



Newsletter

April 2003

Hello Folks,

Yes it is that time of the year again....

In this issue you will read of the results of the Committee negotiations with the ARC regarding Vine House and other activities that have kept everyone busy throughout the year.

Remember though, this is your Club and the committee can only be successful if YOU let them know what you want, how you feel, and you share your great ideas with everyone else.

AGMs have a habit of being boring and of little interest to many. NOT SO THIS YEAR!.

It is important for everyone to have their say but AGMs should be short and to the point. For that reason, the Club is holding a discussion meeting on 29th April so that all your brilliant ideas can be thrashed out and firm proposals formulated to put to the membership at the AGM. These will be published in the next Newsletter so everyone has a chance to think about them before the AGM.

Cheers,

Jan

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Deadline for next month's newsletter: 7 May 2003

Useful phone numbers and addresses

Club address	PO Box 147-282, Ponsonby, Auckland		Publicity Officer	Roger Lomas	579 8799
President	Matt Crozier	817 1984	Safety & Training Officer		
Patron	Colin Quilter	630 2219		Peter Sommerhalder	815 2073
Secretary	Rosie Thom	376 8636	Storage & Club Kayaks		
Treasurer	Alissa Good	846 2622		Lindsay Sandes	522 3344
Membership	Matt Crozier	817 1984	Merchandising	Jonathan Jarvis	578 1545
Trips Officer	Morgan Lewis	620 4005	Newsletter Editor	Ian Calhaem	579 0512
	Morganl@xtra.co.nz			IanCalhaem@xtra.co.nz	

The Club maintains two e-mail groups:

To subscribe to the discussion list, send a blank e-mail to: auckland-kayakers-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

For event reminders, send a blank e-mail to: auckland-canoe-club-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Where can you go to get training?

Auckland Canoe Centre, phone 815 2073

Basic confidence course, Henderson Pool, Tuesday evenings - \$120 for four sessions.

One-on-One rolling, Henderson Pool, Tuesday evenings - \$149 for three sessions. \$55 for single 90 minute lesson. Multisport Grade 2 Certificate, white water, sea kayaking one and two-day courses run frequently.

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 - \$30 for 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)

Outdoor Discoveries Ltd, Chris Gulley, phone 813 3399

Intro skills, overnight at Mahurangi - \$225. Details on web site www.nzkayak.co.nz

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

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 because the leader needs to know the capabilities of those who are coming and to be able to contact you if the plan changes. Please be aware that you paddle on a Club trip at your own risk. Read the safety policy (page 2). 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

Remember... you MUST have either an all-round white light on a pole, or else a large-lens (eg. Dolphin) torch, in good working condition, mounted on the outside of your kayak. This is actually a legal requirement, so, no light, no paddle. As discussed in a previous Newsletter, the Coastguard, do not recommend the use of flashing lights. It is apparently difficult to judge their distance and they are also used to signify danger. Also, it is advisable before going out on an evening paddle that you attend a basic skills course and ensure you are fit enough to be able to paddle for one hour.

Tuesday, Okahu Bay.

All paddlers MUST provide their own night-lights. All skill levels welcome. Meet at Okahu Bay by 5:30pm, ready to be on the water by 5:45pm. 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. Club boats can be hired at the subsidised rates of: \$5 to club members, and \$10 to non-members/guests. (At all other times, club boat hire is \$20/day or part day, for members and guests.)

April

Fri 18th April Easter Weekend - Motuora Is - Meet at Sullivans Bay on Friday 18th April - 8.30 am, where vehicles will be left at a charge of \$5 per night. Leave at 9.00 for Motuora Is where we will set up camp. The weekend will include a trip to Moturekareka and Kawau Islands, and a pot luck dinner on Friday night. This is a great chillout spot and of course, some fishing too. We will be camping, as the bach is already booked. Charge is \$5 per night. **Ph: Justin 025-868 177 or 09-278 8090 to book.**

Fri 18th April Easter Weekend - Far North - Easter weekend April 18 to 21 Easter Trip This is shaping up to be a wonderful event. At this stage we have more than 20 people coming including paddlers from the Northland Canoe Club and BASK in Tauranga. Our base will be Pinetree Lodge, the main camping ground in Ahipara, just west of Kaitaia and at the southern end of Ninety-nine Mile Beach. But don't worry, we will not be going off the beach. Just south of here are two very interesting and apparently very beautiful harbours that drain onto the west coast. They are Herekino and Whangape harbours. Our initial goal will be to explore these two bodies of water and I believe Whangape has an amazing entrance which runs between high cliffs. To the east we also have Houhora Harbour and the Karikari Peninsula. So, the plan is drive and kayak. In the main the paddling will be in sheltered waters but for the more adventurous sea kayaker, there will be opportunities to paddle in the deep blue stuff. The cost of a tent site is \$10, however the camping ground has a range of cabins and these can be viewed and booked on <http://www.ahipara.co.nz/ahiparamotorcamp/index.html> We will have potluck dinner on Saturday night. I have had a request from a lady paddler wishing to share a ride north with another lady paddler, please phone/email Vincent for details. I have been told there is no need to book tent sites. The leader is Vincent Maire on (09) 424-2293, 0252766032 or vincent.maire@xtra.co.nz and please let me know if you are coming along. I may well be going up Thursday afternoon and I look forward to having plenty of company. **SEE YOU ALL THERE**

Sunday May 18th Journeys End. The tiny community of Journeys Ends rests on the shores of the Kaipara Harbour due west of Wellsford. I have never kayaked there before but believe it has an all-tide boat ramp and a number of interesting options for sea kayakers. These include islands at the entrance to the Oruawhero River, Hargreaves Basin, extensive sand islands and weather permitting, a visit to Tinopai. The best route to Journeys End is either via Helensville. Kaukapakapa, Hoteo turning into Tauhoa Port Albert Road about 1km north of Tauhoa. Follow this road until it links with Run Road and at Tabora turn left into Journeys End Road. The other alternative is to drive up SH1 and 3km north of Warkworth turn left into Kaipara Flats Road and take this to Tauhoa.

