



May 2014

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Annual General Meeting Wednesday May 21

See details on page 11



*Just another sunny day in Fiordland. Blue sky and calm sea.
For the real story see page 4.*

PHOTO COLIN QUILTER

Auckland Canoe Club Information

Postal Address

P.O. Box 9271, Newmarket, Auckland

Clubrooms

Marine Rescue Centre, Mechanics Bay

Website

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

Officers

<i>Patron</i>	Jim Mason	
<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 ...

Zavara Farquhar, Jacob Forde and Mindy Yea.



Deadline for Next Newsletter

15 May 2014

Along the Fiordland coast

Colin Quilter

Each year, in February, I drive to some part of the NZ coast, load three week's food into my kayak, and have a holiday. Not an expedition, but a holiday. I expect to enjoy the camping and walking during these trips as much as the paddling. So last year, when I told friends that my destination in February 2014 would be the outer coast of Fiordland, they were sceptical. "Enjoy it?" they asked. "Think wind and rain. Think big swells and rough seas. Sandflies. Wet ground and bad campsites. Stony beaches and hard landings."



My plywood Sea Bear, now 29 years old. She deserves better than hard landings on rocky shores! This photo was taken near the end of the trip, by a trampler whom I met fishing from the rocks in Supper Cove.

I had to admit, they had a point. Would it be possible to enjoy a holiday under such conditions? Or would the trip become, instead, a struggle to reach whatever place was chosen to be the finish-line, a journey in which pleasure came not during the trip but afterwards, in retrospect?

In order to find out I packed the car in Auckland and drove south for 3½ days. The only place in Fiordland where you can drive to the water's edge is at Deep Water Basin, at the head of Milford Sound. I parked my car there, slid my kayak into the water, and headed for the open sea. Just inside the entrance to Milford Sound is Anita Bay, where I expected to camp and wait until the weather allowed me to head south along the open coast. But once at Anita Bay the view outside was so tranquil that I landed just for a hasty lunch, then paddled out to sea and turned left.

The first indentation in the coast south of Milford Sound is Transit Beach, and I was curious about it. In preparing for this trip I had spent hours at home on the computer, traversing slowly along the Fiordland coast using the satellite images provided by Google Earth. I had zoomed in on every indentation along the coast, large or small, trying to judge from the image whether an easy landing might be possible there. Then I had marked my paper map of Fiordland

accordingly. After studying the satellite image I had written alongside Transit Beach, "Surf beach. But landing might be possible inside a small reef at the northern end." Sure enough, when I approached Transit Beach in the early afternoon there was indeed a fast-moving rip which had created a channel tucked inside a small rocky promontory at the northern end. It was invisible from seaward, and I would not have guessed its presence without the satellite information. I landed easily to take photos, but timed my exit badly and got wet. No matter.

Later that afternoon I reached Poison Bay. After paddling through the river mouth at the southern end of the beach I entered a sheltered lagoon, and found an excellent mossy campsite on the riverbank. Windy weather kept me there for two days, but with a big fly erected above my tent I could leave the vestibule of the tent open, and cook under cover.

Even for someone used to them, the sandflies were a shock; Poison Bay is unusually bad for them. Outside the tent I covered up with clothing: socks and sandals, polyprop long-johns with shorts over them. Long-sleeved polyprop singlet with a polo neck. Lightweight polyprop balaclava and gloves.

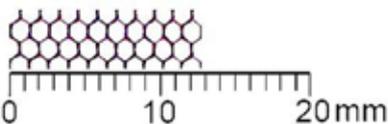
Continued on page 5 ➤



Sandflies are attracted to heat, in this case a cup of coffee. Many fall in and drown. At first they float in little rafts; then, happily, they sink. I soon gave up trying to avoid drinking them.

Thus the only uncovered skin was a circle of face, which I sprayed about once an hour with insect repellent. I used a heavy-duty repellent containing Picaridin, (a recent Consumer test found repellents based on “natural” ingredients to be ineffective). I took a head-net but found it of little use; you cannot eat or drink through it, and the 20 sandflies which got caught inside when I placed it over my head, made the most of their opportunity.

