

Newsletter



March 2005

Highlights in this issue

BIG day out at Muriwai

Ever popular Poet's Corner

Kevin does it with one arm!

Tiritiri Matangi revealed

URGU speaks again, unfortunately

Full-on March events programme

But wait, there's more!

Editorial

Many thanks to those who said they enjoyed the last newsletter. It's a pleasure to be an editor when people send in such good copy. And there's more in this issue, featuring a special report on a rather **BIG** day out at Muriwai. Some spoke of 'carnage', others thought it was a 'picnic'. Read and see what you think! And speaking of carnage, Kevin Dunsford gets himself into trouble on an overnighter, and then single-handedly gets himself out again.

The Auckland summer finally got underway later in January, and some more normal sea kayaking became possible once more. But it has required a lot of relearning to manage calm seas, warmth and stillness again! I've even managed to get out fishing from my kayak near the Browns Bay Reef but the snapper are very small. The pressure from 'recreational' (ha, ha) fishing in the inner Gulf is now enormous - and invariably I spy illegal set nets and long lines close in by local east coast beaches. Perhaps as sea kayakers we should be more active in reporting such things.

Easter is fast approaching, yee ha! There are two Club outings. Read about them in this issue.

This Newsletter contains a couple of incremental format improvements. There is a new Events Calendar Summary which means that you can instantly see what is coming up and when on a single chronological list, and then you can read the follow-up details.

However, the Club also has an updated on-line calendar of events. Make sure that you automatically receive its email messages. See the website for receiving email news inside the back cover of this Newsletter. The on-line system can offer much more flexibility about announcing planned trips than is possible in a monthly newsletter.

And the longstanding Pres Sez column is renamed. If it's good enough for George Bush and Don Brash to have State of the Nation Addresses, then it's good enough for our Club President too.

Also Newsletters will now appear at the beginning of each month. **Copy deadline is 25th of each month.**

Please remember to contribute to this newsletter. There's plenty of good copy about at present, but the winter months are always leaner and I'd like to have good material stored up for those times.

Kerry Howe

Trip reports

Muriwai special report :

BIG day out



1. The Gods Must Be Angry

M@ Crozier

Colin was just coming up from the beach - 'Well, it's a little bigger than I'd hoped...'

Colin had been watching the weather over the last week or so, as a consistent prolonged easterly wind flow usually means a diminished westerly swell on the west coast - ideal for exploring some of the biggest sea caves the North Island has to offer. The impromptu call was put out on the Club email event reminders on Friday as Sunday was looking good for this short window of opportunity.

The swell forecast Sunday morning was 2-3 feet. When I arrived at Muriwai, Colin was just coming up from the beach - 'Well, it's a little bigger than I'd hoped, but I believe it's manageable', he said with that sly grin I couldn't quite interpret. I was impressed to see that seventeen suckers had heeded the call at such short notice. We lined the kayaks along the beach and looked 'up' to the distant breakers as Colin gave encouraging words about the basics of launching through surf. Once the spectators had made themselves comfortable, the more experienced kayakers pushed the others out into the surf - it's all about timing. This may have seemed kindness, but experienced kayakers know you can learn a lot by

studying the guinea pigs. The entertainment value is better back on the beach, and it kept them busy for the hour it took before everyone was out past the breakers. It became apparent that the duration of periodic lulls wasn't long enough to ensure a completely dry break out - something was going to get you somewhere along the line. So the tactic was changed to fire at will and attack the lulls at closer quarters.

The sea was quite calm as we congregated on the outside. A detour to check out the seals at Oaia Island was in order, before heading south to Raetahinga Point where we could see the towering arches in the cliff. Colin, Ryan and Trevor snuck in a cove to investigate the first of these. This clearly angered the gods who sent in the first of the huge rollers we were to encounter at infrequent intervals for the rest of the day. One wonders if the swell forecaster casually slipped feet for metres in his report. Luckily the cove was very deep right up to the cliff - the rollers didn't break until reaching the face, allowing the inquisitors to skip a one-way ride to the rocks. It was enough, though, for the trio to demonstrate a rescue of kayaker and craft out of the zone.

Paddling on the other side of O'Neill Bay to investigate another huge cavern within Erangi Point, Colin, Brian, and Lindsay paddled inside. Neptune was outraged! Allowing just enough time for the bystanders to retreat, his monsters would break level with the entrance - a good 300 metres from shore. Quite atypically, their bite did not penetrate the haven as the trespassers watched them barking at the door, waiting for them to disperse before gingerly sneaking out.



