



December 2013/ January 2014

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The early morning kayak. What it's all about. See story page 9.

PHOTO ROGER LOMAS

Auckland Canoe Club Information

Postal Address

P.O. Box 9271, Newmarket, Auckland

Clubrooms

Marine Rescue Centre, Mechanics Bay

Website

<http://www.aucklandcanoecub.org.nz>

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<i>President</i>	Ian Calhaem	579 0512
<i>Secretary</i>	Rona Patterson	
<i>Treasurer</i>	Matthew Crozier	817 1984
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(for kayak hire, or any related questions)

storage@aucklandcanoecub.org.nz
(for questions about storing kayaks in the locker)

Club Trip/Event Policies

Visit the Club website for details of safety and other important policies.

Contacting trip/event organiser

You must notify the trip organiser in advance of your intention to go on a trip. Organisers need to know numbers and to be able to contact you if the plan changes.

You must also discuss with the organiser 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 call the trip co-ordinator.

Club Banking Details

<i>Bank</i>	BNZ
<i>Branch</i>	Newmarket
<i>Account</i>	02-0100-0023453-000
<i>Name</i>	Auckland Canoe Club
<i>Particulars</i>	Your FULL name (Initials are not enough to identify some members with common names)
<i>Code</i>	Either SUBS, STORAGE, HIRE, OTHER (depending on what you are paying for)

If your payment is for several items, then please make **separate** payments for **each** item.

IMPORTANT

If you are depositing money to the Club Account please ensure that you include YOUR name so that the Treasurer knows who deposited the money.

Internet Banking

All major banks have set up Auckland Canoe Club as a registered payee for internet banking.

This means that you can pay to

Auckland Canoe Club

without having to enter the account number.

Check with your bank.

Kayak Hire

To book a kayak, enter details in the diary. Check diary before taking a kayak.

Kayak Hire Rates

Single kayaks

Daily hire – out am, back pm \$20.00

Half day – out am, back am
out pm, back pm \$10.00

Double kayaks

Daily hire – out am, back pm \$30.00

Half day – out am back am
out pm back pm \$15.00

- Please enter details of hire in register and on an envelope.
- Put money in envelope and place envelope in honesty box.
- **No I.O.U.s!**
- Carry or wheel kayaks to water.
- No seal launching.
- Please wash kayaks before returning to rack.
- Report faults or problems on the faults/problems sheet.

Regular Events

Vine House Weekends



On one weekend each month we have the use of Vine House. This gem in Mahurangi Harbour is a 2 km paddle from Sullivan's Bay, which is the ARC park at the end of the Mahurangi West Road, first on the right past Puhoi.

The house sleeps 10 and has all creature comforts. Bring sleeping bag, pillow case and food. A shared meal and nibbles is the norm for Saturday night, so bring your goodies.

Lagoon Bay is very tidal, so bringing a kayak trolley is a good idea. The range of paddling is endless, e.g. Waiwera, Warkworth, Kawau Island, Motuora Island – your choice. Or just rest and read and enjoy this tranquil and special place. We recommend you take a carry bag to get all your gear up the track to the house. Secure parking is at Sullivan's Bay. Leave a note on your dashboard reading "Vine House Volunteer" when you park in front of the ranger's house.

Please ring to book a bed, and for detailed directions. **Trevor 817 7357 or Matt 817 1984.**

Saturday Morning Coffee Cruise

Most Saturday mornings some club members do a short paddle from the club lock up at Okahu Bay.

We set off from the lock up at 9.00, returning by 12.30. The level is fairly easy and you can nearly always hire a club kayak. The route depends on the tide and the weather. We often paddle out to Bean Rock lighthouse and then stop at Kohi Beach for coffee in a local cafe before paddling back.

Join us for a relaxed paddle. It's a great way to meet people in the club.

Be aware: People don't go every week. You might go one week when no-one else happens to turn up.

You should have basic paddling skills to join this group, you will be responsible for yourself.

Note: Paddlers under 18 to be accompanied by a guardian!

