

# THE SEA CANOEIST NEWSLETTER

Issue 66

December 1996 - January 1997

Editor: P Caffyn, RD 1, Runanga. West Coast .N.Z. Ph/Fax: (03) 7311806

E Mail address: kayakpc@scenic.co.nz

The Sea Canoeist Newsletter is published 6 times a year as the official newsletter of the Kiwi Association of Sea Kayakers (N.Z.) Inc.

Subscriptions are \$10.00 per annum & should be made out to K.A.S.K. (NZ) Inc. & sent to the Treasurer: Sandy Ferguson, 12 Dunn Street, Christchurch 2. Ph: (03) 332 5155 home, Fax: (03) 364 2110

Correspondence to the Secretary: Peter Sullivan, 7 Monowai Cres, North New Brighton, Christchurch. Ph.(03) 388 3380.

## INDEX

Editorial	p. 1
TRIP REPORTS	
Spitzbergen Circumnavigation	p. 2
The <i>Endeavour</i> in Ship Cove	
Kerry Howe	p. 5
BOOK REVIEW	
<i>Paddle to the Arctic</i>	
reviewed P. Caffyn	p. 3
TECHNICAL	
In Praise of Longitudinal Bulkheads & Electric Bilge Pumps	
Peter Sullivan	p. 5
Goretex Dry Suits	p. 8
A National Qualification for Sea Kayakers	
Vincent Maire	p. 7

## EDITORIAL

### KASK Handbook

Work on the second edition is progressing well. In the light of feedback received, the handbook will remain in its A4 format, but dropped into double column with a slightly smaller font. The essential chapter on navigation was finally completed and has shaped up well with the addition of clip-art images of fishing boats and lighthouses. Limited numbers of the second printing are still available from Peter Sullivan (see advert. on p. 9).

In addition to Nicola Johnson's pen and ink sketches, I would like to supplement the text with both pertinent black and white photographs, maps and diagrams. If you have a photograph diagram or map that would nicely illustrate a section of the handbook, for instance relating to the various paddling areas, rescues, equip-

ment etc., please flick down to me. At this stage a scanned image in either Tiff or Jpeg format on a 3.5" floppy disc would help, failing that a crisp black and white or colour print that we will scan. Also if anyone has some clip-art images pertaining to the sea - wildlife, mermaids, surf, camping, fishing boats, I would appreciate copies on a floppy to supplement the handbook.

### NOTICE OF KASK AGM

The 1997 KASK AGM will be held at Wellington on Friday 25 April 1997 at 5.30pm.

Remits, or motions, to be submitted at the AGM must be in the hands of our esteemed secretary at least one month prior to the AGM.

Max Grant reconnoitred venues and unfortunately the Eastbourne venue was already booked, hence a change to Worser Bay on the western side of the harbour entrance. An event filled weekend, commencing with late registration from 7pm on Thursday 24 April, has been finalized by Max and the management team, and includes a day trip to Soames Island and an over-nighter out along the coast towards Cape Palliser.

If anyone has a slide show from paddling this summer (or northern summer) please advise either myself or Max Grant (06) 326 8667.

### THANKS

Thanks to Andy and Deidre Sheppard for looking after the secretarial duties while Peter and Diane were overseas.

### Spitzbergen

I have included the report on the first kayak circumnavigation of Spitzbergen for two reasons, it is the most northerly kayak circumnavigation completed but also the because the success of the trip was based on meticulous planning and research.

### National Sea Kayaking Qualification

The article by Vincent Maire raises an important question of whether amateur sea kayakers in New Zealand need, or want, a national qualification. I would appreciate feedback from paddlers on the subject by early March for the next newsletter.

Feedback from a Christchurch instructor indicates the bulk of people undertaking professional sea kayaking instructional courses do so for a trip in rented boats and do not go on to buy a kayak and keep paddling. Where then do the paddlers who buy kayaks gain their instruction?

Vincent fails to mention the very successful mini-forums or instructional weekends that have been held by the paddler networks in the Otago, Canterbury, Nelson and Palmerston North areas. These networks, through both organized trips and the mini-forums, are undertaking the role of educating paddlers who are keen to learn.

Whether paddlers want to follow this with gaining a qualification, we will have to see what the feedback is.

**TRIPREPORT**

*Paddling in the Arctic North  
The first kayak  
circumnavigation of  
Spitzbergen*

On 15 July 1996, Jill Fredstone, Doug Fessler and John Bauman set off from Longyearbyen to paddle around Spitzbergen, which is the largest of a group of islands collectively known as Svalbard. Although all three kayakers had impeccable paddling credentials, John paddled around Iceland, Doug and Jill around most of the coastline of Alaska and in 1995 around the coast of Norway and Sweden, they still had reservations about the trip. Few people seemed to know where Spitzbergen was and Svalbard is home to one of the highest concentrations of polar bears in the world. And then of course multi-year ice often clogs the coast, rendering it impassable to boats with thicker hulls than that of the kayaks.

