



AUCKLAND CANOE CLUB NEWSLETTER

August 1998

Fun times on the Waikato

It was a sight to behold: fifty or so kayaks perched high on the bank above the Waikato just below the Karapiro Dam waiting to become waterborne. It was a warmish Sunday morning in August and the setting was the start of stage one of Auckland Canoe Centre's planned trip down the Waikato, to be carried out in five one-day stages over nine weeks. The only thing was, twice as many people as expected had turned up.

I was delighted to be there, participating in such an excellently thought out venture. For those of us who can't spare five days all at one time to paddle the river it was a chance to perform a feat we might otherwise not manage.

Because of the recent heavy rainfall and floods around the Waikato the river was flowing very fast and at first it had seemed unlikely we would be able to launch so close to the dam. But the only problem we encountered was a shortage of parking space near the launch area and consequently a long carry to the start.

The early kilometres made for exciting paddling, with lots of eddies and cross currents, and the water flowing more rapidly than most of us were used to. By the time we reached Cambridge we were all acclimatised and having fun, with just a few spills. After that things got easier, and even the Narrows presented little in the way of a challenge. Shame about the heavy rain shower when some of us were only ten minutes out of Hamilton.

The car park where we disembarked at Hamilton was half under water, a dramatic sight to those of us who have been to the venue on so many other occasions - the trees my kids climb were half way across the river.

For myself it was a great opportunity to view the river scenery at leisure. You've heard my opinions on racing a few months ago, and this trip did prove my point. The other time I have been on this stretch of the Waikato was to participate in the Cambridge to Hamilton Race, when I noticed nothing for a couple of hours apart from an aching shoulder. Not, I hasten to add, that these races don't have an important place in the calendar. Sometimes it is nice to notice the houses and trees too.

As luck would have it I won't be able to join in most of the later stages of the river tour, but from my recent experience I can thoroughly recommend that you do so if you can. The river is getting lower even as I write so there shouldn't be anything scary on the way, although you'll also have less current assistance.

Yours in paddling

Your Club Officers

President	Trevor Arthur 817 7357
Secretary.....	Margaret Thwaites 292 7883
Canoe hire/storage.....	Bruce Bugbee 570 1134(day)
Editor.....	Julia Thorn 575 3099
Sunday paddles.....	Matt Crozier 276 7049
White water.....	George Gerard 818 5066

CALENDAR AUG - SEPT

23 August Clean up and barbecue Now here's one for you! Have a leisurely paddle from Okahu Bay to the City to view the America's Cup developments, then return to our Clubrooms for a good clean up of the facilities, and to water blast the boat ramp, which you've probably noticed is more green slime than anything else.

Then the plan is to have a late lunch barbecue.

Meet at Okahu Bay at 8.30am for a 9am departure which should enable us to perform the waterblasting at low tide.

Contact Trevor for full details, what to bring etc, tel 817 7357.

23 August Sea Kayak Race 5 km and 10 km courses. Meet outside our downstairs Clubroom (behind Fergs Kayaks on the ramp) at 8 am for briefing and handicapping. Everyone is welcome, regardless of ability or type of sea kayak. There'll be a barbecue afterwards.

Contact Grant Stone 473 6658, Matt Grant 524 2108 or Roger Lomas 625 8924.

23 August APCC Event Waikato River Race Day Starts at 11 am. Two courses: 15 km for junior and novice, 32 km for seniors. Contact Hamilton Canoe Club, Paul Ewart tel 07 855 8425

26 August Slide evening at Auckland Canoe Centre Entitled *Sea kayaking as it should be*, a slide presentation by Gerry and Trish Maire on their sea kayaking holiday in Turkey. Starts at 7.30 pm at 502 Sandringham Rd. Free entry, and refreshments afterwards.

Please RSVP to Auckland Canoe Centre, tel 815 2073.

29 August Picnic with Neal Join Neal Wilson for a tikki tour of the Harbour, geared to the novice and intermediate paddler. Bring lunch. Your Editor apologises for getting the date wrong in the last issue.

Neal can be contacted on 846 1429

29/30 August North Island Marathon Champs Contact Blair Roskrue at Waitemata Multisports tel 626 2066.

