

# THE SEA CANOEIST NEWSLETTER

Issue 78

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## INDEX

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

- Cook Strait Info.
  - from David Fisher p. 2
- Radio Communication
  - from David Fisher p. 2
- Kayak Propulsion
  - from Ray Forsyth p. 3

### TRIP REPORTS

- Northland Coastal Cruise
  - by J. Wickham & G. Muir p. 4
- Lords River - Sept. '98
  - by Sinclair Bennett p. 5
- Savonoski Loop, Alaska
  - by Duncan Ritchie p. 7
- Sea Kayakers Pilgrimage
  - by Paul Caffyn p. 8
- The Magic of Dusky Sound
  - by Stan Mulvany p.11
- Dinner in the Swamp
  - by Colin Quilter p.16
- Dinner at Whitford
  - by Rona Patterson p.16

### SKINBOATS

- Native kayak web sites
  - from Sandy Ferguson p. 9

### NEWS REPORTS

- Sad news from Greenland
  - by Paul Caffyn p.15

### TECHNICAL

- Rudders
  - by Glyn Dickson p.13
- Retractable Skegs
  - by Karin Mentzing. p.14

### BOOK REVIEW

- 'Sea Kayaking - A Ragged Mountain Press Woman's Guide'
  - reviewed by ChrissieWilliams p. 17

## EVENTCALENDAR

### 11th KASK FORUM

VENUE: Clive, Hawkes Bay  
 DATE: 9th - 11th April, 1999  
 Expeditions: overnight trip to Cape Kidnappers, kayak orienteering in the Clive Estuary,  
 Workshops: weather & Sea Conditions, radios, EPIRBs & flares, navigation, Latest gear & kayaks to view & try. Informal workshops on the water catering for experienced & not so experienced paddlers.  
 Illustrated Talks: enthusiastic adventurers share their experiences overseas & in N.Z. Slide talks & video viewing.  
 Lunches & Friday night dinner included. Good Facilities: based at Clive Rugby Club Rooms & Rowing Club, at Clive Estuary.

A more detailed information leaflet and registration form will be included with this newsletter.

### Canterbury Sea Kayak Network 1999 FORUM

The network invites all and sundry to the 1999 Network Forum to be held at Okains Bay, Banks Peninsula, from 13 - 14 February.  
 For more information, phone Rod Banks at (03) 328 7648.  
 The first event will commence at 9.30am on the Saturday morning. The forum is free but you must register with the Okains Bay campground caretaker, whose residence is clearly posted on the right hand side of the road to the campground. Events will

include talks, demonstrations, and plenty of hands on instruction with an emphasis on safety. If you have any ideas, wish to contribute in some way, would like a topic covered or would like to register your intent re attending, contact Rod Banks.

### WHALE STRANDING

**& How Right Whales were named.**  
 Swedish paddler, Karen Mentzing alias Brunhilda, recently took part in refloating a pod of pilot whales in Golden Bay:  
 I arrived at 1pm and there were about 15 people out there, with more arriving. The whales were covered with sheets and it was a matter of keeping them wet all the time. I got a bucket and a whale to take care of. The poor thing was drawing deep sighs while I was running with the bucket. Must be terribly uncomfortable for them to lay there with their heavy bodies when they are used to travel weightless through the sea. After about three hours, the incoming tide began to reach us and I went to get my wetsuit and some bananas and yoghurt. Back again in less than an hour and the tide was almost up to my hips. I was now with one of the largest whales. There were six of us with this whale, but it was still hard work. The calves only needed two people. Our job was to rock the whale from side to side, as they lose balance and bearings after lying on land, and the rocking helps regain their balance.

Our whale had big problems and kept falling over to the right, so we decided it was not really a Pilot Whale after all, but a Right Whale.

## **LETTERSTO THE EDITOR**

### **COOK STRAIT INFO from David Fisher**

Paul

A possible letter to the editor of The Sea Canoeist Newsletter, or just as my personal comment re Cook Strait. Further to the discussion regarding Cook Strait crossings, I consider the following publication as highly recommended reading for anyone crossing Cook Strait in small craft including sea kayaks:

New Zealand Cruising Guide  
Central Area'

By Keith W.J. Murray & Baron Ralph S. Von Kohorn  
Steven William Publications  
Wellington

Available from bookshops or ship chandlers. My copy is of the Third edition revised 1989. The publishers inform me that a sixth edition will be out shortly.

This publication is primarily written for yachties and launch skippers, but the comments, particularly regarding the tides are also relevant to kayakers. The series of diagrams regarding the tidal flow in Cook Strait at hourly intervals with reference to high water Wellington are of particular interest.

The New Zealand Pilot which this cruising guide acknowledges as a source of information is primarily written for large ships, and I personally would place this cruising guide higher up my must read, list as part of planning for a Cook Strait crossing.

While I have not paddled across Cook Strait, I have sailed and motored across Cook Strait enough times, on a variety of yachts ranging in size from 10 to 14 metres, to appreciate that Cook Strait crossings should be appropriately planned, and that this is a body of water to be treated with respect.

David Fisher

## **RADIO COMMUNICATION from David Fisher**

Paul

Thanks for more interesting reading in the last Sea Canoeist Newsletter. I enclose the following for inclusion in the next newsletter.

I read the article 'Radio Communication in the Great Outdoors' ('The Sea Canoeist Newsletter No.77) again having read it previously in an FMC (Federated Mountain Clubs) Bulletin as I recall.

While I agree it provides useful information on the subject, it is written primarily for people outdoors in the MOUNTAINS as opposed to on the sea. All the communication systems mentioned are used by various kayakers at times ( eg. refer to the article re the Stewart Is trip in Newsletter No. 76 which referred to the use of a mountain radio).

However the article omitted what I consider, and believe the MSA & Coastguard to be the most suitable radio communication system for us on our craft at sea, namely marine VHF (Very High Frequency) radio, particularly the hand-held variety. I have summarised my thoughts on these in the same format as the previous article.

### **MARINE VHF RADIO**

#### **Advantages**

Compact lightweight, two way conversation with bases, and other craft on the water, for weather forecasts, trip reports (advising your intended trip & ETA etc. and then subsequent safe arrival), message services in some areas, and if life is threatened, MAY-DAY communication.

#### **Disadvantages**

Theoretically only line of sight communication with other sets, however the MSA (government) provide a series of Coastal Maritime radio stations covering most of the NZ coast that allow contact with them via repeater sites ( somewhat akin to cellphone cellsites). Others including local associations provide repeaters that

allow communication over hills etc. , in most areas where recreation boating or commercial fishing is popular or organised, eg Marlborough Sounds, Fiordland etc.

Consult the 'NZ Nautical Almanac' for a list of VHF coastal stations and coverage areas. An operators certificate is required, although use in an emergency such as a Mayday is allowed for unlicensed operators. The operators certificate is not difficult to obtain. Contact your local coastguard, or the Ministry of Commerce. Local High Schools sometimes run evening courses.

#### **Use**

Send a concise planned message for communication such as trip reports. Marine weather broadcasts giving situation and forecasts are available at scheduled times or on request.

Likely to be used for communication within or between kayak groups when more kayakers purchase such radios.

#### **Cost & Availability**

\$300 - \$800 + per unit. Available from electronic or communication shops or ships chandlers.

More models have become available over the last year or so, with features desirable to sea kayaking such as water or weather proof. I predict we will see more yet models with better features.

#### **Comment**

In my opinion marine VHF radio is the preferred choice of communication on the water. Particularly in emergency situations. If you want to be well equipped particularly in remote areas lacking thorough VHF coverage include an EPIRB, and a cellphone ( to order pizza when you get back to civilisation, etc.). Carry a spare battery on long trips or a charging system for the rechargeable battery pack.

Desirable features to look for in a hand-held VHF for sea kayaking are:

- waterproof to a high spec. such as submersible to a depth of 1m for 30 minutes. Some radios currently meet

this spec. but tend to be larger and more expensive. If not submersible some lesser water resistance is highly desirable and is commonly available. It is recommended that the radio be carried in a see through waterproof pouch as added protection. This also provides flotation should the recommended tether become parted from the kayaker. These waterproof pouches are available from marine chandlers for approximately \$50. The radio should be operable while still in the waterproof pouch, but operating multiple rotary knobs on the top of the radio is more difficult than push buttons on the face of the radio, so as many features operable via buttons eg channel selection, is desirable.

- the facility to power the radio with both rechargeable battery packs and disposable (alkaline) batteries for long trips in remote areas.

- a scanning facility, to be able to scan (monitor) any number of chosen channels is a nice extra, commonly available.

David Fisher

Wellington Sea Kayak Network

### **KAYAK PROPULSION from Ray Forsyth**

Dear Paul

Reading Derek Wakeling's 'Further Thoughts on Paddle Weight' ('The Sea Canoeist Newsletter' No. 77) and the inefficiency in the push up and down, back and forward movement of doubled ended paddling, it occurred to me that the next major advance in sea kayak design would be a craft designed with a rotary stern paddle wheel.

Rotary motion, a most efficient means of transferring energy, can be achieved in a kayak from a sitting position, using the leg powerful leg muscles on pedals, as in cycling.

A double ended paddle could be retained for balance and steering; or inflated sponsons and a simple hand operated rudder could be fitted.

Energy could be transmitted from the pedals by mechanical, eg. a chain, or hydraulic methods.

What do readers think?

Best wishes

Ray Forsyth.

### **EDITORIAL COMMENT**

Sorry Ray, but your idea for paddle wheel propulsion was put into practice by a German carpenter in 1902. And I have no doubt that British paddlers, who are daft enough to use skegs instead of rudders, have tried paddle wheel propulsion, rockets, battery operated propellers, and tethers to tame albatross and mermaids etc., in an endeavour to lift their paddling speeds to that of their Antipodean counterparts.

