

NEW ZEALAND SEA CANOEIST

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(NZ) Inc - KASK



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Layout & Editing: Paul Caffyn	
Thanks to all the contributors	
Deadline for Next Magazine: 25 January 2015	

NPBSF

Members of the National Pleasure Boat Safety Forum met at Westhaven, Auckland on 28 November. The primary purpose of this Forum is for member agencies to work collaboratively, both nationally and regionally, to reduce NZ's recreational boating fatalities and injuries. Central to the Forum's role is to agree to a national safer boating strategy, which members will regularly review and work together to implement.

The day had a full program with finalizing the terms of reference for the next four years, reports on the recent very successful Safer Boating Week, and proposals for future safety initiatives.

A recent phone survey conducted with 1500 Kiwis for MNZ, gave the following numbers of recreational craft owned or used in NZ:

- 320,000 canoe and kayak users
- 224,000 power boats < 6 m
- 192,000 dinghies
- 96,000 power boats > 6m
- 64,000 sailing boats < 6m
- 32,000 sailing boats > 6m
- 32,000 jet skis

Despite many of us owning a modest fleet of kayaks, the number of paddlecraft users is a lot higher than what I anticipated. Towards the end of the day I gave a Powerpoint show on paddlecraft fatalities and incident statistics, with ideas for future safety education. I have provided a three page report for the KASK committee on the forum, which has led to several lengthy emails re regulation and enforcement concerns. Email me if would you like to see this report.

Tara On TV

Excellent publicity for Tara Mulvany and her new book on TV1's Seven Sharp last Friday night, following a day of filming in rather damp and windy conditions in Milford Sound. The interviewer took to the water in

a rather good effort, but he upped Tara's estimate of wind strength of 50 knots to 100 knots. The 'barefoot kid' was in fine form, responding to questions with cheeky humour. When showing her expedition kit, Tara was asked if she carried make-up and pointed to a bag on the deck. The interviewer then told her she didn't need makeup.

If you missed the footage, see: <http://tinyurl.com/Tara2014TV>

Karen Grant has reviewed *A Winter's Paddle – A Kayak Journey around the South Island of New Zealand* on p. 19.

Searching for the Finmen

Back in 2012 when Norman Rogers's book was published, it was subtitled *An Unplanned Journey in Homage to the Kayak and its Inuit Masters*. Balance issues in his K1, led to a long train of medical tests. He had plenty of time to start digging back in history as to how Greenland kayaks and occasionally paddlers had arrived in northern Britain in the early 1700s. Norman has advised his book is now long out of print, so when I saw a condensed article recently in *Canoeist* magazine, I sought permission to reprint the article (page 13). I do have one copy left of Norman's book for sale.

Travel Insurance

Before heading overseas on your big OE or a paddling trip, the stories on pages 6 -7 by Lois Cowan and Peter Simpson show the absolute necessity of taking out comprehensive travel insurance. With insurance cover, both Lois and Peter would have been washing dishes and floors in their respective overseas hospitals for many decades.

South Island Circumnavigation

Fiona Weatherall and her partner James arrived on 2 December and planning a clockwise circuit of the South Island, launching from Christchurch.

COVER & Page 2:

Susan Cade's wonderful photos of the recent annual Wellington Harbour fireworks evening.

See Susan's story on page 5. The photos were taken with a Sony RX100. Susan noted it was easier to manage this smaller camera rather than her bigger SLR. Aft propulsion and navigation was provided by Sandy Winterton.

Their blog is up and running:
<http://intothesea.wix.com/nwzealandsea>
There is also a facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/intotheneewzealandsea>

**2015 KASK Forum
20 - 22 February 2015**

Tim Muhundan, with the help of Robert Brown, has put together a very impressive program of speakers and instruction sessions for the forum. I'm not sure what bribes he offered, but to have the likes of Tara Mulvany, Ginney Deavoll and Jason Beachcroft lined up, Tim has marvellous persuasive powers. Please register early for this forum. There is a maximum limit on numbers. See base of page 7 for details and the link.

The prestigious annual KASK foto competition will be held, and nominations are sort for 'Outstanding Contribution to Sea Kayaking' for

the past 12 months, not to mention the 'Bugger!' trophy. I look forward to the Sunday night roast dinner. A grand chance to unwind and socialize over a cup of tea with other paddlers.

Thanks

My thanks to all the lovely contributors and photographers who have helped over the past 12 months to make the chore of putting the magazine together relatively easy. I always despair about a lack of material to fill the 24 pages, and come deadline day, I mostly end up with a surfeit of material.

Keep safe on the water this summer, may the wind always be from aft, and if you see a potential incident in the making, I would ask you to step in and offer sound safety advice.

Paul Caffyn

KASK

Admin Report by Karen Grant

Hi sea kayakers, it's hard to believe the year is nearly over and here in Greymouth we are still waiting for summer to arrive. Still, it is nice to have the longer daylight hours even if it is too wet, windy and cold to be outside.

A little update on memberships. In my AGM report when we had 352 memberships, I noted that typically we lose about 15% of our members around October-November each year. At present it is higher at around 21% but I'm hopeful some more overdue subs will trickle in, especially when this edition of the *NZ Sea Canoeist* fails to arrive in their letterboxes.

Currently we have 375 memberships on our subs listing. Of this figure 69 or 18% have yet to pay subs for the 2014 - 2015 year and I will send out one more email reminder before they drop off the subscription listing. Six of those yet to pay were new members at this year's forum.

We had 63 new members join this calendar year, and had 13 request that their membership be discontinued with the main reason given being a change in circumstances that meant they were no longer able to kayak.

By the way, if you have not received an email from me to let you know about Tara Mulvany's lovely interview on TV recently, then it is possible that you are one of the 20 members with either an incorrect email address or with no email address given.

KASK Committee 2014 - 2015

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|
| Ian McKenzie | - President | email: mckian@xtra.co.nz |
| Sandy Ferguson | - Webmaster | email: kayakamf@gmail.com |
| Paul Caffyn | - Publications | email: kayakpc@xtra.co.nz |
| Shawn Walsh | - Committee | email: Shawn.Walsh@codeblue.co.nz |
| Tim Muhundan | - 2015 Forum | email: tim@paddler.co.nz |
| Robert Brown | - 2015 Forum | email: yakityyak1@hotmail.com |
| David Welch | - Committee | email: davidjwelch58@gmail.com |
| Adrienne Owen | - Committee | email: humare.wai@xtra.co.nz |
| KASK Administrator (Karen Grant) | | email: admin@kask.co.nz |

KASK KAYAKING KALENDAR

Canterbury Sea Kayak Network
Okains Bay Training Weekend
31 January - 1 February 2015

Banks Peninsula

Note that most people get there on the Friday evening, 30 Jan.
email Sandy Ferguson:kayakamf@gmail.com

KASK FORUM 2015

Date: 20 - 22 February 2015

Venue: MERC, Beach Rd, Torbay, Auckland

The venue is booked, the program is sorted with superb presenters, instructors and the evening entertainment is arranged.

The traditional Sunday camp-out is at Dacre Cottage, a mere 90 minute paddle. Dinner: soup, roast and dessert.

For more info: <http://paddler.co.nz/kask2015>



NEW ZEALAND TRIP REPORTS

Wellington Harbour Fireworks by Susan Cade

(See also cover and page 2 photos)

Sandy Winterton and I were pleased that it was a good forecast to enjoy the big annual fireworks display in Wellington Harbour. We made an early start, in minimal wind, in our double *Sisson Voyager* so we could have a picnic tea beforehand. When we got to the main viewing positions area in the city harbour, there were many sailboats and motorboats already jostling for prime positions.

We decided to have our picnic on a convenient floating diving platform, which was conveniently not being used and there was no competition for this. Due to the speed limit, there was also little in the way of nasty wakes that could have upset our sojourn. The raft, had the asset of a ladder and did provide a bit of a damp platform, so we were lucky to have the *Helinox* chairs and table to that give us a dry place to eat - being careful that the chair legs didn't slip between the slots. A great dining spot as we watched the sun gradually go down and notice the steadily increasing throng of boats and onlookers.

This year there were very few sea kayakers. We spotted three other groups of kayakers other than us - much quieter than we expected on such a calm night. We had a paddle around the fancy new apartments on Clyde Key wharf, feeling surprisingly at peace as we were away from the congestion of the crowds. Smelling the waft of food and spotting some of the entertainment on the land. Small surf rescue boats were monitoring craft close to the crowded wharf. The water was so calm with very few boats in that area and it was well lit. But I thought a pretty risky thing to do. You would only have to have one boat not seeing a head that is pretty small in the water and it could be serious injury.

We then positioned ourselves between the harbourmaster's boat and a large launch, with an unobstructed view of the big event. We only had one request from the harbourmaster to move further back. I had hoped to get a sea kayak or two to photograph, but no luck tonight. The other boats and just about all the other big boats were well back from the front row, including all the sea kayakers. We wondered if there was some rule we didn't know, but we held our ground, being respectful of the rule (300 metres away from the fireworks launching raft).

I just love the wonderful intimacy of the front row as in the quiet of the harbour - you lose any sense of the rest of the onlookers and you feel as if you are the only ones enjoying the amazing vista.

So in peace, we watched another spectacular fireworks display, this time 12 minutes worth. Synchronized with a sound track on the radio, which each year I never get or-

ganized enough to hear. There were however wonderful reflections, with the slight smoky haze, due to it being such a still night. Many rockets of fireworks being shot into the air that burst out into shapes and many star bursts. Special times at moments included a sky falling with cascading gold bursts, smiley faces was a new one. Streams of colour, being shot up from the launching raft, then appearing to burst in the sky and cascade down into the sea. With the accompany crackle and explosions we are all familiar with.