The following account of the trip is from Doug and Jill's Xmas letter:

The first time we reached the ice, we were streaking at 580kms/hour. But no hardship. We just calmly ate out marinated greenlip mussels and continued peering out the plane window at Baffin Island. Upon landing in Longyearben, one of four small coal mining towns on Spitzbergen, the biggest challenge we had was finding our boats. They were sitting, somewhat forlornly, on the end of a wharf. When we paddled out of town on 15 July, John in his usual kayak and the two of us in rowing boats (Arluk doubles set up with a sliding seat rowing rig), we were loaded with 60 days of food, three shotguns and the usual assortment of camping gear. Our plan was to circumnavigate the island, a distance of about 800 miles, if the ice and weather allowed.

Spitzbergen has been carved by frozen water and further chiselled into shape by uncompromising elements. It is wild and raw, old and new, stark and vibrant. Almost no vegetation obscures the ground which is patterned with polygons and stripes of rock sorted by size. Glaciers stream out of the mountains into the sea.

Many have been retreating, leaving enormous piles of conveyed moraine. It was a rare day when we didn't paddle past at least three glaciers, more often it was five or six. Some of these joined forces to create blue ice faces that were wider than 15 miles. Best of all for us, Spitzbergen was alive. We had groups of 50 - 70 beluga whales swim right through us, often thrusting vertically out of the water a few feet away to gawk with protruding eyes. And more birds than any of us had ever seen in our lives. Arctic terns, puffins, auks, murre, kittiwakes and beautifully flying fulmars all comprised a busy, squawking population in the millions. One rookery stretched the limits of our imagination as with hoods raised, we paddled beneath four miles and 3,000 feet of stacked life.

August 10 was an especially magic day. By then we had paddled north around the top of the island and descended roughly 80% of the way down the east coast. We started the morning with a six mile crossing of a bay. Though the fog was thick, we cruised easily on flat water past, large silent icebergs. As we reached the far shore, where we could just dimly make out a steep scree slope, Jill looked over her shoulder twice before she hesitantly asked, "Is that a whale above my head?" Indeed, as emerging sunshine helped confirm, there was a whale on the side of the mountain 50 feet above sea level, embedded in black ice. And yes, to answer the question that one of Jill's sisters asked, it was dead. It was completely intact, with a wide tail and enough flesh to attract the attention of seagulls, although it looked almost hairy as a result of constant rockfall. There were two possibilities we could think of. One was that this was a modern day whale that had gotten pushed up by pack ice but it looked like it was too far up the mountain for that. The other was that this whale was thousands of years old and was just melting out of remnant ice from a glacier that had retreated more than half a mile around the corner. We told the scientists at the Norwegian Polar Institute about it upon our return to Longyearben and excited, they sent a helicopter with a biologist aboard to take samples. They favoured the latter theory but all of us can only specu-

late until dating is completed.

We continued paddling. John had his eyes on an iceberg which was moving incongruously fast. It turned out to be a swimming polar bear. As we moved towards it, it swam away, impressing us with its both lack of fear and aggression. A few hours later, devouring Doug's hot, fresh bread on a sunny beach, we looked several miles ahead to see bulging, saucer shaped lenticular clouds spilling off the edge of a ridge and dispersing the water of a Yosemite like waterfall outwards. Other not so subtle clues as to what we were in for, including ominously grinding ice out to sea and a rising gentle swell. We, of course, had the option of camping right where we were but the day was beautiful, the water flat and the country intriguing.

We'd made it past one four mile wide glacier and had come to a section of cliffs when winds of 50 to 70mph slammed us. They were offshore so as long as we hugged the coast, rough water wasn't a problem though 100 yards further out, the sea was a froth. Even with feathered oars, we were doing full force bench presses just to get the oars forward against the wind. Slowly we inched our way to a beach where we could land. Doug got out of his boat to check on camping possibilities and at precisely the same moment, he and Jill spotted a sleeping polar bear about 60 feet away. Tip toeing back to his boat, he told John, who hadn't seen Jill signal bear with a downward swipe of her arm, that they'd have to move on. John, who is shorter and couldn't see over the berm of the beach, wriggled up to see for himself, wasting no time returning to his boat. As we passed the bear, it rolled over on his back, legs in the air, scratching its belly, and padded down to the water. When John paused to take photographs, the bear slid silently into the ocean, and began swimming after him but was even more discouraged than us by the headwinds.

We had hoped to find a place to camp before the next glacier but another polar bear was standing where a glacier sloped down to the beach. He tried to hide from us by pulling in his neck and bending his knees, but profiled on the ice ramp, it was the comical equivalent of trying to hide in the

middle of our driveway. So we found ourselves in the ironic position of hugging close to the face of a tidewater glacier to keep us from getting blown out to sea. Finally a few miles later, we reached a possible camping spot which afforded us good visibility for any approaching bears but was also near a bird rookery. We didn't want to disturb the birds, get shat on, or be barraged by incessant, thought stopping bird noise, but we had little choice.