(The last comment is in response to harsh criticism from Glyn Dickson in the Newsletter No. 77 with regard to slipping editorial standards).

In the spring of 1902, a German vessel the 'Gauss' had been imprisoned in the Antarctic ice pack for eight months. Many attempts had been made to blast and cut the ship free. During his daily stroll around the ship, expedition geographer, Eric von Drygalski, observed that the ice beneath where soot from the vessel's funnel had settled was particularly mushy and soft. The dark ash was absorbing sunlight and hastening melting of the ice. A carpet of rotting garbage was then spread over the pristine white ice, the garbage comprising coal ash, penguin blood, rotten peas, spoiled dried fish and any other rubbish on board. Within a month, a long channel two metres deep has formed. The resultant pond that formed around the ship was dubbed by the crew Lake Titicaca.

The book published in English on the German Antarctic Expedition has two photographs on what must have been the first use of kayaks in the Antarctic. One photograph shows two kayaks, a single and a double, being paddled on the lake while a second shows the carpenter, W. Heinrich, constructing a side mounted, paddle wheel propulsion system for a kayak. The two paddle wheels have four blades, each approximately 60cms long, in appearance similar to the old wooden propellers used on first world war aircraft. And judging by the height of the

central shaft connecting the two wheels above the kayak deck, arms were used to turn the paddle wheels.

And the 'Gauss' finally escaped from her icy prison to safety on 8 February 1903.

Paul Caffyn

## **PADDLINGPARTNER WANTED**

Clint Waghorn is planning a trip in the northern summer of 1999 from South-East Alaska, through the Gulf of Alaska, around the Alaska Peninsula and up to Nome. Duration of the trip is 10 months.

Contact Clint at: RD 2, Oparau, Te Awamutu.

Ph/Fax: (07) 871 0615.

## **FORSALE**

- Nordkapp, kevlar/carbon fibre/glass layup custom built.

Near new, \$2,800.

- Southern Light; fair condition; \$2,250

- Evolution Edge, kevlar, white, pump & bulkheads, excellent condition; \$1,750.

- Evolution classic, green deck, white hull, new. Offers?

Contact Wayne McCarthy:

(09) 438 1793

## **ALLSTATIONSALERT STOLENSEAKAYAK**

My orange double southern light pack-horse seakayak named Aroarer was stolen from Pt Chev around Saturday 28th November. The police think it was stolen to order by drug dealers, it been happening around the Country lately. Its perfect due to its very large carrying capabilities.

If you see it on your travels please contact me on WK 3598215 or HM 8465282 or email:

ayoung@cardmember.co.nz

Thanks

Adrian

**TRIPREPORTS**  
**NORTHLAND**  
**KAYAKING TRIP -**  
**FEBRUARY 1998**  
**A SUMMER COASTAL**  
**CRUISE**

**by Jane Wickham &  
Graeme Muir**

Two years ago, while paddling in the Bay Of Islands, Graeme (my partner) floated the idea of paddling the coastline from Doubtless Bay to the Bay of Islands. With the children no longer wanting to holiday with us any more, it was decided that this would be our summer holiday, to be taken in February when the Christmas holidays were at an end. Out came the topo maps, coastal marine charts and other references, some borrowed from a yachting friend and others from the library. This was not to be a journey clocking up large distances, as had some of our previous expeditions, but a pleasant ramble down the coast enjoying the deserted beaches and warm waters. Some of the coastline we were already familiar with from previous land based holidays, it was the remote bits in-between that we were keen to explore. The maps showed no barriers to our planned route with lots of beaches and landing points, some escape routes and even the odd shop to restock. The only slight question mark we had was the coast line just north of the Bay of Islands which showed as being steep and rocky for about half a days paddle. As it turned out there were a number of steep rocky beaches below low cliff faces that we could have landed on. This would not have been the case I suspect, if a strong northerly was blowing.

My uncle, who resides in Kerikeri, assisted us with a shuttle to Mangonui harbour where we launched after loading provisions, filling our water containers and checking with a local boatie on the VHF channel for this area. Paddling out past the moored boats to the harbour entrance under an overcast sky we encountered a fresh breeze and a swell from the north. Keeping our distance from the coast to avoid reflected waves we headed towards Berghan Point, stopping at Takerau

Bay for a snack and our first swim. It was departing from this beach through the surf that my sunglasses, which I had forgotten to put back on, but were hanging around my neck on a strap, departed from the strap in a big wave, never to be seen again. Fortunately, going on past experiences I had packed a spare pair. Passing around Berghan Point, which stood out impressively with a high island off its tip, we continued south on a following sea to Taemaro Bay. The water was beautifully clear with no one else in sight. In fact we were amazed at the almost total absence of boating activity along this whole coastline. It felt like we had it to ourselves. In Taemaro Bay we set up camp on a lovely sandy beach under a large pohutakawa. It rained heavily that night, as well as thunder and lightning but we woke to sunny skies with just the odd puff of cloud about.

Next day, paddling out of the bay, we met an even bigger swell rolling in from the north. We followed another stretch of rugged coastline until pulling into Waimahana Bay then on across Motukahakaha Bay passing close to Sugar Loaf Island and stopping for lunch and a swim at Tupou Bay. Back on the water, we rounded Karauri Pt on the inside of Cone Rock. The swell was bad and my stomach was protesting. Our original plan had been to camp at Taupo Bay that night but we decided to pull into an attractive beach appropriately named Camp Bay. This was on farmland with big pohutakawas providing shade on the beach from where we watched game fishing boats returning to Whangaroa harbour for the night. Stevenson Island stood out clearly with Cone Island just off its tip.

We set off early to reach the Whangaroa Harbour entrance at slack tide and spend the rest of the day exploring the harbour. This is where I evened the score with Graeme. Due to the hasty departure a pair of his sandals were left on the beach. The swell had completely flattened much to my relief and we reached the entrance in less than an hour thanks to a north westerly at our backs. All the beaches in the harbour had 'no camping' signs. It seems that fire poses too great a risk

to the regenerating native bush and the local kiwi population for DOC to allow campers in the park. The wind was brisk as we paddled up to the head of Pekapeka bay. High on a cliff face we were amused to see a waterfall, not falling but rising vertically in the air, blown there by the high winds as it reached the cliff edge. We paddled the kayaks up the river as far as the tide would allow and were surprised to see a little house above the mangroves, tucked into a bend in the river. Out in the bay again, we found Lane Cove Cottage, a DOC property that can be rented by prior arrangement. Just along from the cottage, were a DOC shelter and a toilet / shower block. After checking out these facilities, we continued up the harbour to the store at Totara North. The wind was now gusting strongly, blowing spray off the top of the waves. Following lunch sheltered under the store we paddled into a strong head wind returning to the DOC shelter. By now the weather was looking decidedly nasty so we decided to make camp in the shelter, sleeping that night with the sound of heavy rain and strong winds mingled with the sound of the Kiwi.

On the 8am marine forecast there was a gale warning for our sea area. North-westerlies up to 40knots, changing later to 50knots from the south-west. This was to be a stay put day. We read our books, collecting cockles to make fritters and walked up to the Duke's Nose where we met several other groups from yachts moored in the bay, like us taking shelter from the nasty conditions. Over the course of the afternoon, the winds gradually subsided and the showers became less frequent. By 7.30pm it was calm and we sat reading our books on the verandah of the cottage looking out over the bay - such a lovely scene.

We were fortunate to have a high tide the next morning to launch on as well as glassy sea conditions. At the harbour entrance we had a good look at some caves at the base of some very high cliffs. The sun was shining with a clear blue sky above as we paddled past Tauranga Bay. There were two more sandy beaches before rounding a rocky point at the entrance to a deep

bay called Whangaihe Bay. Then on past East Bay to Mahinepua Peninsula where we enjoyed paddling through the rock gardens. In Mahinepua Bay, which was almost a perfect crescent, there was a camping area on a reserve on the foreshore. The coastline along here was particularly attractive - very rocky in parts with lovely sandy beaches in between and crystal clear water everywhere. We stopped again at Taiaue Bay and then on to Matauri Bay, where we knew there was a shop that would have fresh bread (and an ice cream). The last leg for that day was over to Motukawanui Island - the largest island in the Cavalli group. In half an hour we had beached in Papatara Bay and checked out the DOC Hut which looked like it had once done duty as shearers' quarters. The hut had a nice outlook but the beach was shingly so we decided to see what the next bay held. There was a yacht and a cruiser moored in that bay but soon after we arrived they both left. The beach was sandy with shingle covered by maram grass further up the beach. We set our camp up on the only level area we could find. After dinner, we went for a walk up to a ridge near the top of the island. This provided an excellent position from which to take photos of the sun setting over the mainland. It had definitely been the best day we had had both for weather conditions and scenery.

In the morning we listened to the marine forecast - SW 15 knots tending to S 10 knots in the afternoon. With a clear blue sky and calm seas we set off across to Matauri Bay for our last opportunity to buy bread and get drinking water. The coastline south of Matauri Bay became rockier with basalt formations and cliffs. We were surprised to come upon Waiaua Bay - a beautiful sandy beach with a stream running down to it. It was completely undeveloped and grazed by cattle. There were some large Norfolk Pines planted in one area and a tap at the end of a hose was hanging from one tree. Another bay (smaller but just as beautiful), a little further down the coast, was occupied by two tents with a car beside them. Both of these bays would have made excellent camping spots.

We continued past a sweeping surf beach called Takou Bay and a smaller shallow bay at Taroniu stopping at the next bay for lunch. With rocky shoals at either side, it was well protected from the north-easterly breeze that had developed. After lunch, we continued a little further along the coast but found no where suitable to camp so returned to the bay where we had our lunch to set up camp on some level ground on farmland overlooking the bay. There was a water supply draining into a black plastic barrel on the beach.

