

# THE SEA CANOEIST NEWSLETTER



39 Marsden Rd  
GREYMOUTH

N.36

SEA KAYAK NEWSLETTER

## 1. THE NEWSLETTER

Since Graham Egarr's untimely death on 17 September 1991, responsibility for the Sea Kayak Newsletter has been passed onto Craig Hornblow who sent out Graham's last three issues, then to us in Greymouth, namely Paul Caffyn and Eric van Toor.

The aim is that between us, assisted by Bob McKerrrow who now resides in Hokitika and anyone else who wants to be involved, that we produce a newsletter worthy of the effort that Graham has put into it. The fact that the two co-editors can never agree on anything except the dimensions and colour of a boat should lead to some interesting articles. (Actually, we probably couldn't agree on the colour.)

The deal is the same as the circular sent out with the last newsletters: 6 issues (ie one every second month) for \$8.00, of which this is the first. This issue is being circulated widely but we are on a shoe-string budget and can't send you any more issues until your subscription is paid. So if you want to remain on the circulation list, please fill out the attached form and send with your remittance to the above address (unless you have already sent it to Craig, in which case it will be forwarded to us). It only takes a minute, so send it now before it gets lost in the Christmas rush! Also photocopy it and give it to an interested friend to subscribe.

The newsletter will essentially follow the same format as Graham's, with a mixture of relevant news and technical articles. Some ideas we've got for articles so far are;

- \* Boat building (expanding on Graham's Articles)
- \* Sea Kayak Design
- \* Double Sea Kayaks
- \* Build your own paddle
- \* Health Problems on trips
- \* Flares and Emergency Locator Beacons.
- \* Sea Kayak Photography
- \* Fibreglass materials and repair

In addition we propose to have the following regular columns;

- \* Letters to the Editor
- \* Book reviews
- \* Unclassified Advertisements
- \* Kayak Cookery
- \* Trip Details, covering useful info on individual sections of coastline.
- \* Database lists for literature and fields of expertise

Any other ideas? If so, please write it down on the form and we'll look at presenting an article on it. Better still, write the article yourself. It's your newsletter and it's as much up to you how it turns out as it is up to us.

Trip reports will be welcomed of course, but please keep them brief. Guidelines for future paddlers to the area with notes on hazards, wildlife, safe landings, fishing spots and the like are more likely to appeal to readers than chronological details beginning with day 1 breakfast. Cartoons and illustrated articles are especially welcome.

## THE 1992 GRAHAM EGARR SEA KAYAK FORUM 13-15 MARCH

Graham was responsible for organising the annual forums, at Mapua, since their beginning in 1989. It is a natural and fitting tribute that what has become the most notable event on the New Zealand sea kayaking calendar should be continued in his name.

This year's forum is planned at Monks Bay, Redcliffs, Christchurch, over the weekend of 13 - 15 March, 1992. The reasons for the change of venue are to encourage kayakers from another area, and to take advantage of conditions not found at Mapua (e.g. surf and surf landings). A North Island location would be a likely contender for the following forum and perhaps back to Mapua the year after that.

We intend this forum follow from previous ones in providing a balance of instruction for those new to the sea kayaking or after knowledge in specific areas, and of exchanging ideas for those wishing to develop the sport.

A detailed programme will appear in the next newsletter. Meanwhile, please fill out the enclosed registration form and post along with your newsletter subscription form.

# EDITORIAL - THE STATUS OF THE SPORT IN N.Z.

Four years ago Graham Egarr started the "Sea Kayak Newsletter" as the communication network for the small number of New Zealand sea kayakers. His energy and enthusiasm for both the newsletter and the annual symposiums at Mapua brought together interested sea kayakers from throughout the country who might otherwise not have met and introduced many others to the sport.

The informal network that Graham was largely responsible for has served our fledgling sport well. But the animal has grown and Graham is no longer here to care for it. Some of the issues which must be dealt with are;

- coastal conservation
- safety
- education
- new equipment evaluation and reporting

A few of us have discussed the matter at some length and believe that the best way to deal with the issues which affect sea kayakers is to establish an Incorporated Society. We would be seen as a united group and there is public money available to assist.

