

# NEW ZEALAND SEA KAYAKER

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





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## KASK MAGAZINE INDEX

The index from number 35 (December 1991) has been updated to No. 190 (September 2017) and has been loaded by Sandy Ferguson to the KASK website as a PDF file. The index is listed by alphabetical grouping, that is starting with B for book reviews. The index provides the magazine and page number for every article, thus allowing searching via the PDF files of each magazine on the website, from No. 35.

If you want the PDF file emailed to you, get in touch.

## EDITORIAL

Fancy the editor being a month late with sending the bi-monthly KASK magazine to the printer, the first time since 1991. My apologies. However I have a multitude of reasons for the late delivery; the two so-called ex tropical cyclones making landfall at the 12 Mile and creating substantial damage, then a long scheduled trip to Western Australia to do a keynote talk at a gathering of sea kayakers. A shortfall of articles and photos was also a good excuse.

## KASK AGM

President Tim Muhundan is stepping down at the forthcoming AGM to be held at the Plimmerton Kayak Fest. He has achieved quite a bit during three years, particularly building the social media links to KASK. Fortunately Tim is willing to remain on the committee for another year. Thanks Tim, for all your efforts to improve KASK and smoothly running of regular Skype committee meetings.

## Imperfect Storms

When it hit the 12 Mile, Cyclone *Fehi* had a really bad combination with a super-moon spring tide, exceedingly low barometric pressure and storm force northerly winds. The photo on page 4 was taken two hours before the top of the tide (with a comparison with normal weather and sea conditions alongside).

When 5 – 7 meter high waves began breaking over the roof, under the cottage and smashing into my ranch-slider glass with gravel, driftwood and seaweed, it was no longer exciting viewing. Fortunately I had 1.2 x 2.4 meter sheets of 12 mm ply which I clamped against the ranch slider

## COVER:

*Paddlers preparing to launch from the Maraunui Campsite on Lake Waikaremoana.*  
 Photo: Dennis Hynes

## Page 2 Top Left:

*Melanie Grant rounding Cape Stephens with Port Hardy in the background.*  
*See Max's story on an encounter with Cyclone Gita while paddling around D'Urville Island on page:7*  
 Photo: Max Grant

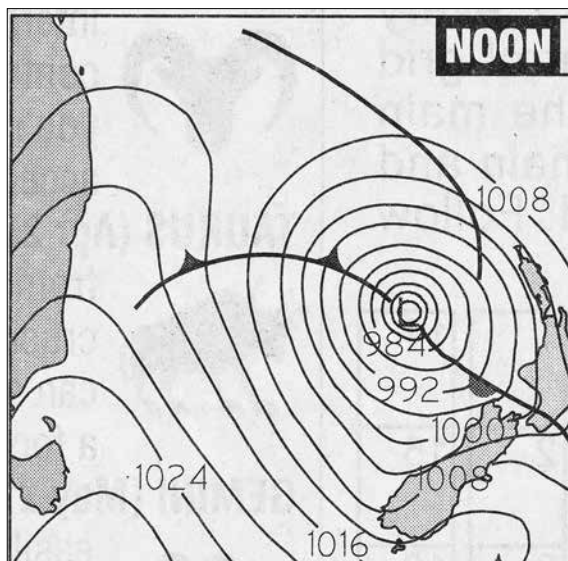
## Page 2 Bottom Left:

*Paddlers gathering in pods at the Western Australia Sea Kayak Fest 2018, preparing to launch for the Friday evening sunset paddle. See story on page 12.*  
 Photo: Paul Caffyn





*The view out through my ranchslider glass, a full two hours before high water, and the full impact of ex-tropical cyclone Fehi was felt. Given waves breaking over and under the cottage, it did not feel much like an ex-cyclone! The deck is eight metres above MHWS (mean high water springs). That is a splattered 'mosquito' from the tropics on the glass - well it might be in fact a sandfly. To the right, same view in normal sea conditions.*



*The weather map for midday Tuesday 20 February. TV One weather man Dan Corbett said the centre of this cyclonic depression was down to 952 mb. Fortunately I was in WA when this cyclone struck the West Coast - bits of clear roofing torn off, barge boards ripped asunder, and flashings stripped.*

glass. Without doubt, it was the strongest winds and biggest seas I have ever experienced after 34 years living at the 12 Mile. Sadly the worst damage was to the *The Snuggery*, a two-berth bunkroom with a steep stairwell leading down into the wine cellar. Massive seas carrying either big rocks or driftwood logs smashed sections of the sub-floor.

Cyclone *Gita* (see weather map above) made landfall with smaller tides, but stronger roof-stripping winds. In NSW for the evening, my mouth went dry when I learned by phone of this second 'weather bomb' about to impact the West Coast. Apart from smashing some sheets of *Nova lite* roofing, and other minor roof damage, my cottage got off lightly. Neighbors said the strength of the wind was far worse than that of *Fehi*, and taped windows with duct tape, due to the movement in and out of the glass.

Two ex-tropical cyclones within one month were a bit much to take, especially when the West Coast was promised a La Nina summer pattern. The previous most recent damaging cyclone to inflict massive damage on the West Coast was *Ita*, back in April 2014. I'm a firm believer in global warming caused by the human species, with both *Fehi* and *Gita* being examples of more severe annual weather events.

### WA Sea Kayak Fest 2018

A gathering of West Aussie paddlers in February was well attended, and the organization was superb, with some rather good ideas that KASK could use for its own future gatherings. See my story on p.12. One of the highlights for me on the way back to New Zealand was stopping off in Sydney to visit Vicki and Finn McAuley, and visiting Andrew's red kayak which is in storage at the National Maritime Museum.

### Paddling Technique

After a recent group paddle, Freya Hoffmeister posted her views on paddle choice and paddling technique on FB. Her words echo my thoughts on the most efficient form of paddle technique, with my only note of dissension being her comments on not using the cockpit back-band (strap).

Back in 2008, three ladies (and Barry Shaw) completed circumnavigations of the South Island, and I ended up with their three quite different paddles:

- Babs Lindman: a heavy, conventional fiberglass paddle
- Justine Curvengen: a four piece Lendal crank paddle
- Freya Hoffmeister: an *Epic* wing paddle (mid blade size).

When training for the 2008 East Greenland paddle on the Grey River, I tried out those three paddles, and the one I used for the expedition was Freya's wing paddle. It was the lightest of the three and I felt it would give me a slight advantage when trying to keep up with Conrad in Greenland.

Interesting that I can still learn to improve on my paddling technique. When taking a lass from Baltimore for a paddle on Lake Brunner, she was using a beautiful, lightweight four piece *Epic* wing paddle – even lighter than Freya's paddle. Catriona told me I was not using the wing correctly, and I had to lift each wrist higher, so it passed across at almost eye level. And it made a difference! I suggest we are not too old to listen to advice on how to improve our paddling technique. My thanks to Paul Hayward for suggesting the FB log for inclusion in the magazine.

### Thanks

My thanks to all those who helped at late notice to supply material to complete this magazine.

Safe paddling, and I hope to meet you at the Plimmerton Kayak Fest.

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## KASK - President's Report February 2018 by Tim Muhundan

This is a special and sad presidents report – as it is the final update I do as the KASK president. After 3 years as president, I will be stepping down on 4 March 2018. It has been highly rewarding three years and I met or talked to most of our members and got to know some amazing paddlers from all over New Zealand!

### What have we achieved?

Following the 2017 AGM, we reached out to our members to better understand what they wanted from KASK. With input from nearly 200 members through a member survey last year, the committee started the term with a strategy workshop to come up with the vision for KASK for 2018 and beyond:



We spent the year kicking off a few initiatives that were important to our members. Here is a summary of the outcomes we achieved that aligned with our vision:

**1. Membership:** We have reversed the declining membership trend from a few years ago, though our numbers have been stable for the last couple of years. We also contacted all the ex-members to find out why they left and we have learnt from some with feedback.

We will be continuing to improve the member joining and renewing experience and our processes.

**2. New Zealand Sea Kayaker Magazine:** Our main publication is our bi-monthly magazine. After recent change with our print going colour, we renamed it from *New Zealand Sea Canoeist Newsletter* to *New Zealand Sea Kayaker* last year.



Following feedback from members, we now offer members a choice of print, electronic version or both. KASK is extremely grateful to Paul for the excellent work in chasing material and editing and creating a quality magazine. He started with issue # 35. We are now on issue #192. Well done Paul!!