Yet again we woke to clear skies and a calm sea. We followed along the rocky coast until reaching Lion Rock which had several large caves passing right through the middle. The temptation to paddle through was great but on closer investigation it was decided that it was too risky. Further on at Rocky Point amongst a jumble of rocky islands some interesting paddling was had between narrow channels, scooting through as the swell was at its maximum. There was a flotilla of boats fishing off Cape Wikiwiki. We were now in the Bay of Islands and could pick out familiar landmarks from our previous trip. Another half an hour's paddling brought us to the Te Pahi Islands facing the Kerikeri Inlet. We had camped here on our last night on our last trip and we intended doing the same this trip. It was just as we had remembered it - even the resident rat.

The next day was almost a rest day as we only had to paddle across to the Kerikeri Inlet and up the river as far as Waipapa Landing where we had arranged for a pick up. The trip was planned for a low and incoming tide. All would have been well had we kept to the marked channel but, what appeared to be a quicker route, found us a bit short of water so a walk and tow became necessary to find deeper water. Once back in the channel, we followed the markers and arrived at the landing a few minutes before our shuttle driver.

And for our next summer holiday? Bay of Islands to Whangarei of course.

Jane Wickham & Graeme Muir

## **LORDS RIVER - STEWART ISLAND September '98. by Sinclair Bennett**

Lords River, on the east coast of Stewart Island, looks so interesting on the map that it has long been my ambition to explore its waterways. The diving party who I have twice been down to Port Pegasus with, offered to drop Terry McGarry, Lindsay Strang and myself off at Lords River, provided we made our own way back to Halfmoon Bay. We did consider paddling both ways, but figured with Stewart Island's fickle weather we might not complete the round trip within our allocated week. Anticipating a continuation of the previous windy months we packed an extra weeks worth of food and fitted electric pumps to our kayaks.

Two days before our departure a strong south-westerly flow moved over the country. As we neared Tikotatahi Bay I anxiously noticed big southerly swells breaking over the offshore reefs. Herbie Hanson, captain of 'The Southern Isle', warned us that the most difficult part of our return trip would be the passage inside Owen Island, just north of the entrance to Lords River. Although this passage is sometimes like a pond, in big seas, waves break right across the gap. Our confidence dropped when Herbie had to cut the engines half way through as a huge five metre wave broke over the bow of the ship.

The diving group had two more hours travelling to Port Pegasus, so after quickly lowering our loaded kayaks over the side we were alone at Surveyors Bay, just inside the entrance to Lords River. We had been told that our destination for the night, a DOC campsite in the Lords headwaters, could only be reached at high tide. As it was dead low tide when we started paddling we didn't expect to get far before running out of water. However we followed the channel and it was two hours and many kilometres later before we ran out of water at the first rapid, just 100 metres short of the DOC campsite. This is one extremely

winding river, sometimes we had to make 90° turns and the many side lobes would have made following the main route difficult at higher tide. Strips of cloth on overhanging bushes indicated several campsites on the way upriver. The east coast of the island is extensively used by hunting parties and most the campsites have large tarpaulin shelters which we greatly appreciated as it rained every night, bar one.

Due to good luck our departure the next morning corresponded with dead high tide, allowing us to paddle 5 minutes further up river to the waterfalls. Paddling back down river, we made the most of the still high tide to paddle a couple of kilometres up the north branch, which, although narrow and almost totally enclosed by bush, is pretty. During lunch back at Surveyors Bay we noticed that although the swell hadn't dropped much since the previous day, the wind was only 20 knots. Herbie Hanson had told us pass through the Owen Island passage on the incoming tide as this flattens out the swell. We were two hours early, but wanting to make the most of the short daylight, we decided to try and get through now. Heading out the river mouth required careful balancing, as steep three metre swells rolled up from the south. One look at the passage itself resulted in a hasty retreat. Waves up to five metres high were going sideways as well as northwards through the passage. To complicate things further, some waves jumped straight up in the air, and we could not even see the other end. A walk over the headland failed to find a viable portage but from our elevated viewpoint we could see the wild water only lasted for 100 metres, and it was calm at the north end.

Although a deep-water rescue looked out of the question we figured that eventually a capsized paddler might be washed through. After waiting for the tide to turn we headed out again. The waves had settled down slightly but it was still one wild ride. You had to paddle constantly just to keep upright, and a couple of quick glances behind me revealed only the top of Lindsay's flag. This was one occasion

when being maximalist paddlers helped - our heavy boats stuck like glue and didn't become airborne. We all got through without incident and three relieved paddles rested in the calm water at the north end of the gap. Incidentally this was around neap tide - I wouldn't want to go through at spring tide with this size swell. We spent the night at the shelter in Tikotatahi Bay, complete with dirty pictures on the walls.

Tikotatahi Bay contains heaps of reefs and these kept us well offshore until we reached the Breaksea Islands. We snuck through a narrow, high tide only, inside passage, not shown on the map. Three weeks later we would have been paddling through the oil slick produced by the Korean fishing boat that ran aground here. These islands take the oomph of the southerly swells and once north of these I felt more confident about completing the trip on schedule.

Shelter Point was the last area of major tidal flows. Big swells, up to three metres high, rose up in the gap between the point and the offshore reef and it was hard to tell where they would, or wouldn't break. Just as we decided to head outside the reefs, a fishing boat came up and said to follow him through the gap, as it is safer there than going offshore around the reef. Heading down Port Adventure the wind picked up so, apart from an unsuccessful search for signs of the old kaik, we had a short day. A group of divers had taken over the Port Adventure hut so we got the consolation prize of setting up camp in the shelter at Abrahams Bosom. A Rolls Royce shelter this one, with a window and a corrugated iron roof, but no porno magazines.

Heading out of Port Adventure the next morning, we had to contend with a 30 knot cross wind, and hail stinging our faces. However once around Starling Head we hugged the coast and were generally sheltered from wind and waves. The sea kayaking from here right up to our next campsite at Lauras Leg was really superb. Heaps of nooks and crannies to explore, waterfalls and yellowed rock cliffs.

Although a short day in a straight line, we were quite worn out just from weaving in and out of gaps in the rocks. The only downside was bugger all caves (wrong sort of rock?) and very few marine mammals. Had to pitch our tents on uneven sloping ground at Lauras Leg, but this was compensated by a superb view.

Another excellent day's paddling from Lauras Leg up to the entrance of Paterson Inlet, including a few decent caves north of Murrays Mistake. Once into the flat water of Paterson Inlet I immediately missed the swells and the rugged coastline of the last few days although Terry, on his first trip to the island, thought the place was magic.

After camping overnight we headed north for a quick look at Horseshoe Bay before catching the ferry across an almost flat Foveaux Strait. I felt we were very fortunate in only encountering 30 knot winds during the week of the paddle. The diving party down at Pegasus at the south end of the island endured gales and torrential rain most of the time.

Note: Apart from the DOC campsite in the upper Lords River, one site in Tikotatahi Bay, and Port Adventure, all campsites on this coast from Lords up to Ocean Beach are on land owned by the Rakiura Maori Land Trust. Any paddlers intending to paddle this coastline are advised to get prior written permission. Permit holders have exclusive camping rights and during the peak hunting season all sites might be occupied. We found no areas suitable for camping apart from the established campsites. Fortunately during our trip no hunting parties we present so we had a wide choice of places to shelter should we have been forced ashore by bad weather.

Sinclair Bennett

**SAVONOSKI LOOP  
ALASKA PENINSULA  
JULY 1998.  
by Duncan Rithchie**

In early July 1998, Yvonne Cook, Judith Terpstra, and myself paddled the 'Savonoski Loop' in Katmai National Park, Alaska, as part of a three week trip to the area.

Katmai National Park is situated about 400km SW of Anchorage on the mainland adjacent to Kodiak Island, at the beginning of the Alaskan Peninsula. This vast National Park is the central area to a huge uninterrupted chunk of protected land making up Wild Rivers / Wildlife Refuges, Game Sanctuaries etc. (5 - 6 million acres). Most of it is a designated wilderness area.

The National Park was originally a National Monument established in 1912 to preserve an area of a large rhyolitic eruption which created 'Valley of the Ten Thousand Smokes'. The eruptive centre is part of a string of about six active volcanoes in the park. These are part of Alaska's volcanic arc hosting about 80 active volcanoes and which becomes the Aleutian volcanic chain further to the southwest. Enough geology.

Most people come to this area to watch the grizzly bears feed on the salmon at and around Brooks Falls, which is the starting point for the 'Loop'. Up to 25 bears congregate here every July to feed on the sockeye salmon which are passing between the lakes. (Another area adjacent to the Park, McNeil River, hosts up to 60 bears feeding at the same time!). The bear-watching is strictly and very well managed by the Park Service. Very few people venture away from the bear watching area which leaves 99.9+% of the Park area deserted.

Ah, yes, the 'Savonoski Loop', one will get sidetracked due to my enormous enthusiasm for the area..... Judith (kiwi resident in Alaska), brought her Feathercraft folding boat while Yvonne and myself rented a double plastic (Puffin-like) as we did

not have our boats in Alaska. There was only one kayak and one canoe for hire at Brooks Camp and they say you can't book them in advance, however we managed to (approx. US\$55/day).

Brooks Camp which is one of 3 or 4 fishing lodges in the Park is owned by Katmailand who are the only concessioner in this Park and have been since the 1950's. The National Park provides a camping ground a kilometre from the Camp. This must be booked early as the Park imposes strict number restrictions due to stress on the bears (and people??).

The 'Savonoski Loop', a 4 - 6 day, 115km circuit, comprises crossing the Illuk and North Arms of Naknek Lake, doing a 1.5km portage, paddling Lake Grosvenor to its SE end, cruising down the Savonoski River and returning to Brooks Camp via the Iliuk Arm of Naknek Lake (see map). Naknek Lake is only about 20m above sea level and drains into Bristol Bay. The trip could easily be lengthened by exploring the lakes further.