For more information, go to:

<http://www.mapmyrun.com/routes/view/127561>

NEW MEMBERS



Welcome

The Committee extends a warm welcome to the following new members ...

Neil Heilemann
and Matthew Haley



Deadline for Next Newsletter

15 January 2014

Poet's Corner – #1

McKenzie Bay
On a fine Spring day
Out with the tide
The wind behind
Walk up to the top
Lunch on the rocks
Gannets wheeling
Diving feeding
Back to the mainland
Back with the tide
Would you believe it
The wind behind.

Mike Randall

Poet's Corner – #2

Thumb up and a grin
From the swimmer
Just finished
Ample reward
For the absolute pleasure
Of bobbing about
On the waves
In the harbour
Where workaday athletes
Swimming their hearts out
Just for the fun
The personal challenge
That reap no rewards
Save that wonderful feeling
'I've done it'.

Mike Randall

Club Christmas Picnic Judges Bay, Sunday 8 December 2013

If paddling to Judges Bay, please assemble at Okahu Bay at 10.00 am on Sunday 8 December. Please bring food for a shared picnic and a small wrapped gift for Santa's sack to the value of \$5.00. If paddling is not possible then just turn up at Judges Bay.

All welcome.

Cross-harbour swim escorts – 2014

Each year, as a fund-raising activity, our club provides kayak escorts for swimmers in the Auckland Central Masters Swimming programme. This is a series of four events running along or across the harbour. From a kayaker's point of view, the swim escorts are a chance to catch up with other kayakers on the water, raise some money for the club, look after swimmers. Enjoy refreshments on the beach afterwards.

Here are the dates for the upcoming summer season; put them in your diary!

Swim	Date	Start	Finish	Tide
St Heliers to Tamaki Yacht Club	Sunday 2nd February 2014	09:00am	90 mins	10:07am
Rangi Wharf to St Heliers	Sunday 23rd February 2014	12:30pm	120 mins	14:17pm

5-day rookie solo kayak/camping trip around Great Barrier Island

Jeremy Fowler

Short version: Left Port Jackson (Coromandel Peninsula) on Monday 11th Nov 2013, proceeding in an anti-clockwise direction around Gt Barrier, returning Friday 15th. Great Barrier, great island, great trip, great weather.

Long version: Had a surprisingly good night Sunday night's sleep in the passenger seat at the Port Jackson DOC camp.

Monday morning: Couldn't pick up the Now-casting weather channel, and so I made the go decision based on Sunday's weather report. Tide-wise there wasn't any time to waste, with low tide nearly there, and packing the kayak took a good while. It was 07h15 before I was on the water.

The wind was rather stronger than I would have liked but it was almost exactly in the right direction. Once out of Port Jackson bay it was definitely stronger than I wanted.

This was the first time I had loaded my kayak up, and with the wind and the waves from behind it was steering very strangely. I battled to keep the nose pointed in the right direction, often making multiple paddle strokes on the same side, and frequently having to make negative (braking) steering strokes, even with the rudder on full lock. The kayak nose was veering up to about 60 deg either side of the heading.

The white horses made for rather too much excitement. With the wind against the now incoming tide the waves were steep and multi-directional and constant concentration was needed. My shirt was very wet, one shocker of a white horse broke right over my left shoulder. The noise of them breaking behind me was rather scary, too scary to try and look back at. The deck was often under water although the deck bags did a good job of diverting most away from the spray skirt. And I had stupidly not tied down my bottles, relying on the bungy cords to hold them in. They were both washed off, I know not where.

A couple of times I had my heart in my mouth thinking I was going over. I didn't have confidence in my ability to roll the heavily laden kayak and I didn't fancy having to do a self-recovery in this chop. It would be difficult to bail out faster than it came in. A special sealable port for the pump in the spray-skirt might be a good idea? I must also modify the Eco Bezhig rudder to increase the steering power. (If anyone has tried this I will be glad to hear of it.)

Anyway, all good things come to an end and it was with definite relief and thankfulness that I got into the relative shelter of the east side of Great Barrier. I could now take a breather and listen to the Now-casting channel, and was rather horrified to hear: "...Channel Island: peak – 31, average – 27...". That explained a lot of the mayhem in the channel.

