



NEWSLETTER

JULY 2000

First splash

Your Newsletter looks a bit different this month. But the Editor remains the same. Most of you know who I am – I'm Julia Thorn and I live at 447A Riddell Rd, Glendowie. My phone answers to 575 3099. My computer resides at juliathorn@xtra.co.nz.

I am always keen to receive contributions for the Newsletter, and now you can send them to me electronically. In fact I would like all contributions to be typed or e-mailed. Also, I generally see brevity as a virtue, which means you don't have to feel obliged to do a lengthy screed once you get the literary urge. It's quicker that way.

In the interests of preventing this publication from getting too boring and routine I do not intend to include information like kayak hire arrangements and listing the Committee each issue, but I will include this from time to time.

But I would love to get some feedback.

The heart of winter is always an exciting time on the water. The delights of night paddling await. I had a taste of this the other week on a Club evening trip over to Rangitoto. Going over we encountered several other craft, like the Waiheke barge which suddenly loomed up close, and a late-returning-home motor yacht whose skippers had a good laugh at us. After a glass of wine on the island, courtesy of the Poolman party staying at the scout hut, we returned homeward. The return was very quiet indeed, no other boats, no moon (not that the moon is usually particularly noisy) and a gentle tail wind.

More to follow I hope.

Julia

Calendar July – Aug

Remember to contact the trip leader before you set out.

Safety policy for Club Trips

- 1 Any Club member who has any doubt about whether or not their skills are sufficient for a particular trip **MUST** contact the trip leader ahead of time to discuss safety issues.
- 2 It is your responsibility to wear a buoyancy aid, to be suitably dressed for the conditions, and to carry any other personal safety equipment necessary for the trip.
- 3 You must make a realistic assessment that your strength and endurance are sufficient for whatever is planned.
- 4 You must be able to re-enter your kayak (with help from another paddler if necessary) after a capsize in deep water.
- 5 With night paddling it is everybody's responsibility to provide their own large lens flashlight or fixed all round white light on a one metre high pole, in working order and mounted on the outside of the kayak where it can be seen at all times..

22 July Karaka Bay & Panmure

Meet at Okahu Bay at 8.30am for 9am departure. Paddle to the Tamaki River estuary for morning tea at Karaka Bay at 10.30 followed by an onward paddle to Panmure for lunch. High tide (3m) is at 11.15. Return time will be around 3pm. Watch this spot for details of this trip in reverse another day! **Leader is Rona Patterson tel 834 3399(h) or 302 1355(w).**

23 July Hunua Tupperware APCC race 10.15am start at Hunua Falls. **Organised by Manukau Canoe Club.**

21/22/23 July Opito Bay This trip is now full, but if you would like to get onto the waiting list for the next opportunity please contact Trevor Arthur tel 817 7357.

30 July Crusoe Island Our destination is a tiny island in the channel between Motuhie and Waiheke. Since low water is at mid-day, there will be a favourable current both going out and coming home. Meet at Bucklands Beach at 10.15am for a 10.30am departure; return will be about 4.30pm. Bring lunch, snacks, hot drinks and warm clothes to wear on the beach. If the forecast is for fresh southwesterlies, we'll change the destination because it would be a long slog home against the wind. **All those coming should contact Colin**

Quilter 630 2219 on Saturday evening or Sunday morning to get the latest information; don't just turn up at Bucklands Beach

5 August Kayak rally Meet at Okahu Bay at 8.15am for 9.15 briefing and start. This is an opportunity for all members to take part in a team based fun filled morning and is suitable for paddlers of all levels. Finish will be at midday with a bbq lunch provided. \$5 entry fee. If you would like to form a team before the day please do so; if not you will be divided into teams on the day. **Contact Jonathan Jarvis for details tel 366 6805.** There is no need to book, just turn up on the day. Phone me if weather looks dicey.

