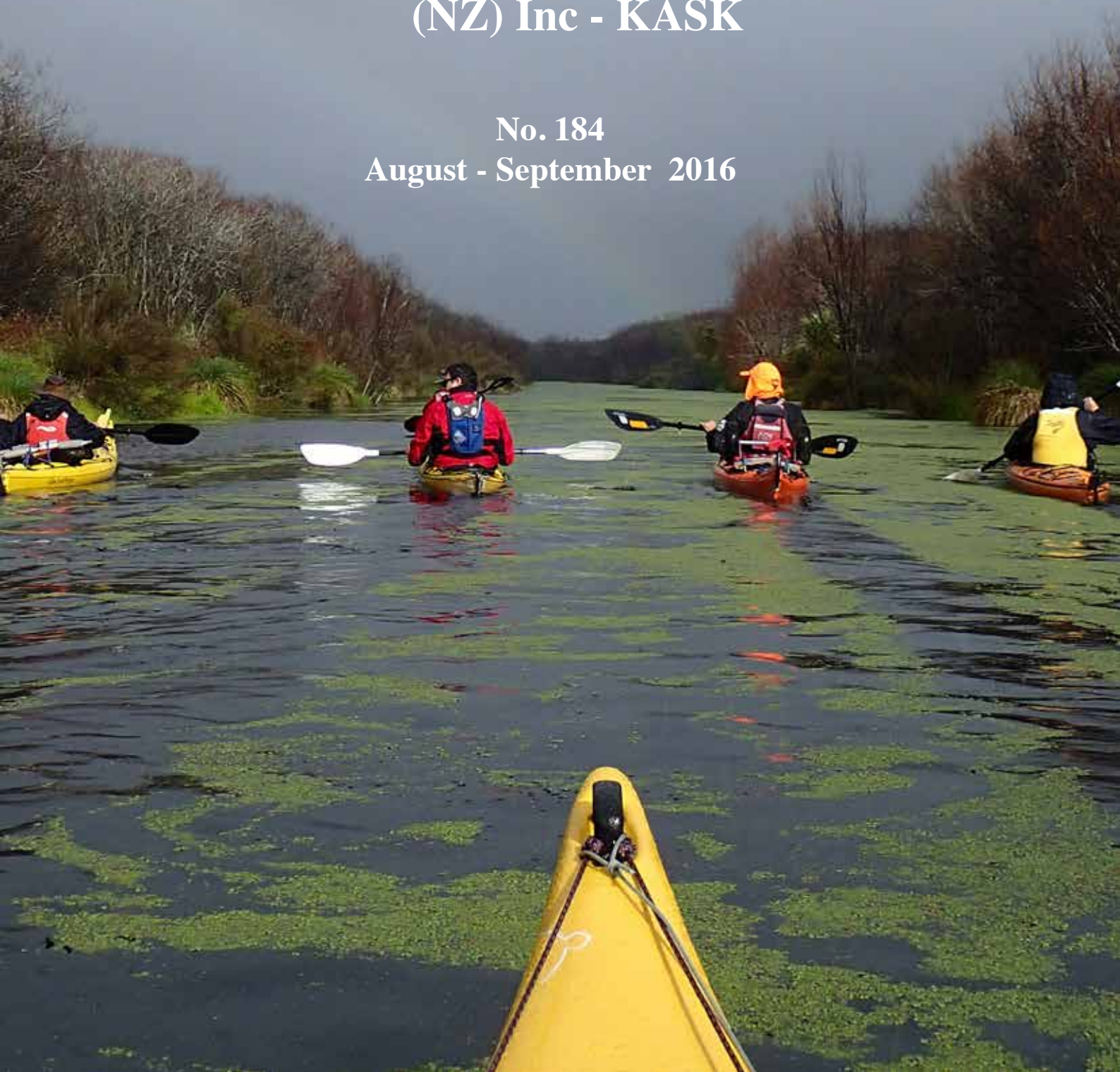


# NEW ZEALAND SEA CANOEIST

The Journal of the Kiwi  
Association of Sea Kayakers  
(NZ) Inc - KASK

No. 184  
August - September 2016









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<b>Deadline for next magazine:</b> <b>25 November 2016</b>	

**EDITORIAL****Lynn Paterson – Around NZ**

Lynn paddled into New Plymouth harbour on 30 September, and must have been rather pleased to have left the South Taranaki Bight astern.

As Lynn commenced her New Zealand circumnavigation from Takapuna (Auckland) on 27 September 2015, she has now spent over a year steadfastly working towards her goal of being the first paddler to complete a continuous paddle around the North, South and Stewart islands.

Since both Tara Mulvany and I both had a hard time with weather and sea conditions in the South Taranaki Bight, I view this section of coast as one of the big cruxes of a North Island circuit.

By Lynn's calculations, she has only 10 paddling days to reach Takapuna. Still ahead of her on the North Island's west coast are those vast harbour entrances of the Manukau and Kaipara, and that long surf (no landings) barrier of 90 Mile Beach before she rounds Cape Reinga. After that, the milk run south to Takapuna.

I asked Lynn for her retrospective view of her circuits of the South and Stewart islands (see page 9).

**Canterbury Regional Council Navigation Safety Bylaw 2016 Review**

Earlier this year I noted a proposed review of the Environment Canterbury (ECan) navigation bylaws, and was disappointed to see a clause on the wearing of a personal floatation device (PFD) with a listing exemptions including: 'persons on board a recreational craft that is less than 6 metres in length and which is propelled solely by oars or paddles when the vessel is underway....'

As our government has been unwilling to change the rules re compulsory wearing of PFDs in recreational craft under 6 metres, the regional councils have introduced their own rules, with the Waikato Regional Council leading the way. The exemption clause in the ECan review was way out of step with the members of the Safer Boating Forum and MNZ.

On 2 May, I provided a four-page submission to ECan, including the statistics for paddlecraft fatalities when PFDs were not worn, and asked for the PFD exemption clause to be deleted. On 5 July, KASK committee member Ian McKenzie spoke in support of the KASK submission at an ECan submission hearing. Finally on 26 September, Ian emailed with good news:

We have had regard to the officers' recommendation, and reasons for not supporting the submissions of KASK and Waikato Regional Council. However in this instance we do not agree with the officers that exemption subclause 5(2)(c) should be retained. We agree with KASK and Waikato Regional Council that this exemption subclause should be deleted.

At the Safer Boating Forum hosted by MNZ in Wellington 28 September, I heard that similar navigation bylaw reviews are underway in Bay of Plenty and Hawkes Bay. If local paddlers have any issues with safety bylaws and need support from KASK, please get in touch.

**Safer Boating Forum**

KASK is a member of the NZ Safer Boating Forum and also a data collection sub-group. The latter looks at how organizations are capturing recreational boating incident data, sharing the information, listing research data and reports.

**COVER:**

*Not a bad day for which 40 knot winds and heavy rain were forecast. The subtle hint of a rainbow in the background whilst paddling along the main channel of the Kopuatai wetland. See story on page 6. Photo: Dennis Hynes.*

**Top Left:** *Helen McMullen and John Gumbley at the rapid that marks the furthest extent of a side paddle up the Waipapa River. Photo: Dennis Hynes*

**Lower Left:** *Rex Barlow branching out in the Kopuatai Wetland. Photo: Dennis Hynes*

A report titled 'Summary of Recreational Boating Research conducted by Research NZ September 2016' was presented. It compared surveys undertaken in June/July of 2013/14 and that undertaken in March-April 2016. Only households with a land-line were surveyed.

Kayaks owned showed a small increase in numbers to 328,484. Given the fact that the questions asked did not take into account whether owners had more than one vessel, the number of paddlecraft owned in NZ must be way higher, given most of us own more than one kayak, and some of us have up to 10 kayaks!

This September 2016 forum marked the last meeting for Neil Murray who is retiring as head of Coastguard Boating Education. Neil has been a

regular paddler, kayaking across the harbour to the CG building at Westhaven Marina. He has been a great support for KASK with paddlecraft issues. Lindsay Sturt is also stepping down as 2IC of MNZ after something like 41 years as a public servant. Lindsay has always responded promptly to KASK queries re recreational boating issues, and always a supporter for KASK. Both Neil and Lindsay will be missed by the recreational boating community.

#### Thanks

To all the contributors for an excellent mix of paddling reports, technical tips and a couple of paddling misadventures (The 'Bugger!' file).

Special thanks to Dennis Hynes for his superb photos which grace the cover and page 2.

With Margot and Peter Sym's article and photos on paddling the waters and islands north of Vancouver Island, it is no wonder so many Kiwi paddlers head over to British Columbia during our winter.

Dave Winkworth, our regular correspondent from Aussie, has provided two meaty articles. His deck carry technique hopefully is never required, as it is only necessary in the event of a sinking or broken kayak.

Dave's cockpit cover article details how to build your own. Back in the dark ages, I used the shoulder straps of my sprayskirt to seal it over the cockpit coaming at night, but now a cockpit cover is just part of my essential paddling kit.

There are so many reasons for using a cockpit cover when your kayak is not on the water; keeping rain and sandflies out when in Fiordland, keeping nasty creepy, crawly creatures out when in tropical Queensland, keeping your PFD safe from keas and wekas, and minimizing wind resistance when the kayak is on the car's roof racks.

Keep safe on the water this spring  
Paul Caffyn

### KASK Committee 2016 - 2017

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David Welch	- Committee	email: davidjwelch58@gmail.com
KASK Administrator (Karen Grant)		email: admin@kask.co.nz

## KASK Kayak Fest 2017 Ponui Island, Hauraki Gulf 3 - 5 March 2017



**Secure your spot at this exciting event.  
We are 80% full!**

With an emphasis on paddling skill development, this is an opportunity for paddlers with differing skills to 'rub shoulders' with legends and "take their paddling to another level".

