

No. 96 December 2001 - January 2002

THE SEA CANOEIST NEWSLETTER



AJ's secret weapon for winning the kayak leg of the Coast to Coast.

**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.

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KASK BADGES

Canterbury paddler, the late Rod Banks, crafted 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. And the badge is appealing to the eye. Size is 23mm long by 11mm high.

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

LRB2 - KASK HANDBOOK

For a copy of this mother of all sea kayaking handbooks, contact KASK Treasurer:

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COST:

New members: gratis
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Make cheques out to KASK (NZ)Inc
Trade enquiries also to Max Grant.

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

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EDITORIAL

Abel Tasman National Park

The Abel Tasman National Park has featured several times in media already this year, including a two page article in 'The Press' (2 February). Media releases range from: 'visitors may have to book campsites after a record busy season', to a proposal to introduce concession fees for commercial boat operators which could include all boat users. The feature article in 'The Press,' titled 'Blundering into paradise,' highlights beaches overcrowded with kayaks, and the lack of control or management of the park's magnificent beaches which lie outside the park's boundaries. The beaches are under the management of the Tasman District Council, 'with such a hands-off attitude it would make even an ardent free-marketeer blush. That, it is clear, is central to the woes facing the park - the free for all that has inevitably resulted from businesses realising that this priceless piece of New Zealand is there for the taking.' 'And the taking is remarkable easy. Not only is it easy to get people to get there, but provided you meet the maritime rules and pay a harbour licence fee of \$200 to \$600 to the TDC, nobody is going to tell you what to do, let along try to stop you doing it.'

Currently, with nearly 200,000 visitors per year, Abel Tasman is New Zealand's smallest national park but the most intensively used. A photo accompanying 'The Press' feature shows at least 17 double rental kayaks on one beach!

People tell me that although the remote experience for myself is buggered in the ATNP, for visitors from densely populated European nations whose idea of a beach is a stinking mud flat, the sight of other kayaks on a golden, non-polluted beach is not a problem. So what. It is the Kiwi paddler whose chance to experience a remote pristine kayaking experience in a paddler friendly environment has disappeared. And who do I blame; the commercial rental and guiding operators whose ultimate aim is to make money with no thought to the degradation of the pristine experience for

Kiwi paddlers, and the two so called regulatory bodies, DoC and TDC, who continued to grant concessions to kayak operators without regulating bums on seats, because there is money to be made from the concessions.

What can be done? DoC has spent \$1 million to upgrade the parks's toilets. The proposed booking system for campsites would limit numbers but this apparently could be years instead of months away according to the media release. A foreshore DoC management plan struck strong opposition from foreshore land owners and commercial boat operators. Only hope I can see is a comment from the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment, Morgan Williams, who has been taking an interest in the debate for several years now. In 'The Press' feature, he is quoted:

"If you stuff the quality of the experience, you then see the degrading of the environment quality," he warns. "And gone is the asset." And he is quoted as saying, 'if there's no firm progress in the next few months, he will launch his own detailed investigation to report directly to Parliament.'

Thailand

From 19 December 2001 to 26 January 2002, Conrad Edwards and I paddled some 1000km from near Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia to Phuket in Thailand. Sprawling grey, mudflats, and long stretches of mangrove-lined coast with tiny fishing kampongs on tidal estuaries, dominate my memories to the Thai border, where we at last hit the magic marine karst country. An abnormally strong NE monsoon season made life interesting during some to the island hopping crossings, with strong offshore winds. The towering limestone cliffs of the Gulf of Krabi provided magic paddling, around the islands and into caves or hongs that occasionally led into massive collapsed dolines. We made Phuket with a week to spare and ended up paddling around the island, gross tourist culture on the west coast and real life on the east side.

How is that for an excuse for a late newsletter?

NAVIGATION

REFLECTIONS ON SAFETY

By Peter Sommerhalder.

(reprinted from the 'Auckland Canoe Club Newsletter', February 2002.)

With summer approaching we no doubt will spend time paddling, sharing the beaches and the harbours with an increasing number of other sea kayakers and vessels of all sizes. Colin Quilter remarked some years ago, when approaching another paddler, you made a slight detour shouting a friendly "Good Day" and then carried on with a good feeling inside. Are we still doing this? Or are there now too many other paddlers to greet each one? Well, for these reasons we should reflect on some basic rules and find out what other vessels are trying to tell us.

Buoyage

Channels leading into harbours are usually marked with buoys or beacons. A buoy is a floating mark, secured to the seabed with a mooring chain. A beacon is permanently fixed upon the seabed. The significance of a mark is revealed by its colour, shape, topmark and light. New Zealand has adopted an international system (Region A) allowing skippers from around the world to follow the same rules. Seakayakers should know the basics of some of these rules, to understand where the large vessels are travelling and therefore how to keep out of their way.

The 'buoyage direction' is either that direction when approaching a harbour, estuary or waterway from seaward; or when travelling clockwise around the North Island or clockwise around the South Island. When travelling in the buoyage direction, the markers are passed on their correct sides. When travelling in the opposite direction, i.e. against the buoyage direction, the side to pass is reversed.

Port-hand markers

To be passed on your port (= left) side when travelling with the buoyage direction.

Colour: Red.

Shape: Can.

Topmark (if any): A red can.

Light (if any): Red.

Starboard-hand markers

To be passed on your starboard (= right) side when travelling with the buoyage direction.

Colour: Green.

Shape: Conical.

Topmark (if any): A green cone.

Light (if any): Green.

Summary

When approaching a harbour, the red, can shaped marker should be on my port (left) side. The green, conical shaped marker should be on my starboard (right) side. As a seakayaker I now know where the large vessels will be coming from, and I can keep well out of their way.

(If you have trouble remembering Port = Red = Left, try remembering this: Port is the Red stuff Left in the bottle! Ed. ACC n/l)

Who gives way?

Failing to obey the International and New Zealand Collision Regulations by vessels, regardless of size, is committing a crime.

A simple rule to remember is: Power gives way to sail; sail gives way to oar (or paddle). Therefore the paddler has always the right of way. Wrong! My advice to all paddlers is: Give way always. It doesn't make sense to insist on the right of way and get run over. Usually it is the kayaker who will not survive.

Risk of collision

On sighting another vessel, my first consideration must be: Are we going to collide? To determine whether I am on a collision course, I watch the other vessel across a fitting on my foredeck (or read the compass bearing if a compass is fitted). If after a short time, keeping a steady course, the other vessel (also moving) is still in line with this fitting, there is a risk of a

collision. Unless action is taken, the other vessel will hit the fitting on my foredeck.

As seakayakers we realise that faster and larger boats have difficulties spotting us. Therefore it is our duty to make a course change and indicate early which way we are going. Always aim to cross behind the other vessel, rather than trying a quick dash across its bow. In a head-on situation, each vessel shall change course to starboard. In other words keep right, as if driving on American roads.

Signalling your Manoeuvre

Tugs pulling large container ships in or out of their berth have their minds on their tasks without wanting to be 'disturbed' by kayakers buzzing around. These manoeuvres are accompanied by blasts of the ship's horn (or whistle). These blasts are not to scare the kayakers away. They are signals to let other vessels know which way these large container ships are going to move and turn:

- One blast – I am altering my course to starboard

- Two blasts – I am altering my course to port

- Three blasts – I am going to move backwards

- Five or more short blasts – Now you have offended the container ship and its tugs. The captain is concerned and wants you to b.... off (get out of the way quick).

Many seakayakers also are yachties and the rules mentioned here are common sense. As users of the harbours and channels, where other boats and large vessels travel, we should familiarise ourselves with these basic rules. Coastguard and some Polytechs are offering Day Skipper Courses which I recommend to any seakayaker. Two books make essential reading: 'Safety in Small Craft' by Mike Scanlan, and the 'KASK Handbook' by Paul Caffyn (the handbook includes an 11 page chapter on navigation, which includes two pages on collision avoidance.)

NEW ZEALAND TRIP REPORT

Waihi Beach to Auckland January 2002

by Kerry Howe

Having sea kayaked from Auckland to North Cape I had run out of coastline, so it was time to head south. For logistical and meteorological reasons I decided to start at Waihi Beach and paddle back to Auckland around the Coromandel Peninsula. As ever, my faithful son James took me to the drop off point at Waihi Beach and I sneaked out from the sheltered northern corner through a low afternoon surf. The long range weather forecast looked OK but for the immediate future a tropical depression well out to the northeast of Northland was dragging a very strong northwesterly flow over the region. I'd have to keep an eye on that depression in case it swung back towards New Zealand. Being a weather forecast freak I had with me both an HF and a VHF radio for regular marine weather reports. Also I had arranged for cell phone text contact, when it was possible, with Clive Hookham who consulted his long range weather maps on the internet.