The bird cliffs were occupied by an unfathomably enormous population of black and white birds called Brunnich's guillemots in Svalbard or thick billed murre in North American birdspeak. We just happened to arrive during the period of only a few days when the young murre make a one way migration from the ledge they are born on to the sea that will sustain them. The problem was that hundreds of the palm sized rookie fliers were taking shorter than necessary trajectories and crash landing at the bottom of the cliffs, which were half a mile from the water. At roughly 30mph, they were bouncing on their sides, their heads, their bottoms, and only occasionally their feet. Their faithful fathers landed similarly hard right next to them, while their mothers, having done their work, flew out to sea. Smearing with blood and dirt, the father baby pair, would pick themselves up, fluff their feathers, and waddle very much like penguins towards the water, braving a gauntlet of predatory skuas and gulls. The half mile of flat ground littered with bones and feathers bore testimony to the many birds that didn't make it and to an otherworldly scene of life and carnage. John and Doug discovered that the high pitched alarm on our polar bear early warning trip wire system around the camp sounded like momma murre. When they mischievously bleeped it, the birds would change direction abruptly and stream towards us. We cheered jubilantly as pairs of battered survivors dropped themselves gratefully into the water.

In all we saw nine polar bears, far fewer than expected. The only close encounter was the first one when a stocky young male snuck within 40 feet of Doug while he was washing

his hair in camp. Jill looked up to announce misleadingly calmly, "You guys, there's a bear right here." John was fortunately near enough his gun to be able to fire three warning cracker shells (like firecrackers with flares) with perfect aim and harmlessly educate this uninitiated bear about the nasty ways of humans.

About three quarters of the way around the island, Doug announced in typical Viking style, that given how impossible we'd been told our trip was going to be, it had been surprisingly easy. Inevitably from about 20 minutes later to 1 September, when we completed our circumnavigation, we got hammered by storm winds. As summer's end, we weren't sure how to get our boats home, so we cut them in half and checked them in a aeroplane luggage.

Jill Fredstone and Doug Fessler.

#### STILL IN THE ARCTIC

Victoria Jason (author of 'Kabloona in the Yellow Kayak') paddled from Repulse Bay to Pelly Bay this northern summer with co-paddler Martin Leonard.

#### BOOKREVIEW

**Title:** Paddle to the Arctic

**Author:** Don Starkell

**Published:** 1995

**Publisher:** McClelland & Stewart Inc, 481 University Ave., Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5G 2E9

**ISBN:** 0-7710-8239-8

**Subject:** Kayak/sled trip through the Northwest Passage; Hudson Bay to Gjoa Haven with Victoria Jason, Gjoa Haven to near Tuktoyaktuk solo.

**Cover:** Hardback

**Contents:** 313 pages, 5 maps, 49 black and white pics in three sections

**Size:** 160 x 235mm

**RRP:** US\$24.95

**Reviewed by:** Paul Caffyn

**NZ Availability:** Scorpio Books, Christchurch

This has not been an easy book to review, particularly as this is the second account of a trip that was written about so well by Victoria Jason in her book 'Kabloona in the Yellow Kayak'.

Don Starkell's first major canoeing expedition was from Winnipeg in Canada to the mouth of the Amazon River, described in 'Paddle to the Amazon'. This book is an engrossing adventure story, with all the highs and lows with his two sons, punch ups on the beaches, and sound descriptive writing of the sights and scenes. The initial draft of 1,400 pages of densely typed typing was edited by Charles Wilkins into a very readable book.

'Paddle to the Arctic' is Don's story of his three attempts in 1990, 1991 and 1992, to navigate Canada's Northwest Passage. In 1990, Don set out solo from Churchill, in Hudson Bay, aiming for Tuktoyaktuk at the mouth of the Mackenzie River delta. His boat was an 18' long Seal kayak, 21" beam, 70 pound fibreglass. On his fourth day out, still close to Churchill, he capsized in shallows and was unable to initially right the kayak. Then there was too much water in the cockpit to climb back in without capsizing again. He then attempted to swim/push the kayak towards shore, but then he blacks out in the sea for 30 minutes! - no lifejacket, no wetsuit, no drysuit - and 'when the lights come on again', he is halfway to shore. Finally on shore, he decides to warm up in his down sleeping bag, but finds it half-soaked, but climbs in fully clothed and wet, and blacks out again. Some 14 days after setting out, Don returns to Churchill.

In 1991, he returns to Churchill with Fred Reffler and Victoria Jason. Fred pulls out early but Victoria continues with him to Repulse Bay, despite heated arguments almost daily. Victoria keeps telling Don they are paddling in the wrong direction along Southampton Island. Don ignores this until they meet Inuit hunters in a dinghy out seal hunting who confirm Vicki's navigation. An incredible navigation blunder which added many miles extra to the paddle.

In 1992, Don and Victoria travelled overland from Repulse Bay to Spence Bay on Inuit sleds towed behind ski-dogs. From there they hauled their kayaks on small sleds across the ice south to Gjoa Haven, where Vicki

was forced to pull out with edema. Don continues man hauling to Cambridge Bay with a tent that had no fly - wet sleeping bag and wet clothes!