We set off the first morning in light breezes and fine weather and spent the day paddling as far as the beginning of the Bay of Islands, a beautiful area of wooded islands at the head of the North Arm, when the breeze freshened from the NE. During that day we had spent time watching a porcupine and viewed with some apprehension a grizzly bear which seemed to be patrolling the shore. Being Kiwis we were pretty wary of bears but followed the rules for camping and had no trouble. As the trip progressed we learned that bears seem to prefer to travel along the shores rather than in the bush because I guess its easier to get around and they might find something scrumptious like a six week old carcass or a cold shivering paddler washed up! In fact most of the beaches had a well worn bear track on them. These became easy to recognise as bears seem to stand in the same foot-steps on their tracks every time they pass. We had to position the tent strategically away from these tracks and try and make it sort of look invisible.

I was pretty keen to camp on an island for obvious reasons but it was pointed out to me that they are really no protection against bears which are strong swimmers. The spot we chose was idyllic however, on a small isthmus and we had an enjoyable evening despite the rather bad mosquitos.

Day 2 dawned clear and we spent the morning cruising through the very scenic Bay of Islands. The wildflowers were at their peak with huge stands of lupins on the lake edge, geraniums etc. in the forest and carpets of matchhead sized azaleas above bush-line. Early afternoon brought us to Fure's Cabin which is a lovely Scandanavian style Cabin that was inhabited by a trapper Fure before the area became a National Park. Going by comments in the hut book, it seems like they threw him out then subsequently renovated the hut. The portage to Lake Grosvenor begins here and after lunch we portaged the boats and some of the gear as the mosquitos crucified us. Once again it was a hot sunny afternoon with the wind strengthening from mid-afternoon from the SE. The portage was over in about 2 hours, made easier by a land-locked lake which we paddled across.

After staying the night in Fure's Cabin we got an early start and after wandering through to Lake Grosvenor, paddled along an attractive coast covered with wildflowers and with the occasional Bald eagle nest high in the trees overhanging the lake (normally on headlands). The whole area of the trip is covered in thick spruce forest. Once again in the early afternoon the wind strengthened and so we made an early camp and sat in lovely sunshine on our little gravel campsite watching the wind gradually build. The scenery here and on the whole trip was outstanding.

After a very wet week paddling in the Nellie Juan Glacier area of Prince William Sound in June, it was great to just sit around and read in the sunshine which is what we did the subsequent day as well also because of the wind.

A 0700 start the next day saw us at the

eastern end of the lake and ready to begin the river section at lunchtime. The route firstly goes down a flat 2km section of the river draining the lake and then into the grade 1 Savonoski River which is followed for about 20km to Illuk Arm of Naknek Lake. The Savonoski River is a wide braided river once again with magnificent views. The Park makes a strong recommendation not to camp along this stretch of the river or near the river mouth because it is prime bear habitat, so we took the hint. Another indirectly related hazard is negotiating the wake where the two rivers meet. The trip is often done by very inexperienced paddlers and one such previous party leaned their double the wrong way at the wake and promptly capsized. Because it was such a hot day they had stripped to their bikinis etc. (get the picture). Their canoe with all their belongings, none of which were tied in, drifted downstream and they were left with little to wear and no gear on a sand island in bear infested country (let alone the mossy's!). Now a jet boat travels this stretch of river only a few times in a season. These folks were extremely lucky that a boat came along and plucked them to safety. Their canoe was recovered a week later. Sobering stuff. In general, I couldn't believe how casually people take this trip.

To continue: Yvonne's river experience proved very useful in route-finding down the braided channels and with a drizzly wind at our back we flew down the river (except for a couple of groundings near the mouth) and surfed down the lake with a building breeze. The moderate breeze and tired limbs encouraged us to camp on the southern shore. Much discussion was had about the best place for the tent as fresh bear tracks seemed even more common than usual on this particular beach. After a feed, and storage of the bear proof food containers (provided free by the Park) at a sufficient distance downwind, we had a rather nervous night.

Day 6 dawned calm and drizzly and we set off on the last 13km leg to Brooks Camp. Rafts of floating pumice on the lake bemused us as we

cruised back for a hot shower. We all recommend this thoroughly enjoyable trip. Only once did we see other people in a distant jetboat. The notorious wind did not eventuate, scenery magnificent, the skies were blue, wild flowers amazing, the company good..... what more do you need.?

Two more weeks were spent in the area during which time we climbed Mts. Trident and Katmai, spent time with friends in the USGS who were there installing a seismograph network, and enjoyed the most unusual features of 'Valley of the Ten Thousand Smokes'. The two strong impressions I brought away from Alaska were the vast landscapes and how good it was to be in country where nature was still very close to being in balance unlike our country where the balance is so tilted in so many ways by floral and faunal imports and by man induced extinctions.

Footnote:  
The same party of three had a week long trip in Prince William Sound in early June. We took a charter boat out of Whittier and were dropped off in Derickson Bay adjacent to the Nellie Juan tide-water glacier. There was still snow to sea-level and it rained almost every day. After exploring Derickson and Deep Water Bays this time in single kayaks, we made our way in calm conditions up Culross Passage. It was at a camp at the northern end of this passage that I carelessly misjudged the huge tides (8 to 13m) and had 80% of our food float off in bear proof food containers in the night much to the delight of attendant sea otters who appeared to be facilitating the process when I poked my head out of the tent for a look at the moon in the night unaware of the drama unfolding! Bear containers float really well. Subsequent rough conditions made an offer of a ride home on a salmon boat attractive for culinary reasons!

Duncan Ritchie

## INAUGURAL SEA KAYAKERS PILGRIMAGE Marlborough Sounds by Paul Caffyn

Paddlers from all over the world gathered at Waikaiwa Bay for the first sea kayaker's pilgrimage in the Marlborough Sounds. Well not quite from all over the world, but the North Island, the Mainland, Australia and a tall strapping redhead from Sweden. Brunhilda was a little apprehensive that her wooden Swedish style sea kayak would meet a fiery end on the sacrificial fire, however a noncooperative airline left her kayak safely at the Stockholm airport. And what else for Brunhilda to paddle, but a Nordkapp.

North Island paddlers had invigorating rides across Cook Strait on the Quick/Fast Catamaran which dropped them off at the Gem Resort in the Bay of Many Coves. Conrad Edward's afternoon ferry took the Queen Charlotte Sound northern entrance to Picton as conditions were too lumpy for the Tory Channel entrance. Sick bags were in desperate need during the crossing. Conrad's kayak, tucked across the stern deck, had a cockpit full of water on arrival at the Gem Resort such was the size of the seas. He was exceedingly fortunate the sick bags weren't emptied into the cockpit.

The wind blew all weekend, from the north, from the north-west, sometimes strong and sometimes turbulent enough to stop paddling, simply brace and watch the bullets of wind lifting spray off the points and headlands. Paddling pilgrims gathered at a DOC campsite in Wharehunga Bay, Arapawa Island, for the first evening and in view of the windy weather, paddled back to Ruakaka Bay for the second night. Following an arduous slog into a gusting headwind, the golden sandy beach was a welcome oasis from the wind. A freshly mown DOC campsite offered plenty of choice for tent sites, the only worry being adequate shelter from the wind.

Late evening the phantom, who was clad in a slinky, head to ankle black ensemble with only the whites of his eyes and pink of his lips visible, ap-



peared out of the night towing a river kayak. His appearance was accompanied by suitable incantations and chants from the assembled stone throwers. After the ceremonial throwing of gravel and small stones (shades of the 'Life of Brian'), accompanied by more incantations, the kayak was devoured by fire. And the phantom mysteriously vanished back into the night from whence he had first appeared.

Later that evening, I understand the phantom was awakened by a strange rattling noise. His skull and crossbones torch revealed beer cans tumbling past his tent. A rather fresh, gusting northerly (50 knots +) had blessed the pilgrims with its presence at 1.30am. The phantom observed one naked body desperately chasing a tent through the trees and another naked body chasing clothes along the beach, items of apparel that had been draped over an improvised clothes line through the trees. I missed all the fun, having chosen rather good shelter for the night.

A great weekend with good company and luxury camping. Loads of good food and wine, with one grossly disturbing exception. Conrad disgraced himself with a hospital catheter bladder full of what he termed 'a rather good red wine' that would have doubled as excellent paint remover.

The Phantom has indicated his availability for sacrificial fire lighting at next year's pilgrimage. In view of the revulsion that the assembled pilgrims felt for that repugnant, loathsome noisy bane that pollutes the sea, a jet ski will be ceremoniously burnt and stoned next year. As dress standards were a little lax at this inaugural sea kayaker's pilgrimage, formal dress is a prerequisite for the 1999 pilgrimage - blokes in suits and blokesses in long gowns and tiaras.

For those sensitive paddlers who are offended by the thought of noxious fibreglass smoke fuming into a night sky from the sacrificial river kayak, the Phantom also was concerned by the threat of rising sea levels and increasing ozone holes. His river kayak, paddler and paddle contained not one iota of fibreglass!

## **NATIVEKAYAKS WEBSITES**

**from cybermail searcher  
Sandy Ferguson**

### **CONTENTS:**

Links to Internet sites dealing with kayak making in the native tradition. Links include: workshops, plans, tips, readings, clubs, online tutorials and much more. Boat types include baidarkas, Greenland-style kayaks and other variations. Materials range from traditional to high-tech.

**Aleut/Eskimo Style Paddle Making:**  
<http://www.users.zetnet.co.uk/cbrown/pdlemk.htm>

Lengthy list of tips and tricks for making Aleut style paddles. Includes lots of photos, sketches and a few links.

**Aluminum Folding Baidarka Homepage:**  
<http://www.eskimo.com/~hmaroske/baidarka/index.html>

A massive listing of links, photos and shop tips on baidarkas and Greenland style kayaks. Includes historical and modern pictures, kayak camping, home designs and much more.