The cliffs to the north of Waihi Beach gave me some shelter from the strong north westerly winds, though keeping close to rocks meant that I had to paddle into a rather nasty 1-2 metre northerly swell and cope with its backwash. I learned the meaning of the term clapotis. Then the wind swung round to the north and it was an unpleasant struggle along an increasingly hostile coastline as the wind intensified and the seas became rougher. Heavy overcast skies and squalls made the afternoon dismal and worrying. Mayor Island was a gloomy presence on the eastern horizon. After a few hours I decided to call it quits for the day and looked for a landing place and campsite. Eventually I got ashore unscathed through a dumping surf near Mataora Bay. It was a sandy beach up to highwater

mark then it turned to boulders and then to steep bushy hillside. I was lucky to find a tiny and not very level spot for my tent beneath a pohutukawa tree. My alpine-rated MacPac Minaret (which I've never pitched much above sea-level) came into its own in such a tenuous location, though I did spend most of the night sliding off my new Thermarest Guidelite mattress. It rained throughout the night and the surf, only metres away at high tide, was deafening. I did briefly wonder if it was all worth it as I contemplated the prospect of my usual 5.33am wake up call courtesy of Taupo Maritime Radio's HF coastal weather bulletin, a wet tent pack up, and getting the kayak back over the boulders and out through the surf.

But mornings are always new beginnings. It dawned fine, though it was still windy. I created a driftwood ramp to ease the kayak down to the sand, and managed the surf OK. Soon I reached sleepy Whiritoa and then enjoyed the beautiful and sheltered cliff coastline through to Whangamata. I topped up my water at the surf club and then spent a wonderful day cruising past the most beautiful beaches imaginable along the Onemana and Opoutere coastlines. I stopped several times for swims and snacks and on cue caught a kahawai for lunch. And then my luck ran out. Just as I began to think about finding a campsite in the late afternoon, the coastline suddenly turned rugged and unfriendly again and I knew that I would have to paddle a lot further until I was beyond the civilised madness of the resort region of Pauanui/Tairua. I toyed with going out to camp on Slipper Island but decided against it in case it was a struggle to get back to the coast against the wind in the morning.

During my crossing of Pauanui Bay there was an incessant dentist drill noise of jet-skis, even though I kept well out to sea. I contemplated how people who owned million dollar properties had certainly not purchased summer tranquillity. It was a relief to get around Tairua hill, even though I now turned into a freshening evening head wind. I skirted Te Karo and Otara Bays, full of people. I had heard of

camping possibilities at ominously named Sailor's Grave, but then I spotted what looked like a nice bay far in the distance, marked as Neaves Bay on the chart, just inside Te Ororoa point, and well beyond road access. It took forever to get there against the wind and I increasingly rued not having stopped much earlier in the day to camp at those idyllic bays further south. I was not happy to find that Neaves Bay was just a jumble of rocks and near vertical hillside.

My last hope before sunset lay around the point at Boat Harbour which thankfully proved an idyllic spot. It is a tiny inlet, without road access, with nice flat grass and bush right on the beach. The evening birdsong was wonderful. I forgot my tired body - I had paddled for nine hours that day - and very happily set up camp in the sunset. Several keelers swung at anchor. Their white masthead mooring lights soon traced silvery trails over the darkening waters.

The next morning was again fine and breezy. The sunrise over the distant Aldermen Islands was stunning. I passed Hot Water Beach, and a sequence of amazing cliffscapes before arriving at Hahei. A snotty 14 year-old shop assistant at the local dairy told me that it was 'not policy' to fill my water bottles, even after I'd spent a small fortune on an outrageously priced ice cream and coke. I eventually got water from a greasy tap at the local garage. Hahei Beach was at its very best, its colours and forms and gin clear waters looking positively tropical. But it was also seething with humanity. I went on to Cathedral Cove but did not land because the beach was also packed with tourists.

In a wonderfully decisive moment, I set out directly across Mercury Bay, avoiding the long way round via Cooks Beach and Whitianga. At the end of the long open crossing there was the reward of another series of perfect and isolated bays. I had fresh water wash from a waterfall that comes down a cliff-face directly into the sea. But it was not without some difficulty. The water falls into about 4 feet of seawater even at low tide. So you have moor the

kayak, and scramble around the dry rocks to the side of the waterfall, reach over and splash water onto yourself since the rocks upon which the water falls are too steep and slippery to allow for actual immersion. Even so, I fell off into the sea and had to start again. I set up camp at the next bay, under the only no-camping sign I saw on the whole trip. Overnight rain was forecast, but none came.

The morning was glorious again. I rounded the Opito Bay peninsula and enjoyed the spectacular scenery of the Mercury Islands. They seemed so close, their distance foreshortened by the dawn light. Further on, I landed through surf at Matarangi and was kindly supplied with water from owners of a rather nice beach-front mansion.

Almost 35 years ago I had been chased by a shark while long board surfing on the harbour bar at Whangapoua, at the end of the Matarangi peninsula. The son, or grandson, was now there instead - a big black brute that I startled in the clear water. It circled round to the side and I lost sight of it when it continued around behind me. I landed at delightful New Chums for a swim and lunch. But within minutes the blue sky clouded over. It became gloomy, and windy again. I did another open water leg across Kennedy Bay, and had a few concerns about the wind funnelling out through its steep flanks. The mountain skyline beyond the Bay was spectacularly rugged, the sky stormy black. I was glad finally to reach Waikawau, where I planned to stay at the DoC campsite. As I dragged my kayak up the beach on its folding trolley, an elderly woman expressed absolute delight at the novel prospect of what she thought were permanently attached wheels - "Why," she said, "that means that you just keep paddling when you reach the shore and you can go right up onto the beach..." "That's right!" I replied.

The weather forecast was not good. The tropical depression was moving further to the east, but deepening rapidly and dragging a front belatedly after it. This was expected to pass over the region that night with heavy rain, to be followed by gale force

sou'westerlies. I unhappily contemplated the prospect of a day confined to the camp. It was a nice enough place, except that everyone had a four-wheel drive and a boat, and the huge, rambling camp ground resembled a busy traffic intersection. It also had a single cold-water shower in the open and you were not allowed to use soap. Showering in kayak clothes is not a lot of fun.

But there was little rain that night and the wind was not too bad in the morning. I set off in reasonable conditions but in turning into Port Charles a west/nor'west wind provided a bit of a challenge. I went directly across the inlet and lunched in a beautiful sheltered cove on the southern side of Stony Bay. I should have stayed in Stony Bay for the night, since the wind was now rather serious, but I had planned to get to Fletchers Bay so off I went. The end of the Coromandel Peninsula is a notoriously windy spot. As I neared Sugar Loaf Rocks the wind was swirling about in all directions and I had to hang a few braces. Once I got to the Pinnacles at least the wind was coming from a single direction - the west- and it was a head slog for the remaining single nautical mile to Fletchers Bay. That took me over an hour. Sometimes during the biggest gusts I went backwards. But I was committed.

Even if I had wanted to, I could not have turned around since I would have been flipped over by the winds, now gusting to 35 knots or more. It was wonderful to reach Fletchers, find a shady and sheltered DoC campsite close to the beach, and have a proper, enclosed, soap-friendly shower. The weather forecast was for continued high winds for the next day so I luxuriated in the prospect of a day off. In retrospect, I was glad I had met the day's windy challenge.

Since returning from this trip, a good friend in the United States sent me a news clipping which summed it up perfectly: 'The very nature of sea-kayaking big seas involves some level of risk. If you are operating near the outside limits of your capabilities, you are going to be taking some risks.

You're likely to find yourself in a jam from time to time. You will have to react, figure things out, make something work. And that's when the good stuff begins to happen. Those are the stories you tell later. If you aren't near that sometimes uncomfortable threshold, you're probably not learning anything about yourself.'

To fill in the my day off, I climbed a 1900ft hill behind Fletchers and had a magnificent view down into Stony Bay/Port Charles, around to Great Barrier, Little Barrier, and across to the high points of the 'mainland' in the Cape Rodney area. Everywhere the sea was a mass of wind-whipped foam. Inland, and above me, forest covered Moehau lay hidden behind dense cloud.

The tropical depression finally moved far to the east over night, and a light southerly was forecast. That meant that I still had a head wind coming back down the peninsula, but its sting had gone. The western coastline is scenically much tamer than the eastern one. I put in a long eight hour day. I was particularly impressed with the beauty of the Motukawao Islands just out to the west. To paraphrase Mark Twain, they were the prettiest group of islands that ever sailed the seas. I saw two more sharks off Coleville Bay. I ended up at the best campsite of the entire trip in an isolated cove in Ngohitanu Bay, south of Papaaroha. It was a perfect evening, but I was a bit nervous about the next day's 13 nautical mile crossing of the Firth of Thames to Waiheke.

In the event, the early morning crossing went well. The sea was calm and there was no wind. Two disinterested dolphins passed me in the middle. In four hours, and well before lunch, I made Ruthe Passage and rewarded myself with a swim and an extra slice of salami at the beach at the tip of Ponui Island. But then a westerly head wind got up and it took me almost as long again to claw my way along the coastline of Waiheke to the DoC camp ground at Rocky Bay. I arrived in a bad mood which was not improved by a knowledgeable sounding elderly woman pointing out the track to the

camp ground. It was a narrow, twisting path. I had to heave, lift and bash the kayak along it, leaving a trail of damaged vegetation - and this in a replanted nature reserve/bird sanctuary. Eventually I burst through the bushes into a delightful, flax enclosed, mown grass camping area, complete with water tap, only to see a big straight road that I could so easily have used from the beach. I now have a policy of avoiding elderly women when I make landfall. From Rocky Bay I could easily see the Sky Tower. The Auckland city skyline glowed like fire after sunset. The beast has some beauty.