**3. KASK Sea Kayaking Handbook:** First published in 1996, the KASK Sea Kayaking Handbook has gone through five editions. We now have a cut down version of it available as a Web App. This will be launched at the AGM.



**4. Events:** Last year we did a major rethink of our event strategy. With the new branding of KASK Forum to KASK Kayak Fest we changed the emphasis to having fun, pushing boundaries and promoting excellence in paddling skills and leadership.



I am very grateful to Shaun Maclaren for driving the event strategy. I am also grateful to the 2018 Kayak Fest team for working so hard to make Wellington Kayak Fest 2018 event happen. Well done!

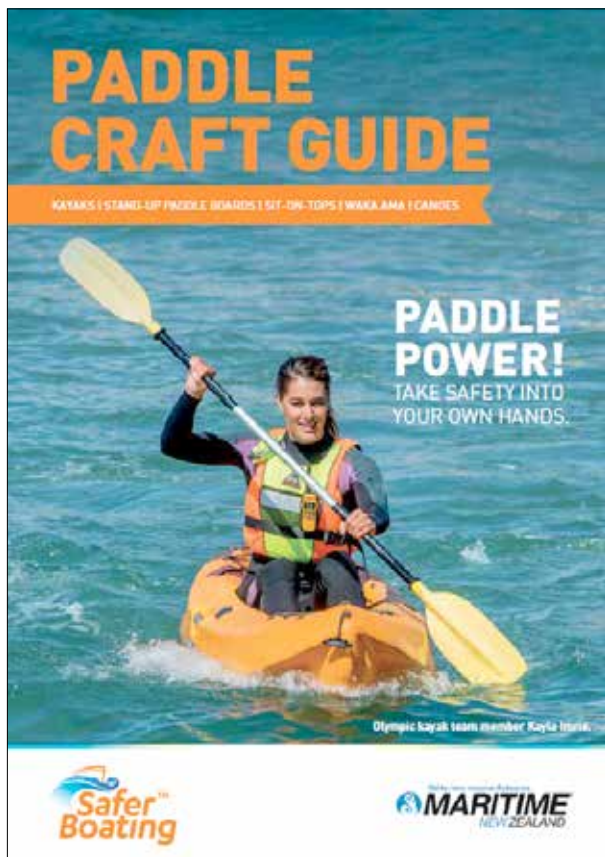
The Kayak Fest will run every two years from now on. The next Kayak Fest:

Venue: Urupukapuka, Bay of Islands, Northland  
Dates: Thurs 6 Feb – Sun 9 Feb 2020



**5. External Relationships:** We have been building our relationship with our external partners, agencies and clubs and been actively involved in various water safety initiatives such as Safe Boating Week.

Late last year, we worked with Maritime New Zealand and other Safe Boating Forum partners and councils to come up with Paddle Craft guide focusing on water safety. We will have the guides available at Kayak Fest 2018, if anyone would like a copy.



**6. Relationship with paddling Clubs:** This year we have been busy connecting with established and emerging kayaking networks and clubs. One of our initiatives is the new introductory affiliate membership for club members for clubs that want to be affiliated with KASK.

I am grateful to Steve Flack for getting this going and for signing the first club to be affiliated with KASK. If you paddle with a network or a club and want to be affiliated with KASK and take advantage of some of the benefits, please get in touch with KASK.

**7. Customer and member Relationship Management (CRM):** One of the initiatives that came out of the strategy workshop was that we could do a better job of managing our relationship with external organisations, our members and clubs. With the management committee changing regularly, having systems and processes to manage our external and member relationships is important for business continuity and risk management. We have been looking at various CRM systems to complement the Cloud-based platforms we already use

including Dropbox (collaboration), Skype (committee meetings), Mailchimp (Direct marketing) Google iSuite (email). We settled on Salesforce and we are super grateful to the CRM vendor for donating the \$24,000 license fee to help us out. The CRM implementation will be one of the projects for the incoming committee to continue and complete.

#### **8. Social Media and Web site:**

I would like to thank Sandy Ferguson who has done a fantastic job over the last decade with the Web and Rob Brown for moderating our social media channel and keeping it engaging.

Our primary Social media channel for members, the KASK [Facebook group](#) is still growing with over 700 active members. It is the place to turn to for answers to-sea kayaking related queries in New Zealand with members helping members.

#### **Thank you!**

A big thank you to all the members and community for the last 3 years as well as our lively committee of 10 made up of Peter Brooks, Rob Brown, Paul Caffyn, Lois Cowan, Sandy Ferguson, Steve Flack, Shaun Maclaren, Ian McKenzie and David Welch – most staying on in the committee for another year!

Happy Paddling  
Tim Muhundan  
President, 2015-2018

*President Tim (left)*



*Tim rolling with his new wing paddle*

## NEW ZEALAND REPORTS

### D'Urville Island Revisited

By Max Grant

See also photo on page 2.

Photos by Max and Melanie Grant

It was in 1992 when six members of the Ruahine White Water Club made their way around D'Urville Island. After 26 years of listening to her old man dribble on about what a great trip it was, Melanie had heard enough and had organized time off work and made ferry bookings for us both to take a week off to kayak around D'Urville Island. Unfortunately, as time drew closer, we realized that something else had a similar plan – Cyclone *Gita*!

Arriving at French Pass, an officer from DoC was busy organizing all campers and vehicles to be parked well away from the beach front. “We’re expecting large waves and very strong winds so there are to be no campers or vehicles within 20 metres of the beach”.

We’d come all this way only to be denied our paddle around D'Urville Island! Well, perhaps not.

I knew the owners of the ‘D'Urville Island Wilderness Resort’ at Catherine Cove, Judith and Dennis Andreassend. If we could kayak to the resort before Cyclone *Gita* arrived we could stay there until

the storm passed over and wait for things to settle.

So late in the afternoon of Monday 19 February, Melanie and I launched from French Pass for our week long paddle around D'Urville Island. Arriving at the resort, Dennis had already sorted out a good place where he felt our tents wouldn't cop the full force of the approaching storm. On Tuesday, the wind increased in strength as the day wore on, so it was a day of tramping and book reading to fill in time.

That evening Cyclone *Gita* arrived. It was not a good night for camping out, even in our very sheltered camp-site. As well as the strong winds, the rain bucketed down while claps of thunder and vicious lightning strikes were all around us. We didn't get any sleep that night, but our tents held together well in those torrid conditions and we emerged in the morning still dry and in one piece. The wind had dropped significantly and was pounding the western side of D'Urville. The eastern side of the island was reasonably calm so we decided to paddle up the shoreline staying close in where we were able to avoid most of the strong wind.

After a couple of hours paddling we had made good progress to Wharatea Bay, our designated lunch stop.

Although we had paddled through a couple of torrential down-pours, the sun was shining when we pulled ashore for lunch. During our 1992 trip we had stayed in a hut at the northern end of the bay. I was very surprised to find the hut was still there hidden in the bush. During the 1800s, Wharatea Bay was the home for at least two families and also a small school. The surrounding hills were now covered in bush and it was hard to believe people lived here not that long ago.

Around Old Man's Head and into Waitai Bay, where we saw a well-established homestead surrounded by some of the best looking farmland I've seen on the Island. This land was cleared by the Moleta Family who travelled out from Italy in the 1800s to settle in New Zealand, or *Nouva Zelanda* as they called it in Italian.

By mid-afternoon the rain had stopped but the sea was becoming rougher the closer we got to Cape Stephens. Just before Billhook Point, we paddled into a small bay with a place to camp so we immediately landed to set up our tents. That night had the worst weather I have ever camped out in. Large waves crashed onto our beach all night while there were great claps of thunder, some right above our tents, and rain, rain,

*Melanie Grant on the eastern side of French Pass, mainland to the left, island on right - keeping an eye on both the strong tidal streams and lowering clouds of Cyclone Gita – ‘The calm before the storm’. Photo: Max Grant*







*Melanie kayaking through Tunnel Point, just north of Wharatea Bay*

rain. Some of the lightning flashes were blinding! Apparently there was a seven metre swell hitting Stephens Island that night.

The next day the sea was far too rough to attempt to kayak, so we set off for a tramp around the top part of the island. The skies were blue and it looked as though Cyclone Gita had passed over. We had some great views of Stephens Island and Port Hardy as we explored the Island. I was surprised to see so much timber floating around in the sea, put there by Cyclone Gita, I assumed.

By the following day, the sea had settled enough for us to attempt to go around the top of D'Urville Island. After an hour we had rounded Cape Stephens and were kayaking towards Victory Island in Port Hardy. The wind was getting stronger and I felt I was at about my limit in these conditions and didn't like the thought of paddling down the western coast with this serious westerly crosswind.

