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NEW ZEALAND SEA KAYAKER

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

October - November 2024
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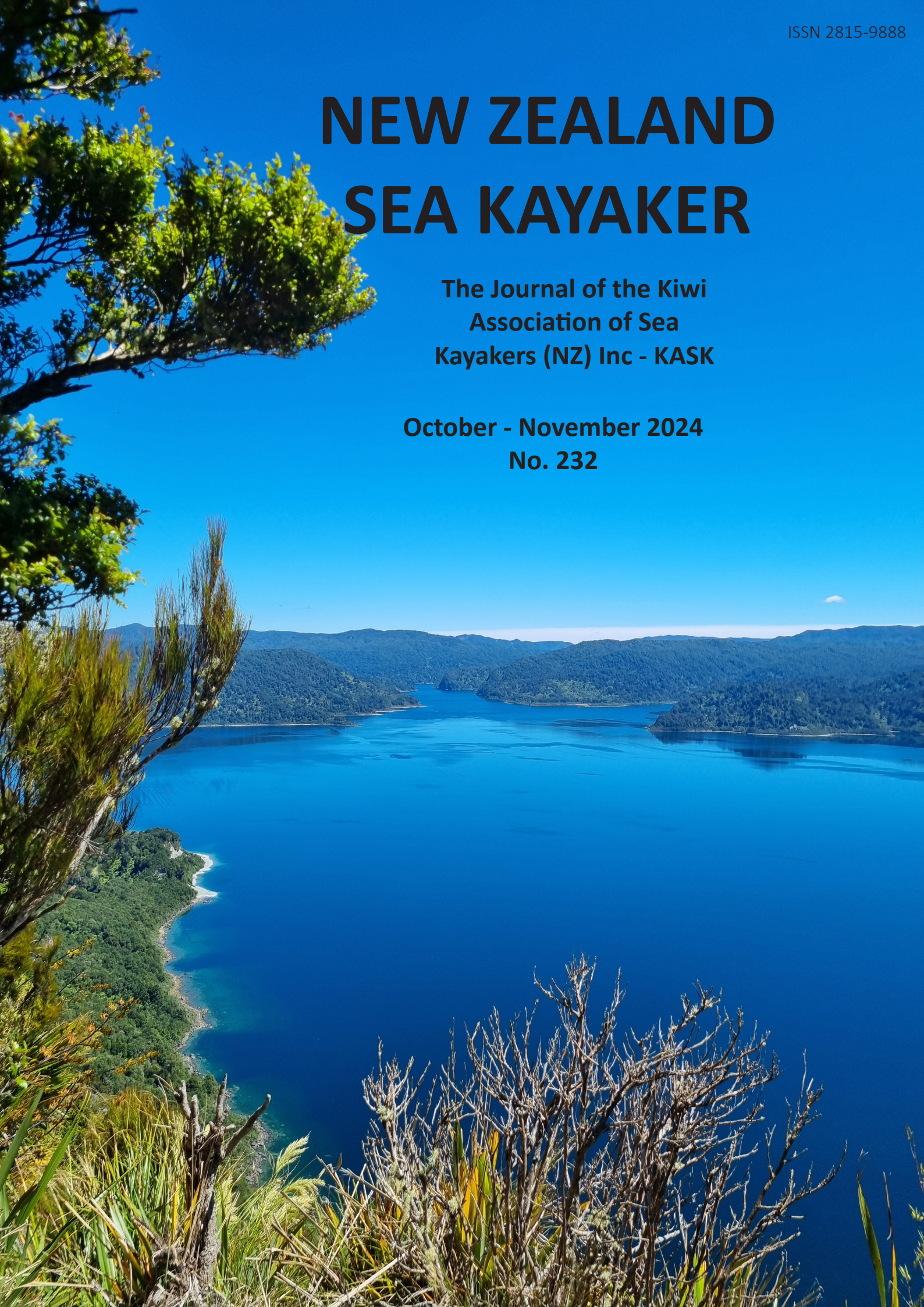

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The second part of the three part series on the Alaskan book by Paul Caffyn in the next KASK magazine #233

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Lake Waikaremoana
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President's Report
By Steve Cooper

Well, it has been a struggle for Jacquie to get this magazine together for you all with a real challenge to get articles to include, a big thank you to Paul for supplying his book reviews as well as the other contributors for stepping into the breach! We really do need you guys to send us through your write ups of trips or other stuff to share so we can keep the magazine going and interesting for everyone to read.

Some of you will be aware that we are still finalising the membership system on the website, these things are never as straightforward as they should be and I appreciate your patience as we work through the final (I hope) issues. Please get in touch if you're having problems with it still and I'll get it sorted for you! In this magazine there is a short article explaining how to login and manage your membership on the website, I hope that helps.

We have also been busy delivering the KayakSafe workshops and there is a short writeup in the magazine about how that's going so far. Dallas and her team are making great progress with that. Sadly, the Safer Boating forum report reproduced here shows that it is still a very necessary initiative.

Of course, the team is in full swing with final preparations TAHUNANUI KAYAK FEST 2025 to be held 13th to 16th February 2025, if you haven't booked your spot yet then get in quick at https://kask.co.nz/kayakfest2025/ at the time of writing there were only a few places left.

At KayakFest in February we will also have our KASK AGM where we provide the reports on the year that has been and the plans for the coming year. We also elect the new committee so if you would like to get involved put your name forward for election. This time we will also be agreeing an updated constitution as required by the Incorporated Societies Act so look out for more information on that in your email inbox over the next month or so.

As always, keep getting out there enjoying the water -- Safe Paddling!

Submissions for magazine #233
25th January 2025

We Should Practice's Review of the Manukau KayakSafe Workshop

By Louise Tu'u

Today's beautiful weather added to our director, Louise Tu'u attendance of a full kayak safety workshop, run by the Kiwi Association of Sea Kayakers (KASK) at Manukau Canoe Club (MCC) in Ōtāhuhu. Parking is tight so Louise cycled here, which was speedy and pleasant.

What Louise and others learned was short of incredible and hairy: the difference between life jackets and PFDs (personal floatation devices) is critical i.e. life jackets keep you on your back so not good if you've capsized and are trying to get back into the kayak, pealess whistles are here because peas get soaked and therefore don't make a noise and WET is not only a noun but a life-saving acronym: Wind, Waves, Water, Weather: Equipment and Tell someone

Out in South Auckland and nationwide, many people enjoy recreational fishing, swimming, paddling. However, we in Aotearoa New Zealand have the unenviable record of having the second highest number of fatalities doing these activities, in the developed world. Therefore, KASK runs these free workshops across the country to encourage people with education, planning ahead with apps like windy.com and buoying up (pun intended) self-awareness and reflection of how awesome doing these activities can be if taken seriously and with care.

This workshop was thoroughly enjoyable for it's factual, science based and highly interactive presentation, led by KASK president, Steve Cooper and fellow trained volunteer experienced sea kayakers: Mark, John, Peter, and MCC president, Roger French.

The morning was theory, with the afternoon, being a very real practical and lively time of kayaking near and over mangroves in the Tamaki River.

Thank you KASK and Manukau Canoe Club and fellow participants for being so generous in your knowledge, humour and passion.

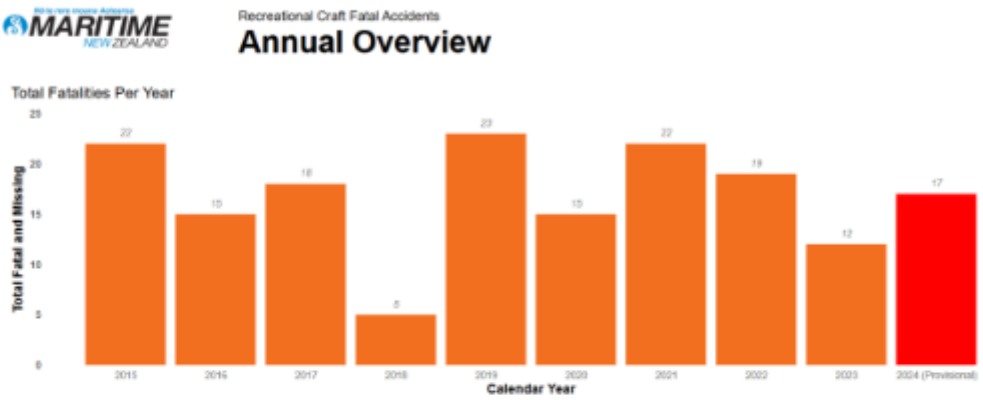
For more information on how to attend their next free workshop and join both KASK and your local club, follow the links.

It could just save your life and others.



Recreational Craft fatal accidents annual overview

This year has seen the number of recreational craft users return to pre-COVID numbers, with approximately 1.7 million recreational craft users across the motu. As of 10 December, there have been 17 recreational craft fatalities in 2024. On average, there are 18 fatalities per year. With the year not yet over, the number of fatalities is unfortunately likely to increase this year.



At the Safer Boating Forum in October, a focus on close-to-shore fatalities informed us that approximately 70% of recreational craft fatalities occurred within 1 nautical mile, and of those fatalities, 40% occurred within 400 metres from shore.

Research from Drowning Prevention Auckland showed people overestimated the length of time they could float and the distance they could swim. Only 2% of participants in the study were able to float for more than 5 minutes in a pool, 94% were unable to swim 100 metres in a pool within 5 minutes and 98% were also unable to swim more than 100 metres in open water within 5 minutes.