The registration fee is \$280.

Visit the event link for more information and program outline: <http://goo.gl/8XiQvI>

Register here: <http://goo.gl/GwpUAX>

Contact the Kayak Fest event team by email: [kayakfest@kask.co.nz](mailto:kayakfest@kask.co.nz)

## Letter to the Editor

### No 183 Cockpit Covers and Cold Weather Kit

I'm really enjoying reading the KASK journals, especially the latest one - well done on such excellent and informative publications.

Two actions I am undertaking as a result of reading the latest:

- double check winter cold water paddling clothes for suitability and carry more spares
- purchase cockpit covers for all of my eight kayaks stored below my deck!

cheers, Allan Miller  
Christchurch

Using a marker pen, mark the outer edge of the coaming on the plastic sheet. Also make marks at both the centre back and front of the cockpit coaming.

Take the plastic sheet off cockpit, add 6 cms all around your marker pen line and cut the plastic all around on the new outer line. Place plastic over the inside of your cockpit cover material and draw right around it with the marker pen. Also transfer the front and back marks.

Mark 6 cms in from the edge, all around, and draw a line. Make sure that the front and back marks will be visible after stitching.

Use dressmaking pins to fold and secure the outer edge into the 6 cm mark. There will be some puckering as you go around tight corners - that's OK. Stitch around fabric close to the edge to leave a good tube for the shockcord. Leave open a 10 cm section at the back to feed the shockcord in.

Stitch in a loop of webbing at the front on the inside - DO NOT block the tube for the cord.

Burn one end of the shockcord to seal the end. Hook on the safety pin and feed it through all the way around. You sort of 'concertina' it up to get it to feed. You'll work it out!

Best knot is a 'Fisherman's Knot' to join the shockcord. Google up an image of it and have a practice. Good point about this knot in shockcord is



*The Nordkapp closest to the camera has a yellow cockpit cover in place.*

that you can do half of it and adjust tension before doing the last bit. Test fit your cover, making sure to leave the webbing loop out!

When you're happy, finish the knot, cut and burn the ends and stitch the opening shut. Transfer the marker pen mark for the rear centre onto the top of the cover - this is the piece you'll hook on first when fitting the cover. Now you're done.

Tell the possums to nick off!  
cheers, Dave

## TECHNICAL

### Making Cockpit Covers

by Dave Winkworth

Re making cockpit covers - some points that may help you. Anyway, this is what I do:

You need the following:

- a sewing machine or someone who can sew it for you. Use standard polyester thread
- piece of plastic sheet larger than the cockpit, preferably transparent but certainly not black
- long piece of 4 mm shockcord.
- piece of nylon material, old tent fly or similar, at least 10 cms larger than the cockpit opening all around. I use some fabric which has a rubberised coating on one side
- a 20 cm length of 20 mm webbing or similar
- a large safety pin.

Knot a loop in the shockcord, spread the plastic over the cockpit opening and secure with the shockcord under the coaming. Pull the plastic as tight as you can to remove creases etc.

*Types of cockpit covers used; from left Reed Chillcheater fuzzy rubber ([www.chillcheater.com](http://www.chillcheater.com)), yellow ripstop nylon with folded black tape carrying shockcord, black canvas or duck fabric.*





# NEW ZEALAND TRIP REPORTS

## Lake Waipapa by Dennis Hynes

see also Dennis's photo on p.2

Lake Waipapa is one of the smaller hydro lakes on the Waikato River, sandwiched in between Lake Marae-tai and Lake Arapuni. With bush down to the waterline for the whole length, high, sheer multi-patterned bluffs with hardy growth clinging to any crevice, it is also one of the most picturesque. Toss in the magical paddle up the Waipapa River and the two Maraeitai dams, stark, impressive, concrete structures towering above the kayakers at the top of the lake and it makes a great paddle, accessible to most paddlers, in most weathers. Less than 20 kms all up.

It was a very cold frosty start for the 11 paddlers who turned up for the recent BASK club trip on the lake. Lots of grumbling about frozen fin-

gers from those that hadn't thought to bring their pogies along.

The reward for early frosty starts on these Waikato Lakes is the wispy mist rising from perfectly still waters creating magical reflections. This day was no exception.

Because the hydro lakes are formed from drowned valleys, shallow beaches for easy haul-out can be few and far between. The steep sides of Lake Waipapa make it even more challenging with a large group. There is a spot on the true right bank a couple of kms downstream from the dams to haul out for a lunch stop, albeit with a fair bit of team work assisting each other to exit. Then rener the kayaks from a crumbling bench from deep water. Even better, it can be bathed in the afternoon sunlight.

The last couple of kilometres to the dams can be a bit of a grind into the current, depending upon how much water is being spilled. Worth the effort to sit below these impressive structures, highlighted by the afternoon sun. Because of the small size of Lake

Waipapa, the water level can fluctuate by metres in a short space of time, as demonstrated in the war stories of kayaks drifting away when paddlers stop for a comfort stop. A reminder that it makes sense to have a bowline to secure your kayak whenever you stop.

Access to the lake is from the boat ramp on Waipapa Road, half a kilometre south of the dam. Parking at the ramp is limited, but there is plenty on the other side of the road a couple of hundred metres up the road.

## Kopuatai Peat Dome and Wetlands

see also Dennis's photos on the cover and on p.2

Just because the forecast is for 40 knots and heavy rain, it doesn't mean you can't go kayaking. Just means a little more thought is required to find a spot out of the wind. A visit to the Kopuatai peat dome and wetlands on the Hauraki Plains is just the ticket.

'The Kopuatai Peat Dome is part of an internationally recognised wetland area situated between Awaiti

The Kopuatai Peat Dome & Wetland - map courtesy Environment Waikato





One of the two Maraetaitai Dans

Road and State Highway 27 on the Hauraki Plains. The peat is derived from the remains of plants that used to live in the peat bog that has been accumulating over 11,000 years and is now up to 14 metres deep. The wetland area is made up of peatland and mineralised wetland. The peatland is acidic and low in nutrients with a hydrological regime dominated by rainfall. In contrast, the mineralized areas bounding the bog's western margins are influenced by nutrient enrichment from the Piako and Waitoa rivers. The wetlands play an important role in flood control and protection by providing storage for floodwater from the Piako and Waitoa catchments'.

The peat dome, as its name suggests, sits a few metres above the surrounding farmland, and as such can't be traversed by kayak. However the mineralized wetland on the western margin, administered by DoC, has canals and ponds among the grass and willow, creating habitat for ducks and other wetland species, including teals, bitterns, crakes, rails and fernbirds. Predator trapping is carried out to control stoats, ferrets and possums.

The 16 ponds are connected by a grid of channels making for a unique kayaking experience, offering kayakers access to a magical flooded forest, well protected from high winds.

Access to the wetland is via the Piako River. Put in at the boat ramp at the end of Maukoro Landing Road, off SH27, about four kilometres south of Patetonga. A leisurely seven kilometre paddle downstream brings you to a weir on the true left riverbank. Once farmland appears on the left bank you've gone too far unless you want to check out the tracks that lead to huts and ponds on the eastern side

of the river. A short 20 metre drag of your kayak over the weir stopbank gives access to the main channel of the wetland.

On the way, it is worthwhile visiting one of the hunting 'lodges' alongside the river on the true right bank of the Piako River. Some of these unofficial dwellings are substantial, semi-permanent structures cobbled together from any imaginable recyclable building material. They bear testimony, more to epic sessions of drinking and storytelling than successful hunting. Paradise for a Kiwi bloke looking to escape the missus for the weekend.

Once into the wetland, follow the main channel heading due south. Be sure to paddle up the side arms branching off from the main channel. Each side arm leads to a large open pond, dotted with maimai and often

with fleets of decoy ducks floating in front. If you listen out, you are likely to hear the loud booming call of the bittern, or even spot one if you are quiet and observant.

From the southern end of the main channel, a 500 metre portage along a four-wheel drive track brings you back into the Piako River a couple of kilometres downstream from the boat ramp. Or if you haven't brought your wheels, you can paddle back the way you came from the weir.

All in all, a very different but very enjoyable paddle on a day when all other kayaking would have been called off.

Note this paddle is a no go during the summer (low water levels and algal smell) nor during the duck shooting season (April to July inclusive)

#### More Background Information on the Peat Dome:

from Sandy Ferguson: on 28 September 1944, a Corsair aircraft crash landed on the peat dome when 'a collision with a willow tree knocked out ignition leads, causing engine failure'. A flare set light to the peat.

from John Gumbley: about four to five years ago, I spoke to the Ngatea Lions Club and an elderly gentleman spoke to me after the presentation explaining as a schoolboy he retrieved pieces of an aircraft which had crashed into the peat dome. The plane clipped the top of a stand of kahikatea trees in the south-west corner of the Kopuatai peat dome and crashed a few kilometres northward in an area of peat east of the Flax Block which is located midway along the peat dome. I heard the place was used for low level bombing run practice. Access is difficult and the area challenging - two SAS soldiers died on an exercise several years ago.

Ironically the aircraft fire would have perhaps done a favour to the highly threatened plants in the area, namely orchids. They naturally rely on occasional fires from lightning strikes to burn shrubland vegetation to enable the (orchid) seed bank to again flourish without the shading of taller vegetation.