By mid-morning we 'pulled the pin' and started on our retreat back



*Max looking north-east from D'Urville across windswept seas to Stephens Island*

around Cape Stephens and on down the eastern side of D'Urville. It was a hard decision as we had put a lot of effort into our trip and to realize that our main purpose for the trip would not be fulfilled, was a devastating blow.

On our return trip, we decided to call at Puangiangi Island, the largest of the Rangitoto group, to visit the house where Ross Webber had lived. Ross was more commonly known as the 'Hermit of Ruangiangi Island'. During our trip of 26 years ago, we had visited Ross, who had made us feel most welcome, and had invited us all in for a cuppa. In 2004 Ross sold his island and it is now looked after by a Trust.

As we walked up to the house I was thankful to see it all still looked in good shape. As I prepared to take a photo, I was surprised to see a person standing at the window. Back on the beach, there was a big sign saying



*Melanie rounding Cape Stephens*



*Melanie with Peter Gaze & Barry Dent doing some maintenance work at the Hermit's house on Puangiangi Island*

'No Landing Here'. I was keen to revisit Ross's house and decided to land and walk up the track for a look see. Cautiously I approached the front door and knocked. We were met by Peter Gaze who had a smile from ear to ear. "Kayakers" he said, "Come on in and join us for a cuppa".

Peter and Barry Dent were doing some maintenance on the house for the Fauna Recovery New Zealand charity:

<https://faunarecovery.org.nz/>

They were great hosts and we spent some time chatting about the islands and some of the local history. After thanking them, we left the island and with a good NW'ly breeze at our backs, we were able to make it back to French Pass by about 6:00 pm. French Pass was a mess, not only was there driftwood stacked high along the beach but also the cyclone had blocked up the sewage system so we couldn't use the showers and the camp toilets were out of action.

So our trip halfway round D'Urville Island was finished and although we didn't get to circumnavigate the Island, we had a most enjoyable trip and survived the full fury of Cyclone Gita.



*The 1992 RWC at French Pass: from left, Max Grant, David Herrington, Mike Tartellin, Bob Bell, Kerry Howe & Bill Anderson.*



## TECHNICAL

### Rolling by Andrew Osborn

I'm wet and cold, the world is a strange murky brown colour. There is water running up (down?) my nose and I can hear surf in the background.

How the hell did I get here? Even worse, why did I volunteer for it! My subconscious lizard brain is saying **PANIC** but my prefrontal cortex is saying: "Now, don't be silly Andrew: Remember what Pete told you:"

- twist and crouch
- legs locked against the inside of the boat
- paddle near the surface and parallel to it
- sweep – strong and long
- stretch out and lean well back
- pressure with the left knee
- a last flick with the paddle and up she comes!

Now I'm lying on the back deck of my boat, the right way up and I'm at Murray's Bay on the North Shore, along with several others of similar disposition also with salt water running out their noses.

Thus began our kayak roll training last summer. I'd previously been

able to roll, *just, sort of*, in a play boat but had never mastered a full sized sea kayak but now I can do it with ease from both directions using different methods.

In fact it's so easy now, what on earth was all the fuss about?

When autumn came we moved from Murray's Bay to the Millennium Pools. Every Monday for months we turned up, did our hour of practice and each time we became a little more competent. In the end if you want your roll to be instinctive (which is what it needs to be for when you really need it) then you need to repeat, repeat & repeat.

We all owe a Pete and Andy a great deal for their endless patience and for spending all that time with us. They have a very neat step by step process for developing your roll which works regardless of your skill level and confidence in the water. Some took longer than others but we all got there in the end.

For those of you that aren't yet rollers, I thoroughly recommend it. It will improve your confidence on the water, enable you to relax in bumpy conditions and give you the ability to tackle more advanced trips. It adds a whole new dimension to your kayaking experience.



Pool training for rolling -Peter Brooks in the cockpit and Andy Harding in the pool. Photo: Tim Muhundan

### How to Paddle Properly! From a Facebook Blog entry by the Goddess of the Seas (Freya Hoffmeister)

I'm just back from an exciting and for me very educative paddle with a large group of 20 along the Isle of Portland, in 20 - 35 knots SW wind with low seas.

We took off well-organized by Steve Jones with many experienced guys to shepherd the large group, and planned to stay in the shelter of the breakwater of the harbor as much as possible. All worked well, we traded paddles along, and I was answering many questions all day about paddling styles and whatnot.

I liked to stay on the back of the group, to watch people's styles and confidence, and enjoyed occasionally to paddle or surf up to the front of the long field, just to fall back again and to do the same all over again. This way, all people who liked to keep an eye were able to watch my forward paddling and open water surfing style.

During lunch break on a sheltered beach, about half of the group enjoyed having a go in my kayak and to try out my wings. I loved to see only beaming faces! Either for the reason of how different my *Freya 18* kayak performs compared to the common British rudderless, relatively wide in the front and rocker shaped hull sea kayak style. Or simply for the reason to take a nice souvenir picture.

On the way back, conditions got stronger with winds up to 25-30 knots on low seas, which was OK for most of the group. Just one lady was struggling behind to keep her rudderless skeg kayak pointed into the wind, while having to paddle hard, especially on the breakwater gap sections where the group was facing fully into the wind.

The group leaders decided to team her up with a strong paddler as a 'double kayak' to keep her kayak straight, and to match the group

speed better in the strong headwinds, which worked well for her and the two guys swapping in the lead of the tow.

I watched the group handling the strong winds, and would have loved to have been in charge of the tow myself to practise my experiences - but this was not my job today.

I feel like coming 'back into the lap of the family' after a decade of pilgrimage on my solo-expeditions - and being looked at as the 'messiahs' - I dare now to share a few messages

My first provocative statement, being in Britain, the Mecca of rudderless skeg kayaks most popular here is to say: 'I don't NEED a rudder (any more!). With a kayak equipped with a rudder, today's towing job might not have been necessary (that early).

My second provocative statement, being in Britain, the Mecca of rudderless skeg kayaks: If kayak beginners in the popular local coaching system would learn FIRST on flat water how to have an efficient, strong and healthy forward stroke (instead of having to learn first how to edge a kayak and to control it without a rudder), they might not be in the need to be towed so early on a windy group touring trip like today.

And many more paddlers, if their kayaks were equipped with a rudder, would also have enjoyed (more) to surf the waves downwind instead of taking the speed and fun out of the ride with the urgent need to perform a stern rudder to stay straight.

And then, I saw many too long paddles, too heavy paddles, too soft paddles, paddles with a 'cranked shaft' all attributes to prevent the performance of a proper healthy and efficient forward stroke at a good pace if necessary, which results in over-all safety on any trip. A cranked shaft is for me just a trial to work your way around an unhealthy, inefficient paddling style - provocative statement No.3.

So why not use a relatively short and stiff and lightweight paddle, no

matter if wing or flat or Greenland style? Despite, the most efficient blade shape is truly a wing - or have you seen an Olympic racers paddling something else? And I have no doubts those guys like to be most 'efficient' - and at the end they also obviously paddle fast.

You can perform the forward stroke style I describe now with any blade shape. Just the wing blade wants naturally to go where it needs to go - as well as you can perform badly with a wing paddle!

Guys, don't move your elbows on paddling, or you'll get tennis-and

golf elbows very soon:

- keep your wrists straight, keep a loose grip and open your hands frequently - or you'll get tendonitis very soon.
- stretch your forearms frequently to three different angles.
- keep your body straight upright with a slight 10° forward bent.
- don't crouch into your backband (it should not be a backREST) It is a kayak, not a grandfather-rocking chair.
- keep your arms in a box-position-



*Freya Hoffmeister on her way in to land at Okiwi Bay, at the end of her 2007 South Island solo circumnavigation. She is using her back-up wing paddle. Freya lost her paddle during a bumper dumper landing at the Wanganui River mouth. Months later Paul recovered the paddle and used it for the 2008 East Greenland paddle with Conrad Edwards. Although admitting to having gone to the 'dark side with a wing paddle', Freya will never get that recovered paddle back. Photo: John Kirk-Anderson*



width grip as an extension of your body with straight wrists and just slightly bent elbows.

- rotate your body while paddling to perform a skating-style stroke. The blade goes from the entry point at the very front out 90° wide to your side and ends there - instead of shoveling water behind you with a too long stroke and accordingly bent elbows and wrists.

