

No. 84 December 1999 - January 2000

THE SEA CANOEIST NEWSLETTER



Peter Oliver with his handbuilt Baidarkas.



**The Journal of the Kiwi Association
of Sea Kayakers (N.Z.) Inc. - KASK**

KASK

KASK, the Kiwi Association of Sea Kayakers (N.Z.) Inc., a network of New Zealand sea kayakers, has the objectives of:

1. promoting and encouraging the sport of sea kayaking
2. promoting safety standards
3. developing techniques & equipment
4. dealing with issues of coastal access and protection
5. organizing an annual sea kayak forum
6. publishing a bimonthly newsletter.

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

Articles, trips reports, book reviews, equipment reviews, new techniques, letter to the editor, and moments when the word 'Bugger!' was said singularly or often {referred to by some as incidents} are sought to enliven the pages of the newsletter.

Send in a plain brown envelope, or via cybermail to:

**Editor: P Caffyn,
RD 1, Runanga,
West Coast .N.Z.
Ph/Fax: (03) 7311806
E Mail address:
kayakpc@xtra.co.nz**

KASK Subscriptions are:
\$20.00 per annum & cheques should be made out to:
K.A.S.K. (NZ) Inc. & sent to the KASK Secretary:
Helen Woodward,
82 Hutcheson St.
Blenheim
Ph: (03) 578 5429.
email: h.woodward@xtra.co.nz

**Correspondence to the Secretary:
Helen Woodward,
82 Hutcheson St.
Blenheim
Ph: (03) 578 5429.
email: h.woodward@xtra.co.nz**

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 Secretary, Helen Woodward.

LRB2-KASK

HANDBOOK2nd.Ed.

For a copy of this mother of all sea kayaking handbooks, contact KASK Secretary 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.

THE LRB2, or the Little Red Book 2nd. Edition, is a mammoth compilation on all aspects of sea kayaking in New Zealand, by many of the most experienced paddlers in the Universe. Following a brief introduction, the handbook is divided into six sections:

- Kayak, Paddle & Equipment
- Techniques & Equipment
- The Elements
- Trips and Expeditions
- Places to Go
- Resources

Each section contains up to nine separate chapters. The Resources section, for example has chapters on:

- guide to managing a sea kayak symposium
- Paddling Literature
- Author profiles
- Guides and Rental Operators
- Network Addresses
- Sea Kayaks in NZ listing

SEAKAYAKING

NETWORK CONTACT ADDRESSES

Auckland Sea Kayak Network
Vincent Maire
7 Motuora Rd, Manly
Whangaparaoa, 1463
Ph: (09) 424 2293
Fax: (09) 424 0385
email: asknet@xtra.co.nz
webpage: nzkayak.co.nz

Canterbury Sea Kayak Network
Andy & Deirdre Sheppard
Ph: (03) 342 7929

Sea Kayak Operators Assoc. of NZ
Bronwyn Duff, Admin. Officer
PO Box 255
Picton
Ph: (03) 573 6505
Fax: (03) 573 8827

Bay of Plenty Sea Kayak Network
Dusty Waddell, Ph: (07) 572 4419
Jean Kirkham, Ph: (07) 552 5982

Wellington Sea Kayak Network
Beverley Burnett
Cellphone: (025) 249 4116
email: beverley.burnett@bswip.co.nz
Web site: <http://home.clear.net.nz/pages/wellseak>

Auckland Canoe Club
PO Box 3523, Auckland.
Newsletter Editor: Julia Thorn
Ph: 09 575 3099

Ruahine Whitewater Club
71 Salisbury St., Ashhurst.
Ph: 06 326 8667
Fax: 06 326 8472

ROTORUA CONTACT
Graeme Muir
36 Buchanan Pl, Rotorua
Ph / Fax: 07 3477106
email: g.muir@clear.net.nz

NEW PLYMOUTH CONTACT
Mark Gardner
153 Seaview Rd,
New Plymouth
Ph/Fax: (06) 753 9881

INDEX

OVERSEAS TRIP REPORTS

Dead Man Walking. The NSW Sea Kayak Club North Qld. Expedition.
by David Winkworth p. 4

EDITORIAL

This 24 page newsletter is a bumper 24 pager to mark the start of 2000, with some great inspirational reading for those paddlers unable to hit the water. The summer on the West Coast is turning into the mother of all summers with large blocking highs sited in the central Tasman. Conrad Edwards arrived Xmas Eve with plenty of toys, three kayaks and two wave skis. Plans for a trip to Fiordland were put on hold while the surf and weather were so good, but after a solid week of wave skiing, I was struggling to lift my arms to tie the skis on the roofrack. The highlight was a late afternoon session on a sweeping lefthander at Rapahoe. Six foot faces and rides up to 400m! The beach in front of my cottage at the 12 Mile is sanded up with great surfing at high tide. Last night's session was a corker; the first heavy rain since Xmas, a full rainbow backdrop against the Paparoas and a magnificent sunset to the south. Sheer magic.

The east coast and North Island seem to be suffering from the lovely La Nina weather - what a bugger! Chris Duff has had a real battle into southerlies on the east coast of the South Island. I have included two stories on Chris, a background interview from when he stayed at the 12 Mile enroute to Picton, a compilation by Sandy Ferguson from the expedition website, and a book review of his around Ireland trip. On 20 January, Chris rang from Bluff where he was preparing for the crux of the trip around Puysegur Point. He is looking forward to the Fiordland leg and aims to explore several of the sounds before trucking up the West Coast.

The Summer '99 issue of 'NSW Sea Kayaker,' was a bumper 60 page classic, the swansong of retiring editor David Whyte. The colour cover included a graphic photo of paddler Arunas Pilka after a 12 foot crocodile tried to rip his leg off. Naturally I found the story of the attack and rescue rivetting, having paddled this same section of of the North Queensland coast, but I reckon this story is well worth including in the KASK newsletter as an example of how to do things right when everything goes dra-

matically wrong. The 'NSW Sea Kayaker' newsletter also included a letter from a Senior Crew Member of Torres Strait Rescue, which complimented Mike Snode and David Winkworth on their competent first aid and self rescue techniques.

Several Kiwi parties have paddled part or all of that section of coast from Cairns up to Cape York without incident and as far as I am aware without carrying an EPIRB. This coastal trip is one of the most magic in the world, with challenging navigation from reef to reef across the broad bays, stunning scenery and following trade wind sea conditions. For future Kiwi parties planning this trip, I would recommend either taking an EPIRB with the party, or refrain from swimming and skin diving off the reefs.

KASK FORUM

Planning is on track for the Easter KASK Forum at New Brighton. Registration forms were mailed out to KASK members, and please return these promptly so that numbers for catering can be sorted. Registration is necessary to attend paddlers should be organising accommodation ASAP - don't leave it too late. The forum is on a public holiday (Easter) and the South New Brighton Motor Camp is very popular. If anyone needs more info re the forum or accommodation they can contact Peter Sullivan directly. JKA (programme organiser) is in the final stages of sorting out the weekend's activities which is starting to look rather good.

Cheques must be made out to Y2CKAYAK.

The forms need to be returned for a number of reasons - safety, catering needs, next of kin in an emergency, available skills, etc etc.

CONTACT:

Peter Sullivan
7 Monowai Crescent
Christchurch 9 New Zealand.
Ph(03)3883-380
email: dsullivan@xtra.co.nz

Location map of New Brighton Motor Camp on Page 23.

OVERSEASTRIPREPORTS

DEADMAN WALKING

THE NSW SEA KAYAK CLUB 'BACK CARE' EXPEDITION TO NORTH QUEENSLAND

David Winkworth

Wednesday 18 August was a typical winter's day in north Queensland - sunny, warm and windy. This was the day our expedition would end in dramatic circumstances.

Arunas Pilka, Mike Snoad and I had left Cairns just over three weeks earlier, bound for Thursday Island in Torres Strait, a distance of about 1000 kms. We'd driven together to Cairns, and paddled north as a close-knit team, camping on the mainland and islands within the vast Great Barrier Reef.

From our campsite that morning on a sheltered beach near Thorpe Point, we planned to follow the coast to Round Point and then strike out for a 37 km crossing of Shelburne Bay on a compass heading of 320 degrees Magnetic.

From our launch we paddled in following seas to Round Point where we departed the coast for the crossing. The massive white sand dunes of Shelburne Bay, stretching away to the south west, reflected the morning sun. With building seas and winds, we surfed wave after wave across the bay, Arunas and Mike being assisted by their sailing rigs. As I had the only marine compass on deck, the navigating duties were mine. Surfing down the waves, a quick glance at the compass and a touch of stern rudder stroke would keep our group nicely on course.

With haze on the horizon, we didn't expect the western shores of the bay to come into view for some time. Our

objective was Messum Hill, an 81 metre high sand dune within a mess of 60 metre high dunes. A non-too-prominent land mark for us, but we were comfortable with our mantra, "when in doubt, head west."

Every ten minutes or so, I turned around to check for a black and a blue sail - Arunas and Mike respectively. Nearing a reef system in the bay with several small clumps of mangroves visible, I looked back to see one black sail only - Mike had been engulfed by a big wave and had gone over. I turned around to go back and nearly backward looped on the first wave!

Mike self-rescued OK and retrieved a few floating bits and pieces. "Lets land on the island ahead for lunch," I shouted over the wind.

Arunas and Mike nodded in agreement. We approached the mangrove stands and saw that they were part of a huge reef system, which disappeared over the horizon to the south. So, skirting the reef to the north, we soon found the 'top' and paddled around to a small sand cay protected from the wind on the north-western tip of the reef. A prominent sign above the beach here proclaimed this place to be Macarthur Island. From here, the coastline and Messum Hill were visible, 12 kms to the west. Shallow warm crystal clear water and clean white sand fringed by reef greeted us as our kayaks touched the beach. This was heaven on earth, no doubt about it!

With the boats just clear of the flooding tide, I stripped off and entered the water for a swim in the shallows. Mike prepared a fire for a cuppa at the top of the beach and Arunas circumnavigated the island, a journey of about four minutes duration!

Arunas joined me at the water's edge. I sat down next to my boat as Arunas stripped off and waded out into the sandy shallows of our little cove. He flopped forward into the water, a little further out than where I had swum, but still in only thigh-deep water. We joked briefly about his lack of faith in my navigation.....

And then it happened.....

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

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

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

Whether it was me on it's back or not, we'll never know...but it did let go. It shot through so powerfully with barely a flick of it's tail, back out onto the reef from where it had come. I felt the curve of the croc's body as it spat me off. THIS was a big hard strong animal.

The croc was gone, but would it come back? I stood up next to Arunas. We were now in deep shit! There was an angry croc out there and we were still in its hunting territory. It now had four legs to choose from!

"Get out of the water Dave," yelled Arunas.

"Not without you mate....come back with me....keep coming," I coaxed. I held my arms outstretched out in a defensive position as we retreated.

Mike was there with us at the water's edge, and we now worked as a team to care for Arunas. We lowered him to the sand. His right leg was a mass of puncture marks and ripped flesh, but luckily there was little blood loss and minimal shock for him. I put my rashie around Arunas' thigh as a precautionary tourniquet. We were later to find that the croc's teeth came perilously close to his femoral artery.

At the water's edge we were still in danger. The croc could come back at any moment.

We helped Arunas to his feet and I supported him from behind, my face on his shoulder, as the narrowness of his escape hit me. "Oh shit mate, shit shit, oh God."

We moved together further up the beach, Mike and I observing Arunas as we went. We didn't want him to fall over because if he did, we didn't think we could pick him up again.

At the top of the beach we lowered him to the sand again with a plastic bag behind his leg keeping sand out of his wounds. I put up the tent while Mike stayed with Arunas. Mike and I took turns to stay with him at all times. As we lifted Arunas to take him to the tent, he nearly passed out.

To this stage, there had been no talk of calling for help. I'd earlier thought that we could tow him to the mainland where our map showed 4WD access to the coast, but would there be anyone there? Infection was going to be Arunas' big problem - crocs have dirty teeth. We had to get help quickly or Arunas could die.

Mike had brought an EPIRB with him but none of us had ever had to use one in an emergency. If ever there was a time, this was it. (I wonder how the Maatsuyker Club, who shun such modern rescue devices, would have handled this scenario?)

"The EPIRB Mike - switch it on," said Arunas, as we propped him up on cool waterbags in the tent.

Mike wedged the little yellow EPIRB into the sand at the top of the beach and switched it on. It immediately began singing its song to the satellites.

We dressed Arunas' wounds, administered strong painkillers, a double dose of antibiotic capsules and his favourite black tea. We kept a written record of all medications and obs for the paramedic we hoped would come soon.