Meet at Journeys End at 9.30am. It is recommended that you allow two hours driving time from the city. And use a map as cell phone coverage is marginal in the area. This is not a trip for novice or beginner paddlers as this

area is prone to strong currents and high wind. High tide is noon so we will miss the really strong currents. Listen to NewstalkZB for a cancellation. **The trip leader is Vincent Maire (09) 424-2293, 025-2766032, vincent.maire@xtra.co.nz**

Sat 19th April Easter Weekend - For those of us who must stay close to home over Easter, come out to Vine House for a night. Leave Saturday morning and return Sunday. Bring wine and good food to share. This may be an opportunity to commence work on the property - such as the access track. **Contact Stephanie Seager for more details. Ph 8345769**

25th - 27th of April Anzac weekend in the Coromandel - Spend the Anzac weekend in the Coromandel at Kautunu. There are lots of things to do in the area including kayaking, tramping, Diving and Fishing. Depending on numbers we will stay at Alissa's Batch, if there are too many people then we can take over the backpackers as well. **Contact Alissa on agood@peace.com or 021 608 448 or 846 2622hm.**

Tuesday 29 April - Pre AGM Think Tank 7pm Okahu Bay clubrooms.

The club exists to provide paddling opportunities and enhance your paddling experience. How we do that, for both the short and long term, is decided by the general membership.

- Are you satisfied with what's on offer?
- Do you have any concerns?
- Do you have any suggestions on how things can be approached differently?

The aim of this meeting is to air these ideas and determine their merit or level of interest. The final objective is to provide a set of Motions (or courses of action) that can be presented and decided at the AGM.

May

May 4th Cambridge - Hamilton Race, start 11am ph **Peter Sommerhalder 815-2073 for details**

May 6th Committee Meeting, 7:30pm Okahu Bay clubrooms

May 10-11 Working Bee, Vine House This is it, the first working bee.

The priority task will be to construct a good track from Lagoon Bay up to the house. We need people willing to get their hands dirty. Bring your own spade and sleeping bag. We'll provide Saturday dinner and a good time (promise!). Aim to meet at Sullivans Bay at 8.30 am Saturday morning. **Ring Stephanie Seager to register your interest in this exciting project. Ph 8345 769.**

Tuesday 20 May - Annual General Meeting (AGM) 7pm Okahu Bay clubrooms

Election of officers to the committee, and presentation of and voting on given motions. The meeting will be run by a list of speakers, speaking to each motion.

Nominations for officers and Motions to be decided must be given to the committee by May 6th.

(Note that the committee meeting for May has been brought forward a week to May 6.)

Nominations and Motions will be published in the May newsletter prior to the AGM.

Pres Sez

There's a lot happening in the weeks ahead – it's going to be a very busy month! There's no excuse not to get out over the Easter break. Vince and Justin have some adventures lined up both near and far; or you can have a relaxing time at Vine House with Stephanie before the hard work starts! It's a time for thinking about the club in general too, with the AGM coming up in a month's time.

Swim Escort

Thanks to all those dedicated soles that came to help with the Rangitoto Swim. Twelve people stayed overnight and enjoyed a good meal – too much food as usual, but we never complain ☺. There's something about sleeping out on the deck at the information centre that appeals over invading mozzies – I can't figure out what. I ended up with the whole hut to myself overnight – what did I do!?

Unfortunately the final turnout of paddlers was a bit disappointing for the last swim escort – less than 10% of our membership came to support the club in this event. Where were you all? I appreciate now how 'lonely' it must be for a swimmer when there isn't anyone close by, being a kayaker looking for bobbing heads over a larger area. I got a bit more of a workout than usual. The swim escorts do the club a lot of good, both financially and in providing an event for paddlers of all levels. Remember, your enthusiasm breeds enthusiasm in your committee (and hopefully visa-versa ☺).

Membership

Subs are now due and a membership renewal form is attached at the front. Remember that if you wish to actively participate in the AGM next month, you will need to have renewed your subscription by then to be able to vote.

Mahurangi Bach (Vine House)

The committee has allocated a budget of \$5,000 to cover expenses incurred in the Vine House project. It envisages that this will be returned through eventual hireage over the long term.

The following is the proposed basis for licence agreement, put together by the ARC and subject to negotiation. They have been working hard to make the proposal attractive to us and accommodate our needs. We would be particularly interested to hear from you if you can help in some of the more skilled areas.

It is proposed that the Council:

1. Provide the building, boatshed and curtilage for the use of Club in accordance with the licence (which will be similar to the example previously supplied). The Club will not be required to pay a rental or rates. The building would remain a Council asset and the Council would retain responsibility for renewals of building components, and for ensuring that it is in a safe and sanitary condition;
2. Insure the building and boatshed and also insure the contract works during renovation of the building;
3. Provide materials/services to the value of \$25,000 (subject to final confirmation through the annual plan process). Note that this is in addition to the structural repairs and electrical upgrade recently undertaken at the Council's expense. While the budget still needs further refinement, it is envisaged that this will be sufficient to:
 - Provide a builder for a 3-month period (note that we have a builder who has offered to work at a reduced rate on this job);
 - Transport materials to the site (probably by helicopter);
 - Fully replace the roof and complete the exterior renovation;
 - Provide a new shower, larger hot water cylinder, water filter and extractor fan;
 - Replace floor coverings in the bathroom;
 - Allow construction of a secure storeroom downstairs;
 - Replace softboard linings in the downstairs rooms with plasterboard;
 - Provide fire fighting equipment and smoke detectors;
 - Improve the water supply and recoat or reline and cover the water tanks;
 - Arrange for the septic tank to be emptied and undertake minor repairs as required (note that this has yet to be inspected);

If for any reason the budget is insufficient to complete all of the projected work, the priority will be to complete the exterior restoration of the house.