The Flax Block itself is a highly modified part of the dome and forms what is known as a mineralised swamp. The peat dome itself is fascinating in that the predominant rushland vegetation (*Empodisma minor* and *Sporodanthus ferruginous*) fluctuates in level seasonally by 30 cms and daily (at 11:00 am) the peat dome shrinks 4 cms in height as gas in the plant root nodules is released, they then build up overnight - its about minimising evaporation loss.

Incidentally the top of the dome is 8 metres above the level of farmland on the peat domes margins. This is a reflection of both peat growing at a rate of 1 mm a year forming the dome feature (and its own water table - note at its thickest the peat is 14 metres thick - do the math to figure its age) but also farmed peatland in the Waikato is shrinking (in height) an average 2.5 cms/annum. In droughts e.g., 2008 and 2012, some vulnerable areas shrunk 30 cms in one year (ie., 300 years of natural growth) due to excessive drainage and associated lowering of the water table, all of which is irrecoverable.



## HEALTH

### 'A Two-Week First Aid Course! Why?'

by John Kirk-Anderson

That was a common response to people hearing about the Wilderness First Responder (WFR) course, run by the Wilderness Medicine Institute (WMI), part of the US-based National Outdoors Leadership School (NOLS).

Their website describes it as '... recommended for anyone who works or recreates in the outdoors or in other austere environments. If you travel in areas where access to medical care is delayed (>8 hours) or communication is unreliable, this course is for you. Students who would benefit from taking a WFR may include professional guides, trip leaders, SAR teams, international travelers, and outdoor recreationists.'

In NZ, the 40-hour Pre-Hospital Emergency Care (PHEC) course has become the default first aid course for outdoor instructors. This course is offered by several providers, and while covering basically the same curriculum, more emphasis is applied in differing areas. Over the years I have taken several PHEC courses or revalidations.

NOLS, which has a campus near Nelson, bought an instructor in from the US to run a bridge course for those who held a PHEC qualification and wanted the internationally-recognized WFR. This took 40 hours, and confirmed the skills and knowledge from the PHEC, and then added their procedures and protocols. On this course there were seven people, five of whom were instructors from the Outward Bound School at Anakiwa. There was also one cave guide, and me.

To add to the challenge for David, the instructor, after the first two days we were joined by a further eight students who were revalidating their WFR. They were nearly all current

or former NOLS instructors, but there was also a glaciologist from Australia (!) who had been a member of the German Army Special Forces, and an Emergency Medicine Physician who was keeping his WFR current to meet requirements for volunteer work he did in the US.

David did a great job of covering off what he needed to, while keeping the very disparate backgrounds, and war stories, under control. A very experienced outdoor instructor, he also worked as an emergency department nurse in a Portland, Oregon hospital.

A lot of emphasis was placed on their Patient Assessment System (PAS) and if indicated, a Focussed Spinal Assessment (FSA).

Takeaways for me:

- 1 - 'First Five', part of the PAS.
  - one, I'm Number One. (Personal and scene safety)
  - two, What happened to you? (Mechanism of injury, witnesses)
  - three, None on me. (Body fluids, gloves etc.)
  - four, Any more? (Number of casualties)
  - five, How alive? (Level of Response)

2 - David's 'Religion of Blister Treatment', which was a very funny look at the various beliefs on dealing with blisters, and how people were often devout on their preferred methods.

3 - The simple classification of musculoskeletal injuries into 'usable' and 'unusable'. If usable, manage and continue with the trip, if unusable, evacuate. Leave a diagnosis to doctors.

4 - 'Stay or Go. If Go, Fast or Slow'. The decision that has to be made when considering how serious an injury is.

Compared with other first aid training I have done, from my time in the army, as an Outdoor First Aid instructor with the Mountain Safety Council, and various PHEC courses, this training was sometimes at a 'lower level', but it was absolutely practical. Many of the things I have

trained to do I wouldn't do in the civilian environment, and much of the equipment I have used I don't have access to.

As David pointed out, most prudent people who recreate in the outdoors deal with little more than cuts, bruises and sprains/strains. If you're regularly dealing with much more than that, you're a ski patroller, or you need to seriously look at your leadership/risk management!



### The 'Bugger! File

from John Flemming  
Rotorua Octagenarian Paddler

I've had a bit of an upset and am slightly restricted. I was practicing my backward dives about three weeks ago in preparation for the Olympics, whilst descending my internal stairs, but didn't allow for the landing bit and have broken two vertebra in my spine and chipped a neck bone in the neck's boney bits. Am tethered up in a neck brace for another three weeks and consider myself very, very, very lucky. At least I can move MOST of my body, as it sure could have been much worse.

I can get a wee laugh at it now, but wasn't at all impressed with lying in a bloodied heap, jammed up against the door at the bottom. I wasn't much impressed at all.

Anyway Paul, life is pretty quiet for me now, and for a while into the future. Keep the funnies coming.



## NEW ZEALAND TRIP REPORTS

### **Redz NZ Journey A Paddle around Te Waipounamu The South and Stewart Island Circumnavigations**

**by Lynn Patterson**

On December 24, 2015, I leave the shores of the North Island at 2:30 am on the next section of my journey with a crossing of Cook Strait. Officially, I reach Perano Head, just a little way north of the mouth of Tory Channel, at exactly 7:00 am. My South Island journey is about to begin.

To start this morning, the ocean is calm and welcoming. But, then, the waters become a little bit crazy for several kilometres as I cross Tory Channel itself. In hindsight, the water conditions are nothing compared to what I've already been up against and what I'm about to go through.

How do I sum up this epic paddle? All I could do was think about each day as it arrived - nothing more. Others who had been there before me insisted on telling me about every inch of the coastline in intricate detail, sharing their scary stories, their near-death experiences. As always, there were the continuing 'what if's'? But, as everyone is well aware, it's different for each person who paddles. Each day, each beach, uniquely personal experiences.

I found the best way for me was to live in the moment, to try really hard not to absorb too many of the 'what ifs?' - otherwise my brain would most certainly have exploded! I have many fond memories, only a few of which I have revisited while writing this recap, such as arriving in Whites Bay on Christmas Eve and seeing a familiar face waving to me. This was after paddling the Cook Strait when the sheer fear of anticipation had nearly had me vomiting at the start. But, in reality, Cook Strait was very

kind and calm to me. There were no horror stories about that patch of water - apart from my nerves causing me not to check my GPS tracking device with the result that I paddled about 7 kms more than I needed to do - a salutary lesson to be learned! Gerry Maire was the man who met me at Whites Bay. That Christmas Eve was epic and will stay with me forever and will doubtless be retold again and again in the years to come

All along the East Coast of the South Island, there were some very treasured moments for it is, indeed, a beautiful coastline - from the Hector's dolphins and the sandy beaches to the rough rock wall and the dumping coastlines - it had them all.

On New Year's Day, while most other people would have been nursing a hangover, I set out for a big day of paddling from Kaikoura to Gore Bay that proved to be another memorable occasion. For an unbelievable three hours that day, I was accompanied by a pod of Hector's dolphins. It was magical and so much fun that I felt truly blessed that day. Already I had felt the warmth of the South Island weather and of its people. As I ventured further south, the spectacular scenery quite simply blew my mind and senses. Banks Peninsula I loved and, when I had the time, I would paddle every single bay. Each and every location I pulled into, was special in its own right, the calmness of the inner bays being relaxing compared to the roughness of the outer waters.

Yes, of course there were difficult sections south of the peninsula - especially the long stone beaches, the river mouth arrivals and my far from perfect entrances into them! There were sections of the coastline where I could talk to Nat (my on-shore companion and invaluable back-up person) but there were places we couldn't actually see each other and some of those beaches had me frowning in frustration.



*Lynn attempting a breakout through West Coast surf, just north of the Nile River mouth, near Charleston.  
Photo: Nat Frew*

The Catlins and the Nuggets were absolutely incredible and, once out on the water down that part of the coastline, the Hector's dolphins came out to play again. There were some wonderfully long days, including paddling into Bluff at the bottom of the South Island, when I felt I needed to pinch myself. 'Wow,' I thought, 'Red you have actually made it!'

I began to wonder when it was going to get tougher. But I could never have imagined just how tough - either mentally or physically! I couldn't decide which would be worse. Then, being close to Stewart Island, came big decision time. There were so many stories being offered, so many heads being shaken when I mentioned that I wanted to paddle around Stewart Island as well. In the end, after much research and talking with the local fishermen, I did what only a handful of people knew was going to happen - I 'gapped it' across Foveaux Strait. It was one huge paddle day from Bluff to Mason Bay, but it proved to be well worth the effort, as well as being the start of my going solo with no support crew. Solo I may have been, but what an

incredible place to visit - raw, rough and dynamic, that's the west coast of Stewart Island!

I spent a few days in Doughboy Bay, a time when many must have held their collective breath for me. Only later did I discover that some kayakers had only got that far and then had to wait so long that a helicopter ride seemed the only way off the island. But I was lucky, having spent only three days there. Then I was back on the water to do some more, great paddling. There were some fantastic sights - far more fantastic than any camera could ever capture. I still lack sufficient words to describe some of the more memorable moments - both on and off the water.

Port Pegasus and Oban (Halfmoon Bay) were both truly amazing and much more time was needed to fully appreciate what beautiful locations they are. All I can say is that you must make a point of visiting them. Even on a wet and rainy day, Stewart Island is a very special place with its own atmosphere and personality. It has left its mark on me for life and the mere thought of it still makes me smile.

