

# THE SEA CANOEIST NEWSLETTER

Issue 69

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## EDITORIAL

**WELLINGTON NETWORK**  
A listing of paddlers at the KASK Forum has resulted in a Wellington Sea Kayak Network being formed. At the first meeting, a list was compiled of the main things they wanted out of the network:

- a list of people to paddle with
- some organized training
- day trips, and some over weekend or short paddles
- sharing trip ideas
- group discounts
- the occasional slide evening
- pot luck dinners

A two page flier compiled by Gill Johnston is included as a separate sheet with this newsletter, with further details.

Contacts are listed below, for contributions to the newsletter, or people wanting to be put on our mailing list  
Phone: Peter Williamson, (04) 473-2587 (at Bivouac)  
Address: c/o Peter Williamson, Bivouac Holdings Ltd, 16The Terrace, Wellington  
Fax: Gill Johnston at (04) 471-0333  
E-mail: Gill Johnston at johnstog@wellington.ecnz.co.nz

## KASKFORUM

The 10th anniversary KASK Forum will be held at Mapua at Easter 1998.

Date: 10 - 13 April 1998  
Venue: Mapua Leisure Park

Mapua is small village on the edge of Tasman Bay, some 20 minutes drive west from Nelson. This clothing optional leisure park fronts both Tasman Bay and the Mapua estuary, and is where Graham Egarr held the first forum in 1988. A magic place for a kayak meet.

Planning for the anniversary forum by a Nelson team of sea kayakers commenced on the Cook Strait ferry after the Wellington KASK Forum. The next forum meeting is to be held at A.J.s on the night of 18 July, at 6pm.

The forum will include an overnight paddle, to one of the following destinations, Kina Peninsula, Rabbit Is-

land, Ruby Bay or Haulashore Island. A spit roast is planned for the forum dinner.

For overseas paddlers, transport for bods, boddesses and kayaks will be arranged from the Picton ferry terminal to Mapua.

Accommodation needs to be booked at an early stage. The costs are listed below:

- tourist flats \$65 to \$70 for extra 2 people
- chalets \$48 for extra 2 people
- caravans \$44
- backpackers \$36
- power sites \$10
- tent sites \$9

To book accommodation, contact either:

A.J. at ph/fax: 03 544 6322 or  
Mapua Leisure Park: 03 5402666

## A TOUCH OF HUMOUR

A romantic young couple had their ardour dampened when their Mini car took an unscheduled bath recently in Auckland's Waitemata Harbour.

Police said the couple parked their car on the waterfront near Auckland Harbour Bridge and failed to notice that the handbrake somehow had released and the vehicle started rolling into the sea.

With a sinking feeling, the couple scrambled back to dry land as the car floated off downstream.

Police were later warned by the girl's father that the car could become a shipping hazard.

## *A LETTER FROM TURKEY*

What follows is a letter Gerry sent to the family written one month after starting the expedition.

We have just finished the first month of our Turkish coastal ramble and are catching up with notes whilst sitting on the beach outside Bodrum some 360km from our starting point at Cesme, near Izmir.

It took us some days to get underway as we were held up with headwinds for three days - but no problem as they say in Turkey as there is plenty to do even in remote places. Fisherman invite us to have tea and village folk invite us in to have dinner. One eventful afternoon was spent with an extended family at a beach party. The food came all afternoon as did the raki, the local drink.

Back on the water we have found our new roller furling fore sail to be essential for a heavily loaded kayak. We can sail hard on the wind in up to 8 to 10 knots and with eased sheets, cream along in 20 knot winds, roller reefing if we get overpowered. Cheating? Don't believe it! The drag is taken off paddling to maintain displacement speed of 6km per hour. At times we have covered 10km plus per hour. The crew (front paddler - Trish) does not like to reduce sail and calls for more speed, then stops paddling, puts her feet on the deck and goes to sleep. Skipper (Gerry) works the sail, paddles and try not to broach and roll the kayak as following seas and wind rises. The water is warm and the sun shines every day.

Our usual paddling day starts at 0500. Down tent and pack up to be on the water by 0600. Breakfast is between 0800 and 0900 at a sea side restaurant. All these small sea side towns have a small fishing boat harbour, most no bigger than 20 boats with a restaurant on the dock side. There is no tide so it is like paddling in a lake. A Turkish breakfast is excellent; black sweet tea, cucumber, tomatoes, cut up ol-

ives, soft white goat cheese, a boiled egg and lots of French bread. \$3 to \$4 per person.

By 1000 the sea breeze starts and by noon can be too strong to paddle - 35 knots plus. It usually dies down again at night. As summer is on us the noonday heat puts a stop to paddling in the afternoon and we are drinking 3 to 4 litres of water each a day. We carry two days of water most of the time and constantly stock up on the readily available bottled water. We are carrying a filter but have not had to use it.

Between villages we have always been able to find a quiet beach to camp on so far. Dry land days come up every 3 to 4 days with a trip inland to visit larger towns and ruins, From Mosques to Crusader castles and the awe inspiring ruins dating back 2000 to 5000 years. Yesterday we spent time looking at what must have been a large walled city. No mention of it on any maps or tourist information.

Shopping in cities like Milas is worth the effort. Here you get the real prices of Gold and Turkish rugs; 1.8 x 1.8 under NZ\$500. How do you carry a Turkish rug in a sea kayak? Thank goodness I have not found the answer yet but I am sure crew will!

Highlights to date. The walled town at Sigacik where 700 people live in a tiny town with very narrow streets. It covers approx. 500 to 600 square metres and is next to a small harbour. Wild donkeys in the night at Piler National Park - no camping allowed but what do you do if there is a 40km paddle! Just as well there are no cheetahs nearby as the Park has them. Tortoises visited us at dinner time on the sands of the Mendenes River delta after rising on shore winds beached us - that is what you get when you try for a 25km plus stretch in the afternoon.

Every day we find and see new things as no timetable drives us. After the visit to the ruins at Didyma we set off for the old city of Iassos which dates back to the bronze age. This village is 35km up the Gulf of Gulluk. As usual, when the end is in sight we do

the kilometres to get there as there is less wind problem in a sheltered gulf.

Saw my first snake in the wild and I was glad it was going in the opposite direction as I was amazed at the speed it took off at. We take extra care in these wild and over grown areas but the spring wild flowers have made us camera happy. They are just magic.

From Gulluk we spent a day visiting Milas then to sea again to round the Bodrum Peninsula. This stretch we were not sure of as to what some of the capes would be like. We pushed off early and beat the wind up the inside and rode excellent tail winds around into Bodrum Bay in three days of early breakfast stops and afternoon township visits. Bodrum Bay is very much like the Bay of Islands, lots of small coves and islands. We are glad we will be out into wilder more remote areas as next week the tourist season starts to swing. The fleet of tour boats here is probably 1,000 plus and there are also fleets of yachts.

