



Newsletter

March 2001

Hello Folks,

Once again it has been an eventful month. Not quite as much travelling around as last month, but good all the same. The swim escort from Mechanics Bay to Tamaki Yacht Club was a success. There was a minor skirmish between some racing yachts and the swim officials but no casualties were reported. I believe Rona Patterson was in the thick of it at one stage, herding the swimmers away from danger, while John Maynard was heard barking away at anyone that dared to veer off course! Roger Lomas weaseled out of doing the barbecue but more than made up for it by getting Wolfgang Pohl, owner/chef of De Niro's restaurant, to take charge. Who needs Ainsley when you've got Mr Wolf! Ham and pineapple, sausages and onion, scrambled eggs and salmon...

I missed Steve Melrose's trip to Waiheke (problems with the relatives – Ray's mum had a "grumpy" attack and we had to go and appease!) but from what I have heard it was well worth while. I haven't heard anything about Martin Fidorski's leaving party, but I noticed that he is still here! Does that mean that we will get a second chance to go to a "leaving" party?

Ray and I got the opportunity to show a visiting kayaker from Holland, Ron, some of Auckland's, and Raglan's, kayaking treats this month. Firstly, we took him over to Rangitoto so that he could get his first chance to see a volcanic island, then we took him down to Raglan to join in with Ken Jackson's trip and experience some kiwi hospitality. By the time we got Ron home again, he had a smile that the Cheshire Cat would have been proud of! He now wants to come back again next year for some more kayaking.

The trip to Raglan was an eye-opener for me. If you have never been to Raglan before I would recommend that you go and have a look. Within the harbour there are some awesome limestone formations, similar to the pancake rocks at Punakaiki, which can be paddled around, through and under, on a high tide. Sunday's trip out on the west coast was a thrilling, if somewhat frustrating trip because there was still too much swell to be able to get in close to the shore-line, but we did get to see the rugged coast from a distance. The following seas on the return to Manu Bay were too good to pass up and I gave Ryan Whittle a good run for his money as we surfed our way back to our starting point.

The following weekend, Ray and I were back over at Rangitoto for another of Roger's gourmet barbecues, but where was Roger? Never mind, our President, Trevor Arthur, came to the rescue and was Tong Master, while Yogi and BoBo were Chief, and Assistant, Fire Officers. We had a pleasant night camped on the Kiosk Deck. After going to the trouble of setting up mosquito nets the mosquitoes stayed away, but Yogi and Ray made up for that loss by serenading us with synchronised snoring! Sunday morning, Roger arrived bearing gifts of huge freshly baked croissants and Robert Harris coffee. The swim escort went smoothly apart from somebody falling out of their kayak, but I guess kayakers like getting wet! I know Rona Patterson enjoyed getting the gentleman back into his boat!

Last Saturday, Ray and I were bitterly disappointed when the trip to little Barrier was cancelled, but we did enjoy the consolation Breakfast and Coffee in Titirangi arranged by Matt Grant.

Cheers,

Margaret

In this issue...

Ryan Whittle's account of Doubtful Sound, page 7; a solo paddle from Kerikeri, northwards, by Dan Hawthorn, page 9; Walking home from Brown's Island, by Colin Quilter, page 11. Notification of next Trip Planning meeting, Saturday 19 May, page 15.

Useful phone numbers and addresses

Club address – PO Box 45020, Te Atatu Peninsula, Waitakere City

President	Trevor Arthur	817 7357	Treasurer and Address List	Matt Crozier	817 1984
Secretary	Rona Patterson	834 3399	Storage and Club Kayaks	Jonathan Jarvis	366 6805
Trips Officer	Matt Grant	524 2108			
Newsletter	Margaret Thwaites	2927 883, 025 626 4786			

38A William Potter Lane, Karaka, RD1 Papakura
m.thwaites@xtra.co.nz

Where can you go to get training?

Auckland Canoe Centre, phone 815 2073.

Basic confidence course, Henderson Pool, Tuesday evenings - \$95 for four sessions.

One-on-One rolling, Henderson Pool, Tuesday evenings - \$149 for two sessions.

Sea Kayaking intro skills (one day) and Sea Kayaking skills weekend, at Waiwera

Auckland Wilderness Experiences, Chris Gulley, phone 813 3369

Intro skills, overnight at Mahurangi - \$225

Details on web site www.nzkayak.co.nz/awk/awskills.htm

Rolling sessions, Kelston Girls, Thursday evenings - \$95 for three sessions – run with George Gerard

Surfing courses, White water courses and Navigation courses run on request.

Canoe and Kayak, phone 479 1002

Sea Kayaking intro course – Friday pool session, plus Sat/Sun 9 – 5, \$230

Rolling sessions, Northcote College Pool - \$150 for four sessions.

White water, Multisport, Advanced Sea Kayaking, First aid and First aid refresher courses available.

Fergs Kayaks, phone 529 2230

Basic paddling skills – paddle strokes, rescues – Sunday morning, Okahu Bay - \$60

50% discount to Auckland Canoe Club members.

Learn to roll, one-on one, heated pool - \$60 per hour.

White water, and Multisport River Racing courses also available.

George Gerard, phone 814 8989 (hm), 367 0959 (wk).

Pool Training, Kelston Girls, Thursday evenings - \$95 for first three sessions, \$10 thereafter.

Intro Sea Kayaking, White water, and Down River Racing courses on request – courses are designed to fit what the participants want - \$100 per day (approx), plus boat hire (\$10 / day)

Positively Outdoors, Liz Maire and Christine Mcloed, ph 473 0027, fax 473 0731.

Two-day OSH certified outdoors first aid course - \$130

10% discount if four or more club members enroll for a course.

Course dates for Albany – Sat/Sun 24/25 March, Sun/Mon 13/14 May, Sat/Sun June 30/July 1.

There are also a few club members that are experienced instructors and with a bit of encouragement (bribery and/or arm-twisting!) might be coaxed into giving a training session...

Ian Calhaem, Rebecca Heap, Ken Marsh, David Poolman

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.
- 6 Use a craft appropriate for the trip. A kayak with water-tight bulkheads is essential for open sea kayaking. Sit-on kayaks are usually too slow to be able to keep up with sea kayaks, therefore, are not recommended on trips planned for sea kayaks.

Trips and Events Calendar

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.

TRIP CANCELLATIONS

The Club is now using "Newstalk ZB" cancellation service. This can be listened to on 1080AM or 89.4FM. The service runs on Saturday and Sunday from 7:00am.

This should eliminate the multitude of phone calls to trip leaders when the weather looks suspect.

Regular Evening Paddles

It is recommended that before anyone tries to go out on an evening paddle that they attend a basic skills course and that they are fit enough to be able to paddle for one hour.

Tuesday Evenings. All skill levels welcome. Meet at Okahu bay by 5:30pm, ready to be on the water by 6:00pm. An experienced paddler will be rostered on to look after new/novice/slow paddlers. Fitter and more-experienced paddlers can form their own group(s). Trips usually last 1 – 2 hours, destination dictated by tide, weather conditions and skill levels.

Wednesday Evenings. Ann Schofield has started a paddling group leaving from Castor Bay at 6:30pm. This is for intermediate to advanced paddlers only. Contact Ann, on anns@rangitoto.school.nz, before turning up

Thursday Evenings. Not recommended for new/novice paddlers because we have not set up a roster of leaders for new people. These trips currently do not have a huge following, therefore, be prepared to paddle on your own. Be at Okahu Bay by 5:30pm, ready to be on the water by 6:00pm.

