except the concrete emplacements, and the wind sweeps endlessly across dry grass and stunted gorse. I camped that night in a little cove just east of Ohau Point, thoroughly happy after one of my best days on the coast. It would be worth living in Wellington just to visit and re-visit this part of the coast by kayak or on foot.

Next morning in calm conditions I rounded Ohau Point and entered Cook Strait. I had three major headlands to get around; in order they were Cape Terawhiti, Karori

Rock, and Sinclair Head. The best guide to this part of the coast is *The New Zealand Cruising Guide – Central Area*, written for yachtsmen by Murray and Von Kohorn, and it made sobering reading. I was interested in the authors' comments about northerly winds, which were forecast for the day I was there:

The area from Cape Terawhiti to Sinclair Head is known by local yachtsmen as "the wind factory." It is aptly named as the various V-shaped valleys accelerate N sector winds which blast out over the area at speeds up to 20 knots stronger than in the centre of Cook Strait. Yachtsmen should reduce sail before entering the area.

Added to that was the problem of tidal streams which run at up to 4 knots past the big headlands, a speed which I could not paddle against. Of course, if one were to believe all the dire warnings written about some parts of the New Zealand coast one would never leave home, so I carried on, (but with a degree of caution, and having timed my trip so that I would reach Karori Rock at slack water).

Off Cape Terawhiti the northerly was beginning to gust heavily down from the hills, but fortunately I was able to pass well inshore of Karori Rock and the reefs that surround it, so gaining a measure of shelter from the cliffs above. I landed east of Karori Rock, climbed a headland, and looked along the coast towards Wellington. True to the warnings in the Cruising Guide a river of wind was pouring out of the mouth of each valley along the coast ahead, the torrents of air marked by tumbling whitecaps. I got back in the boat and managed to cross the first river by paddling at sprint speed at a slightly oblique angle to the wind; but that one experience was enough. The wind was now at such strength that if through a momentary error I had let

A scene of sound and fury viewed from the safety of shore by Sinclair Head.



View west from Cape Karori towards Cape Terawhiti with the hills of the Marlborough Sounds in the far distance across Cook Strait.

the bow swing too far away from the eye of the wind, I would have been forced into a side-on position from which I could not recover, and would have been blown offshore into Cook Strait, out of control.

I needed a landing, and a shingle cove on the western side of Sinclair Head provided one. It was a desolate little bay, just shingle scree and wind-blasted scrub, not somewhere you would normally give a second glance; but what a happy place it seemed to me! Staggering in the gusts, I pulled my boat up the beach and into shelter, changed into dry clothes, and made a rock windbreak to shelter my gas stove. In rough weather the best place for a seafarer to be is on dry land with a cup of tea and a piece of chocolate in hand; so once that was achieved I was indeed a happy paddler.

The afternoon was great. From a comfortable seat in the scrub I watched the williwaws lifting spirals of spray, like smoke, across my bay. At intervals I declared an intermission in the show and made more tea and chocolate; so I suppose the only danger in this situation was that if the wind continued I might have gone home a good deal heavier than when I had left it.

At nightfall the gusts eased enough to allow me to put up my tent, and when I launched my kayak in the grey light of dawn next morning, it

was onto a flat calm sea. Within an hour I was passing the suburbs of Owhiro Bay and then Island Bay; and soon afterwards I landed briefly near Seatoun, inside the Wellington Harbour entrance. From there it was 12 km to my destination at Petone on the northern shore of the harbour, (the only camping ground near the waterfront at Wellington is the Top 10 Holiday Park at Petone), but while I contemplated paddling that final distance a southerly breeze came in from Cook Strait. So I hoisted my sail and flew across to Petone with hardly a paddle stroke needed, an easy end to a satisfying trip on river and sea.

The distances covered overall were 245 km by river, and 220 km by sea, and readers can judge from my account what are the merits of each part of the journey. For me the coastline between Makara and Island Bay was probably the highlight, and I envy Wellington paddlers who have this as their backyard. Although this part of the coast is exposed to some wild weather, none the less there are so many small landings that I think one could always get ashore if that becomes a necessity; and the hills and shoreline have a wonderful rugged grandeur which would lift anyone's spirits.

Colin Quilter

(This article is reprinted with thanks from the Auckland Canoe Club April and March 2011 newsletters)

HISTORY

Untouchable PBK 20 1968 - Riverside Oxford by Alan Byde

I was appointed to Riverside Centre Oxford in August 1968. There was a storage shed with three bays, each bay had four racks and each rack held four kayaks of reasonable size, 24 inch beam. The Percy Blandford design 'PBK 20' had a 32 inch beam and was voluminous. Two of those took up all the space on one rack. There were five or six of them. None had names or numbers. As the weeks went by I met various members and found which canoe belonged to which person. In order to help my records I gave numbers to each canoe and listed them in a record with a name alongside. Bureaucracy has its uses. Months went by and it was winter.

