



March/April 2016

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Annual General Meeting – Monday, May 16

See details on page 13.



Three long distance travellers gather for a brief meeting off the North Otago coast. Was this the calm before the storm? Read more about this adventure on page 11.

PHOTO KRISTINE VAN KUYK

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
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(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 Sullivans 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 café 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, contact either Lester Miller on 575 5942 or Chris Dentith on 486 5599.

NEW MEMBERS



Welcome

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

**Katie Miller
and Brett Lawton.**



Deadline for Next Newsletter

31 May 2016

OBITUARY

Ron Augustin – Inventor and kayak designer



It is with sadness that we announce the death of Ron Augustin.

Ron and Nancy joined the Auckland Canoe Club in the early seventies. After a trip on the Wanganui River, they were hooked on kayaking – in a very big way.

With a background in Mini powerboat racing and marine engineering, Ron designed and built kayaks. The first models were marine ply kitsets. They ranged from kids and river boats to eventually the now famous Seabear sea kayaks.

Paddling Perfection was one of the early builders of singles and doubles for sea kayakers. Right from the beginning, Ron and Nancy shared their love and enthusiasm for kayaking with anyone. The Auckland Canoe Club benefitted from their knowledge and support. So did the Coastguard, Girl Guides, local schools and many youth organisations looking for support with canoeing. Many “mature adventurers” got their introduction to sea kayaking on Seabear Tours run on the Hauraki Gulf.

Ron, you will be sadly missed, but with the knowledge that your family will carry on the solid teachings in kayaking and outdoor activities.

Our condolences go to Nancy and your family.

Poet's Corner

*Remember the Cat
Who paddled with Owl
Owl married the Puke
'Cos cats not allowed
On Rangī
And how it all started
With their buying a double
And ended with trouble
Well I hope my decision
To follow suit
And purchase a double
Of a bright yellow colour
Means a happier outcome
In this boat made for two
My love's not a pussycat
And I've not the wisdom
To morph into owl
So all should be well
With this paddling pair*

*Mutiny's out
She's a skipper most rare
So after the years of paddling singles
The technique to learn
Is paddle stroke syncing
With me at the back
I'm watching the front
Paddle movements with care
To get it just right
Forgiveness is all
In a boat of this size
So it's fresh country paddling
In this new yellow double
Yes all will be well
If we keep out of trouble.*

Refer to two previous poems about the Owl and the Pussycat in earlier newsletters

Mike Randall

KAWAU ISLAND CIRCUMNAVIGATION – 5 March 2016

Peter Van Kuyk

With a forecast of sunny weather and light southerly then nor-easterly winds, it was surprising that more paddlers didn't turn up for Gerard Fagan's trip. Perhaps the 30km distance put them off.



Kawau Island at dawn, from Martins Bay. Beehive Island at right.

Travelling anti-clockwise around the island, we passed Beehive Island and then had a brief stop on a stony beach after 1 hour and 20 minutes. Gerard showed Peter how to re-balance the weight in his kayak using a piece of square timber as the fulcrum, with the kayak as a see-saw. Pretty much everything in the rear compartment was moved to the front, and everything in the front was moved to the rear. The ideal balance point is 200–300mm in front of Neutral (kayak empty).



Shark patrol on eastern side of Kawau Island. Barge in background is being towed north by a tug.



Approaching our second rest stop near Fairchild Reef at 1130. Beware the two rocks in the centre of the beach at low tide.



Sailing past holiday homes at northern end of Kawau Island. The NE breeze didn't last long.



Gerard found a kahawai for the cat!

He was trolling two lures behind the kayak throughout the trip, and just 10 minutes after leaving Martins Bay hooked up with a kingfish. Unfortunately it got away. Later a seagull plucked his line out of the water and dropped it across the back deck, much to his consternation!



Mansion House on Kawau Island.