Inside the tent was less satisfactory. To my dismay, I found that the insect screen in the door of my tent was of slightly too coarse a mesh. My tent leaked sandflies the way a boat leaks water. Of the thousands



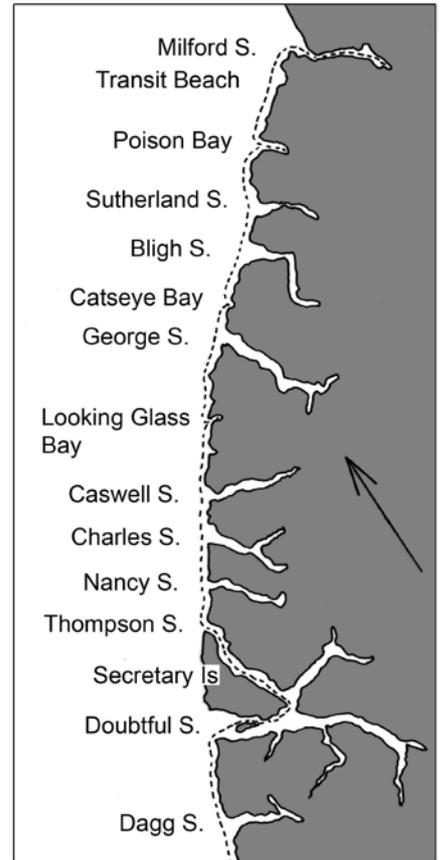
Mesh diameter 1.3mm approx.

A photograph of the mesh from my tent door, with a millimeter scale beneath. I think that a mesh diameter of, say, 1.0mm would be effective in keeping out all Fiordland sandflies. Check your own tent if you are planning a trip there!

swarming outside, about five per minute were able to force their way through the mesh. That’s 300 per hour. Over two days in Poison Bay thousands of sandflies got in.

What saved me was that at home I had soaked the fabric of the inner tent in a solution of Permethrin, which is a contact insecticide. Every sandfly which entered my tent, died in about 20 minutes. Over time a carpet of little black bodies accumulated on the floor. There were drifts, even small dunes of sandfly corpses. I lay on them and among them; they found their way into every part of my food, clothing and gear. Sigh.

On the next calm day I made 50km southward along the coast. My lunch-stop after passing Sutherland and Bligh Sounds was at Catseye Bay. There is a wonderful sweep of white sand here, and the river leads back into a broad, open valley. I was tempted to stop for longer but it seemed reckless to waste good weather, so I carried on to Looking Glass Bay, which was



a disappointment. Waves broke onto a beach which was all stones or boulders except for a narrow strip of sand at the northern end, (and that exposed only at low tide); and in the dense scrub behind the beach, the tiny piece of flat ground which I eventually found to sleep on would have become a swamp if it had rained.

Another calm day took me south past Caswell, Charles and Nancy Sounds. However the day came with a sting in its tail, an event which banished my complacent attitude to paddling in Fiordland. Around 1pm, 40km since breakfast and on a glassy sea, I noticed clouds beginning to form in a distinctive layer about half-way up the seaward face of the coastal mountains. I thought they improved the grandeur of the coast, and was unconcerned when, minutes later, a breeze arrived from seaward.



A happy paddler, high above Doubtful Sound. The view looks eastward towards Deep Cove.

Quickly it strengthened, and soon I was struggling to gain the entrance to Thompson Sound against 25 knots of wind and short, sharp waves. I knew the wind must be a sea breeze, but I was shocked at its intensity, and the speed with which it had arrived. A tough half-hour later I turned the corner into Thompson Sound, which brought the wind around to my back, and found an easy landing on a beautiful white-sand beach at the mouth of the Pandora River. From the beach, Thompson Sound showed an army of white-caps marching southwards. It was a sobering sight.

On reflection, I am sure that this wind – to call it a sea “breeze” is a complete misnomer – occurs when, on fine mornings, the bare rock of the Fiordland mountains heats up rapidly in the sun. That heat is transferred to the air above, and (through a mechanism that most people understand) an intense sea breeze is generated. I suppose that the layer of coastal cloud (which I came to fear) forms when moist air begins to move in from the ocean and rises as it hits the coastal mountains. It expands and cools, and the water vapour condenses to form clouds. Not surprisingly, I found that on rainy or overcast days the sea breeze did not appear, and then I sometimes had calm conditions all day. I expect that on fine days in winter, when the feeble sun is too weak to warm the land, the sea breeze will also be absent; perhaps this accounts for the often-repeated assertion that winter is the best season for fine, calm weather in Fiordland.