8 August Rangitoto overnight 5.30 meet at Okahu Bay for a Tuesday night paddle across to Rangi for overnight at the scout hut. Return early next day. **Contact Stephanie Seager tel 834 5769**

19 August Club Race 10 km sea kayak race for doubles and singles. Meet at club ramp at 8am for 8.30 start. Entry is \$5, bbq afterwards. **Organiser is Roger Lomas, tel 625 8924.**

19-20 Aug Motuora Island The DOC bach on this beautiful island in the Mahurangi is booked for Saturday night. This can accommodate the first 5 people who decide they are too wimpy to camp. The rest of us will be camping. We will meet at 9.30 at Sullivans Bay and paddle off with a picnic lunch to arrive at Motuora some time after lunch. Returning 5pm Sunday. **Contact Ken Marsh 828 0701.**

20 Aug Parakai APCC race 12 km race, starts 1.30pm at Parakai Springs Rd.

22 August Browns Island for lunch Meet at Okahu Bay at 9am for 9.30 dep. Cruise down to Browns Island for a walk and lunch before returning with the tide. We'll be home 3-ish. **Ring Trevor Arthur 817 7357.**

Club night paddles are on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 5.30pm from Okahu Bay.

Club Night

August 1 at 7.30pm for 8pm start at Okahu Bay clubrooms

Format as previous: 2 sessions of 20-25 mins each, separated by a 15-20 min interval.

Ken Marsh

Ken will talk about his trip on the Colorado River in 1997. Ken and 4 other kayakers were supported by 3 rafts in a 16 day expedition on this wonderful wilderness river. How to survive and have minimum impact on a pristine desert environment.

Paul Buckley

Paul will show some slides of trips within a short distance of Auckland, all set to music.



Talking of Club nights . . .

We've had 2 very successful club nights so far this winter, and I really thank everyone for all their support. There are a couple of requests that I have in order to make the nights run as smoothly as possible.

First, it would be really wonderful if we could try to say "Hi" to at least one new person each night. This way, there would be even more talking, trip plotting, scheming and reflecting going on!

Second, a big call for names to add to my 'door duty' and 'supper duty' rosters. I try to have 2 people per job so that you don't get lonely. I can provide a copy of my check list for you to scan over before making the commitment. Please help out..... phone me on 419 9223 or e-mail: anns@rangitoto.school.nz

Cambridge - Hamilton race results

A good day for all on the water on 18 June despite some wind and rain. Here's a summary of how our Club members fared.

Name	Kayak type	Time	Position in class
Arnot La Fleur	Inn 1	1:44:18	7
Peter Sommerhalder	Inn 1	2:13:31	25
Roy Meehan	Inn 2	2:07:19	5
Ian Cotton	Rec single	1:56:48	1
Jonathan Jarvis	Rec single	1:59:52	3
Ken Marsh	Rec single	2:07:28	4
Hayes/Walker	Rec double	1:59:37	2
Poolman/Poolman	Rec double	2:23:06	3
Robinson/Wilson	Rec double	2:25:51	4
Lucas/Lucas	Rec double	2:30:55	5
Jenni Douglas	Rec women	2:04:50	1
Jane Robinson	Rec women	2:06:41	2
Sue Grayson	Rec women	2:13:27	3
Rona Patterson	Rec women	2:23:52	4

Well done everyone!

Sea kayakers light testing

Sea kayakers are encouraged to present their latest designs of night lights and masts. Please bring them along to the Clubrooms on August 8 at 8pm (Tuesday). **For more information contact Kevin Jose tel 846 6796 - eves.**

Browns Island

By Julia Thorn

Long my favourite destination for an idle afternoon, I've been out to Browns Island twice in the past couple of weeks. First time at low tide, which makes the island much larger to circumnavigate, and then at high tide when the whole place looks quite different.

I'm always delighted to see the oystercatchers nosing around on the rocks. The variety of terrain in such a small area is a major drawcard – the cliffs on the northern shore are my favourite part but the contrast offered by the lava flows and greenery on the southern side mean I'm always keen to get round there too.

Approaching the island the old piles remaining from the landing stage of a past era always fool me, as they look so like a couple of fishermen hanging around on the rock platform near the cliffs. Of course there is never anyone there at all.