Anytime

West Coast paddle

Dan Hawthorn is keen to hear from members who are interested in paddling along the west coast. Although it is a challenging piece of water, there can be times when it is easily do-able. Due to the infrequency of suitable days to do this trip (maybe only 3-4 per year), he will be the guardian of a list of phone numbers of people who would be interested in a trip arranged at the last minute when the conditions look favourable.

Even in good conditions, there are some things to be aware of:

- Likely to have surf landings of 1-1.5m waves.
- There may be no landings for up to 4 hours.

This is a trip for experienced paddlers only. Call Dan to register your interest. Dan Hawthorn Tel: 846 9572

March 2001

Weekend 17-18 Waipu / Mangawhai Heads

I will post a sketch map of locations to people who say they are coming. Meet at sea end of Johnson Point Rd at 12:00 on Saturday for a 12:30 start – since tide is about 14:20 this will give us 2 hours each way. Johnson Point Rd runs off Waipu-Mangawhai road a couple of kms south of Waipu, and goes straight down to estuary, almost at the mouth of the Waipu river. This is a leisurely river trip with good tidal assistance at start and end. Will probably see many waterfowl and a big shag colony. Stay Saturday night at our bach, 14 Kanuka Place, Mangawhai Heads. If people want to leave gear there on the way up, we will be there until about 11:30 on Saturday morning. Although it is a smallish bach, we have 5 spare single beds which might as well be used, and some limited floor space in the lounge. There is one flush toilet and a bath. We also have a spare section attached with room for parking and tents. We will provide and cook a BBQ dinner (but BYOG) and Sunday breakfast, so no need to bring cooking & eating gear. \$10 per person should cover the cost of the food. On Sunday morning, the idea is to launch in the Mangawhai estuary and paddle up the coast to Bream Tail and return (approx 5 km each way). We will have to hope for suitable sea conditions and not too much breeze. Usually OK in prevailing westerlies, but we would not go in an easterly storm. Even in bad weather, the estuary is always available if you just want to have a paddle. Anyone intending to come, please phone Mike or Christine Silvester, 817 8405 by 7th March.

Sunday 18 Clevedon Meet at 10.00 for a 10.30 departure. We will head around the coastline (hilly pasture, rocky foreshore and remote tidal flats). Then up the Clevedon river with pleasant scenery and moorings to look at.

We will have the tide assisting us up the river to arrive at Clevedon for lunch at an ideal time of 1.30pm. Tide is full at about 2.00pm, so we can have a decent lunch break and then use the tide to help us return. There and back is about 28km, which is a reasonable distance, but it is all close to the shoreline and tide assisted. Having said that, if the wind comes up, half the coastal section would be a bit of a slog. The trip will require beginner kayak skills with only a moderate level of fitness. All welcome, phone trip leader **Steve Melrose 5365386** to come on this trip please.

Saturday 24 Brunch at St Heliers. A great way to start your weekend! Meet at Okahu Bay for a short paddle to St Heliers for brunch at a café. An easy, social paddle – ideal for beginners. Bring along money to buy your brunch and clothes suitable for visiting a café! Please call the leader beforehand for departure time. All very welcome! **Alissa Good Tel 846 2622, 021 608 448**

Sunday 25 Orere Point Meet at 9.00 for a 9.30 departure. We will travel Southeast past the beautiful Tawhitokino beach, past Orere point and along a non-road accessible section of coastline. We will pass by Tapapakanga Regional Park and depending on the time, round Waimangu point into Matingarahi where the road meets the coast again. We will then head back past Orere and stop at a very pretty unspoilt beach for lunch at 1.30pm, which is half an hour before low tide. We will be able to swim and gather tuatuas easily here (bring a container to take seawater home in to de-sand the tuatuas. After a good break we will head back to our launch point. This trip is about 25km and it is all close to shore. Beginner kayak skills only are required and the idea is to have a relaxed day with a decent beach stop (great spot if the weather is good). All welcome, phone trip leader **Steve Melrose 5365386** to come on this trip please.

Saturday 31 Lunch at Rob Gardner's Home My plan is to do a trip from Okahu Bay on Saturday 31 March, to lunch at Rob Gardner's home at Bucklands Beach. The trip is approximately 10km each way. We will stop for morning tea at either Karaka Bay or on Browns Island. Meet at 8.30 am for a 9 am departure. Phone **Rona on 834 3399 (home) or 302 1355 (work).**

March 31 to April 1st Lake Taupo. This trip will be on a fresh water lake that is 40km long and 27km at its widest point, the surface area is 616 sq. km. the greatest depth is 159 meters and the surface of the lake is 357 meters above sea level. Its name is Taupomoana. (lake Taupo) As this lake is fresh water and above sea level the paddling conditions will be a bit different as will be the bush and rock formations. It is suitable for all skill levels, most of the time and its a over night trip, so camping gear will be required. The Western bays area is where we will be kayaking, starting at the little village of Kinlock. The western Bays area is dominated by bush and large rock cliffs plus ducks, swans, Shags and trout (great for the evening meal) you will need a fishing licence for this activity. Meet at Kinlock at 9.00am Saturday 31st March outside N0.3 Marine Parade, right on the lake front (thats so we can have a cup of tea or coffee before we leave). A briefing will be at 9.15am on where we will be going, Coffee 9.30am then on the water at 10.00am. After 2 plus hrs of paddling we will stop at boat harbour for lunch then on to Waihaha (approx 2.5hrs) we may camp there at a Maori village (a camping fee is charged) or continue on to other sites. From here on it will be a group decision on what we do. We may continue further South or explore the Waihaha river up as far as the water fall 2 hrs return. More information at the time. Contact **Bill Hayes Ph. 8338462**

April 2001

Comedy festival. Michelle Scofield has very kindly offered to co-ordinate a trip (or two) to the comedy festival which is ongoing for much of the month. Give her a ring to register your interest **Michelle Scofield Tel: 827 8936**

Tuesday 3 A Beach Bum Turns 40 Party, at De Niro's Restaurant. Yes, your editor will be 40 and you are invited to the party. Details have not been finalised yet but Wolfgang is working on a special, fixed menu and it will cost approx \$25 per person. This is a "you pay for yourself partly" I'm afraid – Beach Bum salaries aren't too good! **To book your place, phone Margaret or Ray on 2927 883.** (Yes I do have an answer phone, just let it ring for a while...) Or, send an e-mail to m.thwaites@xtra.co.nz **RSVP Friday 30 March.**

Saturday 7 Albany to Long Bay. This is a biggy, approx. 40 km, and is only recommended for fit, intermediate to advanced paddlers. We will be tide-assisted for the first part, but it is essential that we get onto the water early. Ray will be leaving his car at Long Bay so that we can do a car shuttle at the end of the trip, but you will need to take dry clothes, towel and footwear in the boat. Lunch stop will, hopefully, be at Devonport. Please contact the leaders, **Margaret and Ray, before attempting this trip. Phone 2927 883.**

School holidays weektime Trip: Sun 8 to Tues 10. Lake Tarawera. Ian is taking his teenage daughter to Lake Tarawera for 2 days of paddling, and would love the company of other parent / child partnerships. An excellent opportunity to make one of your offspring feel very special. Very easy paddling is envisaged, with plenty opportunities for land based activities also. Probably from Sunday to Tuesday. Call up Ian to discuss this further: **Ian Deverick 817 9564.**