If a person unexpectedly finds themselves in the water without a life jacket and is unable to call for help, attempts to float for an extended period of time or swim any distance to safety is likely to be futile. This research supports the importance of wearing a life jacket at all times so it enables a person to float and carry of two forms of waterproof communication so help can be contacted if required.

Perhaps a reason why people choose not to wear a life jacket is that they report feeling safer close to the shore, and these trips occur with little preparation in contrast to trips further afield. This lack of accurate risk perception does not take into account that close to shore is the area where craft are more likely to get capsized or swamped.

The fatalities data shows that in 40% of recreational craft fatalities, a life jacket was not worn, while in 43% of fatalities, a life jacket was worn but it was found to be improperly fitted, failed to inflate, or in situations where a life jacket could not have saved the person, such as being pinned underwater. This further supports the need to make sure recreational craft users maintain their life jackets and know how to correctly wear them.

Thgis is extracted from the Safer Boating Newsletter - please see link:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/15LyUjWCNaRFHjRZbGdjQq_e1-fH_dhFu/view?usp=drivesdk

KayakSafe Workshop

By Dallas Veitch

"Factual, science-based and highly interactive" - KayakSafe 2024 gets off to a flying start.

The KASK KayakSafe NZ team of Steve Cooper, Lucas Waterworth, Ian McKenzie, Kelvin Texeira, and myself are now halfway through this season's kayaking safety workshops. As usual, we are building on past successes and covering some new ground as well, expanding to new locations, including online, and collaborating with SUP NZ to incorporate paddleboard specific information. Kelvin, a new addition to the team, has come on as a media and communications specialist, and his expertise has helped to drive excellent turnout.

Christchurch kicked off proceedings at the end of November with Ian McKenzie at the helm for a packed evening presentation with a follow-up morning on the water at Cass Bay ably assisted by Steven Cooper (the South Island one) and Dan O'Connor.

"It is exactly what we hoped for... enough of the basics to get started, a base to learn from. … It's the reality check we needed, and we felt very encouraging and positive after the on water training. A kind of put it in perspective that we can plan to manage the risks which on reflection was a central message".
Simon Boys, Christchurch KayakSafe participant

Our very first online KayakSafe workshop was held around the same time on a Saturday morning. After a fair bit of practice on the technical aspects of holding an online workshop, Kelvin ably managed that side of things while I presented to roughly 15 paddlers. We were able to have constructive interaction with participants and believe this is a great option for getting across these key safety messages to paddlers unable to attend in person workshop. We have two more planned for 2025 so if you like to see what we're up to, jump on to kask.co.nz/kayaksafe-nz and register.

The always busy Lucas Waterworth jumped across to the South Island to hold a morning presentation at The Boathouse in Nelson in December to an enthusiastic



group of paddlers. Deputy Harbourmaster, Peter Carmichael, lent a local perspective but had to depart quickly to pull out two people and a puppy from a fully inverted catamaran 10nm offshore! The Nelson Yacht Club also helped out with the loan of a projector and screen. We love this sort of community engagement and hope to return next year.

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Last but not least, Steve Cooper (our illustrious leader from the North Island) held a December workshop at the Manukau Canoe Club. One of the participants, Louise Tu'u, blogged about the experience on her website.

"What Louise and others learned was nothing short of incredible and hairy: the difference between life jackets and PFDs (personal floatation devices) is critical i.e. life jackets keep you on your back so not good if you've capsized and are trying to get back into the kayak, pealess whistles are here because peas get soaked and therefore don't make a noise and WET is not only a noun but a life-saving acronym:

Wind, Waves, Water, Weather: **E**quipment and **T**ell someone

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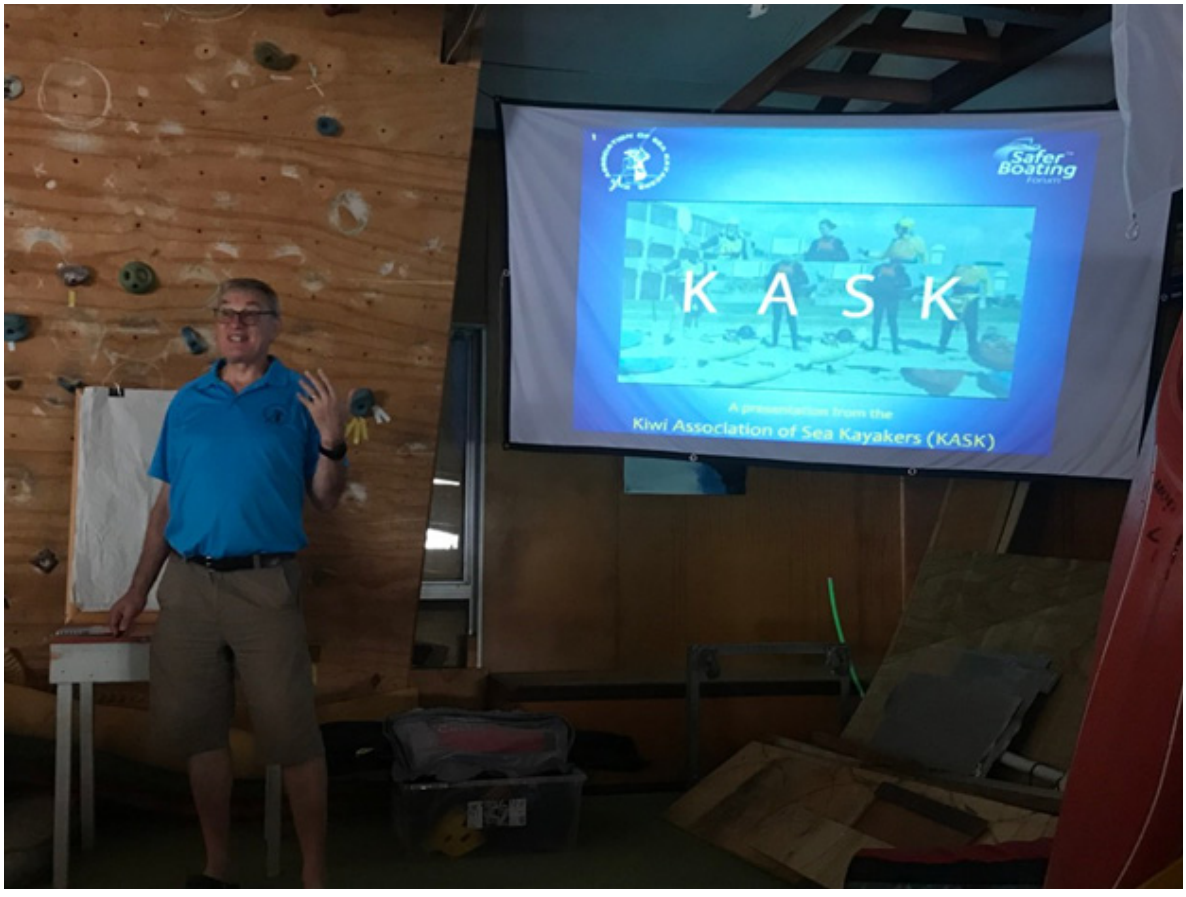
Thank you KASK and Manukau Canoe Club and fellow participants for being so generous in your knowledge, humour and passion."

The KayakSafe team is now taking a well-deserved break over the holidays and will return in late January for online workshops, and workshops in Kerikeri, Whangarei, New Plymouth, Wellington CBD and Dunedin. Thanks to all our wonderful volunteers and community partners and to Safer Boating NZ for making this a worthwhile project possible.






Safer Boating Forum
K A S K
A presentation from the
Kiwi Association of Sea Kayakers (KASK)

A Windy Wellington Christmas Kayak

By Peter Fuller

Mana Island is a Department of Conservation Reserve about 3 kilometres from Porirua coastline. The forecast was of course, it being a Wellington spring, wildly unpredictable but after a number of phone calls and a last minute fall in windspeed, we made the decision to go to Mana Island for the WSKN Christmas do and an exciting trip eventuated. We paddled out into a 1 metre swell which of course meant the odd two metre wave coupled with a brisk 20-25k head wind. Under the watchful eye of Andy Harding and Robby Benson-Cooper we formed two pods and paddled hard until we got into the wind and swell shadow of Mana Island. I was a bit south of the main group at this point and I saw dolphins! The only one to see them unfortunately.

Mana of course was lovely -see the photos and a great spread was put on with Lucas Waterworth running a full kitchen setup and Corrinne Harding's home-cooked Christmas pies being a huge hit.

A group of us did the wetland walk while others lounged and then it was time to return. Initially the wind and swell had dropped on the crossing so we were doing well until we got to the northern end of Titahi Bay which always has some rougher water and sure enough as we came past it the wind was funnelled and picked up quite dramatically driving two-metre downwind rollers. This was character forming with confused sea hitting at different angles and some strong gusts hitting from the side, if you managed to catch a wave it was a short wild ride with the kayak getting pushed in random directions. I was sitting at the back and the next thing Esguerra Willy rolled over. A rescue in the rolling waves ensured and with the help of some brisk paddling from Robby Benson-Cooper he was helped back into his boat by Robby and myself. So it really was a SKISL and reminds us yet again that nothing replaces practicing for rescues. Everyone should expect the January Wellington SKISL to be very very wet.

Oh and also I just had to take a photo of the seagull owning my kayak on the car.

Lovely to see legends Max Grant and Melz Grant, unfortunately Max had an injury and could not join us. A great trip, the right amount of excitement and excellent company and food. Many thanks to Chris Henshaw for doing the safety radio calls.