4. Provide architectural advice as required;
5. Provide the use of the chattels currently in the building, which includes the extension ladder and basic tools for use by volunteers;
6. Provide a booking service via the ARC call centre. It is proposed that no charge be made for this. This policy would be reviewed when the licence is renewed;
7. Arrange periodic inspection of fire extinguishers;
8. Continue to provide periodic mowing of the grass area around the house;
9. Develop a health and safety policy in partnership with the Club.

We would also consider sponsoring some of your members on a 'Growsafe' course, so that the Club could safely use herbicides to control weeds and rank grass growth around the property. This would also be useful should the Club decide to take on a wider voluntary care role at Mahurangi East or elsewhere.

The Club would be required to:

1. Prepare and repaint the building exterior and interior as required, together with the boatshed, bore shed/cover & water tanks (where required). The repainting of the exterior of the house would need to be undertaken in the period November 2003 – February 2004. A significant part of the building is coated in creosote. Replacement weatherboards would need to be coated prior to fixing. Note that it is proposed that a pre-finished roof be fitted so this will not require painting. Some interior painting will also need to be undertaken as work is undertaken during the summer – for example new plasterboard areas will need to be sealed and painted. A variety of skill levels would be required including individuals able to accurately cut in around windows & apply enamel finishes.

Paint and sundries would be supplied from the budget;

2. Provide assistance to the builder from time to time whilst he is on site. This would particularly involve tasks difficult to manage with one or two persons e.g. getting materials on site and stored away, or fixing long lengths of weatherboard. We anticipate being able to drop materials on site by helicopter to minimize handling;
3. Provide chattels and furnishings required in addition to those currently in the building and to insure these if this is required;
4. Pursue any non-payment of rentals;
5. Maintain the building & surrounds (including track from boat shed) in accordance with a cyclical maintenance schedule, and arrange or undertake minor repairs;
6. Pay electricity charges;
7. Work with the Council to develop and ensure compliance with a health and safety policy;

If the Club is able to reduce any of the projected costs of the renovation work – for example by providing trades people at no or reduced cost, this will allow additional items to be purchased from the budget (for example it may be possible to purchase timber for built in bunks). Specialized work will include gib stopping, plumbing, electrical, laying bituminous membrane over deck, and minor reglazing.

If the Club wishes to undertake further renovation of the building interior beyond what can be achieved with the budget available, this would need to be undertaken by or at the Club's expense and in accordance with the conservation plan.

Terms of licence agreement

The time frame for the proposed licence agreement is open to negotiation, but an initial 2-year term is suggested. The Council would expect to see the renovation of the building completed as agreed by the end of this term. If the terms and conditions of the agreement have been met, the Council would exercise the option of renewing the licence at that time.

We would wish to set some limits on the occupancy of the building to ensure that the capacity of the facility is not exceeded or fire safety compromised. Although we have not finalised the limits as yet, a limit of 13 or 14 on scheduled monthly club weekends, perhaps with a reduced limit for independent bookings, is likely. As noted previously, camping is currently not permitted at Mahurangi East other than in the designated camping area.

Time frame

The builder has been booked to start at the beginning of November 2003, and will be available for a total of three months.

Working bee in May – 10th & 11th

This will be the first test, really, of how much volunteer interest there is in the club to help on the Vine House project. We'll be primarily breaking and clearing the old brickwork and starting on the track. See the calendar item for more info. If you can at all lend a hand, on either or both days, then please come along and be part of a motivated group of people.

At the AGM we will need to at least confirm (or reject) our commitment to the project based on what we know so far. It would be good discuss the pros and cons at the pre – AGM Think Tank meeting.

Annual General Meeting – May 20th

We aim to have the AGM to run smoothly, painlessly, quickly, and decisively – with a good set of outcomes. In order to achieve that, some work is required beforehand. The motions and nominations for officers will be established prior to the AGM and published in the May newsletter, which is due out on the weekend on May 11/12. The May committee meeting has been brought forward a week to May 6th – this is the deadline for newsletter articles, nominations for officers, and motions. A week prior to this will be a 'Think Tank' general meeting where motions can be resolved.

Affectively, we are separating the working out of an action plan from the final decision process. This allows some time to develop and think about options before finally deciding on them. Let's hope it works!

Pre AGM Think Tank – April 29

You may have been thinking about what you would like to get out of the club, any direction you think we should be taking, or any niggles you have that you think should be raised. This is an opportunity to raise and discuss any issues to determine their merit or level of interest. It is good for the incoming committee to have an action plan and goals to

work towards. The outcome of this meeting will be a set of motions that will finally decided at the AGM.

Nominations for committee members

There are a number of ways you can measure the 'success' of a club - how many events there are on the calendar; how many people turn up for these events; the size of our membership. All of these indicate how happy members are with what we provide. Personally, I think we've really succeeded when members feel willing to put something back into the club, and help make it run. So, how well have we done? If you are able to help us out, I'm sure that you'll enjoy being part of our enthusiastic and dedicated team.

We try to give everyone on committee a specific responsibility, so no one gets bored. See the inside front cover for the positions on committee. We meet on the second Tuesday of every month (except January) in the clubrooms.

We are losing some key people from the committee this year, and they will be sorely missed. Thanks to Jonathan Jarvis (Merchandise), Alissa Good (Treasurer), Morgan Lewis (Trips), and Rosie Thom (Secretary) for all their hard work. It is particularly important that we fill the Secretary, Treasurer, Vice President roles. Please let me know if you are prepared to do the job.

Nominations for club officers are due on May 6th. Please give this some thought, and don't be shy.

Resources

Minutes of last years AGM can be found at

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/auckland-canoe-club/files/AGM02/minutes02.pdf>

The club Constitution can be found at

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/auckland-canoe-club/files/Doc/Constitution.pdf>

Any other materials (eg, financials) will be published on the web site when available.