Easter Fri 13 to Mon 16. Papaaroha, Coromandel. Papaaroha Motor Camp is just north of Coromandel township and is an ideal base for day-trips. Explore the Motukawao Islands, where the fishing is superb (snapper can be picked up out the water with bare hands – ask Trevor Arthur, if you don't believe me! Ed.), or paddle south and visit more islands and Coromandel town. A short drive over to Kennedy Bay opens up more superb paddling options. Ryan Whittle, while paddling just north of Kennedy Bay, was heard to say "Take me away from here – I can't cope with all this beauty!" **Contact David Poolman on 025 597 086 or 09 420 5199.**

Easter Poor Knights Island. Just a couple of places left on Justins trip. Call him for details: Justin Sanson-Beattie Tel 278 8090

Local Easter daytrip. Need to burn off those extra calories from egg-eating, there will be a local trip running on either Easter Sunday (Apr 15) or Monday (Apr 16). Call Ian if interested and you have a date preference, and he will work out a trip that caters for peoples interest. Leader is Ian Deverick 817 9564

Saturday 21 Tamaki River. Start off your weekend with brunch up the Tamaki River with local paddler Phil. He is thinking of meeting at Glendowie Boat Club reasonably early, to spend some time exploring the Tamaki River and / or Bucklands Beach, with a stop off for either a cafe or BYO brunch. This will be a short, easy paddle and ideal for beginners. Further details from Phil or in the next newsletter. All members are most welcome. Leader Phil Henderson 527 7938.

Sunday 22 Motuihe. Further details in the next newsletter or from Harley Wilson: Harley 575 6272

Sunday 31 Espresso Cruise to Whitford. Meet at 9.15 at Sunkist bay beach in Beachlands, for an easy paddle around Flattop island, past Pineharbour Mariner and across the flats then up a lovely estuary with plenty of nice Tuscany like landscapes to look at. As the estuary narrows, steer up the mangrove lanes to a Maltese cafe sited on the edge of the creek. At the cafe you can sometimes see eels in the water. We will be able to go in just about any weather and the only constraint is that we must be at the cafe at about 11.15 for the tide. Please do phone Steve Melrose for this trip 5365386.

May 2001

Proposed Event Fund Raising for Coastguard A fun evening with a guest speaker and a sneak pre-view of a film about to be released. The details have not been finalised yet, but the event will probably be held at the Berkley Theatre, Mission Bay. Friends and family welcome. Tickets will be pre-sold. Contact Sabina for more details and to book your place. Phone 813 3369 (hm) or 373 1988 (wk).

Whitewater kayaking

Any member who is interested in going river or surf kayaking in the Auckland area or further afield, should give Jonathan or Denise a call on 3666 805. The club has 2 whitewater boats and you can also hire them from Ferg's.

If you have no experience in whitewater kayaking but are keen to experience it, we would like to hear from you.

Wanted: White Water kayaks.

Any cheap options for a school fleet. Corsica definitely wanted, but anything considered. Phone Russy 277 9529.

For Sale: Sea Bear Double.

Kevlar, 5Yrs old but in mint condition – like new. It comes complete with spray skirts, paddles, lifejackets and spare split paddle. Also throw in the roof rack. Asking \$4250. Contact Rob or Ruth on 537 0881 or 025 851 621.

For Sale: Storm sea kayak.

Colour yellow. One year old. Good Condition. Price \$1400. Includes spay skirt. Phone Martin on (09) 533 7244 or (09) 815 4623

For Sale: Two Breeze sea kayaks.

The club is upgrading some of the kayak hire fleet and to make way for a new double and single kayak the two Breezes are for sale at \$850 each. If you are interested call Jonathan on 366 6805

Found: Sea kayak Paddle.

Left on the grass at Manu Bay, Raglan. Probably belongs to one of the group that was with Ken Jackson on Sunday 25 March. Phone Margaret or Ray on 2927 883.

CLUB KAYAK HIRE

Please note the following guidelines for use of the club's rental kayaks.

The club kayaks are intended for:

- members who have joined the club recently and who don't yet own a kayak
- occasional use by members who wish to take out their friends. We expect that such friends will become financial members of the club after one or two trips.

The club kayaks are NOT intended for:

- regular use by members as a cheap alternative to purchasing their own kayaks
- non-members, (except as occasional guests of members)
- ANYONE who abuses our boats by dragging them over the concrete ramp, failing to wash out the kayak and its gear, or treating them in a careless manner.

On Tuesday and Thursday evenings (club nights) the kayaks may not be booked. They are all to be available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Our fleet

At present the following kayaks are available for hire:

<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Model</u>	<u>Code number</u>
3	Storm	1, 2 and 3
1	Squall	4
2	Breeze	5 and 6
1	Sea Bear double	7
1	Corsica	10
1	Pirouette	11

(the last 2 are whitewater boats)

Code numbers appear on both sides at the rudder end of each kayak.

Club night hire

For evening club paddles on Tuesdays/Thursday the charge is \$5.00 per kayak.

Normal hire rates

At any other time the daily flat charge is \$20 per sea kayak and \$30 per double kayak. The whitewater boats can be hired for \$10 per day.

Hireage register

The purpose of the register is to manage kayak maintenance/usage and reconcile usage with money received. The hireage register must be completed before using a club kayak.

It is located in the club shed on the table and must be completed along the following lines:

1. use the page dated on the day (or first day) of hire with:

- your name
- kayak code number

- duration of hire (in hours or days so others know when next available)

2. upon return from your trip complete:

- any repairs required to gear
- \$ amount paid
- place money in the plastic seal-easi bag hanging on the wall before leaving

Booking a kayak

Club nights are on a first come first served basis. At any other time you can book a kayak.

To hire a club kayak, members are required to visit the club's shed and complete the hireage register themselves.

Amending a booking

Members are required to go to the club's shed and amend/cancel the hireage register

Gear cleaning

On your return from a paddle, please hose down your kayak/paddle/spray skirt and empty water from the kayak and return gear to the club's shed

Gear condition

It is important to record any repairs required for the safety of other paddlers and to ensure our kayaks last as long as possible. Jonathan Jarvis will regularly review the register to note any repairs required.

Remember do not drag kayaks on concrete ramps and always raise rudders before landing!!

Doubtful Sound

By Ryan Whittle

Colin, Matt, Wally and Ryan caught a flight to Queenstown on Saturday morning to kayak for six days through Doubtful Sound in Fiordland on the bottom of the South Islands West Coast.

We see a cloud in the sky on the horizon in Queenstown and enjoy a peaceful lunch on the steps by the stream running through the city in the company of ducks and black billed gulls, a different variety to the red billed ones we are used to seeing. The jet boat operators must be having a good day as four full boats depart in 15 minutes on Lake Wakatipu just before we catch a bus to Te Anau in the afternoon. Good views of the longest lake in the country (51km) are had out the right window, with the Remarkables and the remnants of snow out the left.

We check in at the newly open YHA in Te Anau then walk downtown to find Daphne and Bill at Fiordland Wilderness Experiences, who supplied the boats and transport to Doubtful Sound, to finalise plans for the next day. The business they have run for eight years requires a large investment financially, they operate 60 kayaks, the launch for water transport, a 4WD Land Rover in Te Anau, another 4WD minibus on the other side of Lake Manapouri, and in time, with both of them working long days 7 days a week. The off season lasting only a few weeks each year.

