

No. 87 June - July 2000

# THE SEA CANOE- IST NEWSLETTER



Greenland, Igdlorssuit, 1959. Kenneth Taylor's made to measure kayak in the process of being covered with seal skins. Photo: courtesy of Alan Byde.

**The Journal of the Kiwi Association  
of Sea Kayakers (N.Z.) Inc. - KASK**

## 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 newsletter.

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

Articles, trips reports, book reviews, equipment reviews, new techniques, letter 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 newsletter.

Send in a plain brown envelope, or via cybermail to:

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## KASK BADGES

Canterbury paddler Rod Banks produced a badge of a paddler and sea kayak from solid sterling silver, with KASK NZ engraved. The badge can be permanently or temporarily affixed to hats T shirts, ties, evening gowns or dress suits but not dry suits. And the badge is appealing to the eye. Size is 23mm long by 11mm high.

Price is \$15 plus \$1 P+P, and available from the KASK Treasurer, Max Grant.

## LRB2 - KASK HANDBOOK

For a copy of this mother of all sea kayaking handbooks, contact KASK Treasurer:

Max Grant,  
71 Salisbury St.  
Ashhurst, 5451  
Ph: (06) 326 8527 home  
Fax: (06) 326 8472  
email: Q-KAYAKS@xtra.co.nz

### **COST:**

New members: gratis  
Existing members: \$10 + \$1 p&p  
Non-members: \$18 + \$1 p&p

Make cheques out to KASK (NZ)Inc  
Trade enquiries also to Max Grant.

THE LRB2, or the Little Red Book 2nd. Edition, is a mammoth compilation on all aspects of sea kayaking in New Zealand, by many of the most experienced paddlers in the Universe. Following a brief introduction, the handbook is divided into six sections:

- Kayak, Paddle & Equipment
- Techniques & Equipment
- The Elements
- Trips and Expeditions
- Places to Go
- Resources

Each section contains up to nine separate chapters. The Resources section, for example has chapters on:

- guide to managing a sea kayak symposium
- Paddling Literature
- Author profiles
- Guides and Rental Operators
- Network Addresses
- Sea Kayaks in NZ listing

## SEA KAYAKING NETWORK CONTACT ADDRESSES

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Beverley Burnett  
PO Box 5276, Wellington  
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Web site: www.home.clear.net.nz/  
pages/wellseek

### **Auckland Canoe Club**

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71 Salisbury St., Ashhurst.  
Ph: 06 326 8667 Fax: 06 326 8472  
www.qualitykayaks.co.nz/  
canooclub.html

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**COVER PHOTOGRAPH**

The West Greenland skin kayak pic was sent to me by English paddler and author Alan Bye. For Kiwi paddlers in the late 60's and early 70's, Alan's book 'Living Canoeing' was the only informative source available on all aspects of kayaking. It included five chapters on sea kayaking. Following our visit in Nordkapps to the small village of Igdlorssuit in 1999, Alan sent me several scanned images of Kenneth Taylor's village stay in 1959. Although Ken brought his own PBK kayak, he had a made to measure skin boat built for him by the villagers. He took the kayak back to Scotland where it was surveyed, and many replicas built. One of them, a fibreglass Anas Acuta, was used for the lines of the very first Nordkapp. Alan has sent me a CD with a pictorial record of Ken Taylor's stay at Igdlorssuit in 1959.

**EDITORIAL**

Well I have never been so far behind with a KASK newsletter since I first took on the role as editor in 1991. Lack of material from KASK members is my excuse this time, and perhaps a diminishing enthusiasm for the role after nigh on a decade and 52 newsletters.

From a one or two pager, printed on a dot matrix printer, the newsletter has grown over the years into a commercially printed 24 pager! Particularly since the rapid growth of cybermail, and a plentiful supply of articles from paddlers, putting the newsletter together has not been too much of a chore. And for the past 12 months, a payment from KASK on printing of each newsletter has stopped me moaning about the time and expense involved.

The newsletter will stand as a record of sea kayaking and its developments in New Zealand and what KASK members achieve overseas. And with 10 overseas contra magazine or newsletter exchanges, we have access to contacts, trips and developments with sea kayaking all over the world!

Cathye Haddock, Beverley Burnett, Max Grant and Sandy Ferguson deserve special bouquets for regular contributions to the newsletter over the past 12 months.

As for the other 346 KASK members, how about a contribution to 'Bugger!' file, a trip report, a product review, or a review of your favourite kayaking book.

I understand the word 'Bugger!' and worse was uttered by a party of very experienced paddlers, including guide/instructors, who were caught by nightfall recently on the seaward side of the Tory Channel entrance. I know these times are extremely embarrassing but, we can all learn from the mistakes made and name and faces can be modified to protect the embarrassed!

**ASKNET**

For the past seven years Vincent Maire has largely been the driving force behind the Auckland Sea Kayak Network and editor of the informative ASKNET newsletter. When a call for trips and trip leaders had a nil response, Vincent decided it was time to wind down ASKNET. I understand an approach made earlier this year for the Auckland Canoe Club to take over ASKNET was rejected, but as Vincent notes in his editorial, many ASKNET members are joining the Auckland Canoe Club. And Vincent is not disappearing from the sea kayaking scene. He has taken on the role of Publicity Officer and Auckland representative on the KASK committee.

See page 2 for the Auckland Canoe Club contact address.

Vincent also notes there is another Auckland club devoted to sea kayaking, the Hauraki Kayak Group, which has snug club rooms in Cox's Bay. The contact is:  
Pelham Housego (09) 575 5865.

**VICTORIA JASON**

Sadly to report, Canadian paddler Victoria Jason lost her battle with cancer in May. From 1991 to 1994, Victoria paddled some 7,500km through Canadian Arctic waters, two years with Don Starkell (Author of 'Paddle to the Arctic') from Hudson Bay to Gjoa Haven and two years solo down the Mackenzie river and east along to Canadian Arctic coast back to Gjoa Haven. Victoria's account of the four year trip, 'Kabloona in the Yellow Kayak,' is one of classic sea kayaking narratives. In April 1999 I made an approach to Victoria to see if she would speak at both Coastbusters and the KASK Forum in 2000, but plans were placed on hold in July with the terrible news of an aggressive brain tumour. Writing the tribute to Victoria is one of the saddest tasks I have undertaken for KASK.

## BOOKS

The following compilation of recently published titles blends information from the Amazon Books website and the October 2000 'Sea Kayaker' books received section

### 1992 ROUND AUSSIE ATTEMPT

'Keep Australia on Your Left : A True Story of an Attempt to Circumnavigate Australia by Kayak' Eric Stiller; Forge Hardcover Book; US\$20.76 from Amazon books.

On March 10 1992, American Eric Stiller and Australian Tony Brown set off in a double folding kayak from Bondi Beach (Sydney) to paddle around Aussie. They headed up the east coast to Cape York, and paddle/sailed for five days and four harrowing, sleepless nights directly over the top of the Gulf of Carpentaria to land near Gove. I understand that Eric and Tony pulled the pin on the trip at Darwin, not long after a torrid capsizing in the big overfalls of Dundas Strait. Ralph Diaz, editor of 'Folding Kayaker' followed the trip in his newsletter and comments on the relevance of the title:

'The title of Eric's book comes from a self-effacing Eric moment, that showed the differences in personalities between Eric and Tony. Tony Brown had wandered into the New York Klepper shop one day where Eric was a manager and said something about needing a boat to circumnavigate his country. Eric was thinking maybe the Channel Islands or some place, never Australia! Well Eric gets to Australia with dozens of charts, guide books, etc., all he could dig up in his research efforts back home. Tony looked at the tall pile that Eric was anxious to go over, and said "Hey, mate, all we need to do is keep Australia on our left!"

As you can imagine I am looking forward to reading a copy of this title. You can order from Amazon books or through your specialist NZ bookshop.

### ALASKA GUIDE

'Guide to Sea Kayaking in Southeast Alaska : The Best Trips and Tours from Misty Fjords to Glacier Bay (Regional Sea Kayaking Guides)' Jim Howard; Paperback; @ \$14.35 from Amazon books.