I can't say that I had to change heading at all to compensate for the incoming tide, which I had expected to have to.

There was a crayfish boat working under the cliffs here, which I approached, and John kindly said that he would forward my safe arrival message to Emmy, the Great Barrier channel 1 operator. He even more kindly gave me a crayfish!, which made a great addition to dinner. (Although it made me feel like a psychopath, trying get the creature into a small billy and boil it.)

John advised me to press on up to Medlands Beach, rather than stopping at Rosalie Bay – the forecast was for easterly swells – so I kept plugging away northwards.

The gusts coming over the cliffs hit from all directions, some with great force; sometimes the only option was to bend low and hold the stationery paddle tight and low.

A German tourist on the beach at Medlands Beach could direct me to the pleasant DOC campsite – rather a long slog along the loose sand – and the first thing was a welcome although cold shower to get the salt out of everything. And then breakfast, at about 15h00, followed in short order with afternoon tea and the conscience-stricken dinner a couple of hours later.

It took me a fair while to erect the new 1-man tent I had just bought, and to "set up shop". Bits of drying washing hither and thither.

Tuesday morning: Started packing at first light, and was ready to roll by 07h30, after a stop at the local recycling bins to pick out a suitable bailer to replace the one that got washed overboard. The same longish haul of about 350m before the kayak was afloat, although the borrowed C-tug wheels worked well. It was a pleasure paddling in the much calmer morning, going up the long Medlands Beach area, although the old body could still feel the effects of yesterday's battering.

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5-day rookie solo kayak/camping trip around Great Barrier Island

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Rangiwhakaea Bay.

After the beaches and into the rocky shores the incoming 1–2m easterly swells cause havoc where they bounce off the cliffs, and it was necessary to concentrate to stay upright. The wave interferences cause funny little whitecaps to be thrown up and powerful paddle strokes are no good as sometimes the stroke misses the water; more gentle careful strokes being called for.

A breakfast stop at Whangawahia Bay made a welcome break from the slop, and then I carried on up to beautiful Rangiwhakaea Bay. Here I decided to sleep on the beach under the bough of a great Pohutukawa, on a groundsheet, with a hollow for the hips. Surprisingly comfortable and reminiscent of old army days, although the dew next morning was much heavier than expected.

Amazing stars in the absence of all the light pollution.

There was no VHF coverage here, so I wasn't able to let Emmy know that I was OK.



Approaching Needles Point.

The next morning, **Wednesday**, before setting out early, I radioed a passing ship on the eastern horizon and they relayed a message.

The trip up along the rugged eastern and northern part of the island is dramatic. The bounce back from the swells made the going on the eastern side no relaxing jaunt.

As soon as I came around the top through the channel, with the northernmost rocks still to the north, the swell and bounce was gone and one could enjoy the stark beauty calmly.

The sinking of the SS *Wairarapa* here at Miners Head nearly 120 years ago is sobering. One of the pride of New Zealand ships wrecked, with about half the lives lost. Wikipedia says: "Many men, including a large portion of the crew, took to one of the lifeboats, leaving women and children behind." Another confirmation of the puniness of mankind, which this kayak trip reinforced.



Near Miners Head.

Breakfast at Miners Cove restored the energy levels, and it was a relatively easy cruise to the next stop, Katherines Bay.



Miners Cove.

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5-day rookie solo kayak/camping trip around Great Barrier Island

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The granddaddy of Pohutukawas at Nimaru Bay.

There were large numbers of jelly fish around. There is a beautiful tunnel through the headland coming into Katherines Bay, which would be worth snorkelling some time.

Another idyllic spot on the beach at Nimaru Bay behind the floats of mussel beds in Katherines Bay, though considerably more crowded than the last one, here there were up to 3 boats visible somewhere on the horizon, and even a couple of houses across the big bay! Quite the metropolis.

Next morning, **Thursday**, I set off not too early. It required a definite application of willpower to get out of the comfortable sleeping bag – again, straight onto the sand, but this time inside the tent again.

