



June 2015

Club Information	2	Membership Renewal	6
Club Trip/Event Policies	2	Update Contact Details.....	6
Club Banking Details	2	On the waterfront.....	7
Kayak Hire	3	First Winter Lecture	
Regular Events.....	3	Cycle-touring Iceland.....	10
Around Great Barrier.....	4	Be careful what you wish for.....	11
Poet's Corner.....	6	Membership Application Form ..	15



Around Great Barrier January 2015 (see page 4).

PHOTO SUE NOBLE

Auckland Canoe Club Information

Postal Address

P.O. Box 9271, Newmarket, Auckland

Clubrooms

Marine Rescue Centre, Mechanics Bay

Website

<http://www.aucklandcanoecub.org.nz>

Officers

<i>Patron</i>	Ian Calhaem	579 0512
<i>President</i>	Philip Noble	575 3493
<i>Secretary</i>	Rona Patterson	528 1155
<i>Treasurer</i>	Matthew Crozier	817 1984
<i>Trips Advisor</i>	Colin Quilter	360 6271
<i>Publicity</i>	Roger Lomas	846 6799
<i>Storage/kayaks</i>	Gavin Baker	528 5188
<i>Assistant</i>	Roger Lomas	846 6799
<i>Vine House</i>	Trevor Arthur	817 7357
<i>Newsletter Editor</i>	Claire O'Connor	027 238 1250
<i>Webmaster</i>	Ian Calhaem	579 0512

Email addresses

patron@aucklandcanoecub.org.nz
president@aucklandcanoecub.org.nz
secretary@aucklandcanoecub.org.nz
treasurer@aucklandcanoecub.org.nz
trips@aucklandcanoecub.org.nz
publicity@aucklandcanoecub.org.nz
merchandise@aucklandcanoecub.org.nz
vinehouse@aucklandcanoecub.org.nz
newsletter@aucklandcanoecub.org.nz
webmaster@aucklandcanoecub.org.nz

hire@aucklandcanoecub.org.nz
(for kayak hire, or any related questions)

storage@aucklandcanoecub.org.nz
(for questions about storing kayaks in the locker)

Club Trip/Event Policies

Visit the Club website for details of safety and other important policies.

Contacting trip/event organiser

You must notify the trip organiser in advance of your intention to go on a trip. Organisers need to know numbers and to be able to contact you if the plan changes.

You must also discuss with the organiser in advance any medical or other conditions (such as your experience and ability) that might affect the progress of the group.

Cancellation

If the weather looks uncertain call the trip co-ordinator.

Club Banking Details

<i>Bank</i>	BNZ
<i>Branch</i>	Newmarket
<i>Account</i>	02-0100-0023453-000
<i>Name</i>	Auckland Canoe Club
<i>Particulars</i>	Your FULL name (Initials are not enough to identify some members with common names)
<i>Code</i>	Either SUBS, STORAGE, HIRE, OTHER (depending on what you are paying for)

If your payment is for several items, then please make **separate** payments for **each** item.

IMPORTANT

If you are depositing money to the Club Account please ensure that you include YOUR name so that the Treasurer knows who deposited the money.

Internet Banking

All major banks have set up Auckland Canoe Club as a registered payee for internet banking.

This means that you can pay to

Auckland Canoe Club

without having to enter the account number.

Check with your bank.

Kayak Hire

To book a kayak, enter details in the diary. Check diary before taking a kayak.

Kayak Hire Rates

Single kayaks

Daily hire – out am, back pm \$20.00

Half day – out am, back am
out pm, back pm \$10.00

Double kayaks

Daily hire – out am, back pm \$30.00

Half day – out am back am
out pm back pm \$15.00

- Please enter details of hire in register and on an envelope.
- Put money in envelope and place envelope in honesty box.
- **No I.O.U.s!**
- Carry or wheel kayaks to water.
- No seal launching.
- Please wash kayaks before returning to rack.
- Report faults or problems on the faults/problems sheet.

Regular Events

Vine House Weekends



On one weekend each month we have the use of Vine House. This gem in Mahurangi Harbour is a 2 km paddle from Sullivan's Bay, which is the ARC park at the end of the Mahurangi West Road, first on the right past Puhoi.

The house sleeps 10 and has all creature comforts. Bring sleeping bag, pillow case and food. A shared meal and nibbles is the norm for Saturday night, so bring your goodies.

Lagoon Bay is very tidal, so bringing a kayak trolley is a good idea. The range of paddling is endless, e.g. Waiwera, Warkworth, Kawau Island, Motuora Island – your choice. Or just rest and read and enjoy this tranquil and special place. We recommend you take a carry bag to get all your gear up the track to the house. Secure parking is at Sullivan's Bay. Leave a note on your dashboard reading "Vine House Volunteer" when you park in front of the ranger's house.

Please ring to book a bed, and for detailed directions. **Trevor 817 7357 or Matt 817 1984.**

Saturday Morning Coffee Cruise

Most Saturday mornings some club members do a short paddle from the club lock up at Okahu Bay.