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Kawau Island Circumnavigation

Continued from page 5

Mansion House was originally the residence for the mine superintendent on the island. In 1862 the island and home were purchased by Sir George Grey, one of New Zealand's most influential and controversial political figures. He populated it with wallabies, possums and peacocks. Our third rest stop was just around the corner.



Fishing at One Tree Hill.



Dyson Light (1930).

An electric beacon installed on Martello Rock, near Kawau Island. Named in honour of F S Dyson, former district commissioner of works.



Terns at Martins Bay.



Swimmers and boaties at Martins Bay, 25°C at 4pm.



Little blue penguin.



North Channel from Algies Bay.

Little Barrier Island in background left, Moehau in background right, Kawau Island at right. Tankers heading to/from Marsden Point.

Statistics

Arrive at Martins Bay	0715
Start	0800
Finish	1530
Actual paddling time	5hrs 10mins
Distance	30km
Average Speed	5.8km/h
Time ashore(4 stops)	2hrs 20mins

A new Kayak attraction for Auckland

Ian Calhaem



Why have I included a photograph of a Rapa Nui Moai (Easter Island statue) in this article – because it is part of the latest Kayak attraction to come to Auckland!

This statue is part of the multicultural environment being created in Manukau – the Wero Whitewater Park due to open in April this year.

Wero is a Charity set up to encourage kayaking and white water rafting for all comers. It is being managed by our own Ian Ferguson and will enable everyone, after an introductory training course, to kayak moving water.

The Park is set up with three main attractions, an introductory/training course, a completion course, and a 4m waterfall (the only one in the world).

I had the opportunity to accompany Ian Ferguson whilst the first full wet test was carried out of all three attractions.



View showing the three attractions and the escalators.

This facility is impressive! I have seen (and tried) the facility in Penrith, Sydney and this is going to be much better.

You will be able to take your own kayaks, or hire kayaks on site. Everyone will be tested to make sure they can swim and then be issued with a permanent pass specifying which attraction they are qualified for. Coloured vests will be worn to indicate your level of proficiency and to ensure you kayak the correct attraction. As your skill level increases so will your proficiency level.

Safety personnel will be stationed around the course with throw ropes to assist you if you fall out, but there are also many places with steps at the side of the water flow so you can climb out or get back in again. It is even possible to “shoot a rapid” and then get out and go around again.



Rapid on the Competition Course showing steps

The difficulty of both courses can be altered by moving giant underwater “lego” rocks that peg into the bottom of the water channel. The water flow can also be altered to set the grade of the river.

The Introductory Course can be set to Grade II or Grade III, the Competition Course to Grade III or IV, and the Waterfall to Grade IV or V.

The day I was at Wero Whitewater Park there was maximum flow and thus highest grading.

The Park is also set up to cater for families who have never experienced the white water before – you can also traverse the course in inflatable rafts, or two person inflatable kayaks.

Spectators will be able to traverse the main path around the two courses, but will be restricted to the path for their safety.

I am hoping that the Auckland Canoe Club will organise an introductory visit to the Park for all its members in the near future. Bookings are already being made even before the official opening.

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A new Kayak attraction for Auckland

Continued from page 7



Introductory Course showing moveable underwater plastic "rocks".



Rapid at the end of the Introductory Course.



Escalator into the Introductory Course.



Ian Ferguson explaining the course.



4 metre Waterfall.

My sincere thanks to Ian Ferguson for the opportunity to see his facility whilst in the final stages of construction.

I am sure that it is going to provide a great opportunity for our members to experience something different, and involve their entire families.

Ian

	Wero Competition Course	Wero Recreation/ Training Course
Water supply	Pumping station	Pumping station
Flow rate	4–16 m ³ /s	3.5–10.5 m ³ /s
Length	300 m	200 m
Average Width	10 m	8 m
Drop	5.0 m	2 m
	III to IV	II to III

Wero Waterfall	
Water supply	Pumping station
Flow rate	4–6 m ³ /s
Length	20 m
Width	4 m
Drop	4–5 m
Difficulty	IV to V

The Auckland Canoe Club AGM will be held at the Marine Rescue Centre on Monday 16th of May starting at 7.30 pm. After the formal matters have been taken care of, a light supper will be served. It's also a great opportunity to catch up with fellow paddlers and hear all the latest kayaking gossip.