Lindsay Sandes investigates
(photo - Strid)

Colin went to investigate his 'St Heliers' landing just inside Kotau Point, but today it was heavily guarded. We would just have to raft up and have lunch on the sea. Those needing a stretch (or to retrieve their lunch from the internal hatch behind the backrest) would have to exit. Those prone to the slight loll of the sea while stationary would begin to feel top-heavy. Time soon enough to head back and face our fate, which we could see, even at this distance, as a white haze along Muriwai Beach. We found the grandad

tunnel of them all, passing right through Tirikohua Point which we missed on the way down. Right on cue, the gods made it clear that no one was welcome as we approached.

We finally arrived back outside the surf zone from where we left. The lifeguards had set up a narrow swimming lane, allowing us more easily to avoid any 'obstructions' by staying clear. I put on my goggles, knowing full well that I was tempting fate. The outer breakers had already claimed one or two prey, who had a long swim back to shore. Alison and I timed the outer breakers well and it looked all clear ahead - almost too easy. But the break behind was in hot pursuit and would not let us get away without a fight. But I was steaming. I was going to try and surf this wave rather than broach it - why not, I always do! I always fall for it too. Up goes the stern - down ploughs the bow - here comes the jolt - flip - twist - splat. I roll up and the next one's already got me in a broach - ok, I'll settle for that. I catch up with Alison on shore, who's beaming with a 2/2 launch/landing.

There is very seldom an unsuccessful trip. Despite not seeing the grand caves, or firing up the billy for lunch, there is a lot to take away from this trip - and I'm still buzzing. Thanks Colin, for putting it together and providing encouraging leadership. We've got some unfinished business on this coast.

2. Kayaking school at Muriwai

Colin Quilter

Everyone had a story of near-failure or near-success.

A fine, calm summer morning at Muriwai Beach. Two surprises for the trip organiser (me): firstly that a last-minute email invitation has attracted eighteen kayakers. Secondly that the swell (said to be '2 to 3 feet and easing' on the Wavetrack Surf Report that morning) is obviously somewhat bigger than advertised. However the lifeguard on duty above the beach is unworried, agrees with my choice of launching spot, and says they will keep an eye on us. It's a good chance to encounter real waves with back-up available if needed.

The waves are breaking on an outer bar perhaps 200 metres offshore, then re-forming to break again closer to the beach. There are long flat periods between the big sets, but we quickly find that if you wait on the beach for a calm patch, by the time you've paddled out as far as the main break the next big set has arrived. Best thing is just to launch at random, get out as close as possible to the main break and wait there for a flat

spot. So we all set off in ones and twos. Some make it first time, others are knocked over, float back to the beach with or without their kayak, and try again. Gradually the successful ones gather in a group a safe distance offshore.



Oaia Island
(photo - Strid)

Everyone had a story to tell. Mine was three trips in and out, trying to keep track of who was where. It's a bit of a worry with a big party, some on the beach, some half a kilometre offshore, and others paddling or swimming in between. After nearly an hour we have 17 safely off the beach and one (after a determined attempt followed by a long swim) deciding that a picnic on Muriwai might be preferable to more swimming among the waves.

Conditions were ideal offshore. We first visited the fur seals at Oaia Island. They seemed unperturbed by a large group of kayakers. Some sun-bathed on rocky ledges, others played in the water alongside. I noticed that the seals in the water stayed very close to the island, practically touching the rocks, right in among the kelp and never venturing out into open water. I wonder if they fear big fishes with sharp teeth?

We paddled south in flat calm conditions. It's an impressive coast, all the more so with the swell booming onto the rocks and a sea mist rising from broken water. There's a long tunnel through the headland north of O'Neills Beach. Trevor, Ryan and I paddled in to see if it was passable, but the arrival of a big set persuaded us to retreat to deep water in a hurry. In the midst of this Ryan capsized close to the rocks but fortunately a lull before the next set allowed us to tow him clear and help him back into his boat.