### THE INSIDE PASSAGE

'Kayaking in Paradise : Journey from Alaska Through the Inside Passage' Greg Rasmussen, et al; Hardcover; @ \$29.95 from Amazon Books.

'Homelands Kayaking the Inside Passage'; author Bryon Ricks; softback; published 1999, 370 pages; one map and a couple of sketches; no photographs. A couple paddling south from Glacier Bay to Puget Sound. Available in NZ.

### INSTRUCTION

'Sea Kayaking' Johan Loots; Paperback; @ \$15.25 from Amazon books. 96 pages. An illustrated guide for beginning paddlers/ Also included is a section on popular paddling destinations worldwide. The author has 30 years paddling experience, and is currently chairman of the Sea Kayaking Association of South Africa. Published by Stackpole Books; www.stackpolebooks.com ISBN 0-8117-2921-4.

### CONSTRUCTION

( See also available from Boat Books below, for full review).

'Fine Woodstrip Kayak Construction' by Ted Moores. ISBN: 0-937822-56-6; 176 pages; published by WoodenBoat Publications; price US\$19.95. The book combines the designs of naval architect Steve Killing and the building, writing and teaching experience of 'Canoeecraft' author Ted Moores. Four different kayak designs, including a 20'6" double with blow by blow descriptions. Numerous illustrations and photographs of the step by step construction techniques.

Website: www.woodenboat.com

### OLDERER BOOKS REPRINTED

Some of the old classic paddling titles are exceeding difficult to obtain. However publisher D.N. Goodchild is producing either softbound or hardbound

reprints of some of the classics such as:

- 'The Voyage of the Paper Canoe,' by Nathaniel H. Bishop. (1874-5 trip from Quebec to Cedar Key in the Gulf of Mexico).

- 'A 1000 Miles in the Rob Roy Canoe on River and Lakes of Europe' by John MacGregor  
'The Rob Roy of the Baltic' by John MacGregor

- 'Alone in the Caribbean' by Frederic Fenger. (A 1911 trip in the sailing canoe 'Yakaboo').

Website: www.anyboat.com/books  
Ph. 001 (215) 879 8472

### AVAILABLE FROM BOAT BOOKS Ltd.

The following three title reviews are plucked from the MoBB (Member of Boat Books) Newsletters. The Seahorse Bookshop is at 23B Westhaven Drive, Westhaven, Auckland. Ph: 09 358 5691 & email: crew@boatbooks.co.nz

#### 'Cold Oceans'

by John Turk. (Hardback first edition was reviewed in the KASK newsletter).

Paperback, 275 pages, \$39.95 (MoBB price \$35.95)

I wasn't totally sure that I wanted to read this book - who wants to read about cold oceans in the middle of a New Zealand winter - however there was a job to be done, so on with it. But once I started reading I couldn't put the book down. It is such a wonderful story of adventure and the human spirit. John Turk is a small boat adventurer who likes to take on the challenge of the more inhospitable waterways of the world, for example Cape Horn and the Northwest Passage. Some of these expeditions are carried out single handed and others with the companionship of his wife or in one case a fellow male adventurer who turned out not to be the ideal companion for this type of endurance venture. What makes these tales of adventure such wonderful reading is the very human perspective given to the story, both in terms of Turk's own outlook and descriptions of the folk he meets along the way.

**'Fundamentals of Kayak Navigation' 3rd. Edition,**

by David Burch. Paperback, 339 pages, \$39.95 (MoBB price \$35.95). Although this book was originally aimed at the kayak navigator, it is in fact a great book on coastal navigation for anyone venturing out on to the water. The book is very readable and a very comprehensive study of the art of navigation. Topics covered include: chart reading, compass use, finding and keeping track of position, predicting tides and currents, trip planning, navigation at night, in fog and in traffic. There are also good sections dealing with electronic aids to navigation such as GPS. Because of the in depth coverage provided by this book, it would make a great resource book for anyone doing a course such as the Coastguard Coastal Skipper Certificate.

**'Fine Woodstrip Kayak Construction'**

by Ted Moores. (Also noted above under Construction). Paperback 215x280mm; 171 pages; plans, diagrams, plans. NZ\$55.95. There are quicker and easier ways to get a sea kayak but if you enjoy a good woodworking project and would like to end up with a beautiful and truly unique craft then this is the way to go. Author Ted Moore is a noted kayak builder in the USA, in fact some of his work is displayed in museums.

This book takes the reader through every step and process involved in building one of these fine craft. The book begins with a discussion of kayak design features. Lines and offsets are provided for four kayak designs and then the rest of the book is devoted to the building process. Clear text and accompanying photographs and diagrams are of such clarity and quality it is hard to know where you could go wrong. This would be a useful book for anyone contemplating building any kind of strip built vessel because the techniques which are so well illustrated are equally applicable to any kind of craft. Buy the book, get yourself a load of sweet smelling cedar strips, mix up a few tubs of not so sweet smelling epoxy goop, and before you know what has happened,

you will have yourself a beautiful sea kayak.

**KAYAK DUNDEE PRESS**

Write, phone or email for a cattedog of new and second-hand paddling and expedition titles to:  
P. Caffyn, RD1, Runanga, West Coast.  
Ph/Fax: (03) 7311806  
email: kayakpc@xtra.co.nz

## FROM THE NEWSPAPERS

Readers of the 'Dead Man Walking' article in KASK Newsletter No. 84 will recall the riveting account of the crocodile attack on the North Queensland coast:

**Christchurch Press 22 August  
'Crocodile Winky' lauded**

CANBERRA - A man who saved his friend from the jaws of a 4m crocodile is among a list of 83 recipients of the annual Australian Bravery Awards.

David Winkworth, 47, fought the giant reptile after it attacked Arunas Pilka last August. Mr Pilka was standing in thigh deep water at MacArthur Island in the far north of Queensland when the crocodile bit him around the leg and dragged him into a 'death roll'. Mr Winkworth ran into the water and straddled the crocodile, wrapping his arms around its torso. The crocodile released Mr Pilka, flicked Mr Winkworth off its back and fled into deeper water.

"I guess when I grabbed him from behind it surprised him. I think they are used to being the aggressor," said Mr Winkworth, who has been named 'Crocodile Winky'. Mr Pilka survived with deep cuts to his leg.

**Greymouth Evening Star June 2000  
Amorous Croc Sinks Seaplane**  
Brisbane AAP

'A randy crocodile sank a seaplane when it tried to mate with the plane's float.

A spokesman for the Cooktown Coast Guard in north Queensland said yes-

terday the empty seaplane's crew were stunned when they watched from ashore and saw the croc make its move.

"I think it got a bit amorous when he saw the float and tried to mount it," the spokesman said.

But the weight of the three metre crocodile was too much for the lightweight plane, which tipped over and sank in Princess Charlotte Bay, 175km north of Cooktown.

The Coast Guard said it received a call for help on Sunday when the seaplane failed to return after flying a mechanic and spares to a trawler anchored in the bay near Knight Island on Saturday.

The seaplane had been moored in Princess Charlotte Bay but during the night its crew heard strange noises and went to investigate.

"They shone a spotlight on to the plane and saw this great crocodile trying to make love to the float," the Coast Guard spokesman said.

He said the duty room personnel at the Coast Guard headquarters nearly died laughing when they heard about it, but it was serious."

The seaplane sank to the bottom of the bay and plans to salvage it were now under way, the spokesman said.'

When the shape of sea kayaks is not so dissimilar from that of a floatplane float, this is a bit of a worry! Short of painting on the kayak hull, 'this is a bloke kayak' and not mooring kayaks at night, the mind boggles at what other remedial measures could be taken to avoid the attention of amorous crocodiles with serious close fraternization in mind.

**Christchurch Press 25 August 2000  
Marine Farm Applications**

Environment Canterbury does not know enough about sea life around Banks Peninsula to give fair hearing to 18 marine-farming applications in the area, conservationists say.

The applications by Ngai Tahu Fisheries, Kuku Enterprises and Sea Right Investments are due to be publicly notified tomorrow.