Although this is his third year, Don still persists in wearing inadequate paddling clothes - launching in surf, he is drenched every time. At Wilmot Island, a rock falls on his foot and damages four toes. This leads to what for me is the low point of the book. Don calls at the Cape Young Dewline station and demands medical attention for his infected toes (infected as he was not taking antibiotics that he had with him), a shower, use of a telephone and a bed for the night. When he is turned down - no prior notice to any of the Dewline stations - he is ready to belt the station manager. Paddling away in a rage, he continues to write about his reception there in scathing terms. Despite winter fast approaching, he continues towards Tuktoyaktuk but ends up on September 18 on an offshore sandbar, where he ends up in a collapsed tent under snow. His paddling clothes for this last stage were, 'light paddling clothes, covered by my borrowed orange drilling-site overalls, and on top of everything, the yellow oilcloth jacket and pant drilling outfit'.

On 24 September the pilot of a rescue plane from Inuvik sights Don under the snow and he is rescued by helicopter. Even when the rescue team tell him his hands are badly frozen, he maintains they are only cold and stiff! He informs the rescue team that he was still planning on walking the re-

maining 50 miles to Tuktoyaktuk. His inadequate foot and hand protection led to amputation of the tops of a number of fingers and toes.

In the introduction to the book, Don notes, 'The account is taken from my daily journals, with additional information from my travelling partners, my research, and a vivid memory.'

My first niggle with the book is the abbreviated diary style: '6.40pm. Good sleep - calm, windfree night. Up at 6.00am and away at 7.00am. Fantastic conditions. Very tired from previous long days of passionate paddling (46, 32, 30, 48, and today 31 miles) - 187 miles in the last five days - average 37.5 miles per day (not washed up yet)'. This style of clipped writing is tedious to read. The sections which were not recorded in his diary, but rely on 'a vivid memory' are full descriptive prose and easier to read.

The second niggle is that the book lacks fill-in or contrasting information on the Inuit, the flora and fauna, and historical snippets on the quest for the Northwest Passage.

For myself, the book is almost a torture to read, as it chronicles examples of bad judgemental decision making. At least Don is honest in detailing the navigation errors but I wonder why on earth, particularly in 1991 and 1992, he did not include 100% waterproof bags, a goretex drysuit, synthetic clothes suitable for paddling in the Arctic, and a sturdy tent with a fly. His

determination to succeed is unquestionable but at what cost - the loss of fingers and toes.

As for the drama at the Cape Young, his scathing writing about the reception there, reflects poorly on all Arctic adventurers. Self sufficiency is the name of the game - it is tantamount to comfy survival in the Arctic. Thorough research and meticulous planning are required, combined with training and trialing of gear and equipment. My philosophy has always been to be self contained and not have any expectations when meeting people at villages or Dewline stations. If there is the offer of a feed, a shower, and convivial conversation, well and good. If not, provided there are no expectations, then there is not a problem.

The black and white photographs are adequate but burdened with large white borders which tend to mask their impact. A full map of the route covered is printed on the endpapers and each chapter has a small vignette map showing the route followed.

For the inveterate sea kayaking bookaphile, this is a must for the library as there are so few precious narratives published about Arctic paddling. A consummate adventurer Don Starkell, but not a good role model for expedition sea kayakers.

Paul Caffyn.



*In Praise of Longitudinal Bulkheads and Electric Bilge Pumps*

Peter Sullivan

On a recent much recommended kayaking trip around Patterson Inlet, Stewart Island, the last day's paddle involved a crossing from Ulva Island to Oban.

The conditions were far from favourable with an estimated 30+ knot wind and extremely lumpy seas. The crossing was uneventful until we reached the half way point approx. 200 -300 metres out from Native Island where we encountered a series of rather large 3 - 3.5m breaking waves. Diane and I started to turn our double around to run with the swells, successfully letting a couple pass underneath us when a real rogue caught us. With our kayak at about 45 degrees to the face and the bow buried in the swell ahead Diane attempted to take an almighty stroke on the downhill side of the wave, (not usually recommended!). Unfortunately she couldn't find any water and with me buried in the frothy crest with only air to paddle and Diane's leaning over the down wave side and the already sharply angle of the hull on the wave face - it was enough to flip the craft over.

The wet exit went smoothly with only a couple of problems. Diane was wearing pogies and consequently had to let go of her paddle to release her spray skirt - so - one pair of paddles which required recovering. She also had her camera in a dry bag, loosely stowed, which also floated free.

Uprighting the craft was a breeze. With us both on the downwind side I was able to right the craft easily by grabbing the opposite gunwale and hauling it towards me using both the wind and the current.

A modification I made to the kayak when I first obtained it was the installation of longitudinal bulkheads on each side of the paddling compartments giving a cockpit compartment width of 400mm. This is the same width as the widest point of the skirt rim. Access inside these side bulkheads is by plastic 150mm diameter threaded inspection ports as well as

front and rear access. This gives the craft U shaped compartments front and rear as well as an H shaped compartment in the centre section accessible from a water proof hatch behind the front seat.

When uprighted, the kayak had no water in the front compartment, totally self draining, whilst the rear compartment contained around 50 - 75mm of water.

An extra I added to the craft early last year were two fist sized 450 gallon per hour submersible pumps powered by a small 12 volt rechargeable battery which at the time seemed extreme but looked real good to a gadget and gizmo freak like myself.