The next day in perfect conditions I completed the trip from Waiheke via Motutapu and the Rangitoto lighthouse to my home at Rothesay Bay. The sea sparkled all the way, reflecting my own feelings at journey's end. I'm going back one day to seakayak around Great Barrier, and to climb Moehau.

Total distance covered was 142 nautical miles, in 51 paddling hours. For support and information I thank James Howe, Clive Hookham, Rebecca Heap, Ryan Whittle, Wally Gilmour, and Vincent Maire's 'Sea Kayaker's Guide to New Zealand's Upper North Island.'
Kerry Howe

FOR SALE

I would like to advertise a used kayak for sale in the next newsletter. Hopefully someone out there needs a good used double kayak

Double folding kayak and accessories. Pouch RZ-85. Fits in two large bags, and assembles in 30 minutes. Asking \$1800.

Thanks
Michael Camilleri (KASK member)
MichaelCamilleri@branz.co.nz

TECHNICAL

Ooh Aah! BIG MOTION IN THE OCEAN by Richard Birdsey

(Reprinted with permission from the 'NSW Sea Kayaker' No.47.)

Intrigued by an article on rogue waves in a recent 'New Scientist' magazine I found out a bit more about the myths, science and reality of this awesome ocean phenomenon. Stories of giant waves taking ships and their crews have been around since ancient times. Many of these legends are being revealed as fact as modern oceanography, marine engineering and complex computer models build up a more realistic picture of these mountains of water.

We often hear about the results (sometimes tragic) of rogue or 'freak' natural events but what exactly is a 'rogue' wave?

'Rogue' is a generic term given to an unusually large wave appearing in a smaller set of waves. Trip reports often talk about the biggest wave (or set of waves) seen that day arriving during a beach launch or exit, damaging boats and threatening life and limb. These waves could be called 'rogues'. However, the waves I'm talking about are truly monsters. Wave heights (trough to crest) of 17 metres to heights over 30 metres (11 storeys high) are common. When you consider these monster waves may be interspersed among a background of 5 to 7 metre high waves you can start to understand the forces at play. Mariners have accurately measured a few rogue waves, usually by watch officers triangulating wave crests against parts of the vessel. Marine radar, satellite instruments and wave buoys now provide most of the information on rogue waves.

Some of the characteristics of rogue waves are:

- they are greater than twice the size of the 'significant wave

- heights' of surrounding waves,
- they are often deep water waves,
- they may be associated with a very deep trough and other uncommonly large waves moving in a set or 'train',
- they often come unexpectedly from directions other than prevailing wind and waves,
- they probably last only a short time or distance (minutes or a few hundred metres), and
- they are unpredictable - though they do occur more frequently in some places in the world.

SO HOW DO THESE MONSTER WAVES FORM?

There are a number of factors that generate waves. Underwater seismic movements and other natural phenomena can generate huge waves (called tsunamis), but most waves are generated by wind. Atmospheric variations in air pressure force air down, displacing surface water. As the wind moves laterally across the surface of the water along a pressure gradient it drags or pushes the water with it. These two air movements, vertical and lateral (or 'shearing') dump energy into the water.

The particles of water don't actually move much, but the wind-generated energy is transmitted through the water, sometimes at many hundreds of kilometres an hour. As wave height is determined by wind speed, wind duration and fetch (the distance the wind blows uninterrupted over the sea surface) it would be logical to assume that a big wind blowing constantly over a big stretch of water (say the Pacific Ocean) would produce monster waves.

Generally in open waters a wave 1.86 times the significant wave height can be expected every 1,000 waves or so. But any resulting big waves would be toppled by winds at about 70 knots and 100 knots of wind would flatten them, so a train of rogue-sized waves couldn't form. Wave physics is a vastly complex area and I'm not going to weigh into it here. Some different types of waves are outlined below:

- Significant wave heights - the average height of the highest one-

third of waves measured by an observer over a period of time.

- Deep-water waves (or 'short waves') - waves whose length (measured from crest-to-crest or trough-to-trough) is less than the water depth. These waves include wind-generated waves travelling across the open ocean.

- Shallow-water waves (or 'long waves') - where the length of the wave is greater than the depth of the water. These are wind generated waves that move into shallow coastal waters, tsunamis, and tide waves generated by the interaction of the sun and moons' gravitational fields.

- Capillary waves - rounded and V-shaped wind-generated waves smoothed out and destroyed by the ocean's surface tension. They have wavelengths less than 11.7 cm.

- Sea waves - ocean waves driven to their maximum height by the wind. As the waves move away from the area they are generated in they smooth out into longer ('swell') waves.

- Tsunamis - waves generated by underwater seismic movements and shallow-water waves with wave lengths of 160 km or more. Comes from a Japanese word *tsu* meaning 'harbour' and *nami* meaning 'wave'. They travel at 500 km/h and are vastly destructive when they come ashore.

The answer probably lies in a complex interaction between wind, current and topography of the sea-bed. Mechanisms that could generate rogue waves include:

- Constructive interference. Waves move from their point of generation in sets or 'trains'. Constructive interference suggests that several different wave trains travelling roughly in the same direction meet at some point and build on top of each other. The energy in the wave trains builds and adds on to the other resulting in a set of large waves, and one huge wave, embedded in the train. This wave will only

last a short time as the different trains disentangle themselves and move in their own direction.

- Focusing of wave energy. As kayakers know, when strong wind-generated waves run into a current going in the opposite direction then dangerous standing waves can form. A rising sea-bed will further concentrate energy in the currents. This hypothesis suggests that the energy contained in the waves smashing into the counter current can build and accumulate over time, forming huge waves. These waves are thought to be longer-lived than those developed by the constructive interference mechanism.

- Normal wave height distribution. Wave heights are distributed (like most things) along a bell-shaped curve. Some waves are tiny (occurring at one end of the curve), most occur in the middle of the 'bell' and some extremely large waves are generated at the other end of the bell. At sea, most of the waves you encounter are in the middle of the bell (i.e. these are the most common waves) and there is a very low probability of meeting an extremely large wave. But if you do - tough luck. This is the 'wrong place at the wrong time' principle.

Whichever of these mechanisms is true (they probably all are in different situations), it is obvious that big seas, big winds and strong currents all are factors in generating monster waves. These factors determine why rogue waves are more commonly associated with some parts of the world. It is of little surprise that these 'hot-spots' are some of the most dangerous waterways known. The Agulhas current off the tip of South Africa, the Kuro Shio current off Japan and the Gulf Stream are places, where deep ocean paddles are definitely not recommended.

However, the 'New Scientist' article points out two problems with this picture. Firstly, rogue waves are commonly found in places such as the North Sea where there are relatively few fast flowing currents and constructive interference can't entirely explain their frequency. The second

and more pressing problem is that rogue waves appear to be much more common than the bell shaped curve suggests. Complex computer models that attempt to simulate wave patterns also predict that monster waves should be extremely rare. The problem is that studies observing real-life wave patterns (such as those using radar) show that monster waves can occur in some places as frequently as one per week.

Scientists are realising that rogue waves are not as predictable as first thought. Many of the computer models assume linear and predictable outcomes from variables (wind velocity, sea state, wind direction, etc.) fed into the model's algorithms. Scientists now think the sea is more 'chaotic' and that chaos theory needs to be introduced into these models.

You will probably have heard the chaos adage about how the flap of a butterfly's wing in Brazil causes a hurricane in Canada. Similar principles are being applied to wave models (e.g. a puff of wind off Cape Horn causes a rogue wave in Japan). How these theories work is far beyond the scope of this article and my ability to explain them. More interesting is how this research is being applied to make the sea a safer place to live, work and play.

The impact these waves have on maritime commerce and industry is huge. Inquiries into maritime disasters are increasingly looking at the possible involvement of rogue waves. Analysis of a number of ship sinkings suggests rogue waves may rip off the ship's hatches, causing fatal down flooding into the main hold, which then rolls or pitch poles the ship or breaks its back. In any case the wave would come from nowhere and the end would be violent and fast.

Research is being applied to avoid these disasters on three main fronts. First, oceanographic studies and computer models are being combined to try to develop a system to predict when and where rogue waves may form. This will eventually enable maritime authorities to provide an early-warning system for ships and platforms.

Research is also being used in trials to program marine radar systems to identify rogue waves. Land-based radar or satellites might eventually be able to track rogue waves. Similarly, radar on ships can be programmed with calculations used in the models to identify an approaching wave and warn the ship, similar to laser systems used in aircraft to detect wind shear.

Finally, marine architects and engineers are looking at the design of ships, platforms, ports and other structures to gauge their susceptibility to damage from very large waves. Inquiries into the sinking of a number of container and cargo ships have recommended stronger hatches be installed to prevent flooding of the main hold. Complex designs and structures susceptible to wave damage are also being looked at. Drilling rigs may need to be made higher and stronger.

At any rate, the chance of us running into a 'real' rogue wave is pretty small. And I'm glad of it!