Afterwards the sea was even flatter, the slight breeze having dropped further, a smooth paddle back to our launching spot, no traffic jams for us. With more smaller fireworks displays going off all around the harbour as well a few from the boats.

I think some of these photos capture an impression of the display. I took the them on my Sony RX100, it was easier to manage than my bigger SLR.

Sandy Winterton does not seem to be too impressed with this really healthy, gourmet offering of salad dishes, prior to dusk falling on Wellington Harbour and the fireworks starting.
Photo: Susan Cade



HEALTH

Lessons from an Alaskan Sea Kayaking Expedition by Lois Cowan

Sea kayaking in Alaska has been a my long held dream. Tickets, money, travel insurance and passport in hand, it was about to become reality. The 12 day sea kayaking trip exploring the inner and outer coast of Kenai Peninsula and Prince William starts from Seward, a two hour bus trip from Anchorage. Sorting kayaks and paddling gear was easy with the kayak hire right next door to our accommodation. We have our trip briefing over dinner. Afterwards we return to our accommodation and I look forward to my last night in comfortable accommodation. As the only woman, I have the luxury of a room to myself.

I have completed my last minute packing, text home, etc. The next thing I recall is being on the bathroom floor, violent vomiting made worse by an associated headache. It seemed to go on forever. I blamed the salmon I had for dinner. The following morning it was clear that I was not up to kayaking, still nauseous and sporting a large bruised lip. The others decided to start the trip and I will see if I am up to joining them the next day. But by afternoon, my health was not improving when Rick Brown, the owner of the kayaking shop, came to check on me and encouraged me to visit the hospital. At this stage I was still thinking I was recovering from possible food poisoning.

At Seward's health centre, I had numerous assessments, blood tests, scans etc., and to my surprise and horror, was advised that I had had a subarachnoid haemorrhage from a ruptured aneurysm. This is a bleed in the brain from weakness in the artery wall. At that stage they thought I had experienced a heart attack (which was later ruled out). I was transferred to Anchorage hospital via helicopter with what seems like numerous bed

transfers and signing declaims for this and that. I was finally admitted to hospital where I stayed for just over three weeks, with 20 days in Intensive Care. I now have a coil of platinum inserted into the ruptured aneurysm to prevent and future bleeding. The coil was inserted via the femoral artery, amazing technology. Prior to this coiling procedure my clinical notes suggested I was at 'high risk of death', so something to take seriously. In hospital I was monitored closely with daily brain scans, managing cerebral vaso-spasming, blood pressure and cerebral salt wasting syndrome.

I did not get to kayak or explore the wildness of Alaska; instead I explored the inner workings of the USA health system. I am lucky to have survived this without significant long term effects. Early intervention is critical; with this in mind I will share the main symptoms of subarachnoid haemorrhage, as outlined by healthline.com:

The symptoms are a severe headache, which is more intense at the base of the skull. Other symptoms could be neck pain, numbness

throughout your body, shoulder pain, seizures, confusion, and irritability, sensitivity to light, nausea, and vomiting. Symptoms are sudden and the person may lose consciousness.

I was not aware that I had lost consciousness; it was only the bruised lip that indicated this had occurred. Prior to diagnosis, the hospital staff suspected violence at home, with questions such as, "Do you feel safe at home," being frequently asked.

The insurance company curtailed my planned travel and arranged for business class flight home. Hospital bills keep on coming, and without travel insurance I would now be contemplating selling my house. Yes, it cost that much for three weeks in hospital in USA. Many bills went straight to the insurance company but I estimate that it cost them well over NZ\$300,000.

My fellow paddlers Robert and Chris kindly visited me in hospital after completing their Kenai Peninsula trip. Their reports and photos confirm that kayaking is a great

Sadly, the closest Lois got to Alaskan wildlife was patting the nose of this moose painted on the Anchorage hospital wall.



way to explore Alaska's wilderness and close-up encounters with otters, whales, bears, puffins and massive glaciers systems. Robert will write a separate report on their trip. I did have some wildlife encounters of my own, either hanging on motel walls, in hotel foyers, in the museum or painted in the children's ward at hospital. We saw some interesting displays of native history in the museum, native heritage centre and native hospital, with excellent examples of kayaking equipment of yesteryear such as a parka made from walrus gut, sealskin and beaver fur. We managed to explore the Prince William Sound in comfort on a large cruise ship, with massive glaciers, distant sea lions, seals and otters to be seen through the gaps in rain.

I am touched by the extensive support of family, friends and my work place CPIT, over this time. I am impressed and grateful for the generous, thoughtful and timely response from so many to my situation; especially Rick Brown who got me to hospital and Julia Connors, La Wanda Cowan and Ali Begg who all travelled to Anchorage to be with me in hospital, and Ali accompanying me on the flight home.

The Importance of Travel Insurance
A Short Tale of Why
by Peter Simpson

In September this year, Cathye and I were on a cycling trip from Lhasa in Tibet to Kathmandu in Nepal with an organised tour group. Near the end of the trip, near a small village in Tibet, I managed with great skill,



The helicopter flight from the Nepalese border to Kathmandu.

to fall off my bicycle and break the femur in my left leg. Ouch! (Make that a very sore ouch!)

That night and some of the next day was spent organizing evacuation to an international hospital in Kathmandu through our travel insurance company. Two and a half days after the accident, I made it to the Kathmandu Norvic International hospital and spent three weeks there recovering - a titanium plate was bolted to the femur, physiotherapy and dealing with the flow on-effects of this major break (there were other medial complications but not with the actual break). I eventually flew back to NZ for further treatment.

Travel Insurance paid for and met all the costs from the time of the accident to reaching NZ where the NZ health system and ACC took over. The travel insurance covered not only the medical and hospital costs but other travel costs of the now cancelled ongoing travel, flights home, hotel accommodation and other travel costs.

They arranged everything including border crossing into Nepal, wheelchair travel in airport transit and the border crossing, stretcher and bearers, 4WD vehicle, rescue helicopter



Peter's legs were a tad too long for the Kathmandu hospital bed.

from the Nepalese border, ambulance, hospital liaison and liaison with the airline for the 'fitness to fly' certificate to get home. They dealt with the Chinese bureaucracy in Tibet that wanted me to return to Lhasa for treatment (3 days truck travel at best) and who were also problematic with the insurmountable bureaucracy of the possibility of the Nepalese rescue helicopter entering Tibet.

I strongly recommend health insurance. We would never travel overseas without it. The costs of health/accident treatment overseas are crippling and prohibitive so without insurance, the debt would be considerable - mostly in the order of 'selling the house to get the money' costs. The costs are high enough if in an accessible part of the world and even higher in a remote place as we were. Getting travel insurance is a no brainer.

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20 - 22 February 2015 at MERC, Beach Rd, Torbay, Auckland
For more info, see pp 12 - 13 in the last KASK magazine (No. 170) or go to:
<http://paddler.co.nz/kask2015>

SAFETY

In his capacity as BASK Safety Officer, John Gumbley emailed several experienced kayakers with questions re surf landing and launching for inclusion in the *BASK Bulletin's* 'Safety Section'. John received replies from Bevan Grant, Max Grant, Laraine Hughes and Dennis Hynes. The *BASK Bulletin* No. 34 was 'assembled' by Evan Pugh, who has given his official okidoki for permission to reprint the article in this magazine. (BASK is the Bay Association of Sea Kayakers).

QUESTION 1

What are the three (or so) key things to remember when going out through surf

Bevan Grant's Response:

- 1) Take time to establish the wave patterns
- 2) Clear the top of your kayak of anything that may be swept off
- 3) When punching through a breaking wave, lean forward to reduce your profile, keep the paddle parallel to the kayak and close to your body with the forward blade vertical.

Max Grant's Response:

- 1) Before entering your kayak, stand on the beach and study the wave patterns. Establish where there are rips, the wave patterns, which way the wind is coming from, what the tide is doing. When you've worked out the best place to launch, memorize it so you can paddle back in at the same place. It's the same when coming back in
- 2) After working out where best to launch there are some basic rules to follow – entering your kayak in a safe position up the beach, making sure your sprayskirt and hatch covers are correctly fitted, that gear to be carried on your deck is all stored securely inside your kayak (shouldn't be anything on your deck for the launch or landing – maps, bilge pump, etc).
- 3) Rudder stays retracted during your launching and landing.

Laraine Hughes's Response:

I was lucky enough to be included in JKA's surf training session last summer. My answer to your question is:
1. bow at right angles to the surf (i.e. not oblique to the waves)

- 2) bend forward and keep your torso as close to the deck of the kayak as possible
- 3) paddle hard and keep paddling.

Dennis Hyne's Response:

- 1) Spend time on the beach trying to spot the pattern in the sets
- 2) Once in the kayak, paddle out and sit just inside the break zone (this shortens the distance you are going to have to paddle to get through the more powerful break zone)
- 3) Hold station by paddling into & bracing into the broken waves while waiting for the lull. This gives you a chance to get a feel for the strength, power of the waves. If you can't stay upright and hold station here, then it is only going to get tougher further out. If you do capsize then it is only a short walk or swim back to the beach
- 4) As soon as the last wave of a big set has broken, make a full commitment and paddle as fast as you can. Aim is to get through the break zone before the next bigger set comes through
- 5) To break through the waves, keep your body low, lean forward, reach into the wave with your paddle as the wave hits and power through as hard as you can. The worst thing you can do is stop paddling & sit up straight with paddle in the air like most novices seem to do
- 6) If you've judged the sets correctly, you should breeze through the break zone and be clear before the next bigger set comes through. One more tip: paddle out further than you think

you need to be clear of the break zone. There may always be a 'rogue wave' waiting to trap you in the break zone further out.