Whilst hanging onto the side of the craft and grabbing the camera bag as it floated past, I flicked the switch and by the time I had clambered aboard and fitted my spray skirt, the compartment was dry. At this stage Lindsay Strang was able to raft alongside in his single kayak. Diane managed to retrieve her paddle and by grabbing my outstretched paddle made rapid progress back to the mothership. A belly down re-entry on the mid deck, twisting as she slipped back into her seat, securing her skirt completed the operation in well under five minutes. A point of interest at this point is that an accompanying double could not manoeuvre itself into position to be of any assistance.

Things learned from this impromptu exercise:

1. Don't leave things loose in the paddling compartment. We were extremely lucky to retrieve the camera and paddles. Letting go of the kayak to retrieve gear whilst in wet clothing is not a wise move and it wastes time. (No, the dry bag didn't leak.)
2. If you're wearing pogies it may be prudent to attach the paddle to the craft by a leash of some kind because it has to be dropped to release the skirt.
3. If you have a kayak with large paddling compartment/s a hand or foot pump would be of little use. Spend a little extra on an electric submersible pump setup. Absolutely brilliant!. Flick the switch, get back in and get the hell out of

there! If you are in conditions which want to chuck you out, the last thing you want to be doing is hanging around bailing out with a hand pump!

4. If there is any way you can reduce the size of the paddling compartment, either with any extra area filled with firmly attached closed cell foam or airbags or as I have done by placing longitudinal bulkheads which also gives extra stowage space I would strongly recommend it..

If anyone wants any info regarding electric pumps or fitting bulkheads etc feel free to contact me. My address and phone number are on the front of the newsletter or my E-mail address is - dsullivan@xtra.co.nz

Peter Sullivan

*Anticipation, Guilt and History  
The Endeavour in Ship Cove*

Kerry Howe

The visit to New Zealand by the replica *Endeavour* in 1996 caused excitement for this Pacific historian. I visited the vessel in Wellington and was enthralled. But I wanted to see it in a natural 'setting'. I decided to sea kayak from Picton and see it when it visited Ship Cove in Queen Charlotte Sound.

I paddled out from Picton heading for Blumine Island for the first night. The DOC campsite there had become one of my favourites, right on the beach, snug and grassy, surrounded by high, bush-clad hills, and facing the setting sun. But as I approached the island, something seemed wrong with the campsite location. I stopped at the point of the bay for the ritual collection of mussels for my evening entree, and tried to focus on the strange shapes where the campsite should have been. As I neared the beach I could see that part of the hillside high above has slid down a gully completely obliterating my idyllic camp and now formed a huge dirty clay and log pile that went right out across the beach and into the sea. Much chastened by the thought that any campers would have been

killed instantly by the massive slip, I pitched my tent on the nearby small flat that DOC had recently levelled as a replacement site.

My longed for dinner in paradise was instead a rather dismal affair on bare clay next to a devastated landscape. DOC had not forgotten to place a camp fee collection box on the new site. My initial reaction was to think that I should not pay for the dubious privilege of camping on such a rotten spot. But when I finally mellowed after my mussels and de-hi curry and rice, it seemed a churlish reaction. Beside, if the ranger came and asked for my ticket, I would look mean and stupid. I began to feel guilty. Of course there was no sign of life in the entire Sounds that evening. No ranger would ever appear just to check on such a lonely traveller. But I dutifully paddled across the clay in the gathering dusk to put my money in the box, annoyed with myself that I should feel so guilty about such a minor violation, and at the same time annoyed that I should feel so mean spirited about leaving a few lousy dollars. I slept well, however, obviously because of a clean conscience.

The morning was overcast, but stunningly clear. I launched the kayak into water that was so clear you could not see the surface. I was arranging my fishing rod on the deck, a few metres out from the beach, when the jigging lure went overboard. I decided to let it go to the bottom just for fun and was surprised when a blue cod immediately impaled itself on the hook. I stuffed it in the fishing bag and headed off for Long Island. As ever, the weather in the Sounds changes rapidly. Halfway across a strong headwind blew up and I had to dig deep to close on the island. Large stingrays lay in its sheltered shallows. Just to be naughty I poked one on the back with my paddle. It repaid me by hurtling to the surface and drenching me with the huge splash from its wings. Long Island is a marine reserve, and I am a steadfast believer in marine reserves. There is no way I would fish in one, though I might poke the odd stingray. I pulled into the sheltered beach and decided to brew up my beloved Japanese green tea. While the stove was going, I felt hungry. I

quickly filleted my blue cod and sized it in a little sea water in a small frypan. Sitting back against a log, sipping tea, and eating the most delicious fish I had ever tasted, life was good again. I briefly reflected on what would happen if a ranger found me eating fish on a marine reserve, but laughed at the idea that anyone else existed in the world.

Suddenly, from out of nowhere, a high powered rubber inflatable with two burly DOC rangers roared into the bay. They came up the beach like commandos and demanded to know if I knew where I was. I stammered that I was on Long Island marine reserve, and, knowing that they thought they had damning evidence against me in the form of a head and backbone beside the pan, I added lamely that I had caught the blue cod on Blumine Island. Even the truth didn't sound convincing to me. They then muttered something about illegal size and for a long time, seemed to eye me as a resolute criminal. Eventually they said they would take no action 'this time', and gave me some pamphlets on marine reserves and on legal size catches in the Sounds. To ingratiate myself I asked when the Blumine campsite had been destroyed. I was genuinely interested but I also wanted them to know that I had stayed there so that they might ask me for my camp fee receipt which I could produce to show them that I was not altogether bad. But they never bothered asking. They eventually sped away.