Exploring the northern part of Lake Wānaka

By Oliver Winkler

With strong and wet norwesters having ruined various outdoor plans over the past several weekends, a weekend with a forecasted high pressure system was a very welcomed change. Having driven most of the way south on Friday night after work, it was just a 90 min early morning drive to get on the water at the northern (Makarora) end of Lake Wānaka.

I had explored the southern part and Stevensons Arm on past trips launching from Wānaka township, but the more remote northern part had been on my wish list for a while. I decided to first cross over to the western side of the lake to then skirt the shores and explore some of the bays and beaches along that side south towards Mou Waho, a scenic island with a DOC campsite.

The conditions were perfect, a slight head wind in the morning did not take long to dissipate, giving way to an almost glassy lake. There were plenty of beaches to pull out for a rest, some of these beaches would have made nice camping spots as well. Paddling the western side of the lake, along the Minaret station land, offered great views of the McKerrow range and Isthmus peak to the east. I went as far as the Albert Burn before cutting across the lake to land on Mou Waho. A crew of friendly DOC workers were staying on the island for pest control, trying to catch the last rat on this nice bird sanctuary island. We were later joined by two more sea kayakers and one brave packrafter who paddled across Stevensons arm. A few sport boats came for brief visits, but they did not stay long.

Watching the sunset from the viewpoint overlooking the Arethusa pool, a nice tarn 20 minutes up the hill from the DOC campsite is always a highlight when visiting. The wind picked up overnight but fortunately by morning only a bit of chop was left when I got on the water to paddle back along the eastern shore. The Wānaka Faces hut was worth a quick stop and would certainly be a cosy hut to wait out some weather or to just enjoy the grand views of the peaks of the Mt Aspiring National Park to the west. Just as forecasted it developed into a calm and sunny day with just a slight tailwind making for fast progress on the 30km return leg.

However, when I reached Boundary Creek, I could see white caps lurking around the corner and further up the lake. Presumably the sea breeze had pushed in quite early (1:30 pm) via Haast Pass and was roughing up the top part of the lake. So, the final 5 km of the day provided some extra exercise pushing into the 15-20 kts headwind back to the car.





Checking out Wanaka Faces Hut

Around Minaret Bay





Approaching Boundary Creek with a slight tailwind... but could see some white caps in the distance



Looking to the peaks of the Aspiring National Park, around Minaret Bay

Looking north with McKerrows and the Neck on the right





Mou Waho on the left, Minaret Burn on the right



Looking towards Minaret Burn and Twin Peak from Mou Waho

Looking towards the McKerrow Range from Mou Waho





Looking towards the Peninsula and Wanaka township to the south of Mou Waho with Arethusa pool below the viewpoint

A tale of three lakes: Kayaking in the Eastern Sierra of California

By Dallas Veitch

In my mountain home of Mammoth Lakes, on the eastern side of California's Sierra Nevada, it may be 250 km to the ocean but fascinating kayaking opportunities abound. The Eastern Sierra is a landscape of fire and ice, lying on the edge of the Great Basin area that stretches all the way to the Rockies. Arid, dramatic, and perhaps not at all what you think of when you think of California. I frequently paddle three lakes nearby that encapsulate the diversity of this region that is so close to my heart.

Mono Lake

Mono Lake lies beneath the Sierra escarpment directly east of Yosemite at an altitude of almost 2000 m. It is an ancient lake, perhaps a million years old, lying in a shallow basin. Five streams bring snowmelt with traces of dissolved salts from the high peaks, but none exit. The year-round sun evaporates the water and over millennia, the lake water has become salty and alkaline. Three times saltier than the ocean, in fact, and pH 9! As Mark Twain said, "Its sluggish waters are so strong with alkali that if you only dip the most hopelessly soiled garment into them once or twice, and wring it out, it will be found as clean as if it had been through the ablest of washerwomen's hands." Kayaking in this water takes "getting out on the salty stuff" to a whole new level. Your boat rides high, bobs like a cork, turns on a dime. Salt crystallizes on surfaces like fingers of lace. Rolling practice is most definitely NOT recommended. Squalls rush down over the high crest and whip glassy waters to a frothy frenzy within minutes, catching out the unaware. People have perished. Extensive post-paddle cleaning is required. It's a harsh and deadly environment. But far from a dead one.

Algae grow in the waters, feeding tiny brine shrimp and scuba diving alkali flies, which in turn support thousands of migratory birds which stop to refuel at this giant fast food avian restaurant en route from one pole to the other. The vast majority of California Gulls nest on two volcanic islands. Freshwater springs fed by snowmelt percolate up through the lakebed, dissolving calcium, which reacts with carbonates in the lake water to form calcium carbonate towers known as tufa. A growing Los Angeles, in its unending thirst for water, diverted the streams entering the lake almost a century ago, and the water level dropped dramatically, exposing tufa towers in their otherworldly strangeness. Today, we battle against the Department of Water and Power and climate change to restore the lake levels and to preserve this remarkable environment. Putting in for a paddle here, the swarms of alkali flies at the water's edge part magically (I tell visitors that they are the friendliest flies in the world) after laying their eggs underwater. Clusters of black fly pupae cling to submerged rocks, traditional food of the Kutzadika Paiute, dubbed the "Monache" or "Fly People" by tribes trading for this delicacy that is said to taste like bacon bits or buttery rice. Monache has been shortened to Mono - Fly People Lake!

As you paddle around the tufas, the water teeming with brine shrimp, you might see an osprey or two or six. Pairs nest atop the tufa towers, returning to the same aerie year after year to raise their chicks, safe from predators. But no fish swim in this lake. The raptors fly off to nearby lakes and streams and return with trout to feed their offspring. Gulls wheel about, and grebes, phalaropes and many other birds bob about on the lake surface. In the evening, after sunset, when the water turns bruised purple and blue and the tufa towers seem to hover magically, an extraordinary light show plays out across the basin. It's time to sit, to breathe, to look, and to experience nature in all its glory.



A storm approaches Mono Lake from Yosemite. That glassy water will change to whitecaps in about 5 minutes.

Kayaking around the Mono Lake tufas



Crowley Lake

Further to the south lies Crowley Lake, at 2100m. Crowley is a dammed lake thanks to the damned DWP of Los Angeles, and hugely popular with fishermen. For paddlers, the main attraction, apart from stunning views across the lake to the high peaks of the Sierra, Mammoth Mountain, and the Minarets, is the mysterious Crowley Lake columns. They are a few kilometers paddle from the nearest launching site and initially emerge from the sandy hillsides like spiraled chimneys. Eventually you reach a beach with a group of columns linked by arches. How could this be natural? It looks like a Moorish church! Depending on the lake level, you can maneuver your kayak through these spiraled columns and ponder what wondrous geological happenstance was responsible for their formation. Many theories have been put forward, but no one really knows.

Kayaking around the Crowley Lake columns





Crowley Lake columns

Wit-sa-Nap/Convict Lake

Nestled in a deep glacier carved bowl at 2600m, Wit-sa-Nap/Convict Lake has the clearest, and the coldest, water of these three lakes. The English name derives, in great US Western fashion, from a showdown in 1871 between a group of convicts who had escaped from Carson City, 160 km to the north, and the Sheriff's pursuing posse. In the shootout, Sheriff Morrison was killed along with his native guide. Mount Morrison towers over the south shore of this narrow lake with a subsidiary peak named (with colonial condescension) Mono Jim, after the unfortunate guide. The Paiute name, Wit-sa-Nap is far more poetic, referring to magical fish infused with the spirits of children that swim through the surrounding mountains streams. Opposite Mount Morrison rises Laurel Mountain. Both sheer peaks tower almost 1500 m above the lake. Laurel Mountain is composed of metamorphic rock, ancient seabed that was uplifted by the geologic forces pushing up the Sierra Nevada. But here, unlike elsewhere in the Sierra, the underlying granite never pushed through and layers of multihued marbles, sleet, and sandstone were contorted into the wild folds of the Sevehah Cliff. The 400 million year old rock is fossil-laden. Kayaking here on a calm day is like paddling in the sky and through the mountain itself. In the autumn, aspen groves turn reflections buttery gold. In drenching monsoon thunderstorms, the water turns wild and mist swirls behind towers that seem to detach from Laurel's cliffs. It's a jaw-dropping place. I challenge you to visit and not take photos. Usually, one lap is not enough.

Autumn aspen groves on Convict Lake, Mount Morrison at the rear.





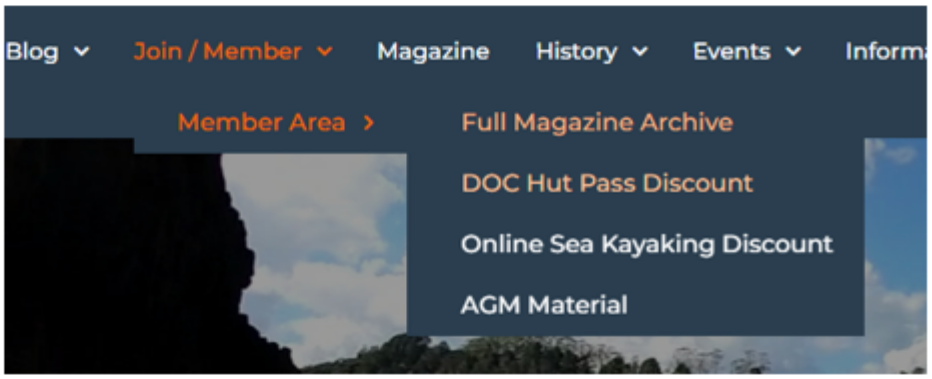
Laurel Mountain and Wit-sa-Nap/Convict Lake. Paddling in the sky!