QUESTION 2

What do you consider the three (or so) things to remember when coming in through surf?

Bevan Grant's Response:

- 1) Again take time to see if a spell of smaller waves can be predicted
- 2) When the larger waves have gone through, paddle as fast as you can behind it
- 3) As the next wave is approaching, be prepared to broach - keeping the shoreward gunwale (upper edge of side of boat) raised and bracing back into the wave

Max Grant's Response:

- 1) Stay out beyond the breakers for at least five minutes to work out the wave patterns, any drift, obstacles, and exactly where you want to land
- 2) See points above re paddling back in same place, securing gear, rudder retracted

Footnote: Know your skill levels in relation to the launching/landing you are about to attempt – experience counts.

Laraine Hughes's Response:

- 1) Wait - assess the wave patterns and best point of landing
- 2) If you can, work out a break between wave sets and paddle hard for shore - keep checking behind you
- 3) If a broken wave is about to catch you, turn your kayak sideways and low brace and rail into the wave as it reaches you - bum to beach!
- 4) JKA also taught us that rather than lean your torso into the wave as you brace and rail, keep the torso upright and turn your head towards



Dennis Hynes carving a nice surfing run in the surf off Mt. Maunganui. Rudder secured on the aft deck.

the beach - prevents a capsize into the surf once the wave has passed beneath you and you no longer have anything to lean on.

Footnote: I really enjoyed the surf training with JKA and thought I had got a grip on the 'bum to beach' technique, but when I found myself in a situation to use it a couple of months later (with a fully loaded kayak) I blew it and ended up capsized. As always, we need to practice these skills until they become automatic.

Dennis Hyne's Response:

1) Unless you are really proficient at 'surfing' in your kayak, the main aim for the sea kayaker just trying to get to shore, is to avoid 'surfing'

2) Again, sit well beyond the break zone and spend time looking for the pattern in the sets. Once you think you have a handle on the pattern, edge you way in, but keep an eye behind for the rogue wave

3) Watch for the last of the bigger set and follow in behind. Again, once you have decided, then commit wholehearted. Paddle for all you are worth, making as much distance as you can through the break zone before the next (hopefully smaller wave if you've picked it right) catches up

4) Just before the following wave catches up (whether or not it has broken), angle your kayak to one side or the other. As the wave catches up, lean toward it and reach your paddle deep into the wave and commit to a solid brace. You may be surprised just how far you can lean into the wave. The paddle blade sliding over the water as the wave pushes your kayak sideways, adds an amazing power to the brace (if you are going to capsize, far better to capsize into the wave).

5) If you are confident 'surfing' the smaller waves in the lull, then by all means try and catch one and ride it as far as you can. By far the quickest way to get through the break zone

6) Once the power of the wave starts to lessen, and before the water gets too shallow, straighten up so when your kayak grounds, it is perpendicular to the beach. You don't want the bottom of your kayak to hit the sand travelling sideways. The sudden stop will throw you head-first into the sand, risking serious injury to head, neck or shoulder. Same goes when launching, if you get pushed sideways in the shallows, USE your paddle to brace. DO NOT put your hand out, I've seen a dislocated shoulder result.

Footnote:

Dennis (a keen surfer) comments: Sea Kayaks and Surf, two things all board surfers know:

1) The most powerful section of wave is the unbroken green water just ahead of the break. For the greatest thrills, the serious kayak surfer tries to catch and ride the unbroken section on the bigger sets

2) Most times there is a recognisable pattern to the waves, bigger sets interspersed with lulls with smaller waves. For the sea kayaker looking to get to shore safely with their kayak intact, and gear dry, that unbroken big swell is exactly where you don't want to be.

The following tips apply to the sea kayaker just trying to get through the surf:

1) Check out the ends of the beach. Depending upon the direction of the swell, you can often find the waves are less powerful there. Waihi Beach is a classic example. You will often find boaties launching from the sand in behind the curve in the cliffs at the northern end of the beach, while surfies are having a great time in far bigger waves further along the beach

2) Look for rips where the waves may be breaking closer to the shore or sand banks where the waves may be breaking further out.

The 'Bugger!' File

Lake Rotoiti Near-Miss By Kevin Dunsford 4-5 October 2014

I witnessed a near tragedy at Lake Rotoiti on Saturday 4 October, a weekend of nasty weather, with forecasts of gale warning for most of the North Island. It was sure blowing a gale and freezing cold to boot. We were staying with friends on the lakeside, and we were trying to work out where we would be kayaking to, this summer holiday.

On Saturday morning Deb took a stroll and looked out over the cliff. There was a father out on the lake on a sit-on-top, trying to hang on a second sit-on-top on which was his young son of about 6 or 7 years old. Deb said he had tried to get his son to hold onto the back of his kayak to tow him in but the force of the wind was too strong for this little hands and he had let go, and they had no rope.

By the time I got up there the guy was in the water. Deb said he had fallen in and he was hanging on to both sit-on-tops. The guy could not get back onto his kayak without loosing touch of his son's kayak.

A couple of friends launched a dinghy to head around the headland and out to them. About this time I heard a young girl in distress near the waters edge and went to check. She was about 4 or 5 years old, just wearing a swimsuit and bouncy vest, dressed like her brother on the kayak. She had seen her father and young broth-

er disappear and followed along the lake edge after them. She had gone as far as she could, and would need to go around a headland by entering the water, which I think she was about to do.

After about 10-15 minutes, the father managed to touch ground and slowly drag both kayaks ashore, which took another 10 minutes. The lake is reasonable shallow in places but he had to fight the buoyancy of his vest and a wetsuit vest he was wearing.

When they got to shore, both the little girl and the young boy were bitterly cold. The father said he was OK. I would have thought that with wind chill of the gale from the southwest, it was about 4 or 5°C max.

When the father came ashore, at first he refused help from us with carrying his kayaks, which I took as a sign of internal shock. He soon accepted our offer, when he saw his wife approaching the scene with a look of fury on her face. She had driven the car from the bach they were staying in, to the road end then set out on foot.

The English family (not sure how long they had been in NZ) had rented a bach for the weekend on the lake edge, all toys included. The father must have intended that he and both children might go out in the kayak because all three of them had life vests on.

The lake conditions were such that I would have had real trouble coping in a sea kayak. The young boy had started out first and was soon blown away in the 40+ knot wind and nasty chop. The father, seeing the boy disappear jumped on another sit-on-top to try and catch his son.

The interesting thing is that on the way back, the father thought he had come from just around the corner. The next day I walked to where they had set off from and it took me 15 minutes in a straight line, so he had grossly underestimated the distance they had covered in the short time.

I mentioned to the father that the sit-on-top kayaks were not suitable for the conditions and he agreed (retrospectively). He had kept his cool and all they all had well-fitting buoyancy aids, the children with summer sun-protective tops and the father with a summer-weight wetsuit top, but none with any comms.

The father showed a lack of knowledge of kayaking or recognition of the conditions, and what could happen. But as I see it, the people who took money off the family and rented them the bach and gear, had absolutely no regard for the safety of their 'clients'. There was no instruction on how and when the sit-on-tops could be used. In the windy conditions, they had rented them a dangerous piece of equipment. The situation that arose could have easily have been a tragedy for the family and I wonder how those kids will feel in the water next time.

The morning after, at about 6 am, I was out on an early walk on the forest road and the family passed me in the car on the way home, all waves, but it seemed their weekend holiday had been cut short.

I just thought I would get this off my chest as it has been nagging at me!

Cheers
Kevin

KASK NATIONAL SEA KAYAK FORUM 2015 - AUCKLAND

20 - 22 February 2015 at MERC, Beach Rd, Torbay, Auckland

For more info, see pp 12 - 13 in the KASK magazine No. 170
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Freshwater Mussels

Kakahi

NZ Freshwater Mussels by John Gumbley

There is an old Maori saying:
*Tane moe whare, kurua te takataka;
tane rou kakahi, aitia te ure*

(Man drowning in the house,
smack his head;
Man skilled in dredging *kakahi*,
marry him)

Just occasionally when kayaking in some of the shallow Waikato region lakes (there are 94) and the Waikato River I have seen, or felt when walking in shallows, native freshwater mussels.

New Zealand has three living species of freshwater mussels all of which are under threat and declining. *Echryridella menziesii* is geographically widespread but in some location is in serious decline. *E. aucklandica* is nationally vulnerable and is subject to breeding failure due to small populations. *E. onekaka* is uncommon and only found in north-west Nelson.

Loss of suitable habitat, the marked degradation and worsening water quality of many of our rivers and lakes in recent decades, including pressure from invasive fish (e.g. cat-

fish) are some of the causes of this mussel's decline. Even predation from rats is considered to be a contributing threat - I am aware of rats swimming 10-20 metres out from a lake shore and diving 1.2 metres to get food.

The freshwater science fraternity is so concerned that ecologists from various agencies are actively developing a New Zealand-wide conservation strategy for freshwater mussels. In many respects these (filter-feeder) species are an important *indicator* of lake and river health.

The freshwater mussel fossil record shows they have been continuously found in New Zealand rocks dating back to the Mesozoic period (65+ million years ago).

New Zealand mussels probably spawn their larvae - however they might use some subtle behaviours to attract fish (e.g. mantle pulsations) for larvae to attach themselves to the fish host, thereby completing their life cycle (*pers. comm.* Sue Clearwater, NIWA). Koaro and other *white-bait* fish species would naturally be host species but they too are in decline.