Our next leg is the Sea of (Korfezi) Gokoua, 80km up the inside then over 200km out around Kindos and back to Marmaris. We have read that there is a narrow strip of land that over 2,000 years ago they tried to cut a channel through. This we will try to portage as it will save us an 80km beat to windward out of the Gulf on a windward shore.

Gerry & Trish Maire  
25 May 1997

## *BAY OF PLENTY SEA KAYAK NETWORK*

A thriving network of sea kayakers is emerging in the Bay of Plenty based around Dusty Waddell of Mount Maunganui. Dusty has been doing well selling sea kayaks and as many of the owners are new to the sport, he has found himself in demand as a group leader and organiser. The group is still in it's formative stage however if you want more information contact Dusty on (07) 572-4419 or Jean Kirkham on (07) 552-5982.

### *SURFING AND ROLLING*

Hamilton based paddler, Danielle Gemenis, wants to organise a surfing & rolling weekend. The course will be run by Chris Gully of Auckland Wilderness Kayaking and many members of ASKNET have done Chris's course and know how good it is. The location will be decided nearer the time however Danielle has arranged two dates; July 6 & 7 or July 19 & 20. If you are interested, please give Danielle a call - see number below.

Danielle is also interested in hearing from people who can join her for midweek day/overnight sea kayaking trips or a day in the surf. Dates suitable to her are:

Tuesday & Wednesday 24 & 25 June  
Wednesday & Thursday 9 & 10 July  
Thursday & Friday 24 & 25 July  
Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday 11 to 13 August

Danielle can be contacted on (07) 827-7538 or on fax at (07) 827 7648

## *CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING*

by Paul Caffyn

Now that winter is here, and particularly since there have been two recent series of fatalities caused by carbon monoxide poisoning, I felt an article warning of the danger of carbon monoxide poisoning was pertinent. The gas is particularly dangerous since it is extremely toxic in low concentrations and almost impossible to detect by smell or taste

Two Department of Conservation workers died in a tent on the Chatham Islands, and three young lads died in a car at Arthurs Pass, all five deaths as a result of carbon monoxide poisoning. In both instances the use of cookers with inadequate ventilation was to blame.

### **Technical Details**

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colourless, odourless, tasteless gas, with a specific gravity of 0.97 (slightly lighter than air). It is slightly soluble in water, and is both flammable and toxic. It will burn in air with a slight blue flame to form carbon dioxide. It forms through the incomplete combustion of liquid or gaseous fuels.

### **Physiological Effects**

Carbon monoxide poisons the human body by being absorbed into the bloodstream and not allowing the blood to take up and transport the necessary oxygen to the various cells and organs. Blood will absorb considerably more carbon monoxide than it will oxygen, thus the body tissues soon suffer oxygen starvation.

The red blood cells (haemoglobin) will take up carbon monoxide molecules when exposed to the gas, forming carboxyhaemoglobin in place of oxyhaemoglobin. This will take place in very small concentrations of carbon monoxide and the ratio of affinity is such that the blood cells under the same conditions will take up 300 times as much carbon monoxide as they will oxygen.

As the human body requires oxygen for functioning and existence, so as the blood saturation rises, so the cells and tissues suffer from progressive oxygen starvation.

### **Cumulative Effect**

A person can be exposed for a number of short periods to carbon monoxide with no apparent effect, however on each occasion the blood has absorbed more of the gas and the victim will become more and more susceptible to its effect.

### **Reversible Process**

Acute carbon monoxide poisoning is a reversible process. In fresh air or oxygen, the blood will gradually rid itself of carbon monoxide and regain its usual oxyhaemoglobin level. The blood itself suffers no apparent ill effect and neither do the lungs or air passages etc., however in the period that the body is deprived of oxygen, many organs, tissues and cells will

have suffered considerable and often irreversible damage from oxygen deficiency.

Symptoms of Carbon Monoxide Poisoning (with increasing levels of blood saturation)

- an intoxicating effect in low concentrations with a gradual failure of judgement
- tired feeling
- weakness in the knees and legs
- giddiness
- difficulty in breathing
- headache, nausea
- increased pulse & respiration
- convulsions, coma
- slow weak pulse and respiration
- respiratory failure and death

### **Exposure Effects**

The absorption of carbon dioxide into the bloodstream is related to a number of factors:

- a. time exposed
  - b. gas concentration
  - c. work being performed
- Exercise, high temperature, humidity and emotional stress, all tend to increase heart rate and thus the absorption of carbon monoxide.

### **Exposure Levels and Effects**

Naturally the exposure level and effect will vary from individual to individual but the following is a brief guide to the exposure effects:

p.p.m.	percent	Effect
200	0.02	slight headache
400	0.04	severe headache
1,200	0.12	collapse
2,000	0.20	death possible
10,000	1.00	death certain

{p.p.m. = parts per million}

### **Body Appearance**

A common characteristic of carbon monoxide poisoning is for the victim to have a healthy appearance, typically with the face showing a rosy, flushed appearance.

### **Treatment**

Removal of the victim to fresh air as soon as possible. Keep the patient warm and do not allow any exertion. The breathing of pure oxygen hastens the loss of carbon monoxide blood saturation by as much as 500% in comparison to breathing air.

**AVOIDANCE OF CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING**

1. If cooking, or thawing out, in a tent, ensure there is adequate ventilation
2. If cooking in a vehicle, ensure the windows are not completely closed.
3. With liquid fuel stoves, ensure the jet is regularly cleaned

There are numerous references in expedition accounts of close calls with carbon monoxide poisoning. Rear Admiral Richard Byrd came ever so close to succumbing while alone in an Antarctic weather station through a defective stove ('Alone', published 1938). And another was a team on the Greenland Ice Cap. While two men were still asleep in their sleeping bags, the third set the stove and lamp going, and when he sat up to place a billy on the stove, he collapsed but quickly revived once he dropped below the level of the carbon monoxide layered in the roof of the tent.

To conclude, carbon monoxide is an insidious, invisible lethal gas, toxic in very small concentrations. Slightly lighter than air, it will layer in the top of a tent or vehicle. Poisoning will be avoided through the use of adequate ventilation and properly functioning stoves.

P. Caffyn

*"The Delights Of Aramid Fibre..."*

by Glyn Dickson

I came across an interesting thing the other day. I was talking to the good folks at Canoe and Outdoor World in Christchurch, and asking what local sea kayakers prefer and buy material wise. The answer was a resounding "Fibreglass". In fact they gave me some statistics on how many fibreglass boats they had sold, compared to how few kevlar boats, and to say the result almost totally favoured fibreglass is no exaggeration.

This strikes me as odd, and I will elaborate. When I bought my first sea kayak prior to being involved in manu-

facturing, I wanted the best kayak I could buy. Although budget restricted, I looked at what was available, and after studying the pro and cons, and looking at the relative values, I bought a kevlar boat. Although it was (from memory) around \$300 more expensive than fibreglass, to me the performance advantages more than outweighed the extra cost.

That was in 1991, and since then the Auckland market has continued to move in that same direction. Here at Paddling Perfection, we have not built a fibreglass one-person sea kayak since May 1995, as every boat has been ordered in kevlar.