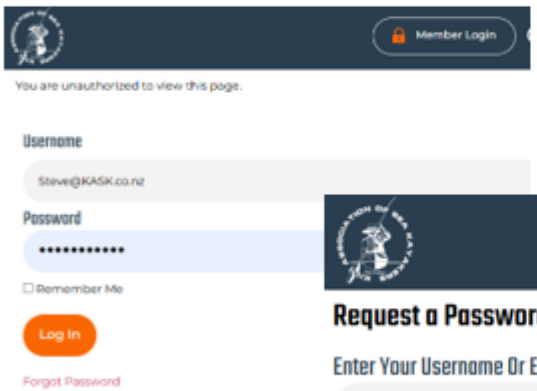
Using the Website for your Membership Management:

A quick guide by Steve Cooper (Admin@kask.co.nz)

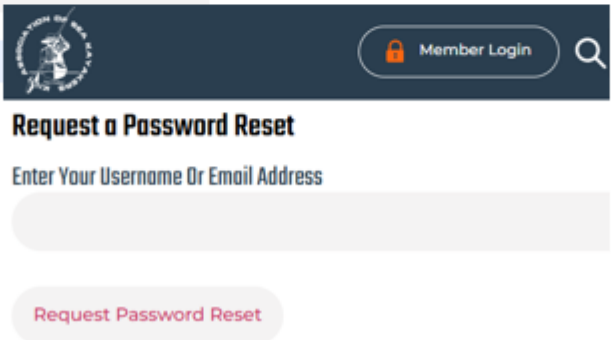


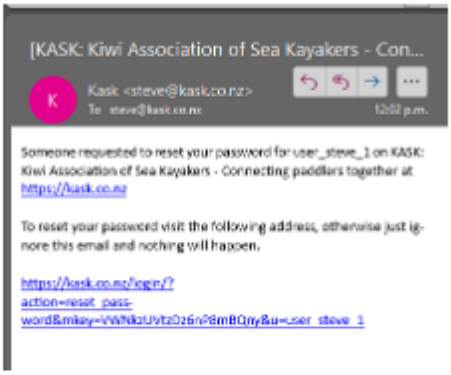
If you are a member of KASK then when you visit our website, if you login by clicking the button at the top right of the screen you will get to see a few extra bits like the full archive of our magazine right back to the first newsletters as well as the opportunity to get the discount from DOC for their annual pass and Online Sea Kayaking discount as well as the AGM Material.



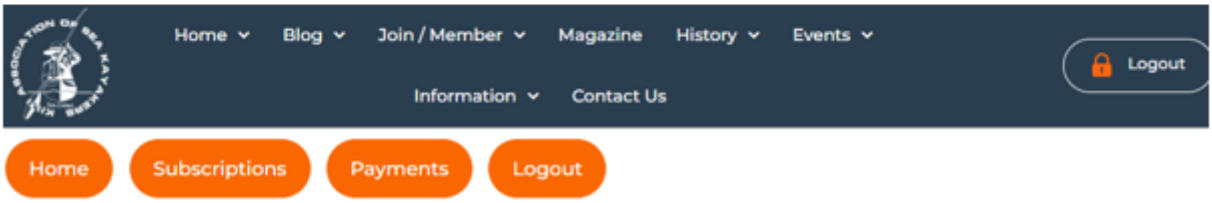


Your username is your email address unless you changed that when you first registered as a member. If you don't know your password you can simply click the "Forgot Password" at the bottom, fill in your email address and "Request Password Reset" to get an email with a reset link in it.



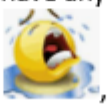


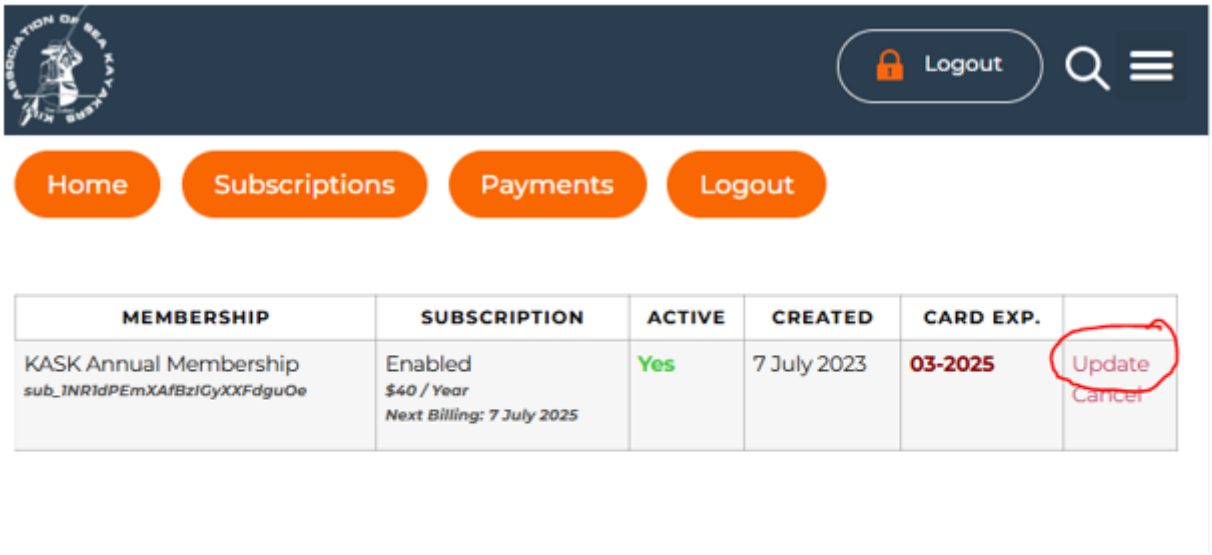
Once you are logged in you can update your address and other details on the "Home" tab:





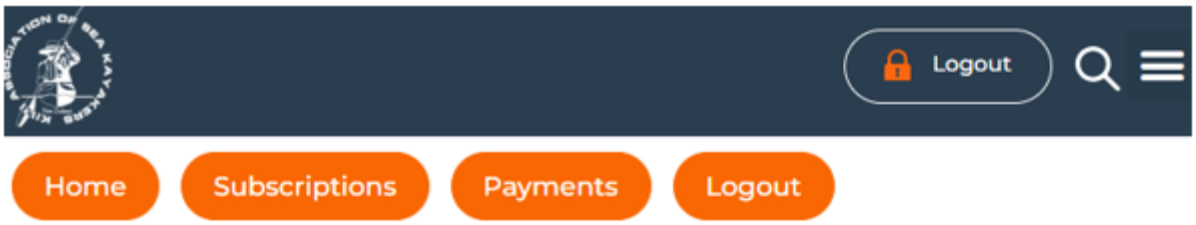
Check out your membership status on the Subscriptions tab (and, if you pay by credit card using "Stripe" change your credit card details by clicking the "Update" link (that's all stored in the Stripe system KASK don't have any of your card details)).

(Or, shame on you , you can cancel your membership with the other link there):



If you paid by Bank Transfer then those links won't work and you'll need to do all that stuff manually with us directly.

The Payments tab just shows you the payments you have made to date:



DATE	TOTAL	MEMBERSHIP	METHOD	STATUS	INVOICE
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7 July 2023	$40.00	KASK Annual Membership	Stripe Payment	Complete	ch_3NR1dPEmXAfBzIGy0dIr2ALX

If things don't work as you expect or you're not sure please feel free to get in touch with me and I will sort things out for you, these things can get quite frustrating I appreciate that!

Of course we would love to hear from you with any other stuff you think should be on the website or comments about what is already up there use the contact us page https://kask.co.nz/contact-us/

Paul Caffyn Around Alaska - Part I

Big Surf, Big Tides & An Oil Spill!

Prince Rupert to False Pass

2 -18 April 1989 14 May - 29 June -1990



During a crossing of Port Bainbridge, I was drenched with spray when this big humpback whale took a breath, then the big tail lifted up as it sounded

The Challenge

It wasn't long after my 1985 kayak circumnavigation of Japan that I began researching and planning a tidewater circumnavigation of Alaska. The worst aspect of sea kayaking for me was the immediate period following the conclusion of a successful trip. It was not one of elation and satisfaction, as you might expect, but was more akin to post-natal depression. Once my elusive goal had been attained, there was nothing else really to strive for. I found the best way to cope with this post-trip depression was to pull out a world atlas and begin to plan another outrageous adventure.

Since the eastern border of Alaska is landlocked against Canada, I decided to have a crack at paddling from Prince Rupert on the northern coast of British Columbia to Inuvik near the Arctic Coast of Canada. Short of lashing the kayak onto a sled and following a dog team south to Prince Rupert, I would have to be satisfied with what I termed a tidewater - in the sea from start to finish - circumnavigation of Alaska. Although the stretched out length of Alaska's shoreline totaled 33,904 miles, my planned route involved 4,600 miles of paddling, give or take a mile or two. At an anticipated all up average of 30 miles a day, I figured by starting in early April I should knock the trip off comfortably inside five months.