The alternative is to work under the umbrella of the N.Z.C.A.. While the N.Z.C.A. is doing a lot of good work for the advancement of canoeing as a whole, we could possibly achieve more with our resources if they were channelled directly.

In any case, it's up to us sea kayakers to organise ourselves. Discussions regarding N.Z.C.A. affiliation can take place later.

We therefore propose that the "Kiwi Association of Sea Kayakers", or "K.A.S.K." be set up to administer the sport. K.A.S.K. would have as it's aims;

- \* to foster and encourage the sport of Sea Kayaking,
- \* to promote safety standards,
- \* to develop techniques and equipment,
- \* to deal with issues of coastal access and protection.

We propose that K.A.S.K. be launched at the forum in Christchurch in March 1992. Please think about what you want from a sea kayaking organisation, come along to the forum and be prepared for some lively discussion!

## WAIKAWA - PORT UNDERWOOD 24/25 AUGUST 1991

We were pushed off from the beach at little Waikawa Bay by some local kids, an hour or so behind schedule. Calm waters and a breath of wind greeted us on that sunny morning.

The only boats on the water as we entered the Queen Charlotte Sound, (a far cry from summer) 7 Nordkapps, 1 Delaware, 1 Norsk. In no time at all we reached the Tory Channel turn off, excellent planning on Bevans part meant we had favourable tides all the way.

After a brief mutiny, we abandoned surfing on the ferry wake in favour of stopping for lunch, only to be side tracked by the sight of dorsal fins on the horizon. The chase was hampered by the unfair advantage of the dolphins who were on a mission in the opposite direction, 1/2 k or so, and lunch again took priority.

Nora was elected to negotiate the guard dog at the old whaling station at Te Awaiti, luckily this little mut had failed its Bull Terrier classes. A skeleton remains of the building which has become a dumping ground, but the huge old boilers and cauldron conjure up gross visions of a red sea, and bubbling blubber in this now tranquil haven.

We made camp at Okukari Bay the site of an early pa occupied by the Ngitiawa, kinsmen of the whalers. The only evidence left is some flintstone on the beach.

After a game of beach-volley and burnt damper under the light of a full moon, our snores were silenced, apprehension grew as rain and a howling wind set the scene for dawn.

The prospect of heading back the way we came, 30k into a head wind and tide didn't hold a lot of appeal, but depending on conditions in the strait, it may have been the only option.

We met a lone seal as we paddled out through the heads, in the rain, to check it out. The surging tide and squalls were with us, so with 30k ahead we steadily progressed observing the inhospitable face of the coast. An impressive blow hole, caves, cliffs, arches, rock statues and cray pots were the order of the day.

Long strands of kelp reached up to us as we manoeuvred around the rocks and arches in the sheltered waters rounding the point to Port Underwood. Discovery of paua and a 40m cave were an added bonus.

Ebbing energy levels called a halt for lunch before the 7k battle against wind and tide to Oyster Bay and dry clothes, where the seeds were sewn for another trip.

Catherine Williams

Graham Eggar - Canoeist Extraordinaire

It is only since Graham's send-off at Mapua that myself and I'm sure many others have begun to fully comprehend the outstanding contribution he made to canoeing and water safety in New Zealand.

In 1977 after reading an issue of the NZCA Bulletin I realised there was someone else in NZ who shared my avid interest in sea kayaking. I had to admire the bulletin editor for filling its pages with informative accounts of overseas expedition sea kayaking accounts and techniques, when strictly speaking the bulletin was for white water paddlers and the numbers of sea kayakers could be counted on one hand. It didn't take me long to find out who the editor was.

From modest beginnings, Graham turned the Bulletin into an up-market magazine with colour photograph covers, switched on editorials and a great variety of informative and educational articles which covered all aspects of canoeing and kayaking. Today those bulletins are the only lasting source of what New Zealand canoeists were doing both at home and overseas.