At Erangi Point I was disappointed to find that most of the caves were made impassable by the swell. Some of us were able to enter an enormous tunnel which pierces the headland, but other parts of the labyrinth were too dangerous to enter. There's a little cove near the caves which on previous trips has given us a lunch spot with a flat-calm landing; that too was being swept by surf so we rafted up some distance offshore for lunch afloat. I realised with sorrow that this set a new precedent for the club; a trip on which there was not

even a landing for lunch and a pee; but the group was too polite to complain. Perhaps it had something else on their minds.

The landing at Muriwai went according to expectations. At low tide the waves were dumping sharply on the outer bar with shallow broken water inshore. We all got ashore within minutes. Some paddled ashore, others swam. Everyone had a story of near-failure or near-success. With everyone safely back on the beach, I was a happy paddler.



Shark bait seals?
(photo- Strid)

Lessons learned

From my point of view as the organiser of the trip, I learned:

- Don't trust the surf report. Next time I'll drive out the beach at dawn and make a decision about whether or not to run the trip on the beach. On the other hand, if I'd done that on Sunday I would still have continued. It was a great chance to get experience in real waves under the eye of surf lifeguards.
- At the place we chose to launch, I expected that the rip current would carry any capsized kayakers out to calmer water offshore. That didn't happen. They drifted ashore quite quickly, which was probably a good thing.
- I spent half an hour paddling in the surf zone trying to encourage and keep track of kayakers, but that was probably not helpful. If they were going to make it they would make it without me, and if they capsized then I couldn't approach them safely in the surf without risking damage to boats and people.
- This trip reinforced my opinion that paddle floats are a worthless method of self-rescue. They may succeed in calm water with plenty of time available. In rough water, under pressure of time (as in surf) they always fail. I don't think anybody even attempted to use a paddle float on Sunday. Those of us with reliable eskimo rolls used them and recovered instantly; those without could only swim or drift to the beach.

• Finally, there were times during the day when I doubted the wisdom of going ahead with the trip. But most of the risk occurred launching and landing at Muriwai, with surf lifeguards available on the beach and in inflatables. Though conditions looked a bit intimidating, it was a chance for club members to gain personal experience in rough water, and to test their own limits. It is not often that we get the chance to do this in relative safety. When I think back over my own kayaking career, occasions like this have been by far the most valuable experiences. I come away from them knowing what skills I have to gain, what techniques succeed and what fail, and with a realistic appreciation of just how powerful - and dangerous - the ocean can be. If others on Sunday also had that experience, maybe we can count the trip as a success.

Tall tales and true

Of slings and things

Kevin Dunsford

Then I had to tie the knot at the back of my neck - with one hand. They never tell you how to do this on a first aid course.

I think I'm going to pass out I thought. I remember wondering, as I fell, if I was above the high tide mark. These thoughts occurred to me as I struck my head against the hard rock of the beach. Just before, I was attempting to lift and slide my loaded kayak up over the rocks to the top of the beach, past the high tide mark. Legs astride the cockpit, I would lift the heavy kayak by the front top of the cockpit and slide it forward 10cm at a time. But a rock under my left foot must have given way as I pushed, and down I went, head first onto the rocks to the left of the kayak.

Lying crumpled on the rocks, my next memory was of a strange detached feeling. I moved my hand to my forehead; fully expecting to feel the warm, thick wetness of blood, but in the dark it seemed to be dry. Phew, I thought. That could have been bad! And then it hit, a stabbing pain, right through my right arm. I knew instantly the trip was finished. Gingerly, I felt up the arm for any protruding bone. I'm not sure how I would have coped if I had found some but, thankfully, there was none. I thought it was probably broken, maybe in two places, as it would not move and there was swelling and pain below the elbow and the main

muscle above the elbow looked like it belonged to Popeye and was completely rigid.

I knew I would need help. I was on a remote island and I would not be paddling anywhere for the foreseeable future. It was almost completely dark. My options? I could ring 111 or the Coast Guard on the cell phone, or a marine radio I was carrying, but I could not see a boat landing on the rocky beach in the dark. It occurred to me that I was not bleeding so there was no danger to life, only limb. Or I could camp the night and worry about the problem in the morning. This last option appealed to me the most. So I set about getting dry and creating shelter.

One handed, I unloaded the boat and took the gear up to a camp spot. Now why didn't I do this in the first place? I think my reasoning was there were only a couple of metres of rocks to get the kayak over due to the very high tide. I even had a pair of kayak wheels in the back hatch! Next, I'm ashamed to admit, I just dragged the empty kayak, single handed (forgive the pun) over the rocks to the camp spot. That done it was time to get into dry clothes. Have you ever tried to get undressed and redressed with one arm in a rigid right angle, knowing that if you alter this angle you'll be punished with a searing pain?



self-portrait
(photo with no hands!)