However conservationists say the applications should not be heard until Environment Canterbury completes its Regional Coastal Plan.

Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society field officer Eugenie Sage said Environment Canterbury should have asked for a moratorium before the rash of marine-farm applications in Akaroa Harbour

“This council (Environment Canterbury) has not learned from Golden Bay and the Marlborough Sounds,” she said.

“They have neglected coastal management issues. There are only a couple of staff working in that area compared to dozens working on land and water management issues.

“The Council does not have information on the environmental values of the harbour, particularly the underwater values so it can determine the appropriate place for marine farming. “The current applications will see the coastline around Banks Peninsula and areas of the harbour cluttered with lines of marine-farming buoys.

“This is public coastal space that is supposed to be managed by the Crown. Now we are seeing private industries trying to privatise the sea.”

Friends of Banks Peninsula chairwoman Jan Cook said marine farms should not be approved ad hoc.

“There’s going to be a huge sea-grab like in the Marlborough Sounds and Golden Bay and there has been no planning or consultation with the community, especially in Akaroa Harbour which is important for recreation and tourism,” she said. Friends of Banks Peninsula were keen to see marine protection areas established, she said.

A Ngai Tahu spokeswoman said marine farms in Akaroa Harbour could produce between 1500 and 3000

tonnes of fish each year.

“This equates to a contribution to the NZ economy of several million dollars annually,” she said. “In addition, opportunities would be expected to arise in the supply and service industries for the local Akaroa community. An added bonus would be the availability of mussels for the local restaurant trade, which would enhance the tourist experience in the region.”

Ngai Tahu Fisheries and Kuku Enterprises which have formed a consortium to develop the marine farms, had taken into account both ecological and landscape values, she said.

“The sites will not be exclusively occupied and recreational fishing can be enhanced both within and adjacent to both sites,” the spokeswoman said.... Environment Canterbury resource management planner David Gregory said there had to be a good reason for imposing a moratorium and that no good reason had existed before the rash of applications.

Now that the applications had been lodged, Environment Canterbury was required to deal with them in a timely manner, he said. Coastal plan hearing would be over by mid-November but it would depend on how long it took to settle any appeals before it could be approved, he said.

### **INPUT/COMMENT FROM PADDLERS**

The deadline for submissions was extended to 15 October. I understand Chrissie Williams and Rob Tipa are preparing submissions on behalf of Cant. Sea Kayak Network and KASK respectively. Rob informs me that there are a total of 18 marine applications and the total area involved is a staggering 260ha. For comment or input re the marine farm proposals (problems/benefits to sea kayakers with marine farms), please get in touch promptly with:

Rob Tipa; Ph: 03 478 0360;  
email: robtipa@clear.net.nz  
OR

Chrissie Williams; Ph: 03 388 0798  
email: chrissiew@netaccess.co.nzp

## **BUGGER FILE**

### **‘Bushwhacked at Lake Taupo’ From Sandy Ferguson.**

For the ‘Bugger File!’ a tale of heroic effort and blind stupidity, extreme effort in the face of overwhelming odds, ADVENTURE... Well, the latter is true ‘Wind in the Willows’ style adventure, ‘a cold, wet thing that makes you late for tea...’

We’d ‘conquered’ the mighty Wanganui River and, with a few extra days holiday, headed for Lake Taupo. We’ll skip the preliminaries and jump to the trip, a day’s paddling from our camp on the north shore of Lake Taupo at Whakaipo Bay to the Maori carvings in Okuia Bay and back, ignore the predicted weather, wind rising to 20+ kph, swells to 1 metre. Firstly, most of the forecasts are wrong and secondly, we’d paddled in such conditions before anyway... hadn’t we?

So, what do you do when a forecast is so unreliable that they get it right? The wind and sea rose as we headed home from the carvings and on rounding the point into the bay before our camp, Kaiapo Bay, we decided to run in, ‘rather a live coward ...’ etc. etc. Landing on the beach was just too easy. We gathered up what we considered necessary into two bags and set off for the short walk back to camp. A bit of bush to push through and then over the paddocks - wasn’t it?

Dense bush including head-high bracken is slow and hard going. At least we had the sun for guidance and after an hour of sheer slog we found a track just before emerging from the bush. Lucky we’re (I’m) young and fit and could dash up trees for a quick look round, though such activity tended to be disheartening each time as all that ever came into view was more of the same - bush and bracken.

Eventually we cleared the bush and attacked the hills, after leaving a stone on a fence post to mark the end of the bit of track we’d found, as we presumed we’d come that way the next

day to collect the kayaks. The short trek over the hills turned into a mammoth epic, a great semicircle route (as opposed to a great circle route) to avoid a very deep, bush filled gulch, not noted on our map. As the sun sank we hit the road with now only four kilometres back to the van - late for tea!

So to sum up the disaster - I forgot to take the keys (left in the kayak), our map was not very detailed (Infomap 336-06), the country to cross was far worse than we thought, we didn't know (we now presume) that a track does come down to the bay somewhere.

The analysis and excuses - there have to be some don't there? We survived. We probably did the right thing landing as the seas were increasing, we were paddling empty boats (they'd been loaded during the preceding days), the next section was sheer cliffs followed by an extended reef and finally, it was winter. I'd left the side window on the van open so 'breaking in' was easy.

And recovery of the kayaks? As I was washing the breakfast dishes down at the lake next morning, a boat came into the bay, I hailed it and used the immortal words, "I'm shipwrecked."

The two lads who were out fishing and about ready to turn for home were happy to take us with them and for us to paddle back on a flat, calm sea. With time to rock-hop, while admiring the variegated forest, this was something we would have missed, had we not stopped to have our 'adventure' the previous day!!

The Lake Taupo coast is certainly something to take time to explore and there is nothing wrong with doing it in the peaceful time of winter.

Sandy Ferguson

## **'NO REASON!'**

# **The Roof of Britain Kayak Expedition**

**by Ian Wilson & Sean  
Morley.**

This is the final instalment of a serialized account of a northern Scotland Circumnavigation. The journey began from Fort William at the Atlantic (western) entrance to the Great Glen, then north to Cape Wrath, east through Pentland Firth, down the sheltered east coast to Inverness, at the opposite end of the Great Glen and back to Fort William via the Caledonian Canal. For a more detailed introduction to the paddlers, planning and preparation, refer to pages 15-16 of Newsletter No. 83. Big mobs of thanks to Sean Morley for allowing this brilliant paddling account to be printed in the Antipodes.

### **Day 13**

Wednesday 23rd June 1999 (38 miles, eight hours paddling/portaging)  
I slept soundly once my hands had stopped itching. I had set my alarm for 5.50am to catch the weather forecast. As soon as it sounded Wilson was up and at it again. When he realised what time it was he cursed me but decided we should get on with it anyway. We were packed and portaged by 8.30am. It was going to be a glorious day. Paddling upstream, hugging the banks we were now in the River Ness that empties the Loch into the Moray Firth. It is a beautiful stretch of water and it occurred to me that it would make a great marathon kayak race from Fort William to Inverness: a two day race with a stage stop at Fort Augustus. We entered Loch Ness passing Aldourie Castle on our left, one of many guarding the Great Glen. I made yet another silent prayer of thanks as we glided out across mirror-calm water, not a breath of wind to disturb the perfect reflection of heather-clad mountains.

We aimed for a point just before Urquhart Bay on the northern shore.

We sat side by side matching each other stroke for stroke, our rhythm unbroken for several miles. Pulling onto the shore for necessary relief it was an opportunity to take in the grand scale of the Loch. It contains more water than all the lakes and reservoirs of England and Wales put together. It is 24 miles long, over a mile wide in places and up to 750 feet deep making it the largest body of fresh water in Europe. Following the spectacular geological fault of Glen Mor or the 'Great Glen' it almost cuts Scotland in two and has provided a way through the Highlands for centuries of travellers. I had been concerned that the prevailing wind in the Glen is south westerly and that Loch Ness, with its long fetch, could have been really hard work with head winds all the way. As it was, we could not have asked for more perfect conditions. We stripped off down to our wetsuit shorts. Time for a tan!