If you would like any these documents sent to you, I'll do that for you.

That's it from me!,

Thanks - M@

(817 1984, matt@vsl.co.nz)

Tuesday night paddling



A club member shares his views on the future of the club

Another year has passed by and the club AGM is coming up. I would like you all to take time out before the meeting to write down a few notes as to what the club means to you, and what the incoming committee could do more of to raise your level of enjoyment and participation in the sport of kayaking.

What are the issues that a small committee team could explore that would generate feedback to provide a basis for informed decision making. The issues that I see confronting the club include:

1. Plenty of new members yet trip numbers are down
2. As soon as summer arrives the popular series of lectures held over the winter months cease, even though we pay rent all year round
3. The entire waterfront site is under review for possible development as a marina. This may well affect our current storage and our clubrooms. Under a new management regime, we could be looking at paying \$100 per square metre or more.
4. What direct benefits do our members gain by the club having all that money in the bank?

On the important matter of the development of the waterfront (point 3), I am concerned that if we are not proactive in protecting our future, we could be rolled and forced to find another site. This, I believe, would be almost impossible given the lack of cite-based coastal locations for clubs such as ours. Monitoring progress on this issue is not enough. We must protect our future by making sure we are part of the decision-making and planning process.

Point 4, the future use of our sizeable bank balance needs also to be debated. One suggestion I wish to put forward involves using some of those funds to make a long-term investment for the club. This is the purchase of a rural/coastal section on either Kawau or Waiheke islands. Given the return on investment in this type of real estate, there is little doubt the club would gain medium to long term. Equally important is the establishment of a campsite that members could enjoy. We could erect a DoC style shelter and install a water tank and a drop-hole loo. If, in the fullness of time it was decided that the property was not being used, the property would be sold and the funds returned to the club account. Camping places in the Hauraki Gulf are selling out. We can always sell it in the future but may not be able to buy it in the future.

These are just a few ideas. There is no hidden agenda. We must speak up, debate the issues and gather information to make informed decisions. Hind site should not be an option for a club our age and our size.

Gerry Maire

Hire Equipment

Lindsay Sandes

Over the past few months I have logged about 20 calls from members expressing concern over the state of our club kayaks. The most common comments expressed are

- Sand, stones in the kayak
- Rubbish, water in main cockpit & hatches
- Clothing left in kayaks
- Foot pedals do not engage
- Cables worn or broken

The Club does not engage a paid employee whose responsibilities include cleaning up or maintaining kayaks. Rather, the club has an expectation that users of club equipment will take the time to clean out kayaks after each paddle, rinse inside and out to remove salt residue, rinse paddles, buoyancy aids and spray decks and stow equipment back in its rightful place.

Observing these basic actions assists with retaining our hire equipment and encourages debate toward replacing or upgrading equipment as and when required. All hire attracts a small but highly subsidised fee. Often, kayaks are taken out without logging in the hire, or paying the hire fee.

The voluntary role of gear custodian involves checking our equipment from time to time, arranging for necessary repair, checking security at the lockup and collecting and banking hire fees. Members who hire have as much as a role as the gear custodian.

Assistance from all members or friends using our club equipment is being canvassed to make certain this great Club facility is retained.

Round Rangi , Mid March

Lindsay Sandes

Judging from my summer of fantastic paddling conditions, numerous navigations of Rangitoto and outlying islands, it was expected that the weather gods would look kindly toward an organised club event.

Expected weather forecast dawned as easterlies 14 knots rising late afternoon. Alan, Ian & Ailsa, Wayne, Terry, Mark, Brian & I met at 0845 to survey the seas, discuss the forecast and make plans. It didn't help that my mates were fishing on the easterly side of Rangi in perfect conditions as their comments defied the weather forecasters.

After agreeing our plans, checking experience levels, equipment, we headed off to Rangi wharf for our 1st stop. An uneventful crossing with conditions softer than advised. Everyone agreed to carry on to Gardner Gap for lunch in the sun and after viewing conditions on the other side, agreed to complete the navigation. During lunch we discovered that Wayne has an interesting past including smothering himself in deer poop...something to do with attracting Pat (or perhaps I misunderstood that bit of the discussion), however if anyone requires advice on hunting, fishing, shooting, then Wayne's the man.

Its not that often we see the Kevlar kayaks chancing the rock pools with the plastic kayaks staying well clear, but this was the norm on this day. Brian demonstrated his superb balancing skills waiting for the occasional wave and Mark & I surfed our way through some tight chutes on exhilarating short bursts of white water.

The wind picked up providing some good swell riding down the eastern side of Rangi and into McKenzie Bay for afternoon tea. Ailsa was feeling the strain from an old shoulder injury, however with Ian in the rear cockpit was in safe hands for the run home. The afternoon squalls arrived but not as strong as expected, however with a busy shipping channel made for a tricky run home. We buddied up for safety while Brian & I assisted Ian & Ailsa finding an alternative route home.

In all a great days paddling and I understand a 1st circumnavigation for some of the paddlers.

The 6 Capes

In February 2002, Wally and Ryan had paddled from Auckland to the Cavalli Islands and were continuing the journey north in 2003.

We had found some generous residents at Tauranga Bay who would look after the car and provide a pick-up service when we called at the end of the trip - wherever that happened to be.

We drove up to Tauranga Bay on Saturday morning, packed and were on the water at 3pm under hazy skies that we guessed were from the Australian bushfires, and bright sunshine - thanks to the weather gods are in order here. Past the Whangaroa Harbour mouth we looked for the local hole in the rock, but the incoming swells put us off going through today. Along Taupo Bay and this becomes new territory for me, never having been further north than this. An hour or so of rockgardening on the low tide provide some tricky moments before finding our first nights campsite at Tupau Bay. There are three houses at one end of the white sandy beach. A flat grassy area beside the shallow estuary at the other end provides a great start to the trip.