**Annotated Bibliography of Arctic Kayaks:**  
<http://www.nif.idrett.no/padling/biblio.html>

A very large list (255 entries!) of recommended readings for people interested in traditional kayaks. Seemingly covers every book or article dealing with traditional kayaks. Includes brief descriptions of the readings (annotations).

**Baidarka Mailing List Archive:**  
<http://robroy.totalsports.net/baidarka/>  
A mailing list for those interested in building baidarkas. Information on how to subscribe, archives Sept. 1996-present.

**Building a Nansen Kayak:**  
<http://www.friend.ly.net/user-homepages/d/dadadata/boat/cod/cod.html#kayak01>  
Using bamboo to create skin-on-frame kayaks based on Fridtjof Nansen's

bamboo-framed kayak that sailed the Arctic 100 years ago. No joke.

**Building the Greenland Kayak: An Illustrated Guide:**  
<http://home.att.net/~jimcoburn/>  
A page providing step-by-step instructions and illustrations on how to build a Greenland style kayak. Includes links and an image gallery.

**Doug's Boat Page:**  
<http://www.personal.kent.edu/~mgarmon/>  
Information on building skin-on-frame kayaks. Includes plans, drawings, tips and more.

**Eskimokajakk teknikker:**  
<http://www.nif.idrett.no/padling/gtech.html>  
Presented by the Norwegian Canoe Association, this page is a photo essay of Greenland kayak techniques.

**"Family K" Skin Kayak Builder's Page:**  
<http://plaza9.mbn.or.jp/~familyk/index.html>

A network dedicated to helping beginners build skin-on-frame sea kayaks. Mostly in Japanese, but an English version is supposed to be coming soon.

**Gerald's Kayak-Origami:**  
<http://elwood.gpi.uni-kiel.de/Kayak/>  
Information on and pictures of skin-on-frame baidarkas and Greenland style boats.

**The Greenland Kayak:**  
<http://www.nif.idrett.no/padling/gronland.html>  
A list of links to information about the Greenland kayak. Posted by the Norwegian Canoe Association.

**The Greenland Paddle:**  
[http://seacanoes.org/grnpadle.htm#THE GREENLAND PADDLE](http://seacanoes.org/grnpadle.htm#THE_GREENLAND_PADDLE)  
Essay on the construction and use of a traditional Greenland style paddle.

**The Greenland Paddling: Notes from a Novice:**  
<http://seacanoes.org/tomnotes.htm#Greenland Paddling>  
Essay on Greenland paddling tech-

niques.

Greenland Style Paddle Building:  
<http://www.wcha.org/paddles/greenland.html>

An article on the topic by George Ellis. Based on an article in Sea Kayaker Magazine by John Heath

Homepage of Traditional Seakayaks:  
<http://w1.156.telia.com/~u15602112/index.html/>

Covers Greenland style kayaks, baidarkas, boat-building classes, links, pictures, fabric for sale and much more.

Kayak Way:  
<http://cronus.rockisland.com/~kyak/iindex.html>

Baidarka and other skin boat plans, workshop info., FAQ and much more.

Kayak Builders of Southern California:  
<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/btreecs/>

Club for kayak builders. Click on "Kayak Registry" for information on specific boats, including Greenland-style boats (mostly strip built and stich and glue) and quite a few skin-on-frame designs.

Kosterfjordens kajakbyggeri:  
<http://www.geocities.com/Colosseum/Field/7582/kajak1.html>  
 Custom made skin-on-frame kayaks in the native Inuit tradition.

Hand Crafted Kayaks:  
<http://www.fidalgo.net/~kayak/handcrafted.html>

Baidarka and other skin boat plans, workshop info., kits, plans, and much more.

History of the Greenland Kayak:  
<http://www.nif.idrett.no/padling/hhistorie.html>

Answers to FAQ regarding native kayak paddling.

Lollysticks and Shavings:  
<http://user.itl.net/~kmansell/articles/lollysticks.html>

An essay describing how to make a traditional Greenland- style kayak paddle. Reprinted with permission from "Sea Paddler" magazine.

Native Watercraft in Canada:  
<http://www.cmcc.muse.digital.ca/members/fph/watercraft/wainteng.html>

Information on baidarkas and other native watercraft by from the Canadian Museum of Civilization.

Native Watercraft Society:  
<http://www.mixweb.com/nativewater/nwcs.html>

Organization dedicated to collecting and disseminating information on the boats used by present. and past indigenous cultures around the world.

NWT Archives Database:  
<http://pwnhc.learnnet.nt.ca./programs/search.htm>

Searchable index of images. Type "kayak" at the search for box for 82 images. All the photos are accompanied by substantial captions. Boats pictured are all East Canadian or Greenland style kayaks.

The Old Techniques:  
<http://www.nif.idrett.no/padling/gtech.html>

A photo essay depicting traditional paddling techniques for Greenland kayaks.

Pictures from the West Coast Skin Boat Gathering:  
<http://weber.u.washington.edu/d88/rif/Boats/>

Jpg. images of skin boats at the gathering. Includes a "read me" file describing the event, who attended and more.

Skin Boat FAQ:  
<http://cronus.rockisland.com/~kyak/sbfaq.html>

Brief rundown of answers to frequently asked questions regarding Skin Boats. Compiled by Skip Snaith.

Sea Kayaking History:  
<http://www.ool.com/misc.files/boats.pad.five.html>

An essay tracing the history of the kayak from its ancient origins to today.

Stimson Marine:  
<http://www.by-the-sea.com/stimsonmarine/>

Skin-on-frame plans and kits, lumber and accessories.

Steam-Bending FAQ (from rec.woodworking):  
<http://robroy.totalsports.net/baidarka/bending.html>

An excellent source of information on steam bending, building steam boxes, jigs and wood choice.

Thoughts on Building the Baidarka:  
<http://www.guillemot-kayaks.com/B u i l d i n g / ExprncBldgngBaidarka.html>

Detailed information on putting together one of George Dyson's aluminum-frame baidarkas. Lots of helpful hints and pictures.

Traditional Kayak Building:  
[http://www.nif.idrett.no/padling/trad\\_bygg.html](http://www.nif.idrett.no/padling/trad_bygg.html)

Photos and captions depict techniques used to build skin-on-frame kayaks.

Walurub's Home Pages:  
<http://www.qsl.net/walurb/1.html>  
 Includes a variety of home-built, skin-on-frame kayak designs.

1998 Ken Winter. Last Updated: October 26, 1998

## SECONDHAND BOOK WEBSITES

Just a quick comment on how to find some of those out-of-print kayaking books... Someone has already mentioned Advanced Book Exchange at [www.abebooks.com](http://www.abebooks.com), and here's a few more:

Bibliofind at [www.bibliofind.com](http://www.bibliofind.com)  
 bookfinder at [www.bookfinder.com](http://www.bookfinder.com)  
 Interloc at [www.interloc.com](http://www.interloc.com)

Petter Hennessey at [www.northfork.net/COM/Hennessey/](http://www.northfork.net/COM/Hennessey/)  
 Powell's Books at [www.powells.com](http://www.powells.com)

Happy reading!  
 Julie Grindol  
 Reference Librarian  
 Linda Hall Library  
 Kansas City, MO 64110  
[grindolj@lhl.lib.mo.us](mailto:grindolj@lhl.lib.mo.us), <http://www.lhl.lib.mo.us>

## TRIPREPORTS

### The Magic of Dusky Sound by Stan Mulvany

In November 1996, an Invercargill party including Jon Taylor, Ross Sinclair, Roger Deacon, Belinda and Stan Mulvany spent 10 days exploring the wonders of Dusky and Breaksea Sounds.

Dusky Sound is the largest sound in Fiordland and rarely visited due to its inaccessibility. The Sound was first visited by Captain Cook in the Resolution in 1773. He spent five weeks anchored in Pickersgill Harbour. At Astronomers Point the crew cut down a large area of forest and evidence of this can still be seen. They met and befriended a band of Maori.

We were helicoptered into Supper Cove by Richard (Hannibal) Hayes from Te Anau. There was snow on the mountains and it was raining. Hannibal wasted no time in offloading us and our gear. Then he was gone. I wondered what we had got ourselves into! We spent the first night in the DOC Hut there and got ourselves organized. Next morning the rain had eased off and we kayaked down the Sound. It was great to be on the water at last. There was no wind, a hint of sunshine and a great stillness. We passed several immense waterfalls, hundreds of feet high. On down Cook Channel between Cooper Island and the mainland. The odd shower swept over us but it was not unpleasant. Ross told us that there was a colony of Mottled Petrels on Shag Island. He did land but found only empty burrows. In the afternoon the wind came away and kicked up a bit of a sea. We kept close to Long Island and it was a long slog westwards into a headwind. That evening we decided to camp on Long Island.

Next day was grey and windless with rain curtaining down. We kayaked past Curlew Island, Heron Island and into Cascade Cove. Presently I noticed a beach over on the left. We closed on it searching for "Maru's Cave". We had read about this ancient Maori shelter but there was no

sign of it. We decided to camp and found a small clearing on the waters edge near an old hut site. We were later to discover the site was probably that of sealers from back in the early 1800's. The rain was lashing down and we were quite cold so we quickly landed here and put up the flies. We established a base camp here for several days. Ross set off to catch dinner and I decided to look for Maru's cave. I walked down the stony beach to the northern end and noticed a cliff line going inland. In the forest about 70 metres back, the cliffline overhung in one place and some large boulders littered the floor. It would have been a very marginal shelter at best. It was here in 1960 that burned human bones were discovered possibly those of Maru's group massacred by a marauding war party. Back at camp Belinda had got a fire going and Ross had come home with some fish.