This trip appealed to me for two main reasons. Firstly no one had paddled the entire route before, and secondly, kayaks and the art of kayaking largely evolved in Alaskan waters. Since all my previous trips had been in waters where dugout canoes or rafts were used by the locals, it felt like I was taking my kayak on a nostalgic journey home. I'd been talking for years about writing an authoritative manual on sea kayaking but a lack of experience in ice conditions had been a great excuse for not completing the book. I needed to round off my experience with a trip into Arctic waters where kayaks had played such a major role in providing transportation for the Eskimos.

For three years I accumulated information on Alaska's coastline, building up a detailed picture of all the things that would affect me, prevailing winds and currents, ice pack break-up dates and how best to deal with the bears. By starting in early spring from Prince Rupert, I felt confident of cracking the whole trip in one season, provided the ice pack allowed me

an easy passage past Cape Barrow, the northern-most tip of Alaska.

The solution to the problem of food resupply with New Zealand freeze-dry meals was simple. I picked out coastal villages from a map of Alaska, then checked the zip code list for those with post offices. Mailing boxes c/o general delivery to coastal village post offices was a widely accepted practice in Alaska.

1989 PRINCE RUPERT to ELFIN COVE
Not a Good Year for Kayaking

Early evening on March 25, I had finished sorting and packing 17 boxes of food in the basement of a friend's house on Vancouver Island when I was called to watch an item on the television news. I was dismayed to hear of an oil spill in Prince William Sound. The *Exxon Valdez* had strayed out of its shipping lane and run aground on Bligh Reef, spewing 11 million gallons of crude oil into the sound. Although the sound was on my projected route, I wasn't too bothered initially and assumed, as most people did, that the spill would quickly be contained.

Ever since 1977, a daily flow of two millions barrels of crude oil had been piped south from the Arctic coast across Alaska to the small fishing port of Valdez in Prince William Sound, from where tankers transported the crude south to the Lower 48 (an Alaskan term for the rest of the USA).

On schedule, but with my usual pre-trip jitters, I paddled away from Prince Rupert on 2 April and lost touch with the outside world for the next four weeks as I worked northwards through Clarence and Chatham straits towards my first food dump at Elfin Cove.

The spring of 1989 was bleak and cold in south-east Alaska. Streams tumbling out of the forest were freeze-framed as stalagmites of ice while snow banks lay thickly on the cobble beaches. It had been a long hard winter. I didn't talk to a soul for eight days.



1 April 1989: about to board a BC ferry for the crossing to Prince Rupert and the start of the paddle



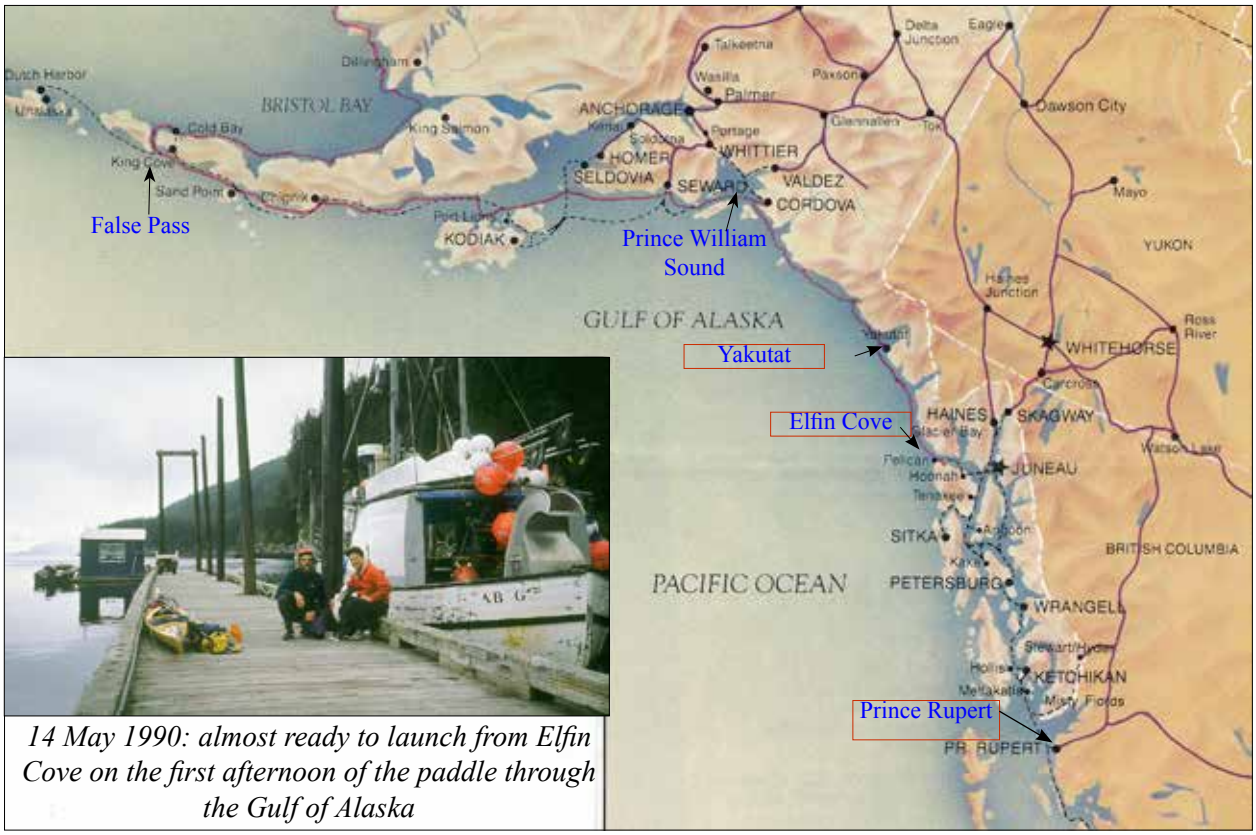
The old bull orca with a serious case of flacid fin syndrome. One of the highlights of the 1989 paddle

When I passed two loggers fishing from a dinghy, I called out a cheery, "Great day for it." In reply they just grunted at me. I kept paddling.

As the trip progressed, my morale and confidence sadly sagged. The kayak was leaking in two compartments. I had to light a fire each night to dry out my gear. Sub-zero Celsius temperatures morning and night didn't help my attempts to fix the leaks. I located pinprick holes by using my mouth against the hull to suck air, then tipped white spirits into each hole and lit the fluid to dry out the kevlar. The only way to harden the fibreglass patches was to use the M.S.R. cooker as a flamethrower.

A pod of killer whales was the highlight of that year. The bull was so old, the top of his massive sail-like dorsal fin, a full eight feet high, had drooped down towards his back. Like a mini submarine, he cruised by my bow less than a paddle length away.

When I paddled into Elfin Cove on 18 April, I was considering abandoning the trip. What with the continuing problems of leaks and cold temperatures, I was definitely not enjoying myself. Salmon fishermen at the cove related horror stories of how the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill was now totally out of control, and spreading down both sides of Kodiak Island. They reckoned I would end up looking like a slime ball if I continued paddling. I could not bear the idea of paddling through a sound littered with the oil-slimed



14 May 1990: almost ready to launch from Elfin Cove on the first afternoon of the paddle through the Gulf of Alaska

carcasses of birds and sea otters, nor did I fancy trying to keep my paddle shaft clean of oil - attempting to roll would be comparable to climbing a greasy pole - so I decided to abandon the trip at Elfin Cove and head home to NZ to lick my wounds.

1990 - ELFIN COVE to NOME
A Brilliant Year for Kayaking

At midday on May 14, a floatplane dropped me back into the tiny fishing community of Elfin Cove. Moored to the dock was the salmon boat, *A.B. & G*, lovingly titled 'All Balls and Guts' by its crew, which had brought my replacement twin-skinned kevlar Nordkapp out from Juneau. Psychologically and physically, I was in top condition. I'd spent the past two months training daily on a wave ski in the West Coast surf in front of my cottage, and had just completed a 200 mile training trip in the inside passages of S.E. Alaska.

The next 430 miles to Cordova had an awesome reputation for rotten weather and huge surf breaking onto exposed beaches. There are only two lee landings, at Yakutat and Icy Bay, which is why I'd spent so much time training in the West Coast surf. I knew of only one party of two who'd kayaked this coast since the turn of the century. One paddler had suffered a broken nose when a bumper dumper wave had smashed his paddle shaft back into his face. In two single kayaks, the men had spent two periods of 36 hours at sea to avoid big surf landings.

On the floating dock In Elfin Cove, I finished loading my gear and equipment for the next four months, with sufficient food to last to my first food dump at the Yakutat Post Office. Under a leaden sky, three fishermen watched me silently head out into Cross Sound, on a course for Cape Spencer. I had an equally leaden feeling in my gut as I plugged into a low chop, bucking the flood tidal stream pouring into the sound.

Very few people knew of this trip, and they were all sworn to secrecy. This was partly in response to trauma and stress caused by the maritime authorities during previous paddling trips in Japan and Tasmania. My sole back up was a hard case kayaker in Ketchikan who I would phone each time I reached a food drop post office. I would give Geoff Grosse my anticipated E.T.A. and he was only to notify the U.S. Coastguard that I was overdue if he hadn't heard anything within seven days of that time. I would be totally reliant on my own resources for the next four months. It was total commitment and that's what I wanted.

The Fairweather Coast?

Fishermen term the stretch of coast from Cape Spencer to Yakutat the 'Fairweather coast'. As he sailed northwards in 1778, Captain Cook named both Cape Fairweather and Mount Fairweather, a 15,300-foot high snow-clad peak only a few miles inland from the cape. The salmon and halibut fishermen reckon Cook must have struck it lucky and maintain that the term Fairweather was a misnomer. When talking to

them about weather and sea conditions, they would scratch their heads and say, "Well, we had a calm day off Cape Fairweather back in '83 or was it '82." I could only hope they were exaggerating.