At a recent committee meeting it was decided to start publishing our club newsletter on a bi-monthly basis. The old monthly cycle of newsletters has been used as our primary method for promoting upcoming trips and events for many years now. In recent times this system has been superseded by our club email alerts and website notifications. We have also decided to conduct committee meetings every two months as well. This will no doubt greatly please the bulk of our committee members. I'm sure that they would all rather be at home with a good book and a hot cup of Milo on some of those cold mid-winter meeting nights. This is particularly pertinent, when you consider that seventy-five per cent of the current committee are now eligible for the old age pension.

If ever there was a need for a regular club gathering, then perhaps it would be for trips planning. Organising trips and events should be one of our prime priorities. Our methods of the recent past have become ineffectual. Pre-planned events are now few and far between, and numbers attending are minimal. Two recently advertised day trips bear testimony to this. Maybe we could hark back to earlier years and re-employ a tried and proven concept that had the club buzzing with activity.

In the past, the club managed to organise a very active events calendar. If something wasn't happening, it was busy being planned. Club nights to facilitate this were well attended and many ambitious adventures were conceived. Back then, the club embarked on some major undertakings that would have been quite daunting. With good leadership and a system of collective involvement, they achieved many of those bold objectives.

It required all hands pitching in to manage roles and tasks. There was no sitting around waiting for someone else to do all the work. Having an element of involvement added to the anticipation and enjoyment of the event. It also promoted a high degree of commitment and certainly helped to take a big work load away from the trip leaders. As an added bonus, this hands-on involvement up-skilled many new entrants. It also helped to form the nucleus for the next generation of club leaders.

I can remember from my earliest days in kayaking, being part of this type of scenario. It was way back in the mid-1960s and we were involved in planning a two week long trip down the Whanganui River. Kayaks weren't readily available back then, so we built our own. Organising with this, and assisting others to build theirs, helped bond us together before the trip had even started.

Our trip leader allocated tasks for everyone; my job was as quarter-master. Provisioning for the trip was done on a collective scale and a vast quantity of food was purchased just prior to departure. The supplies which consisted of dry bulk goods like tea, flour, sugar, milk powder and rolled oats, were carefully packed in waterproof bags. We also had huge stacks of canned foods like baked beans, tinned meats and fruits. These supplies were all allocated to sub groups within our twelve strong expedition team.

Soon the great adventure was underway. Our trip was from Taumarunui, right down to Wanganui. Along the way, it required the running of over one hundred and forty rapids. In the upper reaches of the river, the rapids appeared at short regular intervals. A few of the lads who were quite new to kayaking, participated an involuntary swim or two. This soon took its toll on our supplies. Our state of the art kayaks from way back then lacked bulkheads. Some of the supplies got washed away or were water damaged.

After these incidents on the water, I would take stock of our rations and re-allocate provisions as required. Soon an unforeseen problem began to manifest itself. With the dampness from the dunkings, the old paper labels on our tinned foods began to fall off. Needless to say, we enjoyed quite a few surprise menus on the lower reaches of the river.

I will always remember the anticipation and excitement leading up to this trip. We started planning it many months in advance and it was a whole lot of fun being involved. I only knew but a handful of the participants prior to the event, but at journey's end we were all strong friends eager for another adventure together.

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Our early morning group likes to enjoy an adventure every Saturday morning. Recently we were out exploring the upper reaches of the Waitemata Harbour. It is an area that we have paddled many times before, but we always find ways to keep the outings interesting. We launched at the reserve next to the Salthouse Boatyard in Greenhithe. In recent years the council has installed an all-tide low level pontoon that is perfect for kayakers. You don't even have to get your feet wet.