We set off from the lock up at 9.00, returning by 12.30. The level is fairly easy and you can nearly always hire a club kayak. The route depends on the tide and the weather. We often paddle out to Bean Rock lighthouse and then stop at Kohi Beach for coffee in a local cafe before paddling back.

Join us for a relaxed paddle. It's a great way to meet people in the club.

Be aware: People don't go every week. You might go one week when no-one else happens to turn up.

You should have basic paddling skills to join this group, you will be responsible for yourself.

Note: Paddlers under 18 to be accompanied by a guardian!

For more information, go to:

<http://www.mapmyrun.com/routes/view/127561>

NEW MEMBERS



Welcome

The Committee extends a warm welcome to the following new members ...

Rob Brown, Jacquie James, Johannes Van Oldenborgh and Alex & Judy Vartzbed/Newton.



Deadline for Next Newsletter

15 June 2015

Around Great Barrier January 2015

Rosemary Gatland

One early morning in January, with a good forecast, Lester, Kevin, Karyn, Philip, Sue and myself met on the wharf in Auckland to catch the ferry to Great Barrier Island with the goal of completing a circumnavigation of the island. We had started planning this trip a few months previously, making good use of Colin Quilter's notes to do so. At the wharf, we wheeled our loaded kayaks onto the ferry and settled down for the trip across to Tryphena.

Off the ferry at Tryphena, we had a short walk along the road to a small sandy beach, where we launched at 1.30 for the first leg around Cape Barrier to Medlands Beach and our first campsite. We had calm conditions as we set off, but once we started to go around the cape, the seas became confused, and it was rather like being in a washing machine. We stopped at Rosalie Bay for a break, this boulder beach being one of two possible landing places on this leg of the trip.

Medlands Beach is a surf beach. However, the campground is at the southern end of the beach near where the coast curves around to a small peninsula, so we were able to land in a partially sheltered area where the surf was small. From there we wheeled out kayaks a short distance along a track to the camp site, where we soon had the tents erected and the billies on.

The next day we had a relatively short leg, to Harataonga Bay. After launching at Medlands, the first part of this leg was along off Medlands Beach then past Kaitoke Beach, which is about 4 kilometres long. There was a little more wind than the previous day, and the seas were lumpy but not unpleasant. Heading up past Kaitoke Beach, the swell was rolling in from the east, while waves were coming at us from the west, or coast side. Past Kaitoke Beach we started seeing some interesting rock formations along the coast, then rounded Whaktautuna point to head into Harataonga Bay.

Harataonga is another surf beach, and on our arrival off the beach, we spent a while observing the surf before deciding where to land, which we all did without incident. The campsite is 300 metres up a stream which has its mouth at the north end of the bay. This stream becomes very shallow as the water runs across the beach and out to sea, but behind the beach a small lagoon has formed. Once we had landed we moved our kayaks across to this lagoon and from there we were able to paddle up to the campsite. This campsite, like the one at Medlands, is accessible by road and is popular with some of the locals, who spend their summer holiday here.

The leg for the third day was up to Rangihakaaea Bay, which is known locally as Wreck Bay. We had

a south-westerly wind of about 15 knots, so were reasonably sheltered most of the way. We stopped for a break at the site of the SS *Wairarapa* graves at the north end of Whangapoua Beach. This is one of the two places on the island where those who lost their lives in this disaster are buried.

From Whangapoua Beach it was only a short distance of a few kilometres to Wreck Bay. This unofficial campsite is at the head of the bay. Up past the DoC sign is an area where some time in the past pig hunters have set up a table and some seating. This is where we put up our tents under some trees. A short distance behind the camp site is a stream with good drinking water.

The next day's leg took us up around the northern part of the island to Miners' Cove. We headed up the east coast in good conditions. At the northern end of the main island is a line of smaller islands very close together and with Needles Point as the northernmost point. Philip checked out a tunnel which is a short cut through to the western side of the island. It looked calm as he entered, but he was picked up by a surge and rushed through. At the other end, he turned and came back out to where we were waiting, saying "Don't go that way." We headed about 1½ kilometres further north and went through a gap south of Aiguilles Island instead. Conditions on this side of the island were different. We now had a head wind, lumpy seas, and williwaws, with some calmer patches.

We followed the coast along to Miners' Head. It was near this place that the SS *Wairarapa* was wrecked on 29 October 2014, and is recorded as the third worst shipwreck in New Zealand history. This steamer did a regular run between Sydney and Auckland. On this occasion the ship had taken a different route past Three Kings Islands, and at midnight in fog crashed into the cliffs near Miners' Head, with 170 passengers and 65 crew on board. There were only 114 survivors.

As we came around Miners' head, we could see signs of the copper mining which had gone on here from 1842 to 1867. Our landing place was Miners' Cove, now an historic reserve. From the beach, we paddled up the stream to a suitable camping area. There was a very large flat area behind the stony beach, covered in flax bushes, weeds, and timber washed down in the June 2014 storm, but we were able to find a good place for our tents not far from where we pulled our kayaks out onto the bank.