Its a 6:45 pickup at the YHA Sunday morning, too early for anyone else in the hostel, and down to Lake Manapouri, which has 170km of shoreline and 35 islands. At around 450 meters, its the second deepest lake in NZ after Lake Hauroko in Southland.

The 30km crossing takes us to West Arm, the site of the Manapouri Power Station. Power is generated from water dropping the 170m from the Lake to Deep Cove in Doubtful Sound through a tailrace tunnel. Work started in 1997 on construction of a duplicate tunnel to improve the stations output.

Arrival at West Arm introduces us to the Fiordland sandfly and his extended - very extended - family. Or I should say her, as it is only the females that bite. We all quickly developed the Southland wave.

A quick tour through the air conditioned, sandfly free display room – for educational purposes only you understand, before setting off to Deep Cove over Wilmot Pass. The 22km of metal road was built during the original power project and is New Zealands most expensive road, having cost \$1.94/cm.

By 11am we are packed and ready to go with no sign of the Fiordland rain. Only sunshine and a gentle breeze at our backs. After an hour admiring the bushclad hills, an occasional waterfall, snow on the hilltops, the native birds singing, and the Rata in full bloom to rival the pohotukawa we are familiar with, exhaustion set in and we decided on lunch at the first designated campsite beside the 3km long Elizabeth Island, named by Captain John Grono, a sealer who first explored deeply into the sounds, after his wife.

Malaspina Reach was the first Spanish name we came across, others were to follow. Doubtful Sound is unique in that it holds the only Spanish names on the map of New Zealand. In February 1793, Don Filipe Bauza

became the first European to explore Doubtful Sound while he was on a five year OE around the world aboard Descubierta (The Renaissance). The island 5km down Doubtful Sound bears his name. Nee Islets was the name given to the group of islands at the sounds entrance after Luis Nee, botanist aboard the other ship in the expedition - Atrevida (The Bold). Malaspina was the Italian commander of the Spanish expedition. Although the Spaniards were the first Europeans to enter the sound, it was discovered by James Cook in 1770 and named Doubtful Harbour. Due to the steep cliffs either side of the entrance he was Doubtful that they could sail out as a required Easterly wind he had not seen in a month.

The rocks in Fiordland are 350 million years old and most are hard with large crystals eg granite, formed from magma in the earths core. The rocks hardness means that the glacier covered valleys and fiords are eroded more slowly than the softer surrounds, are retained, and have the strength to hold vertical for thousands of meters.

Maori legend has it that Tu-Te-Raki-Whanoa, a Maori demi god, was given the task of shaping Fiordland. He used a digging stick to create the fiords starting in the south, and his inexperience resulted it many low hills and islands. His technique improved as he worked north, finishing at Milford Sound, which has the steepest clean cut fiords.

After lunch we continued up Malaspina Reach. Landing places were infrequent and from the waters edge you could see the cliffs dropping under water on one side of your boat, the other side was just a dark void.

A stream marked the position of another campsite where we decided to stop for the night. The campsites are more just areas where you are able to camp, the idea being to find a clear spot to take your tent. No large cleared areas for the punters here. Previous visitors to the sounds have been good, as we found only one item of rubbish in the week we were there. After setting camp we went for a walk upstream, finding deer tracks in the mud. I think they saw us long before and were well gone. The stream turned out to have several swimming holes that could be used to wash in, but we were roughing it - no luxurious 4 degree ice baths for us.

Back at camp, the cooking shelter provided by Daphne and Bill provided relief from the sandflies while cooking and eating but became cramped and uncomfortable after a while. It was Wally's turn to prepare the first shared dessert of the trip, and the biscuits and cream layers soaked in brandy meant no naked flames allowed.

At 9:30pm, the sun is beginning to drop below the horizon and its goodnight to the sandflies.

In the morning, the clear blue skies of the last two days have gone, but its still dry, and the mist at sea level prevents us from seeing the other side of the sounds. The water is glassy and the mist rises during the morning, to allow us a view of Bauza Island and Secretary Island as we pass into Bradshaw Sound -

named in 1851 by Captain John Stokes on the HMS Acheron after his first mate.

A stop to stretch our legs and the first dolphins pass by a few meters offshore.

Down Bradshaw Sound we see many scars from slips, in various stages of regeneration all over the cliff faces, which must be an ongoing process in the life of the sounds.

The low tide exposes mussels on the walls that are easily gathered. They are smaller than the ones we normally see, maybe due to the temperature, and/or the fresh water. At the end of the sound, a seal lies asleep on the rocks and ignores us - setting the tone for all seals we come across.

The early sealers here would leave with up to 10000 skins from fur seals. The seals were protected in 1894 with breaks in 1922 and 1946 but we didn't see anywhere near the numbers that must have been here in the past. Larger numbers can be found on the coast, and heavy fishing that has "fished out" Doubtful Sound hasn't provided much encouragement for them to return. Steps are underway to give Fiordland status as a marine reserve as well as the World Heritage Park status it now has.

We share some lunch with a friendly Weka at the campground in Precipice Cove. These birds visited us frequently at the different campsites. This cove ends in beach and the bottom would be exposed at low tide. In all the intertidal zones there was growth of tussock like grasses that are able to survive because of the high amount of freshwater on the sea surface. This fresh water and the vegetation give the impression of paddling on a lake rather than the sea.

The next arm is Gaer Arm, at the end of which is more flat ground and room for tents a little inland. It's our last dry evening for the week and it's Matt's turn for dessert. He makes his traditional cheesecake and puts the base on a plate in a puddle to set while making the filling. The tide is on the rise however and when he returns, sees it floating down river. A quick lifesaving run in the kayak returned it unharmed. There must be a vital ingredient in that river water though, that cheesecake was one of the best I've had.

Overnight rain and a forecast of two approaching fronts tell us that the 9m average annual Fiordland rainfall is on its way. We pack up wet tents and paddle out of Gaer Arm looking for wild cheesecakes on the way. Bradshaw Sound has grown waterfalls aplenty in the overnight rain, more dolphins avoid us after passing under Matt's boat, and a couple more seals ignore us, both continually rolling on the sea surface, perhaps to discourage sandflies?

We erect a tarp at the start of Bradshaw Sound to keep of the rain and wind, which also provides shelter for the sandflies, who don't hesitate to make the most of our hospitality.

The dolphins pass by again just ahead of the first front, and we dress up as the conditions worsen before crossing to Secretary Island, named after the NSW Colonial Secretary, Sir Edward Thomson by the hydrographer aboard HMS Acheron in 1851. He had mistakenly assumed that Thompson Sound had been named after the Secretary but John Grono had named it after the owner of his sailing vessel, Andrew Thompson.

The wind was gusting to 30 knots but the sea was not in keeping with the wind strength and provided us with a fun paddle across to Secretary Island. The Gutt hut on the island has six bunks and we arrived about 3pm as the front passed over to find four double kayaks and a single already on the beach. But they had only stopped for a break and were leaving. The guide wasn't winning any friends getting them to leave a dry hut for a wet campsite, but we grabbed the vacant hut and moved in. Browsing through the guest book there were a few stories from kayakers being held up for days by the weather. We've been lucky so far.

Wednesdays mornings rain and wind encouraged us to stay put and after an early lunch we decided to head to Crooked Arm, 10km downwind which we made in about 10 minutes. Two American paddlers heading in the other direction took one look at the wind and overtook us back to their start point.