As we continued on, passing below the battlements of Urquhart Castle it was not difficult to imagine the scene in the tribal days of the Celtic Clans when feudalism caused disputes to be settled by war and violence. Now the peaceful silence of the Loch is broken by the symbolic strains of bagpipes played by kilt-clad buskers at every viewpoint. We passed by unnoticed. The hordes of clansmen armed with swords and dirks (daggers) had been replaced by Japanese tourists armed with different types of Canon. Low-flying jets roared down the loch like a scene from Top Gun. Forget your fast bikes and cars these guys really motored, doing Loch Ness in seconds before blasting up through one of the side glens in search of prey.

It became a race to see how fast we could 'do the Loch'. Taking it in turns; two minutes on, two minutes off; taking up the pace then sitting on the other's wash. We ate into the miles. The first faint zephyrs of a breeze caressed our backs. The polished surface of the Loch became tarnished, taking on texture and form as if the monster was awakening. We didn't see Nessie - we never expected to. Old sea dogs like us, we don't believe in such things - but it would

have been nice and I will confess to a sense of anticlimax as we paddled into Fort Augustus. Talk of cream cakes soon appeased my disappointment. In the end we had Scotch Pie and chips and girdle scones, fresh and delicious, sat in the sun by the lock cut. For the first time in the trip it was hot. We sat soaking up the ultraviolet rays whilst we contemplated the afternoon's paddle. For a little while we had even contemplated trying to finish that night, but discounted the idea. It may have been possible but what would we have achieved? We were intending to stay with friends of Wilson's on the outskirts of Edinburgh before heading back to England. If we took our time now we would still easily finish by lunchtime tomorrow which would give us the opportunity for a leisurely drive through the Highlands to Edinburgh in the afternoon. It had always been our intention to complete the circumnavigation in as short a time as possible but now, in the pleasant warmth of the Highland summer, there seemed little point in rushing. It was nice to have the time to relax and enjoy the last few hours of our adventure.

Perhaps it was the impending portage up a flight of five locks that had caused our reluctance to get going. Finally we could delay it no longer and heaving my kayak up onto our shoulders we staggered off up the road beside the lock. I felt somewhat incongruous as we grunted and sweated our way past ice-cream-licking tourists. A pleasant paddle to Kytra Lock, our fifteenth lock, saw us at the summit of the canal, 106 feet above sea level. Fourteen locks to go. At least they would be downhill. Following the channel marker buoys through the complex of islands on the humorously named Loch Oich we had to paddle hard into a stiff head breeze. It is an interesting phenomena of the Great Glen. The wind can change direction with remarkable suddenness. It always follows the fault line of the Glen, blowing southwest or north east. Often, as was the case today, a sea breeze off the west coast would meet a sea breeze off the east coast somewhere around Fort Augustus, producing the hot still conditions we had

enjoyed at lunchtime. Sailors on the two biggest lochs, Lochy and Ness had to be wary of sudden 180 degree wind shifts as the two air masses fought for supremacy.

Battles of a different kind were waged from the ramparts of Invergarry Castle although why anyone wanted to fight in such a romantically beautiful setting is beyond me. The crumbling ivy-clad ruins poked above the surrounding beech and oak. A 'des-res' for any canoeist or lover of lake and mountain. Another two mile stretch of canal led us to Laggan Locks where we found a perfect campsite right by the water's edge. Therma-rests out, it was dinner and diaries in the evening sun before the midges ruined everything.

We had been overtaken by an old dredger called Barrow Sand in the Beaully Firth on our approach to Inverness. We had seen it ahead on several occasions along the canal but had been unable to catch it. It was now moored at Laggan and I enquired with the skipper about what time he would be leaving. I had hoped to catch a few washes off pleasure boats on our way down the canal but the only craft up to now had been yachts travelling far too slowly. If we could only get on the wash off Barrow Sand we would have a free ride to Fort William. He laughed and replied in broad Scots that he aimed to leave between 7.00 and 8.00am. Great, how vague is that!

Phone calls to respective partners left us with mixed emotions. Of course it was great to talk to them but hearing about problems at home brought us another step closer to the end of our adventure. It was very nearly over and I would certainly be sad to leave this beautiful country. We had seen people arrive by car at the lock and walk up the tow path to an old tug. Investigating we discovered a real gem. Scot II was a floating pub, popular with locals and passing yachtsmen. Wilson rarely drinks but we had a pint to celebrate the imminent completion of our circumnavigation. We chatted to an Irish lass from the Dutch barge 'Fingle' moored on Loch Lochy.

Converted into an outdoor pursuits centre, they sailed their clients up and down the Caledonian Canal giving instruction in sailing, canoeing, mountain biking, hill walking and rock climbing. There was even a jetski on board that had been buzzing around the loch like some demented insect earlier that evening. She was a strange girl with rather more testosterone in her veins than there should have been. It turned out she was only talking to us to avoid the unwanted advances of one of her mature male clients. I was far more interested in making friends with Fingle, a handsome tan and gold collie-cross named after the barge that was his home.

One beer was enough to set me yawning and we retired for our last night under canvas.

#### Day 14

Thursday 24th June 1999 (21 miles, six and a half hours paddling/portaging)

The alarm woke me at 6.30am.

I nudged Wilson.

"Time to get up if we're going to catch that barge".

Like a Spaniel, eager to please, Wilson sat bolt upright eyes wide open and immediately started packing. His friends back home nicknamed him 'Spaniel' because of his boundless enthusiasm and willingness to crack on with whatever needed doing to get a job done. It was amazing to watch. One minute he had been fast asleep, the next minute he was wide awake and raring to go. He looked pretty awful but then so would you if you had paddled over 500 miles in a fortnight with just one shower! We hurried to get decamped but our haste was futile. Barrow Sand left at 7.30am and we watched it throw an enormous wake as it headed out into Loch Lochy. We would have done well to stay with it in any case.

Afloat by 8.00am we took a leisurely pace, again we were blessed with perfect conditions on the Loch. The steep forested mountain sides climbed into the clouds on each side of us. To the south we once again saw the Ben Nevis massif, snow still covering the upper flanks. Legend has it that if the



snow ever leaves the summit then ownership of the Ben will revert to the Crown. Its ownership not in question the Ben was a welcome sight and further indication we were coming to our journey's end.

Entering the canal once more having enjoyed a pleasant paddle down a very beautiful Loch Lochy we arrived at Gairloch Lock. Again no provision had been made for ease of access/ egress for canoes and kayaks even though the lock had clearly had a recent face-lift. We had to get out at least a hundred metres short of the first lock gate and when we had eventually heaved and lugged the boats past the two lock gates we were shattered. As I looked down the newly grassed slope to the lock basin twenty feet below a man dressed in overalls yelled at us from the swing bridge he was closing.

"Don't even think about it, I don't want you going down there, you'll just have to carry them".

His terse attitude immediately raised my hackles. I walked down to him to see what his problem was. He was clearly Mr Angry and not a big fan of canoeists. Probably a fisherman I decided. I acquiesced, remembering we had our sponsors logos splashed all over our boats. It meant a further four hundred metre carry across the road and down past the lock basin to a difficult 'put-in' down a steep rocky bank. We were both getting pretty fed up with this portaging business. Neither of us minded doing portages with a marathon racing kayak, there are 76 portages on the Devizes to Westminster race which I have done twice and Wilson three times. But with two fully laden sea kayaks it was not much fun and our shoulders were getting increasingly sore. Wilson was beginning to stagger under the burden. His skinny legs bowed with the strain. We were later to discover he had lost a stone and a half during our circumnavigation. He was lean when we started and could ill afford to lose that sort of weight. My compact (many would say stunted) build helped with this sort of weight lifting. Even so I was reaching my limit of endurance.