I opened the first aid kit, which I always carry on every trip, and got out a triangular arm bandage. I tried it this way and that way but for the life of me couldn't remember how I had learnt to arrange it on the first aid course just over two and a half years ago. (Yes, I'm an expired first-aider.) In the end I settled on an odd shaped affair that seemed to support the arm. Then I had to tie the knot at the back of my neck - with one hand. They never tell you how to do this on a first aid course. In the end I had to remove the triangular bandage, tie the knot with one hand and teeth, then put it back on again. Next time my first aid kit will have a pre-knotted triangular bandage. To keep the arm rigid against my body I tried to wind an elastic bandage right round my upper body over the bandaged arm. It's worth trying this at home; with one hand it's not as easy as you may think. I thought about taking a painkiller or anti-inflammatory but decided against it at this stage.

First aid taken care of, it was now time for shelter. For this particular trip I had brought a homemade hammock with built in mossie net and a fly rather than a tent. Erecting all this with one hand was a bit of a mission as you might expect, but eventually it was completed at 10.45pm, an hour and three quarters after I had landed. After ringing home and letting them know the situation, I could not stand the thought of cooking one handed so made do with a couple of glasses of red wine and an apple. I soaked some muesli (in water, I might add) so I would have nourishment ready in the morning without needing to cook. Who knew what the morning might bring.



Kev's MASH unit
(photo with one hand)

That night was comfortable in the hammock but there was not much sleep until early morning. My wristwatch alarm went off at 6.45am but there was no sun yet on this side of the beach. The thought of having to decide what to do resulted in another hour of sleep. When I awoke again and turned on the cell phone there was a message from my wife who had arranged for a nephew to pick me up in his 18-foot bright red fishing machine, complete with 70hp outboard. An hour later there they were. We loaded the gear into his boat and took the kayak in tow - for a while. At 10 knots the towed kayak was like a guided missile. Once it selected a track, it stuck to it. It shot out to port and then out to starboard, almost passing us at one time. We slowed down to a crawl and still the tow was unsuccessful. In the end we loaded it across the back of the boat and came back at a respectable old man's walking pace, which suited me just fine.

An interesting Sunday was spent in the emergency clinic and at radiography and Monday at the physio where I learnt four things. One, the arm is not broken. Two, based on me not remembering any pain in the arm that obviously did the damage the physio reckons I could have been unconscious for some time, probably minutes with a memory loss (not a pleasant thought when kayaking alone); three, the arm will still take some while to fix; and four, well, according to the physio at least, I'm not as young as I used to be and should know it.

Thinking back on the whole episode, trying to drag a loaded kayak, in the dark, over rocks was a bloody

stupid thing to do. Although I think I had everything required to successfully mitigate the actual consequences, I have to ask my self what could have happened. Once I started falling, I had lost control of the situation. Any consequences were in the lap of the gods.

In summary, I would have to add that if a solo paddler goes to an offshore island or remote site, they have to be totally responsible for their own safety. Even a brief day trip can turn into an overnighter, or longer if you drop your cell phone in the drink. More importantly, the solo paddler needs to remain aware of, and manage, all potential risks to avoid losing control of the situation, as happened in this case.

Book review

Tiritiri Matangi, A Model of Conservation, by Anne Rimmer, Tandem Press, \$39.95

Rimmer's book traces the story of an island that has long been regarded as an emblem of the Hauraki Gulf. As she shows, Tiri is now something far more than a mere emblem. It is an inspirational place that illustrates just what is possible when humans work together to restore the natural world. Equally successful as a coffee table book to dip into or an informative and entertaining read, this book should be welcomed by anyone with the slightest interest in the Hauraki Gulf - especially sea kayakers.

Most kayakers regard Tiri as a cherished destination in a gulf of treasures and *Tiritiri Matangi* can only add to our appreciation of the island's human and natural history, making future visits an even richer experience. Generously illustrated and written with humour and a light touch, the book tells a chronological story, with insets providing extra details and tidbits about birds, people and events.