We saw WillyWaws near the campsite. This is where strong winds come down vertically from the cliffs and hit the water with nowhere to go, creating whirlpools of spray above the surface. Looks neat but I don't think it's a great place to be in your boat. Waterfalls appeared from everywhere, many of the falls disappearing in mid air as the winds shredding the falls into blankets of spray.

Tents had to be pitched in the mud and the noise from the waterfall behind the campsite made me wonder if we would be washed away. The forecast is for another front overnight, I guess this is the real Fiordland!

Woke on Thursday to the sound of the promised rain and the roar of the waterfall. It stopped quickly but remained dim and we waited for the 8am weather forecast before deciding on a course of action. It came with the obligatory storm warning for the bottom of the South Island, but nothing too drastic headed our way. We started off down Crooked Arm and were joined by a pod of 20-30 dolphins going our way. We chased alongside but they kept their distance, probably sick of kayakers.

The rain alternates with blue sky every 10 minutes and the high vertical cliffs show off many spectacular waterfalls dropping hundreds of feet. About halfway down the arm at Turn Point we do a loop and travel out on the opposite bank. Back into Malaspina Reach where we paddled on the first day and down into Hall Arm to find our last night's campsite. The map tells us that it isn't easy to see from the water and the directions had to be followed closely to find it. We had to haul the boats through 50m of boggy peat at low tide then wade through mud and soggy trees to reach the campsite. We made camp in heavy rain, and tried to change into dry gear but it's a big ask when all around you is wet and getting wetter. Another weka laughs at our discomfort and everyone goes to bed early to escape the rain and dropping temperature.

It stopped raining in the morning but it's hard to tell from under the trees as they keep dripping long after the rain has stopped. While packing up, our friendly weka has caught up with a stoat and is giving it heaps with its long strong beak. The stoat eventually makes a break directly at us, causing the weka to hesitate and enabling the getaway.

The tide is high so we are able to bring the boats up the river beside the tents to avoid packing in the swamp. Heading down into Hall Arm, many of the waterfalls we saw and paddled under the day before, have already dried up without a trace. There is new snow on the hilltops (in mid December) and a brisk feel in the air. The wind has gone and the water is flat again. The scenery is much more attractive when you don't need all your concentration to stay upright. All down the Arm, what would have been torrents yesterday, appear like designer waterfalls from a gardening magazine, bubbling water cascading down levels of ferns and moss. At the head of the Arm are a number of very high hillsides, one with a huge fault running down its length providing a path for yet more water to flow to the sea. On the way out we pass another group out for an overnight trip that Daphne has dropped off this morning. We pull in at a sunny spot for lunch and enjoy the warmth with the sandflies being scarce for a change. After lunch it's just a few km back to the start at Deep Cove. A final fur seal gives us the usual ignore before the land and unpack. Much of the gear that's been soaking for several days, dries out in minutes. The ride back over Wilmot Pass pauses at the lookout so we can gaze back down the sound to see part of where we

have been. The boat ride over Manapouri starts in the flat but Daphne decides to show as an alternate route back over some judderbars to provide an exciting ride. Saturday morning is windy and showery and we wander down to the DOC office to pay for our night in the hut and look through some of the displays before overhearing one of the staff responding to a child's questions about things to do - "On a rainy day in Te Anau, there is nothing to do". We take a walk alongside of Lake Te Anau out of town and find one of the favorite pastimes for residents - walking the dog while following in the car.

Picking up our bags from the YHA for the bus trip back to Queenstown, we run into Janice, who has just arrived to walk the Milford Track. Go all the way to Te Anau to see another ACC member.

We have most of Sunday in Queenstown before the flight home and spend it walking up past the Gondola, relaxing in the grass out of the wind, admiring the extensive views out over Queenstown, Lake Wakatipu and the Remarkables, and wonder what the poor people are doing.

Kerikeri to Mangonui, December 2000

By Dan Hawthorn

Friday 16th - Saturday 17th. The plan was to start from Kerikeri and go north, idling along, rock gardening along the coast, explore the Cavalis again, look at Whangaroa, do another lot of coast exploration and end up at Mangonui. Six days or so and I have snuck in a map of the Karikari peninsular and Houhora if conditions got spectacularly good. The plan is also for light winds and calm seas.

I leave Auckland stressed and not fully prepared at the end of an overfull year. I have a new Barracuda Expedition (the BE) that I am coming to terms with, I have spent the last seven years paddling a Seabear double as a single so I have come to accept almost total stability as a God given right. However the Seabear is getting too heavy for me to paddle into wind and chop for long periods and my shoulders have been complaining so I went looking for a lighter faster kayak. Auckland has been throwing 30 knot winds and I have used those to get familiar with the BE, but I do not yet know what she will do in open sea. She is, however, enjoyably fast into the wind.

Up to Kerikeri on Friday 16th December and on Saturday morning parked in the Kerikeri Cruising Club carpark, just before Opito Bay. The carpark is large with a ramp, has overnight security checks and is open to the public. I load the BE beside the van and use my folding trolley to get it to the ramp. At the ramp a bloke says the forecast is for 2 - 3 days SE, I had been hoping for the high to move over sooner than that but I will go out and see how it looks.

I head out across Te Puna inlet towards Poraenui Point aiming for Cape Wiwiki. The wind is light, small waves on the nose and the BE is making good time. The tide is coming in but it does not seem to be affecting things here. There are some clouds but it's mainly sunny and I

am surrounded by islands, my spirits lift. Round Poraenui Point and I am not quite happy with the trim, the front is burying in the sea more often than seems reasonable. I turn and go into Wairoa Bay which has the Samuel Marsden cross at one end. I stretch and do some repacking to move weight to the rear then set off again with the BE riding over rather than through the waves. Two more inviting looking bays on my left but I have destination fever and I am on out towards Cape Wiwiki and adventure. I round Howe Point and now I can see Harakeke Island off Cape Wiwiki. The waves are a little larger and I am starting to notice an ocean swell underneath but there is nothing to worry about. With SE winds I am expecting a moderately exposed stretch after I turn around the cape. There is surf breaking on the rocks and the cape is dramatic and exciting, the sea has turned clear blue to say I am clear of harbour waters. Without really thinking about it I go into the gap between Harakeke Island and Cape Wiwiki. Mistake. The tide has turned and is now running out. The wind against tide effect is magnified in the gap between island and cape and in addition the swells are reflected off the shore when they hit so that I am in a patch of clapotic waves with a short steep chop on top of everything. I make rather slow progress. The trip diary records that paddling became very focused for a while. At times I have to brace in earnest and this is new. In the Seabear bracing meant real emergency, that things were seriously wrong and it is hard to get over that mind-set. I get through this a bit shaken and turn north aiming for Rocky Point and the Needles about 6 km away. The wind is now 15 - 20 knots and the swells are pounding the coast. I keep a fair way out but even so reflected swells off the cliffs make for a confused sea pattern. The coast looks fascinating, rugged and bleak. This is definitely a trip to repeat in flat