It is not about the height of the stroke - your hands go above nose level when you like or need to sprint with an accordingly steep paddle stroke. Your hands are at nose level on a regular pace, and below nose level on a long-distance cruising pace with a low paddle stroke. Even when I lay almost on my front deck (it is good to be flexible) in strongest headwinds like today, I rotate my body and don't bend my elbows.

What I did not directly see on the water, but know is hidden under mostly every deck:

- tightly locked legs under fat thigh braces...provocative statement no.4 in the land of low-volume keyhole-cockpits:

- FREE your KNEES! - and let them be part of your efficient forward stroke! You are not likely to capsize all the time, where you might like to have a safe knee lock - it just gives you cramps and wastes a good lot of your available body power if your legs are not in use. Believe me - good surf ski paddlers with open cockpits and unlocked knees are able to handle larger conditions in a much more unstable and narrow kayak.

The whole movement of your best stroke is a blend of all those movements and positions - the tricky bit is to combine all of them! Watch videos of kayak or surf ski racers, they know how to do it!

## 'Kayak Dizziness' -from *The Arctic Year*\* by John Gumbley

"August is the month for kayak hunting. Day after day the calm weather encourages the hunters to go out to sea. The Eskimo way of catching seals from kayaks is to hurl a harpoon into the prey.

This manner of sitting in a kayak hour after hour, day in day out, without moving, is most fatiguing. Not only does a man tire bodily but mentally as well.

This condition of ... 'kayak dizziness' ... is caused by the sun shining on the calm sea which reflects into the eyes and at first makes a man sleepy, then dizzy. Without realizing it, the kayak hunter gets into a state of mind and forgets everything about him, and after a while he becomes completely immobile. He has no ability to move his arms and row; he has the feeling that his

kayak is sinking and the water is rising around him.

This dizziness can be dangerous, for the hunter cannot bring himself out of his frame of mind as long as the sea is smooth. The moment the slightest wind brings some movement to the water he is free of the spell. Also, if one of the hunters observes that a man is caught by dizziness, he paddles close to him and puts his hands on the end of the kayak or gives it a slight push with his oar. Then the spell is broken and the man is free ... often after a few such spells he fears to go out in a kayak again, even when the sea is rough. He can't help himself".

Each chapter of *The Arctic Year* is a month of the year and provides an interesting insight into Arctic wildlife and its people.

\*Peter Freuchen & Finn Salomonsen: *The Arctic Year*, 1959. Lowe & Brydone (Printers) Ltd, London.



### Note from the editor:

John Gumbley is referring to what is termed *Kajakangst*, or a Greenland paddlers' nightmare of disorientation on the sea.

For more information on the subject, there is an excellent paper written on the subject by John D. Heath, in the 1991 *Contributions to Kayak Studies*, Paper 122 published by the Canadian Museum of Civilization, pp 93 - 106.

I think that I nearly succumbed to this malady off the north coast of the Alaskan coast in 1991. It was a windless morning, the sea as flat as the top of a billiard table, but the issue in terms of visibility was a 'pea soup' fog which limited my vision to only as far as the kayak bow.

The sea was grey, the fog was grey and there was no distinct horizon line between the two. The sky merged into the sea as a grey curtain. Without a clear horizontal demarcation between sea and sky, just this grey pall, I was starting to sway left and right with each paddle stroke, almost to the point of capsizing. The only relief from this 'grey-out' was the occasional wind ripple or a tiny piece of sea ice floating as a reference point to a horizon.

I reckon that was close enough for me to call it 'Kayak Angst'.

## Overseas Reports

### WA Sea Kayak Fest' 2018 by Paul Caffyn

The 2018 Western Australian Kayak Fest was held at Grace Camp, on the shore of Geographe Bay, near Busselton, some three hours drive south of Perth. Sandy Robson was chief organizer and leaned heavily on myself, and David Winkworth from NSW to attend.

#### Dave and Paul's Tiki-Tour

As attending the 'Fest' involved three flights for me from Hokitika to Perth, I put a lean on Dave to share the cost of a camper van for a week prior to the kayak fest, to allow some tiki-touring down to Margaret River and out east to Albany - a chance for me to visit some of the landings and overnights from nigh on 36 years ago, during the 1982 Round Australia Kayak Expedition.

In a four berth camper van, we started the tiki-tour from Cape Naturaliste, and slowly worked our way south and then east, driving out to wherever there was access to the coast.

A rugged granite basement ridge topped with a cover of sandy limestone forms that south-west coastline of WA. When the sea level was much lower than now, prevailing winds blew shell grit and sand into colossal dunes, which over about some squillion years turned slowly into limestone. The coastline is just so spectacular with the brick red granite forming the battered shoreline, which is topped by vertical and overhanging cliffs of grey and yellow limestone.

Really strong south-easterly winds prevailed for days, leaving a heavy ground swell and white-flecked ocean. Off Margaret River, one of the best-known surf breaks in the world, the wind was too strong for the board surfers, but perfect for kite surfers. So impressive to see these men and women with their colourful airborne kites, zipping out the back,



*Dave hanging onto his hat as we walked down a boardwalk to the beach at the head of Peaceful Bay, Strong south-easterlies blowing.*

then slicing up and down on the big surf breaks. Talk about gutsy. I wondered how the surfers could get their kites aloft after getting a thrashing in the white water, but then Dave and I watched a bloke pumping up the leading edges of his 'kite' with a foot pump, thus giving flotation!

After a night in a beach-side caravan park at August, close to Cape Leeuwin, we turned east for Albany, with side trips into Windy Harbour - which lived up to its name - Peaceful Bay, Ocean Beach near Denmark and finally Albany. We swam, walked



*The leading marks which boaties (and kayakers) can now line up before entering the narrow reef-guarded channel leading to shore at Peaceful Bay. I wish they had been there in September 1982*

the beautiful sheltered beaches and I spent a lot of time just gazing at the big seas, the white-capping chop and pondering how gutsy Freya, Stuart and Jason were in their solo paddling voyages along that exposed coast. At least I had Andy and Lesley as support crew for moral support.

For example it is 63 miles (100 kms) from Augusta to Windy Harbour, the first sheltered lee landing to the east. Reading back through my diaries, I launched at 1:35 am for that wee paddle, spending the first four hours in darkness. Best of all from this recent trip was getting in touch with Ron Stemp, who hosted Andy, Lesley and I at his Windy Harbour holiday cottage. After nigh on 36 years, Ron and his wife still had the postcard we mailed to him at the end of the trip, and his memories of our evening together were a lot sharper than mine.



*No need for lawnmowers at the Ocean Beach caravan park.*

#### The WA Sea Kayak Fest

Grace Camp is a 'caravan park', with camping under shade shelter trees by the beach, caravans and bunkhouses. Those paddlers camping had superb views of the bay and a 20 metre stroll to the water's edge. Workshops and lectures were held in a large room adjacent to the kitchen or outside under the trees.





From left, Paul, Sandy Robson (who took the selfie and Dave Winkworth, at the WA Kayak Fest.

Friday evening began with seven paddler pods launching at staggered intervals and heading west for a sunset paddle – an excellent time for getting to know those in your pod, while cruising on a nice calm sea.

After a BYO BBQ, a big projection screen was slung under a tree, and Dave Winkworth presented his Powerpoint (PPT) show on ‘How to wrestle a crocodile and other useful skills’, a gruesome at times account of how, on a small coral island off the North Queensland coast, he saved his paddling mate from the jaws of a rather large croc.

From Dave’s Cape York Expedition article:

And then it happened. Arunas let out a cry - a half scream, half shout. He was on his feet, there was terror in his eyes as he looked at me. The surface around him was froth and foam, the sand all churned up. A big animal had him by the leg. Was it a shark? Was it a croc?

I jumped up and ran out into the water the 10 or so metres to him. Below the surface I could see the outline of this thing. It was a big crocodile, and it was trying to sweep Arunas off his feet in a death-roll.

Arunas stuck his fingers in its nostrils. It didn’t let go. He put his hands in the croc’s mouth, attempting to prise open the jaws, cutting his hand on a tooth. Still it wouldn’t let go, it’s teeth firmly embedded in Arunas’ right leg. I straddled the croc’s back and put my arms around its smooth hard belly and hung on.

Whether it was me on it’s back or not, we’ll never know - but it did



The outdoor setting for the WA paddle fest, with a home-made West Greenland skin kayak under scrutiny. Far right, behind the ladder is the screen slung from a tree, used for the magic evening PPT presentations.

let go. It shot through so powerfully with barely a flick of it’s tail, back out onto the reef from where it had come. I felt the curve of the croc’s body as it spat me off. THIS was a big hard strong animal.