But back to Bluff, back to focus on the next section; to plan for a solo section up and into Fiordland. For example, I have to imagine how long it will actually take me. Trying to plan for that was one of the hardest things to do because there were so many unknowns. It was impossible to know the best places in which to plan food drops - closer or further away? In retrospect, the names of the places all seem to blur. Anyway, we tried our best to plan and to pack for every eventuality. I became more and more silent as D-Day - my departure from Monkey Island (in Te Waewae Bay) loomed closer. How can I even begin to describe my thoughts and my feelings at that time? When could I possibly hope to see my back-up team again?

Into the solo world I headed, with every spare space jam-packed full of food including my precious potatoes and kumara. I will never forget the push-off by Nat as she insisted on jamming even more potatoes into

every nook and cranny she could find. Only for a moment did I dwell on what a mind-blowingly, huge escapade lay ahead of me. But, then, I had to pull my thoughts back to the day in hand. One day at a time.

Not once did I add up the actual number of days I spent in Fiordland as I waited for a weather window to head further north. Not once did I count in my head how long it was taking me to travel the length and breadth of Fiordland. But I absolutely LOVED it! Everything about that section was so memorable but very hard for me to put into descriptive words. Each of the sounds had a new feeling, a new energy and my emotions and senses were set on fire. Incredible, majestic, eye-opening.. And, yes, there were millions of sand flies! Yes, they can be very annoying. But I had to get over that and learn to enjoy their company. Looking back, they are just another part of that amazing, breath-taking world.

The storms were intense but my tent and double fly sheets worked so well that never once did I or my belongings get wet. What I recall vividly is the very special landscape, the history, the untouched raw sights, the sounds, the rain, the waterfalls, the crashing waves at the entrances to the sounds, watching the weather patterns and the brilliant, dazzling sunshine. It was, and is, one of the most amazing, magical and enchanting places in New Zealand.

I have a story from each stopover. I have such huge, happy memories of every person along this section and have to thank them all for making me smile on a daily basis. I'm afraid to name any one more than others in case I miss someone out. I was touched by the Southland community and can only say A VERY BIG THANK YOU! As I write this, the memories make me smile. Each and every one of you, in your own special way, made it the best.

Forty-five days later, I paddled into Jackson Bay, grinning from ear to ear. Nat was on the beach, jumping about - partly because of the sandflies but also seeing me arriving on



*Lynn after safely crossing the Grey River bar on 28 April. Nat Frew at the bow. Photo: Paul Caffyn*

a very beautiful beach. My first request was - yes, you've guessed it - chips! Hot, salty, deep-fried and incredibly tasty.

Then it was time for a face-off with the West Coast sections. Some time was spent with Paul Caffyn on the West Coast, taking up with his saying 'much sucking of teeth'. Paul, I was humbled by your generosity and loved your humour. Then it was back to surf beaches, back to facing off against Mother Nature, back to being slapped by salty waves and lots of heaving, foaming water, back to heart-pounding departures and heavy landings - one of them leading to the sad demise of T2. The Heaphy Track, she tormented me a lot.

When I was halted south of Westhaven Inlet for an entire month, I began to think that maybe that was that. No paddling north until a break in the winter weather allowed me a safe departure at last and a few wonderful bluebird days. Before I got past Farewell Spit, I had one more adrenalin -smashing beach launch. Then it was up the beautiful coast to the base of Farewell Spit. I was happy, happy, happy, as I greeted my partner Jase on the beach. It was an incredible feeling. We sat in the shelter of the sand dunes that early evening, eating a packet of chippies and drinking a hot cuppa from the thermos he had



brought with him. Then, only one day later, I walked to the beach in the freezing cold of the morning, to set off in an attempt to get around the tip. The Spit and I finally farewelled each other, and I also said my 'good-byes' to the amazing community of Kaihoka and the surrounding areas (Takaka and Golden Bay).

Then it was on to Separation Point. I stopped and said a special 'Hi!' to this great spiritual place with many indelible memories. Soon it was time for a big fire on a very cold night with a star-studded sky at Totaranui, the 4,000 km mark having at last been achieved. I should mention here that the DoC campsites are magnificent and we almost wished that the weather would continue blowing so we could stay on a little longer. But we also knew that I had to get out on the water whenever possible, so this part of the journey flew past way too quickly.

The crossing of Tasman Bay from Kaiteriteri to Pepin Island was unpleasant to say the least - poor visibility, rain for the entire day, southwest winds and swell not to mention the necessity of having to dodge five container ships. This left me mentally drained and, with no food or liquids taken on this crossing, I had a mental melt-down that stopped me in my tracks at Pepin Island. Well, to be honest, it was actually the support crew who stopped me from going any further. I was disgruntled and angry at my own stupidity and that signalled the end of my day.

We were forced to wait another day or two for better weather before proceeding on the next leg of my journey up to and through French Pass. How hard I had studied this particular passage of water; how attentively I had listened to the locals, hearing not only countless tales of paddling mishaps but also, in apparent contradiction, how simple it was to pass through on a slack tide, tucked beneath the cliffs.

In the event, I had to wait patiently for Jase to clamber up from the beach to the viewing platform to take my picture. Then, with a huge



*Lynn trying out a Nordkapp with a magic day on Lake Brunner*

flourish of my paddle and grinning from ear to ear, I skimmed into the DoC campsite on the other side of the pass, into beautiful Elmslie Bay. We both fell in love with this little bay but sadly no time to stop for a day or two the night was more about getting me ready for the final push back to Tory Channel in what proved to be a good day on the water.

On August 16, off I set with tears rolling down my face. After all, this could be it! As I got closer to Queen Charlotte Sound, I harboured a small glimmer of hope in my heart that maybe - just maybe - Aotearoa was giving me a precious weather gift. So I said a big 'thank you!' and gapped it on the outside of Arapawa Island, past Perano Head and into Tory Channel.

There was a picture perfect sunset and my South Island trip was complete. No pavlova in my face (like so many others who have completed this circumnavigation) but, rather, a wonderful welcome from the lovely people at Whenua Bay as I pulled up on their beach intending to camp there for the night. Instead, I was given the use of a lovely little farm cottage overnight and a delicious seafood gumbo for dinner.

Everything in the South Island ended up as beautifully as it started out. The whole experience has been incredible and a huge part of me is sad that part of my journey is now over. What a way to see the sights of the South Island! What started out as a paddling journey has now become more of an odyssey, with my life having become almost that of a nomad. On the way, I have been met with nothing but generosity from the most incredible people and they, in turn, have become part of my story together with all the amazing sights and sounds.

The emotions I have experienced on this trip are unbelievable - way more than I can even begin to describe; feelings from way deep inside me that most people won't even be able to start to understand - no matter how hard I try to describe it to them verbally, more than I ever believed possible. It was the people I met who have been the icing on this incredible, delicious cake. It is the most amazing life gifts and friendships I have made. I will need to get back into Cuzzie and keep driving around saying "Hi!" at least one more time and reflect again as I go!

On August 17, I paddle in and along Tory Channel. I have no stress or cares today. With a headwind and a mostly outgoing tide, I also take my time. This place is so pretty. This place, even with so many different types of craft whizzing about, has something very special about it. I could very easily return here to live, to hide away from the rest of the world.

I have to say thank you, Te Waipounamu. Thank you for a very special time in a very special part of the world. You are so beautiful in so many ways. This redhead has total respect for you! What a crazy incredible dream!

As Paul Caffyn said, "You are now the oldest female to paddle around the South Island, and the first redhead ever to do so."

Thanks Paul.

## OVERSEAS REPORTS

### Niue Kayak Record

by Nathan Fa'avae

June 7 2016, in celebration of World Oceans Day, my adventure racing team mate Sophie Hart and I etched our names in a little bit of kayak history by being the first people to circumnavigate Niue by sea kayak.

The idea to paddle around Niue started to form when I was there on a work trip in April. I was employed by the Niuean Government to do a review of their events strategy and advise on their adventure tourism industry.

Travelling to Niue Island in April with my family for the Junior Rockman, a kid's triathlon with a difference, 'swim, run & play', I returned again in May for the Rockman Offroad Triathlon and again in early June for two biking events run on the Island, the 'Rally of the Rock', a five stage 40 km off-road event and the 'Around the Rock', a one day 65 km bike race around the island.

During my first visit to the island I became convinced that a water-based event would be an ideal addition to the events on offer. The waters of Niue are incredible, the island pops up out of the deep ocean, the water depth rapidly drops to about 600 metres and then down to around 3000 metres. The clarity is exceptionally unique. I think the ocean there is being under utilized - it's an untapped resource.

In talks with the Tourism Department, I encouraged them to explore the possibility of running some ocean paddling events and they were very open to these ideas. While it's an incredible destination for sea kayaking, it's extremely well suited to ocean surf skis.

The obvious paddle event is around the Island, the whole country, it's 70 kms so probably on the limit of distance for a one day race, but it'd be epic in every sense of the word.

Niue is rugged - there are very few launching and landing places, but once on the water it's amazing. When I started talking about kayaking around the island to explore the feasibility of a race, the majority of people on the island didn't think it could be done. Not because of the distance so much, but more because the east side of the island is regularly exposed to the trade winds, crashing swells and nowhere to land or shelter. It demands respect. That said, there are calm days typically through July to November.

With the backing from Niue Tourism to attempt the circumnavigation I called upon Adventure Racing teammate Sophie Hart to join me for the challenge.

Sophie had said she was keen for a paddling mission and we're used to paddling together long distances in racing, so she was an obvious choice of partner - we always paddle well together and I thought it was important for a woman to be on the trip, it served to inspire local women to what is possible.

We spent three days paddling from Avatele Beach where we could access the exposed eastern shores quickly. Our plan was to depart from Avatele and get as much of the east coast completed while the weather was more settled, typically the mornings were calmer for a few hours after sunrise. Before we could get on the water for the serious attempt, we spent a day racing bikes in the Rally of the Rock event. This event saw 31 participants complete eight individual time trails on bush tracks mainly in the interior of the island. The route traversed the country from north to south.

