

Newsletter



May 2005

Highlights in this colossal issue!

Reflections: Rona wonders why? Laurie wonders why not?

Fiordland odyssey

Blundering into the Furuno

Kawhia South

Taupo circumnavigated

Colin sails away (yes, 'sails!')

Plus the usual suspects - reviewers, poets, ebbers, URGUs etc

Also AGM news

Why would you ask for more?

Editorial

The TRs keep pouring in. It's amazing how ACC members get around the country. The feature TR this month is by Erica Law who did what most of us can only dream about - sea kayak in Fiordland! But those sandflies! And there are reports from Kawhia (Judy Begg), Lake Taupo (Evan Pugh), and Kawau (Mike Oakley-Browne).

Colin Quilter has become a most unlikely convert to sails, and we all know how obsessive converts usually become. He's not content to sail to Rangitoto or Browns Island as normal people do, oh no, he went straight across to Great Barrier!

It's always great also to feature reflective pieces, and this month Rona Patterson captures the angst and ecstasy of camping on her favourite island. Read her 'Why?' and ponder. Then there are Laurie Bugbee's thoughts on 'Why not?'

All this material expresses the very rich and diverse experience of our sport, or rather, our lifestyle. I hate it when daylight saving ends and the heater and slipper adverts appear, but I also know that sea kayaking continues all year. You just have to make a few adjustments, mainly by wearing a bit more, and spending longer in the tent at night. But we are so blessed in Auckland with a relatively winterless climate (I once lived through a Canadian winter!), and with so many available sea kayak destinations.

I'm giving an unashamed plug for my book which is available in bookshops in May - *Coastal Sea Kayaking in New Zealand. A Practical Touring Manual*. I got sick of reading sea kayak manuals from North America about how to avoid bears, and survive capsizes in frozen seas. So here's something locally informed and relevant. I hope you all go out and buy it! It was certainly a pleasure to write. I'm very delighted that Coastguard has endorsed the book. It's not just about practical/technical matters and seamanship, but also tries to capture the aesthetic and emotional essence of touring the magnificent New Zealand coasts. Make sure you read Debbie's review in this issue.

The Club's AGM takes place on 17 May at the Marine Rescue Centre. See details in this issue. Nominations for officers are open until the start of the meeting. Please turn out for the event, and for the after-match function which, it is hoped, will be a tour of the Coastguard Operations Room.

Kerry Howe

Meaning of life file

? ? ? ? ? Why ? ? ? ? ?

Rona Patterson

Have you ever wondered why our sport means so much to us; why we don't hesitate to take every opportunity to get down to the water; why we suffer withdrawal symptoms when on the injury list and unable to paddle? Recently I have been land-based and have tried to analyse what makes a kayaker tick. One of my favourite paddles is a stop-over on Motuihe Island. Why?

First gear has to be collected and ferried to Okahu Bay where it is loaded (squashed) down the hatches - fore and aft - before setting off in the delightful kayaker's uniform. This consists of boat shoes/boots which are always wet, thus turning feet into prunes; shorts of various shapes and sizes (in winter long johns may be worn and these are permanently wet at the bottom as it is impossible to get into the kayak on dry land unless your boat is plastic and you are doing a seal launch); poly-prop top which may be in any colour or combination of colours; if the weather is wet/cold/windy a paddle jacket goes on top, and these also come in many shades and condition of wear and tear; sun glasses are necessary just in case the sun comes out, and a hat finishes the ensemble - mine is either a club cap in the summer or a woolly beanie in the winter, but there are as many different hats as there are paddlers. The hat is a statement of the paddler's identity. An optional extra is a good pair of gloves to help prevent calluses!! Then comes the skirt - absolutely essential unless you are happy to have your cockpit filled with water. There is no discrimination here, male and female wear these and sizes vary according to the size of your cockpit, thus it is not unusual to see one person with a skirt almost reaching the ground and another with a skirt right up around the hips. A buoyancy aid adds the finishing touch. This is essential to hold you up in the water should you be unfortunate enough to part company with your kayak. This should never be plain, it can be covered with luminous strips to make you easily seen by passing boats, whistle, flare, tow-rope, VHF radio, sun screen, chocolate bars for energy, karabiner, and anything else felt essential to be on hand...

Right, we are ready to go and there is every chance we are facing a head wind and an in-coming tide. This just helps to stretch the paddle, after all we are out to enjoy ourselves, so taking much longer to get there only enhances the journey!

Once at the island we are lucky if the tide is in, if not, then there is a long drag up the beach with a boat that weighs a tonne! A wise paddler has a set of wheels to help with this task and if there is not another person available to help with this exercise you are guaranteed to dislocate both your shoulders. If help is available, you will only damage one shoulder each.

Once this heavy beast is up the bank you are faced with the decision to pull/drag the boat up the hill to the camping spot or to empty all the gear and face many walks up the hill heavy-laden, and leave the boat on the beach. (I have taken both options and I think it is marginally easier if help is available, to pull the beast up to the space available for camping.



Motuihe evening light
(photo - Howe)

Finding the best camping spot is not easy. The fields are big, covered in long grass, huge thistles, droppings from cows, sheep and rabbits. Once the spot is chosen, then the tent has to be erected and this is the time that the wind is bound to be very strong and because these lovely new tents we have are very light, they are wanting to blow away before they are secured to the ground. All good things come to an end, and finally the tent is erected and it is time for a well-earned cup of coffee, and just as you sit down in the long grass, someone whom you had considered a friend says that 'we should go over to Waiheke now'. At least now the boat is a lot lighter, and if you don't hold on tight, it is likely to find its own way down the hill.

Eventually it is time to settle down for dinner. If you are lucky it will be a perfect evening and dinner is had looking out over Waiheke while enjoying the company of your masochist friends in the glow of single candle. However, if the weather is wet and windy, the choices are a solitary meal inside your little tent or in the company of your friends under the toilet building's overhang.

Now comes the best part!!! Pup tents are made only big enough to cover an adult in reclining position.

After crawling in, you squat, you rummage in a dry bag for a change of clothes and a toilet bag ready for a trek down the hill in the dark to clean your teeth in a pitch dark toilet block. Once back in your tent at the end of your very tiring day you crawl into your sleeping bag which rests on top of your bed-roll. Bed-rolls also come in many shapes and sizes - all of them *small*. If you are very fortunate you have one of the best which will be as long as you, be self inflating and be about half an inch thick, *and* about 30 cm/12"wide. If you have packed for weight your bedroll will be a very thin piece of rubber a quarter of an inch thick and long enough for the part of your body between the shoulder and hip to rest on. Neither are conducive to a good night's sleep. There is also the possibility that you have been extremely unfortunate and chosen a spot which is within earshot of a champion snorer. This will guarantee no sleep for you, but the snorer always has a wonderful night's sleep (there is something wrong here).



Motuihe's Ocean Beach
(photo - Howe)

Now when you have had as much fun as possible and it is time to return to the city, the whole procedure must be reversed. By now, in all probability, the tent is wet and the only thing which you packed to bring and will not be re-packed is the food you have eaten. The weight of the food has now been re-distributed and will now go home on your hips.

On any homeward trip from this direction, there is always a head wind, so you are guaranteed a struggle, and of course you are committed because you must be at work in the morning. Once you have reached your home, there is only another hour or two before you are finished with your trip. First the boat, the car and all the gear has to be washed, camping gear has to be put out to dry and then packed away, and washing has to be done

Then at the end of the evening when you sink into a comfortable, warm and dry bed you know you have had a wonderful time and that you will be thinking of your next trip in the morning.

? ? Why not ? Life after paddling ? ?

Laurie Bugbee

It has been several years since I last wrote an article for the Club Newsletter. I am always pleased to receive the Newsletter each month and to read of the latest paddling exploits. Brings back many memories of earlier years. The trips with Colin. Our Colin. 'I am not the leader' he would say and probably still does. 'Yeah right!' And racing with Damian Milicich. That's when we started the Tuesday and Thursday night paddles from the Westend Marina. The consternation we caused among other harbour users because in those evenings we used strobe lights instead of a constant white light and no one had seen kayakers on the water at night before. One of the Waiheke ferries even followed us one evening well off his scheduled course to tell us we were a danger to ourselves because we could not be seen. Again 'Yeah right' Often asked myself how he knew where we were then because he had not picked us up on radar. So be careful out there. There are a lot of blind boaties in the day as well as at night.

