



AUCKLAND CANOE CLUB NEWSLETTER

MAY 1999

There have been some lovely days for paddling in the past month, and I've even been able to take advantage of a few of them. Soon it will be time for our Club's annual race, the Cambridge to Hamilton. This is a major event on the kayaking calendar, North Island wide, and I hope you are all able to make it.

This isn't just a race for the experts and the supremely trained. It is a fun trip for all levels of canoeists, and I can personally vouch for that, having completed the route for the first time when I was a real novice. I was quite trepidatious when I saw the calibre of some of the other entrants, some of whom were extremely blase about the whole thing, whereas for me it was a major effort just to remain stationary at the start line. I was so worried about what the Narrows would be like, imagining Grade 4 rapids at the very least. The only thing I didn't worry about was being able to stop at the finish - This could potentially be a problem, since the Waikato can flow quite fast, and if you were to overshoot the finish you could have a hard slog upstream.

But I managed to enjoy the race, and I even won a medal in my age group category. You don't have to ask - there wasn't anyone else in the group! The Narrows were a piece of cake, and yes I did succeed in stopping at the finish. Just as well because the sausages and soup were good and there was no boat service.

Having also paddled Cambridge to Hamilton in a leisurely way I can vouch for the prettiness of the scenery, and the special feeling you get from being on the river for a long time.

My most recent trip to the Waikato River was to swim five kilometres downstream through the suburbs of Hamilton. This little known event is called the Five Bridges Race, and surprise, surprise the idea is to swim under the five bridges across the Waikato in Hamilton. How do you notice bridges when your head is tucked down in the water? Well I was keen to find out.

This turned out to be choice little event. There was a former ferry launch to take us eager swimmers from the registration area to the start of the race. But I have left something out. I had a lot of difficulty actually locating the registration place. You see, they had omitted this vital detail from the advertising leaflet about the race. So the family and I cruised the streets of Hamilton, and a suburb or three, looking for a huge crowd of swimmers as some indication that the registration area was close by. All to no avail. We found the river, however, so I wasn't too worried about that aspect.

Eventually I had the bright idea of going to the launching ramp where our very own Cambridge to Hamilton Race ends, and there they were, the hordes of swimmers, all 25 of them. I had been expecting this to be a major event and it was surprisingly low key. Of course now that I'm writing about it everyone will be heading that way next March.

The swim was good fun and the water was pleasant to the touch, not horribly murky as I'd expected. The current offered plenty of assistance, and in places you could really feel it pulling you along. Some of the other swimmers followed an interestingly zigzag course down the river,

knowing something we out of towners were oblivious to. It's not quite like kayaking, you can't read the river so easily when your head is in it.

Believe me, you get a lot more chance to sightsee from a kayak. I did notice a few grand homes but mostly when I surfaced to breathe all I saw was greenery. Fortunately we had the ferry launch to take us back to our cars, and this provided a chance for viewing the scenery.

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

Please note that we have **changed** the Club's *official address*. So if you need to **write** to the Club - but this does not affect the address for Newsletter material - the new address is: c/o Margaret Thwaites, Auckland Canoe Club, William Potter Lane, Karaka, RD 1 Papakura.

CALENDAR MAY - JUNE

18 May (Tuesday) Club AGM **Matt Grant says:** Those of you who came last year know that attending the AGM is a good time to have your say about your Club and get an overview of the Club's activities and plans for the coming months. You also get to help elect officers for the coming year.

While not quite as gripping as your average political election, the whiff of a good scandal is never far away (I did not have sex with that etc etc...). So come along for the action, put your 5 cents worth and enjoy a good brew & bikkies afterwards.

When: Tues 18 May at 7.30 pm

Where: Clubrooms above Fergs Kayaks at Okahu Bay
Please bring a plate for supper after the meeting.

Have you thought about joining the Executive? We meet once a month to plan trips, keep things ticking over and catch up with what's happening around the traps. No hard work involved. Just put up your hand at the AGM and we will do the rest.

22 - 23 May Mystery weekend This is a wet or fine trip because you don't need your tent. No, it's not Motuihe Island. Where then? Come and find out. Numbers are limited so be quick.

We **leave** from Okahu Bay clubroom at 9.30am Saturday. Contact Trevor to book, tel 817 7357.

23 May 1999 Superdune race See flyer in last month's Newsletter.

1 June Clubnight

We're off to Alaska tonight, so rug-up for a chilling adventure challenge.

Dave Inwood, an Albatross Sea Kayaker, has been over three times now to participate in a human powered endurance challenge in the frozen wilderness. What drives this man to such extremes? Was Eskimo Nell involved?

Be down at the Clubrooms to find out.

The last Club Night prompted considerable comment and a new respect for the Club Spirit that can be motivated by a strong-minded individual.

Date: 1st June. (Remember first Tuesday of the Month).

Venue: Upstairs Clubroom above Ferg's shop.
The usual format: Hot soup and food on arrival, plus the latest kayak videos and gossip

Time: 7pm.

Cost: \$5.

Club Members: This is your chance to bring along a friend and perhaps recruit a new member.

Roger Lomas Ph 625-8924

5,6,7 June Queens Birthday W'end Mayor Island Awesome paddling and tramping. a boat capable of carrying 20 people and kayaks has been booked by Justin Sanson Beattie . It leaves Tauranga at 7.30 am Saturday and will return us to Tauranga on Monday afternoon.

Accommodation is cabin or bunkhouse style as well as camping if you're that keen or trusting of the weather.

Travelling down Friday night could be the wise option given the early start. Justin has accommodation suggestions.

Gear required: all usual equipment except tent, sturdy footwear, raincoat etc, \$5 unisex present for Saturday night's pot luck dinner. As mentioned earlier numbers are limited to 20 so be quick to register. Ring Justin on 278 8090. Cost is approx for the boat trip, landing fee and island accommodation.

OrJoin Margaret and Ray for a trip to an as-yet-undecided destination, but possibly Lake Tarawera or the Rotorua Lakes. There are also open to other suggestions.

Contact Margaret Thwaites on 292 7883 or Ray Clark on 818 9609.

13 June Cambridge to Hamilton race This is our Club's race and we love as many of our members as possible to join in. See entry form attached to last month's Newsletter, or available from all canoeing shops. There will be heaps of spot prizes and it's a great day for the serious or not so serious paddlers. Be there or be

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

Contact Grant Stone 473 6658, David Poolman 025 597 086 or Roger Lomas 625 8924.

18,19,20 June Opito Bay on the Coromandel. Graeme Bruce has kindly made his bach available to us. It's across the road from the beach with the Mercury Islands beckoning us to come and explore. There are other paddling options if a stiff nor'easterly blows up, so we'll still be on the water having fun.

Beds are limited to 8 but there is plenty of flat lawn for tents or vans.

Phone Trevor for details and to reserve a bed on 817 7357.

26 - 27 June Camp at Shakespear A choice of departure points for this one, either Okahu Bay at 9.30 am on Saturday or Waiake Beach around 1 pm. We'll be paddling from Okahu Bay up to Waiake, stopping there for lunch before continuing to Shakespear Regional Park to set up camp.

Following our arrival a local guide will take us to see the wonders of the park on foot, including a waterfall, a lake and a lookout. Bring your torch. Sunday will feature an easy cruise back to your starting point.

Contact Ray Clark for details on 818 9609. If he isn't in you can leave a message, and there will be a prize for the best imitation of the beep on Ray's answering machine (but you have to come on the trip to enter)

27 June Explore the west coast Weather permitting, Colin and Trevor are leading a trip to explore the west coast, launching at Little Huia in the Manukau Harbour and finishing at Muriwai Beach. Our intention is to stay close to the coast, land as often as possible, and (with future trips in mind) try to locate places where offlying rocks or rip channels provide an easy landing. We know of at least two; there are bound to be more.

Paddlers will need to be reasonably fit, and able to relax in exposed conditions. The trip will only go ahead if winds are light and the west coast swell is moderate to low; otherwise we will wait for the next suitable date. Transportation will involve meeting at the Muriwai Beach carpark at 8.30am, leaving cars there, and taking kayaks and paddlers south to Little Huia by car and trailer.

Those keen on coming must phone Colin Quilter (630 2219) or Trevor Arthur (817 7357) to register their interest.

4 July Moturekareka Island Leave from Sullivans Bay at 10 am for a paddle to see Moturekareka and Motuketiketi Islands. Bring lunch and fishing gear, and sandals for a walk around.

Contact Matt Grant tel 524 2108.

ASKNET trips We usually list ASKNET trips in this Newsletter. Here is a summary of what they have planned: May 23 Riverhead Pub - contact John Hotham 378 9388; May 30 Watchmans Island - contact Kevin Jose.

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** prefer novice kayakers to come on Tuesdays and tend to keep Thursdays for more experienced paddlers so the group can go further faster.

Please note that these are just **informal paddles** where you travel at your own risk and responsibility. We cannot guarantee that there will be someone there to hold your hand, although in practice there is almost always a **selection of well worn Club members** at these evening outings. We're not trying to put you off at all, but hey, things can happen out there on the water.....

Destination is by consensus and the group will usually appoint a trip leader and tail ender.

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

Night paddles

Now that winter is almost upon us and the bulk of this paddling is in darkness please remember that you must bring **good lighting with you**. This means all around light and a large lens light. **Hat and warm clothes are also advised** and a whistle.

Sea kayak racing

Serious Saturday Morning Workout
Roger Lomas writes:

Okahu Bay is certainly a busy place on a Saturday morning these days. It's not just our Saturday Series people who make the place buzz. Lauri and Liz were out with a university group, John Rice had the lads from Dilworth out training, and Trev and Bruce looked like they were doing penance in the new club storage shed. Wolfgang, our famous De Niro's Restaurant Chef, was in charge of the B.B.Q., and I was busy making sure that our group put in a serious effort before they were tempted ashore to indulge in the chef's delights.

Now this serious Saturday workout — is it a race, a time trial, or just a chance to blow out the cobwebs and extend yourself? All of the abovementioned, and it can be fun. Just ask one of our fleet paddlers who was comfortably pacing himself alongside a delightful high-stepping pavement prancer in our last race off Tamaki Drive.

Back at the ramp B.B.Q. there is a chance to talk kayaks and related subjects. If you want to gain a few tips and improve your technique, you're in the right place. Ian Ferguson joins us when time and work-permit, or else you can consult Mr Barracuda Gordon Robinson. Gordon is a main race record holder for single and double sea kayaks at the famous Cavalli Offshore Race.

The ladies are in the action too and racing Rona has plenty of competition now. Welcome to Janice and Jenni in the cute Cutlass. Amanda will be there in her new Slingshot, and we are trying to entice Wendy and Stephanie back into proper craft (outrigger girls).

The sun always shines in Okahu Bay on a Saturday morning. See you there.

Next race or workout June 19th. 8am. \$5

DIPS N DUNKS

Your Editor

My name is Julia Thorn and I can be reached at 447A Riddell Road, Glendowie, tel 575 3099. Give me a call or drop me a line when you have something to tell or ask. How about a trip report or suggestions for improving the Newsletter?

Club discounts

Just a reminder that Club members are entitled to a discount of 10% on purchases at Fergs Kayaks, Canvas City and Auckland Canoe Centre. A reminder - we are no longer issuing Club membership cards.

Subscriptions

Club subscriptions are now due for the year to March 2000. There is a copy of our newly redesigned subs/renewal form attached to this Newsletter. **Please note that we have amended some errors that were in the forms attached to last month's Newsletter, so if you are renewing or joining up please use the form that came with this Newsletter.** We erroneously entered the Senior rate as \$20 instead of \$25. Please renew promptly.

Raglan by Trevor Arthur

West Coast surf at it's best with a lovely left hand break. Matt, Jane, Sue and I had lunch on the hill above the beach and were mesmerized by the row upon row of breakers getting their crests whipped off by the strong off shore wind.

We drove around to Whale Bay where the surfies and some very skilled kayakers in stunt and rodeo boats were displaying their extensive skills, surfing frontwards, backwards, cartwheels, popouts, all truly impressive stuff.

Matt and I, with Slingshot and Sea Bear seemed out of place, so rather than create carnage among these able people, not to mention the rocky kevlar-unfriendly shoreline, we launched and headed out to sea and over towards the sandy beach.

Once on the water, as opposed to sitting on the clifftop, we realised just how big those waves were. Big doesn't really do them justice and it was prudent to sit out there for a while and observe the pattern of the sets in order to plan a successful run in.

Well we got some brilliant runs in and the only negative was when a biggie broke on me from behind and tore the front hatch cover off. A friendly surfie found it and returned it so all was well. A kayak doesn't follow instructions about directions too well with the front compartment full, but the Sea Bear side surfs fantastically so it was onto the beach safely and swap kayaks for boogie boards that Sue and Jane had brought down, and we played the afternoon away.

What a great spot, and well worth a revisit. Next time we will be better equipped with white water boats and helmets for the rocky beach.

Watch out next month
for our new column

"My Favourite Paddle"

Your contributions
welcome! Put
pen to paper now

Whangarei to Paihia by Etienne de Beer

During the last week in March Tony Greaves and I set out to do a paddle from Whangarei to the Bay of Islands. Fortuitously Tony's parents live in Whangarei, and his Dad kindly agreed to drop us off at our starting point, Urquharts Bay, and pick us up from wherever we were to end the trip. The day we arrived in Whangarei there was a fresh northerly blowing, but conditions inside the harbour seemed good and we were keen to get underway, so we set off at about 1 pm. The cliffs along the coastline leading to Bream Head initially shielded us from the wind, but the odd gust tugging on a paddle gave some warning of what lay ahead. On reaching Bream Head we discovered to our disappointment that the weather forecast had been accurate. There was a headwind of at least 25 knots with fairly rugged sea conditions, and it was quite clear that we would not be able to make any headway. We backtracked to Peach Cove where we found a sandy beach to land on. A 'No Camping' sign adorned the beach, but consulting my topomap I saw a hut indicated very close to where we were. We followed the track leading up from the beach, and within 200 m found a hut belonging to the Whangarei Tramping Club, available for public use. It rained overnight, so I was thankful for the shelter, despite a screeching possum and the odd rat.

The following morning we left Peach Cove shortly after 8. Conditions at Bream Head were much better than the previous afternoon, and we rounded the headland without any problems. After paddling up the long exposed stretch of Ocean Beach we had an early lunch at the lovely Awahoa Bay, before our second stop in the shelter of the estuary at Pataua. Our aim for the day had been to reach the motor camp on the banks of the Ngunguru river, but since we neither felt like battling the outgoing tide, nor waiting for the tide to turn at around sunset, we decided to take a look at Wharewa Bay, some 2 km south of Ngunguru. A gently sloping beach lay in front of a well grassed paddock with level ground and some trees. We found a great campsite on top of a hill with panoramic views in all directions. Tony found a good use for my split paddle as he chased away a possum during the night.

The following day the forecast was for a 10-20 knot easterly. We launched shortly after 8 and had a brief stop inside Tutukaka Harbour for a stretch and a snack. Our next target was Whale Bay, which would be well sheltered from the strengthening easterly. The last couple of miles we made rapid progress with a tail wind of about 15 knots and swells of 1-1.5 m giving us some good rides. As we reached Whale Bay the rain started teeming down, and we had to rig up a tarpaulin under which to have our lunch. An hour later we reached Whananaki, where we entered the inlet under calm conditions. We landed on the spit south of the town, and found a sheltered campsite in a pine forest. After failing to find any bread at the local dairy, we pitched our tents in the rain.

The next morning we went down to the beach at 6.30 where we were confronted by numerous whitecaps and a good 25 knot nor'easter despite a degree of shelter from the headland. It was not paddling weather. The decision not to go out was vindicated later in the morning when we walked over to the hills on the northern side of the estuary for a look out to sea beyond the headland. A gale force wind hammered the exposed coastline, the sea was rough, and rain made the visibility poor. That evening the weather forecast for the next two days was for a nor'easterly easing to 25 knots with rough seas. Having spent a rather boring and wet day in the pine forest, and with the future weather prospects looking rather gloomy, we discussed ending the trip the following day if we were unable to paddle.

The next morning conditions on the beach looked more promising, and so we packed up and paddled out to the headland. The swells were moderate and the wind light, and we were soon making good progress up towards Mimiwhangata. There was little surf at Kaituna Bay and we were able to land without any problems. After an early lunch we set off on the 7 km open water crossing to the Whangaruru peninsula. On approaching land we encountered swells of about 2 m, noticeably bigger than further south. We followed the coast along to Bland Bay, where we picked our way through the rocks and reefs to land on the well sheltered beach. On reaching our first motor camp on the trip we were both looking forward to a hot shower, but after putting my 50c coin in the box I was bitterly disappointed by a jet of icy cold water. Tony suffered a similar fate several hours later after getting assurances from the owner that he had sorted the problem out.

We were now within striking distance of the crux of the trip - rounding Cape Brett. The forecast for the next day was for a 20 knot nor'easter rising to 25 knots the day after. Our initial plan had been to spend the following night just north of Whangamumu, but with the forecast suggesting deteriorating weather, we did not want to risk getting stuck in an isolated bay without road access. We thus resolved to try and round Cape Brett the next day.

We awoke to grey skies, rain and a 10-15 knot easterly within the shelter of Bland Bay. Setting off at 8 am, we immediately encountered big swells (up to 3 m) getting out of Bland Bay. We headed well out to sea to avoid confused water before turning north. Visibility was poor as we made for what we took to be Whangamumu in the gloomy distance. After 1.5 hours, while several miles out to sea, we realised that the outline on the horizon we were aiming for was actually Piercy island. A change of course brought a better view of the coastline, and we made our way to Outu Bay north of Whangamumu. When planning the trip we had intended to explore the coastline, but with big swells and an onshore wind, paddling close to land had not been an option. After a few anxious moments negotiating an offshore reef we paddled into the calm of Outu Bay and landed on the shingle beach. This beach has 360 degrees shelter from the weather, a small area of level ground which could serve as a campsite, and a stream to supply fresh water. Despite these attractions, and feeling a little tired after the morning's exertions, we were keen to press on to Cape Brett because we felt that the weather was more likely to deteriorate than improve.