The final stretch from Gairloch to Banavie and the infamous Neptune's

Staircase seemed to take forever. We could smell the sea. I was tempted to portage into the River Lochy which was just below us but out of sight behind the embankment bordering the canal but decided that we should see it through to the bitter end. A pleasure boat gave us the opportunity of a wash ride but he overestimated my boat speed. Allowing Wilson to have the first wave I did my best to hang on to the second wave behind the thirty foot motor launch. I had to paddle flat out to stay with it and my arms soon filled with lactic acid. Panting, I yelled at Wilson to stay with it and I would see him later. Like the true gentleman he is he gave up his free ride so that we could paddle it together. To make things worse the sea breeze had picked up and the last four miles was a real head bang along the most boring stretch of the canal. At last we arrived, already shattered at the start of Neptune's Staircase. We went for a recce. It was our worst nightmare. It must have been an eight hundred metre walk from top to bottom. My shoulder ached just at the thought of it. It takes an hour and a half to transit the nine locks in a boat. It took us the best part of an hour to complete the portage with the two kayaks. But complete it we did and after a very tricky 'put-in' between the lock gate and the road bridge we paddled tiredly towards the sea lock at Corpach. The wind was bending the trees as it came in off the sea loch of Loch Eil. Was there to be a final sting in the tail?

Sure enough, having arrived at the twenty ninth lock, we looked out across Loch Eil towards Fort William. The south westerly breeze would be right on the nose for the final part of our journey from the sea lock at Corpach to Fort William Pier. The last, but by no means the easiest portage completed we were on salt water again. We headed out, determined to finish in style. Despite the stiff breeze and flooding tide we covered the last two miles in no time at all.

Closing on the small stone pier I had expected to be overcome with emotion. After all, the circle was complete. We had done it. A circumnavigation of Northern Scotland in two

weeks. I was pleased, of course I was. But there was a tinge of sadness. Would I ever get the chance to do such a thing again? It has been my life's ambition to do a solo circumnavigation of the British Isles. My commitment to Linda and my career made the likelihood of me ever realising that ambition appear remote. Was this a comma or a full stop? When I finished my circumnavigation of Devon and Cornwall I had already decided on my next adventure. Now I was at the end of that journey I was undecided on what to do next. Sure I had lots of ideas; a nonstop circumnavigation of the Channel Islands; an open crossing from Scotland to Norway via the Orkneys and Shetlands; the North West Passage, but they all took time and money. Wasn't it about time I got on with real life and stopped dreaming about 'the ultimate kayak adventure'. I thought of my hero, Paul Caffyn and his book 'Dreamtime Voyager'; his circumnavigation of Australia. Surely that was it. That was the 'ultimate'. Much like I had to accept that I could no longer compete at an international level in kayak racing, I would also have to accept that I could only read about such journeys in books.

Wilson snapped me out of my introspective daydream. Grinning from ear to ear it was really good to see him so stoked with what we had achieved. Only he knows what it meant for him. All I can say is that I could not have wished for a better travelling companion. He generously described paddling with me as "inspirational". That brought a lump to my throat! I hope in this account I have conveyed my great respect for this man but suffice to say that should any of my daydreams ever become reality he will be the first person I will ask to join me on my next adventure. We landed at 2.30pm, it had taken us 12 days, ten hours to paddle around 508 miles, averaging approximately 40 miles a day.

Why did we do it?

No reason!

## TRIBUTE TO VICTORIA JASON

April 24 1945 - 20 May 2000

In late May I received a phone call from Canada with sad news of the death of Victoria Jason.

During the northern summers of 1991 to 1994, Victoria Jason paddled some 7,500km in northern Arctic waters; two years with another paddler from Churchill in Hudson Bay to Gjoa Haven, then two years solo from Fort Providence on the Mackenzie River back to Gjoa Haven. In 1995 Victoria's superb account of the journey was published as 'Kabloona in the Yellow Kayak,' subtitled 'One Woman's Journey Through the Northwest Passage.' The book was twice reviewed in the KASK Newsletter and all the Kiwis I met who read it were impressed at the mettle of this lady. The Arctic paddling opened a new life path for Victoria, with annual return journeys to the icy seas and favourite haunts such as Pelly Bay.

Newsletter readers will be aware of my admiration of Victoria through her efforts to reintroduce kayaking to the Canadian Inuit at Pelly Bay where a successful sea kayaking tourist operation is now run each summer by the locals. Phil Hossack's article 'Return of the Kayak' which was reproduced in the KASK newsletter No.80 (from the 'Canadian Geographic' magazine), noted that motorboats had begun to replace kayaks in the 1950's and 1960's at Pelly Bay. In 1996, as Victoria paddled away from the shore, an image of children waving from the shoreline stayed with her the next winter. She arranged with the local co-op manager to import plastic kayaks to Pelly Bay for the summer of 1997 and by the end of the season, Victoria had encouraged more than 330 locals to try out the kayaks, half of them school age children.

In April 1999, following the KASK Forum debrief, I made an approach to Victoria on behalf of Coastbusters

and KASK to bring her out to speak at the New Zealand 2000 forums. Unfortunately arrangements were put on hold when I received a disturbing fax from Victoria in August. She had flown in to Pelly Bay on 7 June to get things ready for the forthcoming tourist guiding season. Victoria was feeling extremely tired and by the end of the second week, unable to speak coherently. During a phone call home, her daughter noticed the speech problem and alerted the Pelly Bay nurse. At first the diagnosis was thought to be a stroke but Victoria was medevaced to Winnipeg where an aggressive cancerous brain tumour was removed. Radiation treatments followed but were unsuccessful. In November 1999, Victoria wrote to say she was about to commence a second round of chemo-therapy but was still confident of a successful recovery, and keen to get back into her kayak 'Windsong.'

After Coastbusters 2000 in Auckland, I wrote to Victoria to tell her about the success of the weekend and how we hoped she could attend the next one. Then late May, Victoria's daughter Teresa rang with the sad news that her Mum had lost the battle with the cancer.

Victoria was a late starter to sea kayaking. Born in 1945, her experience of the Canadian north began in 1961 when her first husband was working on the Hudson Bay Line railroad. As Victoria noted in her book, 'Kabloona in the Yellow Kayak,' she was: 'sixteen years old with two babies under two years old, trapped into a marriage of my own naivete, to a man I hated. However the magic of the North captured my heart immediately, so what my miserable marriage lacked was compensated for by the silence, tranquillity, and openness.' In 1989 after a divorce from her second husband, who took, 'the canoe, boats and all terrain vehicle,' Victoria was forced to search for something she could handle on her own, and at the tender young age of 45, bought her first kayak.

Impressed by Don Starkell's book 'Paddle to the Amazon' and yearning to revisit the Canadian Arctic, Victo-

ria was taken by a comment that Don intended to paddle through the North West Passage. Don's first attempt from Churchill in Hudson Bay was aborted after a capsized two days into the trip. She met Don later in the year and although he was very reluctant for a woman to join him, in 1991 together with a third paddler, they set out from Churchill to paddle through the North West Passage. She and Don reached Repulse Bay in 1991, after what can only be described as an exceptionally harrowing introduction to expedition sea kayaking. In her book Victoria describes an early morning landing: 'I got out and dragged my kayak to the shore, then went back to help Fred. His arm was puffy and blue. We helped each other lift the kayaks to higher ground. Don was stomping around, cursing, insisting he could have made it. We were all hypothermic. I was shivering uncontrollably. Freddie could hardly keep his eyes open. Don was walking around in circles and blabbering incoherently. I was near tears, and at that point it would have been nice to have a strong wide shoulder to lean on and a dry sleeve to wipe my nose in.' This was after a 17.5 hour paddling day with no food!

Fred pulled out early with an injury, and it is difficult to fathom why Victoria continued paddling with Don through some rotten episodes of tension and conflict. Victoria was convinced Don had made a major navigation blunder in that they were heading south alongside Southampton Island instead of north. Don was only convinced of this monumental blunder after an encounter with an boatload of Inuit out fishing. No wonder Victoria ended up with bleeding stomach ulcers!

Perhaps still uncertain of her ability to go solo, Victoria rejoined Don in 1992 when they set off from Repulse Bay by sled and kayak for Tuktoyaktuk. At Gjoa Haven, after a mammoth slog of hauling the kayaks on small sleds over the sea ice, Victoria was forced to pull out, suffering from edema or muscle fatigue caused by excessive fatigue. Don continued westwards towards Tuk for too long into the onset of winter freeze-up. Hypother-

mic and unable to paddle because of the sea freezing, by a stroke of good luck Don was rescued but lost the tops of most of his fingers and toes to frostbite.

