



# NEWSLETTER

November 2000

## First splash

My time as Editor of this august publication is now approaching a close, which is to say that pretty soon someone else is taking my job and I am moving to Melbourne. I don't want to get emotional about this, but being female what chance do I have anyway, so I decided to try to write something serious about what I've learnt in my four years as editor-on-the-water. Just to explain, I took over as Editor within a few months of sitting in a kayak for the first time, so I was inexperienced to say the least, but it was quite a few years after I had learnt to write so I could manage that bit OK.

Here's an edited selection of what I've learnt. Pretty soon you will realise that I am a slow learner.

1. You meet a lot of nice people on the water. I learnt that one quickly. But only when they're in kayaks, not when they're on jetskis.
2. You don't fall into the drink nearly as often as you expect. When I started out I envisaged one capsized per outing to be a good average, but touch wood I've only been in unexpectedly once in four years.
3. There are many many truly amazing places to explore, even close to Auckland.
4. The wind always picks up towards the end of the day especially on Tuesdays. This one took me about two years to work out. Then I made some babies so I could find alternative activities for Tuesday evenings.
5. In the battle against a headwind, yelling does not help. I am still learning this.
6. A lot of people paddle faster than I do. I noticed this when I finished last in a race. So I gave up racing.
7. Wet booties and wet polypro smell. I was so pleased to find that we did not have rats in our garage after all.
8. In fact I knew nothing about polypro before I started kayaking. I can now consider myself an expert (it's a small subject).
9. Above all, kayaking is grrrrreat!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Julia', located at the bottom right of the text area.

# Calendar Nov - Dec

Remember to contact the trip leader before you set out. This is important, and you must realise that the leader needs to know the capabilities of those who are coming and to be able to contact you if there are changes. **Please be aware that you paddle on a Club trip at your own risk. Read the safety policy below. If there is any chance that you may be a liability to the rest of the group or to the leader be sure to inform the leader of this 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..

**25 to 26 Nov Motuora Island** Leaving from Sullivans Bay on Saturday morning. Overnight at the campsite on Motuora and paddling back about 3-4 pm on Sunday. In between all that there should be time for some rock gardening, fishing or full moon paddling (weather and experience permitting) or just chilling out.

The paddle out to the island is in semi open water so can be a hard slog from time to time. You'll need to have a reasonable level of fitness and experience. **Contact David Poolman for full details tel 09 420 5199 eve or 025 597086..**

**1 to 3 Dec Tiri Tiri Matangi Island** This trip is now full. Trevor will be contacting those of you who are going.

### 3 Dec Second swim escort, Curran St to Chelsea Sugar

Kayakers need to assemble at 11am at Curran Street, as the swimmers depart at midday. Meet at Curran Street to the left of the on ramp to the Harbour Bridge at 11am. We need to be assembled by 11.45 on the water ready for the 12.00 race start. Barbecue drinks and biscuits will be ready for us at Chelsea Sugar Works where the race ends. **Please ring Trevor if you're coming or if you need a club boat.**

**10 Dec Motuihe Island** Meet at St Heliers boat ramp for a paddle across to Motuihe. Bring lunch and snacks. This trip is suitable for intermediate paddlers and above, as the wind can pick up considerably making this a hard paddle home. **Contact Wally Gilmer tel 832 3274.**

**16 Dec Hoteo River** Paddle up the Hoteo River from the lower bridge (SH 16) working up with the tide. Meet at the Hoteo bridge at 11.30am. Back about 5pm. BBQ at my place (Kaukapakapa) afterwards. **Contact David Poolman tel 09 420 5199 eve or 025 597086.**

**17 Dec Bean Rock Breakfast** Breakfast on the low tide rocks below this stunning piece of Auckland architecture. Bring your Christmas nibbles and drinks to share. Meet at Okahu Bay at 6.30 am for an early departure. **Contact Stephanie Seager at ph 834 5769.**

**17 Dec Wenderholm to Puhoi** Meet at the boat ramp at Wenderholm by 11am for an 11.30 departure. We will have a picnic lunch at Puhoi and return to Wenderholm with the tide. This is a leisurely river paddle suitable for all paddlers. The distance is 8km each way. **Contact John 8289673 hm, 8289834 wk, or 0256205899**

**14 Jan Treasure hunt** For all you fortune hunters out there, now is your opportunity to discover the hidden treasures of the Waitemata! Meet at Okahu Bay at 9am for a 9.30 briefing and start. You will be put in small teams and sent on your way with a detailed map that will take you on a path of discovery. The treasure hunt is suitable for paddlers of all abilities.