Our goal the next day was Akapoua Bay near Port Fitzroy. We headed south along the coast past some

Continued on page 5 ➤

great rock formations to Katherine Bay, then turned west to go around the peninsula. At the southern end of the tip of this peninsula, not far from Rabbit Island we had one of the highlights of the trip. A pod of dolphins was close inshore. Some were feeding along the shoreline, and others were leaping out of the water. We stayed for some time observing them as they played around us.

On our arrival at Akapoua Bay, we set up camp. This campsite was another area affected by the June 2014 storm. It was closed for some months and only reopened in December, with some areas yet to be regressed.

We declared the next day a rest day, staying at this campsite for two nights. We did a lovely bush walk which started not far from the campsite and went up to a waterfall then continued on to come out on the road not far from the wharf at Port Fitzroy. Back at the campsite, Frederick the camp warden had baked a batch of scones which he gave to us. He also came over to give us a hand the next morning with our launching preparations. The tide was out so we had a further distance to carry everything to the water's edge. This beach, described in Colin's notes as "Oysters at low tide", is now muddy at low tide, probably as a result of the silt being washed down in the June storm.

The next day we headed to Whangaparapara via the Broken Islands. Once again we had some great rock

formations. Out on one of the islands we saw a gannet colony, and we also had two more encounters with dolphins.

We had another rest day here, and walked the Mill Track from the campsite to the site of the Kauri Timber Company sawmill, passing an historic steam traction engine that was formerly used in the milling operations. This machine is being regularly painted to help preserve it.

At the mill site, a lot of devastation from the June storm was evident. Big logs had been washed downstream from the hills behind the area. We walked up the stream bed, and could see the slips in the hills where these logs had come from widening and lining the sides of the stream bed as they were washed down. Beyond the mill site, we could see where the old whaling station had been, but we did not walk over to it.

The final leg of our trip was from Whangaparapara to Tryphena, still with good weather, and we took our time. The water was very clear and we spent some time observing the fish life as we drifted along. We went into Okopu Beach for morning tea, where Sue produced a birthday cake for Philip.

As we approached Tryphena Harbour, we could see the ferry coming in. We landed very near the wharf at a tiny beach and were able to wheel our kayaks over an area of flat rock onto the road by the wharf. Not too long later, we were on the ferry heading home.



PHOTO LESTER MILLER

Poet's Corner

*A brisk Norwest
Some threatening cloud
Shall I get out there
Will I allow
That wee bit of wind
To stop me from doing
Something I love
Paddle or swimming
Tomorrow's no good
Yesterday's gone
Today is just perfect
When all's said and done
Will I remember
Shall I forget
Those days in my kayak
The times getting wet
When practising rolling
Getting back in
The joy of achievement*

*You know what I mean
Who knows of the future
The past soon forgot
Historical war zones
Remembering what
To prevent the same things
From happening now
Not one lesson learned
Of sword turned to plough
So that is my question
To do stuff that I love
Doing no harm
When push comes to shove
And will I recall
As I lie on my bed
Those days of adventure
Or cleaning the shed.*

Mike Randall

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Membership subscriptions for April 2015 to March 2016 are now due.

Please check the label on your newsletter.

If it says **SUBS DUE, LAST NEWSLETTER** then please renew your subs.

Subs renewed in the last week of May have not yet been processed.

If you are one of those, please ignore the Last Newsletter warning.

- Pay on-line (see Club Banking Details on page 2)
- Use the form on the last page and pop it in the post.

Otherwise if it says **RENEWED** then you are current with your membership.

UPDATE CONTACT DETAILS

Please can everyone update their contact details,
especially home and mobile numbers as many are now obsolete on our list.