Those who owned the canoes were asked to pay dues as a member or remove the canoe. If they were not removed they would be sold. Some were wrecks, unused for years with dead leaves in drifts inside. During this time, I acquired kayak moulds and the first GRP (glass-reinforced-plastic) kayaks appeared, needing space for storage.

One PBK 20 belonged to a student at Uni. We knew who he was, also where he lived and sent a letter to him. We never met the chap but his grandmother, a lady of great presence appeared in his stead. She was well dressed and if she had been a ship, she'd have been rigged over-all keel to masthead pennant, mains to skysails, sprit to spanker, battle flags flying, the reason why Britannia ruled the seas. She was regally polite with a penetrating voice.

She informed me, poor witless fellow, that her grandson was a student at University and excused from paying membership fees. As she was a good friend of Mr Garne, the Director of Education, she could inform me that if I did not at once acknowledge her grandson's advantages she

would ensure that I did. The full power of the authority would come down on my pathetic person. Or words to that effect. She had influence in high places. I knew my place. Don't you just love them? I kowtowed energetically and offered her a cup of club instant coffee, which is only for the stout of heart. Haughtily she declined.

One winter evening, I was with three of the older members in the Iffley Lock Hotel half a mile down river. There are several brass plaques in the bar showing the highest flood mark at dates going back two centuries. They were all about shoulder height. There are no roads to this unique place where one finds 'characters' of the river. All supplies come by barge.

We talked of many things:

of ships and shoes and sealing wax,
of cabbages and kings; and why the
sea is boiling hot and whether pigs
have wings?

The pig we had in mind was the last of the great barges and what could we do about it? My car back at the club had a roof rack and these were three strong young men willing to help me to give wings to this pig.

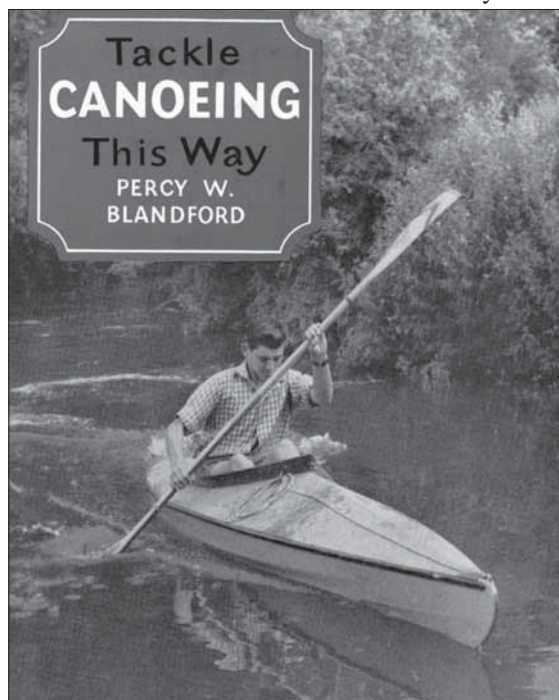
The walk along the towpath was crisp and clear, the night brilliant with stars and frost everywhere,

on the path, decorating the bushes. Cromwell and Hitler had something in common; Oxford being centrally placed in England would be their seat of government. Far from the moderating influence of surrounding seas it can be cold. There was a picture in the club of an Austin Seven on the frozen river in the twenties with people skating to and fro.

Merrily we loaded the PBK 20 on to the roof rack, lashed it with care and at midnight set off to the address to which we sent our letters. It was a neat semi in a decent area, front garden, gravel drive neatly raked. When on clandestine operations one does not walk on gravel. Two of the lads found a way over the sparkling frosty hedge and on to the frosted grass. Every footprint showed. The 'pig' was handed over the hedge and laid tidily by the front door. Then we scarpered. (Rhyming slang Scapa Flow = go)

Next day, a Saturday, I was at the Centre workshop early in a state of some excitement as I awaited the wrath of Britannia. My fellow conspirators were there too. Sure enough the galleon hove in view. Assurances that I would be fired at once and never work again in this city were heaped on me.

Time went by as it does. Until now this yarn was lost in timeless seas.



The cover of one of Percy Blandford's many books, showing one of his canvas-covered wooden frame kayak designs, which were called PBKs.

HUMOUR

Old Timer Driving

A senior citizen was driving down Auckland's northern motorway, when his car phone rang.