A barbecue will be provided afterwards at around midday.

Entry fee is \$5 per person and kayak hire is only \$10 per kayak – this is a special treasure hunters deal. **If the sun is not shining and the wind is up call Jonathan Jarvis to confirm on 366 6805.**

## Motuihe Labour weekend

By Rona Patterson

Paddling to Motuihe has never been so good. The water was like glass, the sun was out and there was no wind. The hardest part of the whole trip was pulling the kayaks up the hill to the camping ground, which we had to ourselves (and the rabbits and thistles).

With perfect weather, we decided that a swim was in order, followed by sun bathing. (This was a far cry from the usual obligatory paddle over to Waiheke). It was here, while sun bathing that we watched two more kayaks come around the corner. Two of us went down to meet them, thinking they were two more of our people, but these two clambered out of their cockpits and walked into the open arms of two yachties! We might have been invisible!

Back to our sunbathing, wearing only bathing suits - exactly what might be expected on such a beautiful day, we put a critical eye over the dress of the paddlers. Why would any self respecting person submit themselves to wearing such an array of clothing – the only part of the human body visible was the part of their faces which was not covered with goggles.

While discussing the kayakers dress code, a fleet of jet skis came into the bay. Their riders looked even worse! They wore full wet suits, and topped them off with life jackets, gloves, goggles and hats. What was intriguing us about the jet skis was that they were not pulled up on the sand, neither were they anchored. They were left near the beach and floated in and out with each wave. Some of them were enormous and had huge storage tanks which would hold almost as much as the hatches of our kayaks, and we were quick to note that our destinations would be reached a lot quicker if we owned one of these. We also noted that it would be a herculean task to get one of these home.

Later in the day we assembled for pre-dinner drinks and nibbles and idle chatter. This was followed by dinner and a leisurely stroll before bed. As always, bed was uncomfortable, but mosquito-free. The best part of the whole trip was early the following morning when our group sat on a wall overlooking the beach in the early morning sun, while eating breakfast. Yachts were bobbing in the bay, the sun was up, the wind was down, very few people were up and about. We had no timetable, and no chores.

On all previous visits to the island, departure from the Waiheke side has always been into rough water; not so this time, the water was glassy on both sides of the island. The return trip was almost as easy as the trip out, but were hit by head winds from St Heliers to the Tamaki Yacht Club.

# *A non-kayaking picnic*

By Rona Patterson

During my time as an ACC member, I have been on two picnics - each during dreadful weather. The first at Sullivans Bay was well patronised, and it rained for most of the day. The second, at Cornwallis was low in participants, and it didn't rain (for most of the day). However, the winds were very strong and got stronger throughout the day.

While having trouble with my rudder cable, I had been loaned a brand new kayak for the day. I was told to "take good care of it". With this message ringing in my ears, I did not dare broach the dreadful winds. Had I attempted to go out, I would have been alone. Not one of our group were game to tackle the conditions.

A walk along the beach was undertaken before playing a game of petanque. Because of the windy conditions, we moved our first picnic spot in an endeavour to get out of the wind as much as possible.

The rain stayed away until mid-afternoon, when most scattered for their cars, and home.

Perhaps Mother Nature will be a little kinder to us for our next picnic

## Useful phone numbers

You never know when you'll need us.....

Club kayaks - Jonathan Jarvis - 366 6805

Trips officer - currently the position is vacant so if you have an idea for a trip please contact a committee member

Newsletter Editor - Margaret Thwaites - 292 7883, 025 6264786;

[m.thwaites@extra.co.nz](mailto:m.thwaites@extra.co.nz) ; William Potter Lane, Karaka, RD1 Papakura

Secretary - Rona Patterson - 834 3399

Treasurer (for membership detail changes as well) - Matt Crozier 817 1984

## The Ebb and Flow

**By Roger Loma**

Ports of Auckland have started work on a major reclamation at Mechanic's Bay. The last remnants of the old Eastern breakwater will disappear as the Ferguson Container Terminal expands outwards and eastwards and a new wharf is placed across the northern tip. When completed this will create a challenging paddle for kayakers heading up the harbour when large container ships are berthed there.

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*Out for a quiet evening paddle at the end of a hectic week, one of our school ma'ams came across a hapless windsurfer out of energy and unable to get back onboard his craft. The wind was offshore and the tide was ebbing. A quick tow ashore saved one soggy sailor. Well done Stephanie Seager*

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Our sea kayak races have been run and won for the year. Last month it was a milestone event, our 25<sup>th</sup> and it was appropriate that a couple of our original stalwarts featured in the results. Roy Meehan and Ryan Whittle took out first and second with Jonathon Jarvis celebrating his birthday with a fine third.