Life changed abruptly for me in '98 when my wife June was struck with cancer and died that October. It made me realise just how precious each day of life is. We both loved travel and had seen some of the big wide world together. But the day we were supposed to fly to Argentina on our way to Europe turned out to be the day I took her to the Mater Hospice to be stabilised for pain and nausea. A real awakening.

So what has happened since? Yes. Travel. Trouble is that travel costs money so work has also been involved. But it is worth every hour spent at the work bench. Been to Aus, several times. Drove right round it three years ago. That's a tale in its self. Samoa, Singapore. Mali and Timbuktu, Last year South Africa, Egypt, Jordan, Scotland [Edinburgh Tattoo] Northern Ireland, and parts of Europe and Hong Kong. In May I'm off to Sabah to see the orangutans, then to the UK for a school reunion. In June to China and the Silk Route to Moscow and St. Petersburg, home via the Siberian Railway and Vladivostok.

I am now in my 78th year, still relatively fit and active, but for how long? Who knows? So what has to be done has to be done now! If I stay with my daughter here in Hastings after my big OE and before my next one [my aim is to have two summers each year] I am tempted to buy a kayak and get fit again [sold all my others]. And I will join you if I am in Auckland on one or more of the swim escorts. Gotta keep on the right side of Rona.

Keep enjoying your paddling. Great way to keep fit and make friends. Don't put yourselves too much at risk but always do a bit more than you think you can. It's more fun that way especially afterwards talking about it. And another article for the newsletter.

My email address is lauriebugbee@clear.net.nz

Trip reports

A Trip to Preservation Inlet, Fiordland

Erica Law

'Are we on holiday yet?' someone yelled, as we struggled forward metre by metre - a refrain to be heard regularly over the rest of the trip

Phone call from a friend in October - '*Preservation Inlet, two weeks in a remote Fiordland wilderness, expedition kayaking, caving, snorkelling, fishing, wildlife, history- are you interested?*' Too good an opportunity to miss. Fortunately my boss and family agreed.

Email from Cathye, our trip organiser:
We are departing from Riverton (weather permitting) at 3am on Sunday 13 February on the 60 foot fishing vessel *Jewel*. Ian Baine is our skipper and he operates Rainbow Charters out of Riverton. The trip is 6 (chunderous) hours and we should get to Pressie Inlet by 9-10am.

Checking in with the fishing boat skipper Saturday 12 February. 'Yep Cathye, we'll head off in the morning. It's AS FLAT AS!!!'

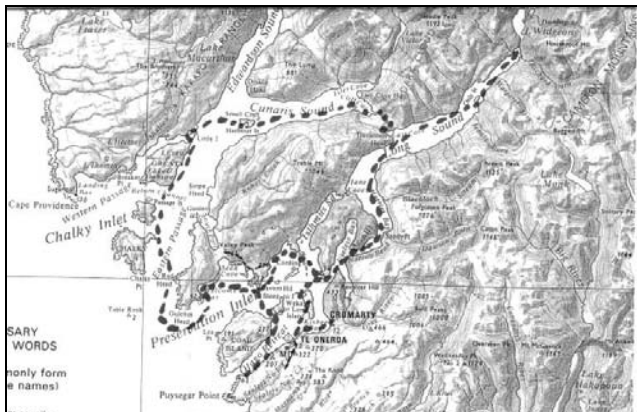
But true to Cathye's prediction, it was *6 chunderous hours* for many of the passengers. Typical Southland sea conditions.

Preservation Inlet

Arriving at the barge moored at Weka Island, Preservation Inlet, a fairly quiet mob disembarked with kayaks and two weeks of food and gear. Here we were, the depths of Fiordland - Preservation Inlet tucked away in the remote south-west corner of the South Island. This is the southernmost of the 14 West Coast sounds, its hills more low-lying than the rest of the sounds. Bush right down to the water's edge. Three metre long bull kelp the width of a hand span,

surging in the swell around the rocks. Oyster catchers, gulls and terns roosting on rocky outcrop islands.

It was February. Sixteen of us had come from different parts of NZ, but the trip was spearheaded from Wellington. Two groups of four set off in two different directions. The eight in my party set off in a third direction, towards Round Island and the Cording Islands in search of caves, Fiordland Crested penguins and other sights, hoping not to further upset fragile stomachs. A few hours gentle exploratory paddle took us in a circular route across to Te Oneroa, the site of a former gold mining settlement that once housed well over a hundred people. The town site is now overgrown with regenerating bush, and inhabited by sandflies (in their thousands). Here we set up our first base camp from which to explore the hills and coast.



The next day, with gale warnings at Puysegur Point, north west 15 knots, rising to thirty, we decided to paddle up into the wind rather than head for the Point and risking problems getting 'home'. So, up to Kisbee Bay, another former mining township, to look for a boiler engine. We also visited Cemetery Island where we found the grave of prospector William Docherty, who had survived a risky open dinghy trip in the late 1800s from Dusky Sound to settle in Kisbee Bay, but suddenly collapsed and died two years later. We visited Kisbee Lodge, one of three private properties still surviving in the middle of Fiordland National Park. Not a viable commercial proposition for fee-paying tourists it seems, but it was useful as a base for a search and rescue operation, in full swing during our first two days - frequent helicopters buzzing overhead during daylight hours, dozens of volunteers scouring the bush and coast.

Day three, an exploratory trip hiking through the bush looking for signs of the former gold mining operations. Battery foundations, camshaft, boiler engine, mine shafts, remains of an aerial cableway. But the big reward was locating the Alpha battery way up over the ridge summit and into the headwaters of Sealers

No 1 Creek. This is one of the most complete examples of a 19th century gold ore ten-stamper battery in this country.



Alpha battery
(photo- Law)

Long Sound

Day four we established our second base camp about five hours paddle away, up Long Sound. Here it really did feel remote, with neither boat nor aircraft nor other human activity evident, just thousands of sandflies at our camp site near Last Cove. The next day we aborted our attempt to paddle further up the sound, being driven back by lashing rain and cold.

However day six, overcast but calm, we completed our traverse of Long Sound. The Cascade Lake several hours paddle away at the top of the sound was serene and beautiful, particularly in contrast to the waterfall at its head crashing down from Lake Widgeon. With some relatively low hills to the north, there might have been some interesting side treks had the weather been more clement. On the trip back, some of the party got busy trawling fishing lines, others having good success stopping to fish for blue cod. However we didn't quite match the nine kilogram hapuka caught by one of the other kayak parties.

Our intention in camping at Last Cove was to undertake the portage from there across to Chalky Inlet, a distance of about 500 metres. So most members of the party at various times over the next couple of days did a recce of the route, coming back with rather jaundiced views of the effort required to get through the bush. The route: up and down, turning and twisting through the mossy beech podocarp forest, around fallen logs, and across creeks. No picnic for heavy canoes!

Unfortunately we were an excellently prepared party, with lots of group gear to help make our expedition and base camps comfortable and safe - supplies for a travelling hospital, a shower, a camper's oven, several wash bowls variously for dishes, bodies and hands, several tent flies for shelter, seats, a range of stoves, a wide range of pots and utensils, various equipment repair kits, a mountain radio and two VHF radios.

People didn't skimp on personal gear either. Much of the party gear went into the one double on our trip, a very heavy plastic boat, fondly dubbed the Queen Mary. The downside of all this was the difficulty of portaging this gear.

In particular, having had to carry the Queen Mary a number of times the 10 to 20 metres from the water's edge to the camp spot, none of us were very keen to exercise our already well-exercised muscles on a 500 meter portage. After much discussion and debate we finally decided to give it a miss, despite the fact that this made it increasingly unlikely that we would get into Chalky Inlet and back in the 5 to 7 days we had left.