The tide is up in the morning, and we are able to walk our boats to the surf through the estuary, avoiding the carry of laden boats through the deep sand from the previous night.. The map marks this area of coast as "very steep cliffs" and "very rugged coast". Integrated with regular coves containing sandy beaches, the scenery is great. We had expected Berghan Point to be our first hurdle, but its nice to us with just a bit of clapotis. On the point is the view of our first big bay - Doubtless Bay. The inside of the bay is barely visible on the horizon, while Knuckle Point, the other side of the bay, is only a 10km crossing away.

Around the corner the swell is behind us and the water calms down. The shark cruising between us in the opposite direction seems content with his lot.

There are only occasional houses above the cliffs until HiHi Beach, a more built up area providing our lunch stop. The low tide here does not make it an attractive beach.

On to Monganui Harbour, and the place is much more populated. Obviously a popular holiday spot with houses spread over a wide area. We pause at the wharf and visit "The best Fish and Chip shop in the world". They happily provide top-ups for our water bottles. Can't comment on the food though. Coopers Beach is a continuation of Monganui and a couple of less crammed beaches before Tokerau Beach ends the busy area.

In the lee of Puketutu Island - a Maori reserve - on Aurere Beach we find a small grassy area between the sand and the farmers electric fence for our tents. Have to be careful with toilet breaks during the night.

The view across Doubtless Bay to Karikari Peninsula and down the length of the bay, is tomorrows paddle. Mares tail above the sunset promises what kind of day I wonder, Wally offers to tell me tomorrow - very droll.

Monday morning dawns calm and still, the 4' swells on a glassy sea give us a roller coaster ride down the length of

Tokerau Beach.

The beach is almost empty, and the sand hill on the shore marks the end of our horizon, broken by an occasional pine tree. Housing appears on the last of the beach, and a quad bike races us along the shoreline. He beats us by a handle bar (and a mile). A smoko break lets us watch the black rain clouds pass over the places we have just left.

From here around the Karikari Peninsula is spectacular. There is one road to the end of the peninsula, and that's it. No sign of people for the rest of the day around to Matai Bay, just high cliffs of charcoal coloured rock, topped with native bush and blue skies. The odd white sandy beach with deep clear blue green water provide interludes to the swells rolling 15' up and down the cliff faces. The Pacific continues forever on our right. Sheltered coves with caves, blowholes and mangrove estuaries provide plenty of variation.

We had intended to stop at Matai Bay, but it still feels early as we approach, and there are thoughts of continuing. Into the bay and all thoughts of passing it by disappear. Its low tide, there are 2km of white sandy beach bisected by an island and framed by green pastures on the hills.

The water is clear blue-green over the white sandy sea floor. Gotta stay here! Going on the dead grass in the campground, its been a busy holiday season. But only a few remain and its tranquil. Have never been here before - will come again. Can't tell if its a red sky tonight, there is not a cloud in the sky.

Tuesday is cloudy and still with a 20 knot southerly forecast. The northern side of the peninsula has more grass fields and the lack of sun means its not as picturesque as yesterday. Cape Karikari is nice to us (thanks to the weather gods here), with just a little clapotis before entering into Rangaunu Bay, the next big Bay on the trip. Occasional shacks before Karikari Bay are the only buildings outside of the doc campground we see on the peninsula. The southerlies kick in during lunch at the start of Karikari Bay, where a walk over the dunes uncovers dirt roads and ideal flat campsites. We stay close to shore for maximum shelter from the wind but around the end of the beach towards Rangaunu Harbour we are straight into it.

Shags by the dozen perched in their trees keeping out of this wind look like Xmas decorations from a distance. The outgoing tide running at about 5 knots makes the water messy across the harbour entrance to East Beach and the wind gives a 10km ferry glide down the beach to Houhora Harbour and the nights campsite.

Wednesdays forecast for gentle South-easterlies looks good and we head into the harbour to find a shop. The newly opened game fishing club is deserted, must all be out fishing I guess. The shop allows us to stock up on the countries most expensive apples, and the paddle out of the harbour against the tide burns up any calories we hoped to get from them. East Beach is transformed in the absence of yesterdays winds. Around Perpendicular Point and we wish we had paddled on another 15 minutes last night. These idyllic beaches would have made great campsites. We stop at the end of Kowhai Beach behind Grenville Point and climb the sand dunes for a look up Great Exhibition Bay. The shining silica sand at the Parengarenga Harbour mouth on the horizon is our destination for the day. Seems a lot of beach. Looking back over our shoulders across Rangaunu Bay, Cape Karikari is relatively close. Around Grenville Point we find a huge tunnel which we watch for a few minutes before deciding its OK to pass through. Although directly in line with the incoming swells, it was large enough to remain calm inside.

I had thought that Great Expedition Bay was one long beach, but stretches of rocky cliffs break up the beach and the journey up it.

The water is very clear, you can see your own shadow although there is no detail visible on the sea floor. I wonder if the clarity is due to the fine silica sand that quickly settles to the bottom. Approaching Parengarenga harbour, Wally spots a couple of sharks but they aren't interested in us. The shipwrecks on the bar are visible on the low tide. They used to be visible on all tides but the sand is slowly swallowing them up. The harbour entrance is a mass of white water so we sneak through on the inside of the bar and camp above the beach at the entrance. Its another cloudless night with a young moon, the sky is a blanket of stars. I'll have to send a thankyou note to the weather gods.

Thursday morning throws a south-easterly at us and the sea is a mess. We can make out a passage of unbroken water up the northern bank and decide to try breaking out on the incoming tide so in case of trouble we'll be washed back. The going is slower than we expected, and eventually, a breaking swell invites me for a swim. Back in the boat we try again for a few minutes before opting to return to the start point. It only takes 5 minutes to get back over ground that took an hour to get past.