email secretary@aucklandcanoecub.org.nz

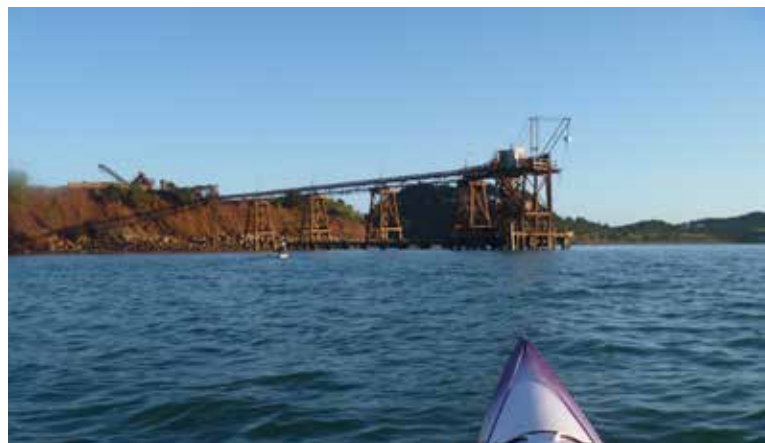
On the waterfront

Roger Lomas

Our 2015 AGM was a very smooth and seamless affair. We have a good and capable crew elected back onto the committee. We are happy now to proceed onwards for another chapter of Auckland Canoe Club activities and adventures. Highlights from this year's meeting would have to include the positive attitude that prevailed throughout the evening. Some good forward planning was achieved in the trips department, with an intentions form being circulated amongst the attendees. This ended up being very well subscribed. Most would have probably failed to read the small print 'club commitment clause' tucked away on the reverse side of the back page before signing. But never mind, re-elected club president, Philip has been empowered to pester for fulfilment. We also took time to bestow due recognition upon some of our club's hard working heroes. Matt Crozier was the popular recipient of the prestigious Evan Stubbs Memorial Award for services to kayaking. Our other major award winner for the evening was club newsletter editor Claire O'Connor, who received the Outstanding Service Award. Claire is now based in Rotorua and the thunderous applause that she received at the presentation, was probably heard all the way down to her new home-town.

Not able to be present on the evening, but certainly deserving of a special mention were two other club members. John Hotham, for showing great initiative in planning an interesting selection of pleasant day trips for our members over the last year. He also set new standards for post paddle hospitality. Linda Frey is also to be acknowledged for her delightful trip report contribution in the December newsletter. This article coincidentally, just happened to be about another John Hotham inspired trip. Well done to both of you, and we hopefully look forward to more.

Karamuramu Island lies just off Kawakawa Bay on our south-eastern coast. Over the last hundred years, it has become better known as McCullams Island. This was in recognition of the namesake family partnership which started a quarry here in 1908. This quarry is still being worked today and has dramatically altered the island's profile. The island is easily identified by the ancient old iron gantry that juts from its southern side. This gantry loads the mined aggregate out onto the barge bound for Auckland. Most kayakers paddling around this way pay scant attention to this tiny island. And for good reason too; it looks dull and drab in its industrial coat of dust and rust. Very little of the island's original bulk, which once boasted a lofty hill, now remains. What you can see is actually a facade, hiding the island's very own dirty little secret. It's hollow and getting more so each year as mining continues.



McCullams Island awaits a visit from a small group of club kayakers. It is a desolate landscape of red gravel, boulders and bulldozers. Little now remains of its former splendour, and even less lies beyond the island's outer rim.

The quarry floor is now well below sea level. So what has become of McCullams Island, where has it all gone you may well ask? The answer actually lies beneath our feet, above our heads and at the side of the road. McCullams was mined for its special reddish-brown mudstone. When quarried and crushed, the fine aggregate produced was used as a stone chip topping for our footpaths, our iconic red footpaths. It was also extensively used for the red stone chip metal roof tiles and more recently as the red shoulder strip along the sides of our motorways. So next time you are paddling out that way, pause and pay tribute to little Karamuramu, the island that gave its heart and soul to our big city.

Vine House received a special visitor late last month. Matt Crozier took his brand spanking new Interface sea kayak over for the regular monthly gathering. It was a wild windy weekend and Matt was keen to put his new ultra-light weight stead through its paces. Speed trials soon saw off the competition on the short choppy trip across the channel. A true test of any sea kayak just has to include a dunk test. The sleek Barracuda V bottom was briefly on display as Matt inverted the craft. Then with just a swift sweep of the paddle and a sharp flick of the hip, everything was topside again. Any sound sea kayaker also knows that sh.t sometimes happens at sea. So a re-entry and roll was next on the test list. Matt gave the new craft a big thumbs up here. He reported that he was most impressed with the way that the kayak almost completely self-bailed its cockpit during this

Continued on page 8 ➤

manoeuvre. Matt's only gripe however was that his new kayak is slightly smaller than the former old faithful. There might be a problem finding room for all of Matt's food after the camping gear is stowed. Look out for a new ultra-light weight Matt during this adjustment period.

Okahu Bay has never quite been the same since the demise of the waterfront café at Fergs Kayaks. Famous for its freshly baked muffins, it was the preferred parking place for the parched paddler in those brief few years of its enterprise. Ever inventive, our very own club members soon responded to its closure. It was probably a fine balance between their addiction to the product of the Arabica beans and a need to justify owning a kayak, but the Coffee Cruise soon evolved. This evocative sounding Saturday morning special has been a regular feature on the club calendar ever since. It has embraced far ranging coastal cafes from Devonport to St Heliers, with many more in between. Essentially just a very relaxed informal outing, it has fostered many fine friendships over the years. New members are welcome and encouraged to tag along. They will gain both skills and confidence as well as that fresh frothy latte. This pleasant little get together happens on most sunny weekends. The cruise starts and finishes outside the club locker down at Okahu Bay. Our club kayak hire fleet is readily available for members to use if required.