The island's lighthouse keeping years are engagingly recounted and often tell the stories behind many of the island's features. Kayaker lovers of the island's eastern shore will be interested to learn that Chinaman's Bay was named after the 1883 wreck of the *SS Triumph*. The captain steered rather too accurately for the Tiri light and ended up on the Pinnacles rocks. During the two month salvage operation, the officers retired to Auckland City while the Chinese crew was left to camp on the beach.

The second part of the book covers the remarkable story of the Tiri restoration project - perhaps a story we all think we already know. The detail makes it even more fascinating as Rimmer covers the years from the

1970s when university students and staff first went to Tiri for research (there is an amusing telling of the tensions between students and one lighthouse keeper). Eventually, the farsighted suggestion by John Craig and Neil Mitchell that the island be replanted as an 'open sanctuary' was taken up. Overcoming the naysayers - 'rare species and the public don't mix' - the Tiri project gained a momentum of its own as conservation and community groups and the wider public all clamoured to play their part. The story is a fascinating combination of a journey into the unknown, using trial and error, and of the determination of ordinary people to help with conservation.

Maori tradition casts Tiri as 'one of the floats of an ancestral fishing net.' This could also be the view from a sea kayak. Perhaps we are the lucky ones, able to travel quietly and at will to Tiri and those other floats in the Hauraki fishing net - Motutapu, Motuihe, Motuora. All these are following in Tiri's footsteps and sea kayakers will selfishly wish and work for the same phenomenal success. Anne Rimmer's text sings sweetly of affection for Tiri, an affection that is widely held. This is a book that would give anyone pleasure - especially those with a love of islands, the sea, the Hauraki Gulf - that sounds like the definition of a sea kayaker!

Debbie Dunsford

URGU speaks

URGU presents a mix of views, news, gossip, scandal and both sound and questionable advice. Contributions welcome, especially if they are salacious. Readers who correctly identify URGU will go into a draw to be shot, or into a drawer to be shut.

URGU's Law

URGU and Mrs Uргу are not averse to doing it in different positions. Recently they reversed roles and SHE now sits in the back. Being a classic Alpha Male URGU is having trouble adjusting to this surrendering of roles, but as yet, has not succumbed to counselling. However, URGU has discovered that for reasons yet to be explained, being in the front is quite different to being in the back. To begin with the kayak seems to move much faster and secondly, paddling effort seems twice that of the rear cockpit. Can this phenomenon be explained using classic Newtonian physics? Maybe in the Year of Physics some clever person will quantify and clarify URGU's Law.

National Radio gives a Bugger Report

While doodling between mid-summer assignments URGU heard on National Radio news a report of a sea kayaker going astray on Milford Sound. URGU was

aware of the trip and looks forward very much to the unexpurgated Bugger Report. The lady concerned was called Giselle and URGU wonders if it was the lovely Giselle who was part of the January Northland expedition. According to the nation's most left wing news service, Giselle became separated from the group and was found some hours later some miles from base camp.

MIA

Whatever happened to Harley Wilson, Maurice Hanvey, Glyn Dickson, Dan Hawthorne, Oreste Pinto, Joan Williams, Jonathan Iles, Joyce & Alan Singleton, Mike Swift, Jan Rivers, Marcel Horvath, Scott Barnes, Peter & Stella Lord, Etienne de Beer, Rex Bond, Tom & Lydia Borman, Ray Clark, Rebecca Clay, Roger Crum, John Duncan, Linda Frey, Peter Gendall, Randal & Janet Hart, Bill Hayes, Mike Hayes, Warren Henry, Margaret Thwaites to name just a few of the wonderful people whose company URGU has enjoyed these past 10-15 years or so. More MIA's will be listed in the next issue.

So says URGU.....

Events calendar summary

5 March, **Rangitoto circumnavigation**
5-6 March, **Vine House working bee**
20 March, **Manukau Heads**
22 March, **Guest speaker night**
25-28 March, Easter, **Rawhiti**
25-28 March, Easter, **Kawhia**

Scheduled Club trips

You paddle on Club trips at your own risk. Please be aware of the Club Safety Policy inside back cover.

5 March, Saturday - Rangitoto circumnavigation

Start with a buddy from your favourite launching spot to rendezvous at Mackenzie's Bay by the lighthouse for a 1.45 pm departure for Gardiner Gap. We will be aiming to get to the causeway for a high tide at 3.10 pm. I will be leaving from Narrow Neck beach at 11.45 am, having lunch at Mackenzie's or maybe going for a walk to the summit. I will be taking a portable gas barbie with me to Mackenzies for anyone who would like to cook some meat. You can peel off from the main group at a suitable point to return to your original departure point.