Lake Widgeon
(photo - Law)

Our third base camp took us to Cuttlers Cove, near the entrance to Preservation Inlet, on the western side. A strong tail wind made the paddle down Long Sound past Sandy Point and through the Narrows a bit of a wild ride. But then round the corner we suddenly encountered a strong head wind across the mouth of an inlet. 'Are we on holiday yet?' someone yelled, as we struggled forward metre by metre - a refrain to be heard regularly over the rest of the trip whenever we found ourselves in rather unrestful situations.

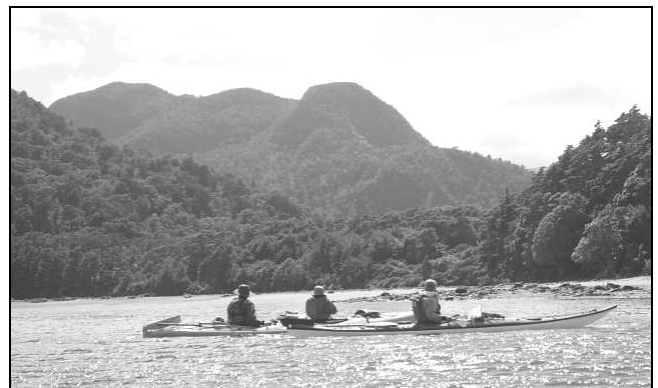
The next day was supposedly a rest day, with a good sleep-in and not leaving base camp until noon. However it did not feel like a rest day after several hours of thrashing around in the untracked Fiordland bush looking for another reputed portage across to Chalky Inlet. On the return journey we made a side trip to Spit Island at low tide. This was a small island with steep rocky cliffs, and only one access route onto the top. At low tide it is connected by a strip of sand to

the main land. It was here that a small remnant of the legendary 'lost tribe of Fiordland' took refuge and built a pa after being chased off Otago Peninsula by Ngai Tahu.

Adventure - Chalky Inlet Round Trip

We were starting to run short of days to paddle around the open coast to Chalky Inlet and back again in time to meet the skipper of the boat on day 14. But it became apparent that some of us were still keen, and were prepared to undertake the dreaded portage across to Last Cove, Long Sound and back to Preservation for the chance of getting into Chalky.

Day nine dawned beautifully clear and calm, with a reasonable forecast, and with 4 to 5 metre swells. Four of us wanted to do a recce trip around to Gulches Head on the outer coast between Preservation and Chalky Inlets. Given the forecast we decided to take our tents, food and gear with us in case it seemed feasible to carry on right around.



Bush right to the edge
(photo - Law)

After an hour of paddling and drawing closer to the Heads, the swells were rather larger than we were used to, but it was green unbroken water, and the distance between peak and trough were manageable. So despite some nervousness we carried on until we could see Gulches Head, and could detect the Balleny Reef out to our left, a line of white foam about a mile offshore; but there was something else we couldn't quite discern not far from the Heads, some flash of white every now and then. The breeze started to come up a little, and the water started to slop a bit. Anxiety levels increased, and before long we decided to turn back.

We paddled back to just inside the open coast, to Prices Beach in Welcome Bay. Following a bit of a surf landing, we were able to enjoy a lovely lunch in the sun, one of only three over the entire 14 days. This was also a good spot to camp for another attempt the next day, as it would save us $\frac{3}{4}$ hour.

Next morning, we were awake at 5am; a favourable weather forecast sent us into action stations. Three of

us were down on the beach ready to launch through the surf by 7am. And were soon on our way round to Gulches Head. Swell was about 3 to 4 metres. Virtually no wind at that hour of the morning. Alert, and a little on edge, we were acutely conscious that we didn't want to be performing a rescue on this relatively exposed coast with its wild unscalable cliffs dropping straight into the sea.. But, feeling confident that we could handle the swells and the small backwash off the cliffs, we carried on past Gulches Head to the entrance to Chalky Inlet. From there we had a following sea up to Red Head, before starting the crossing of the Eastern Passage to the limestone cliffs of Chalky Island.



Seen by few, paddled by fewer
(photo - Law)

10.30am, time for a munch in our boats, a quick comfort stop for some, a lesson in peeing in boats (we were all three women). It was exhilarating to be accompanied by three mollymawks, soaring, dipping and rising in huge arcs. Muttonbirds, shags, petrels, terns, gulls. Seals came over to inspect us as we drew close to Chalky Island, a wildlife sanctuary for endangered native species. It is free of predators such as rats, cats and stoats and was glorious with bird song.

Then on up the Sound to Little Island, for lunch. Here was the rusty wreck of the Stella, an old sailing ship from the early part of the 20th century. A photo we had of her in her prime showed a dignified and attractive-looking three masted vessel. On across the Eastern Passage to Small Craft Harbour Islands at the entrance to Cunaris Sound. Here in an intimate little bay we found a lovely sheltered campsite in the trees a few metres from the water, with the dry sphagnum moss ground covering making for a very comfortable night. As I stepped out of my kayak I almost tripped on a paua - paua for dinner!

The next morning as we were launching the boats, the memory of paua for dinner inspired me to strip off for an early morning dip, with my mask and snorkel. I didn't linger long in the chilling water. Fortunately the paua were easy to find. Just as rewarding was the large blue cod, and another orange coloured fish, that swam up to peer right into my face mask.

The tranquil paddle up Cunaris Sound was awesome, the walls of the sound majestic, the three of us small specks on the glassy waters of this serene wilderness. Sharing our musings on the world, and the meaning of life.

We had timed our arrival at Cliff Cove well, just before high tide so that the small river from Cliff Cove into the lakes beyond was still running with us. At the head of the lakes, we pulled up our kayaks on the muddy bottom, and prepared for the challenge of the day, the *dreaded portage*. We had decided that we should try to do it in three loads, that is two people pushing and pulling a kayak while carrying a little gear, and the third person carrying all the rest of the gear in a backpack and two hand held carry bags.

The first 10 minutes with the first boat seemed to justify all our fears. Up, down, around the wind-thrown logs, mossy clumps, ferns, shrubs and other understorey of the forest. How were we going to do this?! But once we had sorted out the 'easiest' route, things proceeded more smoothly, especially taking the advice of previous parties to slide the kayak over the mossy ground and tree trunks. The first boat took us 1 hour 10 minutes to do the portage; but by the third boat, we had developed the technique, not to mention had the route sussed, and we managed that in 45 minutes, without leaving very much gelcoat on the route. Three and a half hours, and we were completely across, and ready to set up camp a second time in Last Cove; the sandflies seemed pleased to have us back!

The next day was the second to last day of our trip, and we headed off back towards the entrance of Preservation Inlet to find the rest of our party. We were pleased to discover they had decided to move camp to the Oil Store at the Landing near Puysegur Point lighthouse. This meant we didn't have to put up our tents that night. In fact it meant a dry roof over our heads, heaps of space to cook and chat, no sandflies indoors, and the chance to have a fresh water wash. Yes, simple things had become real pleasures. It was also great to catch up with the others again.

On holiday at Last

Our last day was one of the best weather days of the trip - one of the few days when the weather forecast didn't include gale warnings at Puysegur Point. The three of us took a very relaxed stroll to the lighthouse, a long lunch break (in the sun!), and another relaxed stroll back to the Oil Store and Landing. We eventually set off in our kayaks about 4pm, heading for the barge where we would meet everyone else and the fishing boat that night. We three cruised quietly around the western side of Coal Island. Having achieved our goal of the round trip, we seemed to have completely run out of oomph. We were finally on holiday. No more exertion needed. Apart from collecting a few take-home paua

A late night catching up with the other two parties that shared the fishing boat return trip with us. Our paths had rarely crossed during the two weeks, a testimony to how much else there was to see and do in the area. Crayfish, paua, fish, washed down by wine, was the menu for our last supper, all compliments of the skipper, who seemed to think we might not have had a good feed for two weeks. By 5.30am we were under way for the return to Riverton. It was FLAT AS...

So the trip lived up to its promise (remote wilderness, expedition kayaking, great snorkelling, fishing and wildlife, caves, history to explore). But more than that - the company of a great group of people, and friendships that develop in sharing such a special experience.