Former prolific club paddler Gerard Fagen has been missing from action for many a month now. Some of us were quite worried that he might have sunk out at sea or something even worse. Gerard is well known for his kayaking exploits in that distinctive blue and yellow Barracuda Safari. He is also known for being a real stickler for perfection in when it comes to getting weight balance correct in a sea going kayak. Gerard has even been known to utilize movable lead ballast blocks to trim his craft to just right. So when he was missing for a while, some of us shuddered with the thought that perhaps the ballast blocks might have moved in stormy seas. A list might have developed and a disaster could have occurred. Well we can happily report that he is safe, but it is still questionable about sound. He is back out on the water again after resting up during a prolonged non-kayak injury recovery spell. We were all pleased to catch up with him again at the recent AGM. Here we learnt that he has recently purchased another very distinctive Safari sea kayak: an orange and white one this time. This will compliment his existing craft. Don't be surprised if you soon see some strange markings along the sides of this colourful new Fagen fleet. It could well be Plimsoll loading lines.

In the last weeks of autumn, the wild winter weather arrived. The forecast was bleak and paddling options for the early morning group were minimised. It's just as well that we always have a fall-back alternative for this scenario. Our little group likes to seek sanctuary from the tempest just beyond the Bombay Hills.

The Waikato wetlands beckon. We all met up at the Mercer boat ramp before paddling out onto a high flowing Waikato River. It's only about two kilometres upstream to the confluence of the Whangamarino River but the fast flowing Waikato made us work hard to get there. Once off the big river, the tributaries flow felt minimal and we marvelled at the autumn colours on the riverside trees. It was still duck shooting season and we felt a little apprehensive as we paddled deeper into the wetlands. A few more kilometres further up the Whangamarino is a weir that maintains water levels in this important eco-environment during the drier summer season. There was no shortage of the wet stuff when we arrived and the weir was a raging torrent that we had to portage around. We surveyed it well, knowing that it would be a fun run over it on the way back. A little bit further upstream we branched off into the even slower flowing Maramarua River. We had sheep on the stop-banks to the left and duck shooters swamp-land to the right. Someone started mimicking the duelling banjos song, punctuated with a vulgar squealing pig noise or two, and we all hurried along.

Continued on page 9 ➤



It's all ashore to portage the Whangamarino weir in the wetlands. During the drier summer months the flow is minimal and the weir has a considerably greater height. As with many river rapids, the weir will all but disappear at peak flood times.



The giant Archimedes screw in action. It lifts water draining out of former swamp-land below Mangatawhiri, into the Maramarua River just beyond the flood bank. That's a spare gearbox for the screw just to the left of the engine-house. The broad flat plate nearby is a spare sluice gate. The Toyota Ute to the right gives some perspective to the scene.



These floodgates, located at the very lower extremities of the Whangamarino River, act as guardians for the wet-lands beyond. The paddlers are all looking a bit anxious because some wag has just advised them to be wary of their rapid guillotine like action during closure.

Our destination was now only a few kilometres more upstream. We had come to see the biggest Archimedes screw pump in New Zealand and we were in luck. It was working. It's a monster of a machine that churns out over a million litres of water a minute. The big screw pump drains a large block of former wet-lands, now opened up for farming. We came ashore for a closer look and a cuppa. A couple of Environment Waikato officers were busy taking water samples above and below this terrifying beast. They warned us to be very careful around it. We hunkered down for our cuppa huddled behind the auger engine-house to escape a strong southerly squall that was blowing through. Here we quietly contemplated the fate of any poor unfortunate that happened to slip and be sucked into the auger

gurgling away below us. He might end up a bit like the biscuit that we were dunking in our cuppa. The run back downstream to Mercer was brisk, and we all made it safely over the weir. Quick work with the kayak clean-up was assisted by the sight of another scudding squall rapidly approaching. Any trip to Mercer is not complete without a visit to the famous Pokeno Bacon and Eggs establishment. This is located in the nearby food-court complex, next to the Mobil station. As we all tucked into our generous sized servings, we couldn't help but notice the constant stream of hungry travellers calling in with similar intentions. Just a short stroll away, Mr McDonald's restaurant was almost empty.

See you out there.

Roger

The Auckland Canoe Club Winter Lecture Series 2015

Wednesday 17th June

Venue: Lecture Room 2, The Marine Rescue Centre
(next to the downtown heliport on Tamaki Drive)

Meet at 7.00pm for a 7.30pm start

All welcome, so bring along family and friends. A light supper will be available and it's all free.

Further shows in the series will be held on successive months through until August. Look out for the upcoming promotions, and remember that they are all being held on the third Wednesday of each month.

If you would like more information, or would like to help, contact Roger on 846 6799.

Wednesday, 17th June :: Cycle-touring Iceland

Colin Quilter

After giving many winter lectures I've begun to wonder whether folk will get tired of hearing me talk about kayaking (or whether I might get tired of it myself)! To avoid that possibility, here's something different. In 2014 I spent a month cycle-touring in Iceland with my daughter Jenni. For anyone who enjoys volcanoes, glaciers, wild coasts and empty roads, Iceland has much to offer. Of course the climate is a challenge, but after a while we discovered ways of coping with bad weather. Another challenge is the cost of travelling in Iceland, which (even after the economic crash of 2008 which caused the kroner to lose half its value overnight), is higher than in almost any other country.