Contrary to expectation Browns Island is not named for the colour of its summer vegetation but because the first owners of the land were William Brown and John Logan Campbell. They used the place for pig breeding. Later the island was owned by the Devonport Steam Ferry Company and was a popular picnic destination. That's where the landing stage came from, and there are some remains of ferries just offshore. In 1955 the island was gifted to the people of Auckland.

The island was initially formed by a series of volcanic eruptions, which resulted in a large tuff ring and extensive lava flows and a few smaller cones. The most obvious of these cones is the summit which you can walk up to for an excellent view. The most recent eruption was twenty thousand years ago.

One of the attractions of the island is that the tourist hordes just can't get there. So midweek there might just be a couple of fishing boats hovering and at weekends there isn't much more. You do have to watch out for the link ferry from Half Moon Bay into the city, because it doesn't exactly hang around once it gets into the channel. Going to the island is an excellent short trip from St Heliers or just as enjoyable but takes a lot longer from Okahu Bay. At least you can see your destination almost the whole way.



AUCKLAND-KAYAKERS AND AUCKLAND-CANOE-CLUB EGROUPS

Matt Crozier

First of all, Welcome to all the ASKnet members who have joined the Auckland Canoe Club in the last month. As Treasurer I have had to process the influx of new memberships (about 50!, mostly from ASKNet) and it's great to have you aboard. We run a similar style of calendar and you'll find the same familiar faces on our trips so you should be right at home.

Those of you with email that have been subscribers to the Auckland-Kayakers eGroup will have noticed some changes in the last month. This email discussion list, which the club shared with ASKNet, has been split into two separate eGroups with two distinct functions: 1) A discussion list and 2) An events calendar.

This list 'Auckland-Kayakers' remains a discussion list, where people can freely exchange ideas on kayaking in Auckland. The membership to this list is no longer be restricted! - you do not have to be a member of any club. You do not even have to be a kayaker, or even a real person for that matter (yes, there is in fact a certain dog who enjoys a ride in the back hatch!). You just have to be nice and not annoy the other members of the list. However, club events are no longer posted on the Auckland-kayakers calendar. Vince and I still moderate the posting and the usual rules still apply.

A new eGroup has been created and this is restricted to members of the Auckland Canoe Club. This list serves as a calendar for club events, and event reminders will be sent to members prior to those events. There will NOT be a discussion list or chat facilities. Only the moderator can post events or notices.

The advantages of this setup are that ASKNet members who do not wish to join the Canoe Club will not be left without a forum. We also felt there is no point in having more than one forum for discussing 'the same' kayaking issues, so Canoe Club members (or anyone) can use the Auckland-Kayakers list for messages. There are a number of list participants who only want to receive event reminders and not general chat - this will allow that to happen.

All members of the Auckland-Kayakers eGroup remain on the discussion

list. All members of Auckland-Kayakers who are Canoe Club members have been put on the new eGroup with their individual email delivery options preserved.

Whenever a new member joins the club, if they have indicated an email address on their membership form they will be sent an invite to subscribe to both eGroups.

To subscribe to the automatic Calendar event reminders, send a blank email to

Auckland-Canoe-Club-subscribe@egroups.com

To view this month's events, visit

<http://www.egroups.com/calendar/auckland-canoe-club?s>

To subscribe to the email discussion list, send a blank email to

Auckland-Kayakers-subscribe@egroups.com

To post a message on the email discussion list, send your email to

Auckland-Kayakers@egroups.com

For further information about the club eGroups, write to

Auckland-Canoe-Club-owner@egroups.com

WHANGAREI HEADS, JUNE 16-18, 2000

Ann Schofield

We had the following wonderful company on this trip: Matt Crozier, Vincent Maire, Alison Wagstaff, Jan Rivers, Margaret Law, Gerry Bashein, Nicole Moorhouse, Martin Fedorski, Ryan Whittle, Ann Schofield (me).