30 August Goat Island Be at Mathesons Bay at 10 am for a 10.30 departure. The idea is to paddle around the coastline, around Cape Rodney and check out Goat Island, a fascinating spot. High tide is at 1 pm.

Contact Grant Stone for details, tel 473 6658.

30 August Tour of the Waikato Stage 3 of the epic voyage organised by Auckland Canoe Centre. See details elsewhere in this Newsletter.

1 Sept (Tues) Club Night At our Clubrooms above Fergs Kayaks at Okahu Bay at 7 pm. Entry is \$5 which includes hot soup on arrival and barbecue sausages. The main event is to feature a kayak video, slide show and guest speakers. Colin Quilter and Pelham Housego will present *Then and Now*. Afterwards there's supper and a chance to chat with our guest. You're welcome to bring along a friend.

Roger Lomas tel 625 8924 or Ray Clark 818 9609 will be pleased to handle your enquiries.

5 Sept Sea Kayak Race 5 km and 10 km courses. Meet outside our downstairs Clubroom (behind Fergs Kayaks on the ramp) at 8 am for briefing and handicapping. Everyone is welcome, regardless of ability or type of sea kayak. There'll be a barbecue afterwards.

Contact Grant Stone 473 6658, Matt Grant 524 2108 or Roger Lomas 625 8924.

6 Sept Rangitoto summit Time again for one of our most popular trips, a paddle across to everyone's favourite island, followed by a stroll to the summit for the glorious views. Meet at Okahu Bay at 8.30 am for a 9 am departure. Bring walking shoes and lunch.

Trevor has full details, tel 817 7357.

13 September Circumrangitoto

Today high tide is at 12.46 pm. This is perfect for a trip around Rangitoto, since it will allow us to float through Gardner's Gap between Rangitoto and Motutapu at high water. We'll meet at Okahu Bay at 8.45 am for a 9.00 am departure, stop at McKenzie's Bay near the lighthouse for morning tea, lunch at Gardner's gap and home via Browns Island mid to late afternoon. Bring lunch & snacks, and if it's cold a thermos and windproof jacket etc to wear on the beach. If the weather is doubtful phone **Colin Quilter 5280747** for alternative plans or a cancellation.

13 Sept Tour of the Waikato Stage 4 of the epic voyage organised by Auckland Canoe Centre. See details elsewhere in this Newsletter.

18/19/20 September Motutapu Island

Join us for the weekend at Administration Bay on the northern side of Motutapu Island. This is a great winter destination, far enough from Auckland to feel remote, and close enough to reach in 2 or 3 hours paddling. Plus comfortable bunkhouse-style accommodation, hot showers, all kitchen facilities, etc.

Two departures are planned: the first from Okahu Bay on Friday evening, (so as to allow all of Saturday for an extended day trip to the Noisies Islands), and the second from Okahu Bay on Saturday morning. Return to Auckland will be on Sunday afternoon. **You must ring Trevor Arthur 8177357** to get details of departure times and confirm your place. Bring \$15 per night, sleeping bag, pillow, towel, your own food and kitchen cleaning materials. All other kitchen facilities are provided. See you there!

19 Sept Picnic with Neal Join Neal Wilson for another of his successful day trips, geared to the novice and intermediate paddler. Destination will depend on weather and participants. Bring lunch.

Neal can be contacted on 846 1429.

26 Sept Sea Kayak Race 5 km and 10 km courses. Meet outside our downstairs Clubroom (behind Fergs Kayaks on the ramp) at 8 am for briefing and handicapping. Everyone is welcome, regardless of ability or type of sea kayak. There'll be a barbecue afterwards.

Contact Grant Stone 473 6658, Matt Grant 524 2108 or Roger Lomas 625 8924.

This is to be repeated on October 10.

REGULAR EVENTS

Evening paddles occur on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 5.30pm from Okahu Bay. You can simply turn up for these trips, and if you want to hire a kayak you should phone Bruce Bugbee 570 1134. We try to have a Committee member there for these paddles, but excuse us if it isn't always possible.

Organised Club Sunday morning paddles from Okahu Bay don't seem to be drawing much of a crowd these days so we've decided to cancel them until the summer.

Kayak hire arrangements for the weekend remain as for weekday paddles, and Trevor Arthur can also arrange assistance with this. Phone 817 7357.