In this talk I'll explain where we went, how to camp happily for a month in gales, low temperatures and rain; and how to do it at a cost which is affordable.

Disclaimer: there are no kayaks in this talk.

However there are Vikings, pirates, outlaws, murders, rape, pillage, etc. Parental discretion is advised.



DOUBLE SEA KAYAK FOR SALE

Paddling Perfection

'Sea Bear II – Packhorse Express' in Kevlar layup

A fantastic boat for experienced paddlers and beginners alike.
Carries huge loads if necessary. Very stable and reasonably fast.

The boat is in 'mint' condition

Asking \$4,000 including spray decks (new price approx. \$6,000)

Pick up in Auckland

Please contact Lynne Laracy or Peter Moses on 027 212 3889 or 09 528 8097

Be careful what you wish for...

Colin Quilter

February is the month when we are most likely to get a long spell of fine weather, so that's the time I usually take a few weeks off to travel along the coast in my kayak. This year, I planned to leave from Herne Bay Beach, near home, and head around the Coromandel Peninsula into the Bay of Plenty. I hoped that once I got there, a slow-moving anticyclone might give me fine weather and light winds to traverse the long beaches which stretch from Waihi across to Opotiki. It is always unwise to ask for too much from the Weather Gods, and on this occasion they saw an opportunity to play one of their little jokes ... but more of that later.

Mike Randall cycled along from Kohimarama to help me get my kayak and gear down the steps to the beach at Herne Bay. The first few paddle-strokes in a heavily-loaded boat are always a slight shock – the boat feels dead in the water, and gathers speed very slowly – but soon it felt quite normal. I had taken care to leave on an ebb tide, so the current carried me steadily seaward past the city wharves. Tidal streams run fast here, (more so since the harbour has been narrowed by wharf reclamation), and it pays to avoid a battle against the current.

Near the Bean Rock lighthouse a light northerly breeze made itself felt, and with a sigh of relief I hoisted my sail. Immediately the paddle felt light, and the boat slipped forward effortlessly as if an unseen hand was pushing it along. I've been using the sail for a decade now, and it adds so much pleasure to long trips that each day I plan my course to make best use of whatever wind is forecast.



My kayak sail in operation, (a photo taken on another occasion).

Someone commented to me recently, "Well it's not really kayaking then, is it? You can't claim to have paddled somewhere if you have used a sail. It's a sailboat, not a kayak." I agree completely. But my goal is not to paddle from A to B; it's to have an enjoyable holiday travelling along the coast in a boat small enough to drag ashore each night. If I could think of a different kind of small boat which would be better suited to this sort of travel, then I would use it. But all the other possible types – sailing dinghies for example – seem to me to have disadvantages which make them less suitable than my present boat. (This could develop into an interesting discussion about small-boat cruising, particularly as the NZ naval architect John Welsford has developed an international reputation for designing small camp-cruising sailboats, which you might reasonably suggest would be more suitable for the type of holidays that I enjoy. Perhaps I'll discuss that in a future article).

At noon I found myself near the southern tip of Browns Island and stopped there for lunch; then set off along Tamaki Strait. This is the 20km-long corridor of water which stretches east-west with Waiheke and Ponui Islands forming its northern shore and Howick, Beachlands and Maraetai the southern shore. Beyond Maraetai is the Duder Peninsula, and on its southern side a small campground (Te Wharau) has been established by the Auckland Council, specifically for kayakers. I called in to check it out; it's a pleasant spot with fresh water, a toilet and some shade; but a little rough underfoot. An hour or so further east there is a second new campsite, at Waitawa Bay (near Kawakawa Bay), so I stopped there for the night. This is a larger site, east-facing, and well sheltered from most winds, but with only a little shade. There's a cooking shelter too.

Next morning was quiet, with heavy grey clouds drifting across the Firth of Thames in a light westerly wind. I set off sailing and paddling across the Firth without paying much attention to where I was going, with the inevitable result that when, after four hours, I found myself among islands north of Coromandel Harbour, I wasn't immediately sure which islands they were! Such sloppy navigation would not be approved by My Lords of the Admiralty, but I think Huckleberry Finn would have understood.

Continued on page 12 ➤



Crossing the Firth of Thames, with heavy clouds hanging overhead.

After lunch (on a small mainland beach, because there were no easy landings on the nearby islands), I set off to the north. During lunch the light westerly had become an unpleasantly strong onshore wind. The Firth was now flecked with whitecaps and steep short waves were breaking on the rocky coast. I looked for a landing. There is a waterfront campground at Papaaroa, but the stony beach there faced directly into the wind and dirty brown breakers were heaving themselves onto it. Further along, the coast turned NE so I had the wind from astern, but no sign of a landing ... until, to my joy, at Amodeo Bay I spotted a small concrete boat ramp just a few metres wide tucked in behind a reef, giving a protected landing. The motor camp near the ramp was clean, shady and sheltered from the wind, so I settled in there happily for the evening. (This would make an excellent base to stay for a few days, doing day trips out to the islands offshore, and I filed it away in memory for future reference).