Rain greeted us next day. We decided to go to Pickersgill. We stopped there to photograph the bronze plaque put up in honour of Cook's visit. Then on to the boat landing at Astronomers Point. This proved difficult to land on being just a rocky shore with a board walk coming down. On a high point overlooking the sound we had lunch in the rain. Afterwards we walked up to Lake Forster in our wet suits which seemed very appropriate gear given the conditions. It was in this lake that NZ native trout was first discovered. After launching we decided to head over to Indian Island. Went around the eastern side and found the sheltered cove on the north east tip where Cook visited the Maori family. Climbed the hill behind it and fancied we saw the remains of their humpy. As the day was still young we decided to paddle over to Anchor Island. Visited the site of the first house and ship built in New Zealand. Still raining so headed off soon after. Once past Thrum Cap the seas were big and we were glad to enter Cascade Cove again.

Monday was dry for once. After lunch we decided to go to Pigeon Island where Richard Henry had his home. Richard was an Irishman who arrived in Dusky in 1894. His official title was 'Custodian and Caretaker of Reso-

lution Island'. He stayed 14 years and transferred over 700 endangered birds to Resolution Island. Unfortunately a stoat or weasel made it over to the island and he left in 1909 disillusioned. A large swell was rolling in from the south west and crashing onto the southern coast so we went around the western end and found sheltered waters on the north coast. In a cove were the old piles of the slipway and some tracks that went up to the old house site. All that remains there is a flat area in the bush, an old fireplace and the remains of a punga enclosure. It would have been an idyllic place to camp, sheltered and inviting. On our return journey we choose the seaway to the south east past the eastern end of Indian Island. We made rapid progress with the wind and swell in our favour.

On Tuesday a north-west storm blew in and it got so rough we could not get out on the water. We decided on a rest day. Next day there was a southerly forecast so we packed up and set off for Breaksea. We headed over to the Bowen Channel and then on to Acheron Passage. The tops were still in cloud and it was a pleasant day for paddling. We fair scooted along and by early afternoon we reached Sunday Cove in Breaksea Sound. Here there was a barge anchored and a beach of black sand. Behind the beach was a rubbish dump for fishermen and this proved to be the best place to camp.

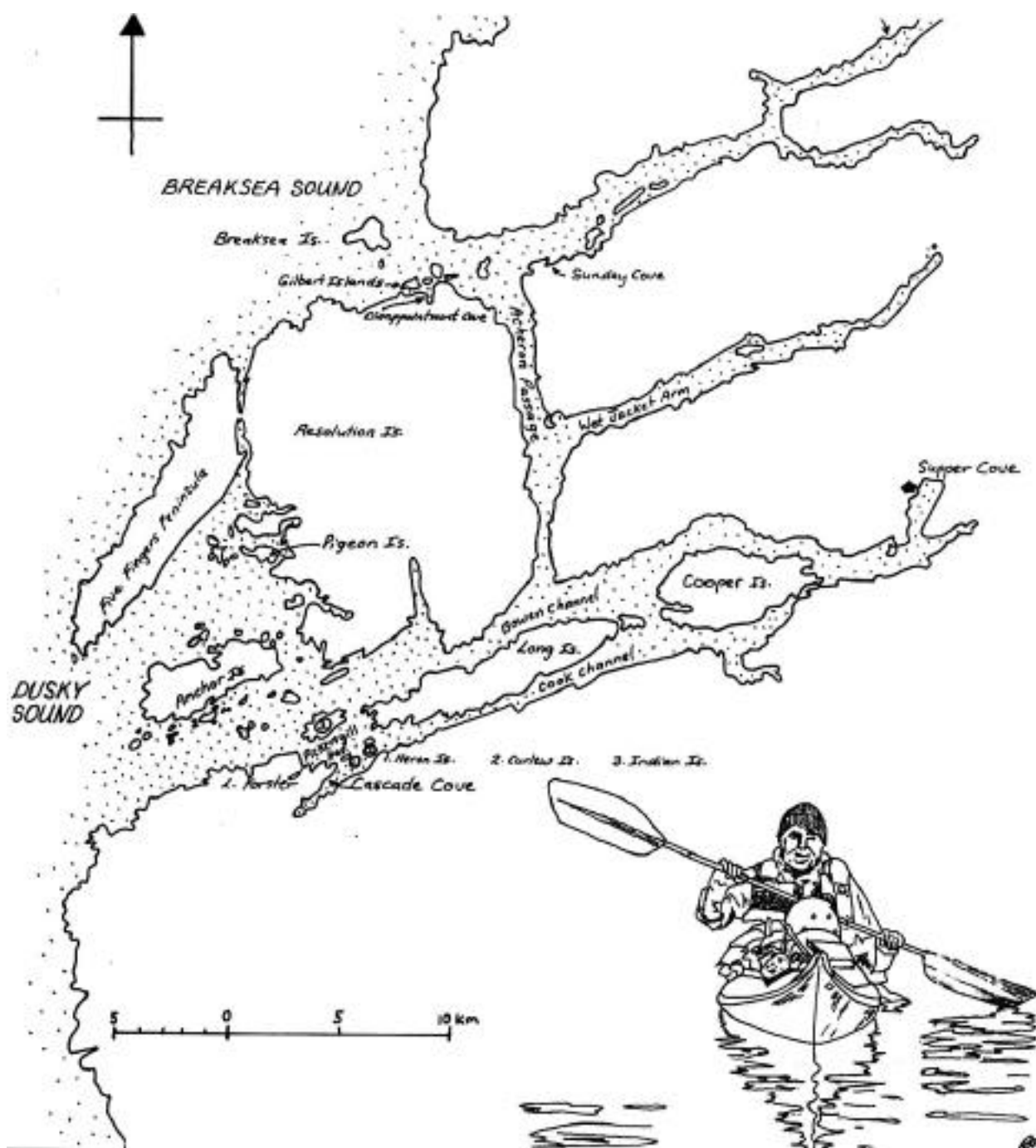
Thursday was back to the usual cloud cover and threatening rain. There was new snow on the tops. Decided to kayak out towards Breaksea Island which is a DOC bird sanctuary. Recently there been a release of Saddlebacks. Unauthorized landings are not allowed. About half way out, the sea started to rough up so we altered course to the Gilbert Islands. Went for Disappointment Cove and what a gorgeous place! There was a wide sandy beach with lots of driftwood and some great camping spots on grass among trees. The big disadvantage was an open aspect to the north-west as we were soon to discover. Ross disappeared into the bush bird watching while we mooched about. We notice

a line of whitecaps out on the horizon and then these started to advance towards us. We wanted to leave but where was Ross? Jonny had a fit, "Ross get your f.... ass down here" he screamed at the forest but to no avail. By now the sea was getting quite stormy. Ross eventually did turn up oblivious to urgency of the situation. We launched immediately. Around a small rocky point we were into it 10 foot waves with intermittent gusts right on the nose threatening to capsize us. The sea was littered with whitecaps,

the waves short and steep. No chance to turn or assist anyone if they went over. It was 'Sauve qui peut'. Belinda in the front cockpit was copping a lot of breaking waves and we were both paddling like blazes. We gained the open sea and clawed off into the lee of the Gilbert Island in between gusts. We eventually all made it though somewhat shaken!

On Friday we packed up and paddled off up Breaksea Sound. Saw lots on penguins including blues and Fiord-

land Crested. It was cold and damp so we plugged on right to the top of Vancouver Arm. Here we scouted around till we found a suitable spot to camp a short distance up a creek. Saturday was a fine day, overcast and no rain. At noon Hannibal arrived in his Squirrel and a short while later we were lifting off, up and across a series of spectacular ridges with views of Halls Arm, Manapouri and sunshine. Stan Mulvany  
Invercargill



## **RUDDERS**

by Glyn Dickson

### **Introduction by Roy Dumble**

I asked Glyn Dickson to write an article for 'Ocean Paddler' about the approach Kiwis have towards rudders. Glyn is a leading kayak designer and manufacturer, and former partner of a firm called 'Paddling Perfection' based in Auckland. He has developed a reputation for professionalism and innovation and regularly contributes to our outdoor magazines here.

This article emerged from a conversation we had after a sea kayak race (not my favourite past-time, but gaining in popularity here). Unlike expedition paddling there was a great deal of wash-hanging - and paddling my treasured Vyneck was like wash-hanging a K1 without a rudder...fast and frustrating. Perhaps after more than 20 years of extensive paddling in all kayak disciplines I have yet to learn how to steer properly - or maybe I ought open my mind to the possibility that there is an alternative. Anyway, unedited, here are Glyn's irreverent observations:

### **Glyn's article**

Differences in paddling techniques and technology have evolved throughout the world, which is well evidenced by the diversity even in Inuit kayak design. Down here in our island nation of New Zealand (or 'up here' if you wish to subscribe to the 'South is up' theory), we are isolated geographically from the rest of the kayaking world, and consequently we have our own kayak culture and favoured design trends.

Now, some years ago Paul Caffyn upset a lot of people by putting a rudder on the back of his Nordkapp, after observing Tasmanian paddlers using them. Debates raged as to whether this was sensible, let alone moral, and it seems to me that most paddlers firmly subscribed to one theory or the other. It would appear that there is still a strong anti-rudder lobby based in the Northern Hemisphere in contrast to New Zealand. As far as I am aware, there isn't one commercially available sea kayak

currently being sold here without a rudder. So, while there are a few paddlers not using them, following 16 years of development since Paul's first overstern rudder was fitted during his Australian circumnavigation, the rudder is king here!

Now it's easy to get one-eyed about such technology, and hailing from a part of New Zealand noted for its parochialism (Christchurch), I'd better be careful here, but the arrival of a BCU qualified sea kayaker from the 'Olde Country' has been a good opportunity to test these theories. Now Jonathan Iles is a thoroughly decent sort of bloke, so he became the unappointed Chief Judge in the rudder case. His credentials were impressive with all manner of the aforementioned BCU indoctrination qualifications, personal acquaintance with a number of the leading lights in the UK sea kayaking community, and (the trump card) he brought his rudderless Vynek 12,000 miles around the world with him. I personally suspect that with his armed forces background, and appetite for adventure he might have considered paddling it from England, but that the sheer number of sweep strokes and stern rudder strokes required put him off!