Postscript - some considerations when trip planning from an Auckland base

- 'Summer' takes on new meaning in Fiordland - it means long johns, overtrousers and layers of warm clothing, rather than shorts, sunhats and sunnies.
- Water temperatures are five degrees (at a guess) lower than here in the north.
- Mosquito repellent is more useful than sunscreen.
- The sandflies are overwhelming - a mosquito head net makes for a much more relaxing experience.
- Weather can be very changeable and severe. It's always advisable to have warm head gear and weather-proof jacket readily at hand.
- It's a remote wilderness - would-be adventurers need to plan well; be prepared, self sufficient and self-reliant. It's not a place to take lightly.



Erica in burkha
(photo - Sam Sandfly)

[now check out the Pic of the Month on the last page - ed]

Blundering into the Furuno

Michael Oakley-Browne

The lights were on full and lit up the whole harbour including where I placed my ground mat and sleeping bag.

After a delayed start to catch the outgoing tide on the Mahurangi River at Warkworth, I paddled slowly down the mangrove-laden river with tui singing their psalms. I made it to Scotts Landing in about two and a half hours without any great exertion. I took a quick break there. On I paddled with the thought of stopping around the northern point of Mahurangi Harbour's entrance written as Sadler on my chart. Dairy Bay with myriads of human forms camping and holidaying did not look that appealing for a pit and noodle stop so I just kept paddling on north and past Big Bay, hugging the coast, vigilant for a smooth landing. It was a rock bound shore line for a bit but the water was crystal clear below my craft and I thought 'shark' for the first and brief occasion.

A couple of kilometres up the coast I had the opportunity to land on a rocky flat not realising that I was at the front of a mansion perched up on the hill. I made good use of my wheels and pushed over the shelf to soft sand on the lapsing tide. Here I could watch a couple of dozen yachts in the distance, plying the seas on the outer channel of Motuora and Motuketekete.

Refreshed with noodles and rice wafers - barbecued flavour, gluten free and 93% fat free - I set off on a course for Kawau Island via the group of three smaller islands north of Motuora. The first of these is Motutara and I made that in about an hour. I was a little tired but not sore. As I reconnoitred its coast I decided against camping there as its contours did not look soft and inviting enough.

As I rounded this island to the north, half a dozen paddlers came into sight. I had a brief chat with one of the party and she informed me I could camp at Bon Accord Harbour. I was tired and in need of rest and food so headed off in still, clear waters and a following tide. Near Kawau I made my scheduled 6 pm phone call home on my beat-up Nokia. Paul took my 'all is well' message and promised to ring my sister and mother at Warkworth to give them a trip report.

I was looking now for a spot to camp and rest as I hit the south west coast of Kawau, at Peaked Rocks with its solitary pine tree. I had a good run with the tide to the Island and around past Mansion House Bay into Bon Accord Harbour.

I was getting into the fatigue stage and looking desperately for a perch to rest, eat and sleep. I had more surprises in store for me besides the lack suitable of land to attach myself to! Bon Accord Harbour was alive with craft - luxury yachts and launches, runabouts, and a large fishing trawler, black and menacing.

I found a small cove and enquired of an elderly gentleman who had beached his aluminium dingy to give his German shepherds a run, about the tide and he said that it was not a place you could camp as the high tide filled the cove.

I proceeded into the overpopulation of boats. Everyone commented positively saying that my sea kayak was the craft of choice for the day. Most of this male culture had stubbies in one hand and a cheerful spirit. It was now obvious that there was a great festival at Pah Farm, where I wanted to camp. I had to laugh at my predicament as the long, wooden, stable wharf loomed up with busy motorised farm buggies, relaying equipment and people back and forward to the farm site. And there was a tall steel structure with lights such as you would see at Eden Park.



This was the Super 12 of fishing, complete with a great circus-like big top. Sounds bellowed out from the big top and everywhere was male humanity. I had arrived for the grand finale of the once a year Lion Red Furuno fishing tournament. I was astounded that I had not known about it.

I meandered around for a short while in my trusty craft wondering where I would land. After a little nosing here and there I paddled to the mushy stone covered shore at the Pah Farm perimeter.

A friendly, slightly inebriated, squat, red bearded gentleman reciprocated my introduction saying he too was Mike. He said us Mikes are the friendly types and helped me with my heavy kayak to a flat spot adjacent to a well used greywacke-mud track. There were two massive logs by my kayak and it looked as secure as I could find in my state after seven hours paddling.

I went for a walk into the festival's rabble as men lined up on one side with cans of beer and a Ho, Ho, Ho and much camaraderie. Five thousand men in absolute jubilation! I ordered an \$8 fish burger and they had no change so it cost me \$10. It saved me preparing a meal and I ate and sucked on my orange cordial with more delight than the food deserved. I chatted to a Samoan security guard and then proceeded to my camp. He said I could bunk up on Pah Farm but I was past my use-by time. The sun was

already disappearing. The lights were on full and lit up the whole harbour including where I placed my ground mat and sleeping bag. The moon was near full and followed me in the company of stars, longer than the booming band past midnight, until the crack of dawn, and the singing tui in the Puriri tree behind me. I'd slept and rested, rested and slept, from 8.30pm until 7am.



a less than idyllic campsite
(photo - Oakley-Browne)

My waking dreams had been the footsteps of many a feaster and the many comments of a positive nature as they came upon this dreamy kayaker. I was alone and rested away from the maddening crowd who stayed awake all night or slept on their crafts or bunked up on Pah Farm. So I had no tent to roll and pack. I delighted in a small tin of tuna, and this was relished with rice wafers; barbecued flavour, gluten free and 93% fat free, you know! I organised my kayak and felt ready for a day's paddling. It was fine that Sunday morning and I took a few photographs of my camp site and the armada and paddled up Bon Accord Harbour to its busy mouth accompanied by every man and his craft heading out. One small craft was a plastic fantastic blue canoe with an outboard motor attached and as he passed he offered to race me with a cheeky smile on his face. The two men in the launch near by agreed with my comment that he would have difficulty doing an Eskimo roll in that craft. He was loaded up with two chilly bins and a red plastic fuel container.

I paddled on to Mansion House Bay, stopped for hot noodles, raisins and nuts. A weka was very friendly and I photographed that bird with its prehistoric legs, mottled like a tree. From Mansion House I headed towards the small Island of Takangaroa in Kawau Bay, and west of Kawau Island. After some consideration of my fatigue and also satisfaction I headed to Scandrett Bay which is in the newest Regional Park. I contacted Rosanne at Warkworth on my cell phone and she was out in an hour to collect me. I had tested my endurance, discovered the Furuno, camped out on soft clay, was treated with music till midnight under the moon, and found more places in the Hauraki Gulf I had not previously visited. Thank you Rosanne for being a great support person.

Easter at Kawhia South

Judy Begg

On the way up to the tunnel we bush crashed to find vestiges of a track and dodged stinging nettle and hook grass. Male members of the party quickly realized the advantage of shaved legs.

There's a special place at Te Waitere overlooking the South Kawhia Harbour where nine of us spent a memorable Easter -- sometimes kayaking, sometimes tramping, sometimes hunting for fossils, but for a glorious amount of time eating fine food around an open fire, drinking mulled wine and soaking in hot baths in the fresh air. Our host Justin had turned back into character pad with relics in every corner and all modern conveniences as well as a few old fashioned ones: two-plank African seats around the open fire and sunken pits with channels to fire and drain cast iron baths in a setting of bark, railway sleepers, old wine bottles and flax. The owner wasn't there when we arrived (gone fishing) but doors were open, chairs set out on the wooden decks and music was playing - an ambience that set the scene for the weekend. What did a diabolical weather forecast matter in those conditions? In fact the hairy weather didn't arrive until the day we left, apart from a round of heavy rain, thunder and lightning at night when we were all safely tucked up.