calm conditions. I have been warned that this stretch of coast up to Whangaroa has numerous bombores. I spot several as I scan ahead but even so I misplace one and find myself rising up a 2 m swell that suddenly becomes 3.5 meters and cresting while I look down on a reef maybe 25 m away that has had its covering water sucked back off it. I paddle up, over and off the wave and it breaks behind me. Whew! It is a long 5 km and by the end of it I am worried. There is nothing that is hard to handle but there is a serious question about how much worse conditions can get before I am in trouble. I am working harder to keep upright than I would in the Seabear and do not feel as confident. At Rocky Point and the Needles I continue north for a bit keeping well clear of the headland conditions before I turn and head west. I rest behind an island just after the point and decide what to do next. I had half intended to carry on to the Cavallis if I was feeling good but I am far too tired for that. I have done four weeks of fairly consistent training two to three hours a night and God help me if I hadn't. I note Paul Caffyn recommends two months of nightly paddles and some weekend trips as a build-up before a serious trip. I decide to make for Taronui Bay which is about at the bottom of the Purerua Peninsular on the north side. My map shows a 1 km deep indentation and I have a vision of a deep pohutakawa fringed cove up which I will glide to a whisper soft landing on a gentle beach. Tiredness does that to your sense of realism. The swell is now behind me, there is a small chop on top of it but things are much easier. It's a following sea but I am too tired to feel comfortable surfing so I ease my paddling and backpaddle when the BE starts to take off. The coast is mainly rocky and there is what looks like a moderate surf running. I have lost count of the headlands and am not sure which one should open up to give me my magic cove. From the map you look down on a clear profile of coast, headlands and bays, from the sea you look along the coast and get a mass of headlands and false headlands superimposed on each other with little indication of what lies behind each one until you pass it. I have even lost count of islands and have to re-orient myself when I come up to a large set of black Christmas puddings that have to be the Barrel (or Black) rocks. I am ready to stop, I look for the first bay with a decent hook to land behind, I do not really fancy surf landings right now. Here's one, possible camp site, only one unoccupied house at one end. In to the beach behind a small wave and stiffly unwind. Behind the beach, right where I landed is a river estuary, the reality behind the deep sheltered cove of my dreams, I am at Taronui. There are Dotterels and Black Oyster Catchers nesting above the high tide mark. Talk to the farm manager's wife, set up a camp and then paddle the river in the early evening sun. Oh I like flat water. There are reflections of rock faces, startled young shags, ducks flying ahead of me. The mangroves change into flax, rushes and pohutukawa as I go up stream, then kingfishers and manuka near the top. Spend part of the night awake fretting about safety, my stiff shoulders, is this the end of my kayaking and all the usual chaff of the first night on a solo trip. Knowing it is part of a pattern helps somewhat.

Sunday 18th. Morning and the trolley turns into a plough in the soft estuary sand. By the time I am ready to launch I am a panting sweaty mess. Out through small surf but my hat flips off and vanishes in the foam. Sheer carelessness, I had not fastened the neck strap. After the recent NSW hoo-ha I had at least packed a spare. I head out, gentle well spaced swells 1.5 to 2 m and a comfortable hour and 20 to the Cavallis. I head round to the north of the main island looking for a camp site that I remember, there is a small surf on the beach and a wave breaks just behind me so I come in sideways on a paddle brace. I set up camp and then go over to Matauri Bay and buy water and an iceblock from the motor camp. Today it is near deserted, next week they have 1200 booked! I do a satisfyingly spectacular exit through 5 foot surf with onlookers. Yee-haa and maybe I will come back as a jet-skier. North again from the main island of the Cavallis is a chain of rocky islets. I take the rod and go trolling for kahawai, go through a narrow gap and see two large swells coming in the other direction, cannot go back because of the fishing line, grit my teeth and up and at 'em. The open sea has a swell running, fed now by two days of SE winds. Here on the north side the swells meet shallow ground and rise steeply to about 3 m, they are not breaking but I put the rod away and concentrate, I do not even want to think about playing a fish right here. No fish and back to camp. No people either and I hang wet gear on trees and wander contentedly naked in the last warmth of the evening sun. In the evening light I spotted Mt Camel, way, way to the north west. I am sleeping on sand with no grass and I wake in the night with painfully stiff shoulders and back. I massage what I can reach and walk in the moonlight watching the lights of a ship disappear and reappear as it passes behind the islets.

Monday 19th. I wake and it is morning, still SE and too rough to explore the Cavallis, I decide to give my shoulders an easy day and cross over to Flat Island and then in towards a sheltered coast and rock hop westwards along to Tauranga Bay. I explore bays, cliffs and caves from close quarters with a feeling of delight. Got to Tauranga Bay at about 10, rested and then, feeling fine, went over to Whangaroa and explored the outer arm, took the only two photos of what is becoming a very two handed trip and have a lovely time watching the mix of cliffs, domes and bush. Found a stream to explore at the NW end and there is a small house tucked up there looking over the water to 500 ft of black cliffs. There is a thin line of white falling down from the cliff's top center and 150 ft further down the water splashes on a wide dome of rock and you can see the splash zone shifting as the wind moves the fall. Stay at the motor camp back at Tauranga Bay, the camp management enliven my afternoon by deliberately burning an old cabin. It is beside a hill, there is long kaikuyu grass running uphill to the tanks and alkathene pipes that are the camp's water supply and then fairly dry scrub climbs to the top of the dome and goes on for miles. There are no hoses. The hut burns with a spectacular plume of smelly smoke and sparks, the kaikuyu catches and starts burning up the hill. One of the two blokes I am watching with (Colin and Dave) suggests we get in and do something, I reluctantly follow them up the hill. We are all in sandals and shorts

and I hate getting burnt. The manager, his off-sider and the three of us do a three stooges version of fire-fighting, cutting alkanethene pipes and using them as improvised hoses, finally getting the fire out before it reaches the scrub line or burns all the water pipes. We relax, unburnt, over beers afterwards and I am told the forecast is for more and possibly stronger SE winds. Sleep well, no aches, a ground cover of thick mown kaikuyu is wonderful. There is a red sky and I hope for happy shepherds.

Tuesday 20th. I wake to a grey-pink sky and a feeling of foreboding. I could stay on but it is starting to rain and a day or so in a wet, tiny tent does not appeal. Memo – better tents make for better decision making. Colin and Dave from last night help me launch, I am briefly buried in spray to my shoulders as the first wave breaks and then I am out into calm water and away. There is an east facing coast running about 6 km north to Karau Point and the further I get from Tauranga Bay the more exposed this coast gets. There are lines of clouds dumping heavy showers all seemingly headed for the same point I am. I am hoping that with SE winds I will round the point and have an easy, sheltered day from there on. The swells grow and there is a cross sea so by the time I get near Karau Point the sea is a wickedly moving carpet of dancing grey. I note that over the last three days the BE has become an extension of me, I feel very like a sea-going centaur, my upper body growing naturally from my kayak. There are wave crests popping up and moving in random directions and every couple of minutes one of these grabs either the bow or the stern and swirls me to a new direction. My responses feel easy and relaxed. There are petrels everywhere, the big black sooty shearwaters doing amazing swoops and swirls in the airflows over the waves, Buller's petrels with their white bellies and occasionally one of the tiny fluttering storm petrels, webbed feet extended dancing just above the surface. Cone Rock comes into view from behind Karau Point, echoing the shape of the point but bare of soil and weathered, a sort of ghostly glimpse of Karau's future. The seas off Cone Rock are horrible, large, steep and confused. There is a low motor noise from the surf breaking on the rocks. Working through this takes concentration. After Cone Rock the seas are less confused but I do not get the hoped for shelter. The wind and swell direction are east not SE and the next 13 km to Berghan's Point contains some pretty exposed bits though there are a number of deep bays that can be sheltered in. There are long foam streaks on the water so I guess the basic wind strength at 20 – 25 knots. Still it's early in the day and I aim for Otonga