For more of that story go here:

<https://nswskc.wordpress.com/page/91/>

Prior to Dave’s presentation was another good idea for KASK to pick up; this was screening the fest’ photo competition digital entries; no need to find a wall to display print copies. Each category had a title shot, then each of the entries rolled through for some 20

seconds. They rolled through continuously, allowing judges to assess their choice for awards, and all those attending to make their own paddler’s choice. Each category was assigned a separate judge, including Dave and myself, and this worked really well.

A broad mix of Saturday sessions all required loading kayaks and driving to various destinations to the south-west. Dave joined the ‘Eco-Explore Cape Ecology Paddling with Eco Purpose!’ paddle, led by Dr Ann Smithson and Sandy Robson. This has to be a first in my view for a kayak fest. Snorkels and masks were required for the underwater transects studying sea-grass and algae densities.

Following late arvo sessions under the trees, Greenland paddle building, simple food dehydration and sea kayak psychology, caterers provided hungry paddlers with pizza made on a trailer mounted wood-fired oven, with a good selection of Aussie beers and wines.

My Saturday PPT show was of the 2008 East Greenland paddle, again in the outdoor venue, after which the prizes for the photo competition were awarded - another lovely evening under the stars.

The Sunday program had the same format, with car shuttling for various



Paddlers preparing to launch for the Friday evening sunset paddle



WA expedition paddler Terry Bolland with Paul at Grace Camp.

paddling options, and afternoon on-land sessions, and afterwards Terry Bolland did a PPT show on a paddle across Canada.

After a few more sessions on the Monday morning, tents were dropped and the site clean up made, and farewells made to new paddling mates. Jointly organized by Paddle WA and Sea Kayak Club WA, it was a wonderful weekend, well organized by Sandy Robson, Paul Browne and Steve Foreman with some good ideas for KASK to pick up for its annual gathering.

Big mobs of thanks from Dave and I to Sandy Robson for enticing us into the hot climes of Western Australia.

And thanks to Dave for accompanying me and driving with our tiki-tour down to that gorgeous southern coast of WA.



Paul with Vicki and Finn McAuley after inscribing a copy of his Aussie book

### Sydney - On the Way Home

Dave and I caught a train up to the Blue Mountains on the Tuesday, and spent a wonderful night catching up with Vicki and Finn McAuley. I hadn't seen Vicki since the Invercargill inquest over 10 years ago, and was keen to meet Finn who now at the age of 14 is a rather good rock climber and has been touring overseas to play soccer. Vicki and Finn made us feel like part of the extended McAuley family that evening, and I was pleased to be able to sign one of my Aussie books to them both.

Back in Sydney for the day, we visited the Darling Harbour National Maritime Museum, with a contact from Vicki to allow us to view Andrew's kayak. Unfortunately his kayak was way up high in storage racks, and we could only view from through a re-enforced glass window. Still pretty moving for us both, as we had both paddled with Andrew. In a glass case, we were able to view a replica of *Casper*, the 'housing' or solid fibreglass cover that Andrew pulled over the cockpit at night.



Andrew McAuley's kayak in storage at the Maritime Museum in Sydney

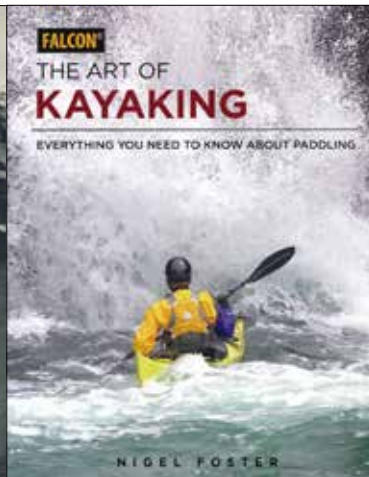
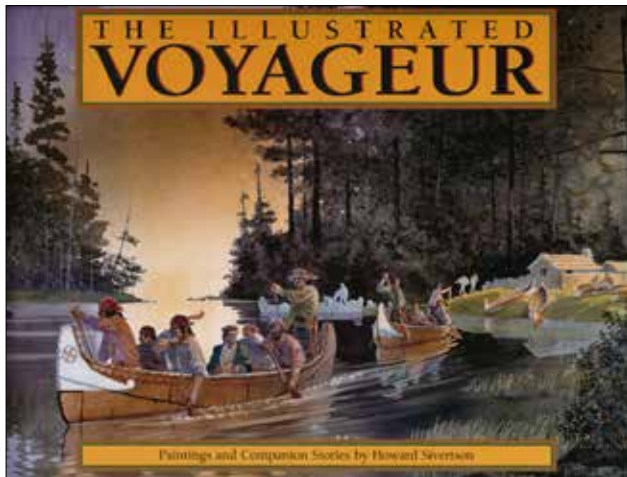
On the red kayak, only one of the two stainless steel rods, which allowed *Casper* to rotate forward, is clearly visible. Dave and I both feel certain that breakage of one of those two rods, three nights earlier, had led to the tragic VHF call for rescue that night off the entrance to Milford Sound.

What really brought home to me the gutsiness of Andrew's Tasman Crossing attempt was the size of his *Mirage* kayak. It looked to me just like a normal single cockpit kayak, and so small in comparison with the *Lot 4*, which is on public display on the ground floor of Shed 7 at the museum. The kayak used by Castrisson and Jones for their paddle across the Tasman.



Paul viewing Lot 4 on the ground floor of the Maritime Museum

Some of the new titles added to the 12 Mile library from Book Depository.





## Overseas Reports

### Yasawa Islands, Fiji by Margot and Peter Syms

I opened my eyes and thought, “Shit. Have we got to paddle in these conditions for eight days?”

The fast-cat ferry, the *Yasawa Flier*, had left Nadi in flat calm conditions and I had dozed off and awoke as we reached the southern tip of the Yasawa Group. It was blowing a good 25 knots - the sea was the most gorgeous blue with a good chop and plastered in whitecaps. The *Flier* had to motor into the lee of the island to discharge some passengers into a resort long boat.

We were finally realising an intention to paddle in the Yasawa Island Group of Fiji (see map) after the recommendation of some Canterbury kayakers years ago. The Yasawas lie about 60 kms to the north-west of Fiji's main island, Viti Levu. So the south-east trade winds, when they get to the islands, have been influenced by the big island.

The Yasawa Group do not get a lot of rain in this season - the hills can brown off, and water is precious. We had to carry water between accommodation places. The islands

are a great place to kayak with intricate islands, warm water to swim at every stop and good snorkelling at many places. We paddled three to five hours per day. The islands do have a large number of resorts, but fortunately these are camouflaged somewhat by that very useful tree, the coconut palm.

Ours was a guided trip with five clients, Jo Kay and ourselves from Nelson and a like-minded, and aged, couple from Aussie. The *Flier* dropped us into a long boat by Tave-wa Island, and after the outboard was finally started - at least there was land to leeward - we were dropped at our base there. We familiarised ourselves with our kayaks and the wind, albeit in the enclosed waters of the *Blue Lagoon* (of film fame).

Fortunately, the answer to my eye-opening question was, ‘No!’ The wind dropped over the next two days and we had calm paddling after that, even if the wind did blow like hell some nights. On our first paddling day we did a day trip circumnavigating Mata-cawa Levu Island, minimising our exposure to the still-strong winds.

We were amused by the fish called ‘long toms’. They are about 20 cms long, and when attempting to escape perceived danger, emerge from the water at great speed and skim along the surface with the bottom of the tail just in the water.

They could travel for about 10 metres before re-entering the water, hopefully evading a predatory mouth in the process. Unfortunately, the danger from us did not lie below the water, and occasionally they would smack into the side of a kayak, or even a paddler.

For the next three days we headed north. We stayed two nights camping at the Navotua Village with our own kitchen bure and composting toilet. While here, we were shown around the village and plantations, and were entertained by small school children singing, as well as by adults with singing and dancing, and a kava ceremony. Village etiquette requires that no hats are worn, even in boiling hot sunshine, and that women wear a sarong at all times when out of the kayaks. I struggled a bit to get my sarong to stay on properly at first, despite some tuition from Jo, but I had fortunately mastered it by the entertainment evening when we participated in some rather vigorous dancing. For safety, I had shorts on underneath!

As a day trip from the village we paddled to Sawa-I-Lau Island, a high limestone island (rare in the Yasawas) that can be seen from afar. Here there are some very tall limestone caves, partly underwater, which are a guided tourist attraction you can visit with your mask and snorkel. But you do need to time your visit between boats from the resorts.