To make our paddle have interest and purpose, we were off to view some relics of a bygone era; old shipwrecks and the remains of a crashed aircraft. Usually we try to avoid this area on a low tide, but this time it was timed to avail us. We had launched just after a spring low and headed upstream towards Paremoremo. Just opposite the stream running up towards the big prison complex lie the rusting remains of a small steamer. There used to be many old hulks up this way, particularly around the Herald Island area. Sadly, the old Auckland Regional Council in their infinite wisdom decided to remove most of them.

Our next relic to view was one that we had attempted to visit before. It was the wreckage of an old Royal New Zealand Air Force Lockheed Hudson bomber that met its demise in 1943. The aircraft was on approach to Whenuapai Air Base and stalled whilst making a steep banked turn. It crashed into the shallow mud-flats just above the Greenhithe Bridge. Last time we ventured here, the tide was a tad too low. I only just managed to reach the wreck by wading the last ten metres through knee deep mud. If I hadn't used my kayak as a support during this manoeuvre, I would have become quagmired in the

viscous muck. Two kayakers managed to do just that recently in a similar area. A helicopter was required to rescue them both.

This time we had our timing right and we were all able to paddle right up to the remains. Most of the wreckage is still intact, save for part of the wing which broke away on impact. It was not salvaged at the time, due to the difficulty of the task. Over the last seventy or so years, the old Hudson has been slowly swallowed up by the mud. A prominent section of the broken wing still remains, defiantly jutting above the soft mud. It is a sombre memorial to the two airmen who perished in the crash.

Our next task was to seek out the remains of an old paddle steamer. This was hidden away in the mangroves somewhere just below Hobsonville. As we paddled down the harbour, we had to pass the old Air Force flying boat base. A farmers market operates here every weekend in one of the old hangers and tasty treats were on offer. It was about morning tea time, so we called in for a cuppa. As we sat in the sun by the old sea-wall, we heard the shrill toot of a steam whistle. Soon three small steam-boats chuffed into view. It was a magnificent sight and we watched as they swept around the point and on up the harbour.

A few of the lads are real steam buffs, and there was no holding them back when the steamships appeared. It was pointless looking for an old abandoned steamer when we had real live steamers to chase. Our quest to find the old paddle wheeler would have to wait for another day. We followed the plumes of black smoke and wisps of steam up the harbour and into Lucas Creek. Here we found a big flotilla of steam-boats assembling for a regatta. We had a great time chatting with the skippers and crew. The steam-boats were all shapes and sizes, with some being fuelled by diesel, others with LPG as well as the traditional coal. Eventually, with a good covering of soot and smelling of smoke, we finally came ashore for a clean-up and another cup of tea.

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These early morning kayaking lads were out on a mission. They were tasked with finding two old coastal shipwrecks and a crashed plane. Here they are inspecting the remains of an old Hudson bomber in the shallow mudflats up near Whenuapai.



The entrance to Bluff Harbour marked mission accomplished for Kristine and John. They had just paddled all the way down the East coast of the South Island after setting off from Makara near Wellington. They camped in the tussock grass above the beach, before setting off the next day, bound for Fiordland. That's the tall beacon of the Tiwai Point aluminium smelter chimney in the background.

Our intrepid expedition kayakers, Kristine and John have made good progress since my last report when they were overnighing at Oamaru. Their quest to kayak the East coast of the South Island was achieved when they paddled into the entrance of Bluff Harbour. This was in early February. So with time and energy to spare, they decided to attempt to paddle towards Fiordland. They set off the very next day for points west.

This last ambitious leg of their expedition proved to be the most arduous. Mother Nature turned on the tempest. A combination of wind rain and giant seas did their best to deter them, but they stoically battled on. On their journey down the East coast they had become conditioned to having to wait up as stormy weather blew through. This was usually done in a coastal campground with the luxury of creature comforts like hot showers and shelter. Heading into Fiordland, the remote wilderness prevailed. The only luxury here was the occasional DOC hut.