I paddled hard back out into the wind and slogged across to Motuara Island and fished unsuccessfully inside the sheltered south point, seething with the self-righteous indignation of a wronged man. The northerly blew stronger and heavy rain clouds formed on the hills behind Cannibal Cove, my site for the night. I again slept well as rain lashed the tent.

Early next morning I was positioned off the point between Cannibal Cove and Ship Cove. Aircraft sped overhead towards the unmistakable shape of eighteenth century sails on the horizon. A very strong northerly blew *Endeavour* quickly into the Sounds. It passed between me and Motuara Island, and heeled round into Ship Cove. It was her silent progress

that was so striking, in contrast to the noise of the circling aircraft and the large diesel belching flotilla of launches, as well as the sinister grey oil-skinned crew scrambling aloft to furl her sails. They were ghost like in anybody's culture.

A haunting challenge from a large waka rang out through the howling wind. *Endeavour* fired a cannon, momentarily filling the bay with smoke. The noise echoed round and round the steep hillsides. It was all too ominous, the cultural memories too frighteningly vivid, a moment relived when *Endeavour*, more than just a tiny, lonely vessel, but a symbol of British Imperial expansion, met with a people isolated from the rest of humanity for at least a thousand years. But I was quickly dragged back to the present as spectator craft threatened to run me down. Soon *Endeavour* and her followers headed off for Picton, leaving me alone in the windswept cove that looked like an eighteenth century painting with its ominous, dark bush and rainy mists swirling over its peaks. There was even, briefly, a rainbow.

I too set off for Picton, eventually passing a becalmed *Endeavour* off the entrance to Tory Channel. I paddled hard to make the 6.40pm ferry, only to find on arrival that there was no such sailing on Monday. I had to wait until 9pm and then had the choice of the conventional ferry or the environment destroying Lynx, a fearsome fast beast whose wash in the Sounds I found so hateful. But when I figured that the Lynx would enable me to home in bed in Palmerston North before the conventional ferry reached Wellington, I went for speed and loved the 30 knot blast through the blackness of Tory Channel and across Cook Strait.

Kerry Howe.

*A National Qualification for  
Sea Kayakers*  
**Is what we need, what we want?**

Vincent Maire

On 5 January it snowed. We were coming down from Panakere Hut which at 1200m is some 600m above Lake Waikaremoana and we were on the last day of a four day tramp around the lake. The weather on the previous three days had been great and in the afternoons we swam to cool off. However, on arriving at Panakere, we sat in the hut and watched a spectacular storm sweep across Hawkes Bay before blasting us. Coming down on the last day, it started to snow.

There were 10 in our group and half an hour from the end of the track 14 year old Andrew had an epileptic fit. However at no time was he in any danger. With two Mountain Safety Council Instructors in the group (both of whom were also part of Auckland Search & Rescue) plus two nurses with a lot of tramping experience and MSC training, the victim was very quickly into a tent and swathed in sleeping bags and emergency blankets. It was great to see the very high level of professionalism demonstrated by these four women all of whom are members of Auckland based Women's Outdoor Pursuits. Along with three other members of the group I stayed behind with the victim until Police and DOC staff arrived with a stretcher to carry young Andrew out. Even with two layers of polyprop, a layer of wool, a fleecy jacket and a rain coat, I have never been so cold.

Trampers are lucky to have an organization like MSC from which to obtain recognized qualifications. We sea kayakers do not have such a body who can provide structured courses which have NZQA or similar recognition. Private providers run courses, Coastbusters does its best and ASKNET has also done some in the past. SKOANZ has a course but it is not aimed at the recreational sea kayaker and NZOIA, which runs white water courses has made no move to offer a sea kayak course and anyway, it seems more interested in the needs of the professional instructor.

Issue 65 of the *Sea Canoeist Newsletter* (October - November 1996) has two very interesting articles relating to the topic of training. The first one is by South Island sea kayaker John Kirk-Anderson about his effort to obtain the SKOANZ qualification. It makes interesting reading and starts with his reason for doing the course:

*'taking responsibility for other people, either paying clients or non-paying beginners, brings with it the risk of explaining to a coroner, or the police, why people in your care died. As a member of the media, I am aware of how much weight is placed on the term 'not qualified'.*

Let me underline those two important words, Not Qualified!.

The second article is yet another rake over of the Lyme Bay incident coals. The article is written by a lawyer and makes fascinating reading, leaving a whole lot of 'what ifs' to ponder. What if Bill, a hypothetical member of ASKNET, leads a Sunday trip that goes wrong and ends up in the coroners court. So what that Bill has been a keen kayaker for 10 years and has the confidence of his peers. Poor Vincent isn't qualified but he runs ASKNET and should be held accountable. And what goes for Vincent likely goes for all those other people around the country running kayak clubs and networks.