We decide to stay put for the day and have a scone making contest. Wally wins easily with the sly addition of some sugar to his recipe. A walk after lunch along the beach into the harbour allows us to contact coastguard from a high point and we run into a mare and her foal. From their tracks, they appear unshod and must wander unchecked.

We decide to try getting out tomorrow via the same route at low tide if the conditions permit, otherwise it will be a day exploring the harbour. The forecast is for easterlies to continue, which bodes well for the coast past North Cape.

If we can get there.

To take advantage of the light airs and low tide we are on the water at 7:30. The seas are much gentler than yesterday and there are no problems getting out this time.

There is some rocky coastline before the white sand of Waikuku Beach and we make a stop at the northern end

of the beach where there are reports of a waterfall and a good water supply. Landing in light surf, we surprise four holidaymakers from Kerikeri. They are camping next to a doc hut used by possum trappers. The hut is available for rent if you are persistent enough to find someone at DOC who knows it exists. A permit is needed to use the road that accesses the hut, and is about an hours dusty drive. Tom Bowling Bay is only a couple of km overland and that is where they have just been exploring.

There is no stock around, its all bush, and the electrified possum fence that cuts across to Tom Bowling Bay protecting North Cape discourages us from going further upstream in search of the waterfall. The same hoof prints here that we saw in Parengarenga Harbour show how far the horses domain extends. We continue on up to North Cape accompanied by stories of huge seas and fearsome standing waves. I'm a little nervous as we approach the first of the Capes at the top of New Zealand. The stories are all vile propaganda (today anyway) and there is only a small chop in the gentle easterlies. There is a boulder bank joining Titirangi Point and Murimotu Island that dries at low tide. We stopped here for lunch and relaxed as the sun warmed the pebble beach. The rising tide allowed us to paddled out through the rocks, avoiding anything nasty outside the island. A large seal floating on its side didn't look in the best of health as we departed.

The Surville Cliffs along to Kerr Point remind us of the North-east coastline of the Coromandel Peninsula with its dark cliffs topped with short scrub. Tom Bowling Bay is another corker, deserted today with a pagoda at the end of the beach marking the private campground. The breeze at our backs and the rising tide push us into Spirits Bay where we pause beside a large catamaran from the Waikato, "Katipo", to ask for a weather report. We get a reply of more light Easterlies turning South-east along with some kingfish steaks and a couple of brews from their home town. The coastguard has been on the job and had let them know we were in the area.

Tapotupotu Bay is about 10km further on the map and that becomes our destination for the day. The tide has turned and we are about to be taught a lesson on the strength of the tidal stream across the top of the North Island. Progress is slow against the tide, and we arrive at the end of a to long 12 hour day on the water. The tide here moves west on a rising tide, and east on a falling tide. After experiencing the hard way the strength of the flow, we planned our future days taking this more into account. There is not much light left on arrival, so camp is set up quickly, and the cold showers made use of before getting down to some serious eating. The swarms of mosquitos are out in the dusk and also into some serious eating - us - and the insect repellent gets liberal use.

A pod of dolphins choose this beach to play in as the sun drops, and provide a show for all the weekend visitors.

Saturday is a rest and research day. Walking the track to Cape Reinga allows us to spy a likely route on the water. The Cape is visited by a continuous stream of people arriving over dusty roads by bus, car and motorbike. I wonder how many realise that this is not the top of New Zealand, the Surville Cliffs we passed yesterday holding that distinction. Views toward North Cape to the east, and Cape Maria Van Dieman to the west, are impressive. Walking back along the road, we catch a glimpse of the sand dunes on 90 mile beach, and they look big from here.

Mike is the doc ranger we run into back at Tapotupotu Bay. He is also a paddler and we find some mutual acquaintances from the Auckland canoe scene. He is a good source of tips for the upcoming passage around Capes Reinga and Maria Van Dieman. Taking a day to research the capes has proved valuable. I hope that using such a great day for this doesn't come back to bite us tomorrow with a change in conditions.

We wake to clear skies and a gentle breeze and head off to Cape Reinga at low water. More nerves following the route we marked out yesterday, but there are no problems. The weather gods are being nice to us again - thanks guys.

Te Werahi Beach runs between Cape Reinga and Cape Maria Van Dieman and looks as good from water level as it did from the lighthouse yesterday. The sand dunes look just as big as well. The 200-300M gap between Cape Maria Van Dieman and Motuopao Island gets a lot of water passing through it, running up to 12 knots. Being closer to low tide, its not at peak flow, but the tide race still make the water a mess. The flow takes us through quickly and we land around the corner behind Taupiri Island in dumping surf. Wally makes a sacrificial offering of thanks with his hat.

Walking over the dunes back to Te Werahi Beach takes us over sand that is not the same white silica we have seen up to here. There is a lot of finely broken shell mixed in and the spine tingling squeak is absent..

Back at the boats we erect a fly for shade using timber gathered from the dunes. Pieces of 100mm x 100mm 2meters long are 20 vertical feet above the water and 50 feet back from the high tide mark. Wouldn't want to be here in the conditions that put the wood up there. Lunch and slothfulness are in order here as we wait for the tide to turn. Its a nice way to spend a few hours on a sunny day.

We launch just before high tide in order to make Cape Maria Van Dieman at slack water. Wally points out that I'm missing my spare split paddles from the back deck. The surf has ripped them off and spat them back up on the beach, and no, I didn't leave them there! Its a good chance for more surf landing and break-out practice. The wind has died and the lack of tidal flow through the gap results in glassy water all the way back to cape Reinga. Only the 1-2m swell passing under us provides any water movement. There is a slight chop around Cape

Reinga again, but Wallys earlier hat sacrifice works a treat. A brief stop back at Tapotupotu Bay, where the weekend warriors have all scarpered, before continuing on to Spirits Bay. We saw a couple of likely **campsites** on the way in

and this proves to be the case. A spot near the start of the Spirits Bay - Cape Reinga track is lovely. A stream mixes with the tide forming a pool and is turned into a warm bath by the days sunshine.