Nearing Kaikoura Island, I was surprised to see a big group of kayakers ahead; they turned out to be Matamata school children under the guidance of 2 Outdoor Pursuits Centre instructors. The instructors were using me as an object lesson for their pupils, pointing to the various safety features, leashes, etc.

The paddle was against wind and tide this time, and each day the energy levels were just that much less than the day before, so the going was tougher than the distance warranted. (I wondered how many days it would take before one's body adapted and stamina built up again.)

Chasing a slow-motoring yacht helped pass the distance, going inshore of the Broken Islands.

A fishing party on a flash Westhaven launch pointed out the entrance to Whangaparapara Harbour for me. It is very well hidden when coming from the north, and I thought they might be "pulling my leg", but true enough, there it was. It was great to have a coffee and a couple of toasted sandwiches on the deck of Great Barrier Lodge, after which I set myself up as the sole occupant of "The Green", the pleasant DOC camp there.

The tides were good for a midmorning Colville channel crossing on Friday, back to Port Jackson, so I looked forward to a slow start on Friday.

Next morning, **Friday**, the weather was great, with just a gentle headwind; the wind was due to be greater on Saturday, and I now had a healthy respect for Colville Channel, so I gave Tryphena Harbour a skip and headed straight back to Port Jackson – the Coromandel clearly visible in the distance. The gannets were out in full force this morning, and the vista was dotted with hundreds of them, flying, diving, swimming. Beautiful!

Coastguard confirmed the needed heading was 180° magnetic, so I plugged away at it, each km passing rather slowly. Doing these distances gave me the chance to revisit the great existential and moral questions, but thankfully just as a visitor, not an inmate. The almost blind leap of faith required initially has broken the code of these hard questions for me, and made sense of what was otherwise a quagmire. Thank God!

A long line, probably 300m long, of dolphins was visible at one point, with some, near the rear, probably youngsters, doing somersaults, etc. Having fun, or were they fighting?

I never saw much else of underwater wild life. It must have been a shark that I saw on the Monday, I just caught a glimpse of an approximately 350mm wide body as it took something on the surface. And plenty of penguins of course. Interesting the way they are constantly on the lookout for danger from below too. My lure had got snagged on a rock and got lost, which ended my attempts to have fish for dinner.

Coming in to Port Jackson bay was the only time that I really noticed the notorious tide. The swirls and ripples around the submerged rocks ahead against which the swells were breaking indicated that there was a current, but I was shocked at the strength of it. Adrenalin kicked in and a few minutes of serious exertion at 45° to the desired heading were needed to keep safe there.

The wardens of the DOC camp at Port Jackson are stars. Jenny and Len had earlier gone to a lot of trouble to be able to switch off the internal light of my car, which I had stupidly left on. They had taken an interest in my jaunt from the start, and the cup of tea that Jenny met me with was very welcome.

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Obituary – Alex Carr

Memories from Jim Mason and Peder Hansen

Alex Carr, long-serving ACC officer, died at Wellington on Friday, 1 November.

Alex was a close friend at school. We would sit under the Pohutukawas for lunch at Takapuna Grammar and discuss how there would be no more wars if people could speak more easily to each other. They can, now, but cell phones don't seem to have made the difference we expected.

Alex father had a radio shop in Devonport. He used to give me old glass valves to play rocket ships with.

Alex sailed with me occasionally in our Z Class yacht "Kestrel" and later, at University, we went tramping and canoeing.

We formed the N.Z. Canoeing Association as our members spread throughout New Zealand after they qualified with their degrees. We met, regularly, at Auckland University for film and slide evenings.

Students Association complained it wasn't a University club, to use the Varsity Halls, so we quickly formed the Auckland University Canoe Club and the Auckland Canoe Club – and all continued to meet there as before!

We published "White Water – Canoeing in New Zealand" to record our exploits with bus loads of canoeists throughout both North and South Islands.