There is a DOC hut in Thompson Sound, at Deas Cove. I was tired, and would have stayed there, but found it in a squalid mess. Six sleeping bags, gear strewn about, blackened sausages congealed in a dirty frying pan, cartons of beer and ammunition. No names in the Hut Book. I formed my own conclusions, paddled south and found a tiny campsite a few kilometres further on. Next day, with a windy forecast, I reached another DOC hut, much older and less often used, at “The Gut” on the south side of Secretary Island. I felt like a rest. The hut was buried in forest, with a gloomy and abandoned feeling to it; but tidy, dry and empty. It was a sanctuary, and I loved it. And did I mention – no sandflies!

From the beach near the hut a marked route leads steeply up a spur to the north, towards Mt Grono.



A fly large enough to cover the tent makes life in the rain much easier; and in Fiordland you need all the help you can get!



The mountain radio: an excellent service provided at modest cost by dedicated operators.

After two hours of scrambling next morning I reached the bushline, and beyond that a minor summit at about 1,000m elevation where wonderful views opened out. To the west, in the mouth of Doubtful Sound, was Bauza Island, named after an officer in the expedition of Alessandro Malaspina; (the Spaniards were the first Europeans to enter Doubtful Sound,

just 23 years after Cook had named it). To the east I could see nearly all the way to Deep Cove, and to the north, Thompson Sound. In the distance on three sides the bare Fiordland mountain tops receded, rank after rank, to the horizon. It was a view, and a day, to make the spirits soar. My wanderings across the open tops were limited because I had foolishly brought little food and water, and by spear-grass which easily penetrated socks and sandals: but by the time I returned to my hut in the afternoon, I was thoroughly contented.

The forecast now indicated a calm day on the outer coast, then freshening north-westerlies ahead of a front. My weather forecasts came via a single-sideband radio rented from the Canterbury Mountain Radio Service. At 8.30am and 7.30pm the base station operators read out regional and mountain forecasts for the South Island, and for my benefit, the marine forecast for Sea Area Milford or Puysegur. They then took calls from those of us out "in the field," (all tramping parties except for me) in which we gave our location and intentions. This service, operated mostly by unpaid volunteers, has to be the best value \$55 per week can buy.

I was afloat by torchlight next morning, knowing that a sea breeze would likely force me off the water by lunchtime. Past Dagg Sound and the Coal River, an albatross soaring in at intervals to give me a curious look. Then, after 45km, approaching Breaksea Island, clouds began to form against the coastal hills. I knew what that signalled. When the wind came from the northwest, anxious to get ashore, I hoisted my sail

and we flew southwards into Breaksea Sound. On the south side of the sound, the Acheron Passage offers an inside route to Dusky Sound. There was the mouth of the Passage ahead; long surfing runs now, the sail (although reefed) pulling hard enough to drive us up the back of the wave in front, through the crest, and helter-skelter down the next face. I didn't like it, only just in control, but the faster we went the sooner we would get there. Half-way down Acheron Passage, Wet Jacket Arm opened up on the left, not sure how to quit the sail in this weight of wind but down it came, and minutes later we entered Muscle Cove at the mouth of Wet Jacket Arm, into still water. In the distance



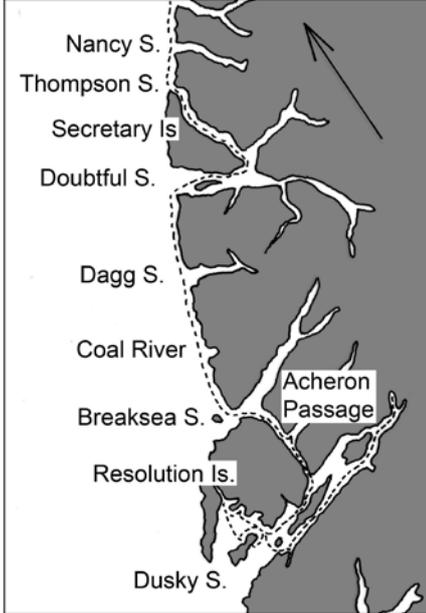
Running into Breaksea Sound, before a freshening sea breeze. Note the horizontal cloud band half-way up the distant hills. I came to recognize this as a warning of strong winds to come.

Along the Fiordland coast

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the southern part of the Acheron Passage was white. Just in time! My knees were shaking.