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*Labour weekend saw a convoy of kayak laden cars heading North for Wally Gilmer's Tauranga Bay camp. One of the attractions up there was the opportunity to camp on a nice grassy site next the beach and enjoy the magnificent ocean vista. The early birds get the prime sites. What happened? Well they all chose to camp well inland next to the dull cabin and hut area. Perhaps they had heard that a famous club chef was due to take up residence in one of the cabins and they were gathering like seagulls in case a tasty morsel of smoked salmon or crepe suzette might be on offer. David Poolman meanwhile had arrived via the sea, having paddled up from the Bay of Islands. In the sea kayaking tradition David pulled his kayak up the beach and camped next to it!*

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Quick to the rescue. After hearing of the plight of our Rona Patterson, (lost in the fog), Quality Kayaks are now providing a deck mounted compass as a standard fitting on all their composite sea kayaks.

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*Watch out for the next club paddle that involves a pot luck dinner. A well known club bachelor has been attending cooking classes and will no doubt spring a few culinary surprises from the hatches of his red and yellow craft.*

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Ron Augustin, the designer of the famous Sea Bear kayak has modified the craft to create a new expedition model called the Polar Bear. Longer, wider and with an additional storage hatch, three of these new craft are on their way to Antarctica. They have been loaded aboard Sir Peter Blake's aluminium ice breaker yacht, Seamaster and will attempt an expedition along the Antarctic Peninsula through the pack ice. The expedition is headed by Graham Charles.

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*Also planning an expedition or two will be some of our club members when Anne Scofield and her team get together to plan ahead for summer - autumn and beyond. Exotic destinations like the Far North, Coromandel Peninsula and the Wanganui River are on offer. Half the fun is in the planning. Join in and be part of it.*

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In the news is the Hobson Bay Poo pipe. There was a time when the brave could run across the top of it. Now it is old and leaky and only spill seekers will paddle underneath it. A plan to extend its life by encasing it in concrete will further restrict navigation for kayakers. A lobby group wants it buried and the old structure removed. If you have strong thoughts on this, call into Ferg's Shop where the lobby group has a protest leaflet

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*If you are new to the club and kayaking, it is worth noting that the club has negotiated generous discounts with Ferg's Kayaks of Okahu Bay, The Auckland Canoe Centre at Sandringham Rd and at Canvas City in Hobson St where Brendon Smith will help you with all your camping and outdoor needs. Remember to say that you are a club member and ask for these discounts. The Trade & Exchange newspaper (Monday edition only) has a special section (water sports) where you will find many bargain priced sea kayaks.*

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Colin Quilter set a challenging course for our last sea kayak rally. Some found the going a bit tough and the grey matter was given a real test. Colin has set himself a bit of a challenge now as he prepares to embark on a Fiordland expedition leading a small group of club paddlers next month.

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*Talk about keen. Rob Gardner has recently joined our club and is no stranger to sea kayaks. Originally from Dunedin, Rob has spent many years in Australia where he was very active in the NSW Sea Kayak Club. In the short time that he has been resident in Auckland, Rob has built a single and a double sea kayak and now paddles from Bucklands Beach to work in the city. You'll spot Rob quite easily on club paddles. He's the one with shark teeth marks on his paddle.*

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The club nights have come to an end for the year with Laurie Bugbee wrapping up the series with a talk about Mali in East Africa. Laurie left for Tasmania the next day and we can look forward to his account of the trip in next year's series.

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*Person of the month can only go to Anne Scofield who organised and ran this year's series Anne also arranged for a navigational course which was run by Chris Gully. Take a bow Anne.*

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Things to look forward to:

A new fun event run by Jonathon and Denise.  
Stephanie Seager's breakfast at Bean Rock.

# Mimiwhangata Weekend

By Susan Hill

You can't miss it," M@ said. Famous last words if there ever were any. "Past Whangarei, past Whakapura, right on Pig's Head Road, and follow the signs. You'll see our cars on one side and we'll be on the other." For anyone else who wants to go, the road that connects Pig's Head to the sign for Mimiwhangata is called Kaiikanui, and you probably don't want to drive it in the dark. And when you get to the Coastal Park, don't follow the sign to the beach, but rather the one that says "Authorised Vehicles Only," past the ranger's house, then to the left end of the road. You may see the cars hidden there in the tall grass, and to get to the campsite you hit the beach, then cross up and over the headland to the left. Or paddle around.