We then turned our attention to the paddle challenge and monitoring the forecasts, the pattern was clear, three metre swells and 20 knot winds. A local fishing charter boat was arranged as a support vessel to accompany. In fact, we were required by the government to have the safety boat.

We'd spent a few days testing the new inflatable sea kayak and flew to Niue with a *Gumotex Seawave*. It was a great vessel but not fast compared to the ocean surf skis that we're used to, or even the *Arctic Raiders* and *Nordkapps* that we sea kayak in. We decided that averaging about 7 - 8 km/hr would be realistic, given the winds, swells and currents. With that in mind and adding in some time for unknown circumstances, we prepared ourselves for a 12 to 13 hour day. There were 12 hours of daylight so we needed to be on the water at sunrise and have night lights, should we still be out after sunset.

I was quite nervous in the hours preceding the paddle. I'd said it could be done and a number of people had backed me on the idea, Niue Tourism, Gumotex, the local support boat and of course Sophie. It felt like the stakes were a bit higher than a normal sea kayak adventure - it was in reality, a sponsored expedition. The weather wasn't making it easy for us, which I was actually pleased about as I didn't want to paddle in perfect conditions, but I did want to succeed, and safely.



*Nathan and Sophie with a good following sea off the coast of Niue*





*Sophie and Nathan, on a big ocean, heavy ground swell and paddling a very small inflatable kayak.*

Going anticlockwise around the island, at 6:00 am we launched from Avatele Beach. It was only a 10 minute paddle to the first headland where we could expect to get into the bigger seas. We'd paddled that stretch a few times so we knew what to expect but it was intimidating water, the swells were big and the waves crashing into land were thunderous, the wave clapotis and refraction along the coast there was impressive, the most diverse I've seen anywhere. But we knew if we punched out 1-2 kms from land, it'd tidy up. Our support boat arrived on the scene as we rounded the headland.

We expected to be in rough conditions for up to six hours as we clawed around three major headlands including the most southern point of the island. If all went to plan, we'd then have the south-east trade winds behind us and we should be able to surf the 15 kms to reach the north coast and sheltered water. The support boat provided some level of comfort but the nature of east coast is wild and remote and there were safety concerns for the boat too. In the conditions on the day there were about 20 kms of rough waters to pass before everyone could relax a little.

Conditions weren't ideal but it was the best forecast for the days we had available to try. Plus we wanted to paddle it in testing conditions as that provided more of a bench mark looking ahead at the possibility of making it a race. Had we paddled around in dead flat seas it would still leave

many questions in the air as to if it was possible in rough seas. My vision for a paddling event would be outrigger, SUP and surf ski, all of which will attract paddlers who want varied conditions, so it was important to do the trial paddle in rough seas.

I'll admit I was nervous heading out into the open waters even with a support boat in the vicinity. There were a lot of unknowns and there are always sudden weather events or rouge waves in turbulent waters as we were in. We also didn't know the kayak well but we soon started to gain confidence as the boat held a good speed and even when we got hit by a few breaking waves the boat handled everything thrown at it. It was exceptionally well made so I wasn't worried about any gear failure.

The GPS was giving us useful information on what the currents were doing. We could maintain the same paddling speed by cruising between 5 and 8 km/hr. By mid morning, we were released by currents and made



*An archway cut by marine erosion into the limestone coastline*

really quick time down the island. When we rounded the most eastern point and had ocean downwind of us, instead of unapproachable rocky coast we could breathe easier and enjoy the paddling more. We were over the worst of it.

Rounding the northern end into sheltered waters was amazing, the sense of relief and the scenery was majestic, incredible colours of water, coral walls, vegetation and sun brightened skies, breath taking. We'd been through some sections where the swells were in the five to six metre range, big ocean stuff, the mammoth waves actually gave us shelter from the wind - impressive forces.

We'd made great time paddling the first 35 kms, two hours faster than predicted, but we knew we were still only halfway and the last headland near the end would be exposed again to the trade winds. It was heating up and Sophie was keen to go for a swim, so after six hours we had our first break, a swim, food and a guzzle of water. It was then back paddling, making the most of being able to paddle close to the coast and enjoy the scenery, sea caves, chasms, archways and then we started to paddle next to the villages towards town.

With 60 kms completed, we took another 10 minute break to bail the water out, cool off again with a swim and then head back into the high winds and swells to make it around the final headland. It was a really good way to finish, being reminded

of what we'd spent the morning doing, fighting into the wind, pitching and tossing around in the waves and swells.

Nearing 4:00 pm, we got into shelter of the land and started to savour the achievement and adventure. We'd done it - 69.3 kms in nine hours and 40 minutes. It was a tremendous feeling climbing out of the kayak we'd climbed into 10 hours prior, with major unknowns ahead of us.

The circumnavigation created quite a buzz around the island and it was really special to have a sizeable welcoming party at the beach when we landed. The chief invited us to dinner that night at the village. Sophie and I both agreed it was an awesome paddle, very challenging and highly rewarding. We felt extremely lucky to have had the opportunity to do it.

It confirmed for me that the Niuean waters will be incredible for ocean sports. I'd love to see some paddling events and a paddling culture really grow there - it's a massive part of



*Sophie and Nathan after successfully completing a rather swift paddle around the South Pacific island of Niue*

Polynesian culture. Our trip was the first known circumnavigation but I have zero doubt that back in time the Niuean people would have paddled around the island in canoes. It's not that far and given they were paddling between the South Pacific islands, Samoa, Tonga, Fiji, even perhaps Aotearoa, they would have easily gone around Niue. Maybe they never

did it in a day as they probably never needed too.

The trip was successful for many reasons and we were thrilled to hear that there are a few local people eyeing up the challenge now too.

[www.niueisland.com](http://www.niueisland.com)

### **Kayaking in the Hakai Area North of Vancouver Island, British Columbia by Margot Syms (photos: Peter and Margot Syms)**

Located in British Columbia, some 120 km north of Vancouver Is, the myriad islands of the outer Hakai/Luxvbalis Conservancy provide a magnificent area for kayaking. It is remote, and includes coast line exposed to the full force of the Pacific Ocean, as well as sheltered sounds. There are islands, large and small, tidal inlets and lagoons, sandy beaches, and little sign of man - apart from his washed up rubbish. We joined a 10 day guided kayak trip because the logistics were complex and paddling there alone was beyond our comfort zone.

Our group of 11 clients and three guides (one a trainee) met over a meal in the town of Port Hardy, north Vancouver Island, on the eve of the trip in July 2016. Next morning the ferry going north up the Inside Passage left at 7:30 am, but early reporting times were mandatory, so we rose

at 4:00 am to catch the shuttle to the ferry terminal at 5:00 am. Much bag organizing into luggage carts, and finally we walked onto the ferry, most of us wheeling a kayak. Five hours later we disembarked at Bella Bella, the first stop and the nearest habitation to our paddling area. All kayaks, gear and food were then loaded onto the water taxi (large) and we headed out, filling 44 ten-litre water bags en route.

The Goose Group was intended as the highlight of the trip, being both exposed and remote, so we started there by water taxi. On arrival at Snipe Island on a dropping tide, gear, food, water and people had to be ferried ashore by kayaks and a small Zodiac without motor. And so we settled in to our home for three nights while we explored the area and ate enough to fit everything into our boats.

We had 10 single and two double kayaks, the latter being required to carry the larger party gear. Peter and I clung possessively to one of the doubles while the others rotated the short straw of paddling the other. Some of the beaches were quite tidal, and leaving from these on a dropping tide was problematic because large guided parties are slow to get on the water. First, all the boats would be carried empty down to water's edge, and packing would begin. Peter and I would religiously keep shifting our double out as we packed so it always remained just afloat, and so avoiding a final carrying of the laden boat. Our technique was taken up by the others as the trip progressed.

The weather on the west coast of BC in summer is either sunny and windy (early starts required to beat the wind) or wet and calmer. It appeared we had elected for the latter.



After all, we were in part of the huge area called the Great Bear Rain Forest. Campsites and beaches are few and far between, but the guides knew where they were. One could camp on the sand, minimal at spring high tides, or in a cleared site in the forest. We opted for the latter, to reduce the amount of fine sand in the sleeping bag - under the assumption, fortunately correct, that the Great Bears (Grizzly) did not visit the small islands. The rain however did!

Our first three days, in the Goose Group, were fine with a bit of cloud and occasional drizzle. On day 1, we explored Gosling Island but it was a bit rough to get down among the Gosling Rocks to the south. These are low rounded mounds, with very little visible at a high tide. There were some keen fishermen in the group, who came armed with gear and licenses, and that night we enjoyed an entree of pan-fried ling cod and rock cod. On the rest of the trip, while no-one succeeded in catching a salmon, we did enjoy several such entrees. Always, the fish backbone was left on the beach a way off, and after a while a Bald Eagle would come swooping down, grab it in its talons and fly off for a meal in peace. This bird is as happy a scavenger as it is a fisherman.

The next day with less wind we went for a paddle around the lesser islands of the group. First visiting the tidal inlet between Swan and Goose Is, then returning south along the outside of Swan and Duck islands. These islands have a wide band of rocks protecting them from the pounding waves of the Pacific Ocean in rough weather. Being out there in the swell with 'the Orient' the next land to the west was a highlight for me. But later when I asked another woman whether she had enjoyed it, she replied 'whatever'. Different people on a group tour value different aspects.