Some resources: 'Wind, Waves, Weather South Australia' - Boating Weather Series - Bureau of Meteorology (1998)

US National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) at: www.noaa.gov

Monsters of the Deep, 'New Scientist' 30 June 2001

Bluewater's newsletter at: www.bluewater.com

('The User's Guide to the Australian Coast' by Greg Laughlin, 1997, ISBN 0 7301 0515 6, also has a chapter 'Wave Essentials.' Editor)

OVERSEAS TRIP REPORTS

The Zuytdorp Cliffs, Western Australia

For several years I have been email corresponding with a Western Australian paddler, Tel Williams, who was keen to complete a paddle along the Zuytdorp Cliffs. For those who are not familiar with the name, or haven't read the 'Edge of Darkness Chapter' in 'The Dreamtime Voyage,' the cliffs are about halfway up the Western Australian coast, between Kalbarri and Carnarvon. At 126 miles long (202kms) the limestone cliffs with attendant reef break and prevailing heavy on-shore swell, are the most crucial and dangerous section of coastline in Australia for a paddler planning a trip around the continent. One small break in the cliffs, near the northern end, called Dulverton Bay or False Entrance, offers a marginal landing onto a short section of sand beach over a shelving limestone reef. However using this landing reduces the unbroken section of limestone cliffs, without a show of landing, to 106 miles (170km).

The prevailing ground swell rolls in from the south-west; the prevailing wind is from the south to south west and the inshore current sets north. Because I was paddling around Aussie in an anti-clockwise direction, I had to battle into the prevailing conditions, paddling non-stop for 34 hours, to reach the shelter of the Murchison River mouth at Kalbarri. That was on 29 August 1982. I used a caffeine based tablet 'No Doz' to stay awake and Lomotil tablets to keep my bowels dormant during the overnighter.

Tel and his team were going to tackle the Zuytdorp Cliffs, from the Kalbarri end, that is south to north, and would have the prevailing conditions behind them for the overnighter. As a warm up, they were going to start paddling from Perth. And they would tackle the cliffs in late January 2002.

Ever since 1982, I have kept in touch with Ken Wilson, the Scotsman who piped me out to sea at Kalbarri, and via email set up contact between Tel Williams and Ken.

When I arrived back from Thailand in late January, I got in touch with Ken Wilson to see how the Tel and his team had fared along the cliffs. And received a copy of Tel's initial report which was just for friends and family. I have since been in touch directly with Tel and passed on my congratulations for their success. Tel has sent me a more detailed report, covering their trip from Perth to Shark Bay, and I will include this in the next newsletter.

ZUYTDORP CLIFFS

Subject: Fw: Kayak Expedition Australia

Date: Tuesday, 29 January 2002

From: Tel Williams

Guddae

Well, the great undertaking to paddle the 'Everest' of western Australia from Perth to Shark Bay has been completed.

This crazy notion to complete this section of coastline which includes 176 kms, of unbroken cliffs and some of the roughest seas in Australia has been on my mind since I started paddling sections of the coast 5 years ago. It always seemed impossible and beyond my capabilities. However as we completed different expeditions I decided to try and complete this section.

I won't go into all the mental and physical preparation except to say that it was intense in the extreme and all encompassing. Finally the day arrived to depart Perth - Jan 10th. The TV interviews and friends seeing us off all added to the enormity of the undertaking. The 500 plus kms north to Kalbarri before the attempt on the cliffs were essentially part of the training and conditioning required. I had a horrific capsized on the first day and thought I had injured my back. Fortunately or unfortunately I recovered enough to continue. We (Four of us) paddled between 9 and 11

hours a day, sometimes in lousy weather, saw the customary dolphin, sharks, turtles etc. A fisherman landed a 3.5 m tiger shark a few meters from our kayaks just reminding us what was in the water but normally did not see. 10 days saw us in Kalbarri for the final preparations for the cliffs. Les had ligament damage and had to pull out.

Unfortunately I did not sleep the night before we left. I didn't feel nervous or even apprehensive but was very mad that I had not slept at all. This meant that when we departed I had been awake for 26 hours. This was to prove disastrous! We paddled at a good speed all day with a following wind and sea. Unfortunately the wind and seas continued to lift all day (contrary to forecasts) and so by night fall we were paddling in difficult conditions. (A long story about using gear, trying to eat, set up night gear etc.) About two hours after dark I began to lose my mental capacity to stay awake. This became increasingly difficult until it was an agony of mental frustration to maintain even the most vague concentration. I was virtually paddling with my eyes shut and will never know I managed to stay upright in the increasingly hostile sea. At times I would be caught in a white cap, surf down the wave and be asleep at the bottom. This meant that time after time I would wake with a shock as I felt the boat going over.

Eventually I had to call John over. We would hold onto each others kayaks allowing the seas to simply wash over us while I shut my eyes. Unfortunately I could not sleep as we still had to struggle to maintain balance and contact. After 5 to 10 minutes I would paddle on for a while and then repeat the process. I can not possibly describe what this entailed except to say it is the most intense pain I have ever had to endure. I am sure tooth ache and ear ache simultaneously would have been a pleasure instead.

After a couple of hours of this I seemed to go into overdrive and felt myself recovering. I was so ecstatic to be able to see and function again I am sure no drug on earth could emulate the high

I felt. To be out on a very rough ocean, in the dark, 100kms from anywhere, off the 200 to 600 ft high Zuytdorp Cliffs was to put it mildly a pretty unique place to be. The horror I felt when I felt the fatigue come back is beyond description. Having used up my final reserves I now could not stay awake for more than a few seconds at a time. The impossibility of going to sleep due to the hazardous position we were in and the inability to function seemed catastrophic.

I could hit myself with the paddle and it would not help. Eventually waves over the head made no difference and I knew it was simply a matter of time before capsize. John rafted up with me and we drifted. Terry kept station about 20m away. He was also sea sick and the fact he didn't capsize is testament to incredible kayaking skill. He eventually joined our raft and we drifted for the next five hours. To say each hour seemed like a week would be an understatement. We were cold, had damaged fingers and hands from trying to hold the kayaks together and were constantly having to ensure we worked away from the cliffs. A few times waves nearly capsized the three of us. The worst thing was, I could not sleep and besides at least been able to have my eyes shut, had the constant mental anguish of having to stay awake.

As the first light of dawn approached I had to pluck up courage to attempt to paddle. Knowing that we had perhaps still another 6 to 8 hours of paddling ahead seemed absolutely impossible. We broke apart and Terry and I set off. John, having been cramped for hours capsized and missed his roll. Luckily he was able to shout out as he baled out. Not been a strong swimmer he lost hold of the kayak and the 30kt plus wind quickly blew it away from him. Fortunately Terry was able to get to him in time and execute a magnificent rescue under the conditions. I paddled back and retrieved some of John's gear.

I can only describe the next 6.5 hours as the most agonizing time imaginable. The frustration, mental fatigue and whatever else goes with 50 hours of

sleep deprivation has to be experienced to be believed. I would have to hit, splash myself, scream, bite, cry and force myself to concentrate for every second of those interminable hours. A few times my mind simply shut down no matter what I did and John was there to catch me as I awoke. Even the sudden starts when I awoke, did not revive me for more than a few seconds and then back to the agony of forcing myself to stay conscious for each paddle stroke.

After 30 hours at sea, and 56 hours since I had slept, we paddled into Dulverton Bay. I survived on the beach for about half an hour before collapsing in a tent. Sleeping a couple of hours and then having a short walk, something to eat and collapsing again for 11 hours. I did not even wake as the wind shredded the tents we were camped in.

The next day we intended to complete the final 36kms to Shark Bay but the weather continued to howl and so we had a rest day before completing the paddle the next day.

Well, that is a very inadequate description of a real life drama. There are obviously hundreds of emotions and experiences that all add up in making this whole expedition. I don't know if any part of this will ever be published or aired but there you have it. The story of the expedition was covered on TV in the Eastern States and WA country TV. Also the press in Geraldton had us on the front page and are doing some follow up. But, if this is what it takes to get famous they can have it. I think an affair with Nicole Kidman would be less painful.

Anyway I thought I'd write some of it down before it all fades into distant memory. I need to catch up with general news to everyone anyway, so excuse no other news on this e mail.

Regards

Tel Williams

OVERSEAS TRIP REPORT

Reprinted from the The Ocean Planet
Wet World No.7 (October 2001)
The newsletter with pictures and all
at: [http://www.oceanplanet.com.au/
wetworld.htm](http://www.oceanplanet.com.au/wetworld.htm)

Paddling with Partners

*Couple's stories - the good, the bad
and the monsters. We thank Mick
Shaw for this story about his first
paddling trip with his partner Naomi.
Mick's concern about sub sea mon-
sters (sharks) plays an interesting
role in their experience! The monster
is not Mick's alter ego by the way.*

For ages it seemed, I'd been busting to get out on an adventure of my own in my very own boat. My partner Naomi and I had been researching for the best part of a year until finally, we placed our order for two shiny new sea kayaks of our very own.

The waiting period between ordering the boats and actually receiving them was almost too much to bear. On my many walks around the Royal National Park and Cape Solander in the southern outskirts of greater Sydney all I could think of was what it would be like to be out there, paddling.

With kayaking adventures always at the forefront of our imaginations, we started to plan our first ocean paddle. Huskisson to Ulladulla over 5 - 6 leisurely days in the summer holiday period.