There was nothing more we could do for Arunas but we still had other jobs to do. We moved the kayaks to the top of the beach out of the reach of the tide and placed two of them in a V, the internationally recognised distress sign. We cut up a large yellow plastic bag of Mikes and made a 2 metre long V sheet. Using another yellow bag, we attached it to a paddle as a signal flag. We wrote the words 'CROC ATTACK - ONE EVAC' in the smooth sand of the beach in 1.2 metre high letters. We did this many times as the strong wind continually smoothed out our writings. We also prepared a smoky signal fire.

We saw several ships travelling north way out to the east in the inshore shipping channel but were unable to attract their attention.....and then.....exactly 2 hours after the attack, we were buzzed about six times by a Coastwatch Dash 8 aircraft. It banked low over our island.

"You bloody beauty," we shouted. "You'll be out of here soon Arunas, he's seen our sign for sure."

Mike and I then cleared a helipad on the top of the island which we marked with a large yellow plastic "H" and sat down to wait - there was nothing more we could do.

We heard the resonating "thump thump thump" of the chopper before we saw it, coming in low from the north and homing in on the EPIRB signal. What a beautiful sight! The pilot landed the chopper and a paramedic and volunteer assistant went to Arunas in the tent. Paramedic Dave Barz inspected Arunas' wounds pronouncing, "You're not going to die," inserted an intravenous line and within ten minutes Arunas was gone, on his way to Thursday Island Hospital.

Arunas, we'd agreed, would arrange a fishing boat to pick us up from the island as soon as possible. We had 2 weeks food and unlimited fresh water with our desalinator. We were content to share this island with the crocodile. It was gone for now but would come back later.

Mike and I sat down and made a cuppa, trying to "come down" from the tension of the previous 4 hours. "Shit," I said, shaking my head. "Yeah, shit," sighed Mike.

As the sun disappeared behind the coastal sand dunes, we were preparing dinner. Suddenly two rubber duckies full of sailors appeared off our beach. We ran down to the water:

"Don't get out in the water, there's a big croc here," we shouted.

They ran their boats up the beach and jumped out. A few sailors carried automatic weapons. The croc appeared on the surface off the point at our beach.

"There he is," called a sailor, and we saw weapons being cocked and raised. "You're not going to shoot it?" we questioned. They didn't, but we think they would've if we weren't there. "Where's the patient? I'm a paramedic" said one of the sailors. "You're too late. He went hours ago," we replied.

The Executive Officer then introduced himself. "We're from the minehunter HMAS Huon which is waiting out in the channel There are also three warships standing by to assist out in the Coral Sea. We've come to rescue you." "We don't need rescuing. We're OK," we replied. "We've come to take you to Thursday Island," he said. "Can you take our boats too?" we asked. "No can do. Just you."

We folded our arms...body language speaks volumes. "Then we're not going," we said.

This was going to be interesting! We know the Navy is in need of some good publicity after the Collins Class Sub problems but can you imagine the tabloid headlines: "SEA KAYAKERS REFUSE TO BE RESCUED BY NAVY!" There was a flurry of radio chatter to the mother ship. The Ex came back to us, "OK, we can take the kayaks too."

And so we left this beautiful place to the crocodiles, with our kayaks balanced precariously across a rubber duckie. Mike and I were well looked after by the Navy. We were transferred to the Thursday Island Navy boat at 4am in mid channel near Thursday Island - the Huon was in a hurry to get to Darwin - East Timor matters we think. The T.I. Navy boat was full of media - cameras, reporters, spotlights - you name it. These guys work fast and the Navy needed good publicity - remember?

Meanwhile, at Thursday Island Hospital, Arunas was also being well-looked after. They kept his wounds open for a week before stitching him up to check for infection and pumped massive amounts of powerful antibiotics into his veins. There was no infection at all.

Mike and I stayed with the Navy and Army for a few days - they were terrific - we had accommodation, a place to keep the boats AND they kept the media away. We thought if we didn't say anything at all to the media that they would go away but that was naive - they just made stuff up! Cheque-book journalism is alive and well and living in little Thursday Island. - there were lots of offers! In the end we took their money and did a TV piece for "Today Tonight." We gave the proceeds to Torres Volunteer Rescue and Thursday Island Hospital. We met Paul and Rhys on T.I. They are the island's resident sea kayakers and they gave us great hospitality. Mike went for a day paddle with them in their Rosco's.

Thursday Island, the commerce hub for all the Torres Strait Islands is one laid-back place. No-one gives a stuff about road rules and many of the cars are held TOGETHER by rust! One night, we were returning to our hostel after visiting Arunas when a car came down the main street in an erratic manner, "Let's get up on the footpath Mike. This guy may have had a few." It was the local paddy wagon.

We shipped the kayaks back to Cairns with Sea Swift for \$50 each. When Arunas was discharged we flew back

to Cairns, picked up the vehicle and kayaks (thanks Mike) and, with the patient on a mattress in the back, headed for home, stopping at hospitals each day for Arunas to have his wounds dressed. It was nice to finish as a team.

Our Cape York Expedition began life as a 10 week Kimberley Expedition but two weeks before we were due to leave, I ended up in my local hospital with a pulled back muscle. That trip was off and Arunas proposed the North Queensland substitute. The 'Back Care Expedition' was born!

Arunas, Mike and I left Canberra on a minus 6 degree morning wearing all our clothes. Two days later we were down to shorts and tevas in Cairns! We launched on the Cairns Park waterfront, our three boats flexing slightly under the weight of 30 days food and 25 litres of water. Arunas' Greenlander won the heaviest boat award: a Kim Beazley autographed picture of a Collins class Sub! We paddled out of the Cairns mudhole early morning with the SE trade winds up and blowing. As we turned north at the first point to run with the wind, Arunas capsized when his sail gybed suddenly. We sat there for quite a while for Arunas to pump out with his little galley footpump and named that place 'Pilka Point.'

The weather, till about Cooktown, was overcast, cool and drizzly, the water inshore quite murky. Just before Cooktown, we moved offshore to spend a couple of nights on the Hope Islands. These were named by Cook when he realized his ship, holed on Endeavour Reef to the south, wasn't going to sink after all! At Hope Island, Mike won our coveted Rex Hunt Award for the biggest fish of the trip - a magnificent queenfish, which we cooked in the coals of our campfire. That night, after going to bed, our campfire exploded, scattering big hot coals in a twenty five metre radius. A piece of bamboo, which had water inside it had exploded. Lucky Escape No.1.

There were half a dozen yachts at Hope Islands and we were able to get

some good advice on islands and coastal areas to avoid because of croc populations

We'd all started the trip with sailing rigs. Early in the trip, Arunas bent his mast in strong winds. I preferred to paddle only and gave him my mast and everything worked out well. With Arunas and Mike sailing/paddling and me paddling only, we were more or less equal for the whole expedition.

Cooktown was a nice place on the Endeavour River. We stopped here for half a day to collect fresh water and visit the James Cook Museum - well worth a visit.

North of Cooktown the weather improved and the water began to clear. The winds kept howling each day - up to around 30 knots. We had some terrific downwind paddling but it was impossible to go back because the winds blew all night. Once past Cooktown, we had to go all the way. The amount of junk and rubbish on the beaches was amazing. Anything and everything was there for scroungers. At Temple Bay we came upon a fisherman's camp where the house was made from beach debris. Pieces of fishing net were everywhere, plastic items...and thongs, millions of thongs. At Cape Sidmouth, Mike found a mobile phone and an artificial leg. We did Rolf Harris impersonations that night!

At Three Islands, we moved offshore for 3 nights as we travelled north, avoiding large areas of swampy croc habitat. Mike lost his hat near Cape Flattery - it sunk - and boy was he pissed! Fair enough too, because small items assume great importance on trips like this. Arunas gave him his spare hat.

We didn't have time to paddle to Lizard Island, so we opted instead for the Turtle Group. In these places there are dozens of islands to explore - you do need the time though! Some groups are a sea kayaker's dream - large areas of shallow reef which make the islands difficult for yachts to visit. Sea kayaks just surf right over the reef shallows.

We returned to the coast at Barrow Point but not before coming very close to a collision with the bulk carrier "Hardwar." For days we'd been criss-crossing the shipping channel inside the reef and keeping a nervous look-out for ships. They travel fast and are on you in a matter of minutes. We'd seen 'Hardwar' to the north coming right at us for about 10 minutes. There were also another 3 ships line astern behind us! We were boxed in on a corner in the shipping lane! Luckily, the northern ship turned inside us as it reached us....but it was close. Lucky Escape No.2.

We skipped around Cape Melville, picking up sweet fresh water from a spring under the huge granite boulders of the Cape. From here it was a short hop across Bathurst Bay to Flinders and Stanley Island. Water was available here from tanks at a National Parks campsite. With a red sandstone landscape, Flinders reminded me of the Kimberley. Flinders was our jump-off point for Princess Charlotte Bay - the halfway point of our expedition.

We didn't have a marine chart for the expanses of Princess Charlotte Bay - our longest crossing for the trip - to work out a compass heading, so we called on a yachting boat anchored in the channel at Flinders. Using some tracing paper, we copied all the details we required from the yachting boat's chart - lights, shoals, reefs, courses etc and that was the "map" we used. It worked too!

The P.C. Bay crossing of 60 kms was the longest of the trip....it was also the only calm day of the expedition. We had to paddle a dog leg course, skirting 3 huge expanses of reef. The calm seas meant we had a fantastic view around the reef edge of schools of fish, dolphins, dugongs, sea snakes, hundreds of turtles and colourful coral heads. At the end of the crossing we landed on the one tree Stainer Island, and joked about it being a sea kayaking 'shrine.' It was here in 1981, that Paul Caffyn, on his Round Australia Expedition, bunkered down to sit out Cyclone Dominic, as most of the island went underwater. The smell of

bird shit on the 'Shrine' was overpowering so we paddled on to Pelican Island for the night.

Another island camp the following night and then a short day to Cape Sidmouth. We had to cut the day short here because the next forty or so kilometres was croc country and we didn't have enough daylight to clear it. I managed to light a respectable bush fire while boiling the billy but Arunas said it was OK because Bush Fire Brigades do it all the time at home. We put it out just like they do too!

An afternoon walk along the beach at Cape Sidmouth brought us to a creek mouth with a large sandbank."Go and get the tent Arunas - we'll camp here tonight," I joked. And then...on the sandbank in front of us was a 12' crocodile. It slid into the creek and we stood on the bank watching a trail of bubbles. It surfaced not far away to watch us. When it submerged again, we left.

The next day, in close to a beach near a river mouth, I saw a small "piece of driftwood" not 10 metres in front of me. As I leaned the boat to steer around it, the driftwood surfaced fully and became a black 16' croc! It quickly submerged and I lost sight of it. When you can't see them....you worry. I called to Mike who was paddling just behind me,"Keep paddling Mike. This is not a good place to stop."

We camped at the 'Old Mission' south of Lockhart River that night and crossed Lloyd Bay the following day to Restoration Island just off the coast at Cape Weymouth. The small community of Portland Roads, an Allied sea base in World War 2 is nearby. Restoration ("Resto" to the locals) was named by Captain William Bligh. He landed here in 1789 after crossing more than 4,000 kms of the Pacific with 18 crew before proceeding on to Timor - truly one of the great small boat voyages of all time. But, William Bligh has gone and "Resto" is now leased by Dave Glasheen, a nouveau beachcomber from Sydney. Dave has plans to develop an eco-resort here but we found it OK just the way it was. Dave, whose favourite attire is a G

string (no washing) has the most incredible all-over tan: "Even the crack of his bum is tanned," commented Arunas.

We spent a rest day on Resto. The fishing here was pretty good, although we had competitors. Arunas came in one day after some trolling and said: "I've just seen a very big shark." "Oh yeah, how big?" we asked. "Just a bit shorter than the Greenlander," he replied.

The following day, I hooked up to a decent trevally near where Arunas saw the shark. I hauled it up and just before I was going to grab it in the water, a shark relieved me of most of the fish. The bite radius and teeth marks told me this was a very big tiger shark. We called this place Shark Point. Lucky Escape No.3.

We paddled on, electing to paddle across Temple Bay to the Olive River instead of cruising up the inside of the reefs to Cape Grenville. At the Olive River, Mike had to remove and straighten his rudder after it was whacked by a shark.

"Get all that black paint off it Mike. Make it nice and shiny. That'll fix it," we joked.

The Home Islands off Cape Grenville are worth a return visit. We stopped there briefly for lunch - a coral trout and vegies lunch at that. There are extensive reefs, the fishing is first class but....don't go in the water.

From a commercial cray boat in Margaret Bay, we picked up water that day, the penultimate day of our expedition...and continued on to Thorpe Point for the night.

So, what do you make of North Queensland? Sun, sun and more sun, space, solitude....a sea kayakers dream? Perhaps...but watch out, the sting is not necessarily in the tail!