It was here we first encountered the sea otters. In the distance you would see shapes on the water but could only tell the otters from kelp bubbles by whether they changed shape or disappeared and reappeared. The

otters would float on their backs, eating their catch carefully balanced on their tummies. They had been hunted to local extinction and more recently reintroduced, and now they seem to be quite common.

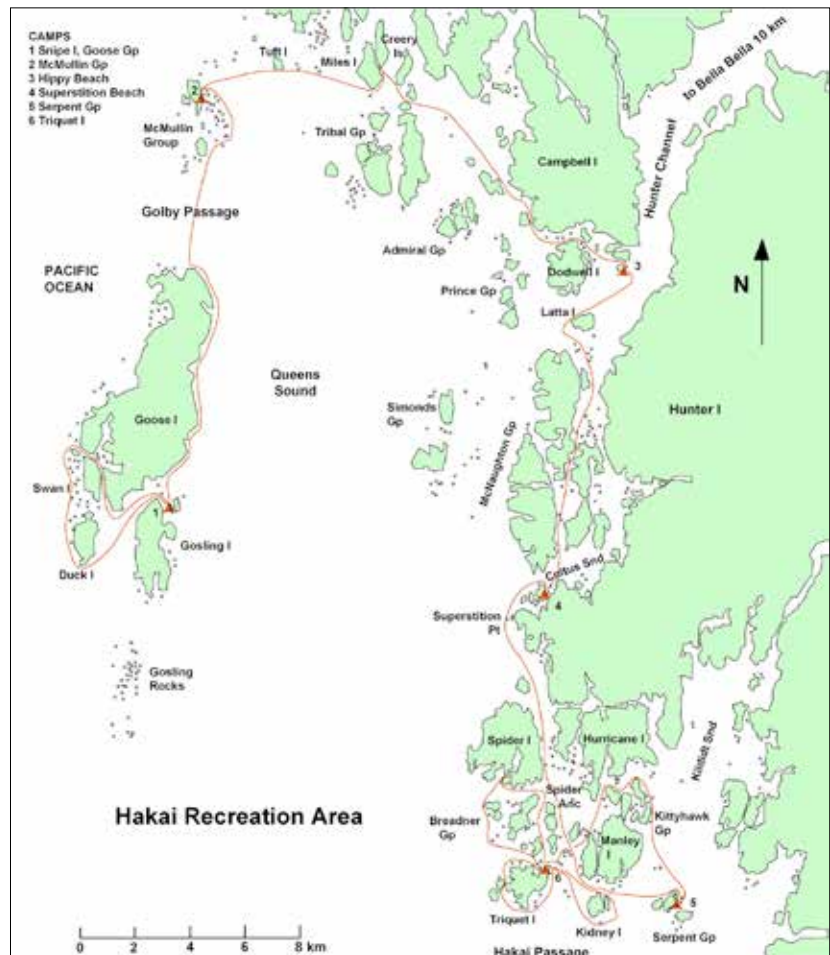
With a mackerel sky the evening before and enough food eaten, on day three it was time to leave the Goose Group, and we were up at 5:00 am to get away by 8:30 am, such are large guided trips. We paddled north up the east side of Goose Island. Near the tip we met a family - mum, dad and two young girls in two double kayaks. I do admire such parents. They had been on the same ferry as us with their boats, and had started paddling at Bella Bella. There is a beach right beside the ferry dock and you can just wheel/carry your kayak from ferry to water's edge.

There is so much interesting territory around here that this is a good option to save a water taxi, at least at one end of a trip. Bella Bella proper is a First Nations village four kms up the road and has a good supermarket for

its size. There is also the settlement of Shearwater about five kms away across the sound. This is more of a tourist place with marina, pub, a few shops and accommodation. There is a small shuttle boat between here and Bella Bella but I am not sure whether it would carry a kayak, so it could be simpler to paddle.

From the north of Goose Island the exposed Golby Passage has to be crossed. For us it was flat calm with a slight swell, and sunny. About the middle of the crossing we saw a humpback whale coming towards us, disappearing after a breath about 100 m away. We waited, and waited, becoming a little nervous, until whoosh, 300 m beyond us it surfaced again, then raised its tail and dived. Great sighting, and frankly close enough.

When we arrived among the islets of the McMullin Group, the tide was low and we had to go well out to the east to not get stranded. Large amounts of intertidal sand build up in the lee of where the Pacific has



dissipated its rage against the first defences of the land. Just before entering our cove we saw and heard a loon, it was the alarm call but beautiful and haunting at the same time. After lunch, five of us (including 'never miss an opportunity' P & M), went around to the outside of our island and a couple of adventurous singles surfed between the rocks. Doug, older than us, with his Greenland paddle and in his own boat was one of them, and Matt (the chief guide) the other.

That night the rain started. We realised that we had not been on long trips camping in the rain for some time, in the order of a decade. Added to this we had our small three-season tent, instead of the big guns. However, old skills die hard and Peter religiously attended to the finer points of tent pitching, with very good results - and sodden sleeping bags came there none. A lot of the 'locals' had tarps/flies with them to make life easier. A lazy day followed. I semi-regretted not going on the offered short paddle in the rain, but it seemed wise to keep paddling clothes dry for the morrow. Even Doug was not a starter as he had succumbed to the 'trip cold', which one bloke brought along and which progressively affected about two thirds of the party.

It was here we first met the Western Sandpipers, small waders scurrying around the tide line feeding on small hoppers etc. We tried to not disturb them as they were re-stoking their boilers during their migration to breeding grounds in Alaska.



*Western sandpipers feeding at the tide line*

The next day (day five) we were off, rain or shine (ha ha). By the time we got across to Miles Island in steady rain and a bit of wind, many of us were rather cool. A lunch stop was called in a sheltered spot where two islands are close together. One guide lit a small fire, another put a pot of water on to heat. I volunteered to steady the large pot on the wee gas stove, and got my hands warmed in the process. After a hot drink all round, lunch (which for me was a case of 'have a little biscuit with your peanut butter') and being in partial shelter from the rain by an overhang, we were considerably revived. The rain had eased a bit by the time we set off, and continued to do so, and there was even a bit of sun. We paddled south-east around Campbell Island and to the camp at the tiny Hippy Beach, made of shells, on a small island.

Travelling by air to Canada and having to lug everything with us, we were a bit limited in what gear we could bring. Careful planning was needed. For kayak clothing we worked on the principle of layers, and apart from that first wet morning when we should have worn one more layer, we were never cold. In fact we were always in that reassuring situation of having a spare dry layer tucked away at all times. My new spray jacket became my most treasured possession, and my neoprene helmet was worn for the first time in anger. And worn, and worn.

For around camp we had parkas and overtrou (the latter bought in Port Hardy I will admit). A few had the luxury of gumboots. Our all purpose boots were stowed away in plastic bags from here on, and I spent all my wakeful time in my paddling booties. Needless to say, soon rows of potential blisters on my feet matched the seam lines of these. When sticking plaster started to run low, I resorted to socks, which I should have used in the first place. Overall we were adequately equipped, and the only thing I would add another time would be winter paddling gloves. We did not need them. Just.

On day six after overnight rain, we headed south from Hippy Beach hop-

ing to go outside the McNaughton Group. However the current entering the Hunter Channel, which links to the Inside Passage, was too strong so we rounded Latta Island and went between the McNaughton Group and the huge Hunter Island. It was interesting to follow along on the chart and peep into the narrow channels as we passed them. At this point my compass did not really seem to be making sense, so I ignored it and just used the coastline. It was the next morning while packing and Peter was putting the three kg gas bottle in my cockpit, for'ard of my foot pegs, that he noticed the compass rotate. Of course! Space was henceforth made for said gas bottle in a hatch further aft.

We arrived at Superstition Beach, so called only because the nearest named feature is Superstition Point. The optional paddle of the arvo took in the sheltered passages south of the beach, then across the mouth of Cultus Sound to the exposed southwest end of the McNaughton Group. What a dramatic bit of rugged coastline. And from here we could look across at the Goose Group, which looked so far away in the heavy overcast conditions. Needless to say it was drizzling again when we arrived back, but the fire was going and the kitchen tarp erected to provide welcome comfort. I can see why a flysheet is so recommended for Fiordland paddling.

North Americans like their camp fires whatever the weather, but on this trip the fire was essential for warmth, warming rain water for extra cups of tea and drying damp clothes. It was not uncommon to see three wet backsides cantilevered over the fire. There are vast numbers of cedar logs washed up on all the beaches, these have escaped in rough weather from log booms being towed by barges. In fact you can get an idea of how exposed a cove is by how far above the high tide level the logs have been dumped by the sea. We also carried an axe; this and the tarp were a godsend on this trip. Cedar has a very straight grain and splits easily. Even when logs are sodden, they can be split to expose





*The group squeezed into Hippy Beach; Margot in the left foreground, in no hurry to remove her spray jacket and neoprene helmet*

the dry wood inside. One can just attack a long log 50 cms in diameter to extract a bundle of good firewood.

No rain over night! Enjoy it while we could. Leaving our camp we paddled around Superstition Point, where it was a bit choppy and exposed, then into the shelter of Spider Island. Along here was a rare sandy beach where we stopped for a short snack so we did not get too cold. We preferred to paddle on for a late lunch at our next camp in the Serpent Group. These islands are exposed to the wide Hakai Passage to the south, yet there is a glorious sheltered campable area on sand caught between one bigger and two smaller islands.

At low tide you can walk on sand between the islands, but at high tide they are distinct. We arrived at low tide, and as the tide rose moved the boats up and floated them around a wee lagoon to the permanent sand of the big island. The vegetation was low with quite a few flowers out. As I awoke next morning I thought I heard a huhu bug flying past, until I

realised where I was and that it was a humming bird.