Determined not to give up on the idea of paddling through the Northwest Passage, Victoria spent the winter convalescing at home. Early summer of 1993 she set off from Fort Providence on the Great Slave Lake and paddled solo down the Mackenzie River to the Beaufort Sea, then east along the Canadian Arctic coast to the small Inuit village of Paulatuk. In 1994 Victoria resumed paddling from Paulatuk and completed her remarkable two year solo journey back at Gjoa Haven.

The epilogue of 'Kabloona in the Yellow Kayak' finishes with a plane flight back to civilization and Victoria's anticipation of seeing a new grandchild. I thoroughly enjoyed the book and since our paddling paths had crossed in the Mackenzie River delta of northern Canada, I wrote to Victoria and so began an exchange of letters, photos and phone calls over the years.

The book really started as a memoir for Victoria's grandchildren: 'Each time I returned from a journey they would gather around and ask me to tell them about the North, which I loved to do, fully realizing they would not remember for long. I decided to write the story for them but in the end it didn't turn out to be a children's type book.'

By 1997, two years after first publishing, 9,000 copies were sold and both the publishers and Victoria were pleasantly shocked when it won the book of year award. Victoria noted that, 'probably the best part of writing was the opportunity to meet so many people I wouldn't have otherwise met in my lifetime. Receiving letters from across Canada, USA and the rest of the world, makes going to the mail an adventure in itself.'

Victoria had plans for a sequel of her adventures in Pelly Bay, which her 10 year old grandson suggested after

watching 'Return of the Jedi' should be titled 'Return of Kabloona,' and she was hoping to have copies of the new book when she visited NZ this year.

Solo women sea kayakers can be counted with the fingers of one hand; Audrey Sutherland who has paddled her inflatable kayak long distances in Hawaii and South East Alaska, Ann Linnea who paddled part solo around Lake Superior, Fridel Meyer who in 1933 paddled a folboat halfway around Britain, and Victoria Jason. Victoria's long and sustained Canadian Arctic trips place her in a league of her own, particularly in my view the 1994 trip from Paulatuk to Gjoa Haven. Coping with total commitment, solitude, sea ice, rapidly changing weather conditions, the cold, and inquisitive brown bears requires special qualities of determination, courage, tenacity and a bit of humility at times. In the Arctic, the soundness of a paddler's judgemental decision making ability is the make or break between successfully achieving the goal or shuffling off the mortal coil.

There is the odd famous expedition paddler who swears by paddling to a set routine, so many days on then a rest day, no matter how calm or rough the sea and weather conditions are. Then there are paddlers such as myself and Victoria who let the weather and sea conditions dictate the paddling routine, going for broke in idyllic conditions while happily catching up on sleep or excitedly exploring on land when the wind gods played merry hell. Victoria wrote: 'Every day nature determined how much time I would be granted on the water. I awoke when the surf and wind were stilled, and slept soundly when it was too rough to travel. My mind was geared to the changing sounds in the environment. I began to trust my intuition. I developed an acute sense of awareness. It was reassuring since my survival depended on it.'

My sole means of appearing presentable when arriving at Arctic Inuit villages was a comb to scrape my beard and long hair into a semblance of orderly appearance. No wonder I was

totally ignored on numerous occasions. Victoria carried with her, a Braun curling iron, mascara and hair colour. When asked how she managed to do her hair when travelling, Victoria replied, "Well, on the days I'm shore bound I find a pond, heat some water and, with a mirror balanced between my knees and through much trial and error, I manage." What a woman!

After reading the article 'The Return of the Kayak', I wrote to Victoria and expressed the view that she was on the same pedestal as I placed Sir Edmund Hillary who, with the building of schools and hospitals in Nepal, had made such a concerted effort to put something back into the 'sport' from which he gained so much satisfaction. In the Greenlandic and Arctic Alaskan villages, I was always saddened by the lack of kayaks for the kids to play in, whereas 20 to 30 years ago, the teenage kids were still being instructed in the skills of kayaking. In Pelly Bay, Victoria has successfully encouraged the local Inuit back into kayaks and initiated a locally run tourist guiding operation in kayaks.

One of my lasting deep regrets is that I will no longer have the opportunity to meet and paddle with Victoria. Her sea kayaking legacy will live on at Pelly Bay and Victoria's book 'Kabloona in the Yellow Kayak' will forever provide inspiration for aspiring paddlers.

Paul Caffyn

## A LITTLE NOAHAN STORY

off the net and with West  
Coast amendments by  
Mary Trayes

And the Lord spoke to Noah and said, "In one year, I am going to make it rain and cover the whole earth with water until all life is destroyed. But I want you to save the righteous people and two of every kind of living thing on the earth. Therefore, I am commanding you to build an Ark."

In a flash of lightning, God delivered the specifications for an Ark and in fear and trembling, Noah took the plans and agreed to build the Ark. "Remember," said the Lord, "You must complete the Ark and bring everything aboard in one year."

Exactly one year later, fierce storm clouds covered the earth and all the seas of the earth went into a tumult. From above the Lord saw that Noah was sitting in his front yard weeping. "Noah," he shouted, "Where is that Ark I asked you to build?"

"Lord, please forgive me!" cried Noah. "I did my best, but there were big problems. First I had to get a Resource Consent for the construction and your plans did not meet the respective Codes. Then I had to hire an engineering firm and redraw the plans and get an engineers report from the Grey District Council. After that I got into a fight with NZ Fire Service over whether or not the Ark needed a sprinkler system and smoke alarms, and the Ministry of Health over the provision of smoking or non smoking areas. Then Grey Power objected, claiming I was violating S.A.M zoning ordinances by building an Ark in my front yard – that it was a recreational watercraft and therefore a threat to existing homes.

On top of that I had problems getting enough native wood for the Ark, because of the ban on native logging on the West Coast. Someone said try Fijian Jarra but I couldn't get the

necessary dispensation from Customs & Excise to import timber from a Pacific Island nation that wasn't party to the international working party on the life cycle of native timbers. And anyway now you can't get anything in or out of Fiji thanks to George Speight. In the end I finally convinced DoC that I needed their rimu to indirectly save the kakapo from extinction which seemed to get a bit of a positive reaction, however then the Royal Forest and Bird Society objected and won't let me catch any Kakapo. No kakapo. No rimu. No ark.

Finally I began to use treated pine and things got underway only for me to find that the carpenters had formed a union under the terms of the new Employment Contracts Act, and they'd gone out on strike. I had to negotiate a settlement under the provisions of good faith bargaining before anyone would pick up a saw or a hammer. Next O.S.H. arrived and now I have to produce a Hazard Management and Safety procedure before the carpenters would start work while A.C.C are insisting we pre-pay our annual premiums on the basis we may not be returning.

So at present I have sixteen carpenters working on the Ark, but no show of getting two kakapo and there are doubts about takehe too. When news got out that I was rounding up pairs of birds and animals, M.A.F arrived and insisted I build quarantine facilities to hold them all for the six months before sailing. They also wanted blood samples to prove no genetic engineering practices were involved.

Was just getting on top of all that when the West Coast Regional Council came knocking on my door wanting an Environmental Impact Report on the proposed flood; the area it would cover, the amount of water in cubic metres, impact on local micro-ecosystems, velocity and force of water, cost to manufacturing and production and local transport, areas for possible relocation and resettlement. I tried telling them they were missing the point entirely and that the early flood warning system would not work in this case!!

Right now, I am trying to resolve a complaint filed with the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Race Relations Office that our selection criteria does not fairly reflect the age, gender, religious and race diversity of Earth. How I am supposed to do that when the world Bio-diversity count hasn't even been finished and we know that some species are still not even discovered?