Puysegur Point lived up to its notorious reputation for horrendous winds and mountainous seas. They almost made it around on their first attempt, but had to turn back and hole up in Gates Harbour as front after front swept through. It appeared as if the weather factory down in Antarctica was having a major clean out.



Port Craig in Southland, was once a busy timber-mill town. It was perched on the edge of a vast native forest bordering Fiordland. Access was either by foot track or boat. Our expedition kayakers staged here before paddling off towards the fiords. Kristine looks like she is glad to have specified that compact customised kayak trolley option.

Eventually they reached the sanctuary of Preservation Inlet, the southern-most fiord. With the long range weather forecast looking bleak, prospects for proceeding further around the coast looked marginal. They had achieved their primary goal, and even managed the added bonus of paddling into the remote Fiordland region. Here they decided to end their summer expedition. A helicopter was called, and in no time at all, they were whisked back into civilisation.

Kristine and John are no strangers to expedition paddling. In recent years they have kayaked down the entire length of the North Islands East coast, as well as a fair chunk of its West coast. The un-paddled portions remaining on the South Island coast will have to wait. It will no doubt be tackled on another expedition. Some brief statistics from their trip include: They used brand new light weight Barracuda Interface sea kayaks, distance paddled over 1250 kilometres, duration 70 days, actual paddling days only 29. They both paddle with our early morning group, and it will be a real pleasure to have them back again.

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Sea kayaks come in all shapes and sizes, and new entrants to our sport are overwhelmed with choice. Picking the right one can be a daunting task, especially when making that initial purchase. Often this first kayak choice quickly outgrows its suitability. Soon, envious eyes start seeking something new. This process can take a few cycles before the right craft has been secured. Even then it might not be exactly right and some customising could be required.

These personal modifications are always interesting, and I enjoy looking to see how others have adapted their craft. Kayak manufactures could learn a lesson or two here. Some have been pumping out the same old product for years, and wonder why sales are slumping. Thankfully there are a few innovative manufactures out there. They manage to refresh their products with a regular facelift, and are at the forefront with launching new models. Little wonder that they are the ones reaping the rewards.

Perhaps we are catching a glimpse of the future with recent trends in surf ski type craft. The skies have all but made redundant the many classes of racing kayaks. Those skinny kayaks lacked bulkheads and capsizing often resulted in a swim. A rescue was a messy procedure. The advent of the sleek long racing skies saw a mass exodus away from the kayaks. It was just so much easier to climb back on-board a ski.

With sea kayaks, we have a more stable craft, but there are still many complications and concerns. Chief amongst these would be that of capsizing at sea. It would probably be the greatest fear for most

new entrants to our sport. Many older hands, who have made the effort to learn how to roll, also have concerns. They can probably manage a practice roll every now and again. This is usually when they have set up for it in calm conditions. Their big worry is about achieving the real thing in testing conditions. An ever present thought is lurking away in the background, the great 'what if'.

All of the major ski manufactures now have a range of novice to intermediate craft to entice new entrants onto the water. These are shorter, beamier craft that are not so tippy and very easy to remount. What they need now is a storage hatch fore and aft, and we would have a good user friendly sea kayak. Some kayak manufactures are getting close with this concept, but it is more akin to making one of those cumbersome sit on top type craft into a sea kayak. They haven't managed to incorporate a good performance hull or minimise the weight factor yet. It won't be long before these innovative ideas evolve. When they finally get it right, just watch our sport boom again. In our warmer northern regions this type of craft could be very popular.

We were out on the Manukau Harbour recently and had a good demonstration of just how quickly sea conditions can change on this body of water. We had launched at French Bay which is tucked into the coast just down below Titirangi Village. We often launch here when the tides are suitable, especially when the winds are gusty from the North or North-East.

It was blowing a brisk North-Easterly that morning and we had an hour of incoming tide to use. We made swift progress up the harbour with the tidal assist keeping close to the shelter of the coast. At the top of the tide we stopped for our morning tea break in one of the many tiny sandy coves up past Blockhouse Bay. These are plentiful around the Cape Horn headland and we selected one looking out towards Puketutu Island.