The recently held Coastbusters Sea Kayak Symposium opened with a fascinating and thought provoking presentation from Jonathan Iles entitled, 'Risk, Rough Seas and Rescues'. Jonathan brought to his presentation 14 years sea kayaking experience; he is a British Canoe Union (BCU) senior instructor, a qualified Joint Services Expedition Leader and has undertaken a number of expeditions in Britain and elsewhere. Jonathan made the point at the beginning that the first generation of sea kayakers came to the sport with their skills developed in white water. The next generation - those coming into the sport since the late 1980's - do not have these skills. Jonathan's presentation focused on this point and he argued that we must get back to basics, that it to learn the three R's if we are to become confi-

dent and skilled sea kayakers. I couldn't agree more especially as I am part of that 'new generation'. {Jonathan's presentation is summarized in issue 64 of the *Sea Canoeist Newsletter* .}

The lack of a recognized, nationally monitored sea kayaking qualification has long bothered me. Speaking as a trip leader and club organizer, I believe it is important a national set of standards are set - something we can give ourselves and those we lead, confidence in our abilities, and should the very worst happen, something we can take to court. Personally, I have often felt it would be beneficial to improve my own sea kayaking skills in a structured way, using some kind of relevant course. I am sure there are others out there who feel the same.

Last month I wrote to the BCU asking for information on their sea kayaking course. Jonathan Iles tells me the BCU has 'syndicated' - if that is the correct word - this course in both America and Holland. My inquiry was to ascertain the possibility of this course being made available in New Zealand. I have yet to receive a reply however as I pointed out to the BCU, before this course is taken up by Kiwi kayakers, we firstly need to ascertain if there is a demand for it.

In giving BCU a brief run down on sea kayaking in New Zealand, I have told them that KASK would be the most appropriate organization to run the course as it is the only nationally recognized sea kayak organization in the country. I make no apologies for acting alone in and making bold statements such as this as I believe this matter is long overdue for discussion and action. {For information on the BCU course, see the December 1996 issue of *Sea Kayaker* .}

The point of this article therefore is to generate discussion, to identify what we need, to see if what we need is also what we want. **WHAT DO YOU THINK?**

Please write/fax your opinions to Paul Caffyn and/or to me (09) 424 0385. I will keep you posted on what the BCU has to say on the matter.

And getting back to the day is snowed at Lake Waikaremoana. There was one other person on the track. His name was Tony and he was on a tramping holiday with his family. Tony is a police officer and head of search and rescue in Gisborne. He didn't hang around long; he didn't have to. One look told him that young Andrew was in the care of some highly qualified people.

Vincent Maire  
Auckland Sea Kayaking Network.  
7 Motuora Rd, Manly, Whangaparoa.  
1463. Auckland.

**Goretex Dry Suits**

**from Sandy Ferguson**

With your Arctic paddling, I thought this might be of interest to you.

Someone put me onto Ray Jardine's Web page, which details (among other things), a several-month sea kayak odyssey Ray and his wife, Jenny, made this past summer across the top of Alaska. It's a hell of a story, and Ray tells it well. Here's the URL: <http://members.aol.com/ray316/index.html> for those interested.

Well, Ray and Jenny used Goretex drysuits throughout their journey, so I queried Ray about how well the stuff held up to constant exposure to salt water, a concern many of my paddling acquaintances have. Here's Ray's response:

*My two cent's worth. Feel free to share it with your paddling newsgroup. I don't think salt water clogs the pores of today's Gore-Tex. Jenny and I wore our drysuits for 2 seasons and 2,000 miles of Arctic kayaking, and never rinsed them. Like any piece of clothing they were subject to chafe, for example where the under arms rub against the torso, and near the elbows where they occasionally rub against the deck. We patched the wear holes easily and effectively with sealant. But here's a tip: we applied sealant to the inside. It doesn't work on the outside because the water can migrate through the outer nylon fab-*

*ric, passing between the applied sealant and the Gore-Tex membrane.*

*When our suits were new, we whacked off the ankle gaskets and glued on home-made waterproof booties. These allowed us to wear 3 pairs of heavy wool socks, and to wade in icy water with impunity. We often lined the kayak into headwinds, so altogether we put several hundred miles on those booties. They were far and away the best feature of our drysuits.*

*The suits now show considerable wear, so we will have to buy new ones for next summer's trip.*

*Is Gore-Tex worth the extra cost? Yes, if you wear the suit all day, every day, for months on end. Probably not if you wear it only a few hours at a time.*

*Happy paddling  
Ray Jardine*

**STOLEN KAYAK**

From Sandy Ferguson:

On 11 January I had a phone call from Nick Woods of Cable Bay Kayaks at Cable Bay in Nelson reporting a stolen kayak. It was his guide boat that was taken and at the wrong time of year meaning he has to paddle a Puffin!!!! It might be worth putting it in the Sea Canoeist newsletter:

Southern Aurora, red deck, white hull, plus paddle with carbon shaft and two spray decks.

Identifying features of the kayak - The keel has carborundum epoxy about 1 foot long at each end. This was not masked when applied and so it looks rough. There is also a patch of it in the middle of the keel directly below the middle of the seat. About 40 mm diameter. If one was looking inside under the seat there would be visible an area of damage to the hull inside of where it was patched outside, a 20 mm crack.