After what seemed like an eternity, we finally took delivery of our two beautiful new adventure machines and organised all the gear to take us on our much anticipated ocean odyssey.

We arrived at Huskisson at a respectable hour on a magnificent sunny, late December morning.

In order to present to the general, and indeed, the more fortunate boat owning public, (of which we were proud new members) I considered it inap-

propriate to allow the good folk of Huskisson only a fleeting glimpse of our magnificent craft. There perched proudly atop the roof of the trusty Suby we made several dawdling, glorious laps of the main drag, then decided to abandon our gloating and rush off to the nearby car park before the post Christmas traffic claimed the last few good spots.

Car and kayaks unloaded, it was time to begin stuffing our gear into the hatches.

"I thought you were supposed to be able to fit three week's worth of stuff in here," I exclaimed.

"Perhaps we'll have to leave the fold up scooters and portable tables and chairs behind," suggested Naomi.

After the 2nd or 3rd attempt, we managed to jam 90 percent of our gear into the boats and came to the realisation that, although there is ample storage in a sea kayak, its necessary to think out ones loading plan in advance and to pack carefully.

The time had come for the inaugural launch of our first expedition together and after the backbreaking lug of our fully laden kayaks from the car park down the hill to the launch point on the beach below, it was nearly time to go. Time to drag out the all important weather report that we had obtained much earlier that morning before leaving my parents place in Wollongong. According to the forecast winds were to be manageable and the skies blue.

We decided to head west from where we were and camp within Jervis Bay that first evening, nothing too ambitious for our first day in our, as yet, relatively unfamiliar kayaks.

The first thing I noticed when I started paddling was how much more initially stable my notoriously tippy kayak was when fully laden. I immediately felt less anxious and started plugging away at the water which was a little choppy than I was accustomed to at the time. As my experience levels were low, it didn't take much for the conditions to be more than I was used to.

The winds were about 10-15 kn from the N/NW and a decent sized chop kept me just within my comfort zone as we headed further out into the deeper and potentially more "monster" infested waters. I reckon that the deeper the water is, the more prone one is to monster attack.

The fact that the water is deeper means that there is a lot more room for the larger of the monsters to move about and lurk within. With that firmly in mind, I bravely continued on. Naomi, at this stage seemed frustratingly comfortable in this potentially dangerous predicament. How dare she be better at this kayaking stuff than me.

By the time we had reached the centre of the bay, the wind had picked up considerably with metre high, breaking waves slowing our progress a great deal, I found myself thinking that this open water stuff was more difficult than I had wanted for my first multi-day paddle. Naomi, thankfully, was feeling the same way and we decided to head, into the wind, NW to Callala Beach and skirt around the perimeter instead, the proximity to the land being somewhat of a comfort to us at the time.

It turns out, that if we had updated our early morning weather forecast, we would have been aware of the strong wind warnings that came later in the day on the updated version of the forecast. The winds were up to 35kn that day at times.

After reaching a more comforting proximity to the shore, we continued clockwise around the perimeter of the bay, I spotted my first penguin just off Callala bay and was really enjoying myself in the flat, calm conditions that magically prevailed after heading into the lee of the shoreline. After an extremely pleasant and uneventful rest of the day, Naomi and I landed at Chinamans beach in the NE corner of Jervis Bay and broke out all of our new camping toys that were largely, a part of our Christmas loot.

I'm fortunate to be well favoured by Naomi's wonderful, generous family and consequently, do very well at

Christmas time. This year was no exception.

Very chuffed with the newfangled camping stove as it is far superior to my old hexamine tablet stove, a remnant of my old air force days. The new stove's speed at heating is much more compatible with my extremely impatient stomach and I can usually bear the few minutes wait to enjoy a hot feed, whereas, in the past, my habit was to devour a cold can of spam or spaghetti and meatballs rather than enduring the agonising wait. "It's already been cooked in the can!" I would say.

The next day dawned as splendidly as the last, and the weather forecast was good with a southerly due later in the afternoon. Our next leg was south to Murrays Beach, via Bowen Island (just because it's an island), our first bit of open, deep water paddling between Beecroft peninsula and Governor head. Getting into it now and feeling more and more like a 'real' sea kayaker with every paddle stroke, although still a little anxious.

I greeted the fisherpeople in their runabouts with the confidence that I felt diminishing the closer I got to that open water crossing bit. "It's only about 5km's," I thought, "that's two hours, max, with the southerly coming up later." But when, I thought.

My priority was to boldly cross this open water bit to the safety of Bowen Island and Murrays Beach ASAP, not wishing to be struggling in monster ridden waters against a 25 knot southerly not yet having mastered the art of the Eskimo roll.

I recall my anxiousness in the middle of that stretch of deep water with countless, scary monsters lurking beneath me, all watching our vulnerable little craft crossing tantalisingly slowly above their waiting tentacles and god knows what other appendages. I've seen the movies, I know there down there.

I also remember my frustration with Naomi, who, unencumbered by my quite reasonable fear of monsters,

seemed to be stopping every couple of minutes for photo opportunities and snack breaks.

"For heavens sake Naomi, it is imperative that we exercise self control in this crucial part of the days journey, time is of the essence and we must get to the other side before the wind comes up." Which was also a relevant concern, no need to encumber her with the frightening reality of all the monsters. Not only is she better at this than I, she's also not even a bit scared.

Upon landing at Bowen island, I became considerably more relaxed, although still cross with Naomi for being so comfortable with the whole ordeal. If so much as a cute little penguin popped it's little head up within a 10m radius of me out there in monster territory, I would have fallen out of the kayak with fright.

After landing and lunching at Murrays Beach, it was time for me to don the mask and try some Eskimo rolls. Three dismal attempts saw me heading back to the beach having completed only the rolling down part of the manoeuvre, the rolling up bit I would need a little more practice with it seemed.

As the day drew on, we started looking for good places to hide the kayaks and camp that were up off the main part of the beach. We weren't supposed to camp there and needed a nice flat, clear spot, just off the main sandy bit of the actual beach.

Naomi spotted our perfect spot, currently occupied by a naked elderly gentleman who was working very hard to achieve signal red on his entire body. The waiting game had begun. We figured that he would go soon because most of the other holiday makers had, by now had vacated the beach to their holiday homes and caravan parks to return again on the morrow.

Darkness was fast approaching and our sun loving friend hadn't yet had his fill of vitamin D. As it happens, he had a good idea of our intentions and, after donning his shorts to our great relief, he approached us to let us know

that he would be happy for us to camp on 'his spot' for the night if we could kindly refrain from messing the place up with campfire ash and the like.

After assuring the kindly gent of our honourable intentions towards 'his spot', he obligingly revealed his hiding place for his rake so that we could smooth it out for better tent placement and sleeping comfort.

We spent a tranquil evening on this beautiful beach, being lulled to sleep by the sound of the small waves gently introducing themselves to the beach.

When the morning had broken, it was time to prepare for our departure on the last leg, direct to Huskisson. The forecast was favourable until the afternoon when the winds were due to pick up along with the seas. For today's effort, out came the trusty Mariners atlas, the compass and ruler. Recalling as much as I could about basic navigation from my air force days, I commenced to orientate the map keeping magnetic variations in mind and I even managed to perform a re-sec-tion.

I slowly but effectively attained the correct bearing. 310° was the magic number that we were to follow in order to reach our goal. Armed with that info, we set off for Husky, aiming to be there before that infuriatingly unspecified time in the afternoon when the winds were to pick up.

Naomi and I both had the same boats and compasses and I said to Naomi, "Point the boat so that 310 is showing on the compass and paddle in that direction."

Naomi's eyesight is not as good as my own and seeing the little numbers on the strap on compass is not a problem, however, without her prescription lenses on, she has trouble discerning between 310 on the compass and the mars bar tucked under her deck bungee lines, so, she asked me to provide her with a landmark for her to aim towards.

Without many prominent landmarks

in the right direction at that point, I stated that all she had to do, was to point the boat so that 310 is the number facing her in the compass window and simply follow it. She hadn't explained to me at this stage that she couldn't see the numbers and my frustration levels began to grow as she seemed to be heading for another Huskisson somewhere off to port.

"Naomi, point the boat at 310 and stay on that for pity's sake", I barked.
"Give me a landmark to follow", she replied.

My frustration levels were increasing steadily because of Naomi's determination (in my eyes) not to follow that bearing. Her frustration was increasing towards me for my refusal to understand her predicament when all the frustration came to a head about 50 metres from a poor unsuspecting fisher family, happily dangling lines from their runabout.

"Why won't you just point the bloody boat to 310 and paddle it?"
"Because I can't see the bloody numbers without my glasses."
"But why didn't you say that's why you needed a landmark?"
"Because I thought that after two years, you would have remembered that I don't see well without them."
"But you are wearing some."
"These are my sunnies and they are not prescription lenses."
"Oh!"

We both created a bit of turbulence on an otherwise flat, calm morning.

Our first make up on the water was a little less than graceful but we were able to find a good reason to practice our newly learned side draw stroke so that we could bring the kayaks together to have a little cuddle and be back on our way. Couldn't think of a better reason to practice a new paddle stroke.