MORE ON THE CROC. ATTACK

Bevan Walked discussed the crocodile attack, as we both have paddled this section of coast, and Bevan on several occasions snorkelled on the reefs in search of fish. What we were intrigued to learn more about, was the visibility of the water at the time of the attack.

From: David Winkworth

Hi Paul,

Some notes about the croc attack: Macarthur Island is about 12 kms off the coast. The water there was as clear as a well-filtered swimming pool. Underwater visibility was probably 20 metres or so. We were in pretty shallow water. When Arunas was attacked he was only in thigh-deep water. He was on sand but the reef started about 3 metres out past him. He saw the croc come in at him off the reef and latch on to his leg but it was so quick he had no time to do anything - not that there was much he could have done. He was in the croc's territory fair and square. Mate, it was a close thing - this animal was around the 12 foot mark and boy was it strong. I really felt like I was nothing on it's back.

When we got to Thursday Island, an officer from the Qld EPA called me to get the details of the attack. It is his job to investigate all croc attacks in Qld. We thought that this croc may have been forced out of a nearby estuary by a bigger animal but he said that all crocs leave the estuaries and travel - ie., it was quite normal for this croc to be there. He said they travel thousands of kms in their lifetime. I asked him what the difference was between us swimming on this island and the thousands of tourists who snorkel off the dive boats further out on the reef. His reply was, "Nothing."

They are just as much at risk! Food for thought isn't it? I did quite a few interviews up there but none of my comments about this made it to air! I guess they're guarding their tourist industry pretty well!

Cheers

Dave

Haida Gwaii - not a Trip Report.

by Roy Dumble

Reading the book review on the Queen Charlotte's made me realise how time flies. It's so easy to get caught up in the merry-go-round of life that you forget how great it is if only you can step off, and the read in the last journal made me realise it was 2 years ago that we were there - surely time to stop spinning again! Anyway, thought some readers may be interested in a kiwi sea kayaker's impressions of the area. This is not a trip report - for those with a destination list of places to paddle before you die, put this somewhere near the top and follow your own path. What *is* below are some issues, remembrances and information that may assist your travels.

Planning

We were briefly tempted to head to Johnston Strait and paddle with resident orca, but as far as journeys go we were told it would be a bit like walking down Queen Street, Auckland - everybody else would be there too! After friendly advice from staff at Ecomarine, we decided on a 2 month journey comprising of 2 parts - a month paddling the Queen Charlotte's and a month paddling back towards Vancouver Island from Prince Rupert. As usual, the decision making was the easy part - preparing for the trip took two weeks of hard work. A ferry strike due to the 'Salmon Wars' between Canada and the USA removed our transport option, which meant just getting to Queen Charlotte City became an adventure. Rental cars and the Greyhound got us close and we finished off hitchhiking with our kayaks out of Prince Rupert toward the ferry terminal. Within minutes we were picked up and befriended by another kayak group who were heading to the same destination for a quick 5 day reconnaissance in preparation for future commercial tours.

The main accommodation area is in Queen Charlotte City, which is about 5km away from Skidegate - the ferry landing. Because of the Orientation

requirements, we couldn't just start paddling off into the sunset, and had to spend time in Queen Charlotte City organising entry permits and travel to launch sites. So after a night of sleeping on the floor of the ferry, we ended up paddling around to Spruce Point Lodge. This was an excellent B & B right on the beach overlooking Robertson Island. The owners understood sea kayaking and sea kayakers and were very helpful.

The big paddling attraction in the Queen Charlotte's is the Gwaii Haanas National Park. The area is famous for its wilderness, flora and fauna and culture. The local Indian band (tribe) is the Haida, a great seafaring warrior nation which has left abandoned villages dotting the coastline. Some of these sites still have mortuary poles standing, with the most famous, Ninstints or Skanggwaii, being declared a World Heritage Site.

With one month's food stashed in our kayaks, we found ourselves bumping along a forestry road in a Simpsons school bus. After six days of travel we were finally getting to our launch site! The area north of Gwaii Haanas is still being milled and the roads and the eyesore of clear felled areas were courtesy of none other than Fletcher Forests. The whole Park area and indeed the whole of the Queen Charlotte Island group was the site of keen political action trying to stop the felling of original growth forest. Out of this action in the 1980's the Park boundaries were set, although hot issues such as the right of private land ownership within the Park, marine reserves and economic sustainability of local people are still at the forefront of debate.

Backcountry Management

The issues surrounding this area are very similar to New Zealand, and we had interesting discussions with locals and the Parks Service regarding the management of them.

Paddling Gwaii Haanas requires permitted entry. The commercial operators, some of whom are from other parts of Canada, have a restricted quota system and independent paddlers, as Hilary and I were, are limited to a daily maximum of 12 (being Septem-

ber, the end of the season, we had no trouble getting in. Entry to the Park now incurs a fee, ranging from \$C10 - \$C80, dependent upon length of stay). To get a permit we had to attend an evening 'orientation' run by Parks Canada at Queen Charlotte City. This was to ensure we were conversant with local practices such as cultural considerations and low impact wilderness camping. It ranged from bear-proofing camp sites to inter-tidal toileting methods. This area is also the first in Canada that is co-managed with the local Band and the systems they are adopting are still being developed. As such we were asked to take part in a Parks Backcountry Management study to help them collate data as we went on our journey. This Park is at the cutting edge of investigating issues such as random versus designated camp sites, limiting numbers inside the Park boundaries, restricting numbers of people ashore at specific sites, flight corridors for air traffic and qualifications and concessions for the operators. The sheer pressure of numbers wanting to get there is causing management concerns, and hence practice. Many of these issues are pertinent to New Zealand - what role should local iwi have in the Conservation estate, how can we handle the impact of numbers in areas such as Abel Tasman, how do we resolve the toileting issue in heavily used areas such as the Abel Tasman and the Bay of Islands?

Camping.

Sea kayak journeys appeal to us for many reasons but one of the strongest attractions is the rhythm that is developed - away from the stresses and distractions of everyday life. There is something about a long sea kayak journey which connects the transcendent spirit to the surrounding environment. I find the rhythm has two key parts - on water and on land. Low impact camping is essential in this area, where visitors pay to get to a wilderness and they don't appreciate pulling up to a beach only to find obvious signs of other paddlers. Sound camp hygiene adds to this feeling of wilderness but has a more immediate effect of bear proofing the campsite! This is the home of the largest Black

bears in North America. We had landed in Canada 3 weeks earlier to the news of a stalked Black bear attack which killed two and mauled another, so we were very bear-wary. We had armed ourselves with every anti-bear device except firearms but were told good camping practice would avoid most encounters. This results in a curious divorced feeling in the campsite. Cooking in one area, hanging all food stuffs, including toothpaste, in a tree in another area and sleeping in yet another area! And it can't be just any old tree - it should be 7 meters up and 1 meter out from the side of the trunk. Even though forest is right down to the waters edge, finding that perfect hanging tree was never easy.

The beaches were a mix of boulder, shingle or sand and seldom enticing enough to pitch the tent. However, the Spruce, Cedar and Hemlock forest came right down to the waters edge and browsing animals enabled good campsites to be found without too much trouble. Some beaches were crowded with logjams and landing at high tide was often difficult. Because of these restrictions, certain areas have become favourite sites for paddlers, and although camping is non designated, we frequently found campsites that had been heavily used. This is especially so in certain 'hot spots'.

There are a number of strategic staging posts in Gwaii Haanas that 'quickie tourists' use to see the favourite sights. Groups get to these spots by boat or float plane and then spend from a day to 1 week exploring. Swan Island, Hotspring Island and Rose Harbour are 3 such areas. Until recently, pocket cruise ships used to bring up to 70 day trippers at a time! The key attractions are the old Indian village sites and their mortuary poles. Such large numbers are now banned because the pressure was just too great for the minimal (or zero) amenities. At any landing site within the Park boundaries, rules now apply. A maximum of 12 people can be on site at any one time and boaties and kayakers must radio ahead to ensure the numbers aren't too many. At any campsite, if it is occupied, it is expected of you to carry on and find a new unoccupied site!

Critters and Other Wild Things

We had been told that by paddling the Charlotte's, the chances were high we would get to see orca just as easily as in the Johnston Straight area. In the days leading up to us getting there, we were hearing reports of a pod of 60 orca in the Hotspring area! Unfortunately the whole time we were there, we saw a small pod of orca from a distance only once! A pair of minke whales was the last of the large sea mammals that we encountered. However, this was made up for in many other ways. The forest and the intertidal zone was an amazingly unspoiled environment. The Burnaby Narrows is so heavily encrusted with intertidal marine life, visitors are asked not to get out of their boats to walk in the tide. Instead you are asked to do a 'float through'. Every footfall would literally crush hundreds of animals and plants. To prevent this, the Management Board is investigating an 'intertidal boardwalk'! The multi hued starfish and urchins in the park area are absolutely dazzling.

Although still rare we came across sea otters a few times and Bald eagles frequent the area. Raccoons crunching shellfish and squirrels scurrying around the campsite always kept us entertained. As in New Zealand there is a problem with introduced species, and here it is the deer. They eat a wide variety of foods, including seaweed, but are causing irreplaceable damage to the forest by eating the Spruce and Cedar saplings. A curious ruling of the Park management prevent them from being hunted, even though they know of the damage they are causing. They are trying to establish deer free islands but these deer are determined swimmers and so far their research extends to establishing how long it takes for the animals to swim back to the islands they have removed them from! Rats are another problem and they are trying to establish rat free zones, with expert advice from New Zealand's world renowned ratbusters. The bears were an anathema to us. This being our first time in bear country, and what with the horrendous news of the recent attack, we were very cautious. Hanging every night and even camping away from stream mouths where they are attracted to the

salmon, we hoped not to have an encounter. However some perverse streak inside wanted to get close enough for that photo opportunity. One paddler we bumped into had had a bear through his campsite that morning. It had given his kayak a good going over but he was very blasé about it all. The paddler had been fishing and storing the catch under his bungys which had attracted the bear. Our decision not to do any fishing on this journey may well have saved us from any encounters. As it was we got to see one bear from a distance while we were safely at sea. In the end we were satisfied with this!

Highlights

Paddling the eastern side of these islands afforded us with the most shelter from weather, although care was still needed. September was the end of the paddling season and the start of winter with storm fronts becoming more frequent. (One surreal moment was when we were storm bound on a small island for 4 days, collecting water from the fly runoff, and listening to scratchy radio reports of the death of Princess Di. It all seemed quite unreal.) We ventured onto the western side of the islands on only one occasion, and that was when we visited Ninintins and the village of Skanggwaii. Crossing the channel in flat water, we decided to paddle around the island before landing. From inside a lagoon we looked out and watched as a 1-2 meter break closed in from the Pacific Ocean beyond. Confident we could handle that we headed out, but within 5 minutes we were in the biggest seas either of us had paddled in and in no position to attempt to turn around! We decided the best thing was to keep going. We eventually turned beam on to 5 meter seas and made a run down the outside of the island, surfed in through a break in the reef at the southern end and settled our heart rate in the calm waters there 20 minutes later!

However, hair-raising paddling was never the intention of this journey. It was a wilderness journey along a coastal forest. The flora and fauna and the views of the San Christoval mountains were eye smacking. The bewil-

dering variety and colour of the forest fungus made coastal exploration fascinating.

The old village site of Skanggwaii with the poles and house remains was a very special place to be. It would be like visiting old Pa sites on our own headlands, but with palisades and whare remains still there, reminding us of the people and culture that lived there.

The hotpools on Hotspring Island would have to be the *best* natural pools in the world - make sure you take the forest walk to the pools from the southeast shore. Can't camp on the island itself but there is an awesome (but waterless) island tucked in between Hotspring and House Island. Gordon Islands are an excellent staging post for the trip across to Ninintins. Beautiful lagoons enclosed by fantastic pillow lava formations. A very tiny campsite up on a small knoll with a spring down below. Like most of the smaller islands, bear free.

All Alone Stone - hey, just the name is inspiring!

Some Considerations.

Ferries - the terminals never seem to be any where close to accommodation. Be prepared to organise transport from or to anywhere you are staying. If you have to hoof it, find a place nearest to the ferry terminal. In Prince Rupert, we stayed at the Anchor Inn - walking distance to the ferry with our kayaks.

Time of Year - we were paddling in September and met up with only one commercial tour, which happened to be the last of the season. Even though this destination is a long way from anywhere, paddling in peak season would surely mean bumping into others. However, end of season can mean end of settled weather!