Contact **David Ward**, 445-3639

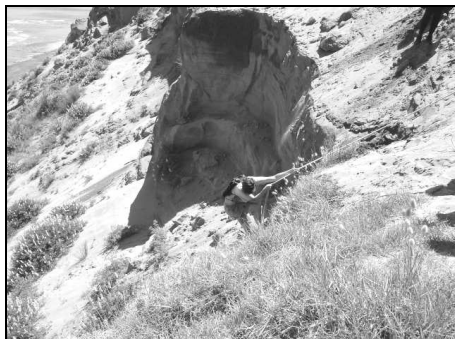
5-6 March, Vine House working bee

We usually take off from Sullivan's Bay. For a map see <http://www.geocities.com/tofska/VineRoute.gif> Vine House is in Lagoon Bay. Just paddle to the green shed at the right hand side of the bay coming in, and walk up the track. It's a twenty minute paddle from Sullivans to Lagoon Bay. Bring a pillow case (probably a roll mat, just in case) and carry bags. Come prepared to get dusty and splashed with paint. Bring along an electric sander if you have one. Also bring \$5 for dinner on Saturday plus your own supplies for the weekend. The high tide is in the afternoon so it is a good idea to have wheels as the estuary is very tidal.

Please phone **Stephanie** to register your interest 09 8345 769

20 March, Manukau Heads.

An old favourite! Meet at Cornwallis Wharf at 9.30am for a 10.00am departure - (remember to allow for Daylight Saving ending today). We will be carried by the ebb tide down to South Head, paddling time about an hour. Then picnic on the grassy slopes below the Signal Station, and take a great walk (including "Rona's Leap") over the headland. If time and weather permit we'll then cross the channel to land at Whatipu, before getting a tide-assisted ride back up the harbour. Return time will be about 6.00pm.



Rona's leap
(photo - Howe)

Bring drinks, snacks, lunch, shoes or sandals, a small day pack or bag to carry your lunch, and a camera. This trip is suitable for intermediate and experienced paddlers; (if in doubt phone Colin to discuss). It is weather-dependent. **If the forecast is poor we'll run an alternative trip in more sheltered waters, therefore all those coming must phone Colin Quilter 630 2219 on Sunday morning between 7.00 and 8.00am to confirm that the trip is on and/or to find out about the alternative.**

25-28 March, Easter Bunny is early this year!

There are two trips.

1. Rawhiti

Rawhiti is a brilliant location in the Bay of Islands! You can bring the whole family. The Bay's famous islands are just offshore. The Rawhiti camp site is available and has plenty of space. The Manager, Louise, says just pitch up and don't worry about booking. Whoever arrives is welcome. Charge is \$10.00 per night for tent site and \$12.00 per night for powered site. The facility is run by a Maori trust and incorporates an on-site marae. However there are no Maori protocols required. You just need to be respectful.



Rawhiti camp is very well appointed with flush loos, hot showers, kitchens, fridges and freezers, laundry, flat mowed lawn, situated directly over the road from the water. Kayaks can be carried or wheeled across the road. The camp is a very short paddle from Urupukapuka and countless other islands. Cape Brett is near for the keener paddlers and there are some awesome walks if the weather is unkind.



Piercy Island, Cape Brett
(photo - Howe)

Bring all your toys; fishing gear, walking boots, petanque, frisbees, balls, etc. This is one trip that you can use your big tent - able to stand up to get dressed, sit in a chair, and sleep in a comfortable bed. Some of us will leave early (4am) Good Friday morning in an endeavour to miss some of the traffic.

Please let **Rona** know if you are interested in our Easter club trip - 834 3399. The Rawhiti camp manager's phone number is (09) 403 7323

2. Kawhia THIS IS NOT YOUR NORMAL KAYAKING WEEKEND

Thursday 24th, after negotiating Auckland's traffic, be prepared to escape and relax. The plan is to head down to my pad at Te Waitere (Kawhia South) and enjoy the area. If people arrive Thursday evening there are six spare beds, room for tents and some spare kayaks.