The evening weather forecast was not good. A northerly wind (which would be a headwind for me), was due to arrive tomorrow. I rose early next morning and walked down to the beach, prepared to cancel paddling if necessary; but all seemed calm so I packed quickly, launched my boat, and paddled northward. Several hours passed and light rain set in, but still no wind. The DOC campground at Fantail Bay came abeam, and from here, with the outgoing tidal current running in my favour, I made easy progress out to Port Jackson. I pitched my tent in the rain and was able to enjoy lunch under shelter.

After a night of steady rain the wind now backed to the west, and there followed two days of 40-knot southwesterlies. You would think that Port Jackson, with its wide bay opening to the north, would be well sheltered from SW winds. But heavy gusts come thumping down from the hills behind the bay, and the campers who had chosen beachfront sites (with a sea view) were exposed to the full force of the squalls. I was interested to see how various types of tent fared in these conditions. The old-fashioned rectangular canvas-and-steel-frame tents seemed to stand up well, but the cheap light-weight dome tents did not. They oscillated in the gusts like enormous jellyfish until their poles snapped, piercing the fabric of the tent, and then the whole structure flogged madly in the wind while the owners tried to gather it in. I was able to find a sheltered spot well back from the beach, where two hedges met in a corner, and had a relatively quiet time.

Continued on page 13 ➤



The boat launching ramp at Amodeo Bay, sheltered by a ledge of rocks. The islands in the background are Square Is (left), Double Is and Happy Jack (right). All of them are interesting places to visit, and easily accessible from Amodeo Bay.



From my tent in Port Jackson I could see Channel Island, and the Nowcasting channel on VHF gave me the windspeed there. The area between Channel Island and Cape Colville is well known for the overfalls which develop there whenever a strong wind opposes the tidal stream. In this case the flood tide is running against a 40 knot southwesterly wind. It's no place for a kayak to be in these conditions.

After two days of walking, reading and listening to the radio in Port Jackson the wind eased and I set off once more. I dawdled slowly along the coast past Fletcher Bay, Stony Bay and Port Charles. The ebb tide sets SE along this part of the coast, and runs strongly, so it was good to have it in my favour. I found that between Port Charles and Waikawau Bay (a 10km stretch) there are no soft landings, and I was ready to stop when I reached the huge DOC campground at the eastern end of the beach.

It was, by now, a hot afternoon. I pulled my kayak on its trolley across the beach and along a short dirt road but strange to say, could not find the actual campground. The first green field I reached had a DOC sign, "Natural hazard area: no camping." The next one said "Day picnic area: no camping." I wiped the sweat from my forehead, grumbled to myself, and kept going. Eventually I crossed a bridge and found a paddock crowded with tents and camper vans, but the only shady spot left empty was in a corner not marked as a campsite. I was certain that officialdom would not allow me to pitch my tent here, but I was too tired to pull my kayak any further, so I left it there and went in search of the DOC office. The building, when I eventually found it, doubled as a camp store and there was a long queue of teenagers waiting to buy icecreams. When at last I reached the head of the queue I found a DOC ranger who looked as sweaty and tired as I was. I explained to her that I had arrived by kayak, and where I had left it, and waited for her to tell me that I must drag it another kilometre to a designated campsite; but she just smiled and said, "Darling, you can camp wherever you like." My bad temper evaporated. As I walked back to my kayak I remembered that the Christians have a saying, "A soft answer turneth away wrath," and I reflected that there's certainly truth in it.

Next morning was clear and calm. A few kilometers south of Waikawau Bay there is a headland, unnamed on my map, which is significant for kayakers because when you reach it a wide view suddenly opens up to the south. Drifting in my boat I could see a great sweep of beaches: Kennedy Bay on my right, then Whangapoua, Matarangi, Kuaotunu, and Otama. All these were familiar to me, so when, moments later, a light northerly breeze arrived, I decided to bypass them all, hoist my sail, and head 20km straight across open water to Opito Bay. Needless to say, as soon as I had committed myself to this crossing the breeze died away, but it was hard to complain about such gentle conditions and after a few hours of paddling I landed at Opito Bay for lunch.

In the afternoon I entered Mercury Bay. There are some attractive bush-clad beaches along its northern shore so I travelled slowly from one to another, landing several times but not finding a good spot to camp. A brisk SW headwind arrived mid-afternoon, and since I was now close to Whitianga I was forced to look for a commercial campground. Some swimmers whom I spoke to at Buffalo Beach recommended a motor camp at Flaxmill Bay, (between Whitianga and Cooks Beach), so at 6pm that's where I pulled ashore, tired but satisfied after a 50km day. The motor camp was excellent, with plenty of shade and clean facilities; (like Amodeo Bay, this would be a very good base for day trips in future).