By Thursday night all but one member of the party had arrived and the evening disappeared in a haze of red wine and steamy bath water. Friday saw us driving to a private farm to tramp past tomos and fossils to a natural limestone tunnel the size of a cathedral - pretty amazing, as was the shark tooth embedded in rock reportedly thirty million years old, and the roof of a cave with fossilized oyster shells in patterns you'd dream about for a public building. On the way up to the tunnel we bush crashed to find vestiges of a track and dodged stinging nettle and hook grass. Male members of the party quickly realized the advantage of shaved legs. On the way back we avoided the hazards by sticking to the river but water has its own problems. One member was stupid enough to remark that she was the only one not wet up to the waist. Writing the trip report looked a better option than being manhandled into the river or tossed over the fence into the swamp.

On Saturday we were on the water by 8a.m. and cruised the coast taking in some impressive rock formations, and drifting with tide and wind back up to the road bridge. Of course there was a price to pay - a struggle with tide and wind on the way back. We were

home by mid day and spent the afternoon lying in the sun (yes, in spite of the forecast), swinging in the hammock, strolling along the harbour edge and chatting. There was still time to put out the net for Sunday's breakfast of barbecued flounder. However that's not all we had. On Sunday morning it was a champagne breakfast with all the trimmings and chocolate eggs thrown in - a very celebratory affair.

The weather held on Sunday and we drove to Lake Taharoa and launched the kayaks from the roadside. There were hundreds of birds, mostly swans and ducks, but geese featured indirectly when Justin led us on a goose chase trying to find the entrance to Lake Numiti. The 30 metre portage to the third lake, Rotoroa, didn't eventuate as we found a passage through the bulrushes, and we beached the kayaks and climbed a hill to have lunch overlooking west coast surf. There were predictable weed and water fights on the way back and a good chain gang effort to get the kayaks back to the road edge.

The plan for late Sunday afternoon was to drive to Kiritehere for fossil hunting. We did find fossils but eventually realized that that wasn't the aim of the exercise. Karen had opted to stay at the bach because she said she'd been to Kiritehere before. What she didn't say was that she'd been there with Justin. He has a habit of finding character pieces - old posts with rusty bolts embedded, a transformer buried in mud, weathered pieces of driftwood and rusting derelict equipment. He can't manage them on his own and at Kiritehere he had a captive group. How could we refuse the hawser that took four people to move, and the washed up tree trunk that took six of us plus a set of kayak wheels to drag along the beach to the ute? Fortunately Karen made up for it by having hot soup ready in a crock pot and all three fires blazing when we returned for another evening of good food, good wine and good company.

The promised lousy weather finally arrived on Monday so a fledgling plan to kayak towards the heads was abandoned and the party made an effort to beat the holiday traffic home. Thanks heaps Justin for such a neat weekend.

Trip members were: Justin our wonderful host, Kerry (not yet a fossil but very knowledgeable about them), **[not the editor!]**, Sandra, Karen, Graham, Charles, Coral, Linda and Judy.

Circumnavigate Lake Taupo.

Evan Pugh

John found a rat had eaten a good size hole through his deck bag to get his biscuits

In March I had some days owed to myself so decided Taupo was available for a 4 day paddle, I phoned John who gladly said yes he would join me.



Tuesday morning we left our vehicle at the Motutere camp ground half way down the eastern side of the lake and after loading we were on the water just after 9am and headed south. Why south? Because I have been around the lake 3 times before and only once clockwise, that's why south. The weather

forecast told us to go south also and that's why the first six hours of the trip were into a head wind and side chop which really pleased us.

I had my GPS and we would hug the shore to see if the lake was 160kms around as we ducked into every bay and sat as near to the beaches and cliffs as the waves would let us. The eastern side is not the exciting side and drags a bit as we get some shelter from the Motuoapa Peninsular then around the long stump bay, across the Tongariro River's many mouths and around past Waihi village. We stopped near Waihi for a short break then headed North now in calm conditions as the wind died away, up past Kuratau and Whareroa where the cliffs start and the coast becomes far more scenic before stopping at Te Hapua bay to camp for the night after 49kms for the day.

Wednesday, John found a rat had eaten a good size hole through his deck bag to get his biscuits from the plastic bag within so he wasn't too happy. As we left this perfect spot in flat calm water with some big trout swimming around under us we headed out and around the huge Karangahape cliffs which dwarf us in their presence. There are only a couple of possible landing spots around here and they are very hard to land at if the weather is bad so care is needed. It takes us two hours to get around the cliffs and onto the beautiful tiny bay called Cherry Bay where we stop for a feed before continuing around Whanganui bay, Waihaha and Waihoru bay. All the way along this side there are huge slabs of rock in the cliffs dropping to great depths below with the Otupoto waterfall in Waihoru bay and if you have time the Waihaha waterfall is a

few kilometres up the Waihaha River which is worth a visit.

Again a short stop at Boat Harbour on Kawakawa point then around the bay to camp at the eastern end of Kawakawa Bay in the sun and have a swim and a wash. I called the coastguard for a weather forecast but could not get a reply so over and outed to finish off. We had paddled 43kms for the day.

Thursday morning calm and warm around the point and down to Kinloch. There's a shop there and I got a pie. Actually I got two pies as I would eat one later cold at lunch time. A chap came over and said he was off the launch we had been near and chatting to. He said he heard me calling the coastguard the previous night and a couple of other boats had called in to say we were ok and camping as the coastguard wasn't too sure if there was a problem so in future I will specify what I wanted if I get no reply so there is no concern.

I said thanks after the chat, finished the pie and we carried on out of Kinloch around Whakaipo bay and the small Kaiopo bay and then the rock carvings before heading towards Taupo township. At the Waikato river entrance we chose not to stay at the camp ground but carry on, so we carried on and on and the wind picked up and blew us along the waterfront then we had the side-on stuff till we got around the point until we were about a kilometre down Five Mile beach where we stopped and camped on the beach on a flat spot a metre above the metre high waves that were pounding the beach at this stage. We had a mother duck with her three young join us for a couple of hours before and during dinner. Today we had gone 50km before camp time.

Friday morning drizzle but only until we packed up our gear and it had blown through the night but conditions were better than yesterday as we were on the water before 7.30am and down the long beach and headland before the white cliffs dodging the boulders in the water which were hard to see in the chop. South we headed past a couple of keen fishermen at the Hatepe River mouth as by this stage we battled headwinds again and some fun around some of the points as the waves funneled in, then back to Motutere camp and the van. Today 24kms. The shore line was 166kms so now we know and paddling time was 26 hours and 43 minutes which gives an average of 6.2kph which was good as we had a fair bit of headwind.

Bloody idiot sails to Great Barrier

Colin Quilter

I expect to be teased a good deal about this

This is an account of a weekend spent sailing and paddling across the Hauraki Gulf. It begins with a confession. Long-time readers of the newsletter will know that I have in the past been mildly critical of folk who attempt to sail sea kayaks. My argument has been that kayaks are so slender and unstable that any sail one might fit will be too small to drive the boat in light winds. A further drawback is that usually the sail will only drag the boat downwind, or within about 45 degrees of directly downwind. So I'm embarrassed to admit that over the past few weeks I've been experimenting with a kayak sail. I expect to be teased a good deal about this, and I promise to take it in good part.

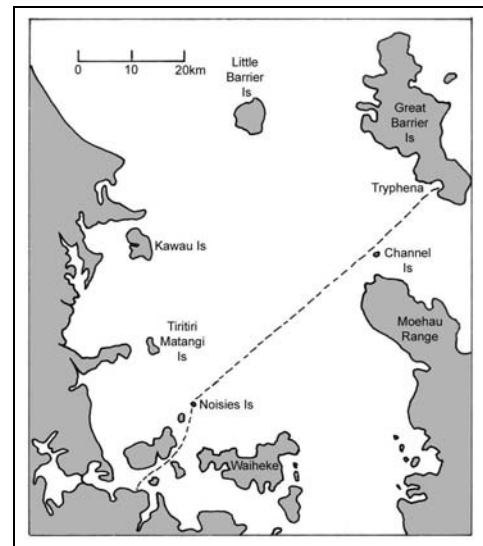
The idea of scoring free miles from the wind is a seductive one. Ideally one would wish for a sail that will work across a wide range of wind directions (from a beam reach to directly downwind, in other words across an arc of 180 degrees relative to the wind, which is about double the usual arc). It should work in wind strengths between say 5 and 25 knots. It should not interfere with paddling, and it should weathercock quietly into the wind with the sheet released. It must be reefable in strong winds. These requirements mean two things: the sail will need to be BIG to give real drive in light winds, and it must act like a foil with wind flowing across it, (not like a parachute as most kayak sails do). I drew a sail plan on paper, bought some sailcloth and alloy tube, and set to work with hacksaw and sewing machine.