So what advantages does kevlar exhibit over fibreglass?

(1) Kevlar fibres have over twice the tensile strength of fibreglass for the same weight, and actually have five times the tensile strength of steel.

(2) Given it's improved fibre strength, your kayak can be built more lightly with the same strength.

(3) It performs exceptionally well under impact and is highly resistant to puncturing (like hitting rocks or beaches). It is also very resistant to abrasion (try sanding the stuff and see what happens).

(4) When it does fail, kevlar usually (unless under huge loads like being run over by a 20 foot powerboat!) exhibits two stages of failure. As the load increases, the laminate begins to fail, but to reach the point of total failure, even greater load must be applied. This characteristic can save your boat (and bacon). Your kayak might come into contact with something, and be partially damaged, but it's still floating, and still in one piece.

(5) Kevlar is highly resistant to the propagation of cracks, in that it can be

flexed repeatedly without the fibres showing damage.

Kevlar's chief drawbacks are price, relatively lower performance under compression loadings, and difficulty in working with it (yes it's much easier to build boats out of straight fibreglass). To overcome the price issue, kevlar is virtually always used with fibreglass in sea kayaks, so the boat becomes reinforced with a single layer of kevlar, at a reasonable price, but with better properties than a straight fibreglass kayak. The higher the proportion of kevlar in the lay-up, the higher the performance or modulus of the laminate. Check a sea kevlar sea kayak to see how heavy the kevlar layer is, some are built with a lighter kevlar cloth (only around 170 grams of kevlar per square meter as opposed to the 300 gram kevlar we use). Recently we have gone to multilayer kevlar construction, and our epoxy modified kevlar Slingshots hulls have up to 3 layers of kevlar.

Please also note that a kevlar kayak is just as easy to repair as a fibreglass kayak if it is damaged. It can be repaired in exactly the same way, and the repair can be done with fibreglass.

Fibreglass is also a high performing material in that it has twice the tensile strength of steel for a given weight. Glass fibres are readily available, cost effective, and relatively easy to work with (easy to cut, sand, and laminate whereas kevlar is more difficult in all three areas). The limiting factor with fibreglass is what happens under extreme loading. Its failure is characterised by sudden catastrophic failure, that is when it breaks, it does so suddenly. By nature fibreglass is a brittle fibre, so under impact loadings it's performance is substantially less than kevlar's. Cracks propagate quickly in fibreglass so repeated flexing is far more likely to lead to damage, and

Laminate Spec	Strength Comp	Glass Comp	Puncture	Glass Comp	Stiffness	Glass Comp
Solid Fibreglass	45	100%	19	100%	13	100%
Glass/Kevlar	55	+22%	27.5	+53%	19	+46%
Solid Kevlar	65	+44%	45	+137%	23	+77%

after damage has occurred, repeated flexing will cause the damage to spread further.

To quantify some of the differences, I have pulled out some test figures from a series of experiments with different laminates. The figures are averaged over a selection of typical laminate specifications having been separated into solid glass laminates, glass/kevlar laminates (such as used for kevlar sea kayak construction), and solid kevlar. The numbers quoted have been normalised to take into account the different laminate weights so a reasonable comparison can be made. The tests were conducted to test flexural strength, puncture resistance (simulating a very sharp point impact), and stiffness (resistance to bending). The columns headed "Glass Comp" are the relative difference between a solid glass laminate, and the figure from the previous column..

(See table at base of page 4)

Note that carbon fibres (black in colour) show very similar properties to fibreglass (stiff, good strength in tensile and compression, but brittle) and a carbon laminate will develop the same strength as glass with around 30% less weight. Kevlar still outperforms carbon in puncture resistance, while carbon fibres are horribly expensive, at around twice the price of kevlar!

I believe the results clearly show that on a weight for weight basis, kevlar laminates substantially outperform fibreglass. And what these figures do not show, is the kevlar's resistance to crack propagation, abrasion, and excellent resistance to shock loading (the test loadings were largely static). It's for these reasons that kevlar is my preferred choice for kayak construction.

Glyn Dickson  
Paddling Perfection

## **RESCUETECHNIQUES**

### ***Paddle Float Self Rescue*** **by Grant Rochfort** **Natural Highs Kayak School**

You have fallen out of your kayak and cannot roll; your best technique for self rescue is probably the paddle float.

Your first priority is to hang on to your kayak and paddle.

With your rear hand hold onto your paddle and grasp the near side cockpit coaming with your front hand in relation to the kayak. Kick hard with your legs and punch your front hand straight up into the air to right the kayak. This technique helps keep the cockpit clear of the water while it is turning over and minimises the water left in the cockpit when the kayak is righted.

Now put your front arm under a deck bungie directly behind the cockpit. You want the bungie on the inside of your elbow. You are now free to use your hands without fear of being separated from the kayak.

Making sure you're in front of the paddle. Slide the paddle float over one end of the paddle and inflate. Often inflation is enough to hold the float onto the paddle. However with some high aspect (skinny) blades you may need to tighten the strap to prevent the float coming off. I have my float attached to a length of bungie which I don't have to take off during a rescue, as it is easy to lose your grip on the float in rough or windy conditions.

Once the float is securely inflated on a blade of the paddle you will need to slide the other blade under the paddle float straps. This will be easier if you keep the power face of the blade down. Slide the blade under both sides but no further. The further the outrigger (paddle float) is away from the kayak the more stable it will be when you climb back in.

It is a good idea to preset the length of the paddle float straps to suit the paddle you are using before leaving the

shore. If your boat is not fitted with paddle float straps you can put some on yourself using a couple of lengths of cord or alternatively you can use the decklines or deck bungies on your boat. If you have strong hands it is possible to do the rescue by clamping the paddle shaft to the rear of the cockpit with your hand.

Now that the paddle float is set up you have to get yourself back in the kayak. Facing the back of your kayak place your outside hand halfway down the paddle shaft and your other hand on the centre of the back of the cockpit rim.

Aim yourself at the rear hatch and using your arms to lunge and your legs to kick belly flop onto the rear deck. In this position it will be possible to bend your legs and put them inside the cockpit. It is important at this stage to keep weight on the paddle shaft otherwise you will just capsize to the unsupported side.

Keeping your weight on the paddle shaft and your body position low, gently rotate your body around into the normal sitting position.

If it is rough get your spray deck back on and pump out the cockpit before removing the outrigger and carrying on with your trip.

Grant Rochfort

### ***TXRESCUE*** **by Grant Rochfort**

In the first part of this rescue description I will describe what to do when every one is in the water. Then I will describe the normal assisted TX rescue. The example I will describe is a party of two. I will call my paddlers Alex and James.

After securing their boats and paddles, James and Alex have decided that Alex will get back in her kayak first as she is stronger and will be able to assist James to get back into his kayak.