On Route Supplies - there aren't any! Once you leave Queen Charlotte City, no more ice cream! Well, that's not quite true. Right down the bottom in Rose Harbour, a very nice family live in a gingerbread house. Patrick and Mary are one of a very few private

land owners inside the park. You will have to visit them to hear their story. We had heard a rumour of these guys back in Vancouver but weren't too sure where they lived. They run Gwaii Haanas Guest House and used to run sea kayak tours (the last I looked, their web page was down, but other contacts may work - P.O. Box 578-P, Rose Harbour, Gwaii Haanas, Haida Gwaii, BC, Canada VOT ISO. or email plemaire@island.net or ph (250) 624 8707 (March to October) or (250) 559 8638 (October to March). Why they don't do it now is *another* story. Anyway, we were running short on flour, so called in and they sold us some. If you planned ahead they would probably be able to restock many staple supplies - but be prepared to pay! They are not rip-off merchants - it's just that food doesn't come cheap when you are in the middle of nowhere.

This was the longest unsupported trip we had undertaken and had underestimated our flour and sugar needs - be warned!

Kayaks - a number of outfitters can rent kayaks, including Patrick and Mary. For those wanting the fully catered options, a range of fully catered/guided trips are available. Many of these, especially those of shorter duration include float plane drop off and pick up. There are companies based on the islands e.g. Queen Charlotte Adventures and out-of-townies e.g. Ecosummer Expeditions - an excellent guide being Morgan Davies.

Nature of trip - most of the guided trips are easily completed by beginner paddlers who have an understanding and experience of wilderness camping. Independent travelers have to be much more experienced in both technical and management skills. We took 18 paddling days to cover 387 km.

Further information - a most excellent web page for Gwaii Haanas, including sea kayaking at:

<http://www.harbour.com/parkscan/gwaii/>

Other sites also available, just do a search on the words Gwaii Haanas.

Wellington Sea Kayak Network Leadership Course

From: Grant Rochfort

Earlier this year the Wellington Sea Kayak Network put together a safety panel to discuss issues arising on network trips. As a result of these meetings several initiatives were actioned, the first of which was a guideline published in our newsletter and, I believe, the KASK newsletter, on the Pod culture. The second was producing laminated checklists for leaders and the third was to employ me to develop and run a weekend leadership course. I thought long and hard about the content of a course designed to develop leadership skills applicable for leading peers instead of leading commercial clients. I believe leading peers to be much more difficult as clients expect to be told exactly what to do.

The course was run over a Friday night with full days on Saturday and Sunday.

On Friday we covered the theory of Towing when and why, Navigation piloting, Trip planning, Channel crossing, Tides and currents, Localised weather effects, Why every trip needs leadership, Risk management and Peer feedback.

On Saturday we covered a wide range of rescue skills in the morning. Most of the participants fine-tuned their rescues. Communication during rescues was one area that was identified to be more important than previously thought. Tight manoeuvring skills needed to be improved.

Saturday afternoon we ran a small trip where each of the six leaders took a turn as leader in a fresh southerly in the Titahi Bay area. After each stint as leader a peer feedback round was held. The group found the peer feedback a useful system for learning from experience in a non-threatening way. The leaders experimented with positioning themselves in different places

within the group and the use of group ferry glides. Basically it was found useful for the leader to position themselves between the group and a threat and identify themselves as a border. This meant that by paddling where they felt safe the group automatically was well positioned. Also the leader could see what was going on in the group.

The whole of Sunday was taken up with scenario training. Each paddler led a short trip and at some stage during their stint I had organised for something to go wrong. Rather than going through every scenario I'd like to share with you some of the interesting findings from the day. Only about half of the group carried tow ropes. However, most agreed that in some situations a quick tow with an easily deployed tow rope could turn a scary scenario into one easily and quickly managed. One leader had two paddlers tow one seasick paddler in very strong winds and this worked very well. The seasick paddler who was in a Puffin had their head buried in their sprayskirt and had no balance problems in very rough seas.

The ferry glide is an essential group management skill for leaders. An unskilled paddler can be coached on when to head into the wind and when to paddle their course and in this way prevent being blown away from the group.

Leaders need to have a 'what if' mentality so that when the shit hits the fan they can delegate and organise quickly to arrest a deteriorating situation before it gets out of control.

Groups need to stick together especially in bad conditions so that they can communicate and change plans if necessary.

Our last scenario was a multiple capsize in windy condition in which one paddler let go of his boat. He ended up spending eight minutes in the water, the main reason being the general inability of the paddlers to manoeuvre their boats accurately and effectively in rough conditions. I may get shot for saying this but most sea kayakers do

not spend enough time working on their basic skills; to manoeuvre your boat effectively in rough conditions you must have an effective forward and reverse sweep stroke, a draw stroke and know how to rail your kayak. You must also have an idea of how the conditions will affect your kayak. Rudders become very limited in their usefulness at low speeds and in tight turns.

Leaders with experience and forethought are able to cope better because they are proactive rather than reactive. They half expect that things won't go perfectly to plan and therefore aren't surprised (which means they don't panic) when they don't go to plan. The more options you have both in skills and in planning the easier your life will be as leader when the wheels fall off the wagon.

Perfect practice makes perfect. Most of the group agreed that it was important to practise skills including rescues in gnarly conditions.

It's tough to lead your peers and the group came away with a real appreciation of this. They now have a bond which should mean next time one of them is leading a group they will get plenty of support from the other paddlers on this course.

I'd like to thank all the paddlers for working so hard throughout the weekend.

I'd like to thank Huey for providing horrible weather which made the learning so much more real.

I'd like to thank KASK, the Hillary Commission and Wellington, Porirua and Hutt City Councils for funding the course.

And a big thanks Beverley Burnett for your amazing organisational ability and for keeping us all sane by turning up with food when we were all wet, tired and hungry.

Grant Rochfort

LETTERSTO THE EDITOR

**Subject: Harrassment of
Topcat Fast Ferry.
From: Beverley Burnett**

Dear Paul

Regarding the incident involving the Topcat fast ferry reported in your October-November issue:

Unfortunately this is not an isolated incident. The Waterloo Quay and container wharf area are close to the recreational area of Lambton Harbour and Queens Wharf, so kayakers and boaties often wander over to have a look without realising that these areas are commercial shipping lanes.

Because Topcat is so large, the space between the two hulls must look quite inviting (you could fit a couple of houses under there). It is not apparent that the engine exhausts are between the two hulls. Anyone who paddles under the vessel while the engines are running has a good chance of ending up as toast! I saw a group of kayakers (rental) paddle under the Topcat while it was moored at the Overseas Terminal, undergoing trials. Recently a fizz boat was caught ducking in and out of the Topcat's hull while it was moored at its berth at Waterloo Quay. Just because the vessel is moored doesn't mean the engines won't start. Anyone who plays around under Topcat can expect to be arrested.

I spoke recently to Keith Pibus, Topcat CEO. He said that Topcat departures and arrivals are often delayed because kayakers, rowers, fizz boaters and other harbour users are around the berth in Waterloo Quay and in the shipping lane. The ship's radar does not cover the area between the two hulls, and the master cannot tell if anyone is under the boat while it is manoeuvring. Blowing the ship's horn doesn't seem to make people understand that they need to get out of the way. The Topcat company is working with the Harbour Master and his staff to help harbour users, including the kayak rental company, understand

that the area around Waterloo Quay (and also the container wharf) is a commercial shipping lane and recreational boaters should be keeping clear.

Mr. Pibus said that the Topcat masters are doing their best to coexist safely in the harbour with recreational users, and they are hoping that other harbour users will make an effort to reciprocate, particularly by keeping clear of the shipping lanes when the ferry is due.

We have invited Mr. Pibus to send one of the Topcat masters to speak at our next meeting in February, and tell us what it's like to be driving Topcat when there are kayakers in the harbour. Should be an interesting evening.

Regards, Beverley Burnett
Wellington RSKN

POSTSCRIPT

Unfortunately this is not an isolated incident. I saw a group of kayakers (rental) paddle under the Topcat while it was moored at the Overseas Terminal, undergoing trials. It is not generally known that the vessel's engine exhaust is between the two hulls. Anyone who paddles under the vessel while the engines are running has a good chance of ending up as toast. Recently a fizz boat was caught ducking in and out of the Topcat's hull while it was moored at its berth at Waterloo Quay. Just because the vessel is moored doesn't mean the engines won't start.

Kayaks for sale

For sale. Ex-hire fleet plastic sea kayaks, complete with paddle, buoyancy aid and spray deck. Kayak models are Puffin and Sea Quest. Price; \$850.00 to \$950.00.

Contact; Dave Watson, Marlborough Sounds Adventure Company, Phone 03 573 6078 or 0800 283 283.

Kayak for Sale

Dobbie double sea kayak, Kevlar, excellent condition, white hull and yellow deck, \$3550. Contact Pam and Derek Wakeling, Phone 07 3322198..

SOUTH ISLAND CIRCUMNAVIGATION

by Paul Caffyn

North American paddler Chris Duff left Picton on 5 December 1999 on a mission to paddle solo around the South Island. Chris's motivation for this trip stems from a four month and 3,000 mile cycle trip around the North and South islands in 1994, when he scouted the coastline for a long term goal of undertaking the South Island trip.

Chris's first kayak trip after he left the US Navy was an 8,000 miles sea and river trip on the eastern seaboard of North America from 1983 - 84. He paddled a Derek Hutchinson designed Umnak kayak, 15.5 feet long and the highlights of the trip can be found in a chapter titled 'The Lucky One' in the Will Nordby edited anthology 'Seekers of the Horizon.'

In 1986 Chris achieved the first solo circumnavigation of England, Scotland and Wales, and to complete a circumnavigation of Great Britain, he journeyed around Ireland in 1996. This latter trip is the subject of 'Celtic Tides,' a gem of a book written by Chris and published by St. Martins Press (USA) in 1999. Not yet available in NZ, the book is available from Amazon books or try ordering through a specialist bookshop.

Chris, aged 42, will paddle down the east coast and has planned a Fiordland food resupply drop with friends at Supper Cove in Dusky Sound on 7 February. He has allowed up to five months for the trip, and is looking forward to seeing some of New Zealand's marine fauna. Chris is paddling a Nigel Dennis designed and British built Romany Explorer, with 10" diameter fore and aft hatches and an 8" day hatch aft of the cockpit. The boat is without a rudder or skeg, so it will be interesting to see how Chris copes with South Island conditions.

Chris has a website for information on the trip, www.olyphen/cduff, and I will include progress updates in the newsletter.

GREENLAND CIRCUMNAVIGATION

From: Sverre Slotte

I mentioned that two Danes have paddled the northern coastline of Greenland. You can find info about their trip on the web at:

<http://www.fred.jacobi.com/>

Here is an excerpt::

During the short arctic summer, Danish polar explorer John Andersen and cinematographer Frederik Jacobi succeeded in kayaking the North Coast of Greenland. The route, that has never been traveled in summer before, is one of the ultimate challenges in arctic kayaking. Due to the rapidly changing seasons and the great amounts of packice, the team had to employ 'alpine style' and be prepared to travel in all possible conditions.

The 2 Danes set out from Station North, a small weather station in North East Greenland, on June 22 skiing on the sea ice and dragging 100 kilo heavy kayaks. With the arrival of spring, the ice was swamped by melting snow, and progress could only be made by walking through knee-deep water using waders. On July 14 they reached the world's northernmost point, Cape Morris Jesup and found ice-free waters 30 km further west. This is a very rare phenomenon on these latitudes, and it is probably the first time anybody has kayaked above 83 degrees north.

The expedition made rapid progress paddling down the coast, until it encountered heavy drift ice in the narrow Robeson Channel between Canada and Greenland. Paddling in 5 foot wide channels between ever colliding ice floes and strong tidal currents called for quick maneuvers and jumping between ice flakes. Further south in the Kennedy Channel, the sea opened up again, and arctic storms blew all the ice to Canada. This caused trouble later on, when the expedition had to pass the 100 km wide Humboldt glacier with no ice floes in sight. Faced with over 24 hours of non-stop paddling with no ice to rest on, they

decided to take a 350 km shortcut across the icecap instead and arrived in Qaanaaq after travelling 1800 km in 72 days from Station North.

With this expedition John Andersen is 200 km away from completing a full circumnavigation of Greenland in kayak after travelling in the Arctic for four decades. Frederik Jacobi, who had never kayaked before, describes the trip as a "great introduction to the Arctic" and looks forward to editing the many hours of film footage that eventually will be turned into a TV documentary on the history of northern Greenland seen through the eyes of modern explorers.

Subject: Re: Rob Roy

From: Alex Ferguson

Here's a URL you might be interested in. They have converted the entire text, including pictures, of MacGregor's 'A Thousand Miles in the Rob Roy Canoe on Rivers and Lakes of Europe' to HTML. Very entertaining:

<http://eldred.ne.mediaone.net/jm/TM.HTM#top>

JOHN MACGREGOR

For those not aware of John MacGregor, he is considered by many to be the founder of modern day canoeing and kayaking. Born in 1825, MacGregor graduated from Trinity College, Dublin, with a degree in mathematics. He travelled extensively through Europe, North Africa, Russia, Canada and Siberia before commissioning a clinker built kayak to be built in 1865. He used this kayak, christened 'Rob Roy', for an extended trip exploring the rivers and lakes of France, Germany, Belgium and Switzerland and then wrote the book 'A Thousand Miles in the Rob Roy Canoe on Rivers and Lakes of Europe' first published in 1866. Further adventures resulted in two more paddling titles, 'Rob Roy on the Baltic' (1867) and 'Rob Roy on the Jordan' (1869). The three titles are not easy to obtain although reprints of his first book occasionally surface in the secondhand bookshops. The August 1999 issue of 'Sea Kayaker' has an excellent background article on the life and books of this Victorian Era paddler.