It was here we first realised how old we seemed to the Fijians to be in terms of being active tourists. Caucasians as a race do turn grey a lot younger than other races, and we

*Sawa-i-Lau - wave cut notches in the limestone. As a day trip ...*



# Yasawa Islands



Map of the Yasawa Island chain by Peter Syme

were no exception. The cave guides were amazed to learn that we were to paddle to the southern tip of the Yasawas.

Later a village mayor could not resist asking how old we were, and we made him tell us his age in return. Then at the final resort when one of the Fijians asked if he could ask me a question, I laughed and said that I knew what it was. I don't think Fijian women, or men for that matter, are flitting around in kayaks in their 60s. And they are used to older tourists slothling in resorts not kayaking the length of the island chain.

We returned to our Tavewa base completing a circumnavigation of Nacula on the only damp day we had all trip. It seemed strange to be wet and still warm, coming from a climate where wet warns of hypothermia.

One upsetting thing was the amount of plastic rubbish on the beaches – bottles of all shapes and sizes, jandals, etc. Real 'Plastic Ocean' territory. On one point where we stopped for lunch on a beautiful sandy beach, it was particularly bad. The location in the currents must have made it a preferential catching area. In front of the resorts the beaches are clean, raked even, but cleaning up does not extend further.

In the tropical heat, food does not keep well, and dividing the trip into two sections, north and south of the Tavewa base made a lot of sense and we ate well all trip – helped by the fact that our guide had been a chef. Fresh provisions were delivered there from the mainland while we were away north. The tropical fruit was fantastic – pineapples like you do not taste in NZ, papaya, bananas, etc. Although we did have a bag of NZ apples with us, which lasted surprisingly well.

The kayak company also offers a shorter trip, which visits the general area that we had visited so far. Graeme Muir and Jane Wickham, also from NCC (Nelson Canoe Club), had done one such trip just a few weeks before.



Jo pounding kava root for the feast

For the second half of the trip, we headed for the south of the Yasawa Group. The first day we paddled to the southern tip of Yaqeta Island, where we had lunch and a snorkel, then across the open passage to Naviti Island in calm conditions. The tide was in so we could go inside a chain of little islands to our camp. This was the only night where we were not in habitation, but people turned up to check us out and make sure we were supposed to be there. Dinner included a Spanish mackerel, caught and cooked on embers by our Fijian guide. It was delicious.

Although the tidal range is quite small (about 1.5 m), the shallow parts of the coral reef are exposed at low tide. As in many places, these can extend quite a way from shore, it can be difficult to land during the lower part of the tidal cycle. The villages and resorts are largely located with deeper water access, but stopping at a quiet spot for a break is not always simple. And walking over coral, particularly carrying a boat is detrimental to the health of both coral and humans.



Margot, Marn, Jo well-dressed at Wayalevu





*A corrugated iron kayak and snorkeller - Our final day ....*

Next morning we left on a dropping tide and paddled south along the east coast of Naviti Island. There are numerous shallow reefs here and for much of the way, so we had to keep well out from shore lest we get stranded. Finally on a point on the south of Naviti, we could stop for a relaxed lunch and the regulation snorkel. From there, a short hop across to Drawaqa Island where we camped in the grounds of the Barefoot Manta resort. We could use their facilities and dined there too.

The channel between Naviti and Drawaqa Islands is often visited by manta rays, and you can imagine how much peace these get to go about their filter feeding. When any are sighted the word goes out and boats appear from the surrounding resorts to let tourists gawk at and snorkel alongside the rays. As we were departing the following morning, a manta about four feet across got the full attention, and we paddled over to see it and people in the water barely a yard from it swimming along with it. Mantas have no sting in their tail. Respect? Regulations? More like a free for all.

After tiki-touring around the small islands to the south of Drawaqa, all well endowed with resorts, we started on our longest crossing to Waya Island. The 25 knot winds were a distant memory as the light breeze died off, and a couple of our blokes dived overboard mid-channel for a cooling swim and Jo put her pump to good use to give herself a cold shower.

Waya Island, being both large and high (567 m), has a few springs which flow all year round (unique in the Yasawas). The village of Wayalevu boasts a flush toilet with a leaky cistern in the hall where we stayed. After settling in and a late lunch, we had a guided tour of the plantations which also gave us some needed leg exercise as it was uphill. We also visited the spring itself, then were treated to freshly made lemon drink before returning to our hall just on dark.

Our final day on the water had a fun start as the beach was steep with round stones. The kayaks had to be held, once loaded, to avoid them self-launching sans paddler. We observed the local kayak-types in use

as support boats for reef fishing. These are made of corrugated iron with no built-in buoyancy. If you tip over, your kayak heads for the bottom of the sea, and you are left with only a paddle. And of course, no life-jacket as that would make you look un-manly.

Between Waya and Wayasewa Islands is a sand spit covered only at high tide. We had a break and a swim here and pulled our boats across the spit. A longboat of locals arrived and asked our help to pull their boat across. Our destination was the Kua-ta Island Barefoot Resort. We delayed our arrival so the tide would be higher by having a long lunch plus snorkel and a circumnavigation of the island. Our night at the resort was definitely glamping, in a 'tent' unit which was a large room with double bed and an ensuite.

You could kayak the Yasawa Group unguided, but there are a few things to bear in mind. You would need to take your own folding/inflatable kayak as there are no kayaks for hire there (except sit-on-tops at the resorts!).

Accommodation would have to be planned and pre-booked. You cannot just rock up somewhere and put your tent up – all land is owned by Fijians and you need to observe the protocols. A local is likely to turn up at what you think is the most isolated place. However there is accommodation aplenty in the form of resorts which range from not-cheap to exorbitant. And also the Fijian villages are catching on to 'homestays', both villages we visited (Navotua and Wayalevu) offered this.

Margot Syms



*Wahoo cooking on the embers*



*Moonlit kayaks at Wayalevu village - Waya Island*

## Overseas Reports

### WEST ISLAND BITS

January 2018

by David Winkworth

A Happy New Year to you all! 'Hope you get to do all the trips you've dreamed of! Here's one you might consider:

#### Keppel Sea Kayak Symposium

This is a great event - no question about it! Held over four days at the North Keppel Environmental Education Centre about 15 kms off the coast from Yeppoon, Queensland. It's limited to 50 people only. Pretty exclusive! Accommodation is in nicely finished huts and all meals are provided in the newly extended dining room.

There are paddles all around the islands and lots of instruction if that's what you want plus swimming/snorkelling in warm water and island walks on the numerous tracks. We usually paddle out to the island and back from Yeppoon but if the weather is against us then there's the centre's big aluminium catamaran to get there. The cat carries all our gear out the island too. How good is that! Dates for this year's event are 14 to 17 June. Check out Paddle Capricornia on Facebook.

#### Setting Records in Sea Kayaks

I am over this - really! What is the point in setting a time record for a circumnavigation or an expedition in a sea kayak? I still see it occasionally - someone claiming a time record to go from A to B in their sea kayak.

Sea kayaks are not race boats are they? Push your boat hard and it gets all sullen around 10 to 11 kms / hour and it just will not go any faster no matter how hard you try. I generally give up and revert to a comfortable cruising speed. Then I get to look around, enjoy the views and generally smell the roses!

I draw a distinction here between a first circumnavigation of an island and a time record to do the trip. First

circumnavigations in a sea kayak are special - no doubt about that. Sometimes there are huge obstacles and logistics to overcome along the way. Paul Caffyn's round Australia paddle and the three overnight cliff sections immediately come to mind.

On my local paddling coast, we have some cliff sections with the most impossibly, beautiful rock folds. Couple this with generally gin-clear water and close in to the cliffs is a beautiful paddle. Yet I often take paddlers along these sections who insist on 'point to pointing' them well out to sea. Maybe they're trying to set records too!

#### PFDs in NSW

The Waterways (rangers) guys in NSW are fierce. We now have full-time PFD laws in NSW. You have to wear a PFD no matter where or when and all the time. I'm opposed to the recent changes but what I say doesn't really matter does it!

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull is a sometime paddler - mainly on Sydney Harbour I think - and he was recently picked up for not wearing a PFD. You've got to feel sorry for him really. The Waterways guy had no choice but to book him. He was fined a few hundred bucks.

A local paddling friend of mine was picked up twice for not wearing a PFD. Luckily for him he was not fined - bloody lucky I reckon!