The upturned hulls are side by side and Alex is next to her kayak. James

is on the opposite side of the hulls next to his kayak. Alex passes the paddles to James who jams the blades under the deck bungy on his boat to get them out of the way. Alex forms a T shape with the 2 kayaks and the lifts the bow up onto the upturned hull of James's kayak. James assists Alex by pulling her kayak from the opposite side.

Once Alex's cockpit is clear of the water and has drained, the kayak is turned over.

James now reaches across his kayak and holds onto Alex's cockpit rim while Alex climbs back into her boat. To climb back into her boat Alex holds her cockpit rim, lunges with her arms and kicks hard and belly flops across both boats.

Face down, she slides her legs into the cockpit and turns over. Then Alex secures her spray skirt.

*From this point I am describing a normal TX assisted rescue.*

Alex asks James to pass her the paddles and then she secures them under her front deck bungy on the opposite side to James.

Alex asks James to go to the front of her kayak making sure he holds on the whole time he is making his way to her kayak. Alex is now going to lift the front of James's kayak onto her deck. It can help balance the lifting if James hangs off the opposite side of the bow to his kayak. Hanging off the front of Alex's kayak has the effect of sinking Alex's bow a little and this makes it easier for Alex as she does not have to lift the kayak as high to get it on her deck. Alex will need to keep James's kayak angled in front of her to make lifting easier.

Once Alex gets the bow of James's kayak onto her deck most of the water drains out of the cockpit because of the bulkhead just behind the seat in James's kayak. Alex doesn't drag James's kayak across any further but instead waits for the bulk of the water to drain then lifts the bow high making sure the cockpit is clear of the water before turning it over. Because

Alex kept the cockpit clear of the water it now has very little water in it and won't need to be pumped out when James gets back in.

Alex now turns the boat around by holding James's bow and twisting at the waist.

She turns the boats so the front of James' kayak is pointing towards her rudder. Alex places her near hand on the near side front of James' cockpit and the other hand on the far side front of James's cockpit. Alex ensures she has a good grip and leaves a little gap between the boats.

Alex talks to James, "James, I want you to come up between the boats facing me. Yep that's good. OK now put your hands one on the front of my cockpit rim and the other on the back of your cockpit rim. Right now lie back and put one foot on my boat and one foot in your cockpit. OK when I count to 3, I'm going to squeeze the boats together and you're going to lift yourself up. 1,2,3, lift!"

With that, James lifts and Alex squeezes. The boats are now securely under James and he has a secure platform while he slides back into his boat and puts his spray skirt back on.

It's a good idea for the first paddler back in their boat to talk as it helps keep the other paddler calm and also helps with the teamwork and timing involved in the rescue.

Grant Rochfort

### **ADVERTISEMENT For Sale**

Double Sea Kayak (Norski)  
\$1,999 including sprayskirts  
Available end of June  
Call: Andy Garland  
or Linda Smith  
(03) 355 2318 (home)  
(03) 366 7449 (work)

## **LETTERSTO THE EDITOR**

### **Sea Kayak Racing and KASK**

**from Aaron Dixon**

I attended the KASK AGM and was amazed by the energy evoked during the discussion over sea kayak racing. I have been pondering over it and the conclusion I have come to is that we have an identity crisis which it is important that we face, make a decision upon, and then proceed onwards. The issue rather than the personalities involved is what is important.

The point about the public's perception is valid, and in putting the guidelines together under either KASK or another group, a life may be saved and some sticky mud may not need to fly.

The issue of defining a sea kayak is irrelevant if the issue is considered from a *-what is our identity* viewpoint.

I therefore see the issue as a constitutional one, the options being:

1. Do we wish to be solely representative of amateur (SKOANZ covers the commercial aspect) *recreational* (as distinct from competitive) sea kayakers, which then means that some of us will also belong to other organisations which represent other expressions of sea kayaking, not unlike tramping clubs, cross country running clubs, or

2. Do we wish to be the NZ Amateur Sea Kayaking Association, umbrelling all types of kayaking on the sea.

What I enjoy is the tranquillity and beauty which can be discovered, the sense of isolation which can be achieved, overcoming the challenge of the elements and the simple satisfaction of having done it myself. Personally I have never raced, nor have I considered paddling around Australia, and whilst those who do, have little inclination to do either.

Quite possibly these are the elements, which in varying degrees, attracted most of us to sea kayaking in the first place. It would therefore seem that the apparent polarisation caused by this issue should not exist; these are simply extreme expressions within the bounds of kayaking on the sea.

I joined KASK a few years ago as a link to the invisible sea kayaking fraternity in New Zealand. I enjoy the low key aspect of KASK, and look forward to the newsletters with the amazing trip reports and friendly feel to it. I have no wish to wade through pages of techno gumf about the fastest materials and race results which will eventuate if we embrace racing.

KASK at the moment caters for my interest: *recreational* sea kayaking. I know that if I contact a member, that I am going to be talking to someone with similar interests. (I have no wish to be exclusive, but I think it is important to have a clear identity). If I develop an interest in racing, I'll be interested in *also* joining that type of association, and similarly with the not so alien whitewater, polo, DR etc.

I have no wish to be associated with KASK simply because it umbrellers a fast growing (perhaps read latest fashion ) sport of racing. The probable increase in membership if we embraced sea kayak racing may dilute the membership and thereby weaken the organisation.

History may have provided us with a recent example in the NZ Canoe Association. Like the Roman empire, it may have got too big, trying to be all things to all people, and is collapsing due to its own mass.

I would therefore be prefer to see KASK as a *recreation specific* type body.

Aaron Dixon

## BOOKREVIEWS

Title: 'Great Heart'

Subtitle: 'The History of a Labrador Adventure'

Author: James West Davidson & John Ruge.

Published: 1988

Publisher: Viking Penguin Inc. 40 West 23nd. St, New York. NY 10010. USA

ISBN: 0-670-81950-6

Subject: 1903 & 1905 canoe expeditions across Labrador, Canada.

Cover: Hardback

Contents: 385 pages, 2 maps, 8 pages of black & white photos, two maps.

Size: 160 x 235mm

RRP: US\$19.95

Reviewed by: Paul Caffyn

The book recounts the attempts of three expeditions to cross the barren lands of Labrador from Groswater Bay on the Atlantic Coast to Ungava Bay in Hudson Bay. After farewelling his young wife Mina at Battle Harbour, Leonidas Hubbard Jnr. set off with two companions on July 1905 for a 550 mile paddle and portage trip to visit the remote Naskapis tribe during their annual caribou hunt. His companions were Dillon Wallace and a remarkable half Scotsman, half Cree woodsman, George Elson.

An early navigation blunder, entering the wrong river at Grand Lake, led to a backbreaking mission of paddling, poling and portaging towards his initial goal of Lake Michikamau. In sight of their goal, but running desperately short of food, Hubbard made a decision to turn back. Abandoning the canoe, the retreat became a harrowing ordeal, until barely 33 miles short of safety, Hubbard could go no further. Hubbard wrote poignant farewell letters to Mina and his mother, waiting in vain while his two companions made their separate ways out to safety. George Elson made it first and sent back a rescue team for Wallace, but it was too late for Hubbard and his frozen body was left in his tent. During the winter months, Wallace brought Hubbard's body out for burial, but that is not the end of the story.

Mina Hubbard blamed Dillon Wallace for her husband's death and secretly recruits George Elson for an expedition in 1905 to complete her husband's mission. Wallace, determined to redeem the memory of his closest friend, also plans an expedition in the same season to complete the mission. A race develops between the two parties, for the first to reach Ungava Bay. Mina's team of five in two canoes, ably guided by George, avoid the navigation blunder of the 1903 expedition, and in late August reach the sea. Wallace's team seemed dogged by bad luck, and running short of food, he sends most of his team back while pushing on with Clifford Easton. A month after Mina's team had arrived, Wallace and Easton, starving and having just survived a capsized in an icy cold rapid, arrive at Ungava Bay.

Davidson and Ruge spent many years of research, tracking down the diaries of the paddlers, searching old newspaper files, and retracing the expedition routes (in a lightweight kevlar canoe), before masterly crafting this book.

At first glance, I wasn't inspired by the writing style. The prologue commences with Hubbard, alone in his tent, dying of starvation and attempting to write his diary, while the first chapter details George Elson's rail trip to meet Hubbard in New York. It felt more like reading a novel rather than a real life saga. However a 22 page epilogue reveals the sheer amount of detail of the paddler's lives gleaned from their personal diaries. And having read the epilogue, the rest of the book was a compelling read, hard to put down. Also in the epilogue, the book is nicely rounded out with a section which starts:

'There only remains the ebb tide: to trace out the fortunes of those who took the memories of Labrador with them.'

The central section of photographs are sharp, and a good montage of all three expeditions. Two double page maps inside the end covers shows the routes of the 1903 and 1905 expeditions, while a single page map facing page one shows the overall area.

Great Heart is what Mina Hubbard wanted to call George Elson, mentioned in her diary but not her account of their trip, 'A Woman's Way through Unknown Labrador', which was published in 1908.

Dillon Wallace also published a book titled, 'The Lure of the Labrador Wild' in 1905 which went through many printings.

'Great Heart' is both a story of adventure, privation and hardship, and a poignant love story of a woman's undying love for her husband.

Paul Caffyn

**Title:** *SBS The Invisible Raiders*

**Subtitle:** The history of the Special Boat Squadron from World War Two to the present

**Author:** James D. Ladd

**Publisher:** Book Club Associates by arrangement with Arms and Armour Press, London

**Published:** 1983

**ISBN:** 0-85368-593-2

**Contents:** 283 pages, 28 B&W photos, 10 maps

**Reviewed by:** John Kirk-Anderson

Sometimes described as the marine equivalent of the better known British SAS, the Royal Marines Special Boat Squadron has managed to avoid the rabid attention that has befallen their army colleagues.

Evolving from numerous 'private armies' set up in the early days of World War Two, the SBS is now well established as a vital special forces unit.

Beach surveys, shore reconnaissance and raids were the prime tasks of the various units in the 1940's. These remain among the jobs that the squadron carries out 50 years later.

This book makes a good job of covering the various theatres that the early groups served in, no mean feat when the appendix lists 39 units from which the modern SBS can trace its lineage. From swimmer-canoeists (still the title given to operators) lying in the shallows of a French beach, taking sand samples while enemy patrols walk past, to raids in the Greek Is-

lands that could have come straight out of 'Boys Own', they are covered in some detail. The author has managed to keep the text reasonably free of military acronyms and confusing unit titles, but the three Appendices have enough to keep the military buff busy.

Reading this history, I was surprised how much use was made of canoes (the book never mentions kayaks) to land on enemy coastlines. Simply a means of transport to the operators, they clearly played a huge part in the success of many missions. Usually launched from submarines, just outside radar range, the craft were paddled very close to the target before the front paddler swam ashore, taking with him beach survey equipment. On other missions craft were paddled up to ships at anchor and steadied with a magnetic holdfast, before limpet mines were placed below the water line. Raids of this type included the now famous 'Cockleshell Heroes' attack on Bordeaux Harbour in December 1942, and 'Operation Jaywick', against Japanese shipping in Singapore Harbour in September 1943. The description of this raid, led by Ivan Lyon, makes a repeated mistake in naming their support vessel the 'Kwike'. Their vessel, the 'Krait', now resides at the Maritime Museum in Sydney.

The book becomes lighter on detail after leaving the Second World War, as the trail leads through Korea, South East Asia, the Arabian Peninsula, Northern Ireland and ends in the South Atlantic, with the amphibious recapture of the Falkland Islands in 1982.

Various types of motorised craft, in particular rigid hulled, have largely replaced the collapsible canoe in carrying the highly trained swimmer-canoeist, but the two-man Klepper is still used. Their unique ability to silently deliver special forces to the target is still valuable five decades after big game hunter Roger 'Jumbo' Courtney carried out an unauthorised 'raid' on 'HMS G1 engyle', berthed in the Clyde, to prove to Combined Operations the value of the canoe in war. To the contemporary sea kayaker, with Kevlar craft and Goretex drysuits, the

methods and equipment of these men seem desperate. But, these were desperate times and the volunteers for 'hazardous duty' may not have had the paddling skills, gear and knowledge that we take for granted, but they did have the guts. One beach reconnaissance team that missed an RV off the French Coast simply turned and paddled back to England.

Swimming away from his Folbot, to check a beach on the island of Rhode, Lieutenant-Commander Nigel Clogtoun-Willmott would probably have killed for Neoprene. Dressed in woollen Long-Johns and a seaman's jersey coated with periscope grease, his torch waterproofed with condoms, and with observations recorded on a slate, he spent three hours swimming and creeping past sentries.

Some of the techniques they use could be handy for recreational paddlers. The firing of General Purpose Machine Guns and antitank rockets from the cockpit certainly has merit. A warning burst through the goggles of a jet skier that ventured too close would be an argument winner.

The author says he has left out some details in deference to sensitive modern operations and tactics, which is certainly sensible as special forces can only do their job out of the public eye. However, the writing style in the latter part of the book tends to replace facts with breathless colour, as the author has suddenly bought into the popular image of the elite special forces as modern-day super-action heroes.

Despite these minor gripes, the book is a good glimpse at the work of the SBS, and while it is a military history, it should still be of interest to the contemporary paddler for its details of kayaks being used for a very different purpose than recreation.

The author, who served in the Royal Marines during the Second World War, has written several books on the history of amphibious warfare.



## TRIPREPORT

*No Barrier too Great  
(at least not this week)*

by Aaron Dixon

Huge overfalls higher than the mast of a 40 foot ketch. Powerful tidal currents in the most vicious piece of water in New Zealand. These were some of the comments we had heard when investigating the possibility of paddling across the Colville Channel to Great Barrier Island. These were the phrases which looped in my mind on the 3rd of November, 1996, as myself, Andy Bruere, and John Beattie, drove from our home base of Whakatane to Fletchers Bay for our annual boys trip. Needless to add, I was a little nervous.

### Day 1

References: NZ chart 531 Great Barrier Island to Mercury Island, NZ 5225 Great Barrier Is., Ports and Anchorages (for Fitzroy), NZMS 259 Great Barrier Island, DOC track and campsite maps, Royal Akarana cruising guide.

We left home at around 06:15 expecting to be on the water at around 12:00, aiming to catch slack water in the middle at 14:00, and ride the ebb tide to Tryphena or Rosalie Bay. The forecast was 15 knots SE, gusting to 20 knots, 1m swell, thunderstorms. Not the most pleasant to look forward to, on top of the warnings we'd already had. However, at least the wind wasn't offshore.

The drive up the Coromandel was a continual weather observation exercise. The winds changed as we crossed the Kaimai ranges from E to S and white horses galloped their way up the Hauraki gulf. After the delightful trip up the Coromandel, the lookout above Fletchers bay provided an excellent vantage, the tidal flow could be clearly seen between Square Top Is and the mainland, and the wind looked to be around the forecasted 15 knots with the scattering of whitecaps.

We arrived at Fletchers Bay at around 14:30. John left his car at the backpackers lodge after lucking out at the

farmhouse up the hill, and we hit the water at 15:15, just in time to catch the full ebb tide to Tonga. Our boats were chocka block. John had bulging hatch covers and deck cargo, and my cunning plan of sharing a tent with Andy backfired when he threw half a dozen stubbies of his home brew for me to dehydrate and slip in somewhere.

Sliding my fully laden whale down the beach, I almost thought its bow wasn't going to part company with the bottom, but eventually physics groaned to triumph and proved that there must have been some room left after all! This thought recurred often after I'd run out of the amber refreshment. After a number of attempts, we established two way comms with \*500 and advised them of our intentions, and set off in earnest on our most serious open water crossing to date.

With the tidal flow, seas were biggest in the mile off Square Top Island, breaking occasionally, and around two metres. A couple of miles out and I got quite a fright as a large whale surfaced and blew within 20 metres of us. We held our breaths to see what it would do next, however the last we saw of it was a huge stream of bubbles rise to the surface across our bows. Exhilarating, and a great way to start a holiday.

The rest of the crossing was enjoyable as I began to settle into holiday/distance paddling/sharing an experience mode; sometimes paddling alone, dropping back, surging forward, pulling beside, chatting, sharing refreshments, consulting over course, listening to my bodies aches and pains come and go, watching the waves, the clouds, the other boats as they worked with the water, my own as it lifted and fell, alive and relishing the moment as I was, breathing it all in, getting in touch again; all the things behind why I love being on the water.

Three miles off Great Barrier Andy sighted something large jumping and moving quickly. Using his binoculars, he determined it was an orca and suggested we chase it to get a better look. However, we quickly rationalised that as it was spring time, getting

between a mother and its calf was not a good idea: tupperware is tough, but angry female Orca teeth might just be tougher!

By this time John was dropping behind, sea sick and not very happy. Andy and I eased up the pace and determined to beach on the N side of Tryphena entrance which looked inviting. As we got closer however, we had to break the news to our waning friend that Taylors beach, south of the nav light, looked better. By this time the sea was like glass and me and Andy paddled to set up a little for Johns arrival. However, by the time he hit the beach, Johns sleeping bag was the only thing on his mind and out of his boat and into it was how it went.

I was relieved to have the crossing under my belt. It had gone well and the beautiful sunset, warm filling meal, cool beer, good company, (conscious and not!), and warm, dry sleeping bag, capped off a great first day.

In the middle of the night, the forecasted thunderstorm passed by. Fifteen minutes of hail and thunder were fortunately all we copped.

Info: Distance: 12 N miles

Great Barrier apparently has Giardia in all its water ways.

Fletchers Bay is coarse sand/ pebble beach with moderate slope. Road access right to beach.

Taylors Beach is large pebble beach, moderately steep, grassed scrubby farmland and inhabited at the southern end by Peter Sporle and his family. Permission to camp was OK'd: kayakers have camped there before apparently. Peter has fished and chartered all around the island, and offered much valuable advice on landing beaches, currents etc.

### Day 2

After a good breakfast we were all refreshed and raring to go. John was a new man. I went to see the local resident, hoping to shed some light onto the mostly black black-and-white map and chart info we had. I was not disappointed. I was however, when returning to find the beach empty, other than my boat sitting just above the water mark. My companions had tired and

gone to check out Tryphena Harbour. I hopped in and met them in the bay. It was around 09:45.

The forecast was 1m SE, 10 knots SE, thunderstorms/ hail afternoon and evening. Low tide was 0815, and the plan was to hit Cape Barrier at slack water, but we know what happens to plans! It was clear but blowing 15 knots as we rounded the point. Sandy Bay, just north of Rabbit Island, would have been a nicer campsite. The gap between Rabbit and GBI was quite passable, a rock in the middle of it, with a river like tidal flow and only a couple of metres of water. The tide was evident all along, but of no bother.

The next psychological barrier was the also much talked of Cape Barrier. Its reputation was not without substance; 2m standing waves, clapotis, and all the drama. Maybe we should make more effort with this plan business. However the lovely sun took the edge off the situation and we continued up the coast. Dope Island, between the Cape and Rosalie Bay, apparently got its name because some locals were stashing their crop on it. However the goodies got the baddies in the end.

Rosalie Bay was exposed to the 1.5 m SE swell so we had to be content with paddling over the wreck of the SS Wiltshire. I'd dived this wreck years before, but had little recollection of the landmarks, it was good to locate it again.

The paddle up the coast from Rosalie was spectacular: the cliffs getting more grand, and the spectacularly acute angles of Shakespeare Point providing an exclamation to this section of coast. Our exclamation came soon after as we rounded the point from 1-2m rolling swell, to a flat calm beach hooked in behind the point. Our concerns of having a wet landing were this time not realised.

We beached, had a good munch, and left our boats to go for a stroll. A couple of young lovers frolicked on the beach, and later Andy spotted them (with much squinting and probable imagination) doing the wild thing,

and more, on the top of a no doubt sacred rock. I guess that was why they'd chosen it. Isn't spring time marvellous!

We climbed Memorial Rock, another beach attached island in the middle of the bay and again marvelled at our good fortune. The surf wasn't huge, but enough to odds on have spilled me.

Info: Distance: 14 N miles.

Rosalie Bay is a moderately steep, large pebble beach, with a house up on a hill behind it.

Medlands Beach is a lovely, white sand surf beach, with a paddock style DOC camp just N of the small island in the S part of the beach. The camp has toilet and cold water, sheltered kitchen facilities, with recycling bins nearby. It is obviously a popular spot as there are many bach/houses and we saw bus loads of backpacker tourists coming and going. There's a Public phone behind the centre of the beach and apparently there is a permanent 025 cellsite there now. There weren't any obvious landing sights between these two beaches.

Day 3

I'd slept well again, thanks to plenty of fresh air, exercise, absence of telephones, and Mr Thermarest. The earth hadn't moved for me that night however. Mr DOC got his usual take in the honesty box, and after another good breakfast, at 0930 we set off into the sun again. We were settling into things now, operating less and less as individuals, and more as family, helping each other and looking out for each other.

The forecast was 10 knots SE, 1m swell. Conditions were 0-15 knots S, 1-2m ESE swell.

The conditions were lovely, a rolling swell underneath, and rolling clouds overhead. We picked a line from the Sugar Loaf, inside Pitokuku Island, across the naval gazing area, to Whakatautuna Pt. Brooding thunder clouds emptied ahead of us, but kept to themselves.

We decided to check out Arid Island

and headed for the impressive pinnacles at the SW corner. The closer we got, the clearer it became that the island was riddled with sea caves, no doubt explaining the supposed lack of water.

The water was a beautiful light pounamu green, and the sun warmed my back reassuringly. I couldn't see a boat or person anywhere. My father had told me how the yacht charterers in Auckland forbid their clients to venture around this side of Great Barrier due to the lack of safe shelter, and I felt great to be out here, where in reality, not many people are game to come in large vessels, never mind in such a supposedly frail craft as my kayak.

We continued following the W coast around Arid Is, popping in and out of large caves, nooks etc, and after cutting through a wedge cave, came upon 'The Cove'. Another faded memory surfaced in my mind, and I repainted my visit here on the 'Spirit of Adventure' during my school days.

The Cove deserves the 'The' as in 'unique'. On this sunny, glassy day it was a picture of tranquillity. The only blemish was the ubiquitous green and yellow DOC no camping sign.

After another excellent lunch (the boys are learning how to feed themselves satisfactorily), we set off again, back through the wedge a number of times, and off to Waikaro Point, shooting the gap between the island, and onto an unnamed bay a mile or so on from the point. The bay was relatively sheltered, large pebbled, small but not very inviting. We jumped back in the boats and set off for Rangiwhakaea Bay.

All day we had observed the occurrence of a large set of swells every 5 mins or so. This phenomena was graphically illustrated when the waters parted right in front of Andy and John. A submerged rock was not something they wished to hongi with, and after hydroplaning out of the impact zone, they proceeded with care as the saying goes.

Rangiwhakaea Bay came into view, and turned out to be the most beautiful campsite of the trip. The site is behind the beach at the very root of the bay. We beached the canoes with little swell. The beach is shallow gradient, sandy, with many shells. There was evidence also though, of its not so good days: the raised ground behind the beach was strewn with flotsam, the conditions really were being kind to us.

Behind the tussocky foreground was a large Pohutukawa tree, and under it was a table and fire place. The bay is set in lovely bush with a Nikau lined stream skirting the N end of the campsite. A tropical picture. What more could you ask for....for a few days anyway.

We settled in, cooked another well earned feast, had a few sups, told stories, shared the different perspectives of our days' events, and thanked all the deities we could think of for our good fortune thus far. A light cleansing rain bid us goodnight.

Info: Distance: 17 N miles  
The northern part of the island, Te Paparahi, is restricted access and requires a permit from DOC.

#### Day 4

Forecast: AM light SW, PM-30-40 knot SW, wind warning. We'd obviously overlooked an important wind deity! We left the beach with light winds and glided back out into the rolling swell we'd experienced the previous days. It was evident that the weather was on the move however, as the clouds scooted over from the windward side of the island.

The coastal scenery continued to be spectacular as we tootled up the coast. It was disappointing not to be able to get closer to the shore, however the perspective from out further did allow a more whole appreciation of the coast. As we approached the pass between Aiguilles Is and GB, the set swells crashing onto a rock loomed bigger and bigger, spray firing twenty feet into the air. This was a warning of the danger of miss timing our run through the pass. I lingered behind taking pho-

tographs as Andy and John made their run for the gap. As they did, so did a set. Adrenalin pumps kicked in and all I saw was flying paddle spray for the three or four minutes it took to get through and out into deeper water again. Minutes later I made my run. Keeping a lookout over my shoulder and preparing for another set..... I was relieved to get through without a problem. However, seeing the bottom a foot below the surface made me decide not to push my luck! Locals told us that at high water fishing boats whip through the gap.

On the NZMS map and the DOC maps, an impression is given that their is another pass further south on the narrow peninsula. There is...about 3' wide and probably safe with no swell. However, it is more a fissure in the rock than anything else.

On the landward side of the pass conditions were quite different. Besides the change in atmosphere, the lack of that wide open, out there, by yourself feeling, we were now having to deal with the forecasted weather, without the shelter of the island. Over the next hour the weather deteriorated from the lovely warm sunny glassy seas we'd had for the previous couple of days, to overcast, wind chopped, swelless seas. However the Islands charm didn't diminish a great deal. The cliffs and caves continued to abound (by now the novelty had worn and mostly I didn't bother), and the remoteness was still evident. Rounding points was now becoming the usual head down and paddle hard affair we all know too well.

Miners Head proved a welcome and lovely stop. In 1894 it was the site where the SS Wairarapa plowed into the rocks at full steam in fog, and killed 121 people, but today the waters were sheltered and sparkled green like the blue-green pyrites which stained the cliffs below the numerous tunnels. The miners which worked there in the late 1940's. must have been part mountain goat and part limpet, or else there was a limitless supply of replacements: the tunnels appear like rabbit holes all over the face of the cliff. After scrambling up

through the manuka to check out the impressive view from the top of the head, we had a much need bath in the little nook beside the main tunnel.

We feasted again and then set off for Katherine Bay. We checked out the camp sites at Miners Cove and Ahuriri as we passed. Miners Cove was grassland with bulls grazing and a sandy beach, exposed to the east. Permit again required as it is not an official DOC camp. Ahuriri is tucked in on a S facing stretch of sandy beach and looked cosy. An impressive arching tunnel cuts through Ahuriri Point.

Civilisation greeted us again past this point. Baches, homes to local fishermen, complete with dilapidated boats. We continued to battle on and arrived at the bay east of Nimaru Bay at around 1800. After mucking about setting up a long line for a couple of hours, we realised that no one was prepared to retrieve it again once we were settled in, so that was abandoned. We had to settle for a few drinks and chatter, with hearty Irish stew instead of fish for tea.

Info: Distance 13 N miles  
There was no reasonable landing between Rangiwhakaea Bay and Miners Head.

#### Day 5

Forecast: 15-25 knots SW  
The weather forecasts were deteriorating, so it was comforting to know that we were on the sheltered side of the island. We left at 0915 and headed off into the wind. The old grit your teeth and do it bit. We pulled in behind Maunganui Point and spoke to a couple of old salts in a 34 foot Townson, one of the most lovely looking vessels I've seen, with varnished coamings and glistening hull. It turned out that it had been shadowing us around the island. It called into Arid Island the evening we had been there, we'd admired it slipping past Rangiwhakaea Bay the morning we left there, and it had spent the night in Nimaru Bay with us that night. They told us about the wind warning and wished us luck around on the windward side of the point.

The yacht may have been more comfortable, but I still enjoyed the satisfaction of doing it myself ( besides that I can't afford anything more grand!).

We passed Nagle Cove. This was the site of the building of many ships, and the largest sailing ship (by tonnage) ever built in NZ actually came out of there in 1848. In 1794 the British Navy felled trees for spars, and the rapacious felling went on from there. 90 million feet of timber was taken from the island by the 1940's. Needless to say, little was left of the native forest. This is quite evident from the amount of juvenile kauris. Only those trees on the unreachable pinnacles were spared.

We ran surfing across Port Abercrombie, a relished rarity in sea kayaking, and headed for Port Fitzroy. The best part of the port was the stunning Fitzroy House on the opposite shore. We declined to mix our sparkling Rangiwahakaea water with the brown liquid the locals assured us was drinkable, and carried on around to check out the DOC headquarters, tying up at their jetty next to their flash 20' inflatable. After finding out that we seemed to know more about the islands features than the staff, and being reminded to camp in the designated sites, we carried on.

The plan had been to hit the track up to the 627m Mt Hobson by 1200, to give us time to check out all the sites along the way, and get back comfortably. Plans, plans, plans! Well, we left the Bush Beach site at 1400. We forged on, checked out the awesome kauri dams (particularly the #1 one) and headed for the summit. The 3 dams were used to transport the huge kauri logs from the valley, via the Kaiarara Stream, to Kaiarara Bay below. The dams were loaded and filled, the top one was tripped, and the other two would trip as the contents hit them. It was obvious as to the reason for the shallowness and sedimentation of the bay after learning this.

The track was lovely, with many Nikau, small Kauri, Puriri and other natives filtering the light through. Fat

Native Wood Pigeons sat tamely and then lumbered off through the canopy. The track is extremely steep in places, heavy power cable strung here and there to assist people to climb the difficult parts.

Then wonder of wonders, wooden walkways. Wonderfully sculptured curving tracks, and 100's of steps. 100's and 100's. The going was easy, but the gravity aspect compensated more than adequately. Once reaching the summit at 1630, it was evident that the walkway allowed us to climb the rock pinnacle it hung on.

The view was magnificent. Completely panoramic. The cold wind evaporated the hot sweat in no time and the next problem became how to stay warm. We made the obligatory cell phone calls to skite to our friends and loved ones, and at 1715 barrelled off again, conscious of the impending darkness. We'd ascended the main track and decided to return via the lesser used South Fork. We actually thought it was the more scenic track, with its ridge run and then descent into the valley.

We got back to our boats at 1900 and set up camp. After feasting and revelry, we spent a hot night trying to sleep. In the end Andy slept in the undergrowth and left me all the hungry mosquitoes.

Info: Distance 10 N miles

Day 6

Forecast: 15-35 knots SW  
Somewhat seedy, we arose late and hit the water at 0915. We ran Man o' War passage and down to Whangarara Island. Seas were 1.5 m and occasionally breaking beam on with the reflections of the cliffs. Out of necessity, my hangover cleared quickly.

We landed at Whangarara Is for lunch at 1215 and after another yummy lunch, climbed to the summit. There was much evidence of temporary dwelling on the top, with fresh hangi pits, shelters and long drops around.

The sea was again a beautiful jade and we continued on for Whangaparapara,

keeping a weather eye out for the odd rogue wave. Whangaparapara was the site of a whaling station and large sawmill, but thankfully we no longer risked witnessing the slaughter of either.

We landed and replenished our stocks of beer (\$20 doz cans), had an icecream and jumped back in our boats to cross to the DOC camp site. It was the first sight where we'd had company, a German guy and his little Japanese partner. It was an incongruous pairing which rang some bells, but I couldn't quite put my finger on it.

They were surprisingly unprepared for camping, having little in the way of equipment, and had been living on cold noodles. We fired up the barbie, Andy gallantly lent the lady his tatty yellow flashers Mac to keep the cold wind out, and they sampled some of Mr DB's draught whilst dinner simmered. They left us sometime later for the comfort of their foam bed rolls, and we tapered off later for another hot night with the mossies.

Info: Distance 10 N miles.

There is apparently an excellent waterfall not far inland, and some good hot pools further inland, however, the previous day's trek put paid to any ideas of investigating further.

Day 6

Forecast: 15 knots SW, slight seas.  
The nebulous plan today was to head off to Tryphena and check out the possibility of hitching a ride back to the Coromandel the next day, in case the weather went to the pack. We staggered across the oyster encrusted rocks with our boats at 1015 and ambled over to see George Mason at Gt Barrier Marine Radio (09 429 0281). There wasn't much in the offing and we set off again a little later. Myself and Andy came to the conclusion that the weather was too good to pass up, and we whistled a reluctant John into the beach at Blind Bay to set up for the crossing back to Fletchers Bay. I made the \*500 call, and we stroked off at 1145. Crossing the bay, we were surrounded by huge, performing darkly coloured dolphins. We realised that these must have been the orca we

thought we'd seen on the first day. We paddled with them for half an hour or so. Each time I pulled the camera out to catch their antics they would mysteriously disappear. Eventually I contented myself with simply enjoying their jeu d'esprit, giving up the pursuit of 'the dolphin photo'.

John was a man possessed this day and he set a pace we couldn't come close to. Being unmarried, we figured he was eager to restore contact with the mainland. Being married ourselves, we couldn't quite understand his eagerness.

Anyway, before he disappeared out of sight, he illustrated the effect of the tidal flow, by firstly veering madly off to the east, and as we entered the main flow and he exited, again apparently heading madly off to the west.

At first we thought the blood flow going to his arms had diminished his navigational skills, but eventually we figured it out.

We paddled on the oily sea, the rolling swell massaging our weary boats, the sun tanning our faces, and threatening skies toward Auckland drenching the mainland. We talked of our adventure and silently I thanked Fortuna for the opportunity to complete the journey with such favourable conditions.

At 1615 we ran into the mainland. John had been waiting for 50 minutes for us. I prised my non-functioning legs out of my cockpit and we thanked our friend, who should have known better, for the lesson in hydrology. We got a camper to take the obligatory end-of-journey photo, packed up the wagon, and hacked a track for

home, a little weary, but primed for the next adventure already.

Info: Distance 16 N miles.  
Fishing: there are absolutely no fish, at any point of the trip we did, schooled in the art of catching lures. Apart from the whale, whose timing seemed a little off the mark to get the lure, not once did anything have a go.

Transport:

Fullers apparently will have a vessel which operates weekdays and will take sea kayaks. Otherwise the options are: Gulf Trans 09 309 0161, Depart AK Tues 1030, Depart Port Fitzroy Wed 0800, \$40 person, \$30 boat return, or Great Barrier Freight 09 307 1405, depart AK Mon & Thur @ 1030, depart Gt Barrier Tues & Fri, \$95 return person + boat.

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