It was also good to catch up with 3 paddlers from Whangarei canoe club during the weekend: Dave Probert, Tony, Ben Bennetto

The question of whether or not to leave cars at Marsden Point refinery and paddle across to our lodge accomodation had played a major part in our pre-trip discussions. Although it was a beautifully moon lit night, and the water was calm, we all opted against the paddle for safety reasons. If any of us were to do the trip again though, I am sure some would opt for paddling because we would know where to head for, and it really would save about an hour of driving. Ten of us assembled at Manaia Baptist camp (\$6 per night; tel: 09 437 6584, bookings made with Greg Mutton), on Whangarei Heads on Friday evening. We had booked Jensen House (sleeps 18), but were also able to use the hall (sleeps 65), so we were certainly not short of space.

After a peaceful night, we were delighted to awake in an absolutely beautiful bay, MacDonald Bay, which is a small section of McGregors Bay (which, in turn is a small section of Taurikura Bay). When facing the water, Castle Rock was on our left, and Marsden Point Refinery across the bay. Grid Ref: 478959.

The area really felt like a wilderness, with many bays, overhanging pohutakawa's, and the rugged volcanic backdrop of various peaks. It was a sunny, calm day. We explored Little Munroe Bay, Roetahi Bay, Motukaroro Island and the refinery for an hour or so; before retracing our stokes, and heading out towards the Bream Head. For a short spell by the island, it had felt like a grade 1 river as the tidal current close to the island was so strong!

The coastline was amazingly beautiful all the way to Peach Cove where we had a lunchstop. After eating, we headed inland up the track to check out the DOC / Whangarei tramping club hut, and the view from the top of the ridge behind it. We were rewarded with a spectacular view all the way to Ocean Beach. It would have been wonderful to explore the track which carried on along the ridge in both the east and west directions, but others were waiting at the beach for us to carry on kayaking (after all, this is a kayaking weekend in theory!). Later, we carried on to Bream Head, and decided that the nearby Bream Islands looked tempting for exploring, but for another day.

We had a lovely evening back at the camp with a shared meal for 10, and a wee celebration. We celebrated all the wonderful times ASKNET had provided for many many people. We had a brightly decorated cake to acknowledge the first (Browns Island) and last (Whangarei) ASKNET trips; and presented Vincent with a beautifully carved waka for all his work. Amongst the 10 of us, Vincent and Matt were the people involved in both the first and last ASKNET events; so they provided us with stories from both these, and many many other great ASKNET occasions. It was a fun and special evening.

On Sunday, the group split into 2. Ryan led a kayaking trip from Ocean Beach to Bream Islands while Vincent, Matt and myself took a very scenic walk up Manaia, a peak of 420m just behind our lodge. It was fun spotting our fellow kayaking pals from up high. The scenery was stunning.

In summary, it was a very successful weekend, and I thank everyone who contributed. In particular, thanks to Elaine Newton for suggesting the accommodation, but sadly couldn't make it herself due to an injury. I am looking forward to returning to the area.

Finally, a huge personal thank you to Vincent Maire for bringing wilderness opportunities around Auckland to my attention. Back in 1997, I was welcomed by him into ASKNET during a short spell working in Auckland, from the south island. Through his generosity and thoughtfulness, he changed my perception of the area and the people very quickly. I am extremely grateful about this, because I am living a happy and fun filled life in a city that many south island buddies said I would not enjoy.

A PADDLE IN THE FOG

Rona Patterson

Having been rather sick of wind, rain and lousy weather, my mind was made up - I would take my kayak out from my local beach on Saturday 1 July on the 6.22 am tide.

It was dark when I set off down the road pulling my kayak behind me, and a thick fog surrounded me. Half way to the beach I realised that I could not go far without my paddle, so returned home to collect it. I waved it to my neighbour as I passed, and she waved back. I really didn't know if it was her or her husband because she was just a haze.

After stuffing my trolley in the nearest tree and lowering myself into the cockpit, I set off around a couple of groups of mangroves, and then out and around a cable marker. This is an area I know well, and knew to turn inwards to follow the coastline towards the Whau creek. After what seemed only a short time, I was close to a wall of mangroves. Where had they come from? Surely I had not already crossed the channel to Pollen Island. I considered going around the outside of the mangroves, but where would that lead to? I decided to remain on the near side.

This was my mistake!