Paul Caffyn

FORUM-SYMPOSIUMCALENDAR

COASTBUSTERS2000

Date: 17 - 19 March 2000

Venue: Puriri Motor Camp, Orewa

Theme: Practical sea kayaking with an emphasis on risk management, making& doing things, planning, going places, plus demonstrations in the pool.

There is also a full-day trip to lovely Motuora Island.

Info: Kerry Howe (09) 478 9952

or email: K.R.Howe@massey.ac.nz

or Vincent Maire (09) 424 2293

email: asknet@xtra.co.nz

website: <http://members.xoom.com/coastbusters/>

KASKY2CKAYAKFORUM

Date: Easter 2000, 21 - 24 April

Venue: South Brighton Domain, Christchurch

Info: Peter Sullivan (03) 388 3380

email: dsullivan@xtra.co.nz

'No Reason' The Roof of Britain Kayak Expedition

by Ian Wilson
& Sean Morley

(This is the continuation of this account from the first installment in Newsletter No. 83)

Day 3

Sunday 13th June 1999 (38 miles, eight and a half hours paddling)

Wilson entertained me with his snoring during the night. He had adapted to sleeping in a tent so quickly it was as if he had been doing it most of his life (which he has)! An occasional nudge was enough to allow me to sleep until the alarm woke me at 6.00am. It had been raining for much of the night. A real blessing in disguise as the wind had backed south westerly. Much more favourable for our first big crossing. The Point of Ardnamurchan is the most westerly point on the British mainland. Surprised? I too had always thought it was Cape Cornwall, but check it out - it's true! The rugged peninsular thrusts out into the Atlantic and has steadfastly refused to be tamed by modern man. Its rolling moorland hills and secluded lochans are a haven for wildlife including red deer, sea otters and golden eagles.

Sadly we saw none of these as we left Kilchoan under leaden skies. The massive cliffs obscured all but the next heather-clad headland. The sense of remoteness increased as we headed west then north, the swell increasing as we rounded Corrachadh Mor. This feeling of isolation was spoilt somewhat when Wilson spotted a set of traffic lights on the single track road leading to the lighthouse! Someone with a sense of humour must have come up with that idea. There were many times more seals than there were ever likely to be cars. A quick photo and a crunchy bar, there was nowhere to get out so we pushed on towards Sanna Point. Having rounded the headland we could see the Small Isles of Muck and Eigg as dark smudges on

the horizon. Visibility was poor, the wind increasing all the time. I was not looking forward to the crossing. Wilson, as usual, was up for it. I insisted on a pee stop then we headed out into the murk. I already had a bearing worked out for Port Mor (on the island of Muck) seven miles away. The wind was playing tricks on us. It had been south westerly first thing. Then it had veered southerly and now east sou'east. It was a solid Force 4 with gusts of 5 to 6. By confusing the residual south westerly swell it made for an uncomfortable paddle. We had gone about half way when I called Wilson over. I pointed out that if the wind stayed as it was or went even further to the east it would make the crossing from Muck to Eigg extremely difficult. We agreed to alter course and head for Galmisdale on Eigg, passing just a couple of miles east of Muck. I had wanted to spend some time on the Small Isles of the Inner Hebrides but the weather was not good and the last thing we wanted was to get stuck on the islands for several days. We decided to have lunch on Eigg and then head directly across to Point of Sleat on the Isle of Skye. The lyric of Robert Stevenson's 'The Skye Boat Song' came to me as we bounced on over the swell:

Mull was astern,
Rum on the port,
Eigg on the starboard bow

Well not quite but it was close enough. We were buzzed by a hundred or more Manx Shearwaters mid-channel. I became quite giddy as they circled erratically around us. The mighty black rock of An Sgurr on Eigg is one of the most distinctive features of the Inner Hebrides. It really does look like an upturned ships prow and must have made an excellent fortress for the Picts in the early years of the first millennium, guarding one of the main sea paths of the Celtic world. The shelter created by this rock wall has created a sub-tropical micro-climate where the islands flora, including rare ferns and palm trees flourish. We found no such shelter from the bitter south east wind and heavy rain that welcomed us as we arrived in the small harbour. We were just trying to

find a refuge on the shore when a call came across the water, "Do you fancy a cup of tea?" We turned to see a grey-haired, sun-tanned face smiling at us from the cockpit of a wooden yacht moored in the small bay. We warned him that we were soaking wet but he reassured us and welcomed us on board. Out of the wind and rain it was heaven in that boat. Hugh Eaglesfield was a fascinating character who spent much of his summers sailing the west coast of Scotland. Retired from Dounreay, the nuclear power station on the north coast, he would sometimes sail his yacht around from the east coast where he now resided, through the Pentland Firth and around Cape Wrath. This year he had used the Caledonian Canal. I had lots of questions for him and his knowledge and experience was invaluable. Meanwhile Wilson took over his galley and prepared our lunch. Once we had sat down to eat I could not get a word in edge-ways as Wilson and Hugh told tales of their exploits on the high seas. We could easily have stayed there all day. The wind was howling outside and there was no let up in the incessant rain. But Hugh, far from advising us not to go out in it, encouraged us to get back in our kayaks. Not because he wanted to get rid of us, he assured us, but because he too had heard the forecast and he knew we risked getting stuck if we delayed any longer. He had pressed the right buttons and we clambered back into our kayaks for the next crossing.

Thanking Hugh for his hospitality and promising to keep in touch we headed north, following the saw-tooth ridge of Beinn Bhuidhe until we could see Point of Sleat some eight miles away. We took a bearing straight for it. As we passed the northern tip of Eigg the massive bulk of Rum was revealed. A shifting window in the clouds allowed watery sunlight to filter through, foreshortening the distance to the island. The sunlight beckoned us but we resisted the temptation. It would have meant a really hard paddle from Rum to Skye later that day. I would have to explore that island another day. It was a major disappointment for me. I yearned to see white-tailed sea eagles

soaring above its four high pinnacles.

"I'll be back," I promised myself.

The Cuillin Mountains were obliterated by thick oily clouds. In my mind's eye I had pictured Skye, perhaps the most romantic of all the Hebridean islands. It had looked nothing like the real image that now presented itself. The steep low cliffs backed by forbidding hills under a gloomy sky. We entered the Sound of Sleat, a steep choppy sea making the going difficult despite the flooding tide. There was the promise of a bed at Ornsay, a friend of a friend - you know how it is, but that was too far. We had to settle for Armadale Bay where we knew there would be a phone and fresh water. There appeared to be lots of places to pitch a tent on the lush green grass. Closer inspection revealed it to be salt marsh riven with little gullies and ankle breaking pot holes. Eventually we found a solid piece of turf, just a few feet above the high water mark. I was conscious again of the imminent spring tides and we waited until we could be certain of pitching the tent without it being flooded. The morning tide would be higher again so we would have to be up bright and early. Phone calls made to the coastguard and respective partners, we were happy about the progress we had made in what could only be described as crap conditions. We used the toilet at the nearby boat yard. Cor! A sit down job! We were shattered by the days effort and it was tent, grub, bed in rapid succession.

Day 4

Monday 14th June 1999 (39 miles, ten hours paddling)

I did not sleep well, whether it was the rain squalls rattling the tent or the subliminal worry about the morning high tide, I'm not sure. I woke with a start just after 6.00am. Quickly looking outside, the sea had crept silently to within two feet of our tent. I shook Wilson, still deep in sleep.

"I think we had better get a move on!" As it was the tide came no closer and we were able to eat our porridge without getting wet. It had given us an early start though and by 8.00am we were paddling out of the bay into a

following sea. The wind was being funnelled up the Sound of Sleat and we made excellent progress towards the island of Ornsay, gliding through the shallows into the small port.

It was raining heavily as we trudged into the only shop, water dripping all over the bare floor boards. It was busy with local people getting their morning paper and bottle of milk. No-one batted an eyelid as we searched the shelves for something tasty. They must get visitors dressed in neoprene skirts all the time! As we discussed what we could supplement the days lunch with Wilson performed a neat juggling trick with a can of beans. As it slipped from his grasp he batted it across the room narrowly missing a display of carefully placed bone-china trinkets, probably worth a small fortune.

"I thought it was set up for bar billiards", he explained.

"Do you take credit card?" he asked the shopkeeper.

We left the shop in tears of laughter and found shelter from the downpour in a marquee erected on the harbour side. It was the remains of a very posh do; chandeliers, 'champers', the lot. We felt a little incongruous as we sat there, our warm bodies slowly steaming. When it was time to head off again we both felt the urge as soon as we stepped out into the cold. Having completed our business against the nearest hedge I was just adjusting myself when a very smart looking woman appeared from around the corner.

"Do you work here?" she asked in a very English accent.

"We were sheltering from the rain" I explained.

"You're in my garden" she exclaimed indignantly.

I did not bother to communicate any further.

I puzzled as to what job she thought we might have been performing. Perhaps all her servants dress in dry cags, waterproof trousers and wetsuit boots!

Our delay had been deliberate. We were about to enter Kyle Rhea, a fjord-like channel between Skye and the mainland. The tide would be flowing at up to 8 knots in the wrong direction

and would not be turning for another couple of hours at least. We decided to push on anyway - at least the wind was behind us. The channel narrowed until the steep wooded cliffs engulfed us. Dramatic falls of brown peaty water cascaded down hidden gullies as if the very mountains themselves were bleeding to death in some sacrificial act. A pair of Peregrine falcons shrieked obscenities as we passed underneath. The wind was more than a match for the tide so long as we hugged the shore. The six foot swell kicked up by the weather tide helped us surf past each rocky outcrop. It was stunning scenery despite the miserable weather and I revelled in being able to defeat the opposing tide. We reached the reverse eddy in the bay of Bagh Dunan Ruadh without a problem. The next section presented a bit more of a challenge though. The channel was just three hundred meters wide and we were reminded of the speed of the south flowing tide as a large Royal Fleet Auxiliary vessel came crashing down through the standing waves at high speed. It was an impressive sight and was evidence of the depth and volume of water rushing through the narrow gap. At first glance there appeared to be no way that we would be able to paddle against it. On closer inspection however it was apparent that if we hopped the eddies along the Skye shoreline we could just about do it. After a couple of careless break-ins where the tide swept us 180 degrees back the way we had come we got the angle right and with the speed of the Inuks we were able to paddle upstream against the flow. We were being watched, not just by the passengers and crew of the ferry working the narrow crossing, but also by a gang of seals fishing and playing in the eddy lines. As we finally made it into the reverse eddy by the lighthouse half way up the narrowest part of Kyle Rhea we came across a colony of a hundred or more seals of all shapes and sizes. The young pups had possibly never seen a kayak before and could not have been taught about the historical use of the craft in Arctic waters. They came to within a few feet before diving in a melodramatic flail of fins. One youngster had obviously watched too many 'Flipper' epi-

sodes as he came leaping past with carefree abandon. We just floated and admired their agility in the water. Any attempts to photograph them were hopeless as they deliberately dived at the critical moment.

We could have sat there all day but we were both getting hungry and we still had a few miles to do before lunch. Turning the corner into Kyle Akin the wind was on the nose again. It just goes to show that any wind forecast is almost irrelevant in these parts as the islands and glens just direct the air-flow down the line of least resistance. It was a hard thrash across to Kyle of Lochalsh, passing underneath the controversial Skye Bridge. I do not pretend to understand all the issues but I have some sympathy with the opposition to such a bridge. Anything that takes away what Jim Crummley describes as the 'Island-ness' of Skye is sad and I would be the first to agree that the many ferries that serve the Hebrides should be subsidised by central government to ensure their economic viability. However, unless national and local government policy has, as its aim, to keep the young Hebrideans on the islands by providing opportunity and prosperity the identity of this place will be lost forever.

The depopulation of the Highlands and Islands began when the Hanovarian army crushed the Jacobite uprising at the Battle of Culloden in 1745. The lairds and landlords, once dependent on their tenantry for military support found they were no longer able to raise arms. At the same time they realised there was more profit to be had in sheep and sporting estates. The relatively large populations in the glens and on the islands of Scotland's west coast, were forced off their crofts and given little option but to emigrate, mostly to Canada and America which they did in great numbers. The Clearances continued until the Crofter's Act of 1886 when a degree of security of tenure was introduced. Emigration caused by unemployment and the promise of 'a better life' in the cities continued through the twentieth century and only recently has the trend

been reversed. How many of the once empty crofts have been renovated by settlers from the city in search of 'the good life'? The interest in all things Celtic has done much to revive the economy of the Hebrides. Whether the building of a bridge will detract from the romantic ideal of the Isle of Skye is difficult to say. It has certainly made it more accessible to those lacking imagination.