As work proceeded my doubts grew. What looked good on paper seemed cumbersome, complicated and plain scary in reality. However I decided to give it one trial on the Manukau Harbour where none of my kayaking friends would be likely to see me, and then quietly discard the whole thing with nothing said. Well I could write a small story about my trial sail there, but after two high-speed reaches across the harbour with my hair standing on end, I came home with renewed hope, and spent the next few evenings improving the sail controls and fitting proper cleats and hardware to the deck of the canoe.

The following weekend (April 16/17) looked a suitable one for a more extended trip. On the beach at St Heliers mid-Saturday morning I met Roger, Ryan and a group of others returning from a paddle to Browns Island. I was relieved when Roger was the only one who noticed the sail bundled on the foredeck of my kayak; it might yet turn out to be a really bad idea. In glassy conditions I paddled out to the Noisies Islands,

where I camped for the night. The forecast for the next day was SW 10-15 knots, which if it eventuated would be ideal for a longer sail across the gulf.

In the morning I packed up by torchlight and was afloat at sunrise. The day was grey and overcast. But there was a light westerly breeze which would give me a broad reach across the gulf towards Cape Colville 40km away, so I hoisted the sail and immediately felt the canoe begin to slip more easily through the water. I paddled gently but steadily and as the hours passed the wind freshened. At first I was doing about two-thirds of the work with the paddle, but as the breeze lifted so the sail pulled harder and by mid-morning in about 15 knots of wind we were travelling fast. Now the sail was doing most of the work, and I kept paddling partly out of habit and partly for the increased stability gained from the paddle strokes.



There's a sense of exposure in this open, central part of the gulf. Around me in the far distance lay familiar landmarks: Kawau Island to the west, Waiheke Island to the south, and the uplifted bulk of the Moehau Range to the east and ahead. There were few other boats. But the miles slipped by and later with Cape Colville looming on my right, I had a decision to make. The tidal stream was now beginning to run against me and against the wind, kicking up steep seas southwest of Channel Island. The opposing current would make for slow progress. Perhaps I should divert to Port Jackson; had I been just with a paddle that is certainly what I would have done. But the Gods had sent me a fair wind, and I now had confidence that the sail would drive me through. So on we went, creeping past Channel Island against the current.

I was now having some great surfing runs down the face of big swells. I won't say it was enjoyable. On the steepest of them I would have preferred to back off and let them go through, but I discovered that's not easy when sailing. The sail just kept pulling, and down the

face of the wave I went. Fortunately the old Sea Bear ran straight and true, and I found that when hit by the bow wave the sail feathered backwards and did not trip the boat.



Channel Island
(photo - Quilter)

Beyond Channel Island in the middle of the Colville Passage the seas were less steep. I was feeling much more confident, and I was also hungry. Time for an apple. I held the paddle in one hand while I peeled the little sticky label off the fruit with the other hand, and simultaneously the sail powered us off on a full surf down an unexpected wave; that was about as close as I came to inversion. At 2pm I entered Tryphena Harbour. I dropped the sail and spoke to someone on the wharf. 'When's the next ferry to Auckland?' 'Leaves in an hour, mate. You'll be back in town by seven-thirty.'

On the ferry were a group of fishermen who'd spent a week on the island. During the trip home they drank more beer than I thought was good for them, and at one point I overheard two of them discussing my kayak. 'See that old guy over there,' said one, gesturing in my direction. 'He paddled this canoe out from Auckland.'

There was a short silence. 'Well he's a bloody idiot then,' said the other.

Performance note. From the Noisies to Tryphena I travelled 61km in 7 hours, an average speed of about 9km/hour. However allowing for the hours spent fighting the tidal stream in the Colville Passage I would guess that my average speed through the water would have been somewhat greater, probably 10km/hour). Those who have kayaked with me know that I am not a fast paddler, nor is the Sea Bear a fast boat. My normal cruising speed with camping gear in the kayak is 6km/hour. So the sail gave me a useful gain in speed. But apart from that, it gave me confidence to attempt a more ambitious trip than I would have contemplated with a paddle. I'll explain details of the sail and its rigging in a future article.

Book review

Coastal Sea Kayaking in New Zealand: a practical touring manual, by Kerry Howe, New Holland Press: Auckland, 2005.

This book is a very welcome addition to New Zealand's sea kayaking literature, perfectly placed in the gap between Paul Caffyn's three odysseys and Vincent Maire and Alex Ferguson's Sea Kayaker's Guides. *Coastal Sea Kayaking in New Zealand* is a comprehensive but also highly personal manual for anyone experienced in or wanting to take up coastal sea kayak touring. By any measure, Kerry Howe has the credentials to write such a book. Over the past few years, his low-key usually solo paddles have taken in the whole coast from the North to the East Capes. His buttocks (clenched or unclenched) must have spent hundreds of hours in his kayak seat and it is staggering to consider that he has covered this distance just through arm power.



The book appeals at first sight, the cover beautifully designed in suitable blue tones, with the great low view of the slightly distant New Zealand coast that sea kayakers know so well; the prow of the boat, the laminated maps and a low, lazy sea as you head towards your destination at the end of another day. On the back cover are the other quintessential symbols of a multi-day trip, the tent on the shoreline and the camp cooker.

One of the book's many strengths is that it is closely focused on and respects its intended readership. There is no attempt to summarise brands and types of boats, paddles, lifejackets, etc. Howe assumes that you have a certain level of experience and are capable of forming your own decision about what equipment suits you. However, with gear and equipment being such an important part of sea kayaking, there is plenty of discussion about the principles behind what makes good equipment choices. Howe gives a thorough coverage of the myriad of minor pieces of equipment and passes on the helpful conclusions he has reached on gear as diverse as clothing, wheels, gps and vhf

radios. A good example is his description of PFDs and the detailed account of what he carries in his and why. A bonus is that Howe is also a great DIY man and, while he pays for good quality equipment, also enjoys making his own gear at minimal cost. His foot sling, paddle leash and homemade cockpit pocket are examples that will no doubt have the Berninas whirring and the hot glue guns heated. For myself, I have already started collecting plastic bread bags!

Howe's writing style is spot on and should appeal much more widely than just those intending to make such a trip. He is both 'no-nonsense' and engaging at the same time. Many people will devour the book in one sitting as I did. The way it has been structured means that, while it is always informative and briskly passes on Howe's experience and thoughts, there is a strong narrative drive also. The reader is being taken on an informative journey and I found myself unconsciously planning my own hypothetical coastal trip as I read. On the other hand, it is so packed full of useful information that it will undoubtedly become a permanent reference, with the index giving quick access at a later date as you remind yourself just what his take was on a particular topic. The deserved Coastguard endorsement reinforces the value of the information and the ease with which it is conveyed.

The book also has a logical, thematic structure with chapter headings such as General Preparation, Trip Management, Equipment - on the beach, Equipment - at sea, Navigation, Weather, Life in the cockpit, Emergency Gear, Hazards at Sea, etc, and each chapter broken into brief topics. It is apparent that Howe has thought at length about all aspects of coastal kayaking over the years and conveys his tips and advice with common sense and some wonderful touches of humour. A further strength of the book is his coverage of particular hazards and situations that might occur and some of the decisions that might need to be made. I found myself marvelling at just how many individual components are involved in the apparently simple task of paddling a kayak. In breaking it down into its constituent parts, Howe simplifies the process for those who might be intimidated but also reveals the extent of the preparation and skills needed. No doubt this will lead some experienced paddlers to identify areas where they could improve their own expertise. His advice to get formal instruction in seamanship is well made.