There was an excellent campsite in the bush behind the beach. In the evening the sea breeze died away (of course) and next morning I used the slowly-building north-westerly of the incoming Low to sail through to Dusky Sound. So that was the Acheron Passage done in a total of about two hours! Although, on a map, the



Passage looks like a sheltered route linking Breaksea and Dusky Sounds, northwesterly winds are funnelled along it and in the past other paddlers heading northwards have had a bitter struggle to get through against strong headwinds.

I spent the next six days “sightseeing” in the outer part of Dusky Sound, camped first at Earshell Cove on the western side of Resolution Island, and later at Cascade Cove to the south. The weather was mostly overcast and sometimes wet, which I enjoyed because it removed the threat of sea breezes. I visited most of the historic locations which Charles and Neil Begg have described so well in their book *Dusky Bay: in the steps of Captain Cook* (Whitcombe & Tombs, 1966). As others have done, I stood silently in the forest on Astronomer’s Point and looked with astonishment at the moss-covered stumps of trees cut down by Captain Cook’s men in 1773. How could dead timber have lasted for 241 years? This is an eerie place, where time seems to hang in the air like a mist.

Once my sight-seeing instincts were satisfied, I had five day’s food left. Another Low was coming, predicted to bring northerlies of up to 65 knots and a 4-metre swell on the outside coast. To be honest, I was relieved, because I had been wondering whether I could make an attempt to get south to Chalky and Preservation Inlet. This forecast removed any doubt about what I should do. Sit tight! By evening the gale was roaring in the trees and williwaws were tearing clouds of spray from the surface of Cascade Cove. My tent fly had to come down or it would have been destroyed by the wind, and my poor little boat was blown over on the beach despite being heavy



A williwaw lifts spray from the surface of Cascade Cove. A tent buried deeply in the forest is not entirely protected from gusts like this.

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Along the Fiordland coast

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with gear, and being pulled partly into the trees. From the west came a low-frequency rumble, a sound so deep that it was felt more than heard. I realised it was the roar of breakers on the open coast several kilometres away. No place for a 64-year-old guy in a plywood kayak!

One day of south-westerlies was predicted after the front had passed, (before the wind turned northerly ahead of yet another one) and I put the wind to good use. With the sail pulling hard I ran 30km east to the sheltered waters of Supper Cove, at the head of Dusky Sound. By lunchtime I was installed in luxury at the DOC hut there; by afternoon I had arranged (by satellite phone) a helicopter to lift me out; and next day I found myself sitting with a meat pie and real coffee in main-street Te Anau! It all felt a bit surreal.

It remains only for me to answer the question I posed at the beginning of this story: is the goal of a paddling holiday along the Fiordland coast achievable, or does a trip in hard country like this become, inevitably, an expedition? I would like to

claim (as I have done for many previous trips) that every day was enjoyable, but I cannot. I began paddling south from Milford Sound in a relaxed frame of mind, but after bad experiences with sea breezes which hit with alarming intensity in fine, settled weather, I became increasingly "jumpy." I found myself paddling faster than I normally would, in an anxious frame of mind, and I looked with suspicion at every little puff of wind, wondering if it heralded something worse to come. Perhaps being a solo paddler makes one vulnerable to this sort of anxiety; with a companion it could be more easily laughed off.

I was surprised how cheerful I felt when finally I reached Supper Cove, and I realised then that without admitting it, I had been under some emotional strain before. I don't think one can have a light-hearted holiday in that frame of mind; but a memorable one, certainly.

(Reprinted from the "New Zealand Sea Canoeist".)

Poet's Corner

*Across to Browns
On a Friday morning
Autumn stillness
No wind warning.*

*Paddling East
Chatting together
Weekly companions
Birds of a feather.*

*Round the end
Across the gap
To Musick Point
Check it out on the map.*

*High tide coming
On the beach nearby
Out come the flasks
Sun up on high.*

*Colin regales
With stories of yacht
Positions mistaken
Emotions ran hot
Cycling miles
To meet up with the skipper
Great Barrier's roads
No place for a biker.*

*Tide surges in
Kayaks are wondering
Where shall we go
If carried out floating.*

*Talking and laughing
We pack up to go
Back to the world
Of worry and woe.*

*That world of depression
Of stress and aggression
Far from our minds
In our brief intermission.*

Mike Randall

Train Spotters and the A.G.M.