Ferry gliding through Plock of Kyle we sought shelter in a gully to the north of the town. Wilson did his 'chef thing' whilst I tried to find the shortest route into town. I came across an old man collecting huge lumps of coal from the side of the railway line. Relics of a by-gone age they still provided good fuel, he explained. Kyle of Lochalsh is the terminus for one of the great rail journeys of Britain. With lunch eaten in warm sunshine in the undergrowth to escape the chill westerly wind, I volunteered to walk into town to buy some extra gas canisters. Wilson had purchased a gas conversion kit for his Trangia which was proving to be very efficient, boiling a kettle in about eight minutes. He was now able to estimate how much gas we would use for the whole trip and as this was the last town for many days it seemed sensible to get it now. I left Wilson sat in his boat to keep warm. Even so by the time I had returned from a successful shop he was shivering with cold.

We headed north. My original plan had been to go across to Scalpay and up through the Sound of Raasay to Iona. The Force 4-5 westerly put paid to that idea. Instead we crossed Loch Carron to the Crowlin Islands. The Skye peaks of Sgurr Mhairi, Beinn na Caillich and Bla Bheinn (926m) with the Cuillin massive behind were silhouetted in the late afternoon sun. Looking across to Wilson, the sunlight turning the spray from his paddles into showers of molten metal, I was moved by the enormity of what lay ahead. We were leaving the shelter of the Inner Hebrides, heading up into the Minch and beyond to the North Atlantic. Cape Wrath, the notorious 'turning point' seemed so far away, yet it was just one of many

major headlands that now lay between us and the relative sanctuary of the east coast.

Despite the strong side wind and the fact that Wilson had been unable to get warm since lunch, our pace was perfectly matched. We arrived in Applecross Bay in pleasant evening sunshine. Finding a nice spot next to a stream beside a couple of wooden boats resting quietly on the turf, we soon had our kit strewn everywhere. A very tame male Chaffinch entertained us as we fed him left-over crunchy bar. He sat happily on a deck hatch whilst we prepared his and our supper. As the sun sank over the Western Isles I was reluctant to get into the tent. Another big day to come, I was making the most of being warm and dry. This was why we were here, this was just the beginning.

Day 5

Tuesday 15th June 1999 (48 miles, nine and a half hours paddling)
I awoke early but dozed until 7.30am. The bay was calm with a light south westerly breeze just ruffling the surface. It had been a great campsite and for that reason perhaps we were in no hurry to leave. By 9.30am we were finally underway. I had a tendency to 'faff' which occasionally meant Ian was waiting for me to get my butt into my boat. It was a tail wind again. I made a silent prayer of thanks to whoever was responsible because we needed a big mileage day if we were to reach our goal of the Summer Isles. We surfed past the Royal Navy exercise area off Ru na Lachan. I could see someone watching us from the traffic control tower as we sped past at around seven knots. We were now due east of the northern tip of Rona with its gleaming white lighthouse. This narrow island ridge is high on my list for a return visit. Further west the broken ridge on the Trotternish peninsular of Skye dipped towards the Outer Hebrides, clearly visible on the western horizon. As we crossed Loch Torridon the three great mountains of Liathach, Beinn Eighe and Beinn Alligin dominated the view inland, cumulus cloud just caressing the high summits. I took a photo of Wilson; he had climbed most of the mountains in the Torridon

range but he had never seen them from this angle.

We were reminded of how far north we were by the first of many Great Skua. These powerful birds would glide low towards us, checking us out to see if we were edible, angling away at the last moment. We passed Red Point, our progress slowed by opposing tide. Without a break we pushed on to Longa Island, in the entrance to Loch Gairloch. Wilson was going well. His ability to surf his Inuk down the steep following seas whilst I floundered around in his wake, convinced me that my rear hatch was full of water. The large hatch cover was several years old and quite perished. I had decided it would do one more expedition but I was concerned it may be letting in water whenever it was rough. I inspected it at lunch time - the rear compartment was dry, so I had no excuse. Wilson was supremely fit and his confidence and familiarity with his kayak was increasing with each day. I would do well just to keep up with him.

There was no beach on the island but having paddled non-stop for three and a half hours we were both desperate for a break. We hauled the kayaks over large rounded boulders above the surge of the small swell. We ate lunch in the lee of a low cliff in the entrance to a cave the size of a double garage. A gang of seals we had accidentally disturbed on our way in came to see what we were up to. Wilson posed for more photos. His father ran a business importing vacuum bagged Saarlander sausages from Germany. These mini 'Bullets' really hit the spot when we were feeling hungry. During a long trip I have found that just eating high energy cereal bars leaves you craving something savoury. A couple of 'Bullets' were a convenient way of taking the edge off that desire.

Having scoffed half a packet of Chinese noodles, a Fruitini and half a plum loaf each we were ready to make more miles. The falling tide had exposed a forest of two-foot-tall kelp between the boats and the water. Sliding up to our waists between the boul-

ders and mindful of the many sea urchins, we heaved the reluctant boats back into the sea. By the time we had accomplished this we were hungry again!

Following the coast due north we approached Rubha Reigh. Huge caverns and countless sea stacks kept us fascinated, then under the lighthouse, seemingly one of the few that is occupied, Wilson pointing out the clothes fluttering on the washing line in the stiff breeze. We landed on the isolated beach of Camas Mor, the virginal sand and vertical stacks reminiscent of the golden beaches of Cornwall's north coast. A quick toilet break trying to not feel guilty about soiling somewhere so perfectly pristine, we made yet another big crossing to Greenstone point eight miles away. The flat headland of layered Torridonian sandstone, 'one of the oldest rocks in the world' Wilson informed me, seemed to take forever to reach. The western horizon was darkening with the approach of a warm front. The wind picked up as we crossed Loch Ewe. I doubt if the crew of the Royal Navy destroyer even saw us as they entered the loch behind us. By now it was raining and the wind was steadily increasing. The Summer Isles were another ten miles of open water away. We decided to head into Grunard Bay to the curiously named Mellon Udrigle which, according to my map, at least had a telephone. As we arrived Wilson spotted an 'old' lady walking her dog on the crescent of white sand. She might have been advanced in years but she was 'young' enough to paddle her own sea kayak out to the many islands that litter the bay. She warned us that unless we asked permission at the croft up on the hill, we were likely to be kicked off the grassed sand dunes that formed a most basic campsite. The concept of paying to pitch our tent was somewhat alien to us and I am still not sure what we actually got for our £2 - there were no toilets or fresh water provided, but we worked quickly and efficiently to get the tent up so that we could shelter from the steady drizzle.

Wilson was at it again. He went up to a very smart looking caravan to ask if

he could use their washing line to hang his wet kit on. Within minutes we were ensconced on their luxurious sofa consuming tea and ginger cake. Wilson warned me with a look that did not need reinforcing with words. He did not intend moving from that spot until he absolutely had to. I went off to phone the coastguard and Linda whilst he did what he does best.

I returned three quarters of an hour later to find him still chatting away to the very pleasant couple. Chris, it turned out, spent most of the year at Mellon. He had left in December last year returning again in February. His partner joined him whenever she could. Chris reassured us that it is lovely there when the sun shines and I am sure he is right. It was just a shame that right then the warm front had brought visibility down to less than five miles and it was not looking good for the next days paddle.

Before going to sleep Wilson and I chatted about the trip so far. I had come to the conclusion that it was not what you do that matters but who you do it with. During my journey around Devon and Cornwall I had become incredibly lonely. It took me by surprise and I did not really have a strategy to deal with it. I missed Linda to the point where I became desperate to finish the paddle, somewhat undermining the adventure. Before this trip I had mentally prepared myself for this and Wilson's company meant that I was really very content. Of course I still have the same feelings for Linda and was already looking forward to seeing her again, but although sometimes alone during a long crossing or because I felt like some space, I was never lonely. Wilson proved to be the perfect travelling companion and I was so pleased he had agreed to come with me.

Forecast for the next day? 3-4 sou'sou'westerly increasing 7-8 later!

(to be continued in n/l No.85)

TRIPREPORT

AJ in LUST!

Reprinted from the December 1999 Nelson Canoe Club newsletter, 'Bottoms Up.'

What do you call a sea kayak enthusiast and trip leader who'd rather take a water taxi than punch into 25 knot headwinds for a couple of hours? Sensible, maybe but in AJ's case we're talking lust! To set the record straight I'm talking about the annual Labour weekend seakayaking pilgrimage to the Marlborough Sounds for the usual hearty dose of sex, drugs and rock and roll.

This outing promised a twist or two including a visit by that well known seakayak identity the Phantom, there for the ritual stoning and burning of a jet ski and a formal attired dinner. Things are on the up and up. The venue was to be Pipi beach, tucked away on the western shore between Kenepuru and Pelorus sounds about 2-3 hours paddle from Havelock depending on the strength of the wind of course.

As usual paddlers arrived from all points of the compass, such is the lure of a Phantom sighting, after all it's not every day you see someone wearing their undies on the outside. However fate dictated that we all arrived on mass and the fight for tent sites began with plenty of relish. It wasn't long before we were all ship shape and the tall tales flowed like wine and visa versa. As the evening approached the formal attire emerged with everything from white ball gowns and pearls to a tux complete with cummerbund etc. There were a few variations on the standard theme with the odd bit of rayon and polyester to add a bit of class. The fire was lit and we all waited the arrival of the Phantom with bated breath.

It was all a bit of a fizzer. A murky caped figure appeared from out of the dark, incanted something marginally intelligent then he tossed a jet ski onto the fire, threw a handful of rocks at it, turned into the night and that was the

last we saw of him.

The jet ski put in even less of an appearance as it went up like a rocket. Whoosh - it was gone. The rest of the night was spent watching AJ tearing himself away from being in lust long enough to bum everything burnable on the beach.

The odd person added to the entertainment when they were caught unawares by the tide. Fun was had by one and all and this little outing AJ organizes each Labour weekend is fast becoming a cult classic. Infact you'd better pencil it in the diary for next year now. I wonder what we'll wear next time - CROSSDRESSING!?

BOOKREVIEW

Title: 'On Celtic Tides'

Subtitle: 'One Man's Journey Around Ireland by Sea Kayak'

Author: Chris Duff

Published: 1999

Publisher: St. Martin's Press, USA

ISBN: 0-312-20508-2

Content: Hardback, dustjacket, 269pp, sketch maps, central 29 pic b&w plate section.

Size: 16x24cm

Price: US\$23.95

Availability: Amazon books or order through your local specialist bookshop.

Reviewed by: Ken Winter

Reprinted with permission from December 1999 'Sea Kayaker.' Also reviewed by Ken Winter was 'Dance with Waves' by Brian Wilson which is the book referred to in comparison. This title has already been reviewed by John Kirk-Anderson, see newsletter No.81, p11.

In direct contrast is Chris Duff's book 'On Celtic Tides: One Man's journey Around Ireland by Sea Kayak,' which describes Duff's 13-week odyssey in the summer of 1996. Where Wilson was hounded by reporters and camera crews tracking his corporate-sponsored journey, Duff slips quietly along virtually unnoticed, save for a few flabbergasted coastal residents, who

universally adopt him with their own kind of sponsorship.

Duff eloquently recounts his solo circumnavigation of Ireland in this heart-warming book. In the process of telling his tale, Duff opens his soul to the reader, describing with arresting honesty the emotions that drove him to attempt a solo expedition that would curl the hair of the world's finest paddlers.

No stranger to monster expeditions either, Duff boasts an impressive resume of accomplishments, including an 8,000 mile trek around the eastern third of the United States and Canada in 1983, and the first successful solo of the entire British Isles in 1986.

You don't just get the feeling that Duff enjoyed this trip, but that he considered it a privilege-perhaps even an extended form of prayer. The story Duff tells is tender, sensitive, and deeply infused with spiritual undertones. 'It was no wonder I felt so alive, so open and willing to take the risk of being both physically and emotionally vulnerable,' Duff says, recounting a psychic connection he felt with the land of his Irish ancestors. For Duff, the trip, and the risk, is clearly a path to purposeful, passionate living.

Duff's informal writing style is incredibly effective, and perfectly suited to his sensibilities as a kayaker, revealing wisdom and a sense of reverence and wonder before the sea. The ocean, he explains, is a great teacher of humility, stripping away the non-essentials of ego, societal rank and the mundane demands of our workaday lives.

