

New Zealand
The Sea Canoeist Newsletter

8

Graham Egarr
50 Tahiti Street
MAPUA

With this issue of the newsletter we have completed a full year of eight issues and it is time to assess whether or not there is enough interest in keeping it going. From my conversations with a number of paddlers over the last few months it is clear that at least those of you who I have spoken to from time to time are pretty keen to see the newsletter continue - but then they are the keen ones anyway and if they thought the newsletter was a load of rubbish they would have spared me the hurt and not told me. I think I have a thick hide so don't stop from making comments on where you think I can improve. As it is time to pass the hat around and collect money to cover costs for the next year, I will enclose a brief questionnaire or reader survey for you to complete and return with your subscription. This will indicate to me how to develop the newsletter in the next few years. I can hold the costs to \$6 again as although some of the newsletters ran to far more pages than I had anticipated in my budget, I was able to cover costs with a couple of dollars spare - not enough to retire to Eketahuna on, mind.

Sea Kayak Forum: With the last newsletter I circulated a notice of a Forum to be held in conjunction with a weekend of open canoe paddling skills. To date I have had enough interest to indicate that I ought to proceed and on that basis you can plan on the event taking place. But, dates mentioned in the newsletter were different to those in the notice, and most people wanted the weekend inbetween. So, the date now is February 11-12. I shall be contacting all those who expressed interest and can now get down to more detailed planning.

At this stage we propose to kick the forum off on the Saturday morning at 9am so all those who are travelling will have to do so on the Friday and the 9am start should allow those who arrive off the late ferry to get out of bed at a civilised hour in a good mood. Saturday morning will be a 'dry' session discussing such things as interpreting the weather, Expedition planning, designing the ultimate sea-kayak, kitting your kayak out. The afternoon will be a wet one with some paddle techniques and self-rescue techniques. On the programme is also discussion on landings on exposed coasts - not sure if the surf will be up enough for this to be a practical session - I doubt it. In the evenings we have the interesting topic of night paddling and navigation, a panel discussion with questions from the floor - this has the potential to range over a variety of topics each of which may not warrant a full lecture/activity. There have been a number of recent expeditions which would warrant a slide show, and there are a number of trips coming up that we could be told about. A topic on conservation issues of the sea coast is a possibility, particularly with the change in government environmental law due to be reviewed in the next 12 months. I also have an interesting one-hour video on beach erosion that would be worth showing. Sunday afternoon could be devoted to a trip in the local area to involve some of these new-found skills. Then we have a local sail-maker who could talk on the subject of sails on canoes. As you might have gathered, we have no shortage of topics to talk about and I hope to be working on these details in the next few days and putting people to topics.

In the last newsletter I apologised to Tom Arthur for missing out putting the right map in, then I didn't give you the replacement map - I will try again in this newsletter.

Also in the last newsletter I mentioned Grahame Sisson's double kayak, 'Southern Light' which is the production boat from the prototype that was developed for Paul Caffyn to cross the Tasman. Grahame has gone back to this boat with a bit more thought, particularly with a view to making it a more useful boat for less specialised use than crossing the Tasman. The cockpits have been moved about a bit and the result is a better balanced boat. As I mentioned, it looks huge in the shed but Paul and Bob McKerrow paddled it over from Nelson city recently to have lunch with my wife and I and then went back with a stiff sea breeze throwing a fair-sized chop at them. The boat certainly looked small as they shot out over the entrance bar with an outgoing tide against the sea breeze. Bob reported to me that the boat is

very fast and superb in the waves; no effort to keep it to its optimum speed. I know that during the development phase Grahame and Bevan Walker gave it a real workout to iron out any faults in the design, particularly with the deck lay-out. The hull itself is a well proven design originally developed for long distance racing. Grahame has refined the basic lines and added to it all the best aspects of the Nordkapp kayak and his later development research that went into the Puysegur kayak. I was in Grahame's workshop recently and he had a row of these boats lined up in various stages of completion; all ordered by clients and Grahame really hasn't been promoting these boats yet.

Bob McKerrow has recently taken over as editor of *Adventure Magazine* so we will be seeing more sea kayaking stories in that magazine I should imagine. The magazine is doing a canoe and kayak supplement for the December/January issue which will be well worth having. The same publishers are bringing out the new *New Zealand Geographic* which looks like being another excellent publication. For those of you who live too far from a bookshop and would like to order these magazines direct the *Adventure Magazine* is \$35.00 per year for 6 issues and *N.Z. Geographic* is \$35.75 for 4 issues. Both from P.O. Box 122 Ohakune.

I have discussed with Bob the future of our own newsletter with a view to having a regular page in *Adventure* and stopping this newsletter. As both run to 6 issues per year we would not lose anything topical. This is a question I will put in the reader survey, however in talking it over with other people I gather that the preferred option would be to run the two publications alongside each other so that this newsletter is complementary to *Adventure*.

Seen recently was a radio dry-bag. This was a trifle on the expensive side at around \$50 US. but I guess if you drop a radio in the water it would pay for itself without a doubt. The bag is called 'Watersound' and is designed to fit most common makes of VHF radio - you can speak and receive through the bag. The same company also make bags for video and still cameras. As yet, not available off the shelf in New Zealand but if you are interested you should write to EWA Marine

C/o Pioneer Marketing
216 Haddon Ave
Westmont N.J. 08108
U.S.A.

Also worth looking into is the use of reflective tape on your equipment. I recently met a fellow who had all his gear marked with a band of reflective tape, even his boat had a stripe from end to end. He told me that he had only to flash his torch around the beach to pick up all his gear. 3M make most of the tape available in New Zealand. It reflects light back in the same direction that it came from - ideal for finding your gear in the dark and I should imagine that plenty splashed about your clothing would help locate you in the water at night too. Some years ago when I was on the committee that drew up the current standard for buoyancy-aids we had a demonstration of retro-reflective tape out on Wellington Harbour. We had some divers dropped off with a variety of lights and some with retro-reflective tape only. Aboard the rescue boat we had only to sweep a light over the water and we could pick up a flash of light reflected back from the tape to locate the person in the water. About the next most effective light were Cylume sticks. For the cost of retro-reflective tape I would suggest it would be a good investment. Incidentally our committee included retro-reflective tape on all the buoyancy-aids as standard.

Another publication that you may be interested in is the newsletter of the Nature Conservation Council. The September issue had an article about the Greenhouse effect - what we don't know. I guess everybody is talking about this topic at the moment. There was also an article about threatened coastal plants. They also mention a new booklet on Coastal Wetlands - 16pp illustrated at \$2.75 available from Government Bookshops, or from the Nature Conservation Council. If you would like to receive copies of their newsletter (free), write to Nature Conservation Council. P.O. Box 12-200, Thorndon. Wellington.

The recent issue of *Traditional Boat* magazine reports the formation of an informal society for information on recreational rowing. Contact is Roy Meehan phone (09) 2787 917 or John Welsford phone (09) 438 207 both Auckland contacts.