The last straw has been W.I.N.Z wading in. They've seized my assets for alleged non-payment of child support for some sprog I allegedly fathered with the coach of a Rotorua Women's Waka team last year when I was at the tapu lifting ceremony for the relocation of the Waitomo Caves cemetery. Mrs Noah is beside herself and has gone and enrolled herself in a 'Women in Leadership' Seminar run by Ginette MacDonald, applied to the Waitangi Tribunal for her share of Tainui's corporate box at Ericson stadium and is bugging off! I really don't think I can finish the Ark for another five or six years at least," Noah wailed.

Then the sky began to clear, the sun began to shine and the seas began to calm. A rainbow arched across the sky. Noah looked up hopefully and said, "You mean you are not really going to destroy the earth, Lord?" "No," said the Lord sadly. "I don't think I have to. The government already has."

### MORE HUMOUR

from 'The Press' - 'Trailer Sailor!' Last northern summer, down on Lake Isabella, California, some folks, new to boating, were having a problem. No matter how hard they tried, they couldn't get their new 6.7m Bayliner to perform. It was sluggish in almost every manoeuvre, no matter how much power was applied. After about an hour of trying to make it go, they putted over to a nearby marina. A thorough topside check revealed everything in perfect working order, so one of the marina guys jumped in the water to check underneath. He came up choking on water, he was laughing so hard. Under the boat, still strapped in securely in place, was the trailer!

## TECHNICAL

### TIDAL STREAMS

Recently I have noticed some Kiwi paddlers using the term tidal current instead of tidal stream. Both mean the same thing however the term 'tidal current' seems to be used only in the United States, and in the 'United States Coast Pilots.' In all those countries where British Admiralty Pilots are the source of coastal information, the term used is 'tidal stream.'

In New Zealand, although our tidal range is not excessive by world standards, we do have very strong tidal streams, particularly through Cook and Foveaux straits, off the northern tips of the North Island and D'Urville Island, and off most of the major headlands around Stewart Island. Both French Pass and the Tory Channel entrance are renown for their tidal stream strength.

During my overseas travels I've had first hand experience of powerful tidal streams:

- Nigel Denis and I shot through Pentland Firth off north-east Scotland at a speed of 16 knots, with a little help from a spring tide of 12 knots +.
- Off the Kimberley coast of north-western Australia, I surfed for over a mile on standing pressure waves of an enormous overfall off King Sound (12 knots +).
- Off Stewart Island's South Cape, I thought my last hours had come when striving to pull through a boisterous tidal stream in a weather tide situation.

Dorus Mor and the Mull of Galloway in Western Scotland, Tsugaru Kaikyo in Japan, the entrance to Lituya Bay in Alaska; all gripping encounters with powerful and turbulent tidal streams. Needless to say I have a lot of respect for tidal streams. Even paddling flat out at four knots against a 12 knot tidal stream, a paddler is going backwards at eight knots!

For paddlers uncertain of what a tidal

stream is, or what to look for on the sea, a good analogy is to think of a major river rapid, where a river is constricted by depth or width (or both). Take for instance a rapid formed by a gravel or rock bar across a river; as the top of the rapid is approached, the river velocity will increase, and a smooth tongue or V will be evident showing the deepest channel through the rapid. The tongue or V narrows to an apex downstream with standing pressure waves and turbulent back eddies on either side, close to the river banks. The turbulence and river velocity decrease downstream when deeper water is reached. If you expand the river rapid view and think of Cook Strait as a huge river channel where the sea flows one way for six hours, and then reverses for the next six hours. Wherever the sea bed constricts this flow, through shoaling or narrowing (or both) the river rapid analogy applies.

To continue with the river rapid analogy, back eddies (where the direction of flow is reversed) form behind exposed rocks and against the river banks downstream of projecting rocks, logs or bars. By hugging a river bank, and using back eddies to build up speed, a whitewater paddler can work their way upstream through a moderate river rapid. In Cook Strait, back eddies form behind reefs, islands and sharp projecting capes or headlands. For the inexperienced paddler crossing the eddy line, or narrow zone of demarcation between the tidal stream (rapid) and back eddy, is where cap-sizes will occur. And whitewater river practice at breaking in and out of back eddies is certainly an advantage for building confidence in dealing with tidal streams.

Tidal stream direction and strength can be assessed when close against a coastline by a paddler's relative speed against the coast, by observing the direction of fixed strands of kelp and buoyed lines to craypot floats. When approaching a coastline, transits on shore will allow assessment of movement off course by tidal streams. However out in the middle of Cook Strait, when too far off offshore to observe transits, it is very difficult to assess

tidal stream drift. Thus for long strait crossings, pre-trip research on tidal stream direction, strength and slack water times, is essential. The 'New Zealand Pilot' and the relevant marine chart will provide this information, while Tory Channel and French Pass have their own tidal prediction tables in the annual 'New Zealand Nautical Almanac.' The 'Central Area NZ Cruising Guide' has a two page section on Cook Strait tides, showing tidal stream direction and strength at hourly intervals with reference to High Water (HW) Westport, HW Plimmerton, and HW Wellington.

On marine charts, the symbol for a flood tidal stream is like an archer's arrow with the flight feathers only on the bottom side of the arrow. The ebb tidal stream is a arrow without the flight feathers. Above the arrows, the spring rate of the tidal stream is shown in knots. The charts for Foveaux and Cook straits have tables of tidal stream direction and strength at hourly intervals for both spring and neap rates. The reference position for this information is shown by a diamond symbol with a upper case letter inside (A).

As noted in the quoted section below, the tidal stream slack water times do not commonly coincide with high and low tide times. The turning of the tidal stream, will be noted either in the Pilot as so many hours after high or low water on shore, or by reference to the relevant marine chart.

The following section of definitions and explanations of tidal streams is reproduced from the annual 'New Zealand Almanac.'

### 'TIDAL STREAMS

'Tidal streams are a direct effect of tides, but whereas the tides are periodic vertical movements of the water, tidal streams are periodic horizontal movements. They must therefore never be confused with, nor referred to, as tides.

'The velocity (rate) of a tidal stream is expressed in knots (i.e., nautical miles per hour), while the direction is given as that in which it moves. The stream

which runs with the rising tide may be termed **flood** stream, and that which runs with a falling tide, **ebb** stream, but in order to avoid confusion when it turns an hour or more after high or low water by the shore it should be described by the general direction in which it runs (i.e., north-going, east-going, etc.)

‘Slack water is the interval between the cessation of a stream and its commencement in the opposite direction. On the coasts of New Zealand the change in the direction of a stream seldom coincides with the time of high or low water by the shore. The change differs as much as three hours, so that a stream will sometimes be running at its greatest rate when it is high or low water by the shore.

‘Caution is always necessary in navigating near the coast as the duration, rate and direction of a tidal stream is often affected by local weather conditions of which the mariner may not have any recent knowledge. It should also be remembered that there is usually an in-draught into a bay or bight although the direction of the general run of the stream may be across the entrance.

‘The effect of the tidal wave in giving rise to streams may be seen in two simple cases:

- (1) Where there is a small tidal basin connected with the sea by a large opening;
- (2) Where there is a large tidal basin connected with the sea by a very small opening.

‘In the first case the velocity of the stream in the opening will have its maximum value when the height of the tide within is changing most rapidly (i.e., at a time about midway between H.W. and L.W.). The water in the basin keeps at approximately the same level as that of the water outside. In the second case the velocity of the stream in the opening will have its maximum value when it is H.W. or L.W. without, for then there is the greatest head of water for production of motion. Flood stream begins about three hours after L.W., and ebb stream about three hours after

H.W., and so slack water occurs at times about midway between the tides. In an unobstructed wave the flood velocity is a maximum at about the time of H.W., and the ebb velocity becomes a maximum near the time of L.W.

‘In a stationary wave the slack waters are almost simultaneous with the H.W. and L.W.

‘In some bodies of water, particularly long channels, such as tidal rivers, the directions of the streams are obviously governed by the trend of the banks; but in broader bodies, especially near the heads of gulfs and bays, the directions taken by the particles of water are not easily explained. It is quite common in such cases to find no true slack water, while the direction of the stream shifts continually with the varying states of the tide.