Jonathan instructed commercially in Auckland for nearly 12 months after his arrival, and provided quality education for those under his guiding eye. Our local sea kayaking network received a shot in the arm from his input and the weekend courses for trip leaders he ran. To say that he was operating at a skill level much higher than most of us is understating things, and while not involved to the same level now, his influence has been and is significant.

Jonathan was heard muttering, "real boats don't need rudders," under his breath shortly after his arrival and it was apparent that he considered these aluminium foiled kayaks second best. Funny how times change though. An incident I well remember was during a two day sea kayak race last February (1997). With a tail wind we suddenly had some waves, and as I surfed up behind Jonathan, I marvelled at his

superb zig zag course. I realised that he was using sailing skiff tactics (I believe he's looking to purchase a small yacht -with a rudder I guess) to increase his apparent wind and maximise downwind VMG (Velocity Made Good), but most observers would merely have suggested he needed a rudder. As I whistled past, I suggested he should get a prize for the most distance travelled during the race, but even if they had presented it, he couldn't have collected it after pulling a muscle through too many sweep strokes.

On another occasion I paddled a K2 with him during a midwinter race. I should have recognised the signs then, as he insisted on paddling from the front cockpit which had the rudder controls. He recently enquired about cutting the stern off the Vynek and installing a rudder (I can almost hear Nigel Foster shuddering from here). For someone highly skilled, and used to paddling without, the change in attitude has been dramatic, so maybe there's something to that bit of Downunder (the kayak) technology.

Like any issue of boat design there are always pros and cons for a particular feature. Paul Caffyn found that his average daily runs increased significantly with a rudder. The conclusion is that the extra energy savings from eliminating sweep strokes etc., to steer the kayak, overcame the extra drag from the foil. Retracting the rudder saved drag when it was not required. And on that note I had always found that racing sea kayaks on flatwater it was an advantage to raise the rudder. Recent speed testing during development of a new design indicated that at seven knots, retracting the rudder would add an additional 0.2-0.3 knots. Strangely enough at a steady five knots I couldn't discern any difference. My observation is that in anything other than flat calm conditions the rudder is clearly more energy efficient, particularly over a long period when tired muscles complain about forward paddling strokes let alone a steering stroke. Hip steering/railing while easy when you are fresh, becomes an effort at the end of the day. The effort required to push one's foot forward is manageable (barely perhaps!). That rudders

have proven their efficiency both in sea kayak racing, and also for relatively slower paced cruising, highlights their benefits.

Those opposed to rudders will always find argument against them, whether because of the extra drag and hence speed loss, complication of a relatively simple piece of equipment therefore giving more likelihood of problems, or because the aesthetics of a rudderless kayak with graceful up swept ends is more pleasing to their eye, and of course because the Eskimos refrained from such dalliances.

#### **Footnote from Roy Dumble**

Now John, before I get death threats from the rudderless community, I have to tell you that I will not cut the back of the Vyneck off to put a rudder on it - it would be sacrilege and would destroy a monument to a certain way of thinking. However, I am saving up to buy one of Glyn's boats... with a neat little rudder on the back of it.

## **RETRACTABLESKEGS**

### **How they Work & When they Don't by Karin Mentzing**

A retractable skeg is a small fin at the aft end of the hull. When not in use, it's retracted inside a skeg box inside the aft compartment. Retracting the skeg is worked by a cable attached to the top of the skeg, which passes through the kayak and emerges beside the cockpit.

When a kayak is paddled forwards, an area of turbulent water is created from the widest part of the hull and backwards. Anyone who have been paddling in a river or tidal stream, knows how a kayak behaves in turbulent water. It sort of slides around. So when the kayak is paddled forwards and the wind hits it on the beam, the kayak stern is more effected than the bow. The stern slides away from the wind. That's why the kayak wants to turn upwind. If you then drop the skeg below the turbulent water, the kayak will track and not turn upwind. If the skeg is dropped too much, the kayak will instead turn downwind, because

now the bow is more effected by the wind. So the skeg is not something you steer the kayak with, but allows you to track on a set course. The faster you paddle, the deeper will the area of turbulent water become and the more you will have to drop the skeg.

If the kayak has a very long and deep aft keel line, a low aft deck and a high fore deck, it might not be heading upwind, at least not in slight winds and at low speed. It might turn downwind. One can compensate that by carrying a deck load aft, and load the kayak a bit heavier in the bow, but this is not a good solution, because the kayak might not behave well in waves when heavier in the bow than aft. Then it's much better to have a rudder on a kayak that is designed like that, because a skeg will not do the job.

Anyway, most kayaks are designed so that they turn upwind and you need a skeg or a rudder to compensate for that if you don't want to make paddling enjoyable. Still it happens that skegs and rudders break or fail and you will have to struggle for a while before you can come to shore and do something about it and then it's time to start thinking of the turbulent water at your stern. The bow sits in the water and the stern slides, so doing a sweepstroke action to get on course is not very efficient. At least half of your effort of paddling will be wasted. The stern is what is easiest to move, so you correct the course with a stern rudder with your paddle as long as you want to go crosswind. Just finish a forward stroke by letting the paddle continue towards the stern and then press in or out, depending on which side you're doing the stern rudder. I find it more comfortable to do a stern rudder on the wind side and press the paddle blade towards the stern, because then I can edge the kayak into the wind and not away from it. If you want to turn upwind, you use a sweepstroke and even bow rudder if you've got enough speed and want to do a quick turn. If you want to turn downwind, you do a more powerful stern rudder or a low brace turn.

When paddling in waves, the kayak is not so much effected by the wind,

even if the wind is rather strong. Partly because the wind is getting weaker near the waters surface because of friction, and partly because the kayak is in shelter between the waves. So I find I don't use the skeg very much when paddling in waves. And if you, like me and some other paddlers, have learnt from start to paddle the kayak without a rudder, you develop a feeling for how the kayak moves and compensate with the paddle without noticing it.

The skeg is best when you paddle in conditions like wind blowing over almost flat water, a situation we often have in Sweden where we mostly paddle in archipelagoes where is no swell. I find the skeg a lot more reliable than a rudder, less moving parts and less lines and things that can break or be tangled up. And I can use a lot more power with pushing my feet to the footrest when paddling, than if I have to divide my feet in two kind of actions, one pushing for paddling and one holding the rudder pedals still. My simultaneous capacity is not very good, though I'm a woman....

The skeg doesn't work very well in following seas though. All kayaks wants to skate sideways in following seas and the longer and sharper keel line the kayak has, the more difficult it is to handle this skating and get the kayak back on course. In such conditions a rudder makes life easier. But it has to be an efficient rudder. It's not of much help if it's flapping in the air behind the kayak, above or just behind the waves crest.

A disadvantage with the skeg, is the skeg box which divides the rear part of the aft compartment in two, which means you can't store any bulky gear in there.

So if I don't have a rudder, how do I steer the kayak then? Well, I have to use the paddle and my body. Anyone that has been paddling white water is familiar with things like sweep stroke, bow rudder, stern rudder etc. and all the varieties of these strokes. And leaning and edging the kayak.

Some paddlers think this is a waste of

energy and some even think I'm a stupid bugger when they see me zig-zaging close along the shoreline, altering my paddle in all kind of weird positions. But for me it's more of an almost sensual feeling of being one with my kayak. It adds so much joy and pleasure for me, to develop this control of my own body, the paddle and the kayak.

So for the sort of paddling I do, for holiday and relaxation, the skeg is all I want. If I was planning an expedition over a long time and in exposed areas with many crossings and following seas are expected, I would definitely mount a rudder on my kayak and learn how to handle and operate it. That would save me a lot of effort. But when hugging the shore in sheltered waters, I would still fold it up and get carried away by playing with strokes. Karin Mentzing

## *Changes at Paddling Perfection*

Dear Paul,  
Just letting you know that Ron Augustin has bought me out of Paddling Perfection. As you probably know, the business has been a 50/50 partnership between us, and after 5 and a half years, a few differences in philosophy were emerging which we increasingly struggled to resolve.

I wish Ron and the staff every success for the future, carrying on from the platform we established together. With Ron's creative abilities, backed up by a really good team in the factory, I'm sure we'll see more interesting kayaks appearing.

I'm looking forward to the Xmas break, some paddling, and shifting kayaking back to a hobby.

Cheers,  
Glyn Dickson.

## **SAD NEWS FROM GREENLAND**

Lone Madsen, Danish journalist and sea kayaker, was caught by a storm on 30 September whilst paddling the south-east coast of Greenland. She and her paddling companion Tore Sivertsen, a helicopter pilot with Greenlandair, were paddling south from Angmagassalik towards Cape Farewell at the southern tip of Greenland and were crossing a fiord near Prins Christians Sund when strong winds suddenly hit them with gusts up to estimated 50 knots. They were crossing a fjord when Tore heard Lone shouting for help but there was nothing he could do. It was impossible to paddle against the wind. Lone apparently capsized and was overcome by the chill of the icy waters.

Some hours later, Tore got safely to the shore and got in touch with Narsarsuaq Airport and an overflying twin otter, however the weather was so rough that there was no possibility to attempt a helicopter rescue that evening. Tore was picked up the next morning and after 15 minutes searching, they found Lone's body.

Lone was a regular contributor to 'Sea Kayaker' magazine in the USA with articles on paddling in Greenland. In 1996, Lone with two Greenland ladies, Inngi Bisgaard and Rina Broberg, paddled from Sisimiut down the west coast of Greenland to near Kap Farvel. Her account of this trip appeared in the June 1997 issue of 'Sea Kayaker', Vol.14, No.2.