It's easy to lose track of time in these delightful tree clad coves. There was neither a sight nor sound of the suburbia that surrounds these beautiful coastal reserves. Mullet were jumping, a stingray was foraging in the shallows and kingfishers were flitting amongst the branches above. All too soon the tide was starting to rush out, it was our cue to head back. Once again we kept close to the coast.

Nearing Green Bay we noticed a change in wind direction. It had veered around to the South-East and was starting to intensify.

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Could this be the future face of sea kayaking? It is getting close to ticking all the boxes for me. Made by Epic Kayaks, the V6 hybrid has a length of 4.88 m, beam of 58.4 cm and weighs between 14.5 and 17.7 kilograms, depending on construction options. It has 175 litres of storage in fore and aft hatches.

In no time at all, large wind waves began to build up. Our small group that morning was made up of some of our keenest and most skilled paddlers. We were actually revelling in the conditions and gleefully looking forward to the last leg. Then the waves would be approaching more from the stern, perfect for surfing back to the beach.

We all came ashore in high spirits. At the post paddle cuppa we sat looking out across an angry white-cap flecked expanse of water. In the deep water channel where the tidal stream was now rapidly ripping out, the sea was even more tumultuous. It was easy to see how many small inshore fishing boats get into trouble on this large landlocked body of water. With the change in wind direction, the fetch for the wind waves had increased. We were lucky that morning; if the wind had veered any further to the South, the fetch would have been much greater. It could have been a real white knuckle ride home.

A couple of years ago I managed to acquire a lightweight Kevlar version of my old wooden sea kayak. The wooden craft had served me well for over the eighteen years. During that time, I had never bothered to weigh it, but suspected that it was getting heavier with age. Just after I had purchased the new Kevlar model, they both went for a stint on the scales. The disparity in weight was amazing, almost ten kilograms lighter in favour of the composite craft.

This was to make a huge difference for me each week when it came to loading the new craft onto my vehicle. There was even greater joy at the end of the day when the arduous task of unloading occurred.

From the garage apron area at the front of the house, to the kayak storage loft around the back, I had to trudge almost fifty metres, and it was all uphill.

It is little wonder then that many paddlers are now opting for new lighter craft as they emerge onto the market. Many years ago I owned an old polyethylene plastic sea kayak that weighed almost thirty kilograms. A few of the new ultra-lightweight thermoformed plastic craft are almost half that weight. When you are using your kayak frequently, it's a big advantage to own a nice light user friendly craft.

Our early morning group contains some of the most regular paddlers in the club. A few of them are out over eighty times a year. A high percentage of these hard core early morning enthusiasts, are now using the ultra-lightweight plastic kayaks. The small handful that don't, are often heard complaining about their chiropractors fees. Next time you are thinking about a brand new kayak, look for the ones that weigh well under twenty kilograms, and pamper yourself.

After our AGM is out of the way on the 16th May, we will start looking forward to the beginning of the winter lecture series. This will get underway on Wednesday 15th June and run through until August using the third Wednesday of each month. Details are still being finalised and will be advertised in upcoming newsletters and promoted on our club website. We have decided to extend the best short newsletter article competition deadline till later in the year. The August newsletter will now be the last opportunity to submit your articles for inclusion.

Roger

Final Swim Escort

Sunday 10th April Rangitoto Wharf to St Heliers Beach

This the last swim escort for this season. The Rangitoto to St Heliers swim starts at Rangitoto Wharf at 7.45am. Briefing will be at 7.15 am on the wharf. Kayakers have two options: to paddle on the morning of the swim to Rangitoto or paddle over on Saturday afternoon and camp on the deck Saturday night. (If you have any queries please phone Philip or any of the committee members, see phone numbers on page 2 of this newsletter.)

Event	Date	Swim Start time	High tide
Rangitoto	10/04/16	7:45 am	9.32 am