This was a "targeted" theft done at night by someone who knew what was there to take and took only the applicable items.

**INTHEMAILBAG**

**1. English Paddler seeking Employment**

A letter (from Jonathan Burleigh, who is looking for instruction type work connected with sea kayaking, mountaineering and expeditions, from April to November 1997.

Jonathan, age 22, has an impressive C.V. with a whole string of qualifications including the BCU senior instructor and advanced sea proficiency. He is currently completing a six month trainee course at Plas Menai, the National Watersports Centre in Great Britain. He has expedition experience in British Columbia, Indian Himalayas and Korea. He has been involved with for a year with a leading outdoor shop in Surrey. Jonathan is looking for an opportunity to work mainly in a maritime location and continue his sea kayak coaching. With 10 years of paddling canoe slalom at a high level, sounds like he would be an asset to a New Zealand outfit.

Write to me for a copy of Jonathan's letter and CV, or contact him directly at:

Jonathan Burleigh  
61 Rosemary Ave.,  
East Molesey  
Surrey. KT8 1QF  
England.  
Ph: 0181 224 0468  
E Mail: [mikeb@gn.apc.org](mailto:mikeb@gn.apc.org).  
[UBJVM6Q@ccs.BBK.AC.UK](mailto:UBJVM6Q@ccs.BBK.AC.UK)

**2. Folding Kayaker. Nov/Dec 1996, Vol.6 No.6**

This issue has a long section on dealing with currents around piers and points; a way to make a comfy seat for foldboats; tips of repairing torn decks; dealing with air stoppers (the bit at the end of the inflation tubes for the inflatable sponsons); and a slightly jaundiced article on how much better folding kayaks are than fibreglass boats in minimizing damage when landing on rocky beaches.

There is an interesting note for bookaphiles on a new best selling



book, *Undaunted Courage* by Stephen Courage, and published by Simon & Schuster (1996). Apparently a collapsible iron frame boat was conceived in 1803 for the Lewis and Clark Expedition, one that could be carried past the falls of the Missouri, and put together with animal skins at the far end. The frame apparently only weighed 44 pounds, but there were problems in covering the frame with elk skins and the boat did not float.

Please write if you would like the loan of the latest Folding Kayaker.

**LIST OF RETAILERS/RENTAL  
GUIDING OUTFITS**

Sandy Ferguson has compiled a comprehensive list of nearly all the commercial companies involved with retailing, guiding, renting and instruction. Apparently SKOANZ has been a little tardy in producing such a list. It is a valued list as I often receive overseas enquiries. Please contact Sandy directly if you require the list urgently - he can E Mail it to you.

**ADVERTISEMENT  
KASK Handbooks -**

Copies of the second printing of the Handbook are available from Peter Sullivan {address at top of page 1}. Prices are as follows:

**\$13 including P & P -  
KASK members**

**\$19 including P & P -  
non- members**

For lucrative trade price enquiries, please contact Peter Sullivan.

The response from the retailing and manufacturing sector, to either retailing the handbook or including a handbook with each kayak sold, has been pathetic to date. Peter Sullivan has had two responses to date, from 20 sample copies sent out. One can only assume that either KASK has not publicized the Handbook enough for the retailers and manufacturers, or they are only interested in selling kayaks

and not at all interested in educating kayak purchasers in safe kayaking.

Stockists of the handbook are: Bivouac in Christchurch and Wellington, Topsports, Canoe and Outdoor World, Auckland Canoe Centre and Watercooled Sports in Dunedin.

On a more positive note, a Wellington High School has bought a set of 20 Handbooks as part of the syllabus for an outdoor recreation course.

**ADVERTISEMENT  
Sea Kayak Narratives**

Copies of 'Cresting the Restless Waves', 'Dark Side of the Wave', and both softback and hardback editions of 'The Dreamtime Voyage' are still available from P. Caffyn. In March 1996, the softback edition of 'The Dreamtime Voyage' was reprinted with a radical drop in price. Please E mail, phone fax or write for a book price list.

## ***KASK FORUM - 1997***

**Date: 25 to 27 April 1997**

**Venue: Worser Bay, Miramar, Wellington.**

**Brief Synopsis of Program:**

- late registration from 7pm, Thursday 24 April**
- Friday am: workshops**
- Friday pm: afternoon paddle to Ward & Somes Island**
- Friday evening: KASK A.G.M., Chile paddling slide show**
- Saturday am: workshops**
- Saturday pm: overnigher paddle to Pencarrow Head**
- Sunday am: return to Forum and debrief.**

**FULL DETAILS INCLUDED WITH THE NEWSLETTER**

If undelivered, please return to Sandy Ferguson: 12 Dunn St., Christchurch 2.  
Sandy's E Mail address: [a.ferguson@chem.canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:a.ferguson@chem.canterbury.ac.nz) - web site: <http://john.chem.canterbury.ac.nz>

Check your address label. If the number is the same as the newsletter issue number or less, then you need to renew your subscription immediately. This is your subscription renewal reminder.

**SUBSCRIPTIONS** - Check your address label, if it has a red circle round the number in the righthand corner, your subscription is due.