Our native mussels are long lived (at least 50 years) and can be found in both fast flowing streams as well as lakes.

Maori refer to mussels/shellfish as *kakahi*, *kuku*, *kutai*, *ahitua*, *kokota*,

kaeo, *torewai* and *karo*. While they are said to be the least appetizing of the lake food supplies, they are important in story, song and proverb. *Kakahi* were harvested throughout the year, but were best in the winter. Harvesting *kakahi* by dredge-rakes (*kapu* or *mangakino*) required great skill and "it is said that skill was descended in or was inherited by certain families" (Hiroa 1921).

Compared to saltwater mussels they were regarded as tasteless and insipid but were used for the feeding of motherless infants. The softened *paru* or visceral mass was sucked from the shell like milk. *Kakahi* was often greatly desired by people with illnesses. Sometime the flesh was dried, eaten raw or lightly steamed. The shell of *kakahi* was used for cutting hair, and also the umbilical cord of a newborn child.

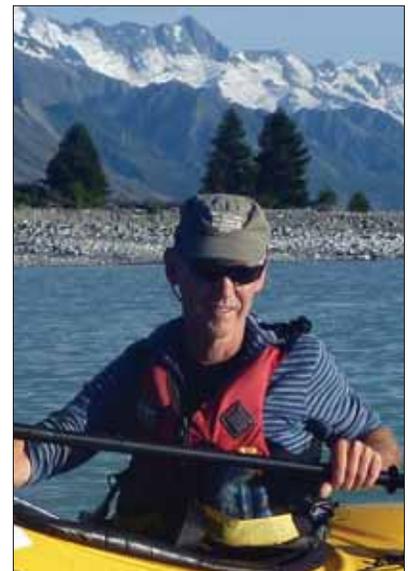
Keep a look out for *kakahi* in your local lake or river.

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NIWA; www.niwa.co.nz *Kakahi*

John Gumbley
gumbleyj@wave.co.nz

Kakahi or freshwater mussel, Lake Ohinewai (Waikato)



Overseas Report

West Island Bits by Dave Winkworth

Bittangabee Whale Watching Weekend

(see also photos on pages 23 & 24)

Wow, that was fun! Kerrie Voegel, Graeme Thompson and I hosted this weekend in mid October for the Vic. Sea Kayak Club and our local Scarpers paddling group plus a few NSW paddlers. It was a good turn-out. We cooked in the camp ovens for 35 people on the Saturday night.

Smack in the middle of the southerly Humpback whale migration season, we hoped to get up close and personal with a good number of whales and were not disappointed! I had a whole Humpback head out of the water not two metres in front of my kayak before it submerged and swam close under my kayak. It was a special moment.

Mike Johnston took the great photo you'll see in this edition of 'my whale' re-surfacing behind me. Mike takes some great photos on our trips – how he balances in his kayak with a big non-waterproof DSLR plus 300mm lens up to his eye is just amazing.

Our base campsite was at Bittangabee, very near Green Cape on the NSW far south coast. Paul Caffyn spent six days here on his Dreamtime Voyage. The water is deep and we hoped the whales would hit this bit of the coast before swimming south-east to round the Green Cape promontory.

We plan to host another weekend next October. KASK paddlers are welcome to come along if on the West Island at that time!

Platypus Yank

Please meet American Teresa Diehl. Teresa is presently in Cairns, getting ready to attempt an around Australia paddle in her *West Coast 55* sea kayak. Teresa calls herself an adventurer/educator. She plans to give



Teresa meeting her new kayak for the first time. Glare off the white deck could be a worry up north

talks during her trip, which looks like taking her a long time. I asked her when she plans to be on the NSW south coast. "I'll be down your way in about 12 months," she said.

Interestingly Teresa is paddling around the continent in a clockwise direction. If she can avoid trade and summer winds here and there - who knows - she just might have a really good trip! Could be a teensy problem with crocs up north in the warmer months but we wish her all the best!

Go Teresa! You can keep up with Teresa's travels on her site at: PlatypusYank.com

VSKC AGM

The Victorian Sea Kayak Club AGM was held at Coolamatong Camp (is that an Aussie name or what?) on Victoria's Gippsland Lakes in early November. About 150 people turned up for a great weekend in very warm weather. There were trade displays, the ever popular gear auction, workshops, paddles, presentation of awards and the AGM!

Scott Donaldson spoke on the Friday night of his trans-Tasman paddle which ended with him being choppered off the ocean in sight of the NZ coast. Bugger! Scott was a good speaker and impressed us all with his planning. He is a fit guy and it appeared a well-planned attempt. However it was rudder failure which ended his attempt and the photos he showed of the broken rudder told me that much more work was needed in this department to make such a vital piece of equipment close to bullet-proof.

Notes for Paddling Groups

I wrote the following notes for our local paddling group. You may find some useful bits in them:

1) If you are the leader of a group and you have to do a rescue/tow etc., you, as leader should try not to get involved but instead direct other competent paddlers to the various tasks needed. If you're hooked on a tow for example, it's hard to maintain an overview of the situation. Of course, if your group is only small then in all likelihood you will be needed - but as a general rule try to keep a view of the situation and offer advice, encouragement and support where needed.

2) If a rescue is on and you are part of the group that is not needed for the rescue, you should turn your kayak into the wind and maintain station close-by. If the sea and swell is up, then it is even more important that you maintain station close by. If you are one, two, or three swells away from the rescue group, you are out of their sight - AND effective communication! Best if you just do it too without the leader having to direct you.

3) And on communication - get yourself a LOUD whistle. Whistles are effective only if they are L-O-U-D. Without doubt the loudest whistle on the market is the 'STORM' whistle. No other whistle comes close. They are available from Expedition Kayaks online store. Cheap insurance!

4) And lastly 'Back to Basics' skills learning. I encourage paddlers to learn their skills this way - and I know other instructors in our local group do too. Learn the solid basic techniques well and you'll always remember it. You may never ever use a skill again, in that basics form as your skills improve. BUT if you ever need to - then you know what to do. A good example of this is using the Pawlata Roll in heavily aerated surf. Your screw or C to C roll may not quite be enough if you've been trashed heavily - but the Pawlata will always get you up. I know plenty of good paddlers who attest to going back to the Pawlata in big surf.

Have a great paddling Christmas!

HISTORY

Searching for the Finmen

by Norman Rogers

About 300 years ago, individuals in kayaks appeared around the northern shores of Scotland. Norman Rogers explores the many and varied theories about who they were and how they got there.

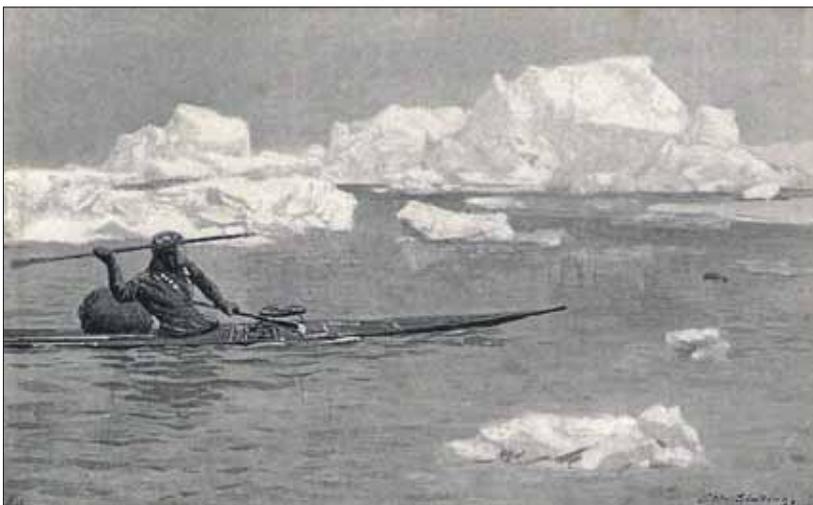
Many recreational canoeists are aware of the story about a lone Inuit man who landed on a beach near Aberdeen in the early 1700s in a traditional skin kayak and died three days later.

His kayak and hunting gear can still be seen today in the Anthropological Museum in Aberdeen where the vessel is sometimes referred to as the *Belhelvie* kayak. Such a voyage, crossing 1,200 miles of hostile ocean from Greenland to the north-east coast of Scotland, would seem to be impossible and the event has remained an enigma.