I followed the mangroves for what seemed like an eternity, all the time listening for motorway traffic and straining to see motorway lights, because surely I should have been well into the Whau creek by now. Nothing! The darkness and stillness enveloped me. I knew that while keeping close to the mangroves I was in shallow water and that land would not be far away, but after about an hour of this I was starting to become concerned. Then all of a sudden, the mangroves came to an end. This in itself was a relief, but now what was I to do? There was water as far as I could see, in front, to the side, and behind me, and dense mangroves to my left.

After peering all around, I could just make out something ahead of me. It could be a boat and there may be someone on board. Should I leave the security of the mangroves to venture near? Very gingerly, I edged closer, keeping an eye on the mangroves behind me. Once alongside, I could make out another boat, then another, and then I could just make out a retaining wall and a few trees. The area looked suspiciously like the Taikata yacht club. How in the world did I end up in the Henderson creek, when I had set out for the Whau creek?

As I turned around and retraced my steps, some of the landmarks now made sense to me, where they had seemed wrong on my way out. While daylight should have arrived by now, it was still dark with fog. On my arrival back at my beach, my neighbour and his dog were sitting on the beach waiting for my return. His wife had told him she had seen me go out. While I had not felt threatened, I had begun to feel uncomfortable when I couldn't find any familiar landmarks, and it was very comforting to know that someone had cared enough to watch for my return.

While I had set out wearing a hat and warm clothing and carried two lights (one in front and the other on a pole at the back), a split paddle, bilge pump, paddle float, tow rope, duct tape, first aid kit, hypothermia bag and Swiss army knife, I did not have a compass!

Muriwai by moonlight

Colin Quilter

I've long wanted to paddle from the Manukau Harbour up the west coast to Muriwai. A year ago, a group of us abandoned this trip when we failed to break through surf on the Manukau bar. However earlier this month an unusual weather situation (a stationary depression north of New Zealand and a slow-moving anticyclone over the South Island) generated a week of strong easterly winds which flattened the swell in the Tasman. If you want to explore the giant's house, you had better wait until he is asleep; today was such a day. Matt Crozier, Rob Laery and I left Little Huia Bay at 9.30am and carried the last of the ebbing tide down to Whatipu. We climbed the steep metal ladder onto the Ninepin Rock and looked out over the bar. We could see one area of breakers on the bank south of the main channel, and another close to Whatipu Beach about a kilometre northwest of us; apart from that, nothing but flat calm sea ruffled by a light SE breeze.

Over morning tea we developed a policy for our trip: to make as many landings as possible, and to explore every cave and passage which could be entered. Time and distance were to be ignored. (In the event we landed seventeen times between Little Huia and Muriwai and finished our trip by moonlight, so I think we can claim to have lived up to our intentions).

The first section took us north along the Whatipu shore, past the Pararaha Valley mouth. The whole coast was bathed in sunshine; by now the sea was glassy. Our landings at Whakaruro Bay, Karekare and Mercer Bay were just a matter of slipping in to the beach between waves no more than half a metre high. Mostly we could leave the beach again without even getting splashed, and from outside the breaker line we could still touch the sandy bottom with our paddles. At the headlands we could float alongside the cliff and keep hold of the rocks while the kayaks rose and fell perhaps 20cm in the swell.



After lunch in the sun at Mercer Bay we entered the half-flooded tunnel in the northern headland and landed on a tiny beach which forms the cave floor.

A shaft admits light from high above; it is an eerie place. Then just south of Piha we landed inside the blowhole, and paddled through The Gap inshore of Taitomo Island. In normal weather both of these are places where huge swells play, where people go to watch the violence as irresistible force meets immovable object; today we wriggled and pried our way into their farthest recesses on a flat calm sea.

Other beaches followed; Piha, Whites Beach, Anawhata, Wigmore Bay, and Bethells Beach. At all of these we landed, sometimes more than once. Between them cliffs, crags, gullies and passages delayed us.