‘Cook Strait-Tidal Streams - Caution The tidal streams in and around Cook Strait are unreliable, and masters are warned to exercise every precaution when navigating in the vicinity. The streams often run in one direction for eight to 10 hours, while cases have been reported of them going so for 18 hours and more. When the streams have been running in one direction, for say eight to 10 hours, it has been found that the opposite stream is much weaker and, in some cases, hardly noticeable. The maximum rates shown on the chart which are usually attained at springs are also liable to be experienced at any other time. In the vicinity of Karori Rock and Cape Terawhiti a rate of up to 7 knots is frequently experienced, but as a rule it does not last for more than about an hour. Small vessels are warned to keep well clear of tide rips, as they may lose steerage way and may, in extreme cases, capsize.

‘French Pass-Tidal Streams - Caution Masters of vessels are cautioned against taking a vessel through the Pass against the stream, as not only does a vessel sometimes not answer her helm owing to the stream eddies acting on her bow, but there is danger of meeting a vessel, coming from the opposite direction, which is not vis-

ible in sufficient time to prevent collision. Powered vessels of moderate size can, with prudence, pass through at slack water or with the tidal stream and so save some 15 miles of distance and avoid the heavy cross sea that is frequently met northward of D’Urville and Stephens Islands. Local knowledge is highly desirable.

‘These streams attain rates of from 5 to 7 knots, and do not set directly through the narrow channel, but across, the flood stream setting in a southwesterly direction as far as the narrows and then along the shore between Channel and Rock Cod points. The ebb stream sets in the opposite direction. See tidal arrows on the chart. Slack water lasts about 20 minutes. The Extraordinary irregularity of the bottom, together with the narrowness of the channel, accounts for the many eddies.

‘Care must be taken to prevent a vessel being swung round on to Collinet Point by the eddies.

‘A daily table of times for the flood and ebb streams can be found the Tidal Predication tables of the annual ‘New Zealand Nautical Almanac.’

#### ‘GENERAL CAUTION

‘The tidal stream rates shown on charts are for an average spring or neap tide. If the tidal range is greater than normal (e.g., full or new Moon coinciding with perigee) the rate will be increased roughly in proportion.

‘Small boats and launches are therefore cautioned against proceeding through a high tidal stream rate area or where an overfall or tide rip is charted (see symbols and tables on New Zealand charts) without checking the weather forecast, the anticipated tidal streams, and the currents (also shown on the charts). The New Zealand Pilot must also be consulted.

#### ‘EDDIES, TIDE RIPS, OVERFALLS, AND RACES

Eddies are small whirlpools or streams running contrary to the main tidal stream and are caused by obstructions, banks, or beaches in or bordering the path of tidal streams. They

can, therefore, be expected in the vicinity of shoals and projecting headlands, near the shores of straits and channels, and near the banks of rivers.

'Tide rips, overfalls, and races are varying degrees of turbulence occurring in a tidal stream, and are caused by the stream being suddenly increased, or being forced over an obstruction or through a constriction. They can, therefore, be expected where two streams or eddies converge, or where the sea bed shelves suddenly or becomes uneven, and in bottle-necks and straits.

'Eddies, tide rips, overfalls, and races can, in some circumstances, cause capsizing or complete loss of control in a boat. They should, therefore, be avoided.'  
(End of 'Nautical Almanac section.')

### **Further Comment on Tidal Streams**

Wind & Tidal Streams - when a wind is blowing against a strong tidal stream, it is called a weather tide. Most inshore paddlers are aware of what sea state (chop/whitecaps) is generated by increasing wind strength. But throw in a strong tidal stream flowing against the wind direction and diabolical paddling conditions are created. A 'wind with tidal stream' situation will guarantee a swift passage for a paddler, but err on the side of caution with a weather tide situation.

Building up Skills - my ability to read the direction and strength of tidal streams stems from a sound background as a whitewater paddler. And when training for a trip, paddling my Nordkapp upstream in the Grey River was always a great refresher in making progress by working back-eddies upstream. To build up your skills, I would suggest taking your sea kayak into a local river and practice until you are comfortable at crossing eddy lines in easy graded rapids. The standing waves of big overfalls can provide great sport for an experienced paddler into surfing, and in Great Britain kayak rodeos are held in areas with good standing waves in overfalls.

To conclude, treat strong tidal streams and particularly overfalls with a great deal of respect. If you are planning a trip to the extremes of New Zealand, or across the straits, ensure that you do the homework first and suss out all the information available on tidal stream strength, direction and slack water times.

Paul Caffyn

## **KASK WEB site and e-mail**

Secretary Sandy Ferguson recently sent out a message via e-mail asking what use members might make of a KASK WEB site or e-mail contact. If you are on e-mail and weren't contacted then it is probably due to us not having the correct details entered or you have changed your address or you have newly acquired an address.

If you want to be contactable, e-mail: [a.ferguson@chem.canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:a.ferguson@chem.canterbury.ac.nz) and your address will be noted.

KASK members

This notice is for two reasons, one to check the validity of the e-mail information (if you don't get this our information/data entry is wrong) and secondly to ask those to whom it might matter i.e. those with e-mail/WEB access, what might be wanted on a KASK WEB site or by 'bulk e-mail contact.'

We have two sites up at present - <http://john.chem.canterbury.ac.nz/kask> and <http://communities.msn.com/kask>

Both are simple and just give some information about KASK (sorry the forum information is a bit out of date on the first site).

One other function that a block e-mail listing might be put to is stolen kayaks. Sisson Kayak's site does this but how often do you access it and check?

Those Networks putting together a mini-forum or notice of the annual Pilgrimage by AJ in the Marlborough

Sounds are another use for general mailouts - information sent to members at short notice. We hope that these things can go in the newsletter but there are times when events are organised at short notice or a reminder might be helpful.

So, it is up to you to come up with brilliant ideas, that hopefully, I could implement.

## **KASK 2001 Forum**

Date: 10 - 12 March 2001 (Friday night registration)

Venue: Cable Bay, approx. 14 km north of Nelson, off the highway to Blenheim

The tides are most favourable (high at noon), a mix of estuary and open sea paddling. A total camp-out weekend. There will be a large marquee for eating/socialising.

Pepin Island forms one side of Cable Bay with a natural causeway joining it to the mainland. One side of the causeway is mudflats and it is possible to circumnavigate the island with suitable tides in about two hours. The outer side of Pepin Island, though not extensive is a really interesting bit of coast to paddle - see how many slots, tunnels and caves you can find or actually paddle through.

Sandy Ferguson  
KASK secretary

## **Ruahine Club - Trips**

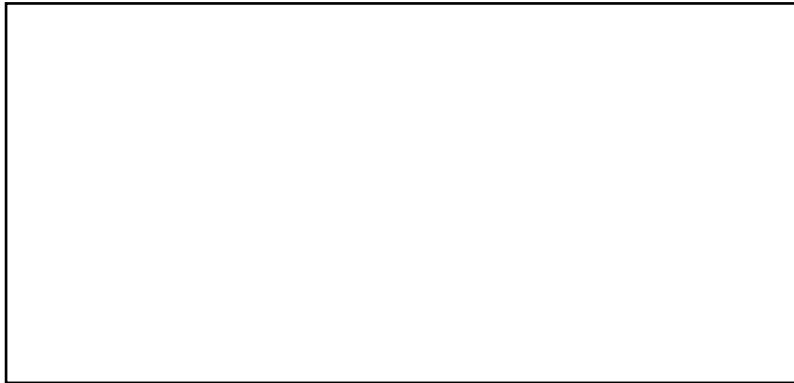
Several people have asked if they could be notified when the Ruahine Club holds it's next sea kayak trips, and if non members can tag along? Club policy is that anyone is most welcome to join us on any of our club trips. Our next sea kayaking trips are:

8th Oct. Trip down the Foxton Estuary from the old wharf - 3hrs.

5th Nov. Trip to Mana Island - 4hrs.

For further information, contact Max Grant, phone 06 3268667.

**MAILED TO**



If undelivered, please return to: Helen Woodward, 82 Hutcheson St. Blenheim.