Not so widely known is the fact that, at about the same time, individuals in small boats were also seen around the coasts of the Orkney islands over a number of years at the end of the 17th century. Published accounts describe these sightings. For example, *A Description of the Isles of Orkney* by James Wallace, published in 1700, has the following passage:

Sometimes about this Country, are seen these Men which are called Finn-men*. In the year 1682, one was seen in his little Boat at the south end of the Isle of Eda. Most of the people of the Isle flock'd to

The Belhelvie kayak with its associated paddle and hunting equipment



Seal hunting - From Nansen, F., Eskimo Life, Longmans Green & Co, London, 1893

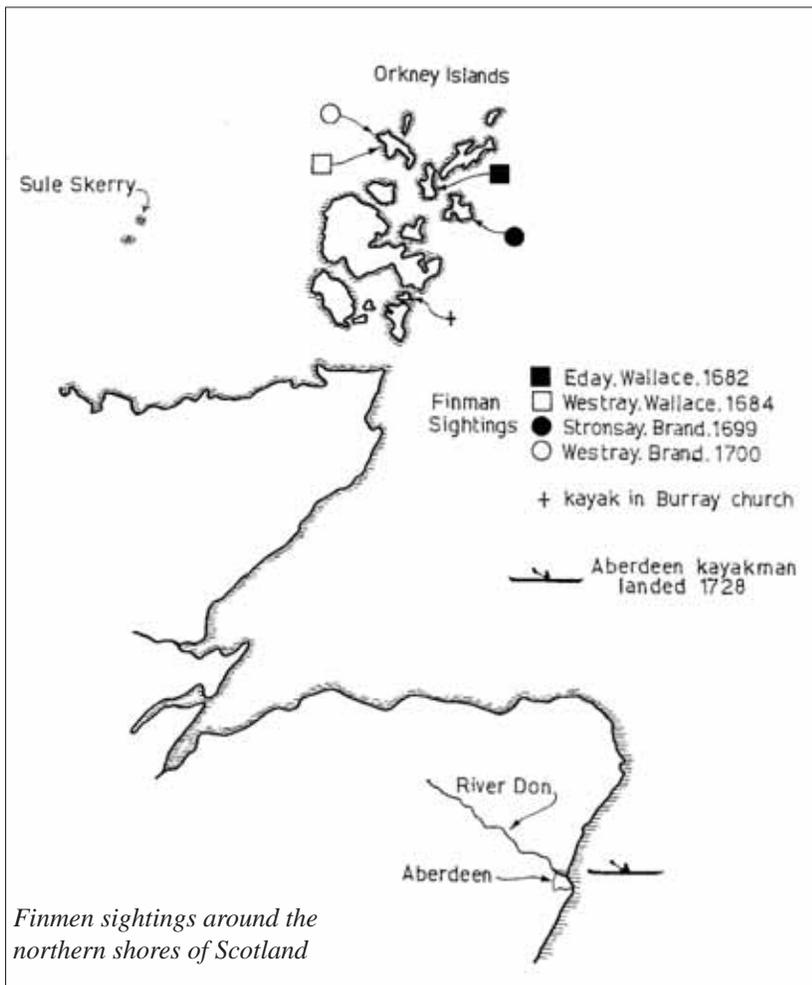
see him, and when they adventur'd to put out a Boat with men to see if they could apprehend him, he presently fled away most swiftly. And in the Year 1684, another was seen from Westra; I must acknowledge it seems a little unaccountable, how these Finn-men should come on this coast, but they must probably be driven by Storms from home, and cannot tell when they are any way at Sea, how to make their way home again; and they have this advantage, that be the Seas never so boisterous their boat being made of Fish Skins, are so contrived that he can never sink, but is like a Sea-gull swimming on top of the Water. His shirt he has is so fastened to the Boat, that no Water can come into his Boat to do him damage, except when he pleases to unty it, which he never does but to ease nature, or when he comes ashore.

Another account is contained in *A brief description of Orkney, Yetland, Pightland-Firth and Caithness* by John Brand, published in 1701:

There are frequently Fin-men seen here upon the coasts, as one about a year ago (1699) on Stronsay, and another within these few months on Westray. A gentleman with many others in the Isle looking (sic) on him nigh to the shore, but when any endeavour to apprehend them they flee away most swiftly; which is very strange, that one Man sitting in his little Boat, should come some hundreds of leagues, from their own Coasts, as they reckon Finland to be from Orkney; it might be thought wonderful how they live all that time, and are able to keep the sea so long. His boat is made of seal skins, or some kind of leather; he also hath a coat of Leather upon

Before the Wind - From Nansen, F., Eskimo Life, Longmans Green & Co, London, 1893





northern shores of Scotland in the late 1600s begs the question 'How did they do it?'

This mystery has received regular scholarly attention over the last 100 years. Among these scholars are MacRitchie (1912), Souter (1934), Debenham (1934), Whittaker (1954 and 1977), Mikklesen (1954), Nooter (1971), Heath (1987 and 2004), Kleivan (1990), Fossett (2001), Longyard (2003) and Golden (2006).

The theories are many and various: Greenlanders would have been capable of paddling all the way from Greenland to Orkney. Only Debenham thought this was possible without reservation.

A group could have made the journey direct from Greenland with favourable storm winds - Heath (2004).

The individuals paddled from Greenland to northern Scotland using the 'stepping stones' approach from Greenland to Iceland, Iceland to Faroe, Faroe to Orkney - Whitaker (1954).

him, and he sitteth in the middle of his Boat with a little Oar in his hand Fishing with his lines: And when in a storm he seeth the high surge of a wave approaching, he hath a way of sinking his Boat, till the wave pass over, lest thereby he should be overturned.

Although Brand surmises, probably because of the local name used to describe them, that these individuals originate from Finland, there is no doubt that these were Inuit in kayaks, probably from Greenland:

- their 'shirts' are tied to the boat to prevent water from entering
- their boats are made of seal skins or some kind of leather
- their coats are made of leather
- execution of a so-called 'Eskimo roll' is clearly described.

Orkney folklore is also full of tales of the Finfolk and the Selkie Folk, who were seals with the power to cast off their skins and take human form and come ashore during certain times of the tide. Most folk tales

relating to the Selkie Folk describe how the sealskins were stolen, thus trapping them on land in human form. The idea that the skins of the Selkie Folk were in fact sealskin kayaks and that the Selkie Folk and the Fin Folk were one and the same, is not new.

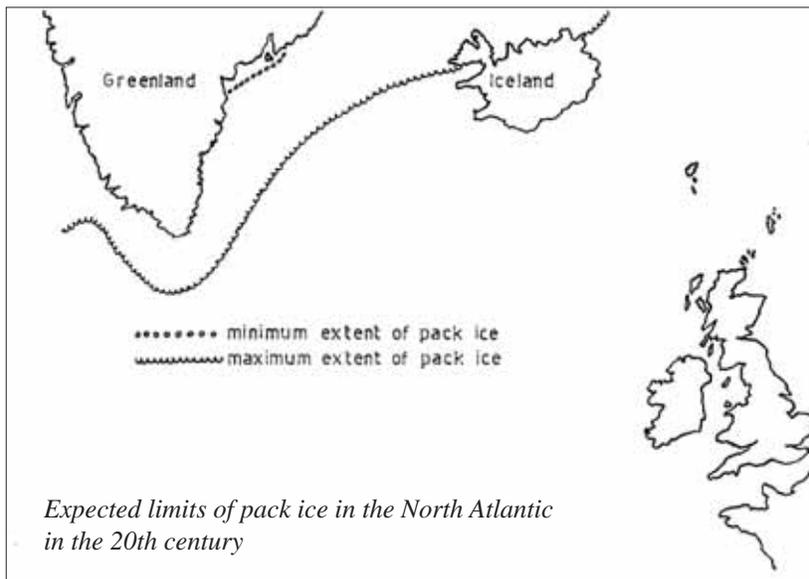
Accepting that a group of Inuit made the journey from Greenland to the

The individuals were kidnapped in Greenland by homebound whalers and escaped close to the Scottish coast - MacRitchie, Souter, Mikklesen, Nooter, Whitaker (1977) and Kleivan.

A group could have used ice floes as refuges and as a source of fresh water in their journey to Orkney - Heath (1987 and 2004) and Longyard.

'A Kaiak Man Rescuing a Comrade' From Nansen, F., Eskimo Life, Longmans Green & Co, London, 1893





The increasing extent of the ice in the late 1600s provided the necessary motive (avoidance of starvation) and means (travelling along the ice edge) to encourage a group to travel in the direction of Orkney - Fossett and Golden (see figure above).

Based on speeds achieved by long distance kayakers over the last century, the journey would have taken between 20 and 40 days on the open sea for a 1,200 mile crossing. Even assuming the 'stepping stones' approach, the journey would involve a minimum open sea crossing of 280 miles (Iceland to Faroe) taking five to 10 days.

There have been a number of audacious open sea crossings by kayak over the last 100 years, including Atlantic crossings. Most have used kayaks which have been adapted to make them more stable and capable of carrying extensive supplies of food and fresh water. Some have used modern stock production sea kayaks with limited adaptations. Of the latter, I mention two outstanding voyages which indicate what could be achieved.

Andrew McAuley's attempt to kayak 1,000 miles solo and without backup across the Tasman Sea commenced on January 7 2007. He anticipated that the journey would take 30 days and had been told to expect 10 m swells, wild winds, very cold weather and very intimidating seas.

The documentary film *Solo* presents a vivid picture of privations experienced by Andrew in the course of his voyage and is at times difficult to watch. The on-board footage in this film was taken from a single memory card retrieved from Andrew's kayak. The six hours of videotapes also recovered were blank, having been destroyed by salt water immersion.

The kayak was a modified *Mirage* double kayak with a beam of 58.5 cm and with the length reduced from 7.3 m to 6.4 m and only one cockpit. There were a few other modifications, including the following:

- a cockpit canopy (christened *Casper*) which sat on the back deck while Andrew paddled, and which slid over and made a watertight



Andrew's kayak with Casper on the aft deck. Ready to launch from Tasmania seal with the cockpit when Andrew wriggled down into the kayak to sleep and provided a self-righting capability in this condition

- inflatable outriggers to stabilize the boat for 'housekeeping' operations in the cockpit when Andrew would not be using the paddle.
- a large all-body spray skirt sealing at the neck rather than at the waist (referred to as a 'cockpit change bag') allowing him to carry out 'delicate tasks' in the upright position without waves getting into the cockpit
- a fresh water desalination plant
- a battery-operated bilge pump
- a 5 Watt flexible solar panel to charge the boat's batteries
- a sea anchor deployed every night before going to 'bed' for greater stability, keeping his nose into the oncoming swell.