Continued on page 14 ➤



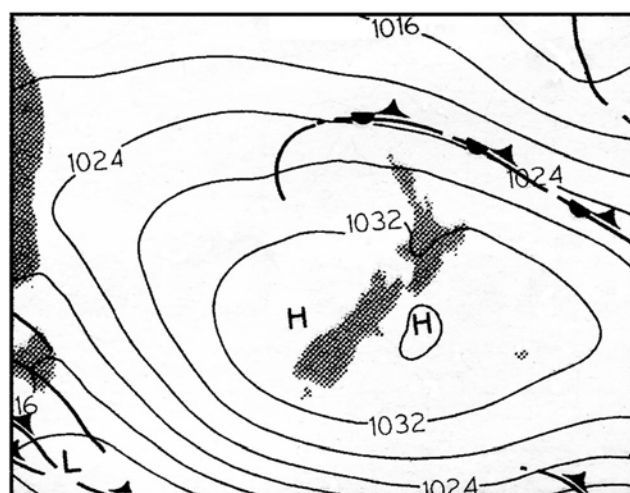
The Flaxmill Bay motor camp had a friendly cat. Every campground should have one!

In the morning I paddled eastward past a series of well-known beaches: Cooks Beach, Cathedral Cove, and Hahei; then out of Mercury Bay and along the rugged coast to Hot Water Beach. South of Hot Water Beach there's an easy landing in a cove at Boat Harbour (which is still, thankfully, undeveloped). I landed there for lunch and then set off again to the south, reaching Tairua just as a southeasterly headwind began to freshen. Soon it was up to 15 knots and with my progress slowed to a crawl it was an easy decision to enter the Tairua Harbour through its narrow (and shallow) entrance. I found the only motor camp which is in the centre of town. It is a bit run down and lacking shade, but has the advantage of being next door to the public library. If you must be held ashore by a headwind, then a library is a great asset!

However the long-term weather forecast, when I obtained it on a computer in the library, made grim reading. My wish for a large, slow-moving anticyclone had been granted by the Weather Gods; but the anticyclone was centered on the South Island. Winds rotate anticlockwise around a centre of High pressure, so this High was sending fresh southeasterlies across the Bay of Plenty; and they

would continue as long as the High remained in place, which the forecasters predicted would be about a week.

I stayed in Tairua for another two days, hoping that the forecasters were wrong and that the High might move away to the east. My time was occupied with reading, listening to the radio, and walks up the headland at Paku. The view from the summit was depressing. The wind had settled at E 25, and grey swells stretched out to the horizon. Surf was now breaking right across the harbour entrance. As the High remained stubbornly in place the date when the wind was predicted to ease or change direction kept creeping forward, so that after two days any change was still predicted to be a further week away.



The isobaric chart for February 15, while I waited impatiently in Tairua. It doesn't look like a weather map which would bring a kayaking trip to a premature end!

Eventually it just seemed foolish to waste another week in Tairua. I caught the bus home, and returned the following day in my car to pick up the kayak. This is the first time in a decade of February trips that I've had to abandon one half-way through, but I was philosophical about it. Like a poker player who has been dealt a bad hand, I could only play with the cards which had been dealt to me; and my hand was not a good one. Next time I'll keep any thoughts about stationary anticyclones to myself!

AUCKLAND CANOE CLUB

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM



New Member

Renewing

IF YOUR DETAILS HAVE CHANGED PLEASE UPDATE US

Surname: _____ **First Name:** _____

Family Name(s) _____

Address: _____ **Suburb:** _____ **City:** _____

Phone (home): _____ **Mobile:** _____ **Fax:** _____

Phone (work): _____ **Email:** _____

Rate your Experience:

I have completed a basic skills course.

No Experience

Novice (confidently forward and backpaddle, paddle for 30 mins without rest)

Intermediate (able to brace, perform a deep water entry, paddle for at least 2 hours or 25 km)

Advanced (self rescue in all situations, off-shore paddling experience)

Do you own a kayak? **Yes** **No** **If YES list type(s):** _____

Please select the types of kayaking your are most interested in:

Sea kayaking

Touring

Sea kayaking racing

Whitewater

Surf/rodeo/polo

MultiSport

Kayak trips: Are you interested in co-ordinating kayak trips ? **Yes** **No**

To comply with the Privacy Act 1993, please read and complete the form below.

I Agree **I Disagree**

To let the Auckland Canoe Club publish my name, address phone Number or any other information concerning me in the Club Newsletter or to National Canoe Associations. I accept responsibility for correcting this information where applicable.

The Auckland Canoe Club and its officers take no responsibility for any injury any person may suffer, or any damage to equipment, while participating in the Club's kayaking activities. Any Person, who does participate, acts at his or her own risk.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Fees for the year ending 31 March

Member \$30

Family \$35

Life Member

Post to: Auckland Canoe Club, PO Box 9271 Newmarket, Auckland

Total Payment

Cheque

Bank Transfer

Bank: BNZ, Newmarket

Acct: 02-0100-0023453-000

Name: Auckland Canoe Club

Particulars: **Your name & initials**

Code: **Subscription**



If address is incorrect, please return to:
Auckland Canoe Club, P.O. Box 9271, Newmarket, Auckland

From: Auckland Canoe Club, P.O. Box 9271, Newmarket, Auckland



To:

