



NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 1999

I often find this time of year particularly frustrating. Just because of the weather.

It seems to be so much more unreliable than usual. For a few days we have glorious sunshine and everyone says that summer is here at last. We put away all our heaters and winter woollies. We buy in extra ice cream. We stop daydreaming about idylls on tropical islands.

Then it all changes. The wind comes up. The rain pours down. And it's cold enough for skivvies again. Just when you were getting used to the heat.

As I write this there is a gale blowing with wind gusts of the hugest proportions. Today of all days is the first of this season's swim/run races at St Heliers. They couldn't have picked a worse day. The support crews on their pathetic little surf skis won't be out there in this, that's for sure. (It's not that I think surf skis are pathetic, it's just that they wouldn't stand up to this wind very well.) But I'm sure the race won't be cancelled, they never are. And do you realise that there aren't even any toilets in St Heliers to shelter in at the moment. Or take a shower if the rain should by chance cease.

I suppose one should see these adverse conditions as part of the challenge. It's true that some of the greatest satisfaction can come from overcoming great odds, and completing things in adversity. I felt very pleased with myself when as a complete novice I kayaked across the Harbour on a day you could barely see across it, and the waves were unbelievable. It's just that I probably would not have set out if I had really known what it was going to be like.

I've cycle toured in terrible solid mists where the road was barely visible, and felt a great sense of achievement to arrive, soggy tent and all, at a saturated campsite for the night. But perfect sunshine would have been nicer.

Being dependent as I am on snatching my exercise moments when I can, it is always annoying to have planned a few hours' kayaking and then find the water looks too horrendous to risk an outing. Or to have planned a bike ride and then be too scared of being swept into oncoming traffic by the blustery wind so have to change plans.

Even worse for our trip organisers who have planned a trip to fit around tides, their social calendar etc and then have to cancel out.

As a follow on from a few Editorials ago where I rabbited on about the benefits of multisport training, you could end up spending a lot of time at the swimming pool.

Yours in paddling, when possible,

John

AUCKLAND CANOE CLUB TEE SHIRTS

Fancy yourself in a really smart kayaking tee shirt? The club now has its own. These shirts are top-brand Beefy Tees, guaranteed to put up with repeated wearing and washing. They are printed on the front with the design at left, and come in two great colours: white design on navy fabric, and black design on light grey fabric. Three sizes are available: medium, large and extra-large. We are selling them at cost, \$30 each.



To order, contact **Colin Quilter**, (phone 630 2219 or email "c.quilter@auckland.ac.nz")

P.S. There's more to this story. The company which printed the shirts for us mistakenly printed 26 shirts with black design on a medium grey fabric, instead of the light grey fabric we had ordered. They made good the mistake by printing another batch using the correct colour, but it leaves them holding a bunch of shirts which are not exactly what we ordered, but still look really nice. They are identical to the first grade shirts, just a different colour, medium rather than light grey. So we are selling these at half price, \$15 a shirt. Ask Colin about them.

Hireage of Club kayaks

Here are the charges for Club kayak hire:

Tuesday & Thursday nights - members \$3, non members \$5

Half day - \$5

Full day - \$15

Guest of member, with member present - \$25. This hireage is extended once per guest, after which we encourage the guest to join the Club.

No member shall disclose the lock combination to a non member for purposes of using their own or a Club boat.

Please hose down Club boats after use. Some have been put away with sand clogging the

rudder and foot slides, accelerating wear and tear.

Our Fleet

At present the following boats are available for hire:

1 Storm

1 Squall

2 Puffins

2 Breezes

1 Sea Bear double

1 Corsica

1 Pirouette

These last 2 are whitewater boats.

CALENDAR NOV - DEC

Just a reminder Please can you make an effort to contact trip leaders before you pack up your stuff to go on a trip. Details may change between the time you read your Newsletter and the day of departure, and the leaders really like to know how many people are coming on a trip. In certain cases trips have to be cancelled.

20 Nov Kaukapakapa - Kaipara surge This is a full day's paddling. Meet at the Highway 16 intersection at Kaukapakapa at 7.30am to paddle to the Kaipara River and on into the Kaipara Harbour. Bring along plenty of food, spare clothes and enough to drink. There may be a barbecue at the leader's house at the end of the paddle, which could well be after dark.

Contact David Poolman tel 025 597 086.

21 Nov Tawharanui peninsula A beautiful part of the north. Meet at Matakana township at 10am. Bring your snorkel or at least swimming togs. Lunch is required, and there may be a stop on the return at the Morris & James place in Matakana.

Contact Matt Grant tel 524 2108 or 021 610 604.

27 Nov Doubles Day at Okahu Bay Sea kayak race for doubles (Barracuda and Packhorse Express craft for hire at \$5 per seat). Race entry \$5 per person, includes BBQ. Meet at the ramp behind Fergs at 7.30am. Race starts at 8am.

Contact Roger Lomas for details, tel 625 8924.

28 Nov Sea Swim Escort This is the first of the year's sea swims that the Club traditionally escorts, Herne Bay Beach to Curran Street. Meet at Curran Street at 10am to be on the water at 10.45 to paddle down to Herne Bay and meet the swimmers.

There is a full description of what goes on further on in this Newsletter.

Trevor can tell you more and assist with arranging use of a Club kayak; tel 817 7357.

4 Dec Peak to Peak A multisport event in its inaugural year. Starts with a 10km run from One Tree Hill to Okahu Bay, then a paddle across to Rangitoto (lighthouse bay) and finally a 2km run up to the summit. Return will be at your leisure. Start time is 9am, entry fee is \$10.

For details contact the Race Director, Peak to Peak Challenge, PO Box 62-596, Central Park, Auckland. There is a website at: <http://www.peaktopeak.co.nz> See last page of Newsletter.

3/4/5 Dec Tiri Tiri Island This trip is now sold out. Those of you who have been

fortunate enough to secure a place please contact Trevor to coordinate departure times.

Contact Trevor Arthur for info, tel 817 7357.

5 Dec APCC Trophy series finale at Lake Pupuke. Start time 10 am.
Contact any APCC person for details.

12 Dec Sea Swim Second swim of the series, Curran Street to Chelsea Sugar.
Meet at Curran St at 9.15am to be on the water by 9.45. Contact Trevor for more info.

George Gerrard our qualified instructor has offered to be on hand after this swim for re-entry or rolling assistance. This is a perfect chance to try group rescues or anything else you'd like help with, in a no pressure, fun environment.

ASKNET trips We usually list ASKNET trips in this Newsletter. Here is a summary of what they have planned: Nov 28 Motuora Island working bee with Vincent Maire tel 424 2293; Dec 12 Point Wells Xmas bbq and paddle with Gerry Maire tel 486 7444.

Coastbusters 2000 an advance notification of this event which will take place 17 to 19 March 2000 at Puriri Park, Orewa. On the Friday and Saturday the event will be based at Orewa and the Sunday will be spent paddling on the Mahurangi .

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. Please remember to pay your fees.

Swim Escorts

Explained by Trevor Arthur

Our role in these events is to assist the swimmers. This is done by:

- Supporting them on our bow if they are cramped, throwing up, fatigued or have had enough for the day
- if a swimmer wants to pull out you raise your paddle in the air and a rescue craft will come to you and relieve you of your guest
- if you are in the midst of other swimmers tow your swimmer out to the side of the course
- every swimmer pulling out **MUST** be taken to a coast guard boat. Do not allow swimmers to go ashore part way through the race.

Guiding swimmers is in reality our main task. Fogged up goggles make it hard for these people to see where they are going. If you see someone going off course paddle on the same side as which they are breathing so they can see you. Give them clear directions. Point as well as speaking loudly (they may be wearing ear plugs under their caps!).

99% of swimmers are really appreciative of our help. For the odd stropky one who has swallowed too much seawater and insists they know where they are going when they don't, tell them they will be taken out of the water if they go outside the coastguard cordon.

Sea swim dates are 28 November, 12 December, 20 February 2000, 12 March 2000.

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?

Thank you for the recent good response to my pleas for Newsletter material. It has been great to receive so much mail. I am running low on supplies right now so please keep the stuff coming!

Rangitoto Ramblings

By Roger Lomas

The lighthouse end of Rangitoto is an interesting area and over 100 years ago was the site of some industrial enterprise. NZs second attempt at commercial salt evaporation was carried out here and a rock quarry was also worked nearby. I've often wondered where exactly these ventures took place and last month a group of us from the club went over to have a look.

Starting early from Takapuna Beach in fine weather we crossed the channel and stopped for a cuppa on a small sand cay near the lighthouse. Wally immediately claimed the prime spot making himself comfortable and looked set for a day at the beach. We had to convince him that the island disappeared at high tide before he would get back into his storm for the short paddle to McKenzies Beach.

Colin spearheaded a thorough search of the coastline for any obvious signs of mans industry but to no avail. Time for plan B. Ryan Whittle had contacted Susan Yorff who is researching Rangitoto for an upcoming book. Sue knew of an elderly bach owner who as a young girl had seen the ruins of the old salt evaporating ponds. A rendezvous on the island had been arranged so off we trotted along the coastal road to her bach.

She was able to show us an area below her bach where the ponds were. We would never have found them because of a dramatic change in the scenery. The salt pods are now a beautiful Pohutakawa Forest with a rich ground cover of soil and humus.

After a quick look through our guides historic bach it was time to seek out the old rock quarry. We picked up the trail of an old narrow gauge railway formation and although it was quite overgrown in places we were able to follow it as it wound its way up the slopes to the quarry face. The railway carried the stone to the waters edge where it was loaded aboard scows. Transported to the city it was used to build many of Aucklands fine buildings and construct waterfront seawalls.

Back on the coastal road another local guide took us on a tour of the other baches built at the waters edge and with stunning views. One however was sited well inland amongst the trees and a kauri tree was planted nearby. This bach is now in ruins and as we viewed the site Pelham climbed atop a rectangular mound of rocks whilst our guide told us the tale of how the last owner had died at this spot. A mortified Pelham looked down at us but was quickly assured that the body had been taken to the city for burial.

There is a body on the island but it has never been found. For many years George Stevenson roamed the tracks and coast and encouraged others to join him. This group eventually formed the Auckland tramping club. Steve disappeared on the island and his body has never been found. His friends erected a memorial beside the road just before the baches. If you are walking from McKenzie Beach it is on the left side of the road and if you look around behind the rock memorial you can pick up the formation of the rail track to the quarry face. A plaque that once adorned the memorial is still in existence and hopefully will be returned to its rightful place.

Andi was threatening mutiny if we didn't return to the beach for lunch, so our twelve strong group of explorers returned mission accomplished.

Sea Kayak Racing

With Roger Lomas

To finish off the sea kayak racing calendar for the year, event no. 20 will be another doubles only race. Some great prizes from Canvas City will be up for grabs as well as a special spot prize. One of the clubs new T-shirts (value\$30.00) will be won in the draw.

The big Barracuda Outback and Packhorse Express double sea kayaks from Fergs will again be available at \$5.00 per seat and race entry is only \$5.00 per person. If you bring your own double sea kayak we will give it a fair handicap so everyone has a chance. If you haven't a partner just turn up and we will match you up. The coastline hugging courses that we use always keep you in contact with the rest of the field.

An early meeting time of 7.30am with a race start around 8.0 am will have you looking forward to the lavish mid morning breakfast B.B.Q when you come ashore. If you don't want to race come on down and cheer the fleet on and join us in the BBQ afterwards.

SEE YOU DOWN AT THE RAMP ON SATURDAY 27TH NOVEMBER.

Crusoe Island

By Rona Patterson

There were a few keen paddlers remaining in Auckland on the Sunday during Labour Weekend, and at the very respectable starting time of 10am six keen paddlers assembled at Bucklands Beach for a visit to Crusoe Island. This was the third time I had attempted this trip. The first time it was too windy and wet to land and the second was cancelled, also due to bad weather. This time we made it, although low tide stopped us landing on the Waiheke side of the island.

Four women and two men started off into the channel to take advantage of an out-going tide and headed around the southern end of Browns Island, heading for Motuihe. We stopped at a little bay opposite Crusoe Island for morning tea and exactly fifteen minutes after leaving this beach we were preparing to land on Crusoe Island for lunch and Colin's obligatory walk.