In June this year, Conrad and I spent two days in a small hut near Kangamiut on the west coast of Greenland, while waiting for a gale to ease. The hut log book contained only three entries from passing kayakers, one of which was from Lone and her companions for 21/05/96.

Ice conditions this year on the south-east coast of Greenland were not good for paddling. We heard of two parties attempting the trip south from Angmagassalik this northern summer, Lone Madsen and Tore, and another

dynamic duo Lonnie Dupre and his Australian partner John who are attempting a circumnavigation of Greenland. The latter pair were successful, but only with much kayak hauling over the ice.

The south-east coast of Greenland, from Angmagassalik down to Kap Farvel, is totally committing for a kayaking trip. There are no villages for resupply, scarce beaches for camping and the polar ice pack remains closely packed against the barren rocky coast. The deep fiords are often choked with ice from calving glaciers and hurricane force katabatic winds descend off the icecap with unbridled power. Newsletter No. 77 carried an article by Earle Bloomfield on the 1986 Australian expedition that set out to repeat Gino Watkin's open boat journey south from Angmagassalik. The expedition was forced through problems with the support yacht to start in late September, and the four paddlers were extremely fortunate to survive encounters with collapsing ice bergs and gale force seas. After the kayaking trip was aborted, the support yacht was knocked down and rolled in horrendous seas. The stunning quality expedition video of this trip contained a graphic warning from a local Greenlander that September marked the onset of winter and for the paddlers to be very aware of the dangers of the Pittoraq, a katabatic wind which descends off the icecap. I have untold admiration for the cameraman who filmed the rescue of the support yacht by the last Danish supply vessel of the season. The stomach churning seas appear to be at least 15m high from crest to trough.

30 September was late in the season to be attempting this trip, but perhaps the ice pack opened up very late, allowing an avoidance of hauling over the ice. Even so, Lone Madsen was out there paddling in conditions that we can only dream about. Her death is a sad loss to sea kayakers all over the world. Vale Lone Madsen

P. Caffyn.

## ***How to Avoid the Xmas Police Random Roadside Check Points***

Colin Quilter's delightful article provides an interesting vignette on the social customs and dress standards of the owners of several different brands of sea kayaks, during an evening paddle to an Auckland restaurant. Lucky there were no paddlers present who own tippy British designs.

Reprinted from the Auckland Canoe Club Newsletter December 1998

### **DINNER IN THE SWAMP Colin Quilter**

On a windy afternoon in late November sixteen of us met at Cockle Bay on an expedition for dinner at the Settlers Coffee House at the head of the Whitford creek. There were Sea Bears, Albatrosses, Penguins, Barracudas, Sue and Peter in a double, and Julia in a long, skinny boat which looked more suitable for paddling fast down rivers than for paddling slowly up them. Rona had packed her kayak with a few bottles of water in order to ballast it in the fresh breeze, (although in view of the fact that the restaurant was BYO, she would have done better to use wine).

We were soon out of the easterly chop at the river mouth and being carried quietly up the estuary towards Whitford. Everyone remarked on the mansions which grandly overlook the river, but we all rejected them as future homes for kayakers because of the vast area of lawns to be mown, (it is well known that kayaking and large lawns don't mix); together with the fact that they cost fifteen million dollars each, (about three times the value of Mike Haye's ultra-lightweight kevlar-and-titanium Packhorse Express which was being paddled by Sue and Peter).

The tide was a little over half-full when we neared the top of the creek. Mud and mangroves closed in around us. "Where's the restaurant?" we asked.

"It's up there," said Ray, pointing to an evil little ditch winding itself into the swamp on the right. "We sent Margaret to see if the water is deep enough".

"Have you heard anything since?"

"No. Maybe she's stuck."

"Should one of us go and look for her?" Nobody moved.

"Perhaps", I said, "there's enough water and she's already at the restaurant tucking into the hors d'oeuvres."

There was a concerted rush for the ditch.

Eventually we were all pulled out on the grassy bank of the restaurant. Here an interesting sociological phenomenon occurred. Those paddling Sea Bears pulled clean clothes from their boats and entered the restaurant in casual but undeniably smart style, with only traces of mud between their toes. You could tell they belonged to a better class of paddler. The Barracuda people, on the other hand, squelched into the dining room in their damp polyprop and had to be seated near the door so they wouldn't drip on the carpet. Heaven knows what they're like in the privacy of their own homes!

But it was the two paddlers of Penguins who really took the prize. Both smartly dressed, not even a smidgin of mud, and - most amazing of all - they had actually combed their hair! Definitely hauteboat couture!

The meal, I thought, was not quite up to the standard of my usual salami-and-pasta-and-Surprise-peas billy stew, but it was pretty good; and the wine, (which I chose because it had a picture of dolphins on the label), wasn't bad either. It was a well-satisfied party who set off down river at about 10.30pm.

The trip back was a special treat because of the phosphorescence in the estuary. From the bow of each kayak streamed a glowing green ribbon which marked the bow wave, and a splash of the paddle sent thousands of green sparks flashing across the water. This would be a good trip to do again in the future, and we all (except

for the barracuda boys) vowed to bring a comb next time.

Colin Quilter.

### **Dinner at Whitford - A Second View by Rona Patterson**

On Saturday 21 November, 15 hardy souls departed from Cockle Bay to paddle to Whitford for their dinner, in about two inches of water and very strong winds.

We were greeted with amazement by other patrons at the restaurant. The owner had primed the other diners by advising them that there was a group coming in who had found a way to avoid the 'drinking and driving' dilemma.

The chef/owner stood on a chair and instructed us to, "listen carefully because he would say this only once". He offered two choices of entree and main, which were both were delicious. Judging by the noise in the restaurant while we were there and the lack of noise once we had left, a good night was had by all. I can certainly recommend the company.

But that was not the end of the evening. Making our way back up the creek in pitch black was a beautiful experience, with the peace and tranquillity combined with the most amazing phosphorescence making this a night to remember.

Rona Patterson.

## ***LRB2 - KASK HANDBOOK 2nd. Ed.***

The 200 print run of the LRB2 is almost sold out. For a copy of this mother of all handbooks, contact KASK Treasurer Helen Woodward: 82 Hutcheson St.

Blenheim

email: h.woodward@xtra.co.nz

### **COST:**

New members: gratis

Existing members: \$10 + \$1 p&p

Non-members: \$18 + \$1 p&p

Make cheques out to KASK (NZ)Inc  
Trade enquiries also to Helen.



## **KASKBADGES**

Canterbury paddler Rod Banks produced a badge of a paddler and sea kayak from solid sterling silver, with KASK NZ engraved. The badge can be permanently or temporarily affixed to hats T shirts, ties, evening gowns or dress suits but not dry suits. And the badge is appealing to the eye. Size is 23mm long by 11mm high.

Price is \$15 plus \$1 P+P, and available from the KASK Treasurer, Helen Woodward.

## **BOOKREVIEW**

### **'Sea Kayaking - A Ragged Mountain Press Woman's Guide'**

Thanks for the opportunity to read and review this book. I was a bit sceptical myself at why a woman's book, but when comparing it with Derek Hutchinson it is so friendly and is accepting of those that want to paddle quiet waters and not seek huge seas and surf.

I finished 1998 (at 6pm on New Year's Eve) with my first paddle in Tara (my Nordkapp) since my accident. It was only half an hour on the Estuary, but boy did it feel wonderful. My lower back got a bit sore but adjustments to my set-up will help that, but my arms/shoulders despite the scapula fracture were fine. All bodes well for 1999. See ya, Chrissie

**Title:** Sea Kayaking - A Ragged Mountain Press Woman's Guide  
**Author:** Shelley Johnson - Sea Kayaking Editor, Canoe & Kayak Magazine  
**Publisher:** Ragged Mountain Press  
**Publication date:** 1998  
**ISBN:** 0-07-032955-9  
**Price:** NZ\$44.95  
**Reviewed by:** Chrissie Williams

Why a sea kayaking guide written for women? Like many of you I have read or browsed many 'how to sea kayak' books. They often have a similar content and flow, but also can have a particular chapter or slant that makes them different.

And that is what it is with this guide book. It isn't a hefty volume, quite precise in fact, but the introduction and first three chapters in particular are where the difference lies. In reading them I don't get that gut wrenching feeling that Derek Hutchinson's (in The Complete Book of Sea Kayaking) introduction gives - with all his horror stories thrown into three pages.

In this Sea Kayaking Guide a woman new to sea kayaking is gently encouraged to give it a go, and to seek what kind of experiences or adventures she may want from a sea kayak. There are inspiring stories of a whole range of styles other woman have taken on for themselves, whether for a challenge or to search for solace.

There's tips on what to look for in an introductory course; equipment descriptions; hints for carrying and loading a boat; and selecting a kayak to buy.

The sections on rescues, waves, tides, navigation, weather etc., are standard but well explained, and the book finishes with a chapter on stretches, how to pee while in your boat, paddling while pregnant, paddling with the family, and a non gender specific piece on paddling with a disability. The list of resources gives direction for finding out more or what to read for inspiration\*. The overseas paddling club list includes four New Zealand contacts, including KASK.

This is an excellent book for women paddlers - whether novice, intermediate and advanced. It is useful, precise but comprehensive, reassuring and encouraging. It would be a wonderful gift for a woman you would like to introduce to sea kayaking in a non threatening but inspirational way.

\*Talking about inspirational books. A couple of years ago I reviewed a book "Deep Water Passage: A Spiritual Journey for Midlife" by Ann Linnea who in 1992 circumnavigated Lake Superior. I am in the middle of re-reading this book to gather strength and motivation from a woman who undertook a huge challenge. The challenges in my life in the last 9 months since my bike accident have been of a

different sort but there are many parallels in being extended physically, emotionally and spiritually beyond pre-conceived limitations, with the associated need for determination and survival, and a growth in self awareness. I again recommend this book to you.

Chrissie Williams

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