Andrew McAuley setting off from Tasmania for Milford in early 2007



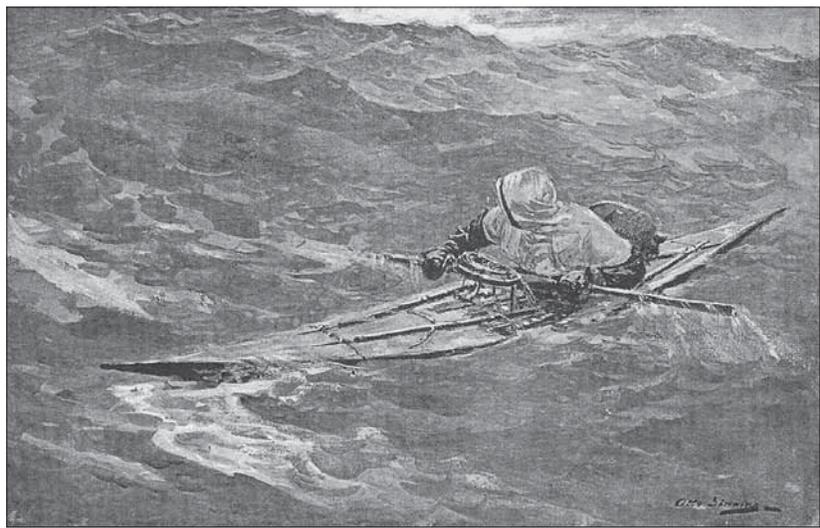
Despite the extreme seas, the multiple capsize and the effects of having to sleep in a space leaving no room to turn around, Andrew kept to the progress rate required for a 30 day finish and by 1 February, he was within 250 miles of the New Zealand coast. By 8 February Andrew only had 75 miles to go to reach the finish in Milford Sound in New Zealand and the waiting family and friends were anticipating being reunited with Andrew in a matter of 2 or 3 days.

At 7.15 pm New Zealand time on Friday 9 February the NZRCC (Rescue Coordination Centre) picked up an indistinct radio message from Andrew saying he had an emergency situation and that his kayak was sinking. At this stage he would have been in sight of land. A helicopter search was mounted and his upturned kayak was eventually spotted but Andrew was missing. His body has never been found.

What Andrew McAuley proved with this voyage is that with enormous courage and persistence in the face of incredibly adverse conditions, it is possible to complete very long open sea crossings in a stock recreational sea kayak.

In July 2009, Patrick Winterton and Mick Berwick made history by being the first people to paddle from Scotland to Faroe, a total distance on the open sea of 256 miles. They both paddled similar single stock production kayaks, a Rockpool *Menai*

A Kaiak-Man Attacked by a Walrus. From Nansen, F., Eskimo Life, Longmans Green & Co, London, 1893



The head turned half backwards to watch the seas.

18 (5.54 m long and 0.53 m in the beam) and a Tiderace *Explore* (5.49 m long and 0.53 m wide). The *Menai 18* is described as 'Rockpool's high carrying capacity and rugged sea kayak for extended expedition use by advanced paddlers'.

The trip took four days, including a 14 hour crossing from Stornoway to the tiny island of North Rona followed by over 70 hours for the final leg to Faroe. Although they intended to have a day's rest on Rona before the final leg, they were advised that the weather window was closing in so they elected to paddle on after only a short rest on the island. The pair managed to sleep, one hour at a time, by removing the footrests and sliding down into the body of their kayaks, lowering the centre of gravity and increasing their stability.

These two journeys, carried out at speeds of between 30 and 65 miles per day, might be considered as supporting evidence that both the non-stop crossing from Greenland to Orkney and the 'stepping stones' crossing by the Inuit in the late 1600s would be possible.

However, the volume of the *Belhelvie* kayak is only about half of that of modern sea kayaks of a similar length. There is good reason to believe that this kayak would be representative of the ones seen around Orkney, in which case, for a journey from Greenland, storage of sufficient food and water would have been difficult. Sleeping and dealing with the normal bodily functions would have been difficult if not impossible as the Greenland kayakers would not have allowed sufficient room for the occupants to lie down nor to move safely out of the cockpit.

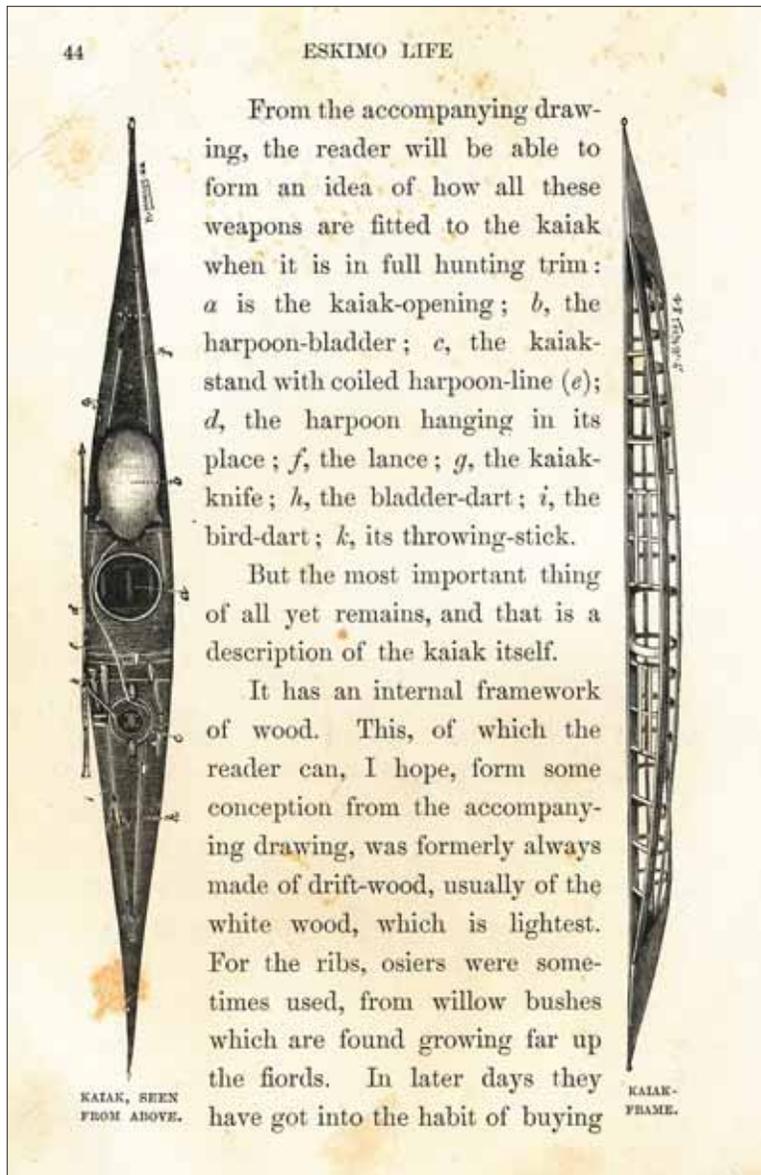
There is also some doubt that the kayak itself would survive a journey of more than a few days without becoming waterlogged owing to leakage. There is also the question of why the journey would have been made. The Inuit were adapted to an environment of snow and ice and knew how to survive in such conditions. Why would they travel hundreds of miles to an environment which was unnatural for them?

While I believe that the Inuit man who paddled ashore near Aberdeen in the early 1700s probably escaped from captivity on a homebound



Halibut Fishing - From Nansen, F., Eskimo Life, Longmans Green & Co, London, 1893

Fridtjof Nansen and five companions achieved the first crossing of the Greenland Icecap in 1888, but after missing the last boat from Godthaab to Denmark, they had to winter over. Nansen then had to time to studying the locals kayaking and indeed how to paddle a kayak himself. See the page below from Eskimo Life.



44

ESKIMO LIFE

From the accompanying drawing, the reader will be able to form an idea of how all these weapons are fitted to the kaiak when it is in full hunting trim: *a* is the kaiak-opening; *b*, the harpoon-bladder; *c*, the kaiak-stand with coiled harpoon-line (*e*); *d*, the harpoon hanging in its place; *f*, the lance; *g*, the kaiak-knife; *h*, the bladder-dart; *i*, the bird-dart; *k*, its throwing-stick.

But the most important thing of all yet remains, and that is a description of the kaiak itself.

It has an internal framework of wood. This, of which the reader can, I hope, form some conception from the accompanying drawing, was formerly always made of drift-wood, usually of the white wood, which is lightest. For the ribs, osiers were sometimes used, from willow bushes which are found growing far up the fiords. In later days they have got into the habit of buying

KAIKAK, SHEN FROM ABOVE.

KAIKAK-FRAME.

whaler, with or without assistance from crew members, I think the solution to the riddle of the Finmen in Orkney lies elsewhere.

Between 1300 and 1800 was an era which has been termed the 'Little Ice Age'. During this period, and particularly between 1680 and 1700, the coldest cycle of the Little Ice Age, the sea ice around Greenland would have been extensive for much if not all of the year. Changes in the extent of open water in summer and the extent and thickness of the sea ice in winter would therefore have had a radical influence on the subsistence hunting culture of the Inuit.

In the winter of 1683/84 the sea even froze in European waters. Belts of sea ice appeared along the coasts of south-eastern England and northern France, ice lay thirty to forty kilometres offshore along parts of the Dutch coast and shipping was halted throughout the North Sea as harbours were choked with ice.

On 24 January 1684, the diarist John Evelyn wrote:

'Frost... more & more severe, the Thames before London was planted with bothes (booths) in formal streets, as in a City... It was a severe judgement on the Land: the trees not onely splitting as if lightning-strook, but Men and Cattell perishing in divers places, and the very seas so locked up with yce, that no vessells could stirr out, or come in.'