Ultimately, Duff admits that the trip was his greatest challenge - one he was not sure he could accomplish at times. Yet, while he faced his fears on the sea, he reveals that his greatest apprehensions come from the land. He recounts the crackling tension of Northern Ireland, a bombing at the Olympic Stadium in Atlanta, and the mysterious downing of a jetliner off the coast of Long Island - events that

seem to leave him feeling more vulnerable than did his greatest challenge on the water.

Duff's book is a must-read for anyone who has ever longed to make an extended voyage by kayak and be fundamentally changed by the experience.

Ken Winter is a reference librarian and freelance writer living in Charlottesville, NC, USA. On weekends he can be found paddling the coasts of North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia.

EXPEDITIONREPORT SOUTH ISLAND SOLO

Background and progress reports on Chris Duff's paddle around the mainland. Received from Sandy Ferguson, who compiled the information from the expedition website:
www.olyphen/cduff.

Paddling route - clock wise from Picton, down the east coast, around the south coast and back to Picton. Chris plans to spend the next four months paddling a seakayak 1600 miles around New Zealand's south island, alone. If the four month, 1600 mile expedition is successful he will be only the second person to solo the south island (Brian Roberts, an American working in NZ, was the first - Ed.).

New Zealand has the potential for being the most challenging of all his previous sea journeys. At New Zealand's southern latitudes there is a continuous band of uninterrupted ocean that encircles the globe. The 'Roaring Forties,' as these latitudes are referred to, are known for extreme winds and some of the roughest seas in the world. 'The west coast is certainly on my mind a lot, and will, without a doubt, be the most challenging part of the trip. The prevailing winds are south westerlies formed by low pressure systems out of the Antarctic. These winds breed huge swells that have nothing to stop them until they hit the shallow coastal waters of New Zealand.'

Chris' philosophy regarding the challenges of the trip are simple: "You go with the best equipment available, you hone your skills to their finest, and you stay focused. The rest is out of your control and the only thing you can do is sit and wait for the oceans to allow you to pass. The key to the circumnavigation will be a combination of carefully monitoring the weather and paddling (like crazy) in the relative calm between the frontal systems."

On 7 Feb 2000, Sam and Martha Baker, Gay Hunter and Mike Croxford, all local friends of Chris are planning to meet him at Supper Cove in Dusky Sound. They will be hiking in food and other essential supplies for the exposed run up the West Coast.

When asked why he chooses to do solo expeditions Chris explained, "There are very few times in our busy lives where we have the luxury of true solitude. I love the simple focus of these journeys; the physical challenges of the sea balanced by the inner calm which comes from living purposefully and so simply."

Given that the Irish trip was approximately 1200 miles and took a little over three months I have extended the original four month time frame for the New Zealand trip to a full five months. The New Zealand weather, winds and surf can be unpredictable at best so it is better to build in enough time to allow for delays.

Training has picked up a little but as always, I don't have the time to really train as I should. I am using a different boat design for this trip - a boat that is more maneuverable in surf and better in following sea than my old favorite a Nordkapp. I have had the "new" boat, a Romany Explorer, for 6 months now and have it out in some pretty wild water. It's a comfortable boat in terms of stability yet it is also responsive and doesn't lose its hull speed when the water gets rough. We have had some high winds and fairly rough water here in Port Angeles. When the winds are out of the west or the north-east there is a fair bit of fetch and the

waves can build to six footers - if you're lucky. The Straits of Juan De Fuca are not in any way as exposed as the waters of New Zealand but it does give me an opportunity to test the boat in marginally rough water. I feel absolutely confident in how it handles the bigger seas. As soon as I am in the boat and I feel the rise of a good swell beneath the hull, I know the certainty of the journey - the solidity of purpose and singular focus that have been the companions on previous trips.

Much of the focus of the past year has been toward this journey that I am about to become a part of. I say "a part of" because that is exactly what this journey offers and at the same time demands: a total immersion - physical, emotional, and spiritual into the joy, wonder, angst, fatigue and freedom that the sea offers. This is the motivation for picking up the paddle and sliding the boat into the water again. I hope to be updating this site as often as possible during the trip. I will not have a computer with me and the New Zealand coastline, even on the more populated east coast, is fairly remote. Updates will be made via libraries and folks I meet in the villages and towns along the route. I'll try my best to keep those interested in the trip informed as to my progress."

Dec 2nd: "It is Friday morning here and I am recovering (slowly) from the flight and a killer head cold. Thirty five hours on the go with about four hours of sleep. Good spirits though and fired up to begin the trip. I am in Te Anau, staying with Kevin and his wife. Spent all day yesterday unloading their container - getting at my boat. No rental cars available to get up to Picton but will bum a ride to Christchurch late tonight - arrive at 3am, sleep somewhere and rent a car in the morning. From there I'll drive to Greymouth, meet with Paul Caffyn for the charts that he said he would loan me and finally head for the put in at Picton.

Warmer weather than I had thought - 60's and overcast. High winds and heavy rain yesterday in Invercargill where we were unloading the container. Hopefully by the time I get

there in January the weather should be better, though it is an area known for inclement weather.

The boat survived the shipping with little more than a small spot of abrasion. I changed the back rest this morning and also the bungie cords that hold the spare paddles in place. Odd and exciting to think that just a few days ago the bungie cord and straps I bought in Swains now are being put to use here 7,000 miles away. Time is a blur and I am in that mode of preparation where fatigue is ignored and I am simply focused on what has to be done.

Already I am looking at Feb 7th - the date for my meeting Sam, Martha, Gay and Mike in Fiordland. Odd - I have to drive almost 1000 kms north, wait for weather and then start back south - I will be relieved to finally be sitting on the beach - tent and boat all organized and waiting. It is the simplicity of the journey - far from what I am feeling at this moment - that I so desire.

Dec 5th: The Millennial Expedition has started on schedule! Chris has arrived in Picton and sent a brief message. "The boat is loaded and sitting on the town beach ready to go."

Dec 12th: We have received the following shorthand message from Chris after his arrival in Kaikoura: "I had a fantastic day of paddling yesterday - brilliant weather - hot and no wind, lots of porpoises, a couple of sharks, some dolphins and loads of birds. Emerald green water that is much warmer than I had expected - makes it safer. Very beautiful coastline - looks so much like the Olympics but with thick bush coming right down to the water. Met a couple of great fishermen yesterday - retired buddies who go out for crayfish - they gave me a fish for my dinner. I am very settled into the trip - it has happened faster than usual - maybe because of the fine weather and warm water - so much less threatening. I paddled with a bunch of dolphins this morning - right under the boat, skimming the surface and jumping right in front of me. Fantastic! The coastline along this

shore looks very much like the Olympics - snow covered peaks and high mountains. Incredibly beautiful."

Earlier he encountered strong southeasterly headwinds and was forced to wait it out at the mouth of Tory Sound. Then a northerly gale hit and gave Chris a wild ride toward Cape Campbell. He had seen lots of blue sharks and basking sharks. "They tell me to watch the Blues - OK so I watch them, and I bet they are watching me".

His beach landings have been exciting, with three to four foot surf running along the entire coast. Today southerlies are predicted and he has to get off the beach before they kick in. The next stop is a sheltered beach 5 miles down the coast. Then it's a hundred miles to Christchurch where he will contact us again.

Note: Next day the weather forecast was rather ominous: *GALE WARNING IN FORCE* Southerly 15 knots becoming westerly 20 knots this evening. A change to southerly 40 knots spreading north early morning. Sea becoming very rough. Northeast swell 1 metre. Southerly swell rising to 2 metres tomorrow.

Dec 15th: A brief message from Chris today - he made 24 miles from Spy Glass Point just east of Kaikoura to Gore Bay, where he landed safely and waited out the storm next day. How he landed his heavily loaded kayak while huge surf caused by 12-foot swell which was crashing on the beach remains a mystery! We hope to get more details of his adventure soon.

Dec 18th: "I made it to Christchurch this morning and met two sea kayakers along the way - John and Bruce. They were as surprised to see me as I was to see them. It's nice to have a real bed to sleep in tonight and to have a chance to do some needed shopping for food as well getting some padding for the cockpit. I had a splendid day yesterday and a real test of both my endurance and the performance of the boat. A big surf was still running from the southerly that blew in three days ago - 8 to 10 footers that I didn't want to deal with. So, I stayed off shore for the

entire day - eight hours of steady paddling with a 15-knot wind and three foot following seas. A bit nerve racking, as I had to also keep an eye on the swell and make sure I stayed out of the boomer range. It's really a mental game of not allowing the mind to control the body - everything is telling you its time to quit, but to quit means you have to run the heavy surf so its a matter of really staying focused and somehow "going inside." From what I have learned of this coast and that which lies ahead there may be quite a bit of those long days. Its good to know that I can sit for that length of time in the boat and still have the concentration and the strength to work it through the surf at the end of the day. Yesterday, after the long paddle, I had to eventually come through some good-sized waves - five footers. I waited for a lull in the bigger sets and worked my way through the others. I got caught by a good one and broached but was able to turn the boat - very much to its credit - and finish the run in. What a fantastic feeling to finish such a long day with a successful surf run. The weather is changing again, now southwesterlies are predicted - very unusual weather for this time of year apparently. Normally it isn't this cool or as windy. I'll have a go at the north side of the Banks Peninsula tomorrow and find a place to lay over till the winds allow me to continue. I should be in Timaru in perhaps a week, weather permitting. I'll be in touch then. Cheers for now."

Dec 20th: We have received some great photographs of Chris after his arrival in Christchurch from John Kirk-Anderson. John also drew our attention to an article about Chris, "Danger dogs solo circuit", that appeared in the local news.

Chris has already left Christchurch and paddled about half way around the Banks Peninsula. He sent this message from to Akaroa: Very beautiful coast - all cliff and a few cobble beaches. Paddled with some Hector dolphins this morning - a dozen or so swimming with me for the better part of an hour. Marvelous to have them as companions. I am thinking of staying here in Akaroa for Christmas - not

sure yet, it will depend on the winds. A southerly is predicted for tomorrow and it is pointless to try going up against it.”

Dec 28th: Chris arrived in Timaru on the 27th and sent us the following message: I am very glad to have this past 100 miles behind me. I left Akaroa on the 22nd - big swell breaking on the cliffs and a fairly high off shore wind that was a bit threatening. Couldn't get under the protection of the cliffs because of the winds, yet didn't want to get too far off shore just in case the winds picked up - it's a long way to the next piece of land due south which happens to be the polar ice cap.

That afternoon I made it about four miles south of Birdlings Flat on the mainland - six hours of steady paddling in something other than perfect conditions. Had to land through the shore break and got rather pummeled - I seem to have an eye for choosing the wrong wave to ride in on. They never seem very big until they are right behind me and then it's a bit late to do anything but attempt to ride them until they send the boat into the inevitable broach. In this case- with the dumping surf - everything happens about four times as fast as it normally does and the only thing to do is tuck tight, lean into the wave and hope for the best. Of course I got knocked over right away. A lovely bath in the fast spin cycle. The water is much warmer than in Washington State and it doesn't have the same shock effect, thankfully. I did my roll just in time to look up at the next dumper - some things are universal and timing even in the southern hemisphere is everything. Needless to say as soon as the boat touched the gravel beach I was out of the cockpit and running for the bow grab-loop - not a very graceful way of ending the day but...

The next day's forecast was for southerlies - 30 knots by late morning. I left camp at 6am and landed five hours later at the mouth of the Rakaia River. Within fifteen minutes of landing the winds went from a 5 knot southerly to the predicted 30+ knots. All the fish-

ermen abandoned the gravel spit and with a roar were off on their four wheelers seeking shelter. I was off to crouching beside the boat in all of my Gortex and wind proof gear to sit out the gale. Having the VHF radio for weather reports has proven to be one of the most valuable pieces of gear on the trip.

Alas my faithful pink helmet is no longer part of my gear. I came through the surf two days ago - ran it rather well by somehow choosing the right wave - and jumped out as the next wave bore in. I was going for the bow loop in order to pull the boat clear of the wave but decided at the last instant to jump clear of the boat. The boat is like a log in the surf - the best thing you can do at times is to stay well clear of it. The wave picked the boat up and dropped it on top of my helmet which was on the rear deck. SPLAT... no more nice round helmet.

The obvious question is why was not the helmet on the head??? Stay tuned for an update as I think about that one. And yes I am buying a new helmet here in Timaru. This first leg of the trip feels as though it is almost purely a time of preparation for what is to come. I had thought that this leg might be a problem in terms of the winds - Spring conditions perhaps not quite being sorted out. As it turns out that is exactly what is happening. All the locals say that this year is the worst weather they have seen in many years- much colder and wetter by far than usual. There have been two days of new snow in the mountains- again each local say this is unheard of. I tend to be an optimist and look at all this inclement weather as great training... If I can still keep the spirits up in this stuff- and that doesn't seem to be a problem- then when and if summer gets here, I'm really going to be a happy camper/kayaker.”