A Weekend at Opoutere

By Roger Lomas

It is in the last weeks of winter and a group of about twenty head south for the Club planned Opoutere Lodge weekend. For me it is always a welcome moment to arrive at the bottom of the hill by the tall redwood grove, turn off the main road and cross the small one-way bridge onto the quiet Coromandel backroad that winds down to the Wharekawa Harbour. Past the baches and on under the coastal pohutukawas, a couple of bends later and there it is, the magnificent seaside lodge with its mountainside pa site backdrop.

Inside the cosy kitchen the water is always on the boil ready for the welcome cuppa. It's great to get there early and await the arrival of fellow Clubmates. Soon the kitchen-dining area is a bustle of pots and pastas, cuppas and comradeship as the tensions of the working week are eased away. Tomorrow we are paddling.

There are many options here for trips and today we choose to depart for the nearby Whangamata wharf and explore the islands just off the town beach. We then follow the coast south to a cave that Margaret has recommended for lunch. A good choice, and we bask in the winter sun sheltered from the cool southwest wind, almost reluctant to continue.

The return journey is relaxed and we are in tune with the pattern of the ocean swell as it rolls in and recedes along the coast. The usual games of *will I or won't I* are played close in amongst the rocks by some, but no Robinson Crusoes are created.

A wash down and a chat with the locals at the wharf before the short drive back to the lodge. A snooze, a beach walk or a visit to an old goldmine fill in the remainder of the afternoon.

Our Club chefs, Diane and Wolfgang, were not available this year but the bearded waitress David called in to say hi. Not ones to sit about and sulk, our Clubbies were soon steaming up the kitchen with dishes that would dazzle and delight Kerre and the never ready cooks. Margaret's famous candelabra appeared and set the mood for the evening. Elegant tales abounded and hip flasks appeared. With the spirits in abundance it was now time to inform Ray C of his sleeping companion. Occasionally seen and often heard, this tormented lost soul is known to lurk in the disused top level of the eerie ancient bunkroom.

Sunday: a day to do as you please and the early morning estuary paddler keen to observe the wildlife could see grey dotterell, red beaked oyster catcher and lesser intelligible multi-coloured smelly polypro'd pipi gatherers (Steve, Margaret, Trevor and Ray) working the shell banks.

The southwesterly blew down the harbour but outside in the shelter of the steep coastal cliffs it was perfect paddling. Wally, Trevor and Ray surfed at the bar. Matt C, David M and Ryan cruised the coast and Margaret was seen once again rapidly depleting our fishery resource in her Albatross trawler.

It was time to pack up and return to the grey city. As I drove out I saw Ray sitting at the picnic table beaming away: he was awaiting the arrival of his retired mates, off for another trip with the sunshine paddling company.

DIPS N DUNKS

From Laurie

Laurie Bugbee has asked me to forward to the Committee his thanks for the flowers sent to him and his wife June by Auckland Canoe Club following the news of June's illness. We wish June all the best and please remember we are thinking of you both..

Your Editor

My name is Julia Thorn and I can be reached at 14 Paurui St, St Heliers, tel 575 3099. Give me a call or drop me a line when you have something to tell or ask.

A Request

Please please could you let us know if your address or phone number changes. You can phone your Editor about this, or Colin Quilter who keeps the master list of members' addresses, tel 528 0747.

Subscriptions...

Many thanks to those of you who have renewed so promptly. Club subs are due now for the year ending March 1999. There's a membership renewal form at the back of this Newsletter.

You old hands probably remember Club policy but here's the story for newer members: you'll be getting two more Newsletters regardless of whether you have re joined the Club, but after that the supply is cut off unless you have paid your subs. Please please pay your subs as soon as possible, so the Club can continue with its good work.

... and membership cards

By the way, the Committee has decided to dispense with membership cards for the current year. This means that you will still receive a receipt for your subscription payment if you request one, but no membership card as in previous years. If you make a purchase at a retailer who offers Club members a discount, you merely need to tell the retailer that you are an ACC member and are entitled to the appropriate discount. No Member has been knocked back yet.

For Sale

Albatross sea kayak, near new, the very latest. \$2600 ono. Phone Grant 473 6658.