Don't chance it over here. Wear the PFD and smile at the nannny state gods.

#### Kayak Seat Heights

I find this very interesting: we go down to the local kayak shop and do a short test paddle in the boat that takes our fancy. The kayak is empty and it feels OK on the water so we plonk down the dollars and take the shiny new boat home.

Then we fill it right up with gear and start doing trips with mates. Hmm, it feels very different! Maybe it doesn't run as well, catch waves or the paddling doesn't feel as nice as it did at the shop.

Of course you can't do much about the weight and the reduced free-board, but what interests me is the changed relationship between you - the paddler - and the water. You're now sitting perhaps 50 mm lower and maybe you're now flicking water on the return stroke with your paddle and you just don't feel like you're 'over' the paddle like you did in the empty boat!

You're not alone! It happens to all of us and it could be time to do something about it. A trip in a loaded kayak is just the occasion when you want good efficiency.

So, what to do about it? You could shorten your paddle perhaps if you have a length-adjustable shaft. Maybe not ideal in that it will force you into greater torso rotation that you might not like or you could look at raising your seat. Considering that your kayak is loaded and feeling like a bit of a barge, stability is not a problem.

How to raise the seat and still be comfortable could be a problem and your seat material is an issue here too. A fixed fibreglass seat makes it difficult I know. I use foam seats that attach to the hull with *Velcro* so adding a 20 - 25mm foam spacer sheet is relatively easy. There's a changed relationship with the back-band and thigh braces to accommodate but it's showing promise. It's all about efficiency and staying safe on the ocean. I'll keep you informed.

#### Big Surf

Over here on the NSW south coast we've just had a couple of days of huge, huge surf on our beaches. Paddling on the ocean was waved away of course but like many locals I visited a couple of beaches and river bars where I often launch and return to shore for a bit of a look. Funnily enough I found myself assessing the surf for breaks in the sets of waves and the possibility of getting out through it:

"Yep, get through that one OK - roll in front of the next one. Sit there - more coming. Roll again - move out one more break. Wait again. Bugger! Roll again. A lull!



Go you bastard! Keep going hard! Airborne over that big one, brace for the landing I'd reckon and out through it." Piece o' cake!

Do you ever do that? It's a good fun exercise while safe and sound on-shore!

I'm reminded of a past tough trip where two of us sat just past the in-shore breaks looking seaward at the big surf that confronted us.

"Dave, what happens if one of us can't get out through that?" shouted my mate.

"The fellow out there will have to come back," I smiled.

"That's good enough for me," he replied, and spun his kayak to return to the beach.

We enjoyed a nice cuppa on the beach that morning!

### Paddle Length

How long is your paddle? Have you ever run a tape over it to check - or maybe compared your paddle with a mate's? THAT is a good thing to do.

Over the years I've found paddle lengths coming down which is pleasing to me. I make paddles and I used to have to order long shafts to accommodate people's wishes. Now I no longer need those longer shafts. I haven't made a paddle over 212 cm for about five years. The average length paddle I now make would be 208 cm. Quite a change!

I recently did a four day trip with a friend who was using a paddle of 220 cms. That's a long one these days yet I still see many of them at that length for sale in the shops and in catalogues. I do regular shortening of paddles for paddlers, but it's not ideal and adds some unnecessary weight.

So, my friend - she isn't tall so the paddle length coupled with her reach limitation compounded her problems. I observed her often paddling in a 'high gear' - that is with hand grips closer together than ideal and compromising paddling effort with the heavily loaded boat. Also, due to the paddle length, she was forced into a relatively low angle stroke to stop the blades going too deep. The



*Dave Winkworth demonstrating paddle bracing at the recent WA 2018 Sea Kayak Fest*

low angle stroke moved the blades further out from the boat, increasing the turning moment of the action. Her torso rotation was also reduced bringing her bicep muscles into play more. Biceps will not cut it all day in a sea kayak. They are just not strong enough.

Can you see her paddling problems compounding and giving her much reduced average speed and efficiency?

So, what's the ideal paddle length? Well, my thoughts are that it varies with:

- a paddler's torso length
- arm reach
- overall height
- boat type.

My paddle is 210 cms long and I'm 188 cms tall. I could go down another centimetre quite easily too. The longest paddle I've made for a tall woman is 208 cms.

Are you wondering about the advantages of a shorter paddle? Here's a few:

- shorter paddles let you rate higher
- You may not want to all the time but the ease of doing so is there
- shorter paddles encourage torso rotation. To get that blade fully immersed, your top hand should definitely cross the centre line of the kayak. This helps with a higher angle stroke, the blade moving out from the kayak in a sculling motion as you rotate. Good torso rotation brings your abdominal muscles into play. They are strong muscles - and who knows - you may even develop a six pack!
- shorter paddles let you easily get the blade in close to the kayak to start the stroke - less energy-sapping turning moment.

Get that tape measure going!

### Rolling

Last issue, John Gumbley wrote a piece on rolling for fun. Great article John! It is fun isn't it!

I'd just like to back up a few things in John's article and add one or two more if I may. Perhaps if I do it in point form:

- forget the hip flick! Too much to think about when upside down and the water is bubbling up your nose. It can come later. Rolls still work very well without a hip flick.
- wear a mask and practice in clear water. Make it easy!
- take your time. Sea kayaks take a little time to roll over so don't be in too much of a hurry. Loaded kayaks take even longer
- a good roll FEELS good! If you have to 'muscle up' you've mucked it up!
- analyzing the roll on the living room floor is difficult. Get in the water and just do it!
- your head position is the key to an easy smooth successful roll! It needs to be either way back looking at the sky behind you when you finish OR looking at the bottom. One of Newton's Laws comes in here. If your head is up - and it's quite natural to want to get your head up - your body is down (equal and opposite reaction etc.) and the roll will feel difficult or fail
- when you're learning or practicing - try thinking of ONE thing only as you roll: head down, sweep the surface - whatever you think is a problem for you.
- it IS fun!

We'll do some rolling at the Forum. See you there.



*Dave enjoying a day paddle off the coast of New South Wales*

## Book Review

**Title:** *Crocodiles and Ice*

**Subtitle:** *A Journey into Deep Wild*

**Author:** Jon Turk

**Published:** 2016

**Publisher:** Oolichan Books Fernie, British Columbia, Canada

**Website:** www.oolichan.com

**Contents:** 293 pp, no maps, only chapter heading b/w photos

**Cover:** softcover (paperback)

**ISBN:** 978-0-88982-323

**Size:** 138 x 204 mm

**Price:** US\$ 19.95

(NZ \$24.31 Book Depository UK)

**Review:** Kay Costley

We find Jon Turk in a hotel room in the Solomon Islands stuck to the sheets with blood from wounds sustained in a crocodile attack, which we discover further down the line – after many digressions and remembrings – that he badly grazed his backside when he came off a moped on an island road!

I never quite knew where I was reading this book as it comes from many places, the scientist, the philosopher, the experimenter, the spiritualist and the adventurer. Jon has had a great number of adventures in his life and is continually seeking – and sometimes finding – the Deep Wild, the close spiritual link he believes humanity used to have with the earth/planet and the ancient wisdom/magic that bond contains.

From kayaking in the Pacific Islands – where he discovered that if you wash your face in the water where the crocodile lives, it will recognize you and not attack; to an encounter with a great white wolf at 80° North – where after acknowledging to the wolf that they were both creatures of the ice and fellow travellers, the wolf followed him back to the camp where it ‘became woven into a tapestry of all the animate and inanimate forces around us’, forces that could change any second; to bicycling across the Himalayan Plateau with an ex Mao Tse Tung propagandist, seeking the Dalai Lama’s birthplace and confronting the hugely devastating effects that technology and pro-

gress have had on a people and their land.

Jon’s basic premise is that the greater part of humanity is too rooted in technology and too distant from the subtle, intangible, and inexplicable secrets of nature to make the spiritual/consciousness changes necessary to prevent the destruction of ourselves and our planet.

He believes that the way forward is the through a Consciousness Revolution based on a deep, reciprocal communication with the Earth understanding and rediscovering the intimate, life-supporting, reciprocal synergy that existed in our aboriginal ancestors and the natural world and then assimilating that synergy into a sane and sustainable 21st century society.