Since the climate appears to have been at its coldest during the period when the Inuit in Orkney were said to have arrived (1680 - 1700) it is possible that the increase in the extent of the sea ice in this period may have had a direct bearing on how and why their journey was made.

In the worst of 'bad' years in the twentieth century, the pack ice in both winter and summer would have stretched from the north coast of Iceland, round the southern tip of Greenland, making settlements on the east coast of Greenland inaccessible by sea throughout the year without the use of an ice breaker. In a 'good' year in mid summer, the east

coast of Greenland south of latitude 80° would have been ice free for the whole year and the whole of the west coast would have been navigable to the north of Ellesmere Island.

The pack ice around Greenland during the 'Little Ice Age' was far more extensive than it would have been in the worst years of the 20th century. In 1695 the ice sheet extended so far to the east and south that ice was reported to have blocked the entire coast of Iceland for much of the year, halting all shipping. In the winter of this year, conditions would have been even more extreme.

The kayak was the principal hunting tool for the Inuit of Greenland during much of the year. During the heart of the Arctic winter, when the ice prevented the use of the kayak, Inuit families would have survived mostly on provisions collected during the rest of the year. However, extensive sea-ice around the south of Greenland during the Little Ice Age would have reduced the opportunities of hunting from kayaks and forced the Inuit to hunt seals on the ice, waiting for many hours at a blowhole for a seal to surface.

One can imagine that, if climatic conditions became too severe to support life, there would be a large proportion of the population which would succumb to starvation but a few who would attempt to move to a more habitable location. This may have involved living on the edge of the pack ice so that hunting seal from kayaks could continue. Inadvertently, a group of Inuit hunters might have travelled by kayak east along the ice edge towards Europe, resulting in the sightings of the Finmen in Orkney.

Norman Rogers is the author of *Searching for the Finmen* (Matador 2012). He is a recreational kayak paddler involved in both marathon and sea kayaks and is an avid researcher into the history of the kayak.

See <http://www.searchingforthefinmen.co.uk/>

See also a podcast at <http://seakayakpodcasts.com/Main.html>

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* Finn-men - James Wallace in his publication of 1693 refers to 'Finnmen', which is changed to 'Finn-men' for the revision of the same work in 1700. John Brand's book published in 1701 uses the terms 'Finmen' and 'Fin-men'. Later works by other authors use 'Finn Men' in addition to the other variations. I have arbitrarily chosen the spelling 'Finmen'.

(reprinted with permission from Norman Rogers and British *Canoeist* magazine).

Rowing to Greenland from Chris Duff

Chris has paddled around the South Island of New Zealand (*Southern Exposure*), around Ireland (*On Celtic Tides*), also around GB and Iceland. He has been endeavouring to row a dory from Scotland to Greenland. He notes:

I finally made it to Iceland this past June after my 2011 and 2012 attempts were stymied by persistent and unusual north winds. This year's crossing wasn't easy but I was able to make it safely from the Faeroes to east Iceland and then offshore along the south coast from east Iceland to the Westman Islands - a more dangerous row than the crossing from the Faeroes to Iceland.

I am planning on continuing From Iceland to Greenland and then onto Labrador - possibly in late summer of 2015 depending on ice conditions along the east coast of Greenland. I am writing about the entire adventure but do not have any deadlines as to completing the book. I am pleased with how the writing is coming along and that is the important thing. The people along the way have been a highlight of every leg of this journey - marvellous island folks with lots of stories of their own that I am including - that is what makes the travelling so rich and colourful.



BOOK REVIEWS

Title: *A Winter's Paddle*

Subtitle: *A Kayak Journey Around the South Island of New Zealand*

Author: Tara Mulvany

Published: September 2014

Publisher: Craig Potton Publishing

Website: www.craigpotton.co.nz

Contents: 143 pp, maps, central colour plate section

Cover: softcover

Size: 152 x 236 mm

Price: \$34.95

ISBN: 978 1927213 18 6

Availability: NZ bookstores

Review: Karen Grant

In her book *A Winter's Paddle* Tara Mulvany tells the story of her winter circumnavigation of the South Island of New Zealand. She is the first woman to complete this journey and the only person to have done it in winter.

Tara sets out on this epic five month journey with her boyfriend Sim. What do they have to look forward to? After paddling each day, they must land on an unfamiliar beach, at times battling through hair-raising, dumping surf in darkness, before they can set up camp in total exhaustion. When each morning comes, they have to scrape themselves out of bed to set off again, and possibly battle out through more dumping waves. This is a story with adventure, danger, mishaps and the tension of the changing relationship between the Tara and Sim.

I found Tara's style of telling her story most engaging. She draws you quickly into her tale in the opening pages when she vividly recounts the excitement and frustrations of an earlier storm-ravaged excursion to Fiordland. It was this experience that sparked Tara's plan to circumnavigate the South Island. The winter timing was to fit in with her summer guiding work.

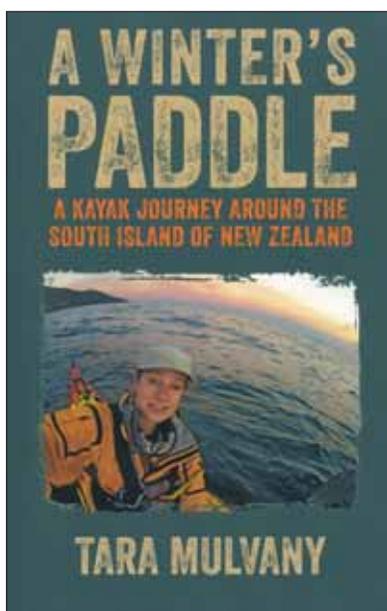
Through Tara's descriptive writing, you can almost feel the bite of the cold winter wind, hear the crunch

of ice under foot on a cold clear morning, and should I mention the urgency to pee? Even the potential for destruction by 'dumpers' is palpable, as is the sense of relief at making it safely to shore for the evening, or safely back through big waves for the next stretch of paddling. Through her story you enter her world.

This plucky young woman battled through storms, glandular fever and persistent sea-sickness to pursue and achieve her goal; to give up would be unthinkable. Tara chronicles the story of her journey, the hardship and beauty, with great skill and it is a good read.

Sporting an attractive cover with a selfie of Tara, I was disappointed that a low quality paper had been used for the content. The silky cover is a delight to feel in the hands but turning the page is not so appealing. I would also have preferred to see the text neatly justified to both left and right margins.

This is Tara's first book. Since writing this enjoyable account of her South Island journey, she has completed circumnavigations of the North Island and of Stewart Island. I now look forward to reading her future books.



Title: *Sticking With It*

Subtitle: *A sea kayak odyssey around Britain*

Author: Rowland Woollven

Published: 2013

Publisher: Matador

Contents: 230 pp, maps, b&w photos, two colour plate sections

Cover: softcover

Size: 130 x 198 mm (A5)

Price: £11.99

ISBN: 978 1 78036 227 0

Availability: Fishpond \$23.99; The Nile \$27.99

Review: Paul Caffyn

Despite a few niggles re the writing style and layout, I thoroughly enjoyed this book. After a 35 year career in the British Army, Rowland planned to paddle around mainland Britain, partly to see the coastline of his country and partly a desire to get inside the 'top 20' of paddlers to circumnavigate the 'olde country'. As commander of the Joint Service Mountain Training Centre, in which kayaking was included, his previous experience included kayaking expeditions to Alaska and British Columbia.

At a gathering of paddlers in Wales, he talked about those previous trips and his aim after leaving the army. He said he didn't mind if it was solo, accompanied, self supporting or a mix of those. Rowland was approached by an outdoor instructor, Cath Tanner, who said she would be interested in doing the trip. They settled on an early summer 2008 start from Ilfracombe in North Devon.

Surprisingly, with no previous paddling experience together, Cath and Rowland made a good team but there was an edge; Rowland had an AF condition, a heart problem where the top chambers of the heart go out of sync with the bottom ones. He had been cleared for the paddle by his cardiologist and GP, was on medication which generally controlled it, and made sure Cath was aware of the condition.

The first two chapters provide the 'genesis' and 'preparations' for the trip, then the narrative follows the daily grind of early morning starts,

rotten weather and long stretches of tidal flats to shore in the evening. Rowland touches on a bit of history, and mostly the good side of meeting locals on the way.

At Cape Wrath, after over-exerting himself running up to Cape Wrath to check on sea conditions, he had an AF event which required a helicopter medevac to hospital in Inverness. A night of drugs, needles and sleep effected recovery. It took six days to progress three miles on that northern coast of Scotland. A rotten run of weather marked 2008.

By 13 September, Rowland and Cath had notched up 1527 nautical miles but had only reached East Anglia, still well north of the Thames Estuary on the east coast of Britain. The forecast for the next five days was terrible, so after tears and talk, they pulled the pin. There is a telling photo of Rowland sitting against a concrete sea wall, chin in hand, looking morose, with a caption, 'The end of a dream...'

Rowland went through a bleak post-expedition period, not helped by criticism of some paddlers of his unfinished circumnavigation. Was his expedition a success or a failure? He considered giving up paddling and selling all his kayaking kit, but two mates encouraged him back into a kayak and he began to think about resuming the circumnavigation.

In 2011 Rowland teamed up with a paddling mate Barry, to return to Ilfracombe from East Anglia but the weather was terrible again. They managed only 287 miles in 20 paddling days, for an average of only 14 miles per day.