For sale

Savage NZ have six of their Fury playboats for sale at a special winter price of \$1200 plus freight. For details phone 04 563 6695.

Tip Top bread

A special sports promotion is under way with Rebel Sport vouchers to be won by individuals and their nominated club. Your bread bag has the details.

Sea Kayak Race at Okahu Bay Aug 9

By Roger Lomas

Gusty winds from the north east made the course challenging in our inaugural Club sea kayak race. An on the water mass start had the fleet racing across the bay to the first mark. A moment of drama followed when Grant Stone's brand new prototype Mustang sea kayak veered to starboard with rudder failure. Glyn Dickson in his Slingshot was quickly on the scene to offer help if needed, and was then able to rejoin the race and catch the main bunch.

Ian Ferguson took line and handicap honours and gave the new *X Factor* its debut win. Gordon Robinson in his own design Barracuda kept the pressure on Ferg and took second. Roy Meehan in his trusty Nordkapp came in third. A top performance from Racing Rhona in her Penguin and Ray Clark in his famous yellow Puffin. Trev and Steve were seen in serious talking formation and finished with identical times in their Seabears. Dave Poolman's Sabre gave a fine demo of wind assisted rolling along the ramp before the race. His rudder damaged, Dave elected to try BCU style racing ie rudderless. David Matthews in his Albatross and Matt Grant in his Slingshot harried the fleet and kept everyone honest.

Many thanks to the race sponsors, Fergs Kayaks, Auckland Canoe Centre and Canvas City.

More racing on 23 August and next month on 5 and 26 September.

Tour of the Waikato With Auckland Canoe Centre

Stage 3: Sunday August 30th
Ngaruawahia to Rangiriri Approximately 27km
Meet 10:00am. Main Street Ngaruawahia
Trip Leader Peter Sommerhalder / Mike Hayes
Phone Auckland Canoe Centre for further information. Ph: 815 2073

Stage 4: Sunday September 13th
Rangiriri to Tuakau Approximately 30km
Meet 10:00am. Carpark Rangiriri Hotel
Trip Leader Mike Hayes / Peter Sommerhalder
Phone Auckland Canoe Centre for further information. Ph: 815 2073

Stage 5: Sunday September 27th
Tuakau to Port Waikato Approximately 25km
Meet 10:00am Tuakau Port Waikato Bridge (Public Park)
Trip Leader Peter Sommerhalder / Mike Hayes
Phone Auckland Canoe Centre for further information. Ph: 815 2073

The cost of participating in the Auckland Canoe Centre "Tour of the Waikato" is \$6.00 per paddler per stage, which will be used towards the cost of shuttle vehicles, shuttle bunnies, tour toy boys, and a barbecue at Port Waikato after stage 5 on Sunday September 27th. Tee Shirts certifying the wearer as a "River Rodent" Waikato 98' will be awarded to paddlers completing a minimum of 4 of the 5 stages.

Strolling up Paratutae

Colin Quilter

The Manukau Heads have become a popular kayaking destination of late. On the north head, one of the landmarks is Paratutae Island, shaped like a haystack and a little over 100 metres high. Paratutae Island is the subject of this story, but before reading it you should know that there isn't any kayaking; just blood and sweat in about equal proportions.

A couple of weekends ago my daughter Jenni (18) suggested a walk along the beach at Whatipu. She's at the age when most young people don't want anything to do with their parents, so I jumped at the offer. To warm up we wandered to the top of the hill directly southeast of the Whatipu carpark, a 20-minute walk which normally yields wonderful views of the Manukau Heads and the coast leading south towards the Waikato River mouth; but today drizzle and low cloud enclosed us. We descended and made our way out to the beach.

I had one of my Good Ideas. "Let's see if we can climb Paratutae Island. The view from the top must be superb. It won't take long." Paratutae used to be an island, but now it is joined to the beach by a neck of sand. The waves and current have undercut the soft conglomerate rock all around its base, so that those wishing to "stroll" to the summit are immediately repulsed by overhangs. After trying several improbable places we clambered around close to the sea on the western side, looking for a weakness.

"Dad, is the tide coming in or out?"