All reconciled, I provided Naomi with a visual reference point that was more prominent and easy to see than the little numbers on the compass and we continued blissfully on to our goal on a perfect, calm, sunny morning on

Jervis Bay. My bearing of 310 took us directly to the beach from where we launched a couple of days earlier and my feeling of satisfaction that I got from successfully navigating there was more than I had expected.

We arrived at the beach just before the winds picked up. Planning really made that last leg for me and everything (apart from our little tiff) went very smoothly and according to plan.

So, we survived our first multi day paddle together and we've got five more days to go.

Lets get a large serving of fish and chips and off to Erowal Bay for more of the same....

Mick Shaw

TECHNICAL

HELPFUL HINTS

(reprinted from the Auckland Canoe Club Newsletter Feb. 2000)

By Roger Lomas

New to the club and Kayaking? It often pays to observe our old salts and see what crafty techniques they employ to enjoy hassle free Kayaking. Here are a few:

- Buy a large plastic storage bin that will fit into the car boot to carry home all the wet paddling gear.

- After paddling, wash the Kayak down with fresh water before it goes home on the car. You will be too tired to do it when you get home. Often there are no wash down facilities available so carry your own. The best way to do this is to buy a Solar Shower. Canvas city has an excellent New Zealand made Miller Solar Shower selling for \$20 at the moment. This holds 17ltrs and is enough to wash down at least three Kayaks (this will earn some brownie points).

- When travelling with the Kayak on the car racks it is a good idea to attach an extra safety line to secure the bow to the front bumper or forward tie down point. This will give you tremendous peace of mind when travelling at highway speeds.

IN THE PRESS

Kayakers to the Rescue.

In late November, kayakers helped rescue two men through the sunroof of their four wheel drive vehicle, which got into trouble trying to cross the Motueka River, near Nelson. The men had tried to drive across the river to get firewood and underestimated the river. Their vehicle went over a deep hole and was floating at one stage.

Members of the Nelson Canoe Club had assembled at McLeans Reserve for a downriver race, when Amanda Young was alerted to the vehicle's plight by backpackers who saw it get into difficulty. When she kayaked out to the vehicle, water was up to the windows and two men were still inside.

"They couldn't get the doors open because the electrics didn't work. I had to get them to try the sunroof," she said. The men were sitting there like 'stunned mulletts' and Ms Young thought they were showing signs of hypothermia. "They were sitting there with water up to their shoulders. I don't think they were functioning properly."

The men managed to climb out of the vehicle's cab through the sunroof and other members of the canoe club arrived. Club member Ron Wastney, who is experienced in river rescue, swam out to the vehicle and got the men into lifejackets. Then were then pendulummed to shore, fastened to the middle of a rope, as one of the men was a non swimmer.

Amanda Young noted, "The men were very lucky and did amazingly well to get the sunroof open. If they had not been able to get out through the sunroof, I don't know whether I would have been able to smash it."

The vehicle was towed to shore by members of the canoe club.

(reprinted from the Nelson Evening Mail')

BOOK REVIEWS

Title: 'Building Skin on Frame Boats'

Author: Robert Morris

Publisher: Hartley & Marks

Content: 320pp

Price: US\$ 24.95

Reviewed: Jay Babina

(reprinted from 'Atlantic Coastal Kayaker' October 2001).

At last! Long awaited! Finally... a huge void in kayak literature has been filled. We now have a really extensive and diversified book on building skin boats, especially one covering the traditional Greenland kayak, 'Building Skin-on-Frame Boats' by Robert Morris. There are many ways to skin a cat and I'm sure a lot of skin boat purists have mixed opinions on what's right or authentic as far as a lot of the methodology. However, this is a huge step in the right direction and it will further the fascination and enthusiasm towards building skin boats.

As soon as you pick the book up, you're going to like it. Beautiful cover, nice bright white paper stock, crammed full of great photos and illustrations and my personal favorite is the warning on the Baidarka chapter: 'Overestimating your skills on the water and building and using this kayak before you are ready could be deadly.' Now that's a serious book!

The book is substantial at 270 pages and the author has instructions on building eight different boats along with fold-out frame illustrations. The Greenland Kayak, Alaska Retrieval and Recovery Kayak, Netsilngmeot Kayak, Baidarka, a Pram Dinghy, Providence River Boat, Canadian Canoe and Upper Yukon River Skin Boat. The concentration of the book is on building the Greenland Kayak and the others are touched upon with much of the building process gained from the Greenland kayak section.

There's lots of history and historical building details as well as a very diversified outlook on the building methods for each of the craft. There's a great shot of the author in a low volume Greenland frame with his head

leaning on the back deck. I was happy to see that this understanding was there rather than presenting a book on building only high volume "safe" replicas. There is something for everyone and he presents wider and higher volume adaptations for those less inclined to go the super low volume and less stable route. You design the kayak for yourself with the traditional methods of measurement: two fists wider than your hips, etc. The book addresses tools, woods, and various skins from the typical canvas to the more exotic synthetics and covers the advantages of each as well as various coatings.

Every reviewer has to find something and here it is. I was hoping the book would have about 30 pages with step-by-step instructions with photos on how to put on the skin. I feel Morris fell a bit short on this especially in comparison to the coverage he gives everything else. Having made a Greenland skin kayak, I know how frustrating putting on the skin can be, especially when all you have is a few drawings of the sewing stitches and a photo of some fabric laying over a frame. It's one thing to skin a kayak and another to get it really tight and done well. I think the first-time builder will be re-reading that section a few times and will be looking for a lot more.

There's an historic sensitivity throughout the book. Unlike many formulated book formats, with the history, tools and getting started chapters, Morris not only does that but incorporates bits of history and nice drawings of Eskimos and kayaks, etc. throughout the instructional text. I found myself reading about boats I had no interest in building because of the narrative way he incorporates his fascination with the origins and history. There's no doubt about the author's passion and love of this type of craft which is accentuated by the very refined artistic illustrations.

This is an absolute 'must' for anybody leaning towards building a skin boat or even the "just interested." It's a quality book that's extremely thorough and will provide hours of read-

ing pleasure as well as great reference for skin boat enthusiasts whether building is on your agenda or not.

Reviewer Jay Babina builds the Outer Island, a low-volume strip-built kayak, with his company Jason Designs, North Branford, Ct, USA.

BOOK REVIEW

Title: 'SEA KAYAKER'S GUIDE to New Zealand's UPPER NORTH ISLAND'

Editor: Vincent Maire

Published: 2001

Publisher: New Holland Publishers

ISBN: 1 877246 71 9

Cover: Softback

Contents: 176 pp, maps, central colour plate section.

Size: 210x146mm

RRP: \$29.95

Availability: NZ book & kayak shops

Reviewed by: Paul Caffyn

I tried to dissuade Vincent from writing this book. Guide books to me take away much of the fun of finding out about an area, both beforehand and during a trip. And publicising a favourite paddling area is simply going to bring more paddlers to your spot. But with the rapid growth of popularity in the sport, it was only a matter of time before a publisher saw the potential market for a sea kayak guide, and fortunately they hooked in with the best person for the job.

Having paddled through the area of the guide, from the Coromandel Peninsula up the east coast of the north island to Cape Maria van Diemen, I feel Vincent has done a great job in compiling a listing of some 75 paddling excursions. Each of the eight regions has a location map, with a listing of relevant maps and charts, also information on the VHF radio schedule. Each region then is broken down into specific areas with 'getting there' and 'safety consideration' advice, then a listing of specific trips in that area. Each trip has a duration, difficulty rating, distance and a concise (but not too detailed) description of the trip. The maps do not have too much detail, and take a little getting used to, with roads shown as dotted lines and walking tracks as solid lines.

An initial nine page introductory chapter covers the basics, clothing, first aid, trip planning etc., while the last three pages include a reading list, and appendix with contacts for the sea kayaking area networks plus some website addresses.

The 17 colour pics in the central colour plate section are corkers and cer-

tainly an enticement to get out paddling. A minor quibble is the expanse of white paper around the pics - the pics would have been better bled to the page margins.

In this current newsletter, Kerry Howe (who has paddled much of the area in the guide) pays a compliment to Vincent's guide, and judging by the sales

of 800 by late January, the book is proving very popular with paddlers.

Vincent Maire is currently publicity officer for KASK, but has been one of the mainstays of Auckland sea kayaking for the past 12 years, with an active organizational role in both the Coastbuster symposiums and as editor of the ASKNET newsletter.

OBITUARY

Rod Banks

1/12/1955 - 18/11/2001

Christchurch paddler Rod Banks, died in a whitewater kayaking accident on the Hokitika River, on the South Island's West Coast. Rod was an active paddler not only with the Christchurch based Whitewater Canoe Club, but also with the Canterbury Sea Kayak Network (CSKN). Rod held a SKOANZ guide's certificate.

Rod introduced numerous people to sea kayaking through his instruction for Canoe and Outdoor World as well as his voluntary instruction and participation with the Canterbury Sea Kayak Network. A generous and happy person, Rod took on the difficult task of finding speakers for the monthly CSKN meetings. Rod is survived by his estranged wife Debbie and two sons, Hamish and Campbell.