Another early start is required in an attempt to make high tide at Parengarenga Harbour. A gentle headwind on the last of the outgoing tide persuades us to head directly across Spirits Bay to make the most of the current. Paddling out to sea rather than along the coast is a different experience. You get a changed view of bird life with shearwaters close in flight or sitting on the surface, and small flocks of gannets are not uncommon. By Hopes Point, its clear we aren't going to make it in time so its into the shoreline to reduce the effects of the wind and the changed tide.

Taking a break on a small sandy beach just past Tom Bowling Bay we decide to wait and time it so the tide will be slack around North Cape. Around the Surville Cliffs and North Cape, the shore is on our right, and open ocean is everywhere else. With water on three sides as far as the eye can see, you feel very insignificant. Surf is breaking onto the rocks in the gap we passed through on the way North, and using it again is not an option from this direction. We keep well offshore in choppy seas and make a nervous passage around North Cape, not really knowing what to expect and without the benefit of a preview as we had with Cape Reinga and Cape Maria Van Dieman.

Once around into the lee, we pause for a breather in the flat calm before carrying on down to Waikuku Beach to camp the night before attempting the Parengarenga Harbour entrance tomorrow morning at low tide. The familiar three resident horses provide a welcoming committee when we land but they must have other engagements as they are soon off. Following the stream in search of the reputed pool and waterfall takes us along a path that has been used before. The pool is about 10m across and too deep to see the bottom of the very clear water. The waterfall comes from another smaller pool about 4m above it and, its bracing! Clean and refreshed, its a lazy evening in the sunshine.

Tuesday morning we are able to dawdle down to Parengarenga Harbour to catch slackwater at low tide. The aim is to sneak in the same way we got out. Its a flat calm day with blue skies and a 1-2m swell. In spite of the outside conditions there is still plenty of white water at the entrance and we have to dodge breakers as we pick our way in.

The shipwrecks on the foaming bar, looking out over the calm blue Pacific provide a symbolic picture. Pulling up on Kokota (the sandspit), we walk to the top of the dunes to get a view of the harbour mouth. Our route this morning is a mass of white caps. Not the way we would choose if deciding from the view. The main channel is clear out to sea for about a kilometre. Over the second line of dunes we expect to see more of the same but its a shock. A sand plain stretches down and across the spit. The sand dunes are just an empty egg shell. Up until 1999-2000, all glass in New Zealand was made from the silica sand taken from this spit. Visiting barges would pump water onto the dunes and suck up the slurry. From our vantage point we can see another tan coloured hump on the skyline. We guess it is a dune on 90 mile Beach, only around 12km away at this point. We paddle with the tide to Te Hapua and phone for a ride home. Te Hapua is a town of 200 with forestry, oyster farming and farm labouring providing the main employment. The school of 38 children up to form 2 is the last school before Australia. Most of the land is Maori owned and residents are leasehold. There are only a couple of freehold properties and the residents feel this has stifled any growth in the area. Trying to follow the topo map to the Waitaki stream proves a fruitless exercise and we end up a creek to nowhere with barely enough room to make a U-turn. Retracing our steps we ask for directions (as any male would). When we eventually find the stream we still couldn't relate its position to the map. (read - the map is wrong!)

Following the creek to where the landing is marked, there is nothing to indicate a landing, so some ineffectual paddling back and forth lead us to a road bridge crossing the stream. Its labelled Waitaki Landing Bridge so we figure we are close. Wandering up the road we find the landing and they point us the creek access. 200m down a grass track to the stream, there is still no indication of a landing. Don't try and find it from the water! Its about 4km up the creek, 50m back from the overhead power lines. Get out where you can on the North bank. Best bet is to go by road and ask at the petrol station for the creek. Once there, the showers are good, and we can cook in a kitchen for the first time in a while. The mosquitos are rife here after dark as well.

Dick arrives early Wednesday morning to ferry us back to Tauranga Bay. A relaxing day followed by dinner at the local establishment before heading home the following morning round off an excellent trip.

Thanks to Kerry Howe, Etienne de Beer and Mark Hutson for sharing their experiences of the area.

Special thanks to Dick and Mary Hughes for their hospitality, taxi and car sitting services.

And a final thankyou to the weather gods, who made the travels into an area that can be impossible, a pleasure.

The Ebb and Flow

By Roger Lomas

With the clubs 50th coming up next year it's perhaps timely to have a quick look at a slice of club history. We started life as the Auckland Canoe Club in 1954 and our clubrooms were in a small upstairs room in Swanson Street. This was a photographer's studio, which was rented for one night a week to hold club meetings. Perhaps the club grew quickly because it soon required a move uptown to another upstairs rented room. This time the premises were just off Elliot Street about where the Aotea Centre now stands. The next move was to a more spacious warehouse facility in Federal Street and old club members fondly recount of happy times here. The rented venue became a centre for off water club activities with keen members meeting, eating and sleeping over as they built kayaks and friendships. (The Sky City Casino now engulfs this area.) The lure of coastal clubrooms took the club out of the city centre and over to the Point Chevalier Yacht Club where a shared venture had been negotiated. This was not to prove a happy union with the canoe club members being treated as the poor cousins. We did like being beside the sea though and when a more comfortable arrangement was found with our present companions the club moved to Okahu Bay. Kayak storage at Okahu Bay was for some years inside two shipping containers but when the opportunity to convert part of the old "R" class building into a storage locker arrived we moved. Today its about as good as it gets with the comfortable clubrooms upstairs (again) above Fergs Kayak Shop and our well equipped storage locker down on the launch ramp.

Another sea kayak is to go on display in a place of honour at our Maritime Museum on the Hobson Wharf. One of the three Polar Bears used by the Kiwi Antarctic Peninsula Expedition will be presented to the museum shortly. It will compliment Paul Caffyn's Nordkapp, which was presented for display last century. That should make some members gasp, because they escorted Paul on Isadora's final voyage.