Jan 5th:

Finally, after eight suspenseful days, Chris has contacted us: “I am in Dunedin for a couple of days - time to restock the boat with food, find a new helmet and prepare for the next stretch of the journey. I have had a real mixed bag of weather since I left Timaru. It

is a very cold summer here, according to all the locals. The other day 27cm of snow fell on a nearby mountain pass- the first snow there in 33 years. Although it is still much warmer than the northern hemisphere, it does at times make paddling a bit of a challenge. In comparison to the Irish trip the sea conditions are more technically difficult.

I have been at this trip for a little shy of one month and already I have been upside down twice; that didn't happen at all on the Irish trip. Both times they were a product of dumping surf, something that is a difficult thing to avoid. This latest little test of my rolling skills happened just south of Timaru - I had landed the previous night through four-footers that, due to a NE wind all night, had built to six-footers. It was no big deal really, I was almost expecting it, and so was well prepared - hat and glasses safely in the middle compartment, shirt off and life jacket on. I suppose a six-footer looks bigger than what it actually is when one is sitting at eye level with the sea. There is nothing really glamorous about getting tossed about like a bit of flotsam. The trick is to hit the roll clean and get the boat going before the next roller comes in with the same greeting.

I feel like this first 500 miles has been a bit of a test. The weather, in particular the winds, has been a bit of a hassle as I will explain. In addition to the winds and the unusually cool temperature, this section of the coastline isn't the highlight of the journey - much of the past 200 miles has been either long expanses of beach, or steep shingle cobbles. I knew this before setting out and planned on this first leg as being a sort of training ground for the rest of the trip. From here in Dunedin, to the Bluff area should be very beautiful and a reward for sticking with the focus of the last couple of hundred miles.

While I was in Kakanui four days ago, a southerly came through and blasted the area with 30 to 40 knots of winds. After 36 hours of standing up to the punishment, one of the poles in the tent finally let go. Quite a mess of

soaked gear from the heavy rains and also course sand scrambled into everything. Fortunately for me, I met some great folks, Paddy and Susan Dillon who took me in for two days, giving me rest, food and shelter. Paddy drove me an hour into Dunedin to find a repair sleeve for the tent. This is the kind of hospitality I am constantly finding along this coastline. These very same people who have helped out in time of my need are also the ones who say, "Wait till you get around the Catlins and the West Coast - you won't find nicer people anywhere else in the world." I can't imagine finer folks than those I have already met. I think this kind of travel- sea kayaking around small countries - has introduced me to the finer side of humanity.

Yesterday as I was paddling into Dunedin Harbour, heading for what I was told was a kayak/windsurfing shop on the water, a fellow walked down the boat ramp with a cup of tea calling out, "I hope you take milk and sugar in your tea." He had been informed that I was on my way into Dunedin by another fellow I had met the evening before on a beach. When the going gets tough out on the sea, as it has and inevitably will again, it is heartening to know how much support there is coming from family, folks back home in Port Angeles and complete strangers who hear of the trip through the newspapers and are out there looking for this Yank in a wee little boat.

From today, I have exactly one month to reach Supper Cove in Dusky Sound. I am well within the time and mileage range as long the weather cooperates. For the last month I have monitored the weather around the country with my VHF radio. Every morning at 5:30 I am greeted with "All stations, all stations this is maritime radio, maritime radio..." and then comes the detailed weather and wind reports which originate from the same report which is on this website. The report for Foveaux Strait has been, if nothing else, at least consistent - gale force winds out of the south or southwest - three to four meter swells.

I have learned a bit about the weather

and now understand what effect the low pressure systems coming up from the pole have on this tiny country. Unlike in the northern hemisphere - the high pressure systems spin counter clockwise and the lows clockwise. At the present moment, and indeed much of the summer so far, there have been a series of lows that roll up from the south and sit off the east coast, spinning their southerly winds and building the southerly swell. All the locals predict a finer Jan and Feb with the highs hopefully prevailing. Of course my hopes are all in agreement.

Regardless of what happens weatherwise, I feel very confident with the equipment I am relying upon and the skills that keep surfacing when they are needed. Whatever the winds and sea offer up, I believe if I move with caution and respect for the environment I am surrounded by, all will be fine. The key is keeping one eye on the weather and the other on safe landing spots. In between are the moments of sheer joy when the boat is escorted by Hector Dolphins, when gannets swoop by for a closer look, or when a sunset warms the moment of a sage landing and there is a pasta supper heating over the stove. All and all it is a fine life and one I am very fortunate to partake in.

Presidents Report from Phil Handford 18 January 2000

Welcome to all our new members as the KASK numbers continue to grow along with the distribution of mother of all sea kayak handbooks (LRB2). The Handbook will continue to be up graded. It was originally written by a wide cross section of members and still relies on all members to improve it. Any input, comments, updates or amendments should be forwarded to Paul Caffyn.

The "Bugger File" that regularly appears in the newsletter has become well established now. We can all benefit from these real life experiences when this did not go as planned. If you have been involved in or know of any sea kayaking incidents, where there

are lessons for others then please write it up. Cathye Haddock can help with this so do not hesitate to contact her. Cathye will be involved in a workshop on this area at the Coastbusters Sea Kayak Forum in Auckland on 17-19 March.

The Wellington network have run a successful sea kayaking leadership course which is being further developed and KASK will be aiming to make this type of package available to all networks. Cathye Haddock and Beverley Burnett have met with Water Safety NZ, (which KASK is a member of), and will be applying for WSNZ support for a number of projects to help facilitate safe sea kayaking in NZ.

KASK forum replies should be dug out and sent off to the Christchurch organisers so they can get a better idea of the numbers they will need to cater for. Easter is a 5 day weekend so make the most of it and enjoy the paddling Banks Peninsular has to offer.
Phil Handford

EQUIPMENT

Nik Naks
By Cathye Haddock

When the going gets tough, the tough go shopping!! I recently spent a great 2 months in North America, but it sure was tough going into the outdoor shops with a NZ dollar that was worth half the US dollar. So the solution was, to spend anyway!! All I could afford at REI (Portland, Oregon) were a few nik naks:

A whistle with a compass on one side and a thermometer (Fahrenheit) on the other!

Two signal mirrors, one solid glass type with a peep hole in the middle so you can aim at something (US\$7.50); the other an el cheapo bendy reflective metal one (US\$3.00)

A US\$1.00 water proof match container with metal flint!

At Mountain Equipment Co-op in Vancouver BC I bought:

A toothpick & scissor spring to replace those missing from Pete's Swiss

army knife (CA\$50cents each)

Paul Caffyn told us about the sea kayak and marine shops at Granville Island, Vancouver BC. This was a great day out but disastrous for the VISA account. We both bought:

- Paddle leash
- Paddle float
- Waist held sea kayak tow line
- Dry bags

All except the dry bags were made by North Water, a local company specialising in rescue and paddling equipment. The 50ft adjustable tow line doubles as a quick release throw bag and is mounted on a quick release belt. This is a smart piece of equipment and worked well for rescuing my niece in the lounge and even better in my recent practice on the water. The staff in the shop told us that inflatable paddle floats are out of vogue in Canada now. The new design is to minimise time in the water so the victim loses less body heat in the cold Canadian water. It is a thick piece of closed cell foam flotation enclosed in mesh and cordura with a pocket on one side for the paddle, and a clip to secure around the shaft. These floats have no leaks or finicky valves so are ready inflated on your deck. The paddle floats replace our home-made mesh bags with a couple of wine bladders in them. Much flasher!

NEWZEALAND- BUILT ALEUTIAN BAIDARKA

by Peter Oliver

If any readers are traditionalist gaff-rig, sweeping sheer-line, gaff-rig, wooden boat types like me then you will get a kick out of these Aleutian kayaks, the traditional sea-going Baidarka that I am building, and the Greenland style paddles that go with them.

I have built the first boat for my own use and the second one on a commission for my brother. I am an experienced woodworker but am having to learn a lot about kayaking as my experience is more limited there. My

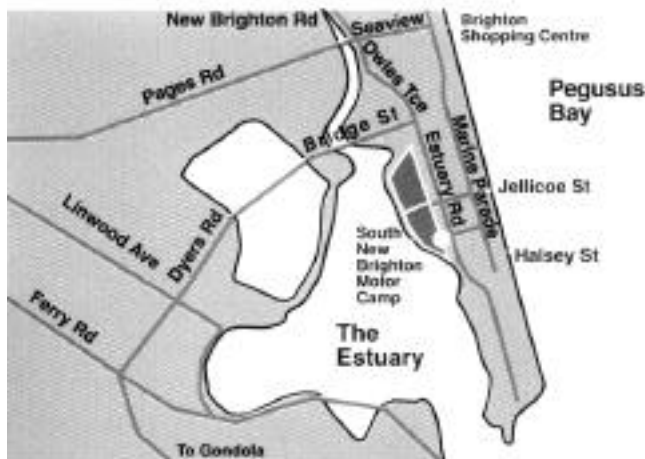
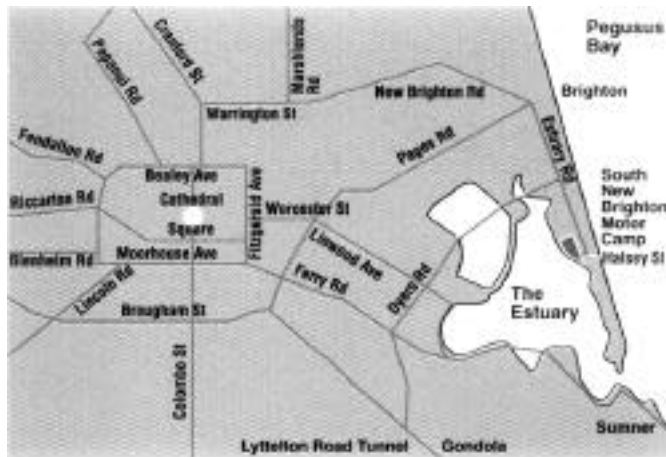
kayak is 17ft 5" (5.34 m), 21" wide (533 mm), and weighs about 21 Kg. It is tender in the water but is sleek and fast and moves through the water beautifully. The tenderness will be negated by improving my technique and the narrow hull and deep Vee give it excellent seaworthiness: as the seas gets rougher as it doesn't have to roll over every bit of wave. Although it is tight to get into I found out unexpectedly early on that I can wet-exit okay, luckily! And I have only been rolled by the ocean twice. The next trick is to learn to Eskimo-roll.

The frame-work is mostly built from Tanekaha - noted for its resilient strength- with ribs made from willow shoots. These are surprisingly strong. I tried steam-bending tanekaha ribs but haven't had much luck yet. After trying one or two other native timbers, I have settled on tanekaha for the paddles too. They are almost as light as carbon-fibre models and should be unbreakable with proper use. As Kerry Howe states in his recent article, they are great to use.

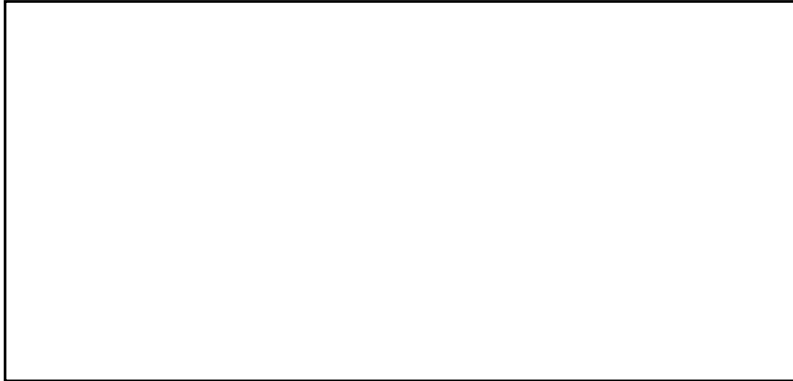
The skin is cotton duck canvas sealed with oil base paint. The evolved design of the baidarka has some interesting elements that 3000 yrs of experimentation have settled on. The hull flexes in a sea-way and this aids its progress through the water. The split bow has a very fine entry into the water with a flaring bow-plate above to give the bow lift in waves. The truncated stern appears to pick up the following sea and get quite a forward momentum from the waves pushing the boat through the water.

What I notice when paddling into the wind next to a fibre-glass hull is that where the fibre-glass hull is lifting and banging down my baidarka slices through the chop almost noiselessly, just like a fine hulled wooden sailboat. Really pleasurable. I hope to be able to make more of these boats now that I have ironed out the bugs and I welcome any enquires to talk about these boats and paddles and the building of them.

Peter Oliver, Lichenstein Rd, RD4, Rotorua. Ph: 07 362-4321
email: MagicChisel@HOTMAIL.com



MAILED TO



If undelivered, please return to: Helen Woodward, 82 Hutcheson St. Blenheim.