I guess everyone who wanted to find the place did. There were four on Thursday night (three tents, two couples, one solar shower), I arrived early afternoon on Friday, a dazed Doug wandered by before sunset, and Kevin hiked over the hill well after dark (typically Kevin, I suppose, tooling around in the dark).

So as I said, I finally found the cars hidden in the tall grass, but I had no idea where the campsite was. Matt's car was open, so I left a note, put my boat in the water (a kilometer of powdered sugar reflecting off to the right, a far cry from Auckland's grey gales), and paddled northwestish along the coast, as indicated by the nose of the mummifying shark on the beach. And just around the corner were the tents -- and apparently a note scratched in the sand to tell me the others had paddled eastish along the coast, should I care to chase them. Oh well. No matter. It wasn't long before I'd stopped scanning the water for rambling kayaks and focused on my own journey -- caves, inlets, isolated beaches, ramshackle baches, and a few luxury havens, around a ship's prow of a rock and into the breeze. I approached the settlement in that next bay, but turned back to coast "home" to a welcoming committee, who charged off looking for the lookout while I set up my own tent and chose a different route up the mountain. I was slouched in the hammock a couple of hours later when Doug stumbled over the hill, and the rest returned shortly to combine efforts for a shared supper of pasta primaverish and cheesecake. Ann reported the discovery of the island where she plans to spend her honeymoon -- at some unspecified time in the future with some unspecified companion. (Venus bright in the western sky must have given her hope and inspiration; Mercury too was visible -- a special astronomical vision.) The usual lantern-lit conversations were fading when Kevin appeared; I guess Matt helped him with his tent.

Saturday was one of the laziest kayaking days I can remember, but I have no complaints, as it's still early in the season and there's plenty of time for challenges. Lunches packed, we wandered out the way I'd gone the day before, paddled in and around some rock gardens (get someone with a chart to tell you where -- I was on the follow-your-nose plan), but stopped at a friendly, deserted island and clambered through a little gap for lunch on a secret beach, with Ann's lollie cake and Margaret's chockie chippies. Matt and Kevin -- big kids that they are -- squeezed into wetsuits and snorkeled around a bit, but then dozed in the sun to recover. The incoming tide encouraged Ray to instigate the building of a moat to keep our feet dry, but we eventually gave in (time and tide and all that) and returned to our boats to search for an ice cream shop in the holiday collection of baches on the mainland. No such luck, though we explored the mangroved creek as well. The afternoon breeze gave Doug a chance to continue to fiddle with his mast-and-boom sail, which, with scrap wood outrigger, allows him to sail much closer to the wind than Becks' trapezoidal design, used by most sailors we see. There's potential there, but some more fiddling to do.

Another shared supper -- multi-course: tuna frittata, greens, tandoori rice and vegetables, fresh fruit salad, and Bailey's pudding carried us through to darkness and moonlight. Some retired; some -- independently -- went walking on the beach, and met up on that far stretch of silver sand to discuss the universal metaphysics of chaos, or something like that.

We packed up Sunday, slowly facing the reality of the need to return to another reality, but even those who thought they'd get an early start were tempted out for "a training paddle" before hitting the highway. The rest of us found yet another set of sheltered rock gardens, having lunch at Sting Ray Bay before a bumpy ride back to a gentle surf landing. It was warm enough for a quick skinny, if you know what I mean. Next time maybe you'll come too.

## A WHATIPU EXPERIENCE

By Steve Cunnold

The trip that wasn't - or how to go on a club trip own your own. Sunday 8 October 2000

Awoke on Sunday morning and was pleased to see that the strong and gusty



wind from yesterday had died down and the forecast was for 15 knot NW, increasing in the evening, by which time I should be back home. As is usual on a Sunday morning I was running a bit late, so after packing the car in a rush, hurried on my way to Cornwallis for the rendezvous. I managed to take the first turn off and found that I was on a deserted beach. Soon realized that the wharf was at the other end of the beach and that's where I should be.

There was one other kayak on the beach when I got there. I said hello to Grant and we chatted and waited for 10 minutes then realized something was not quite right, so we phoned and found the trip had been cancelled on account of the weather (and the moral of the story is .....)

It was fine and sunny and sheltered at the beach, and as we'd made the trip all the way out to Cornwallis, decided to go for a bit of a paddle anyway. We were rewarded a couple of minutes later by coming across a seal and her pup perched on a rock. The pup regarded us from his perch and didn't alter his casual attitude, sprawled upside down, obviously tanning his tummy.

After the obligatory photos, we set off around the corner and began the long paddle to Whatipu. The tide was really helping - this is one trip that you wouldn't want to do with it against you !