Both boys have enjoyed forays on to Lyttelton Harbour, which their home overlooks. When the boys were really young, Rod would sit them in the front hatch of his beloved Nordkapp for short jaunts.

Rod also loved multisports racing and was proof that it is possible to get better with age. His good humoured participation in events like Coast to Coast's longest day, and Goldrush as well as his work for Canoe and Outdoor World and involvement with CSKN meant that he was widely known and liked by those in the kayaking fraternity of the South Island and beyond.

Rod was a jeweller, and had worked in parts of the world including Ger-

many and Australia, refining his skill. Many KASK members will be familiar with the sterling silver KASK kayak and paddle badge, that was designed and crafted by Rod. He was a keen hunter and knew Fiordland intimately. In fact he had initially seen sea kayaking as a great way to access remote hunting and fishing areas. However it was soon apparent to him that sea kayaking was an endeavour worth undertaking for it's own pleasures.

Rod Banks packed a lot into his life. He would often arise at 5am to read or work, and could be up 'doing something' at 1am. He was well read and enjoyed debate on any subject, especially environmental issues. Rod is sorely missed by many who knew and loved him.

Stephen Counsell.



Photo: John Kirk-Anderson

LITERARY SECTION

(Reprinted with permission from the 'NSW Sea Kayaker' No.47.)

Clear Point by Mark Pearson

The fire crackled again. The soft flickering glow played on the faces of the mixed group of paddlers gathered in a rough circle around the cluttered camp. As the wine flowed so did reminiscences of adventurous times past.

Another story came to an end with an eruption of laughter. As the conversation briefly hit a lull, the group leader looked over at an individual who had been quiet to this point.

"And what about our esteemed guest... you've heard some of our epics, what was your most dramatic moment on the water?"

"Me?" said the old man, and paused. "Well..." he hesitated again, "dramatic moment... well there's been so many, but there was one particular day..."

Sensing some reluctance, another of the young Americans encouraged, "Yeah Norm, I know we'd all love to hear a genuine story from Down Under..."

Several others voiced their appreciation.

The veteran paddler composed himself. "Well, I guess it was thirty years ago now... more than thirty years. His name was Ben... Ben Lehmann, and he was a good friend of mine. A good paddler too, strong, determined, and, like you people, good fun around the camp fire... always had a story to tell.

"But, just to give you some background, Ben was also bit of a practical joker, was always looking for opportunities to put one over his fellow paddlers. And particularly those with the best equipment, because Ben's

gear was basic to say the least. He paddled one of the roughest looking Greenlanders you'd ever see, repaired so many times it must have weighed 80 pounds.

"I remember one time he 'stole' a friend's unattended ultra-light Kevlar kayak from a remote beach, lodged it up a tree, then insisted it was the result of a gust of wind... he later admitted to a bad case of weight envy. Then there was the day he organised a sea kayak sailing race and beat all the high tech rigs using nothing but a hand held golf umbrella."

Norm chuckled and held out his hand for a refill of his wine mug, "That one was typical Ben."

"Anyhow, one day, after a training paddle, he came up to me and said he had thought of a really good prank. There was a trip planned along the Murrararang National Park coastline the next weekend. We'd seen a shark there a month before, an event that caused quite a buzz amongst us paddlers. Over there, y'see, we've got serious sharks but we don't see them too often.

"Ben, who never seemed to be scared of anything, told me he wanted to play on this. At the very place we'd seen the fin, he was going to capsize his kayak. He'd then quickly wet exit and stick his head into the air pocket in the cockpit of his upturned kayak and stay there, hidden from view.

I remember saying, 'So what... what's that got to do with the shark', and he said, 'This...' and he held out a Nalgene container. It was full of red food colouring. He explained gleefully that he would open it while he was under the boat, that all the other guys would see was an upturned kayak and red water. They'd freak out.

"I had to agree with that! Ben was pleased as punch with his plan. Me? Well I knew the whole idea was a bit sick, but Ben was my friend, and I knew there was no point in trying to talk him out of it."

One of the listeners leaned forward

and laid some more small sticks on to the flames. Norm continued on.

"The day came. It was a small group, Martin and Alan, two experienced paddlers, Joe, a bit of a novice, and Ben and I. We set off from a place called Depot Beach. I remember that morning well... the Murrararang coastline shimmered brilliantly in the early morning sunshine. About a metre of swell with barely any wind. Just perfect. As we paddled out Ben looked over at me and gave me a knowing wink. It was on.

"And sure enough, an hour later as we approached the headland, Ben began to paddle his Greenlander purposely to the front of the group until he was about 120 metres ahead of us. About a minute later his paddle flew into the air, there was a muffled cry, and he was over.

"Someone looked over at me and shouted, 'What's he up to?' I shook my head innocently. Joe, followed by Martin and Alan, then accelerated over to Ben's kayak, with me a bit behind.

Joe got there first and immediately screamed a warning... something about a shark, a big shark. At that point I remember chuckling... this one obviously wasn't just any old shark, but a monster! I could see the old orange Greenlander was just sitting there, upturned, a paddle floating nearby. There was no other movement."

Norm took a sip of wine. His eyes now not leaving the fire, His total focus now on that day.

"As the three guys gathered around the kayak I could see the fear. It was like electricity was going through them. Bodies visibly tensed, all looked defensive and strangely tippy. Then suddenly Martin broke away from the group shouting, 'I'm outta here,' and headed for shore at speed.

"Anyhow, in the few seconds it took me to get to them my best attempt at a straight face had disintegrated into uncontrollable laughter as I saw what my mischievous friend had done..."

there was red stuff swirling around everywhere... not just on the surface but even down deep.

“Understandably shocked at my inappropriate behaviour, Joe turned on me, his face all fear and confusion. He hissed, ‘What’s so funny... can’t you see? A shark got Ben.’ Through glazed eyes I could see the man was petrified, holding his paddle up in the air like a weapon. But I was now laughing so much it hurt.

“I knew I was seeing real panic... I tried to tell them. I gasped, ‘Look, it’s OK... he’s OK...’, for I could hardly talk. ‘It’s just a joke,’ I was trying to say, but I just couldn’t get it out. Alan then really lost it, screaming, ‘What the hell’s going on here?’

“So, knowing the whole thing had gone way too far, I sort of composed myself, paddled alongside the Greenlander, lowered my hand under the coaming and flipped her over. And...”

Norm’s voice suddenly faded to a harsh whisper.

“It was then I stopped laughing.” Something in the fire expired with a slow hiss. Norm stared deeply into the flames, almost in a trance, slowly, almost imperceptibly, shaking his head. More seconds passed as he struggled to gain the composure to finish his tale.

“But what did you see?” said a tense, almost pleading voice from the group.

For the first time in a while the old man looked up from the fire. He cleared his throat, turned towards the voice and said quietly, “Just an unopened container of red food colouring.”

THE ‘BUGGER!’ FILE

When Simple Things Go Awry by David Cregan

Reprinted from the The Ocean Planet
Wet World No.7 (October 2001)

Sea kayaking brings with it inherent dangers; I have been buffeted by winds and seas passing around some of our larger capes; on a solo trip in Baja I paddled with pods of blue whales; and, I have had some truly terrifying, white-knuckle crossings of river bars. These things have left me with a profound respect for nature and our frailty.

What these things have not prepared me for is the unexpected, simple, everyday thing that can go wrong in a nano second and really stuff up your life!

Early in October, I had just begun paddling most afternoons after work on Lake Burley Griffin (Canberra’s largish lake). The days were getting longer and warmer and this was an opportunity to get in some boat-time and exercise after a long winter.

I drive a VW camper van, (a rare four-wheel drive version which sits much higher than the standard), consequently my roof racks are over two metres above the ground. I must have loaded my Mirage 580 numerous times; it requires a bit of technique. The bow is lifted into the cradle, I then push the boat as far forward as I can. Then, pulling down on the stern and pushing forward I lower the bow of the kayak into the front cradle.

In practice this is easier than it sounds and if done quickly works well. However, on this day the kayak bounced off the front cradle and after what seemed like an eternity to happen, crashed stern first onto right ankle!

All praise to the quality of Paul Hewitson’s fibreglass as the Mirage struck my limb and came to rest in the grass undamaged. I am glad it wasn’t the plastic Apollo, which weighs far more.

The pain was almost instantaneous and the swelling soon followed. Grimacing, I grabbed the kayak and reapplied the now flawed technique; this time with success and after tying it on made my way home via the supermarket for the frozen beans (the impromptu ice pack).

That night the pain was intense and after some initial confusion the ankle was pronounced truly broken and in no time I was the proud owner of a fibreglass cast with spiffy Goretex *liner.

In the following weeks, I learnt how complex it was to do routine things I had taken for granted. Walking was difficult with the simple over boot provided to protect the cast and it was not until after much frustration I discovered the simple joy of a Teva sandal held on with plastic cable ties. I could now bush walk and paddle, although using the rudder was hard because of the inflexible cast so I reverted using paddle strokes and my body to turn the kayak - I could not fit into the Mirage - so the Apollo with the bigger cockpit was ideal. It was good to get out!

My cast came off last week and I am now back to some resemblance of a normal exercise regime. The whole episode has given me a very healthy respect for those people who manage real disabilities every day and perhaps a realisation that one should not take simple things for granted.