Friday is planned to head inland to a Natural Limestone Tunnel. This is on Private Property and is an easy 2 & ½ hour walk each way. Great photography and a good day out.

Saturday I'm in the process of trying to get access to the Taharoa Lakes. This is an area where there are two lakes which are joined together by a narrow passage and the third lake is a 30m portage.

Sunday is paddling on the harbour to some great rock formations and relaxing on white sandy beaches.

As always bring good food and wine. Monday we may do a paddle out to the heads and try to explore some of the coast.

There are limited places so first in, first served. Contact **Justin**, 09-278 8090 or 025-868 177

Regular Tuesday evening paddles

Meet at Okahu Bay every Tuesday at 5.30pm, for departure at 5.45. Trips usually last 1-2 hours. All skill levels are catered for. Novice paddlers will have an experienced paddler look after them.

It is a legal requirement for every night paddler to have an all-round white light fixed to a pole at least a metre high, or a large lens (e.g. Dolphin) lamp at hand on deck. No legal light, no paddle. Club boats can be hired at a reduced price.

Regular Saturday morning paddles

Meet at Okahu Bay by 9.00am. The usual trip to Café at Kohi lasts about 2 hours. All skill levels are catered

for. It's a great chance for novice or slow paddlers to mix and mingle with older and/or experienced club members. Club boats can be hired.

Guest speaker night

Tuesday 22 March. Come along to hear our guest speakers, **Andrew Francis and Morgan Lewis recount the voyage of the sailing ship R. Tucker Thompson.** With a crew of club kayakers and their craft on board they headed off for an expedition to the Three Kings Islands.



Meet at our new venue - the Hauraki Kayak Group's clubrooms, at the city end of Coxs Bay. It's a converted boatshed built over the water just off West End Road. This is also a good opportunity to catch up with club gossip and purchase club merchandise, including the new order of club caps, which have just arrived.

Meet at 7pm for a 7.30pm start.
All welcome, refreshments available.
Need more info: **Roger Lomas** 579-8799

President's State of the Club address



Swim escorts

The main features on the calendar in February were the remaining two swim escorts. Thankfully the conditions were wonderful for both events. It was great to see the club come out in full force for the first of these - the swim from St Heliers to Tamaki Yacht Club. 55 kayakers were counted for this event. Was it the BBQ back at base that brought everyone out of the woodwork?

The main event - the Rangitoto swim - didn't attract quite so many, but 45 is still good turnout. Maybe this time it was because of the early start? I'm glad that last year's 'adventure' did not seem to deter people

from this year's effort. About half chose to stay overnight on the deck of the information centre, where we shared a good meal and the club provided desert.

Many thanks to those who regularly avail themselves for these events, every year. It really does help the club, and your efforts are appreciated.

Email event reminders

About mid January, the automatic reminders for events on the on-line calendar stopped being generated. I was having to post event reminders manually myself, which was a bit chaotic - so sorry about any confusion or inconvenience that may have resulted. It turns out that our Yahoo on-line calendar was still using an older version of the software, and this was probably being decommissioned.

I asked Yahoo to upgrade our calendar to the new version, and everything seems to be working well now. As a result, you may have noticed that the email event reminders and on-line calendar have had a bit of a face-lift and offers more features. One downside is that there is now a 120-character limit on the event details, so trip leaders - be aware that not as much information can be conveyed on this medium.

If you would like to get automatic reminders of events by email, then send a blank email to auckland-canoe-club-subscribe@yahogroups.com or you can visit <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/auckland-canoe-club>.

Note that this Yahoo Group is essentially one-way traffic of notices from the committee, which you can't reply to. However, we do also have an open (not just for club members) discussion group where anyone can post messages. So you can check out <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/auckland-kayakers>

New members

We would like to extend a warm welcome to the following new members. Members first joined since January have their membership extended to March 31 2006.

Ali & Pete Coleman/Smith
David & Jacqui Evans/Tyrrell
Paul Shipman

M@

Poet's corner - Mike Randall

The Golden Weather

The summer's right upon us
'At last', I hear you cry
It's the season of the Harbour Swims
But the kayakers keep dry.
If you want to meet a buddy
You haven't seen for years
Turn up at swimmers' escort day
It'll make you want to cheer.

The first one up for year 05
Was held not long ago
From Heliers Bay along the coast
The rate of knots was slow
Three and fifty kayaks
About as many guys to match
The rainbow fleet was well described
It's job, to keep a watch.