As well as making his own trips, Alex joined us on many first canoe descents of our rivers. Later he took an active role as Secretary and in editing national race results and articles in White Water. He wrote a monumental history of canoeing for the Encyclopaedia of New Zealand and followed me as National Canoe Slalom champion in 1959.

The Wanganui was our most popular river with a 150 mile Christmas cruise held every year during the fifties.

Both Alex and I took our fiancés down the Wanganui as a prelude to marrying them. They both qualified, as canoeists, and brides!

It would have been early 1960's when I first met Alex at the Manawatu river, site of the NZ canoeing slalom championships.

Gates on wires had been strung across the river which was fast but clean. About 100 people with canoes, cars and trucks were on the low level stretch of river bank.

All was set to begin when a local farmer came in his battered Landrover shouting at us to get everybody to high ground as a major upstream log jam was breaking up.

Within minutes we were all on high ground with canoes, cars and trucks, stunned listening to the roar of the river as logs, uprooted trees, leaf and branch debris in the muddy water swept past about 3 metres above the riverbank we had just left. Most of us would no doubt have drowned.

When the flow slowed I saw Alex launch his canoe and with great skill slalom between logs and branches. This was canoeing at its best.

His comment when coming back to the river bank was that this had been the most reckless but also the most exhilarating thing he had ever done.

5-day rookie solo kayak/camping trip around Great Barrier Island

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Jenny, the kindly warden, with a cuppa.

In all, a GREAT trip. Each day had been about 28–30kms, except for Monday, which had been about 37kms. I am keen to do more of this sort of thing.

I found the notes by Colin Quilter on his Great Barrier experiences very useful, also the book "Coastal Sea Kayaking in New Zealand" by Kerry Howe.

I would advise anyone to seriously respect the Colville channel area in a wind, also the rocky areas on the east coast when there is a swell running.

I noticed that the "Designated camping area" signs had washed away in some areas, or maybe they had been stolen? Anyway, only a bushman tracker will be able to find where I bivvied, and not at all after the spring tide, so I don't expect to be prosecuted or censured.

ANOTHER YEAR

Roger Lomas



Most of our trips are local and involve between 2 to 4 hours of steady paddling with a cuppa stop midway. We pride ourselves on these cuppa stops and a careful eye is always scanning the coast for the right spot. It can make or break a trip getting it right. Some of these cuppa stops can last for a while if all the ingredients are right. We can easily idle away a pleasant hour or so reviewing the week that was or solving the world's woes. During the warmer months a swim is part of the break and we also partake in our annual mid-winter dip as well.

So another year ticks over and it is timely to realise that the early morning group has been active for over 25 years now. During that time we have organised over 1500 paddle adventures which

have catered for over 6000 participants.

Our focus has always been to enjoy kayaking in a safe and sensible environment. So far we have managed to achieve this. Along the way we have all upgraded our skills and seamanship and formed many fine friendships. Roll on 2014.

Roger

Before the clock ticks over at the end of December, the lads of the early morning kayak group will have logged up over 70 days of paddling this year. We are all agreed that the little bit of effort required to attend these early morning events has been more than adequately rewarded, even when the weather is a bit marginal. Once under way things always seem to get better.

We have had a boost in numbers during the year and sometimes it has been necessary to organise paddles for both Saturday and Sunday to cater for demand. This year we have not had to cancel any paddles because of the weather. Our early morning group has fine-tuned a good paddle alert system over the years. This involves a text message being sent out to the regular hard core nucleus of the group early on Friday evening. This message will advise of the launch site and the on the water departure time. The stalwarts of the group have all become conditioned to prepping their kayaks and gear every Friday regardless of the forecast, knowing that a suitable paddle and venue will be arranged.

When it comes to kayaking, it is a well-known fact that the best conditions are usually to be found in the early morning. We are fortunate in being able to choose between two distinct tide zones in the Auckland area and our paddle departure points alternate to suit. Our paddles are timed to make the best use of the tidal flows. We have acquired a good knowledge of the region and use this to obtain the optimum paddle for the forecast conditions of the day.

If you would like to be part of the early morning group, be mindful of the requirement for regular commitment and a suitable degree of fitness and skill.