Answering, he heard his wife's voice urgently warning him, "Ashley, I just heard on the news that there's a car going the wrong way on Northern Motorway. Please be careful!"

"Hell," said Ashley, "It's not just one car. There's hundreds of them!"

New Book Release

A man goes into a Paper Plus bookstore and asks the young lady assistant, "Do you have the new book out for men with short penises? I can't for the life of me remember the title."

She replies, "I'm not sure if it's in yet." The man said, "That's the one, I'll take a copy."

Proper Beer

The General Managers of Tui, DB, Macs, Monteiths and Speights were at a national beer conference and they all decide to go to lunch together. The waitress asks what they want to drink.

The Tui's man says, without hesitation, "I'll have a Mangatainoka Dark."

The DB bloke smiles and says, "I'll have a DB Export, brewed from pure mountain water."

The GM of Macs proudly says, "I'll have a Macs Gold, the King of Beers."

The Monteiths chap says, "I'll have a Monteiths Pilsner, the cleanest beer on the planet."

The head honcho from Speights glances around at his lunch companions and says, "I'll have a Diet Coke."

The others are speechless and look at him like he has sprouted a new head. He just shrugs and says, "Well if you poofers aren't drinking beer, then neither will I."

New Australian

Abdullah entered his classroom on the first day of school. "What's your name?" asked the teacher.

"Abdullah," he replied.

"You're in Australia now," replied the teacher, "So from now on, you will be known as Kevin."

Mohammed returned home after

school. "How was your day, Abdullah?" his mother asked.

"My name is not Abdullah. I'm in Australia and now my name is Kevin."

"Are you ashamed of your name? Are you trying to dishonour your parents, your heritage, your religion? Shame on you!" And his mother beat him. Then she called his father, who beat him again.

Next morning when Abdullah returned to school, the teacher saw all of his bruises.

"What happened to you, Kevin?" she asked.

"Well miss, shortly after becoming an Australian, I was attacked by two bloody Arabs."

Stammering Sex

In England, a very pretty young speech therapist was getting nowhere with her 'Stammerers Action Group'. She'd tried every technique in the book without the slightest success. No one was improving. Finally, thoroughly exasperated, she said, "If any of you can tell me, without stuttering, the name of the town where you were born, I'll have wild and passionate sex with you until your muscles ache and your eyes water. So, who wants to go first?"

The Englishman piped up, "B-b-b-b-b-b-irmingham."

"That's no use, Trevor," said the speech therapist. "Who's next?"

The Scotsman raised his hand and blurted out, "G-g-g-g-g-g-lasgow."

"That's no better. There'll be no sex for you, I'm afraid, Hamish."

"How about you, Paddy?"

The Irishman took a deep breath and eventually blurted out, "London"

"Brilliant, Paddy!" said the speech therapist and immediately set about living up to her promise. It was a sight to see. After 15 minutes of exceptionally steamy sex, the couple paused for breath and Paddy said, "-d-d-d-d-d-d-d-erry."

Priestly Jungle Talk

A Priest was about to finish his native's tour of duty. Leaving his Mission at the jungle village where he spent years teaching the natives about religion, he realizes that the one thing he never taught them was how to speak English. So he takes the chief for a walk in the for-

est. He points to a tree and says to the chief, "This is a tree." The chief looks at the tree and grunts, "Tree." The Priest is pleased with the response. They walk a little further and he points to a rock and says, "This is a rock." Hearing this, the chief looks and grunts, "Rock." The Priest was really getting enthusiastic about the results when he hears a rustling in the bushes. As they peek over the bushes, he sees a native couple in the midst of heavy sexual activity. The Priest is really flustered and quickly responds, "Man riding a bike." The chief looks at the amorous couple briefly, then pulls out his blowpipe and kills them. The Priest goes ballistic and yells at the chief that he has spent years teaching the tribe how to be civilized and be kind to each other, so how could he kill these people in cold blood that way?

The chief replied, "My bike."

The Talking Centipede

A rather shy, single bloke decided life would be more fun if he had a pet. So he went to the pet store and told the owner he wanted to buy an unusual pet. After some discussion he bought a talking centipede which came in a little white box to use for his house. He took the box back home, found a good spot for the box, and decided he would start off by taking his new pet to church with him. So he asked the centipede in the box, "Would you like to go to church with me today? We will have a good time." But there was no answer from his new pet.

This bothered him a bit, but he waited a few minutes and then asked again, "How about going to church with me and receive blessings?" But again, there was no answer from his new friend and pet. So he waited a few minutes more, thinking about the situation. The guy decided to invite the centipede one last time. This time he put his face up against the centipede's house and shouted, "Hey, in there! Would you like to go to church with me and learn about God?" This time, a little voice came out of the box, "I heard you the first time! I'm putting my shoes on!"