Any body got a good recipe for a large amount of frozen beans?

David Cregan
Canberra

'BUGGER!' FILE

Missing Sea Kayaker

On 29/01/02 I received this message from Auckland kayaker Clive Hookham: 'May be of interest to you. Coastguard and Auckland Maritime are putting over notices all the time re a kayaker missing from Puriri Park Motor Camp since 22 January. He was seen to leave Orewa beach that day and hasn't been seen since. They are asking for any sightings from anyone. He is described as a 45-year-old Caucasian about 5ft 10 inches in height wearing a black top and in a sea kayak, an Albatross, red and white with a red sail fitted in front of the cockpit. I heard one boat say they had seen a kayak fitting the description at the bottom end of Waiheke off Cactus Bay heading towards Onetangi last Saturday. I guess his car etc is still in the motor camp and hence all the concern.

Hibiscus Coast newspaper *The Coaster* carried the incident on the front page and reported that police had been notified and were of the opinion the kayaker was in the vicinity of Kawau Island.'

Clive's message was put out on auckland-kayakers@yahoogroups.com and the next day two Waiheke Island sea kayakers filed the following reports:

All is well with this kayaker. He stayed at Palm Beach Waiheke Island last night where I met him. Got the missing message this morning and contacted Coastguard. They were sending someone round to see him. Its nice to know that the kayaking crowds look out for each other. Thanks. Dawn and Karen, The Kayak Company.'

'He was camping on Little Palm Beach, Waiheke last night. A couple of friends where talking to him about his large sail rig during the full moon drumming. He was OK, but will get a message to Coastguard to but their mind at rest. Cheers, Grant Glazer.'

No one has been able to put a name to this sea kayaker and maybe he would prefer it that way. Let's hope he had follow-up meetings with both Coastguard and the police.
Vincent Maire

HUMOUR

HELL

The following is an actual question given on a University of Washington engineering mid term exam. The answer was so 'profound' that the Professor shared it with colleagues, which is why we now have the pleasure of enjoying it as well.

Bonus Question: Is Hell exothermic (gives off heat) or Endothermic (absorbs heat)?

Most of the students wrote Proofs of their beliefs using Boyle's Law, (gas cools off when it expands and heats up when it is compressed) or some variant. One student, however, wrote the following:

"First, we need to know how the mass of Hell is changing in time. So we need to know the rate that souls are moving into Hell and the rate they are leaving. I think that we can safely assume that once a soul gets to Hell, it will not leave. Therefore, no souls are leaving. As for how many souls are entering Hell, let's look at the different religions that exist in the world today. Some of these religions state that if you are not a member of their religion, you will go to Hell.

Since there are more than one of these religions and since people do not belong to more than one religion, we can project that all souls go to Hell. With birth and death rates as they are, we can expect the number of souls in Hell to increase exponentially. Now, we look at the rate of change of the volume in Hell because Boyle's Law states that in order for the temperature and pressure in Hell to stay the same, the volume of Hell has to expand as souls are added.

This gives two possibilities:

1. If Hell is expanding at a slower rate than the rate at which souls enter Hell, then the temperature and pressure in Hell will increase until all Hell breaks loose.

2. Of course, if Hell is expanding at a rate faster than the increase of souls in Hell, then the temperature and pressure will drop until Hell freezes over.

So which is it?

If we accept the postulate given to me by Teresa Banyan during my freshman year, "...that it will be a cold day in Hell before I sleep with you," and take into account the fact that I still have not succeeded in having sexual relations with her, then, #2 cannot be true, and thus I am sure that Hell is exothermic and will not freeze."

This student received the only A.

UNUSUAL HABIT

A taxi driver picks up a nun. After entering the taxi, the driver won't stop staring at her. She asks him why is he staring and he replies, "I have a question to ask you but don't want to offend you."

She answers, "My dear child, you cannot offend me. When you're as old as I am and have been a nun for as long as I have, you get a chance to see and hear just about everything. I'm sure that there's nothing you could say or ask that I would find offensive."

"Well, I've always had this fantasy to have a nun kiss me."

She responds, "Well, let's see what we can do about that. Firstly, you have to be single and secondly you must be Catholic."

The cab driver is very excited and says, "Yes, I am single and I'm Catholic too!"

"OK," the nun says, "Pull into the next alley."

He does and the nun fulfills his fantasy with a kiss that would make a hooker blush.

But when they get back on the road, the taxi driver starts crying.

"My dear child," says the nun, "why are you crying?"

"Forgive me sister, but I have sinned. I lied. I must confess that I'm married and Jewish."

"That's OK," says the nun. My name is Trevor and I'm on my way to a fancy dress party."

**KIWI ASSOCIATION OF
SEA KAYAKERS (NZ)
INC
10th Annual General
Meeting, Onepoto, Porirua
3 March 2002**

AGENDA

Present:

Apologies:

Previous Minutes:

Matters Arising:

Treasurer's Report

Secretary's Report

President's Report

Conservation Report:

Instruction Report:

Safety Report:

Publicity Report:

Election of Officers:

a. President

b. Secretary

c. Treasurer

d. Safety Officer

e. Instruction Officer

f. Conservation Officer

g. Publicity Officer

h. Forum Organiser: - to be elected at debriefing after forum venue is decided.

Remits:

Notices of Motion:

1. Moved Helen Woodward/Seconded Maurice Kennedy

"To amend the KASK constitution to amend Rule 11-Rules of General Meetings-section (b)-take out "20% of the total current financial membership", and replace it with: "At all General Meetings 50 current financial members"

The amended Rule will then read: "At all General Meetings 50 current financial members shall constitute a quorum."

(Reason: As the membership has increased to almost 500, it is increasingly difficult to reach the 20% level of attendance. Attendance at forums has not until now increased with the increase of membership, and not all forum attendees will attend the AGM. The opportunities to hold an AGM other than at the national forum are limited.)

2. Moved M Grant/Seconded M Kennedy:

To amend constitution to add to Clause 3 Membership, "e) dual members cat-

egory: Any two or more people who reside at the same address who have applied for membership and have duly been voted members."

3. Moved M Kennedy/Seconded H Woodward

"To resolve to develop a closer working relationship between KASK and SKOANZ, particularly with sharing of information, safety, skills training, and joint funding applications."

General Business

1. Set Subs for 2002/2003 financial year.

2. Ask for feedback from members about the Proficiency Course.

3. Discuss review of whole constitution in 2002.

4. Any further business from the floor

Note: Nominations for committee positions will be taken up to the AGM.

Helen Woodward
President

NATIONAL SEA KAYAK FORUM Onepoto, Porirua, Wellington. 1 - 3 March 2002.

2002 Kask Forum Registrations

Just a last reminder to get your registrations in for this year's forum **now**.

If you intend to participate then please get your registrations in without delay.

If you are still thinking about it then you will be pleased to know that a programme has been put together that will meet the needs and be of interest to paddlers at all levels of experience.

The forum provides a unique opportunity to:

- Network and exchange information with paddlers from all parts of the country.
- Catch up on the latest in equipment clothing and boats.
- Improve your paddling skills and techniques

- Learn and apply the key safety points to trips.

- Take part in KASK's AGM, vote for the national committee, and have a say in the future of KASK

- Participate in a day paddle to Mana Island (all skill levels catered for)

- Listen to a specialist on Antarctica give an evening talk on Shackleton and South Georgia

The committee are mindful that the large increase in KASK membership (now 500 and up from 180 a year ago), means that the training sessions and workshops both on and off the water, must also cater for less experienced paddlers.

While all this sounds very serious, the committee also wants the 2002 forum to be a fun experience and have organised a fun filled nautical night on the

Saturday evening, with fancy dress optional.

The organising committee extends a particularly warm welcome to new KASK members who will be attending their first forum, and looks forward to seeing you there.

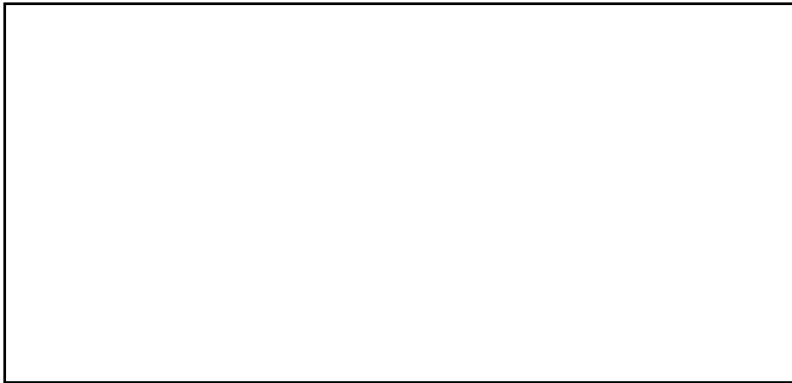
If you haven't registered yet then send your completed registration form in without delay.

If you need more information? then contact:

**Noel Winsloe ph
(04) 478 5480,
email: noel.winsloe@xtra.co.nz.**

Noel Winsloe and Maurice Kennedy for 2002 KASK Forum Organising Committee

MAILED TO



If undelivered, please return to:
Maurice Kennedy, PO Box 11461, Manners St., Wellington. 6034