After a good feed and a rest we left the shelter of Outu Bay for the final leg up to the Bay of Islands. We slogged straight into the big nor'easterly swells to get to Waiwiri rock, where we turned north for the last 2 km to Cape Brett. This final approach provided the most challenging conditions of the trip. The 3 m swells crashing into the cliffs and reflecting back out to sea, made us feel like we were inside a washing machine. From time to time two opposing swells would meet beneath the hull of the kayak, which would rise up like an elevator, causing me to stop paddling and prepare for a brace. After a seemingly interminable time we reached shelter in the lee of Piercy island. We had a brief rest and a snack, and then turned into the BOI. For a while we just drifted along with the wind and swells, enjoying not having to work at making progress. The only hazard left to face were the numerous tourist launches with high speed engines and aggressive sounding names. Intermittent rain squalls and grey skies meant that the visibility was still rather poor, so we kept close to land to try and avoid the traffic. After a leisurely paddle we landed at Deep Water Cove for a hot drink and a rest. With a good tail wind to push us along and swells to ride, it took just under an hour to get to Rawhiti, where we finally did get our hot shower.

On the final day we again awoke to grey skies and a 20 knot nor'easter. We made good progress, surfing along intermittently, and reached Robertson island in under an hour. A leisurely paddle took us to Paihia, where we had a good meal and a couple of beers before returning to Whangarei.

The trip had been very different from what I had envisaged while doing the planning. Instead of a leisurely coastal exploration the largely onshore winds and big swells had lead to our paddling more or less point to point, thus missing out on a lot of the scenery. Ultimately it had turned into an expedition rather than a relaxing holiday. We both hope to return to this area, particularly the coast north of Bland Bay, for a closer look under more favourable weather conditions.

KASK Forum 1999

by Ryan Whittle

The KASK forum was held at Clive in Hawkes Bay on April 9-11

As well as the normal sessions you see at these conferences, KASK makes a point of an overnight trip in the local area.

This years was planned to be out to Cape Kidnappers on Saturday afternoon and returning the following morning.

Someone must have invited the weatherman as the radio told us that everywhere else in the country was fine and clear.

We had 20 knot offshore winds gusting considerably more.

The overnight part of the paddle was set aside on about Plan D, plans A B and C having been abandoned at various stages through the day.

The offshore winds meant that the sea was flat, so about 40 boats left in 4-5 groups and set off for the Cape about 10km distant.

The beach was made enterly of small loose stones, with quite a steep drop to the incoming small surf but everyone got away without any problems.

Paddling up the coast towards the cape stayed calm and the wind kept gusting strongly, making for some anxious moments, nearly blowing a few of us over.

I don't know what they put in the water down there, but the visibility would have been in the region of 1-2cm.

You could probably have walked on the water there was so much sediment floating around.

The cliffs make for impressive views along this section of coast, and continued on for the best part of a hour up to Black Reef.

Here the coast line took about a 90 degree turn. The seas past the reef were no longer calm, so we decided that the cape would have to wait for another day.

The gannets are meant to be there in Jan - March, and going on the numbers that were there at this time of the year - hundreds on the reef, in season they must be an awesome sight.

An easy trip back to the start point, and a few people managed to get some surfing in just before dark.

A debriefing of the trip the next day bought the comments that people were very impressed at how each groups members all stayed very close together throughout the trip, something that most of us had not experienced before. Dividing up into smaller groups of 6-10 was thought to help in this.

AUCKLAND CANOE CLUB MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

New Member

Rejoining

Surname:

First Names(s) (If family, please list all names):

Address:

Phone (home) Mobile Fax

Phone (work) E Mail

Do you own a canoe / kayak ? Yes No

If "yes", please list type(s)

Briefly state your experience in canoing

Please tick the types of canoeing you are most interested in:

Sea Kayaking

Touring

Flat Water Racing

Witewater

Surf

Sea Kayak Racing

Fees for year ending 31 March 2000 (Please tick amount being paid)

Junior \$15

Member \$25

Family \$30

Associate member \$15

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$.....

To comply with the Privacy Act 1993, the Club is required to obtain permission from members to gather and publish personal details such as names, addresses and phone numbers. This information will only be used in newsletters and published on the current member phone list. Please read and complete the form below.

I Agree (please tick one)

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.

Signed Date

Please return to: Margaret Thwaites, Auckland Canoe Club, William Potter Lane, Karaka, RD 1, Papakura