The overnight rain did ease while we had breakfast and packed up, only to resume as we left. As forecast, there was a bit more wind, so we had to forego exploring around the Serpent Group, and use the sheltered waters of Kildit Sound and go between Manley and Hurricane islands, then south again to a sheltered beach on the north of Triquet Island. Despite the rain it was not cold paddling, maybe we were used to it. Tarp up, fire going, late lunch, and no real desire for an extra paddle afterwards in the rain. After all we were here for a couple of nights.

After a wet night the forecast was for less wind and a chance of showers. Correct, 100% chance. A group of seven of us had a morning paddle around Triquet Island, enjoying a bit of swell on the south side and sneaking among the islands to the west. A stop at a beach enabled firewood collecting as well as bladder relief. After lunch back at camp, in

almost sunshine, we paddled around the Breadner Group and investigated the big lagoon of the south coast of Spider Island.

No rain for our last night of the trip. There had been a bit of after-bargain whingeing on the part of the water taxi over our pickup time, conducted by sat phone. Pickup at 6:00 pm was agreed to, which gave us time for a morning paddle in fine weather as well as packing up in the afternoon. Six of us paddled around Kidney Island, enjoying a bit of swell, while some others went kayak fishing - no fish for lunch unfortunately.

We packed up, I got that end of trip anticlimax feeling, not helped by the fact I was succumbing to the trip cold. The water taxi arrived on time, loading was a bit quicker than unloading had been because we were 40 odd water bags and much food lighter. In an hour, we had whizzed past what had taken us days to paddle, and on up the Hunter Channel to the tourist town of Shearwater where we cleaned up and spent the night, af-

ter a good feed at the pub. Great trip.

**Useful Information:**

1. Gabriola Sea Kayaking guided our trip and provided the gear. Clients participate in the catering:  
[www.kayaktoursbc.com](http://www.kayaktoursbc.com)

2. BC Ferries for all major ferry services in British Columbia:  
[www.bcferrries.com/schedules](http://www.bcferrries.com/schedules)

3. Shearwater village facilities:  
[www.shearwater.ca](http://www.shearwater.ca)

4. Maps - Marine chart 3937 Queens Sound, and 3938 Queens Sound to Seaforth Channel. Both 1:40,000, available at marine and chart shops.

5. Alberni Outpost sell kayak and other outdoor gear online and from their stores in Courtenay and Nanaimo:  
[www.albernioutpost.com](http://www.albernioutpost.com)



*A damp evening in the McMullin Group with firewood free for the chopping up, and the use of the wonderful tarps and flys to stay dry.*

## TECHNICAL

### Sea Kayaking Skills - Deck Carries by David Winkworth

These are my thoughts on Deck Carries. No-one has all the answers in sea kayaking. You should practise these skills for yourself and decide what works best for you. I hope these notes are a useful guide for you.

So, what exactly is a deck carry?

Simply, it's a rescue! It's the transportation of a paddler or a swimmer on the rear deck of a sea kayak.

It's not quite that simple though, so I'll start from the beginning.

You come across a tired swimmer well out to sea, a member of your paddling group has smashed their kayak on a bombie or they've come out of their boat and you need to move them back to it. Whatever - it's a very useful skill to have.

How are you going to do this?

Having the person hang onto the stern of your kayak is NOT the answer. Firstly, your progress will be

painfully slow due to the drag of the body in the water and secondly, you will have no steerage and control of your kayak. When a kayak turns it does so by pivoting approximately at the bow hatch, which means that the stern must sweep around. If a person is hanging onto your stern - then clearly your kayak cannot turn and you will most likely stay beam-on to the breaking waves that you hoped would aid your progress!

Remember that the conditions in which you may be called to do a deck carry are unlikely to be mill-pond flat. People don't fall out of boats much on calm water! It could be challenging conditions.

So, you have to get this person out of the water and onto your back deck. The first thing to do is to prepare yourself before you go in to them. Paddle upwind to them - you'll have steerage into the wind and you'll be unlikely to surf over them. Call out to them, "Are you OK?" You're looking for a calm measured response.

Get your towline handy in case you need to use it. Put your paddle on its leash if it's not already on it. Have a good drink of water - it may be a tough paddle coming up!

Now, a few things may count against you doing the deck carry. I'll go through them:

**Panicking Patient.** Is the person in the water panicking? Screaming, hyperventilating, distraught perhaps? If this is so, then do not go near them just yet. If you do, they may pull you over as they attempt to climb aboard your kayak. 'Makes no sense having two people in the cold water! Watch them and talk to them. Reassure them.

Let them drink a little sea water maybe. You need them to do exactly as you say. If you assess them as being unable to do that then you don't want them aboard your boat. Tough love? Yes it is. Call in the cavalry if you have a radio or a phone you can use.



### Skills All Round

Do you have the skills to do this? OK, maybe you do - but does the patient know what to do too? If the patient is a sea kayaker you may be fine but if they're not, then it could be difficult on a heaving windy ocean to get your instructions understood and carried out. Think about this.

### Competing Masses

How big are you? How buoyant is your kayak? How big is the patient? If you are a small person in a narrow low volume 4.5 metre kayak and the patient is 120 kg+ then the deck carry most likely will not work. Your kayak will point to the sky and you'll capsize. Do the maths as quickly as you can. Also, 'big' people can have quite a bit of difficulty getting onto the deck of a kayak.

### Rear Deck Gear

If you're carrying a pile of gear on your back deck then not only will it inhibit the patient climbing aboard but it will also force their mass higher and prevent them getting their weight low as close to you in the cockpit as possible. This may be another case of calling in some outside help.

But let's say everything's OK and you go in for the deck carry.

To do this manoeuvre you're going to have to brace while the person climbs aboard. The brace you'll need to do is the 'Sculling Low Brace.' I'm not going to go through that stroke here except to say that your 'sculls' should be a good metre long for optimum support (see photo).



*Deck carry practice. Have someone in the water beside you steadying the kayak. Note the person climbing on to the kayak deck is kicking hard.*

*Photo: Tim Morris*

You can brace on either the side that the person will come aboard or the other side. Whatever suits you! You're the rescuer so you call the shots!

And in calling the shots remember to tell the person what YOU want:

- "Reach over and grab the far deckline and kick hard to get yourself up."
- "Pull me over and you're dead meat!"
- "Keep your body AND head very low. Get your head right up behind me."

Communication is important because you won't be able to turn around to watch!

Generally the person should cross the rear deck of your kayak about a third of the way back from you. Once they feel some 'balance' they should swing around so that their body lies along the deck with their head right behind you. As much as possible their feet should be out of the water on either side of the stern.

When they're in position, hold your brace until you're ready to paddle off. Take your time because it will feel a little unstable.

When it's time to jettison your cargo, do a low brace to steady yourself and tell them to slip off slowly.

### Waikato Safe Vehicle Parking and Theft by Evan Pugh

After an enjoyable Lake Rotoma trip on returning to the 11 vehicles which we had parked at the eastern end of the lake on Matahi Road, we discovered six of them had been broken into by lowlife scumbags.

One had extensive damage to the door, door lock and window broken while others had only a window or small window broken. One was lucky enough to only have a window pried open and the ashtray with coins in taken.

They seemed to stay away from new vehicles with modern door locks and alarms. The vehicles had been carefully searched and only money or Visa/EFTPOS cards taken, no clothing, or good shoes etc., missing.

Most of us had our wallets and cash with us in the kayaks but it is distressing for those losing cards that can be used like paywave etc., and having to find cellphone reception to call a bank and cancel these perhaps hours after they were taken.

We will start from behind the café next time as there are houses there to hopefully keep these types away. We have been lucky over the years but this really brings it home as to being careful where to park.

## EQUIPMENT REVIEWS

### Sharkskin Tops by Andrew McMullen

Sharkskin is a line of clothing made for water sports. It comes in a variety of forms. 'Chillproof' is the style most suitable for kayakers. The garments consist of a fleece layer against your skin covered by a top layer that keeps out the elements. The correct sizing has it fitting snug to your body to minimise the water that enters if things don't quite go to plan and you find yourself swimming (so in this respect it functions as a wetsuit would). The trouble is I don't find 'skin tight' all that comfortable to wear all day so have gone the next size up and possibly compromised a bit on performance but gained a garment that I am likely to be wearing when I need it.

I am always impressed at how good the fleece lining is at letting go of water once you emerge onto dry land. The fleece drains and drains and drains and ends up feeling acceptably drish after a few minutes.

Just over a year ago I bought a vest off Trade Me, put it on and leapt into 7 degree water in the pool expecting some sort of miracle. What I experienced was a bout of rapid breathing accompanied by the pain that cold water brings. I stuck it out for a misery filled 10 minutes and emerged cold, cold, cold, including the bits of me covered by the vest. However, there was no doubt in my mind (as I dripped my way to the warm shower) that it was because of the vest that I was able to stay in for an extended time.

My winter kayaking top clothes consist of the sharkskin vest covered by a light wool singlet. The vest seems able to breathe to some extent and it only becomes a bit damp after extended periods of maximum effort. At lunch stops it keeps the chilly wind at bay. I have since bought a long sleeve version of the Sharkskin

Chillproof top that I keep for more nasty conditions.

Sharkskin have not been shy about branding their garments and it is only your life jacket that saves you from looking like a floating Sharkskin advertisement.

For that mid winter plunge, no way does Sharkskin compare to a drysuit. Sharkskin will perform roughly equivalently to a lightweight wet suit, but be more comfortable to wear when dry. You should however expect to experience less agony than those kitted out in polarfleece and other insulating tops.