We coast hopped and explored in close to the rocky shore, there aren't very many rock gardens or landing places so it was viewing only. The cliffs are pretty spectacular, being volcanic they are very rugged and with the thick bush, this made an imposing backdrop. In the distance the clouds were low over the hills of the Manukau Heads and this gave an almost spooky feel to our destination.

Not far from Destruction Gully we came across a whole colony of seals, lounging atop enormous boulders, this was turning out to be a seal benefit ! It appeared to be not such a good day for the fishermen and we only passed a couple of them trying their luck on the rocky ledges. It had been quite a number of years since I had been along this part of the coast and retelling stories of some of the things we used to get up to as kids helped pass the time.

There was a bit of a swell coming in over the bar, and as we got closer to the entrance, this increased noticeably, maybe a meter or more at times - the wind was occasionally gusty, but nothing to worry too much about. We were also really happy to see the sun come out - how it cheered up the scenery !

A couple of hours after setting out we arrived at Whatipu - we chickened

out on going to the seaward side of the beach, as we could see the huge swells breaking all over the bar, so we were content to land on a small sandy beach on the harbour side of the beach. As soon as we got ashore, we realized how sheltered we were from the real force of the NW wind - it was howling through a gap in the cliffs and made carrying the boats up the beach difficult. We found a small cave that was sheltered and put the boats into it while we found a sand dune to be our lunchtime grandstand.

We consumed our sandwiches with almost equal quantities of the amazingly fine black sand that seemed to get every where! Grant got a big surprise as a huge ship suddenly appeared from around the corner and headed up the channel towards Onehunga! When we got back to the boats, we just about had to dig them out as they were completely covered in wind blown sand, and if we had stayed any longer, they would have been hard to find.

Launching proved to be a bit of a mission, there were quite a few people on the beach taking an interest and as usual, when there's an audience, things always seem to go wrong. The waves were bouncing off the rocky points at each side of the beach this made them sweep across the beach at right angles. I managed to drop my paddle under the boat while I was trying to stop being swept sideways and as the water receded the boat came down onto it, crushing the shaft. Grant's launching was much better and he suffered nothing more than a healthy splash from a bigger than usual wave! I had bought along a spare paddle, so after assembling it, we were on our way home.

The paddle back was with the wind and the tide and only took a bit over an hour. We kept out into the channel a bit more (we hoped that all of the ships had gone past for today) and had a fine view of the contrasting sides of the harbour, the northern - green and bush covered compared to the southern sides pastures and eroded sandy cliffs.

As we paddled back, the wind died away and with lots of sunshine, it turned out to be a just about perfect day! Cornwallis came up all too quickly and before we knew it we were loading the boats back onto the cars.

## Sea Kayakers discover new island

By Vincent Maire

While exploring the Bay of Islands over Labour Weekend, Kevin Beebey and I "discovered" Aroha Island courtesy of a nice lady in the Russell DoC office.

Aroha Island is located on the northern side of the Kerikeri Inlet approximately halfway between the Stone Store and Opito Bay. To find it you drive past the Stone Store, take the Opito Bay road and it is about 10 minutes driving to get there. It is very well sign posted. Aroha Island is part of the Queen Elizabeth 11 National Trust. This means that it is privately owned but given over in perpetuity to conservation.

The island is connected to the mainland by a causeway. It is a kiwi refuge and the "guardians" believe they have a dozen or so on the property. Kevin said he heard them calling in the night. The island has a superb camping ground which is surrounded by bush and therefore sheltered from the wind and provides plenty of protection from the hot Northland sun.

As Aroha Island is limited to the number of people who can camp there, it never gets crowded. The facilities are also first class. The inlet is tidal however landing is not difficult after half tide. There is also a boat ramp which can be used at low tide.

We were both surprised at how much the Kerikeri Inlet has to offer sea kayakers. There are plenty of easy trips both up and down river. The inlet is studded with islets and another easy option is the Te Puna Inlet which is a very large and protected body of water just beyond the northern entrance. Once out of the inlet there is Moturoa Island, another private nature sanctuary, the very impressive Black Rocks and beyond this, Cape Wiwiki. Aroha Island is also well positioned for vehicle based expeditions to other locations in the area. Kevin and I urge you to check this place out, (09) 407-5243, you will be very impressed.

### **Here's thanks.....**

Finally I'd like to thank Club members for being supportive during my time as Editor and for supplying articles and comments. It's not an especially easy job, and I would like to single out certain members for having gone a long way in helping make this job more enjoyable, namely Colin Quilter, Roger Lomas and Rona Patterson.

I'd like to wish my successor Margaret Thwaites all the best for the future.

Julia