Point about 9 km away. Taemaro Bay lies behind the point and that will be shelter and easy landing if I need it. I work towards Wekarua Island, see it as looking like a vast baboon. Bum down and back sloping up steeply as it challenges the sea. Then as I run past it there is a large sea-cave in its rear and the image becomes slightly obscene but I have no time for re-invention. Otonga Point is hard work, I am meeting conditions that I did not know I could handle and feeling reasonably comfortable. I rest behind the point and make decisions. Taemaro Bay is rain swept and unappealing, I have been going about three hours and feel fine. It also seems as if it could be a good idea to get around Berghan's Point before the wind gets up any further. So onward, out of the calm and back to the swells. My feeling about myself so far is that I probably should not be here but that I am making a respectable job of handling the kayak. I stay fairly well out from the cliffs and get to Berghan's Point about 11.30. As I go round the point things get hairy. There are cross-seas and every so often there is the sound of someone tipping a load of large gravel off a truck that means that a wave has seriously broken somewhere behind me. At times I am looking down, at times I am looking up, bow and stern are randomly jerked left and right and I paddle across the waves dodging crests, sliding down shoulders, surfing on the small slopes and back paddling on the steep ones, bracing when a break runs across me. I am doing the best paddling I have ever done in my life, each action flowing from the next, reading the sea well. In the back of my mind there is the thought that if this was not so tied to survival it would be a whole barrel load of fun. The cliffs are 60 – 80 m away and the sea breaks on them with towering bursts of spray and a low continuous growling sound. Ahead there is a new, expensive, body board floating in the foam, I flick past, make sure there is no body attached and race on without a thought of attempted salvage. I get level with the point itself, am mentally preparing for easy water when I get into a small overfall. In the midst of the crossing seas there are now pillow sized lumps of water popping out of the tops of the crests and exploding, I paddle like hell for 2 – 3 minutes and am through. Whew, I slide into one-foot ripples. I have reached Doubtless Bay and I will paddle gently into Coopers Beach sheltered from the SE by the high hills. A gust comes down from those same high hills, tears swirls of spray off the water and tries to take my paddle away. I have always found Doubtless Bay a spiteful bit of sailing water. But the wind does ease off. I have lunch at Takerau Bay and on to Coopers Beach, where I finally have a whisper smooth landing.

Walking home from Brown's Island

By Colin Quilter

It's a real bummer when a trip you've been looking forward to is cancelled because of bad weather; (yes, I know this is a family magazine and you don't expect immoderate language, but since the Toyota ad campaign it seems that "bummer" has become part of everyday speech. On the other hand "holocaust" must be used with great caution, as Tariana Turia

discovered). So when I rang Wally on a Friday evening and heard that his night-time trip to Rangitoto had been wiped out by a forecast of easterly winds of 30 knots, gusting to 40, I was a bit disappointed. "How about a wee paddle down to Brown's Island instead? Provided we could struggle down there

against the wind, we'd be sure to have an easy trip home.'

Once someone has a silly idea, it's amazing how many others fall prey to similar bad judgement. Six of us eventually met in the twilight at St Heliers. Once afloat, the first ten minutes in the shelter of Archilles Point were pleasant, but off the headland the real work began. Jam the paddle in, lever the boat forward by brute force, head-down as the spray whips back from the bow, jam the paddle in again.....

On the north-west corner of Brown's Island a "wind sculpture" has been erected; a few dozen yellow sail-like panels fluttering and spinning in the gale. How the Gods must have chuckled as that was installed. "Wind?" they must have said. "He wants wind? We'll show him what wind is."

At Crater Bay we pulled ashore for a cup of tea. On the beach the kayaks rocked in the gusts. Spindrifts of sand found their way into our cups; it wasn't a place to linger. By the time we were back on the water darkness had arrived. But now that our destination was downwind, what a transformation! It felt as if a giant hand was pushing firmly between my shoulders; the distance which had been hard-won, metre by metre,

was now retraced effortlessly. Overtaking swells were difficult to see in the gloom, but the sensation of speed as we surged down their faces was magnified by darkness. It was an exhilarating homeward passage, and the whole trip now seemed an excellent idea.

At low tide the reef off Achilles Point is long and low, with a narrow passage at its inshore end. Tonight surf broke on its eastern flank. Lindsay and I found the passage; the others, a little too far to seaward, ended up in the surf and were driven ashore before they had a chance to retreat. Where a man can't paddle he must walk, so they carried their boats across the rocks and launched again on the leeward side. Floating there in the shelter I felt a twinge of guilt as I watched their indistinct shapes stumbling across the oysters in the darkness, but didn't feel guilty enough to get out of my boat and help; and it certainly added interest to the trip.

So that was it; a cold, dark, windy and thoroughly enjoyable evening. Auckland is said to be the City of Sails, but I can tell you there were very few sailors out on the water that night. And what's more the yacht doesn't exist that can be driven onto an offshore reef in darkness, then carried across and refloated within ten minutes. Kayaks certainly have their advantages.

A Waitangi Weekend Holiday

By Rona Patterson

If you are planning on a holiday, first pick your weather, then your company, and go for it before conditions change. Pack your cars to the brim, leaving pride of place for the kayaks on the roof. Once the perfect camping spot is located and tents are pitched, making sure there is heaps of space for tables, chairs and ablution areas, put the car keys away - not to be used again until it is time to return home.

Recently a few friends left work early on a Friday afternoon, took the Monday off work (to coincide with Waitangi Day) to make a four day weekend. Once camp was set up, there was only time for a walk up the beach, spending time with some young men who were having a huge amount of fun with their sea kites, (gosh, I wish I were younger - they look a tremendous amount of fun) before getting back to the more serious task of cocktails and nibbles. This can be dangerous because time can slip by allowing daylight to disappear, forcing dinner to be cooked in the dark. (It can be done)!

With holiday being our main aim, we restricted our paddling to once a day, for 3 to 4 hours duration. South-west winds were the order of the weekend, apart from the Saturday morning, when conditions were nothing short of perfect. It was hot, sunny, windless, and the water resembled a mirror. The only blot on our time on the water was that after our fisherman caught a fish, the fish decided he didn't want our company, so it jumped back in the water.

Successive days were not as kind. One paddle was really wild. We had gone from Shakespear's bay around the corner, heading for Army bay. We were buffeted

around a lot, first from the side, then from behind, and the last 45 minutes was into a strong, head wind. Conditions were not conducive to struggle back against wind and tide, so this was to be a one-way trip. Undaunted, it was decided this was as good a place as any for a picnic and sun-bathe. It was then that we found how to have fish on the menu without actually putting a line into the water. One of our members wandered down to the water's edge and offered help to a solo fisherman, and was rewarded with two beautiful schnapper, and they had even been gutted!

There are various memories of that weekend - I see our tallest member standing in the middle of a line of youngsters waiting for a Mr Whippy ice-cream; lovely hot solar showers; 40 rowdy neighbours who didn't go to bed before 2.30am, and got up before 6.00am; and a complaint about the noise we were making one night. I don't know whether to be insulted or flattered, because when we told the ranger we had eaten dinner early, walked up the beach and fallen into bed by 9.00pm, he said "I knew it couldn't have been you". I got the distinct feeling it was not the fact of our early night which convinced him, but he didn't consider at our age we would be disturbing the natives.