Of course you don't have to be content with just a top, there are the long pants, balaclava, socks and pogies to match. If you kit yourself up in all these, not only will you find that the effects of cold water immersion are delayed but you will be eligible for direct entry into ninja school!

Lavacore is another product with similar properties to Sharkskin: <https://www.lavacoreinternational.com/products/tops/>

Outdoor Action is an Auckland outlet that stocks a large Sharkskin range and has good prices: <http://www.outdooraction.co.nz/shop-by-brand/sharkskin.html>

Canoe & Kayak stock Sharkskin products in Tauranga: [http://www.canoeandkayak.co.nz/shop/Clothing/x\\_item\\_sort\\_by//page/2.html](http://www.canoeandkayak.co.nz/shop/Clothing/x_item_sort_by//page/2.html)

Expect to pay \$200 to \$250 for a long sleeve top.



## The 'Bugger! File

### Kerikeri Low Tide Mud Bath by Lynniss Burson

I had a delightful afternoon taking my 12 year old grandson for a paddle down Kerikeri River on a dropping tide just after Easter. I impulsively changed my well thought out trip plan, which was to launch at Opito Bay and paddle up to Aroha Island for a cook up on the beach. Instead we launched at Scudders, paddled down river, had our baked beans cook up followed by Malteser Easter Bunnies - they are so yum - then back to Scudders.

My grandson Reinah was loving every minute. Arriving at Scudders, there was no water, but plenty of mud flats. He's so light that he paddled his kayak several metres over the goo then got out and sank up to his thighs without hitting firm ground.

At this point, I know I'm in big trouble. He is still loving this adventure with his grandmother, however I'm feeling daft.

I've a rope in the cockpit which he ties on my kayak, then hauls me across to where the mud is only ankle deep. A local wades out and invites us to use his hose while carrying Reinah's boat to the tap, then comes back and helps me with mine. We sure needed that tap!



Lynniss Burson



## HUMOUR

### School Biology Class

The 6th grade science teacher, Mrs. Parks, asked her class, "What human body part increases to ten times its size when stimulated?"

No one answered until little Mary stood up and said, "You should not be asking sixth-graders a question like that! I'm going to tell my parents, and they will go and tell the principal, who will then fire you!"

Mrs. Parks ignored the stropy little tart and asked the question again, "Which body part increases to 10 times its size when stimulated?"

Little Mary's mouth fell open. Then she said to those around her, "Boy is she going to get in so much big trouble!"

The teacher continued to ignore her and said to the class, "Anybody?"

Finally, Billy stood up, looked around nervously, and said, "The body part that increases 10 times its size when stimulated is the pupil of the eye."

Mrs. Parks said, "Very good, Billy," then turned to Mary and continued. "As for you, young lady, I have three things to say to you. One, you have a dirty mind. Two, you didn't read your homework. And three, one day you are going to be very, very disappointed."

### Eye Disorder

A man with a winking disorder is applying for a position as a sales representative for a large firm.

The interviewer looks over his papers and says, "This is phenomenal. You've graduated from the best schools; your recommendations are wonderful, and your experience is unparalleled. Normally, we'd hire you without a second thought. However, a sales representative has a highly visible position, and we're afraid that your constant winking will scare off potential customers. I'm sorry - we can't hire you."

"But wait," the man says. "If I take two aspirin, I'll stop winking!"

"Really? Great! Show me!"

So the applicant reaches into his jacket pocket and begins pulling out all sorts of condoms: red condoms, blue condoms, ribbed condoms, fla-

voured condoms; finally, at the bottom, he finds a packet of aspirin. He tears it open, swallows the pills, and stops winking.

"Well," said the interviewer, "that's all well and good, but this is a respectable company, and we will not have our employees womanizing all over the country!"

"Womanizing? What do you mean? I'm a happily married man!"

"Well then, how do you explain all these condoms?"

"Oh, that," he sighed. "Have you ever walked into a pharmacy, winking, and asked for aspirin?"

### Shipwrecked

One day a man decided to retire. He booked himself on a Caribbean cruise and proceeded to have the time of his life, that is, until the ship sank. He soon found himself on an island with no other people, no supplies, nothing, only bananas and coconuts. After about four months, he is lying on the beach one day when the most gorgeous woman he has ever seen rows up to the shore. In disbelief, he asks, "Where did you come from? How did you get here?" She replies, "I rowed over from the other side of the island where I landed when my cruise ship sank."

"Amazing," he notes. "You were really lucky to have a row boat wash up with you."

"Oh, this thing?" explains the woman. "I made the boat out of some raw material I found on the island. The oars were whittled from gum tree branches. I wove the bottom from palm tree branches, and the sides and stern came from a Eucalyptus tree."

"But, where did you get the tools?"

"Oh, that was no problem," replied the woman. "On the south side of the island, a very unusual stratum of alluvial rock is exposed. I found that if I fired it to a certain temperature in my kiln, it melted into ductile iron. I used that to make tools and used the tools to make the hardware."

The guy is stunned. "Let's row over to my place," she says. So, after a short time of rowing, she docks the boat at a small wharf. As the man looks to shore, he nearly falls off the boat. Before him is a long stone walk leading to a cabin and tree house. While the woman ties up the row-

boat with an expertly woven hemp rope, the man can only stare ahead, dumb struck. As they walk into the house, she says casually, "It's not much, but I call it home. Sit down, please. Would you like a drink?"

"No! No thank you," the man blurts out, still dazed. "I can't take another drop of coconut juice."

"It's not coconut juice," winks the woman. "I built a still. How would you like a Tropical Spritz?" Trying to hide his continued amazement, the man accepts, and they sit down on her couch to talk. After they exchange their individual survival stories, the woman announces "I'm going to slip into something more comfortable. Would you like to take a shower and shave? There's a razor in the bathroom cabinet upstairs."

No longer questioning anything, the man goes upstairs into the bathroom. There, in the cabinet is a razor made from a piece of tortoise bone. Two shells honed to a hollow ground edge are fastened on to its end inside a swivel mechanism. 'This woman is amazing,' he muses. 'What's next?' When he returns, she greets him wearing nothing but some small flowers on tiny vines, each strategically positioned, she smelled faintly of gardenias. She then beckons for him to sit down next to her. "Tell me," she begins suggestively, slithering closer to him, "We've both been out here for many months. You must have been lonely. When was the last time you played around?" She stares into his eyes. He can't believe what he's hearing. "You mean..." he swallows excitedly as tears start to form in his eyes, "You've built a golf course!"

### The Blonde Wife

The very blonde wife picked up the phone, listened a moment and said, "How should I know, that's 200 miles from here!" and hung up. The husband said, "Who was that?" The wife answered, "I don't know, some woman wanting to know if the coast is clear."

### Short and Sweet

As I was getting in bed, she said, "You're drunk."

I said, "How do you know?"

She said, "You live next door."

## KASK

**KASK, the Kiwi Association of Sea Kayakers (N.Z.) Inc., a network of New Zealand sea kayakers, has the objectives of:**

1. promoting and encouraging the sport of sea kayaking
2. promoting safety standards
3. developing techniques & equipment
4. dealing with issues of coastal access and protection
5. organizing an annual sea kayak forum
6. publishing a bimonthly magazine.

**The New Zealand Sea Canoeist is published bimonthly as the official journal of the Kiwi Association of Sea Kayakers (N.Z.) Inc.**

Articles, trip reports, book reviews, equipment reviews, new techniques, letters to the editor, and moments when the word 'Bugger!' was said singularly or often (referred to by some as incidents) are sought to enliven the pages of the magazine.

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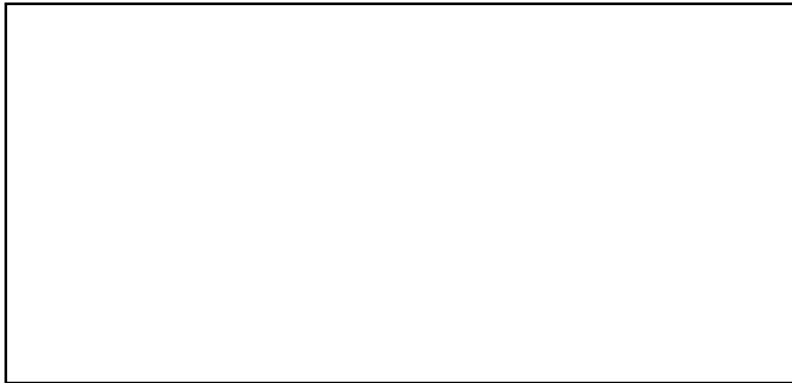
*Margot and Peter Syms paddling in the rain, and cozy.  
See story on page 14. Photo: Christopher Green*



*Manoeuvring kayaks at the camp in the  
Serpent Group as the tide rises  
Photo: Margot and Peter Syms*



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*Kayaking in the Hakai Area, north of Vancouver Island, in British Columbia.  
Crossing the exposed Golby Passage on a perfect day. Photo: Peter and Margot Syms  
Story on page 14.*

### **KASK MEMBERSHIP POLICY**

Current membership fees are:

- \$35 for ordinary membership
- for new members \$35
- \$40 for family or joint membership
- \$35 for overseas membership (PDF newsletter only);
- the KASK memberships runs 1 August to 31 July the following year
- a subscription due notice and up to two reminders are sent out with the newsletters between June and October
- if a membership renewal is not received by 30 September, membership lapses
- new members who join between 1 June and 31 July automatically get their membership credited to the following year, receiving a 14 month membership
- the KASK committee puts its emphasis on confirming renewals from existing members from July to October; and promoting new KASK memberships from November to February