The real trick to keep a check
On swimmers in the sea
Just count the arms, add on the heads
And then divide by three.
It helps, of course, if in the past
You've had a sheep of two
'Get in behind' is good advice
To keep the flock in view.

If paddlers want to test their skills
The starts, the turns, the stops
The turning round to look behind
Negotiating chop.
Then join that happy band of guys
That form the rainbow fleet
A nicer crowd I'm bound to say
You'd never wish to meet.

You may suspect that some of us
Turn up to simply feast
On Roger's cordon barbecue
It gets us there at least.
But that's OK for what's a club
If it's not to socialize
For if we don't, as sure as eggs
We risk the Club's demise.

I could go on for many a verse
Before it's time for bed
eg. the 'unofficial' swims'
Deadline calls - time's up - blame ed.

Auckland Canoe Club - information

Postal Address:

P.O. Box 9271 Newmarket, Auckland

Clubrooms:

Hauraki Kayak Group boatshed clubrooms, Coxs Bay, just off West End Road.

Website:

<http://aucklandcanoeclub.org.nz>

Email discussion group, send blank email to:

Auckland-kayakers-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Email event reminders, send blank email to:

Auckland-canoe-club-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Officers:

Patron:	John Watts	03 541 9296
President:	Matt Crozier	817 1984
		matt@vsl.co.nz
Vice-President:	Lindsay Sandes	522 3344
Secretary:	Rona Patterson	834 3399
Treasurer:	Des Matthews	575 5804
Trips:	Gavin Baker	528 5188
Publicity:	Roger Lomas	579 8799
Safety/ Training:	Ken Marsh	828 0701
Storage/ Club Kayaks:	Lindsay Sandes	522 3344
Vine House:	Andrew Frances	021 142 4857
Committee:	Margaret Thwaites	818 9609
	Wayne Fitzsimons	298 5087
	Ian Calhaem	579 0512
	Peter Sommerhalder	631 5344
Newsletter:	Kerry Howe	
		krmhowe@xtra.co.nz

Club trip/event policies

Visit the Club website for more details of policies:

Contacting trip/event leader.

- You must notify the trip leader in advance of your intention to go on a trip. Leaders need to know numbers and to be able to contact you if the plan changes.
- You must also discuss with the leader in advance any medical or other conditions (such as your experience and ability) that might affect the progress of the group.

Cancellation

- If the weather looks uncertain don't call the trip leader but listen to Newstalk ZB Cancellations on 1080AM or 89.4FM, Saturday and Sunday from 7.00am.

Safety Policy

- You must make a realistic assessment that your skills and endurance are sufficient for a planned trip.
- Any Club members who have doubts about their skills for a particular trip MUST contact the trip leader in advance to talk about safety issues.
- It is your responsibility to wear a buoyancy aid, to be suitably dressed and prepared for likely conditions, and to carry necessary safety equipment.
- In the event of you capsizing in deep water, you must be able to re-enter your kayak, with help from another paddler if necessary.

- On a night paddle it is your responsibility, and a legal requirement, to provide a fixed all-round white light on a pole, or a large lens lamp at hand on deck.

- Kayaks must be appropriate for a trip. A sea kayak with water-tight bulkheads is essential for open water sea kayaking. Sit-on kayaks are usually too slow and not seaworthy enough in rough conditions and are therefore not recommended for sea kayak trips.

Gear hire

- The club hires out a range of sea kayaks and accessories. See the website for details.

Swim escorting (seasonal)

- Auckland Coastguard controls operations for kayak swim escorts, and has stipulated that there be a minimum number of kayaks before events can proceed. The Club receives some financial support depending on the number of kayak escorts it provides.

- With small distances and a slow pace, there are no Club paddles more suitable for novices. Club kayaks are available for use at no charge.

- The on-water job is to guide swimmers if they veer too far off course and to flag down a roaming rubber boat if a swimmer needs to get out.

- If you have a VHF radio, please bring it. Initial comms are on channel 86, then move to channels 6 and 8 for each side of the course. Please STAY in the area until the last swimmer arrives, in case a search is needed.

To:

From: Auckland Canoe Club, PO Box 9271, New Market, Auckland

Pic of the month



Chez Sommerhalder in Fiji - sigh!
(photo - S. Sommerhalder)