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, trip reports, book reviews, equipment reviews, new techniques, letters 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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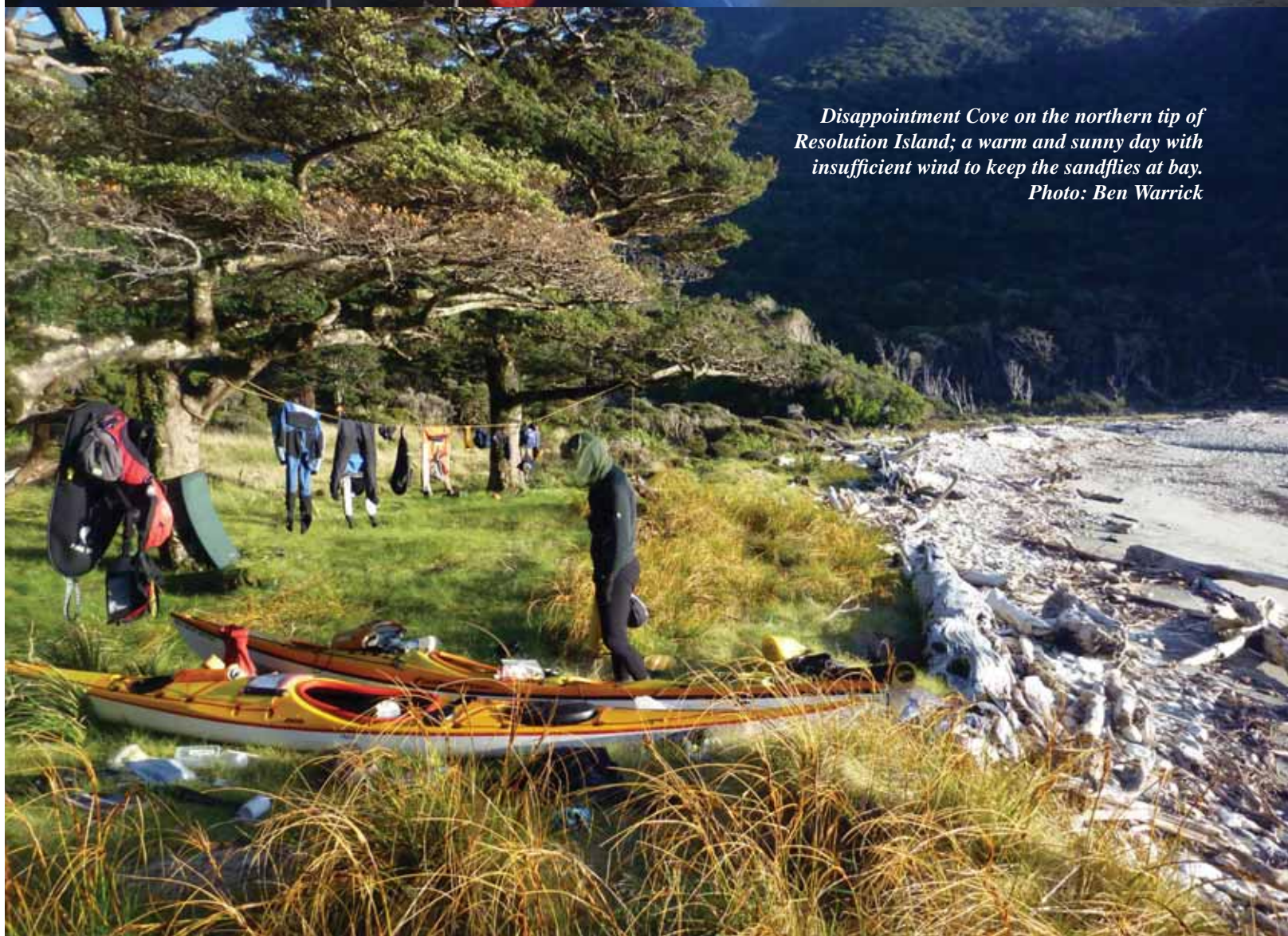
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*Ben Warrick on a wild and wet Fiordland day,
with Five Fingers Peninsula is the background.*



*Disappointment Cove on the northern tip of
Resolution Island; a warm and sunny day with
insufficient wind to keep the sandflies at bay.
Photo: Ben Warrick*

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Doug Aitken paddling north along the exposed Fiordland coast; rounding the western end of Anchor Island, with Five Fingers Point in the distance. Photo: Ben Warrick

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 on confirming renewals from existing members from July to October; and promoting new KASK memberships from November to February