It was just before our lunch stop that I caught a fish, but it is the story of the fish that got away because while trying to get it to sit quietly on my deck, I noticed I was getting perilously close to rocks. So, while trying to back off, I lost the fish and the line. Thank goodness for Lyndsay who was behind me and managed to retrieve the line – without the fish – and without the lure and the hook!

On the homeward trip we landed on the Waiheke side of Motuihe and portaged to the other side of the island before crossing to Browns Island for afternoon tea. Then the battle began - strong winds against an in-coming tide meant the hardest paddle of the day.

Lucas Creek

By Ryan Whittle

Wally and Ryan met on an overcast Sunday morning at Xmas beach on Herald Island for a saunter down Lucas Creek.

The idea was to ride the incoming tide to Albany and the outgoing one on the way back.

We were about 3 hours early for the tide calculations and it was near low tide when we started.

If you have seen the upper harbour at low tide, you will know how much mud there is.

We walked ankle deep through 50 meters of the stuff, carrying our boats, to launch.

5 minutes into the breeze and chop to reach the shelter of the creek where the wind and waves stayed out in the harbour.

Although the mud banks are prominent, there was still plenty of water, even at low tide.

A healthy population of mangroves line the creek, and the hills are covered in bush, the kowai in bloom competing with the gorse for the brightest yellows.

The new housing just before Albany, is visible on the banks above the mud, with a number of up market residences catching the eye.

For anyone who has parked behind 3 Guys in Albany, the roosters gave a fix on the location.

The creek forks here, beside a playground. We turn left as instructed by previous visitors.

The large fallen tree that we had been told needed to be limbo danced under, was not within reach of stretched paddles at this tide level.

Under the road that leaves Albany, the foundations of the old wharf, where commercial boats used to make deliveries, and the original road bridge, are clearly visible within a few yards of each other.

Boulders on the creekbed prevent us going further upstream, so a long 10 metre walk was required to reach the famed Albany waterfall and pool.

Back to the playground and a stop for lunch under the trees. The rain had sent everyone else home and we witnessed a pukeko first swimming then flying downstream, an unusual sight for both of us.

When the food was gone, so were we, cruising toward home.

A creek we had spotted on the way in had filled up enough on the incoming tide to float into, and we found another picturesque waterfall cascading down the hillside with some bubbly sound effects.

Back into the main channel and we were surprised by what looked like a tsunami bearing down on us.

But it was only Rogers bow wave as he chased after us having completed his family duties for the day.

The rain had stopped by this stage and a pleasant paddle back past waterskiers that often use the creek when the tide is in.

Roger supplied the always available hot drink from the back of his VW to finish off a pleasant trip.

Lucas Creek is an excellent place to paddle if the weather has taken a turn for the worse, and is not as tide dependent as reputation would have us believe.

PEAK TO PEAK

As the name suggests, this event takes in two of Auckland's most recognizable landmarks, namely One Tree Hill and Rangitoto.

It began last year as a challenge between David Walthall and Matt Feary and was enjoyed so much we thought we'd see if others were keen for a fun couple of hours.

The initial run is mostly downhill, from the summit of One Tree Hill to Okahu Bay, which we've measured at 10km (give or take). Obviously, there is a need to drop off your kayak at Okahu Bay in preparation for your arrival. We'll make sure a marshal or two is there to keep an eye on all of the gear. The paddle across to Lighthouse Bay on the north side of Rangitoto is relatively open to the elements and we are mindful of the possible range of participating boats, from the multisport variety to sea kayaks.

If we consider the weather to be too treacherous on the day we'll utilise the Newstalk ZB cancellation service and postpone the event for another day/week?

Upon landing at Lighthouse Bay it's a quick jaunt up to the top of Rangi via the road. Each finisher will need to touch the wooden pyramid construction, right at the summit (i.e. along the wooden walkway to the highest most set of platforms).

We are delighted to offer an All Seasons Flowers gift basket to the winner (thanks to them!), and a cold drink and snack for each finishing competitor (included within the \$10 entry fee).

Unfortunately you can't spend the rest of your life on Rangitoto so it's a paddle back to the mainland. You could, of course, be fortunate enough to have a support boat to take you home. Whatever, weather permitting we're planning an informal BBQ at Okahu Bay. So bring along your BBQs, food, beer and friends.

For an entry form see:

www.peaktopeak.co.nz

or contact:

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