The book has a good number of black and white illustrations throughout which are well selected and pertinent, often with amusing or evocative captions. One of Howe's strengths is his ability to teach us all something new but also to suggest the familiar, often with sly humour. The pre-trip laying out of gear and supplies on the lounge floor, the often admiring interest in our journeys by yachties, fishermen in aluminium dinghies and people in coastal baches and

campgrounds will be familiar to many. Unfamiliar to me was the thought of taking fly spray on a kayaking trip. Howe must be surprisingly undisciplined about keeping his insect screens zipped tight.

In any such book, there is a balancing act between being a practical manual and conveying the highlights of a coastal journey. I loved reading his account of paddling 'buttocks clenched' above the sharks pouring out of Parengarenga Harbour. This vivid image is now etched on my mind. No doubt Howe has had other similarly intense experiences and incidents on his travels. I would have loved him to have shared just a few more of these high or low points that in the end symbolize the coastal kayaking experience. Yet, this is a minor and personal wish. This book is far more than just a generous sharing of Howe's wide experience. His thoughtful reflections and analytical treatment of his topic mean that *Coastal Sea Kayaking in New Zealand* is destined to become a New Zealand sea kayaking classic.

Debbie Dunsford

How Ryan made a real mess of it file

Obituary



Albatross 81

On 16 March 2005

Tragically taken on the Auckland Harbour bridge under the wheels of a concrete truck.

Born in July 1998, cherished travelling companion of Ryan, and scourge of Barracudas everywhere.

Will be sadly missed.

Roger's ebb and flow

This year's Club membership has peaked at around the 570 mark. The number includes children with the family membership. If you would like to remain a member and continue to receive the new look newsletter, you know what you have to do. A good way to ensure that membership fees are lodged is to come along and do this personally at the AGM on 17 May at our new home over the water venue, the Marine Rescue Centre, Tamaki Drive, Mechanics Bay. The decision to move to this luxurious facility on the harbour was in no way influenced by its proximity to the Mikano Restaurant and Bar. Committee members are more than happy with their traditional fare of tea and biscuits. Yeah right!

The structural integrity of the Rangitoto Scout Bach will be severely tested later this month when the Morgan Lewis chilli, spice and curry night is held. The old 1930's era bach has survived many years of boy scouts and baked beans. On the way home the sea kayak sailing aficionados, who attend the fiery feast may well be able to ponder on the physical principles of the transfer of energy. Internal combustion to wind power. Perish the thought if they put this into practice.

Brian Strid lowered the record time that he set last year for a Waiheke circumnavigation. Starting and finishing at Maraetai Beach, the elapsed time for 2004 was just under 11 hrs. Last month it was completed in 9 3/4hrs. It's amazing what staying out of rock gardens will do. Brian however puts the quicker time down to an extensive body makeover, which we all thought was long overdue. Brian said he felt like a new man. You can be sure that **Gerard Fagan**, **Wayne Fitzsimons** and maybe **Ryan Whittle** will be following in Brian's wake and having a crack at the record soon.

It's a true fact that nobody wearing a high visibility (bright orange) Auckland Canoe Club cap has been run down by a ship, crapped on by a seagull or attacked by a seal. If you need that sort of protection you need a club cap. Order now from **Tony Hannifin** \$20 a head one size fits all. Ph 489-1706.

Four sea kayakers repeatedly exposed their bottoms at Kohimarama recently. There were actually five but one was so slick that it was gone in a flash. A small crowd had gathered to gasp at the display and immediately noticed that **Kevin Woolcott's** bottom was a little redder than the rest. **Gavin Baker's** bottom was quite beamy with a distinctive line down the middle, almost identical to **Lindsay Sandes**. **Peter Keegan's** bottom looked a bit flat and he seemed quite proud of it. The slick one that was gone in a flash belonged to **Mike Randall**, who was running the sea kayak rolling school on that fine autumn day.

Cruising around the harbour this month, the roving eye noticed:

-Motorised houseboats for hire at the Viaduct Basin. One was later seen anchored at Okahu Bay and a local wag suggested that the club should buy one with the building funds. If that sounds like a good idea, just remember that there would only be enough room on board for the committee members.

-Also down at the basin is a small hovercraft plying for trade at \$40 a ride.

-At the outer entrance to the Viaduct Basin precinct is a sign that simply says 'Blake Harbour'. Rumours circulating suggest it was put there by a small group of sea kayakers. Well-done lads.

-Closer to home, work is well underway on the Orakei Marina development, which is on the city side of Okahu Bay. The marina sales manager requests that kayakers keep away from the construction zone.

-The Auckland City Council has plans to redevelop the landing site at Okahu Bay. Negotiating on behalf of the club with the council will be **Ian Calhaem**, **Gavin Baker**, **Trevor Arthur** and a couple of others.

Just who is the Aristotle Onassis of the club-kayaking world? The title of owning the biggest private fleet of kayaks might once have belonged to former secretary and editor **Margaret Thwaites** with a fleet of six craft. Another former editor, **Ian Calhaem** and his family have seven stored in a special kayak loft. Over at the leafy suburb of Mt Albert, the **Ted Hughes** family has a very extensive collection of watercraft, which includes 2 double sea kayaks, a quad sit on top and seven single kayaks. Ted has been caught casting amorous eyes at a new sleeker racier double with lots of encouragement coming from 10-year-old son Eddie. But Ted's wife Margaret is not so sure and is still seeking an explanation as to why the family cars and lawnmower have been evicted from the garage. Even if Ted and 'fast' Eddie get their way, they will still have some catching up to do to equal our no 1. Kayak fleet owner. He has been an active kayaker since way back in the formative years of our club and over the ensuing years, has owned 35 kayaks. He currently has 18 on his inventory with some out of commission. His latest craft was purchased just 3 years ago with river rapids in mind. There is just a small problem though. His lifelong kayaking mates are all easing up a bit now and the new young fellas all want to go too fast. It's great to see that our no 1-kayak king still has a sense of adventure and we all know that he has probably been there done that. Yes we are talking about that tenacious explorer **Pelham Housego**.

URGU speaks - (fortunately briefly)



URGU aims to present a mix of news, views, gossip, scandal and both sound and questionable advice. Contributions welcomed, especially if they are salacious.

A letter from Helen

Book Group members (including those with members) were thrilled to receive a letter from Helen Clark. 'Dear Members (including those with members)', she wrote, 'I have \$180,000 to give away and would like you to help me decide who are worthy recipients of this largesse.' All the members had to do was to nominate a poet a non-fiction writer and a fiction writer and each would (or could, maybe, a vague possibility) receive \$60,000. Both membered and unmembered members thought hard. It was finally agreed that the poet would be Robert Sullivan, the fiction writer Lloyd Jones but the non-fiction writer really stumped them. They were just about to nominate Michael King when some clever person found a rule that disqualified him. Then how about a half-dead historian someone suggested. So if Kerry Howe receives the Prime Minister's Awards for Literary Achievement, he knows who to blame!

Last night URGU wondered

What ever happened to all the skinny people? Gone to Santiago perhaps?

'Our' island file

Motuora Island is 'our' special sea kayak island. DoC has produced a nice brochure giving information on the island, its past, its amenities, and its significance in plant and animal restoration, notably the kiwi. Miraculously, the island has always been pest free - so make sure you haven't got rats in your hatches! For a copy of the brochure contact **Liz Maire** (she's by far the better half!) lm Maire@doc.govt.nz

Motuora is now jointly managed by DoC and the Motuora Restoration Society. The island manager's phone number (which you might keep handy) is: 027 492 8586. Address all enquiries about camping to him.

You are encouraged to join the Restoration Society (09 427 8911) and/or help with tree planting which takes place on the last Sunday of each month. For planting information contact Eilene 09 427 9811.