I must have, like Cook, struck it lucky, for although the sky remained sullenly overcast, the wind remained light. I passed the four-mile wide snout of the La Perouse Glacier on 15 May and next morning a break in the cloud revealed a magnificent backdrop of the Fairweather Range. Shimmering icy peaks, broad neve fields and crevassed glaciers marching towards the sea, towered over the coastal strip of forest. I wished for an ice axe and crampons and promised myself a trip back one day to climb Mt Fairweather.

Tiredly I rounded Ocean Cape late evening on 18 May to enter the shelter of Monti Bay with Yakutat at its head. That I'd knocked up 59 miles since dawn was a credit to my pre-trip training, not to mention wanting to avoid another big surf landing. That first 176-mile stage was in many ways the crux of the 1990 Alaskan trip, physically and mentally. Having overcome it, not with ease but in style, I knew I had the mettle to carry on with the next 3,000 miles.

The next 250-mile leg to Cordova was just as committing but I now had a psychological edge. In a massive dumping surf at Point Manby, I almost looped end over end when the second wave of a set caught me scrambling out of the cockpit onto a steep gravel beach. Catapulted out of the cockpit, I grabbed the bow and struggled clear of the undertow, losing only piece of mind and a water container off the stern.

Arriving in Icy Bay, I was nearly an exposure case within 10 minutes of landing. An icy blast off the snow-clad peaks of the St Elias Mountains was funneling out of the bay. The only lee protection on the bare sand spit was a drift-log and I had the devil's own job trying to keep my dome tent in contact with the ground until it was firmly guyed to the log. A big brew of hot tea re-established circulation to my hands.



In Icy Bay, the only lee protection on the sand spit for the tent was the huge drift log

Icy Cape lived up to its reputation as I slipped out of Icy Bay next morning. With an ebbing tide I ran into a solid white line of ice. It was not sea ice but hard glacial ice, fed into the bay by a host of major glaciers which have their snouts in the Pacific Ocean. Because of this, they are termed tidewater glaciers.

Particularly on this initial 430 mile of exposed Gulf of Alaska coast from Elfin Cove to Cordova, I would have preferred the company of a co-paddler however I knew that I was faster and far more flexible operating on my lonesome. Who in their right mind would paddle 50 miles during the day on the outside of the Copper River delta, stop for a brew and a dehi-dinner, kip for an hour on a sandbank, then paddle all night to work a big flood tide over 'The Hump' in order to catch the Cordova Post Office before it closed on Saturday?

Mind you I didn't make it in time. What I had not foreseen was a big 15-foot flood tide that was accompanied by what the fishermen call a minus tide. In this case the tide sucked out to a level 4.5 feet below the low water springs mark. As I neared the saddle of 'The Hump', a short cut used by Copper River salmon fishermen and marked by spruce poles stuck in sandbanks, the tide was sucking out on both sides. Five minutes later the saddle would have been dry. Water from the drying sand banks was funneling into a steeply dropping channel.

On the western side of The Hump, the kayak dropped with a lurch over a gravel bar into a series of rapids. Just like paddling a glacial fed river, I headed for the V at the head of each rapid then over drops of two to three feet and swung through sweeping S bends, punching through big pressure waves. I was swept down-channel, broad mud/sandbanks on each side, for half a mile until the gradient eased. Exposed mud flats kept pushing me away from Cordova. Not a single salmon skiff had sped past me. Only then did my tired brain register that the channel leading to Cordova had dried out completely with the minus tide.

Patience was the order of the day. I dragged the boat up three feet to the top of the mud flats, laid down on my parka for a wee kip and only woke up when the incoming tide began surging around my ankles.

Prince William Sound

From Cordova I was able to avoid the Gulf of Alaska for a few days by ducking into the sheltered waters of Prince William Sound. I was keen to find out



On Evans Island, I camped back in the forest edge, clear of the sad evidence of the Exxon Valdez *oil spill in the intertidal zone*

how badly the oil spill had affected the shores of the sound, and how effective the subsequent clean-up operations had been.

Crossing courses with a south-bound, laden tanker, I noticed two tenders shadowing its wake, obviously to prevent a repetition of when the drunk skipper of the *Exxon Valdez* retired below to his cabin and left the third mate to steer the vessel onto Bligh Reef.

Apart from a noticeable absence of sea bird life and otters, I saw little sign of the spill till I landed for the night on a gravel beach at the north-eastern end of Evans Island. This beach had been right in the path of the drifting spill. From the high tide mark back to a fringing belt of trees, the beach was coated with oil. An animal, probably a brown bear, had been digging in the beach gravel for shellfish. The pools that had filled with water all had an oily sheen on them. I found a campsite under a tree well inland from the beach for the night.

From a count of 36,000 dead birds picked up in Prince William Sound, experts believed this figure represented between 10 and 30% of the total number that perished. One has to wonder about the sanity of



Turning over rocks on the beach showed a coating of syrupy mousse left from the oil spill

the scientists who carried out a study to check the recovery rate of dead birds. They shot 219 perfectly healthy birds and dipped them in crude oil before dropping them into the sound to see what percentage would float and could be recovered.

Amongst sea kayakers, Prince William Sound had a reputation for outstanding scenery and the presence of several pods of killer whales. You couldn't help bumping into at least one pod. However, in the summer of 1990, exactly 14 months after the spill, I did not sight a single killer whale. The sea and sky were devoid of life.

Ever since the curtailment of the 1989 trip, I'd felt a twinge of guilt that I should have continued paddling through the oil devastated areas, and recorded first-hand the damage. But after talking to people who were involved with the clean up crews, they all said I would have probably broken bones while carrying the kayak up oil-coated rocks. Apparently broken legs and collar bones were common injuries amongst the crews.

A Whale of a Time

On 1 June, I left the sound's shelter for the open waters of the gulf, en route to my next food drop at the port of Seward. I was apprehensive heading offshore but the day was made by a magical experience, one of the highlights of the summer. I heard the sound of a whale spouting and swiveled my head until I saw a thin spout of misty spume, intermittently fountaining out of the sea. During past trips I'd been literally scared out of my wits by whales suddenly surfacing alongside the kayak but I'd never had the presence of mind to take a photograph.

This large humpback whale was regularly spouting three times before sounding and diving for several minutes. I stopped paddling and retrieved the two cameras from my middle compartment. Slinging them round my neck, I resumed my course.

I knew I was in the approximate position where the humpback would surface again but wasn't quite prepared for the massive, grey submarine like body surfacing less than 30 feet away, so close in fact that I was drenched by a fine spray when the whale spouted. Its exhaled breath smelt like the stale inside of Icelandic fish factory with a tinge of cod liver oil. Twice more the whale spouted, while I clicked the camera shutters. Then its huge tail lifted 15 feet majestically into the air, almost directly over the bow. Click. I hoped trembling hands had not spoilt one of the greatest shots I'd ever taken at sea.



The sliver of driftwood points to the Barren Islands, halfway across Cook Inlet to Kodiak Island. The arrows show tidal stream direction

Fogged In

From the end of the Kenai Peninsula, I was faced with the next big crux, a long exposed 55-mile crossing to Kodiak Island. Swift tidal races, a reputation for rapid weather changes, thick clammy fog and strong winds left me gripped as I kicked out for the Barren Islands, a small group of islands midway across. It took me two days to complete the crossing, with an overnight stop on Ushagat Island. On both days, I was enveloped in thick, damp fog banks. In visibility less than 200 feet, I was absolutely reliant on my deck-mounted compass, and had to juggle both wind and tidal stream drift to ensure a landfall.

The second leg of the crossing had all the makings of a major epic. I'd waited until 5:30 pm for a series of big tide races and toppling overfalls to settle down before launching. Initially I had a visual sight onto a hazy snow-topped range on Kodiak Island and was able to correct for tidal drift by checking transits over my shoulder on the Barren Islands. Then from seawards, I noticed the swirling tendrils of a dank fog bank sweeping towards me. I scarcely had time to recheck the compass course to Kodiak Island before I was enveloped in the chilling gloom of a dense fog bank.

For the next three hours, I struggled against a choppy beam sea to maintain my compass heading. It was a nasty weather tide situation, a 15 knot south-easterly wind blowing against the tide ebbing out of Cook Inlet. When the short, five-foot chop began breaking, I was totally gripped. By 10.30 pm, according to the elapsed timer on my watch, I should have sighted land. The sea had eased when the tide began flooding but I was still totally immersed in a grey-out. I could neither sight land nor hear the sound of surf on shore. Re-checking the distance for the umpteenth time, I could only hold the compass heading and try to keep mounting anxiety under control. I wasn't prepared for a full night at sea. I had no food handy and the red navigation torch was buried deep in the middle compartment.

Fifteen minutes later, I was desperately trying to work out why I'd overshot the island when I noticed a slight increase in the visibility. Glimpses of the sun sinking golden in the west lifted my sagging morale. I kept sweeping my gaze in an 180˚ arc over the bow. Then a few minutes before 11:00 pm, I glimpsed a faint smear of rock through the fog to my left. It was Dark Island, my aiming point. That wretched wind and flood tidal stream had pushed me off course by just on a mile. Needless to say, I was rather pleased to reach terra firma again. I didn't quite kiss the ground, but that was one hell-of-a crossing to have left astern.