Have you noticed that after leaving home with everything packed neatly into little packages, they never return in the same condition. And so it was for us, so much so that one of the group offered to ferry a kayak home for another in the group. I heard that the kayak dropped over the side of the roof on the way home, but believe there was no damage done.

The Winter Solstice

By Ryan Whittle

Over the last three years, the weekends around the winter solstice have been great for paddling. Days spent getting sunburnt at the Bay of Islands in 1998, being visited by a pair of dolphins on a mirror sea at Great Mercury Island in 1999, and cruising the Whangarei Harbour with a pod of dolphins in 2000. I wondered if this was just coincidence or if there could be more to it.

The ASKNET newsletter recently had an article about weather predictions based on the moon and I asked the weatherman, Ken Ring at <http://www.predictweather.com/> if he would expect constant conditions around the winter solstice each year.

He replied

...the answer is fairly constant but not as predictable as, say, Easter weather, which is tied to the Moon more. Easter is the 1st Full Moon after the spring equinox, and here always serves bad weather in the latter part at least. Solstices are sun-aligned, and the Moon is not always in the same position but could be up to a week away from that same position. So if your error is around 6 days, you can safely predict a consistency. But I can tell you that next year around Auckland the weekend of June 23rd-24th will see light showers on the Saturday with easterlies predominating and only a slight easing the next day into overcast skies, followed by a week of showery weather. Most June weekends for 2001 will see wet conditions. The best weekend weatherwise

next year will be June 2nd-3rd. And if you want a fine venue over the solstice weekend, Hawkes Bay will be sunny.

The seasons of the year are caused by the 23.5° tilt of the earth's axis. Because the earth is rotating like a top or gyroscope, it points in a fixed direction continuously - towards a point in space near the North Star. But the earth is also revolving around the sun. During half of the year, the southern hemisphere is more exposed to the sun than is the northern hemisphere. During the rest of the year, the reverse is true. At noon the sun appears high in the sky during summertime and low in the sky during winter. The time of the year when the sun reaches its maximum elevation occurs on the day with the greatest number of daylight hours. This is called the summer solstice, in the southern hemisphere this is typically on DEC-21 -- the first day of summer. "Solstice" is derived from two words: "sol" meaning sun, and "sistere," to cause to stand still. The lowest elevation occurs about JUN-21 and is the winter solstice -- the first day of winter, when the night time hours are maximum.

A search on the web came up with many items on the religious significance of the summer and winter solstice but no references to its relationship to paddling conditions!

But I'm planning to be on the water that time next year.

Waiheke Island

By Steve Melrose

The trip worked out ok. Some of the people arrived 5 min before departure time and quite a few phoned up at 8am on the morning I had left to paddle to Maraetai by this time so I hope all those who phoned made it. One man came down to see us off. He had concerns for us in terms of the weather report, he joined us later on in the day for the trip back after completing commitments at home. So we had 13 people in 12 boats. Slow easy crossing, small portage with trolleys (and carry) across hard sand. Walked to pa site (after some confusion about where the track started), then onto the camp techno-toilets and notice board, then Nikau track to the Cascade tracks waterfall for lunch. The water looked pretty scungy so my image of frolicking in a crystal clear bush stream was dashed, (the pity was that I had also told everyone else of the rangers lovely description of the Cascades swimming area). After lunch the trip leader entertained the group with a realistic simulation of dazed behaviour. I'm sure that even now some of the group think that I did not know

which track we were supposed to take, or that I did not even know which track we had just been on. Two tracks later we ended up on end of the beach opposite to where our boats were. We meandered along the beach past a fenced off area with Dotterel birds inside it. And then past an unfenced area where we had the opportunity to observe a quite lovely, topless, yellow bikini bird.

After one of the girls in our group went for a quick swim and everyone stocked up with food and water, we kayaked across to Rocky Bay village, which was very picturesque. A quick look at the wineshop which is now a cafe, and then back to Maraetai with almost a tail wind.

We had great weather and good scenery. My impressions of the trip were of lovely cool (temperaturewise) bush walks and a group of very nice people who all got on really well and were a pleasure to be with.

Deadline for next month's newsletter: Tuesday 10th April (= committee meeting)

Articles to look forward to: Circumnavigate Great Barrier, starting from Okahu Bay, by Ryan Whittle; A woman's perspective on solo paddling, by Susan Hill.

This is the provisional trip program for the upcoming months. Many thanks to the huge number of people that contributed to it. Remember that all trips are subject to change at this stage.

	25	Anzac Wed						Tue-Wed Rangitoto	Ann Schofield	419 9223
	28-29							Sun Whitford River	Matt Grant	524 2108
May	5-6		Slipper Island	Matt Crozier & Tony Greaves	817 9223 07 827 2170					
	12-13							Sun Shoal Bay Sat Noises	Allister MacClean Rob Gardener	445 9646 533 4061
	19-20							Sat eve Trip Planning Mtg Sun Tiri Tiri	Ann Schofield Vincent Maire	419 9223 09 424 2293
	26-27							Sat Thai Restaurant Sun Hoteo River Sun Cambridge to Hamilton race	Michelle Scofield Gerry Maire Matt Grant	827 8936 09 426 6257 524 2108
Jun	2-4	Queens3d	Lake Orakei Korako	Justin Sanson-Beattie	278 8090					
	9-10							Waitakeres Tramp	Ann Schofield	419 9223
	16-17							Sat eve Pot Luck, Karapiro Sun Waikato River leg1 Karapiro to Hamilton	Tony Greaves Peter Sommerhalder	07 827 2170 815 2073
	23-24							Manakau	Selwyn Palmer	625 7798
	30-1							Sun Waikato River leg2	Peter Sommerhalder	815 2073
July	7-8									
	14-15		Oputere?					Sun Waikato River leg3	Peter Sommerhalder	815 2073
	21-22									
	28-29									
Aug	4-5									
	11-12									
	18-19		Admin Bay?							
	25-26							Sun Short Trip + Hot Pools/ movie	Susan Hill	
Sept	1-2									
	8-9									
	15-16									
	22-23		Rotorua area	Barry Wybrow	846 5809					

Next Trip Planning Meeting

When?

Saturday May 19 evening (venue to be decided)

To ensure that we find a venue of a suitable size, it would be really useful to know numbers in advance please leave me a message at home asap (419 9223) if you intend coming along. .

The plan

A proposed program will be drawn up before hand for discussion at the meeting. For this purpose, I need proposed trips in writing beforehand. The form in the newsletter is available for this and there will be one available on e-groups also.

All club members are encouraged to seriously consider putting a trip on the program. Our skill and confidence levels vary, and our events program will reflect this. It is best to start out leading a really short trip, maybe a few kilometers along the coast line to a cafe, and back. Alternatively, consider a social event an afternoon tea get together in Devonport, or a trip to the movies one Saturday evening!!

..... *cut*
here.....

Proposed ACC Trip

Name of Leader / organiser _____

Phone number (home and / or work) _____

e-mail _____

Trip Idea _____

Day or Weekend or Long weekend _____

Date preferences 1st choice _____

2nd choice _____

Are there any dates that are not possible for you? _____

Special requirements eg: tide times, daylight length, moon cycle _____

Please provide advertising details to be included in the newsletter 1-2 months prior to the trip.

Please return the form asap to:

Ann Schofield, 114 Coronation Rd, Hillcrest, Northshore, Auckland Tel: 419 9223

anns@rangitoto.school.nz