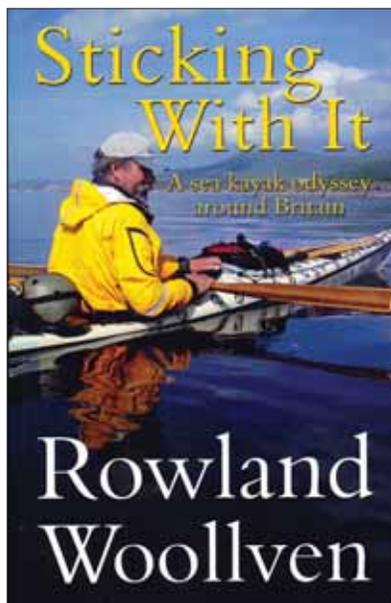
Still determined to complete the circumnavigation, Rowland teamed up again with Barry in late April 2012, this time with his Barry's wife Wendy. Despite more wretched weather and numerous nasty wet landings, they rounded Lands End, the SW tip of Britain, and with what must have been considerable relief, they reached Ilfracombe – for Rowland, this was after 224 days and 2118 nautical miles.

Considering I did this wee paddle back in 1980 with youngster Nigel Denis in only 85 days, I have nothing but admiration for Rowland in his determination and dogged persistence. Even though there was some doubling back to link in with previous paddling marks, not to mention the time taken, this was a remarkable paddle. He became the oldest at 58 years old, the 19th person to achieve the circumnavigation, and the first to use a stick (Greenland) paddle.

The story is well told, but the paragraphs are way too long. Some taking up most of a page. The maps are very basic with bugged all detail, but to scale. There are black and white photos pages, but mostly drowned in a sea of white with the paper quality losing definition. The choice of colour plates in two sections is good, but they are also drowned in a sea of white – they should have been bled out to the paper margin.

A preface quote from Audrey Sutherland, from her book *Paddling North*, notes: 'When I succeed, what next?' Rowland's last chapter 'Reflections' revisits this quote, and his last paragraph expresses his concern re the time and disruptions to his paddle:

However there still remains, if only in my head, that unanswered question; I know I have paddled around Britain, but have I completed a circumnavigation?

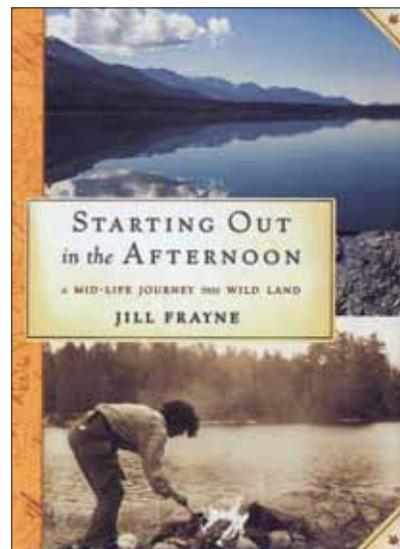


BOOK NOTES

Recent acquisitions to the 12 Mile library include:

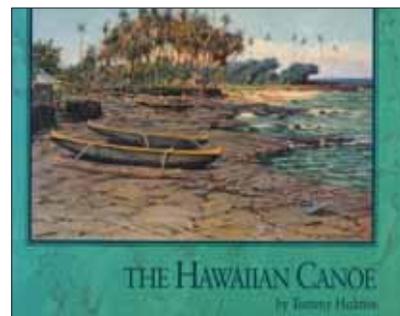
Starting Out in the Afternoon - A Mid-life Journey into Wild Land by Jill Frayne

This delightful book, published 2012 by Random House Canada, does not dwell too much on sea kayaking, other than a 15 days guided paddle in the Haida Gwaii (Queen Charlotte Islands) and a paddle on Lake Superior, but is mostly a story of a bust up from a long term relationship and a daughter about to leave home. Quite a personal journey of discovery, and learning about one's capabilities, dipping back into past loves, but rather good descriptive writing. The book design is also rather good, from a great dustjacket to the text layout. \$26.94 from The Nile.



The Hawaiian Canoe by Tommy Holmes

This 1993 2nd edition is a stunner in terms of words and photos. Coffee table size, a wonderful breakdown on the history from building the big double-hulled voyaging canoes, to canoe racing and surfing. Excellent bibliography and index.



HUMOUR

Sideline Abuse

At one point during a game, the coach called one of his 9-year-old baseball players aside and asked, "Do you understand what cooperation is? What a team is?"

The little boy nodded in the affirmative.

"Do you understand that what matters is whether we win or lose together as a team?"

The little boy nodded 'yes'.

"So," the coach continued, "I'm sure you know, when an out is called, you shouldn't argue, curse, attack the umpire, or call him a pecker-head, dickhead or asshole. Do you understand all that?"

The little boy nodded 'yes' again.

He continued, "And when I take you out of the game so another boy gets a chance to play too, it's not good sportsmanship to call your coach 'a dumb ass or shithead' is it?"

The little boy shook his head, "No".

"GOOD," said the coach.

"Now go over there and explain all that to your grandmother!"

Burial Plans

A man and woman were married for many years. Whenever there was a confrontation, yelling could be heard deep into the night. The old man would shout, "When I die, I will dig my way up and out of the grave and come back and haunt you for the rest of your life!"

Neighbours feared him. The old man liked the fact that he was feared. Then one evening, he died when he was 98. After the burial, her neighbours, concerned for her safety, asked, "Aren't you afraid that he may indeed be able to dig his way out of the grave and haunt you for the rest of your life?"

The wife said, "Let him dig. I had him buried upside down - and I know he won't ask for directions."

Sharp Thinking

A man is getting into the shower just as his wife is finishing up her shower, when the doorbell rings. The wife quickly wraps herself in a towel and runs downstairs.

The wife quickly wraps herself in a towel and runs downstairs. When she opens the door, there stands Bob, the next-door neighbour.

Before she says a word, Bob says, "I'll give you \$800 to drop that towel."

After thinking for a moment, the woman drops her towel and stands naked in front of Bob. After a few seconds, Bob hands her \$800 and leaves.

The woman wraps back up in the towel and goes back upstairs.

When she gets to the bathroom, her husband asks, "Who was that?"

"It was Bob the next door neighbour," she replies.

"Great," the husband says, "Did he say anything about the \$800 he owes me?"

Moral of the story:

If you share critical information pertaining to credit and risk with your shareholders in time, you may be in a position to prevent avoidable exposure.

My First Drink with my Son

I was reading an article last night about fathers and sons and memories came flooding back of the time I took my son out for his first pint. Off we went to our local which is only two blocks from the house. I got us some Fosters, he didn't like it - so I had his as well. Then I got us some Carling Black Labels, he didn't like it, so I had his again. It was the same with the 1664 Lager, Premium Dry Cider and all the other beers we tried. By the time we got down to the whisky I could hardly push the bloody pram back home.

Kids in Church

After the christening of his baby brother in church, Jason sobbed all the way home in the back seat of the car. His father asked him three times what was wrong. Finally, the boy replied, "That preacher said he wanted us brought up in a Christian home, and I wanted to stay with you guys."

I had been teaching my three-year old daughter, Caitlin, the Lord's Prayer for several evenings at bedtime. She would repeat after me the lines from the prayer. Finally, she

decided to go solo. I listened with pride as she carefully enunciated each word, right up to the end of the prayer: "Lead us not into temptation," she prayed, "but deliver us from E-mail."

A Sunday school teacher asked her children as they were on the way to church service, "And why is it necessary to be quiet in church?" One bright little girl replied, "Because people are sleeping."

Six-year-old Angie and her four-year-old brother, Joel, were sitting together in church. Joel giggled, sang, and talked out loud. Finally, his big sister had had enough. "You're not supposed to talk out loud in church." "Why? Who's going to stop me?" Joel asked.

Angie pointed to the back of the church and said, "See those two men standing by the door? They're hushers."

A mother was preparing pancakes for her sons, Kevin 5, and Ryan 3. The boys began to argue over who would get the first pancake. Their mother saw the opportunity for a moral lesson. "If Jesus were sitting here, He would say, 'Let my brother have the first pancake, I can wait.'" Kevin turned to his younger brother and said, "Ryan, you be Jesus."

A wife invited some people to dinner. At the table, she turned to their six-year-old daughter and said, "Would you like to say the blessing?"

"I wouldn't know what to say," the girl replied. "Just say what you hear Mommy say," the wife answered. The daughter bowed her head and said, "Lord, why on earth did I invite all these people to dinner?"

Unbearable

A bear walks into a bar and says to the bartender, "One schooner of beer please."

"So what's with the huge pauses?" asks the bartender.

The bear shrugs, "I dunno, had them since I was a cub."

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.

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4th Ed. KASK HANDBOOK

NOW OUT OF PRINT

A 5th edition of the KASK Handbook is planned. It is a mammoth compilation on all aspects of sea kayaking in New Zealand, by many of the most experienced paddlers in the Universe.

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www.maritime.govt.nz

**KASK Website
Kask.org.nz**



Dave Winkworth having a whale of a time of Mowarry Point, south of Boyd's Tower in Twofold Bay, southern NSW. 'The humpback whale's head had broken the surface directly (within 2 metres) in front of my kayak before submerging and gliding along just under my boat to re-surface behind me. Wow!'
Photo: Michael Johnston



An unusual photo from Swedish paddler Babs Lindman, of her cat Sigge who loves kayaks - not for the paddling itself but for the possibility to find new islands with new trees to climb

MAILED TO



**If undelivered, please return to:
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*Approaching Mowarry Point, NSW, during the Whale Warching Weekend (photo Kerrie Vogele)
See Dave Winkworth's story on page 12.*

KASK MEMBERSHIP POLICY

Current membership fees are:

- \$35 for ordinary membership
- for new members \$35
- \$40 for family or joint membership
- \$35 for overseas membership (PDF newsletter only);
- the KASK memberships 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