For paddlers, Graham's 'Open Canoe', 'Sea Canoeist' and 'Paddlers News Alert' filled the vacuum left after he retired gracefully from the NZ Canoeing Association after a magnificent 10 year era of editing the association's bulletin. Power hungry politicking and questionable ethical practices of some of the association's silvertail bureaucrats were definitely not Graham's cup of tea.

In 1986 Graham sent out the first issue of his 'Sea Canoeist Newsletter' and organized the first of what has become the annual summer Mapua Sea Kayak Forum. The 'Open Canoe Newsletter' and 'Paddlers News Alert' joined Graham's growing list of regular home-printed publications, which were an invaluable service for the canoeists scattered throughout the length and breadth of NZ. All we paid Graham for this service was eight 40 cents stamps a year - thus his aim was not monetary gain, but simply it was because Graham enjoyed collating and disseminating information.

My solo circumnavigation of NZ attracted a considerable amount of criticism from the armchair silvertail canoeists - never less than 3 there should ever be! In those years I had only one staunch ally who was prepared to respond in print to the criticism and that was Graham.

I'm sure that there is a host of people in New Zealand who have similar stories of being helped by Graham in his quite unassuming way.

Graham was the outstanding promoter of canoeing in NZ. No one has made such a sustained, valued and lasting contribution to NZ canoeing.

After Graham wrote a review of my first book in 1980, I felt Graham did not have much in the way of a sense of humor. He wrote:

"The humor is rather offbeat. The puns get more than a little tiresome and fail to convey anything except that puns are a part of a tradition of canoeists, whereas they are more the property of mountaineers and that cliché. I never quite forgave Graham for that until two weeks ago."

When I arrived back from Alaska, I was gratified but puzzled to read an unsigned letter which appeared in Graham's most recent 'Sea Canoeist Newsletter'. It discussed a minimalist approach to sea kayaking and was from someone who referred to a mountaineering background and stressed a lightweight approach to sea kayaking. The letter echoed all the things I have been trying to say for years, but in a far more succinct manner that I could do it. During the drive up to Nelson I racked my brain to think who on earth the writer was; someone with a way with words and a mountaineer?

Graham was keen to hear about my recent trip and then I asked him, "Who on earth wrote that letter about the minimalist approach to sea kayaking?" He didn't say anything for a moment, then he grinned and said, "It was me." Initially shocked but then highly amused, I said, "Only reprobate editors like Bob McKerrrow write letters to themselves and don't sign them."

I have nothing but admiration for the courage both Graham and Jan showed in facing up to the melanoma. I only hope that when my end is nigh, I can be half as brave and courageous as Graham was.

In our generation Graham stands out as a shining example of devotion not only to his wife and young family but also to canoeing with his formidable list of publications, his drive to protect wild rivers and informing and educating the canoeists and rafters of New Zealand.

Paul Catlyn

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#### Trans Pacific Row

A 46 year old Frenchman, Gerard d'Aboville, completed a superb four month row across the Pacific Ocean, when he reached the Columbia River mouth on the western coast of the U.S.A. on the 22nd of November. Gerard set out from the port of Choshi on the eastern coast of Honshu on the 11th of July this year. Interestingly enough, Choshi was where I set off to paddle around Japan in 1985. To provide freshwater for the 10,000 kilometre row, Gerard had a desalinator power by the sliding motion of his rowing seat. Although a British chap, Peter Bird, claimed to have made the first successful row across the Pacific in 1983 from San Francisco to Australia, he was picked up by an Australian Navy boat off the Great Barrier Reef in rough seas and gale force winds. He had reached Australian waters but did not make a landfall. Thus D'Aboville is disputing Bird's record.

Gerard's craft was called a kayak style rowing boat. Eight meters long, the low profile deck departed dramatically from the traditional high profile rowing boats used for ocean crossings. Peter Bird's boat had high profile fore and aft decks which are not for storage but simply to provide a self righting capacity in the event of a capsizing. From the TV news footage, Gerard slept in a watertight compartment aft of the cockpit. I would say the design of the boat was excellent both in terms of his fast passage across the Pacific and that he survived 36 capsizees with only a gash on his head. It must be considered as a superb feat of planning and endurance. P.C.