During the following three days as I headed west through Shelikof Strait, the few fisherfolk I met shook their heads when I told them where I'd come from. The skipper of the salmon seiner *Lady Beth* said, "I won't even take my boat across via the Barren Islands, and it's a 35-footer!" A lass at the old Port William cannery, now turned into a fishing and hunting lodge, would not fly across that stretch of water. It was too turbulent for her, even in a floatplane.

The Alaska Peninsula - Aleut Country

From Kodiak Island, I made a swift and enjoyable 23-mile crossing of Shelikof Strait to the Alaska Peninsula and that's when my lucky break with a run of reasonable weather came to an end. Each night at 6.30 pm, after the television news, a 20-minute program on the Alaskan weather was broadcast. Mark Evangelista, the hard case presenter, turned the mundane details about pressure gradients and synoptic situations into a humorous, enjoyable session watched Alaska wide by aircraft pilots and fishermen. The night I'd spent at Port William cannery, Mark pointed to a small high pressure cell and said, "Remember this for nostalgia's sake. It's the last one we are going to see for a long time."

For the two weeks it took me to struggle down to my next food dump at Chignik, cold front followed cold front in a seemingly endless progression with ever so short lulls in between, when I would fight a few miles to the south-west from lee landing to lee landing. Survival became dependent on my ability to read the wind shifts by direction changes in the cloud movement.

When I finally limped into Chignik, 19 days out of Seward, I was shattered physically. All that remained of my food supplies were a couple of dry crackers, a spoonful each of sugar and powdered milk and one freeze-dry meal. Pete Nolan, a jovial Australian fishing boat skipper, plied me with pizzas and tins of meat in an attempt to put some condition back onto

my lean frame.

False Pass was my next objective, a narrow channel at the western tip of the Alaska Peninsula, where the waters of the Pacific Ocean and the Bering Sea rush through at great speed. Whether it was the pizzas and tins of meat or a moderate run with semi-settled weather, I averaged 44 miles per day for the next 265 miles to False Pass.

The Russian Influence

One of my lunch stops en-route to False Pass was a gravel beach below the abandoned village of Belkofski. On a bare grassy slope overlooking the beach, the most ornate and grandiose building was a Russian orthodox church. All the other buildings apart from the school were ramshackle cottages Originally established as a Russian trading settlement, Belkofski was a centre for rich sea otter hunting grounds. Although Russia sold Alaska to the U.S.A. in 1867, the village remained under the tyrannical dictatorship of a priest. This pontifical pirate charged the Aleut natives a fee of sea otter pelts for marriage ceremonies, births, christenings and funerals. He had such a hold over the Aleuts that when he rang the church bell, no matter what the time of the day, they had to attend a service.

Belkofski was a favourite stopping place for whaling ships, partly because the vessels could stock up on fresh food, but also because the priest always had a considerable stock of rum and whisky. He was also an avid poker player. One evening, during a game with the captain and crew of a whaling ship, the priest had a bad run of cards and ran out of money. Although it was long after midnight, he rang the church bell and donned his vestments. The locals took some time to wander bleary-eyed into the church. The priest chanted a few prayers, took up a collection and then disappeared back to the poker game.

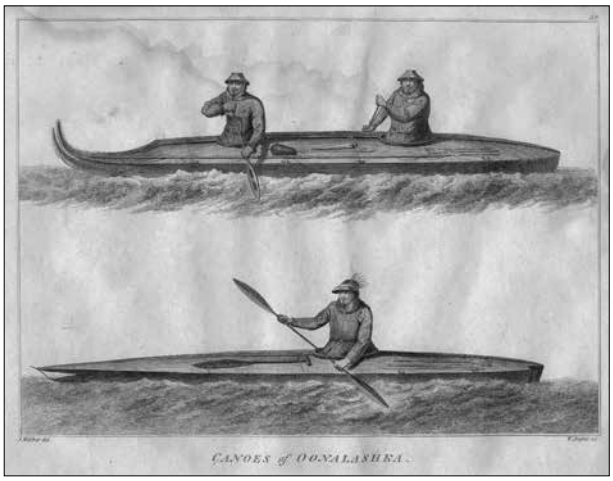


27 June: The abandoned Aleut village of Belkofski where sadly, the most grandiose building is the Russian orthodox church



23 June: Seal Cape, south-west of Chignik. An early evening dinner in the heart of brown bear country, before moving on to camp for the night

The Aleut sea otter hunters had developed the skills of kayaking and hunting to a state of perfection. Captain Cook was amazed to find that the Aleuts experienced no trouble in keeping pace with his Resolution while it was sailing at a steady seven knots. Their kayaks, called baidarkas, were works of technological achievement, the only kayaks in the world to have shims of polished ivory or bone inserted between the lashed pieces of wooden frameworks. These shims prevented wear, and added flexibility to a kayak's framework. Four or five sea lion skins were cut to shape by the men and sewn by the women over the baidarka frame to form a completely waterproof skin.



Baidarkas of Prince William Sound and Unalaska, drawn by John Webber during Cook's 1778 voyage

It was a great tragedy that the Russians first discovered Alaska in 1741. Reports of seas teeming with sea otters led to a stampede by Russian hunters to make their fortunes with what became known as the golden fleeces - the Chinese were insatiable buyers of the short-haired pelts. These Siberian hunters who became known as the Promyshlenniks were the low life of Russia. Bone and ivory tipped spears and arrows were no match for Russian firearms and poison. Localized

efforts by the Aleut villages to repel the hunters led to bloody massacres and razing to ground level of villages.

One of the worst recorded incidents was perpetrated by Ivan Soloviev, the commander of two trading vessels. At the village of Kashega, he tied 12 Aleuts front-to-back in single file and then fired a musket into the first native. The bullet lodged in the ninth Aleut - nine skilled baidarka men killed with a single shot. By the time Captain Cook visited the Aleutian Islands in 1778, the Aleuts had been completely subjugated by the Russian hunters. Of an original population of 16,000 less than a half remained. They never recovered.

On several occasions in the old Aleut hunting grounds, I had an eerie, spine tingling feeling of not being alone at sea. I felt a distinct presence around me. I could only sense as the spirit of the old baidarka men.

False Pass

By late afternoon of 28 June, I was 'racing in the streets' for the shelter of False Pass. The day was turning into a bit of an epic. I'd rounded up into the lee of Egg Island for lunch and a brief respite from a breaking south-easterly swell. I disturbed a mob of sea otters resting on a rock shelf and grinned when the mothers grabbed their wee pups in their teeth and dived into the sea.

Twenty five miles of exposed weather shore remained to the entrance of False Pass. Since Egg Island had no fresh water and no level areas to camp, I had to either shoot the gap for False Pass or paddle across to a sandy beach on the mainland. Several times I climbed up onto a high point to gauge the density of whitecaps and feel the wind strength. Deciding it was absolutely marginal, I kicked out for 10 minutes to see if I could cope with the conditions. On a five-foot breaking chop, buffeted by williwaws and a showery 25 knot south-easterly, I crossed a deep bay and commenced a four hour struggle to keep a little distance between me and surf breaking on a jagged rocky shoreline.

Apart from my arms steadily grinding in 38 paddling strokes a minute, the only thing that kept me from being driven against the rocks and cliffs was the deep draft overstern rudder. Of all the 89 days of the 1990 trip, this was the one when the rudder was absolutely magical. The wind, gusting to 30 knots with hard driving rain squalls, was square on my beam. To correct for wind and chop drift, I had to maintain a course well south of the coast. Although I was mostly within a mile of shore, the rain was so heavy at times that I was forced to rely on a compass heading.

More and more cockpit curlers began breaking over the decks. I tried a little bit of forced singing for a while, but then as the wind strength kept increasing and my body began chilling down, I had to pull the drawstring of the parka hood into a tight circle with only my nose and eyes peeking out. No more singing.

My first glimpse of the Palisade Cliffs, a vertical tier of sheer rock that guards the entrance to False Pass, brought a shadow of relief. I took note of the compass heading before the viz socked in again and gritted my teeth for the last four miles. The wind was raging at a steady 35 knots, driving before it a seven-foot-high breaking chop. Rain was pelting down. My concentration was riveted on making the shelter of the pass. Closing on the cliffs, their tops hidden in cloud, I cast fleeting glimpses at waterfalls toppling out of the cloud base. Now with the wind and chop on my stern quarter, I was flying along but holding back on the surfing runs as the chop was too short and too steep. No time for an end over loop.

Bouncing into the shallows, and at last clear of the breaking chop, I took note which way the long brown streamers of kelp were lying. The flood tidal stream sets north through False Pass at speeds up to eight knots and it was almost high tide. I bounced through a big rapid with a series of standing pressure waves and was chuffed to find the tide with me – only five miles to the village of False Pass. On a flat sea, broken only by tide races, huge bubbling boils and the odd small overfall, I flew through those five miles at about 12 knots, with a little help from the tide and wind. I'd been warned to steer well clear of Whirl Point. The whirlpool was so big and swift, it would suck the kayak down or so the fishermen had reckoned.

The rain was still belting down but the wind had eased to about 20 knots. Keeping out in mid-channel, with just enough viz to sight the shore on either side, I shot past Whirl Point almost before noticing it. Two miles to go, and the village should have been in sight. Bounced from side to side by big boiling eddies, at last I glimpsed a bright light though the clag and began a long ferry glide towards shore. Still steaming along at 10 knots, I shot under a long wooden jetty and could see buildings and houses of the village. Totally shagged, but wearing a whisker of a smile at the corner of my mouth, I ground the bow onto a gravel beach and staggered ashore. I had just passed the half way mark to Nome - 1,354 miles down and about the same number to go.