"In. But don't worry, we'll be back before the waves get this high." Presently we found a steep face covered in flax. Beneath the flax was a thick tangle of creepers and gorse. Progress upwards was possible by pulling with brute force on the flax leaves. After 30 metres or so we reached an overhanging rock wall and crawled to the left along its base. The way became narrower, and reached an exposed corner.

Above, the route slanted to the right up a narrow gut filled with gorse.

"Come on Jenni, it gets easier here," (a shameless lie). Beyond the gorse the hillside was steeper yet. There was no sense of exposure or fear of heights because we were tunnelling vertically upwards within the flax bushes; visibility was never further than the next root or stem. Behind me there were grunts and curses.

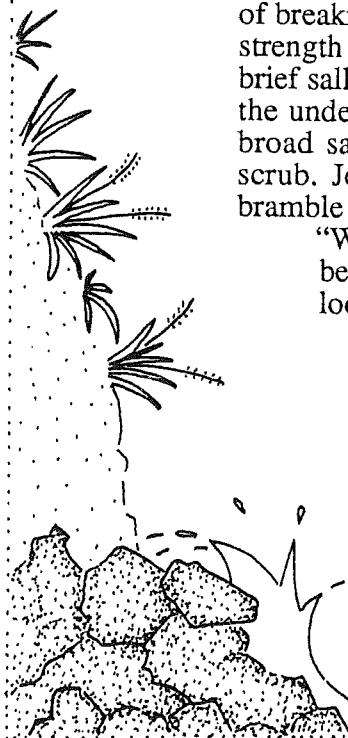
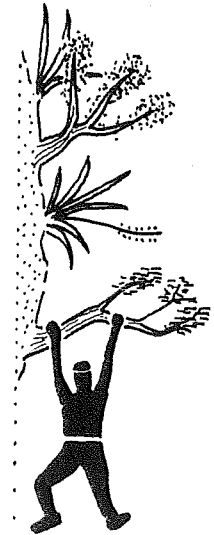
"How on earth did you get up here?"

"Just pull on the flax leaves. They won't give way." More grunts, then the sound of breaking branches and a heavy impact. Apparently there is a limit to the tensile strength of flax. We returned to grovelling among roots and branches, then made a brief sally across an open corner with 60 metres of empty air below, then back into the undergrowth again. Now the gradient began to ease. Presently we reached a broad saddle, and eventually the summit. It was mostly covered in head-high scrub. Jenni looked like the survivor of unarmed combat with a leopard in a bramble bush.

"Well," I said, "there's no sign that anyone else has been here. It would have been too bad if we'd found a beaten path at the top." She gave me a dark look.

The descent was easy; we lowered ourselves from one flax bush to another with gravity on our side. At the bottom after about an hour and a half on the hill, we found that the tide had nearly cut us off. Both were thoroughly soaked with spray while waiting for a lull between waves. It seemed, (to use one of Bill Tilman's expressions), a trifling addition to an account already large.

So there you have it: a great little stroll up Paratutae. It's the sort of thing fathers and daughters should enjoy more often, in my view. Can't imagine why they don't.



AUCKLAND CANOE CLUB MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

New Member

Rejoining

Surname:

First Name (s) (IF FAMILY, PLEASE LIST ALL NAMES):

Address:

Phone (HOME): (WORK):

Occupation:

Do you own a canoe? Yes No

If yes — please list type (s):

Briefly state your experience in canoeing?:

Please circle the branches of canoeing you are most interested in:

Slalom	Whitewater	Surf	Polo
Touring	Sea Kayaking	Flatwater Racing	Long Distance Racing

Nominated by: Seconded by:

FEES FOR YEAR ENDING 31.3.99 — PLEASE CIRCLE THE FEE BEING PAID!

Junior \$15 Senior \$25 Family \$30 Associate member \$15

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED: \$

To comply with the Privacy Act 1993, the Club is required to get permission from members to gather and publish personal details such as names, addresses, phone numbers etc. This information will only be used in newsletters and published on the current member phone list. Therefore could you please read and fill out the form below.

I agree / 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 the National Canoe Association. I accept responsibility for correcting this information where applicable.

Signed: Name (PLEASE PRINT):

Date:

Please return to: The Treasurer, Auckland Canoe Club Inc., P.O. Box 3523, Auckland.