Roger Lomas

It was all looking good paddling wise in the weeks leading up to the Easter holidays. Our club website trips page was bulging with opportunities for members to get out and away on paddle adventures. In spite of the storm which did its best to deter us on the Thursday leading into holiday break, paddling happened. Even the Coromandel weekend went ahead with a couple of staunch stalwarts testing their skills out on the lumpy seas. Back in the big smoke the early morning kayakers were active as well.

Good Friday saw our small group heading up the harbour with the incoming tide. We were over on the North Shore side seeking shelter from the gusty northeast winds and the occasional shower that was sweeping through. Up past the Chelsea sugar refinery wharf is Kendall Bay. In these conditions it could be a pleasant place to stop for a cuppa. However the sun was still lurking behind a scudding squall cloud so we paddled on a bit further. Our intent was to use the push from the last of the incoming tide to assist us up towards Island Bay. Hopefully we would find a nice place for a cuppa along the way.

Just past the Kauri Point munitions wharf is a series of small bays. Onetaunga Bay is first. Unfortunately this is part of the military munitions storage area and

out of bounds. Fitzpatrick Bay is next. It has a sandy beach and backs onto the Kauri Point Domain. The sun still wasn't out, and even if it was, the tall pines behind the beach would steal the sun from us. Moving along and it was into Soldiers Bay. We occasionally cruise the periphery of this inlet, but in our haste to be elsewhere, have never lingered. The bay is bounded by a reserve on the northern side which offers no easy landing for cuppa thirsty kayakers. The southern side of Soldiers Bay is flanked by the tall trees of the Kauri Point Domain and again no easy landing.

At the head of the bay mangroves are well established and beyond has never looked inviting for thirsty and now hungry kayakers. We were just about to beat our way out of the bay, when a cry came from within the mangroves. One of our forward scouts had ventured into the shrubbery. He had spotted a small sand spit at the mouth of a stream which drains the hinterland beyond. It was sheltered from the wind, with a driftwood log to sit on. A restful tranquil setting, there was not a sight or sound of the city that surrounded us. As we tucked into our tea and biscuits, we thought that it just couldn't get any better, and then the sun came out.



Train Spotters and the A.G.M.

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Some people wonder why there are not many lady participants on our early morning group outings. Perhaps one of the reasons is because we like to indulge. Amongst the hard-core nucleus of the group are to be found; train nutters, ship watchers and plane spotters. Many of our adventures are deviously designed to slake the thirst for these passions. Earlier in the month we were very indulgent. We were out on the Manukau Harbour for a trip to Mangere Airport.

Our launch site was at Weymouth's Keith Park. One has to be careful at many of the Manukau launch sites, as most are not all tide accessible. Keith Park, which we have used many times before, is only suitable for a mud free launch and landing two hours either side of a good high tide. I cannot stress highly enough how important it is to get the tides right on the Manukau and for that matter, the other west coast harbours in our region. In the upper reaches of the harbour, mud happens. People remember bad experiences. As a consequence of mucking up with a poorly planned outing, many a budding trip leader has become a pariah.

A couple of our avid plane spotters, in their aviation eagerness, had us on the water some ten minutes early. Luckily, we didn't get our feet too muddy. Once clear of the clutches of the strong tidal stream that flows into the Pahurehure Inlet, the airport was

in sight. In good conditions it is a relatively easy paddle over to the end of the runway. On our recent trip, we made a detour out to an offshore fuel terminal where small coastal tankers berth. All that was needed now, to achieve total indulgence, would be for a train to have rumbled by. But that's another paddle.

Some important events to note in your diary will occur in the next couple of months. **On Wednesday the 21st May, the club AGM will be held.** This will take place at our usual venue, the Marine Rescue Centre. We get underway with the formal business at 7.30 pm sharp. At the conclusion of the AGM, it's time to relax and enjoy a club quiz night. This will have a kayaking theme and prizes. A light supper and hot beverages will be available. Then on Wednesday the 18th of June, Colin Quilter will lead off our 2014 Winter Lecture Series. This, once again, will be held at our Marine Rescue Centre venue.

Our club activities are being promoted on the club website. If you have a club related event that needs profile then follow the prompts and put it up on the events page yourself. Our club website and IT gurus, Ian Calhaem and Matt Crozier are available to assist members in website technicalities. Contact details can be found on page 2 of the newsletter and on the website.

Roger