In conclusion, there is a lot to think about as you read this book. I picked it up and put it down and thought about what was being put forward as a philosophy. Our lives have become increasingly busy and we have lost the ability to be still or to be without input. Even when we are in a

### Editor’s Note on *Crocodiles and Ice*

Jon Turk has three previous books still in print or reprinted:

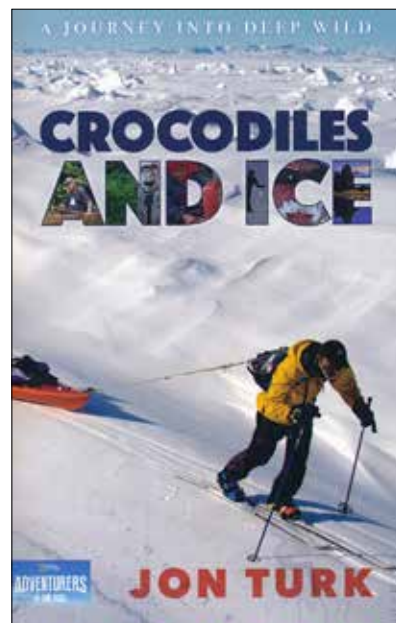
*Cold Oceans* 1998

*In the Wake of the Jomon* 2005

*The Raven’s Gift* 2009

All these three books have been reviewed in the KASK mag. When I saw the title of his fourth book, I did go on-line and purchase a copy, expecting some serious paddling in ice and encounters with a crocodile. The ‘Croc Attack’ chapter opens when Jon wakes up with blood-soaked sheets in a sleazy Solomon Island hotel, and I assumed this was the result of a nasty encounter with a croc.

It was all ‘bollocks’ so to speak. The closest Jon got to a croc was seeing tracks on a beach and a pair of yellow eyes in the bush! The blood soaked sheets were due to a previous mountain bike accident and choosing a poorly fitted sit-on-top kayak for his Solomon Islands paddle.



place of natural stillness or beauty we struggle to be in the present and experience the here and now – we have become disconnected from Nature. ‘Pay attention and we will value nature more. When we value nature more, we work harder to reverse its declines’ (JB McKinnon). It is about being open to other ways or paths, to other realities, to other ideas and to find space in our lives to experience our own Deep Wild.

To me it felt like the worst con since Eric the Red tried to convince the Norse population of Iceland that the promised land to the west was so wonderful, it was called Greenland.

The book mid-section discusses a bike ride in Tibet. The third section describes a kayak drag over frozen sea ice and snow around Baffin Island. It is not sea kayaking as I know it. Timing of the paddle, or choice of partner!

Then a very expensive med-evac from Baffin Island due to the fact he can’t pee. Jon blames the physical stress of man-hauling the laden kayak for the bulk of this Baffin Island ‘circumnavigation’ for his urethra shutting down. His own diagnosis differs from that at the doctors treating him.

The only positive for me out of this book was ensuring I took a catheter down to the Antarctic Peninsula and had learned how to use it. If you are after a gripping sea kayak narrative, save your money.



## HUMOUR

### Business Trip

A man returns home a day early from a business trip. It's after midnight. On the way home, he asks the cabby if he would be a witness. The cabby agrees for \$100.

The man suspects his wife is having an affair, and he wants to catch her in the act.

Quietly arriving home, the husband and cabby tip toe into the bedroom. The husband switches on the lights, yanks the blanket back, and there is his wife, naked as a jay bird, with a man also nude. The husband puts a gun to the naked man's head. The wife shouts, "Don't do it! I lied when I told you I inherited money. He paid for the Porsche I gave you. He paid for your new 25 ft Ranger Fishing Boat. He paid for your Football season tickets.

He paid for our house at the lake. He paid for your golf trip to St Andrews and your new 4 x 4. He paid for our country club membership, he even pays the monthly dues. And because of HIM, I put an extra \$2,000 in our bank account each month."

Shaking his head from side-to-side, the husband lowers his gun.

He looks at the cabby and says, "What would you do?"

The cabby replies, "I'd cover him with that blanket, before he catches cold."

### Kids 1

An nursery school pupil told his teacher he'd found a cat, but it was dead.

"How do you know that the cat was dead?" she asked her pupil.

"Because I pissed in its ear and it didn't move," answered the child innocently.

"You did WHAT?" the teacher exclaimed in surprise.

"You know," explained the boy, "I leaned over and went 'Pssst' and it didn't move!"

### Kids 11

One day the first grade teacher was reading the famous story of *Chicken Little* to her class.

She came to the part of the story-where Chicken Little tried to warn

the farmer. She read, "... and so Chicken Little went up to the farmer and said, "The sky is falling, the sky is falling!"

The teacher paused then asked the class, "And what do you think that farmer said next?"

One little girl raised her hand and said, "I think he said, 'Holy shit! A talking chicken!'"

The teacher was unable to teach for a few minutes.

### Maths

A little boy was doing his math homework. "Three plus six, that son of a bitch is nine...."

His mother heard what he was saying and gasped, "What are you doing?"

The little boy answered, "I'm doing my math homework, Mum."

"And this is how your teacher taught you to do it?" the mother asked.

"Yes," he answered.

He said to himself, "Two plus five, that son of a bitch is seven. Three plus six, that son of a bitch is nine...."

Infuriated, the mother asked the teacher the next day, "What are you teaching my son in mathematics?"

The teacher replied, "Right now, we are learning addition."

The mother asked, "And are you teaching them to say two plus two, that son of a bitch is four?"

After the teacher stopped laughing, she answered, "What I taught them was, two plus two, the sum of which, is four."

### Cross Examination

Lawyers should never ask an old grandma a question if they aren't prepared for the answer. In a trial in a small outback town, the prosecutor called his first witness, a grandmotherly, elderly woman who had lived in the town all her life, to the stand.

He approached her and asked, "Mrs Jones, do you know me?"

She responded, "Why, yes, I do know you, Mr Williams. I've known you since you were a boy, and frankly, you've been a big disappointment to me. You lie, you cheat on your wife, and you manipulate people and talk about them behind their backs. You think you're a big shot when you haven't the brains to realize you'll

never amount to anything more than a two-bit paper pusher. Yes, I know you."

The lawyer was stunned. Not knowing what else to do, he pointed across the room and asked, "Mrs Jones, do you know the defence lawyer?"

She again replied, "Why yes, I do.

I've known Mr Bradley since he was a youngster, too. He's lazy, bigoted, and he has a big drinking problem. He can't build a normal relationship with anyone, and his law practice is one of the worst in the entire state. Not to mention he cheated on his wife with three different women. One of them was your missus, and one your daughter. Yes, I know him alright."

The prosecutor nearly died.

The judge asked both prosecutor and defence lawyer to approach the bench and, in a very quiet voice, said, "If either of you two bloody idiots asks her if she knows me, I'll send the both of you to the electric chair."

### Toilet Cleaning Made Easy

Dear Householder:

Here are the instructions for cleaning the toilet. Put both lids of the toilet up and add 1/8 cup of pet shampoo to the water in the bowl. Then, pick up the cat and soothe him while you carry him towards the bathroom. In one smooth movement, put the cat in the toilet and close both lids. You may need to stand on the lid. The cat will self agitate and make ample suds. Never mind the noises that come from the toilet, the cat is actually enjoying this. Flush the toilet three or four times. This provides a 'power-wash' and 'rinse.'

Have someone open the front door of your home. Be sure that there are no people between the bathroom and the front door. Stand behind the toilet as far as you can, and quickly lift both lids. The cat will rocket out of the toilet, streak through the bathroom, and run outside where he will dry himself off. Both the commode and the cat will be sparkling clean.

Sincerely,

The Dog.

## 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.

**New Zealand Sea Kayaker is published bimonthly as the official magazine 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 to:

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### **KASK Annual Subscription**

\$35 single membership.

\$40 family membership.

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A subscription form can be downloaded from the KASK website. Cheques should be made out to: Kiwi Association Sea Kayakers & mailed to:

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

Payment can be made by direct credit (preferred) to:

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with your name and/or KASK membership number for reference.

### **Correspondence - Queries**

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PO Box 23, Runanga 7841  
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or email Karen at:  
admin@kask.co.nz**

### **4th Ed. KASK HANDBOOK 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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**KASK Website**  
**kask.org.nz**

*Photos on opposite page:*

*Top right: A Steller's sea eagle about to beat up the photographer.*

*Both photos taken by John Kirk-Anderson during a sea kayak guiding trip to the far north-eastern coast of Siberia*

*Bottom right: A mob of walrus off the north-eastern coast of Siberia.*

*JKA will be showing more of his wonderful photos at the KASK Kayak Fest 2018*







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*Paddlers on Lake Mahinapua on a rare flat calm, West Coast day. Drone photo by Adrian Taylor.*

### **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.