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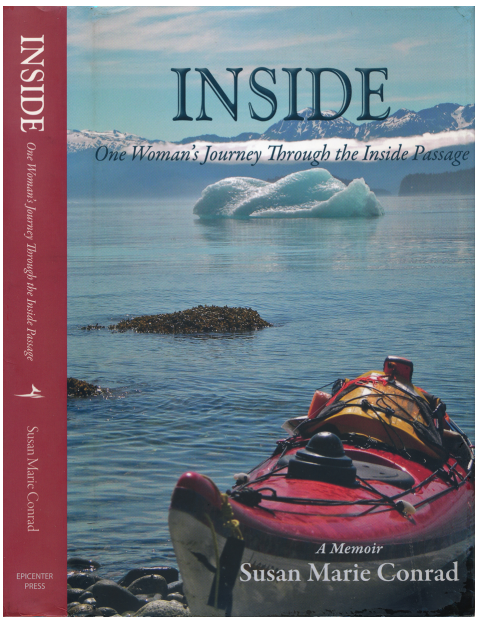


In the North American Spring of 2010, Susan Conrad launched from Anacortes in Washington, and set off solo paddling for Juneau in South-east Alaska.

What do I like about this book?
- Susan's expedition style
- her descriptive writing style
- Susan's inner journey as well as the physical side of paddling
- her chapter heading quotes
- her comprehensive kit list

Expedition style – I break down my long distance expeditions into three phases:
- planning and research
- training
- execution

For her first 'big trip' Susan did impeccably well with all three. It took me a few years to figure out the prime requirements for my big trips - small things, that prove to be so important when a trip is underway, like annotated maps (some of Susan's maps with comments from Audrey Sutherland), tide tables, dehydrating meals and, with mailed food parcels, including a letter to the postmaster advising of her trip and an approx. date of arrival. That's exactly what I did for my Alaskan trip.

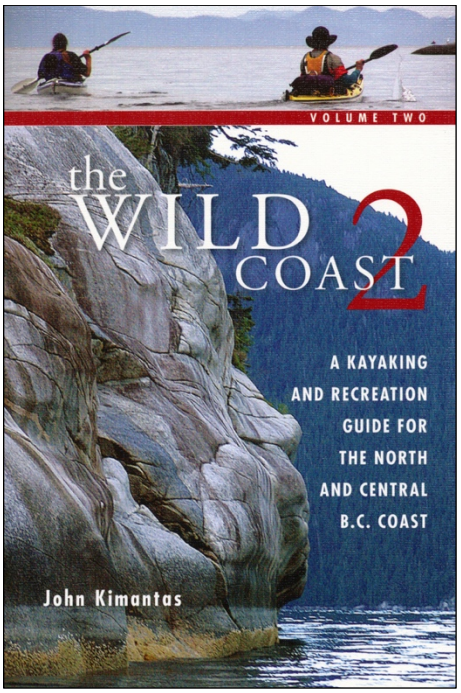
To me, pre-trip training is so important. On the water 'realistic' training is the absolute best, in conditions as close as possible to what will be encountered on the trip. Training in a gym, lifting weights, is a bit like a broken pencil – pointless in my view! Susan spent three months paddle training in southern B.C. Then there was a 100 mile paddle in the fall of 2009 to check out equipment. In terms of the critical criteria for the Inside Passage paddle, she needed a dependable roll, competent navigation and good sea(wo)manship. She had all three.

I must admit that some of her paddle distressed me immensely. I was so envious of Susan's encounters with big and small mammals (whales and bears), knocking off another committing crossing and her sheer joy of finding a magic evening campsite, fresh water, bit sheltered from wind, dry under the tent and a better than average view of the water. Echoes so much of what I loved about the 'big trips'.

Although the issue of weight (kayak and kit) took me several trips to come to terms with, Susan realized from the outset, that the weight of kayak, paddle and kit was extremely important. In the Antipodes we call it the expedition 'minimalist' style – boat, paddle, tent, cooking kit and food, all as light as possible. Down to sawing half the handle off the toothbrush – not sure if Susan did that, but she had the minimalist style to heart, which is so important when paddling solo.

Susan's low key approach to the trip also appealed to me, no big pre-publicity, no daily website updates, no sponsors to satisfy, no big welcoming party at the conclusion, just the satisfaction and pleasure of achieving an outstanding adventure.

Title: ***the WILD COAST 2***
Subtitle: *A Kayaking and Recreation Guide for the North and Central B.C. Coast*
Author: John Kimantas
Published: 2006
Publisher: Whitecap Books
Website: www.whitecap.ca
Contents: 344 pp, bibliography, index, colour pics and maps throughout
Cover: paperback
Size: 150 x 226 mms
Price: Can$ 29.95 NZ$ 42.90
ISBN: 978-1-55285-768-1
NZ Availability: TheNile.co.nz
Review: Paul Caffyn



This paddling guide to the British Columbia coast of Canada, north from the tip of Vancouver Island to the boundary with Alaska is one of the best I have come across. In terms of layout, words, photos, the maps, bibliography and index, it is a standout paddling guide.

Particularly with BC paddling reports by Peter and Margot Syms (No. 178) and Susan Cade's Johnstone Strait encounters with orca in this magazine, it seems timely for a review of John Kimanta's latest guide. He has previously published *The Wild Coast, Volume 1* which covers the north and west of Vancouver Island, and *The Wild Coast Volume 3* for BC's south coast and the east coast of Vancouver Island. The background bit below is the author's profile on the publisher's website:

'When John Kimantas took a job in Nanaimo, BC and first moved west from Ontario, he was struck by Vancouver Island's natural beauty. Since those first few days on the Island, John has become somewhat of an expert on the natural wonders and recreational opportunities Vancouver Island holds.

'John took an immediate interest in the water, and explored the British Columbia coast by kayak. Through these explorations, John began writing the Wild Coast series of guidebooks exploring the British Columbia coast in three installments. John also created the BC Coastal Recreation Kayaking and Small Boats Atlas series to help kayakers and other boaters navigate the BC coast.

'When John's exploration of the Island took him inland, he was disappointed to see that most road maps did not include many roads or other features that lay mid-island. Despite the enormous amount of information and features documented by various specialty clubs and organizations, John struggled to find a comprehensive guide to help access the world of recreational wonderment that he knew Vancouver Island held. As a result, John began to write and research his book, The Essential Vancouver Island Outdoor Recreation Guide.

'John has worked at several daily newspapers across Canada, beginning as a cub reporter in The Pas, Manitoba, in 1986, moving on to become a magazine editor in Ontario and then managing editor at a daily newspaper on Vancouver Island.'

In the foreword, John writes that he spent 92 day in 2005 paddling 3,304 kms in order to:

- provide an overview of the north and central BC coast through photos, maps and descriptions
- demystify some aspects of the coast
- compile a list of camping opportunities

An introduction of 40 pages includes is concise, but for visiting Kiwi paddlers, it includes sections on 'Managing insects' and 'Managing kayaks on ferries'. The maps symbol definitions are excellent. The guide has the regional sections colour coded on the page margin, for easy reference. The geographic descriptions are also concise and the words 'profusely illustrated' are apt for this guide with a superb colour photo on most pages, and the maps contain all the info vital for a visiting paddler. A short bibliography or reference texts are included, followed by a listing of websites used to research the guide. A comprehensive index rounds out this excellent book.

The book's size makes it ideal for stowing in a day hatch for paddling or in day pack for on-shore tiki touring. In low light, the map details may need glasses or a magnifying glass to see clearly, but the text is easy to read, even in low light. Topo maps or marine charts (or a GPS with charts) would still be necessary for navigation.

Perhaps the beautiful seascape photos are mostly taken in fine weather, they highlight what a magic, mysterious coastline lies waiting for visiting paddlers.

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 a bi-annual Sea Kayak Fest
6. publishing a bimonthly magazine.

***New Zealand Sea Kayaker* is published bimonthly as the official magazine of the Kiwi Association of Sea Kayakers (NZ) Inc.**

Articles, trip reports, book reviews, equipment reviews, new techniques, letters to the editor.
Send to Jacquie James at: **Jacquie@kask.co.nz**

KASK Annual Sub
Membership is $40 for individual and overseas renewals.

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https://kask.co.nz

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or email Steve at: steve@kask.co.nz

Change of Address, you can now update your membership details including address and payment method by logging on to the website (https://kask.co.nz/account/). If you prefer you can still contact Karen at: admin@kask.co.nz

SEA KAYAKING NETWORKS
Auckland Canoe Club
Website: https://Aucklandcanoeclub.org.nz/
Facebook: https://Www.Facebook.Com/Groups/1493987844116617

Bay Association Of Sea Kayakers (BASK)
Website: https://Www.sporty.co.nz/Bayseakayak/
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/groups/866695656761343

Hawke's Bay Canoe Club (HBCC)
Website: https://www.hbcc.org.nz/
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/\groups/250185461675006

The Nelson Kayak Club
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Canterbury Sea Kayak Network (CSKNet)
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Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/groups/Canterburyseakayak

Wellington Sea Kayak Network (WSKN)
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New Zealand Women's Sea Kayak Network
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/groups/Nzwskn/

Northland Sea Kayakers Network
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Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/groups/northlandseakayakers

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