KH

Ryan's guide to gazebos

Northland Canoe Club 10 step guide to Gazebos:

1. Buy the cheapest one available - \$40 should suffice
2. Return it
3. Buy the most expensive one available - \$1040 should suffice



Trial 1:

4. Erect it in preparation for a spectacular sunset after a day on the water
5. Arrange numerous club members under the gazebo to admire the sunset
6. Sing praise to the wonderful gazebo
7. Add a wall to block the onshore breeze (and the view of the sunset)
8. Move all chairs outside the gazebo to better see the sunset

Trial 2:

9. Remove wall to see the next night's sunset after another day on the water.
10. Notice that it looks like rain and take down the gazebo so as not to get it wet

Pool training

Come and join Water confidence, Rolling and Self Assisted rescue training in small boats in the Glen Innes Pool. Once we have a solid list of 15-20 Club people we can schedule some nights in the pool 7:30-8:45. This cuts the cost down to \$10-\$15 per session. We have the choice of several nights of the week, so let me know your preference.



Contact **Ken Marsh** 09 8177357 or 0275 45 11 74.

Events calendar summary

14 May - Chilli, Spice and Curry night on Rangitoto
28 May - Poetry Night on Rangitoto

4-6 June - Queens Birthday Weekend at Otakawhe Bay Lodge, Waiheke Is.

Scheduled Club trips

14 May - Chilli, Spice and Curry night on the Rangitoto Deck.

Club social night, meet at Okahu Bay 3.00pm for a 3.30pm departure, paddle across to the Rangitoto Is, stay the night at the old scout bach. Please bring along your favourite Indian, Thai, Indonesian or Malay food, BYO. There will be a prize for the hottest, meanest and spiciest food. Cost for the night's accommodation will be \$6.00.

Contact **Morgan Lewis** on 6204005 or email morganl@xtra.co.nz

28 May - Poetry Night on the Rangitoto Deck.

Club social night, meet at Okahu Bay 3.00pm for a 3.30 pm departure, paddle across to the Rangitoto Is, stay the night at the old scout bach. Please bring along your favourite poets' works and have a bit of fun reciting to one and all. Bring along a pot luck dinner for the evening meal, BYO, there will be a Poets BBQ breakfast, bacon and eggs, hash browns. Cost of the night's accommodations will be \$6.00.

Contact **Morgan Lewis** on 6204005 or email morganl@xtra.co.nz.

4-6 June Queens Birthday Weekend at Otakawhe Bay Lodge - Waiheke Is.

Join us for Queens Birthday weekend at Otakawhe Bay, spend the weekend exploring around Rotoroa, Pakatoa, Ponui and Tarahiki Islands or visit the Te Matuku Marine Reserve.



Otakawhe Bay Lodge is a large two storied building with lounge, four surrounding bunk rooms and front enclosed verandah. The lounge has a supply of books, magazines and games, TV and video, CD and tape player are available by arrangement.



The Lodge can sleep up to 36 persons. A three metre wide verandah surrounds most of the building, just 5 metres from high tide mark, there are outstanding marine views. The Lodge has separate male and female ablutions on the ground floor, the kitchen has been completely renovated and is well equipped with all the mod cons. The weekend will be self catering and the cost for the weekend accommodation will be \$38.00.

Contact **Morgan Lewis** on 6204005 or email morganl@xtra.co.nz.

Regular Tuesday evening paddles

Now that daylight saving has ended, these night paddles are not suitable for novices who might, instead, try the Saturday morning paddle.

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.

Club 2005 AGM

The Club's AGM will be held at the Auckland Marine Rescue Centre (the Coastguard building), Mechanics Bay, Tamaki Drive, at 7.30pm, Tuesday 17 May, Ground Floor Lecture Room 1. Please come to this event, and please consider offering yourself for office, or nominating someone else. The Club is always looking for talent! It is hoped that the AGM will be followed by a visit to the Coastguard operations room, so you can see where your TRs end up! There's some wonderful hi-tech gear to ogle at. Ian Calhaem explains 'that it is well equipped with 7 stations, each with dual monitor, and multi-channel radio and telephone communications capabilities. Software technology enables operators immediately to identify callers by boat or call sign, and concurrently locate their position on the on-screen chart. In a marine emergency, this room becomes the operational centre for all major rescue services, including the Police, Fire and Ambulance.'

Officers

Nominations will be received up to the start of the meeting. Nominations received so far (with mover/seconded):

Patron

President I. Calhaem (Sandes/Noble)

Vice President

Secretary

Treasurer D. Matthews (Sandes/Lewis)

G. Fagan (Lomas/Strid)

P. Noble (Howe/Baker)

Trips

Publicity

R. Lomas (Patterson/Strid)

Safety

M. Randall (March/Baker)

Vine House

T. Arthur (Lomas/Sandes)

Newsletter

K. Howe (Patterson/ Strid)

Storage/Gear

G. Baker, [assistant R.

Lomas] (Sandes/Marsh)

Committee

B. Strid (Sandes/Patterson)

L. Sandes (Patterson/Howe)

Motions

At present there is one proposed motion [Calhaem/Lomas]:

'That the club appoints a subcommittee of three to:

- Liaise with the regional and City Councils over the development of the Orakei Marina
- Review options for establishing a permanent home for the Club
- Investigate building costs for clubrooms that are consistent with the economic constraints of the Club's Building Fund'

President's State of the Club address



As I write this, I'm taking a long earned break in Perth from normal life back home (and politics). Surprisingly, I haven't ventured in or on the water at all, despite the amazing weather we've been having! Probably because I'm not all that tempted by open deck kayaks that seem to be popular hire craft over here. I'm very impressed with the city's bikeways though, and have spent a lot of time becoming familiar with Perth on two wheels.

The committee has been humming along very nicely while I've been away. We've organised a new venue for club meetings (including the upcoming AGM), which is closer to home base and can accommodate us much better. It is the Marine Rescue Centre at Mechanics Bay - where Coastguard reside.

Please note in your diaries the AGM for May 17. Nominations for committee positions have been put forward and there is a motion to discuss (see elsewhere in this newsletter).

It's time for everyone to renew their club membership for this year. If you are a new member joined since 1 Jan this year, your membership already carries to 31 March 2006. Please try to complete this before the AGM, or at least do it on the night. If you've lost the membership renewal form that was in last month's newsletter, then you can download one from <http://geocities.com/tofska/memform.pdf>

We would like to extend a warm welcome to the following new members this month:

Ricardo Alvarez

Heidi Baker

Miva Splawinski

Michael Oakley-Browne

M@

[This is President M@'s last presidential statement and he has typically not wanted to write a valedictory - but on behalf of us all, M@, many thanks for your fine service - Ed.]

Poet's Corner

Forget about the All Blacks
The Tall Blacks and All Whites
Take no notice of the Black Sox
The Black Sticks and the like
Dismiss the swords of willow pros
Batting for the cash
The cyclists who ride for gold
Pugilists who bash.

It's the ordinary sheila
I'm here to talk about
And that includes the blokes as well
Before I hear them shout
They get up at some unearthly hour
And run for miles and miles
They simply do it just for fun
It really brings on smiles.

Skateboarders will spend their time
Perfecting one small move
They don't get paid for doing this
The skill's their treasure trove
Swimmers in the sea and pool
Rugby players too
Cricketers and round ball buffs
Tennis players, kung fu.

So three cheers for all the amateurs
Who go to work each day
And afterwards get out there
To bike, swim, skate, kick, throw, play.

There's a game I haven't mentioned
Beloved by readers of this verse
I salute you with my paddle
There're activities that are worse
Perhaps this paddling on the sea
Is the last of the amateur code
We don't do too much racing
In the medal or money mode.

One last thing to ponder
My dear guys and gals
Without all the dead keen amateurs
Would there be professionals?

Mike Randall

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@yahooogroups.com

Email event reminders, send blank email to:
Auckland-canoe-club-subscribe@yahooogroups.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:	Brian Strid	09 238 8084
	Philip Noble	575 3493
	Ian Calhaem	579 0512
	Peter Sommerhalder	631 5344
Newsletter:	Kerry Howe	krmhowe@xtra.co.nz

Club trip/event policies

Visit the Club website for details of Safety and other important 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.

To:

From: Auckland Canoe Club, PO Box 9271, Newmarket, Auckland

Pic of the month



Life on Mars, or anti-sandfly strategies in Fiordland?
(photo - Law)