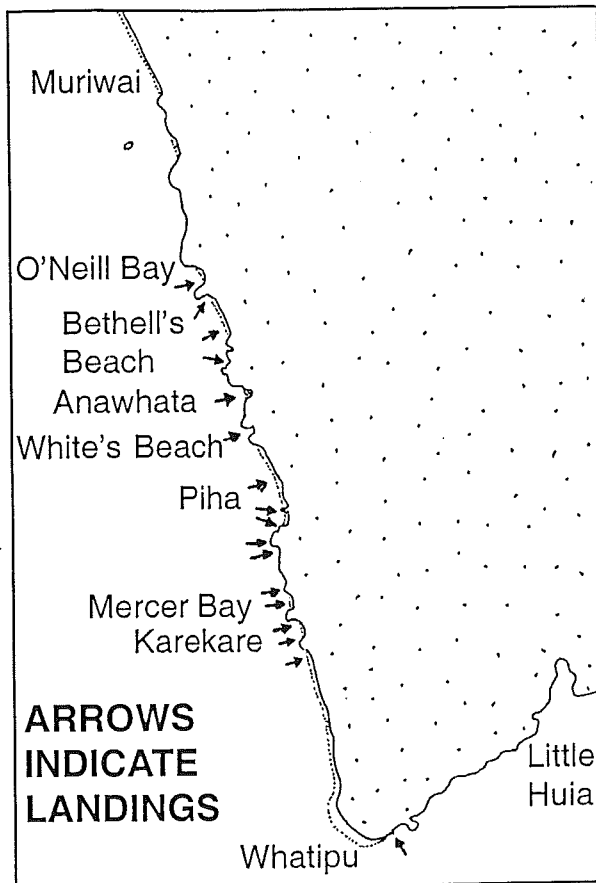
The headland separating Bethells Beach and O'Neill Bay is called Erangi Point, and we discovered that it is riddled with tunnels. One was so long and winding that we eventually lost all sight of daylight and progressed by the light of Matt's torch. With the distant booming and sucking of the swell, and the sea mist filling the dark caverns, this was an amazing experience. Another tunnel pierced completely through the headland, and after about 120 metres led to a small exit partly blocked by a boulder-fall. Normally this is a blowhole, generating explosive blasts of spray which

make a fine sight if you are picnicking on Raetahinga Point, a kilometre to the north. Today we floated peacefully in the throat of the blowhole.

At O'Neill Bay we landed for chocolate and a drink. The sun set as we left the beach, with about 6 km still to paddle. It was a magical evening; the sea glassy calm and the clear western sky yellow at the horizon grading to blue-black overhead. Beneath Raetahinga Point in the twilight Rob discovered another immense tunnel, probably the longest of the day, so we had to thread this one twice to do it justice.

North of O'Neill Bay there are extensive off-lying ledges and rock gardens. We paddled in the narrow guts and passages inshore. The water was black, so it was impossible to see the depth except by watching for disturbed ripples in the moonlight. Eventually a receding surge left Rob stranded on a hidden rock and the next swell rolled him over. But he was soon back in and we continued towards the distant lights of Maori Bay.

Off Muriwai we hesitated. It was difficult to tell where rocks ended and beach began. The swells coming in from the ocean were invisible, and we didn't know when to sprint for the shore. Eventually we went at random. Riding into the beach sideways-on to a small breaker in the moonlight seemed a perfect way to end what was, for me, one of the best day's kayaking I've ever had.



For the future, I suggest:

- 1 Wait for the right weather. At Karakare we met a lifeguard who reckoned that in 30 years experience he had never seen the surf smaller; but I guess conditions like this might occur once or twice each year. They are signalled by prolonged easterlies.*
- 2 The paddling distance is around 33km in a straight line, which you might paddle in say 5 hours; we spent about 8 hours on the water (excluding lunch and other stops) which shows much fooling-around in caves and passages occurred.*
- 3 If you arrange cars as we did; (drive to Muriwai 50min, leave a car and trailer there, drive Muriwai to Little Huia 50min, then in the evening drive from Muriwai to Little Huia again, then home) then you will spend a total of 3.5 hours on the road. It would be better to persuade (or pay) someone to drive you to the start and pick you up at the finish.*



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")