The custom built Polar Bears were produced by Paddling Perfection at their No. 7 Subulite Road factory in Kelston. If you are out that way call in and inspect their new kayak chandlery. Replacement items and accessories for their craft are available and they carry out modifications, repairs and overhauls. Composite kayak owners might be interested in one of their very comprehensive repair kits, which are available for Kevlar or fibreglass craft. Large numbers of their new sea kayaks have been exported to Australia lately.

Making a journey in the opposite direction will be Ian Smeeton's new Aussie craft. A Mirage 580. This new kayak will double the Mirage fleet owned by our members and will bring a cheery smile to Rob Gardner's dial. Rob is currently incarcerated at Waiouru.

Talking about Paul Caffyn earlier. How many people can put up their hand and say they have completed two circumnavigations with the "Lanky Legend"? It appears that a group paddle with Paul at the recent Rotorua KASK Forum did venture around an island or two on their lake excursion. Brian Strid was amongst those elite paddlers.

Leave your maps at home. A large sign has been erected at the southern end of Motuihe Island indicating the way back to Auckland. Gerard Fagan spotted it from his Safari and suspects it's a case of "blatant highway robbery".

Mr Barracuda, Gordon Robinson has been a busy boy up at his Silverdale factory lately. A new Trans Atlantic rowing boat has been prepared for the ocean challenge later this year and the prototype four man Tasman Navigator has been out on the water for sea trials. Rob Hamill is organising a race across the ditch in March 2005 with teams competing in identical 10.6m craft. The other new product released this month is the Barracuda wing blades that feature braided carbon fibre shafts. Call into Fergs Kayaks to see them.

A good place to try out your racy wing bladed paddles will be at the annual Cambridge – Hamilton river race next month. Peter and Su at the Canoe Centre have been working hard to make the event attractive to the once a year

racing brigade. There are going to be some good grudge matches between the Sea Bears and the Expeditions, and the Puffins and the Storms. Wolfgang will be on hand at Hamilton to revive you with tasty treats from his mobile oven. It's got to be worth the price of the entry.

Well done to Fergs Kayaks for their very successful Rangitoto Race last month. Choppy conditions on the day provided a challenge for the 50 plus paddlers. A good entry came from the club and this was rewarded with some fine placing's. Bernard Moyerson in a Slingshot won the composite sea kayak division with Jimmy Thompson the victor in the plastic division in his storm. Jonathon Jarvis and Denise Young cruised to victory in the veteran mixed doubles and over on the short course Rosie Thom won the women's veteran sea kayak race and John Hieatt won the men's veteran plastic race. Loads of spot prizes and good refreshments were served up to the competitors who all appeared to have had a good time for their \$5 entry. A great race that will boom next year when the good news gets around.

The Auckland Canoe Centre was being very up front when they promoted the Super Hooters buoyancy vest (the name says it all) on the e-mail chat line recently. One mystified male was heard to muse, " Why duplicate what Mother Nature has already provided for."

Have you noticed the sign on the end of the Devonport Naval Wharf? You will have to close to within 20 metres of it to learn that you must stay 200 metres away from it. Not to worry, if you have poor eyesight and somehow miss it and you venture past the warning zone you will be treated to a very impressive display of naval semaphore from a rather agitated petty officer.

Strange nocturnal happenings. Question: A. Why did Brian Strid sleep on the wharf at Rangitoto Island? Nearly everyone else slept in the visitor's shelter. B. Why did the President sleep in the scout bach on his own? C. Why did people flee into the night from the bunkroom that Philip Noble slept in at Tiri?

Answers: A. Brian is like that. B. Matt had a secret stash of cheesecake. C. Philip snores and fellow roommates have now placed his name on the endangered species list.

Scrambled eggs for breakfast! It must have been a strong wind that blew Henrietta the Hen over to Browns Island last month. She joined some early morning kayakers for breakfast and then happily clucked of to peck with the pukekos.

It's all hands on deck for the next months working bee at Club Mahurangi. Stephanie Seager has a long list of chores for you to get started on. Don't even think about giving our school maam any lip either or you will be sent to stand in a corner, probably with a paintbrush in your hand. A sub committee is tying up all the loose ends with the A.R.C. people and the current club committee has given the project the green light to proceed. It's now up to us.

Winds Up !!

Lindsay Sandes

The call came in from Matt Grant...easterly winds gusting at Bean Rock and I have a leave pass for a few hours. Saturday lattes or paddling....say no more.

Matt, Mike & I met for an hour of thrilling paddling from Okahu Bay to Bean Rock on a recent Saturday morning. 50 minutes to reach Bean Rock, 10 minutes to surf back and land at Okahu Bay. Wow !! The buzz of the wind and spray screaming off the bow as we surfed down the swells was amazing.

Sea kayaking on smooth seas is good, however nothing compares to challenging yourself in tough conditions and putting all those brace strokes and survival skills to the test - naturally followed by a latte at the Bays.



Tiritiri Island

Reading Group

On Saturday 22 March a group of us were sharing a before dinner drink in the scout hut on Rangitoto Island. The topic of books came up and it was suggested that what would be nice is for the club to have a reading group. Stephanie, Judith and Vincent have agreed to take on the task of organising the group. If you are a bit of a bookworm and enjoy reading and talking about good books and want to participate, please email Vincent to receive more information. vincent.maire@xtra.co.nz

New Members

The Committee extends a warm welcome to our new members...

Glenn Berry	Peter Bull	David & Susan Cairns	Murray Davidson
Rebecca Godfrey	Nigel Harper	Helen Orchard	Evan & Linda Pugh
Michael & Michele Scarr/Moore		Neville Williams	Claire O'Connor

Deadline for next month's newsletter: 7 May 2003

Start writing your articles now.

Send articles to: IanCalhaem@xtra.co.nz



Sender: Auckland Canoe Club, PO Box 147-282, Ponsonby, Auckland