

No. 120 December 2005 - January 2006

THE SEA CANOEIST NEWSLETTER



Susan Cade in front of Belltopper Falls, Stewart Island.
Photo: Douglas Flux



Seal guarding kayaks in Port Pegasus. Photo: Susan Cade

**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:

**Editor: Paul Caffyn,
RD 1, Runanga. 7854
West Coast .N.Z.
Ph/Fax: (03) 7311806
Email: kayakpc@xtra.co.nz**

KASK Annual Subscription

\$35 single membership
(\$105 for 3 years; \$175 for 5 years)
\$40 family membership.
\$35 overseas

A subscription form can be downloaded from the KASK website.

Cheques should be made out to:
K.A.S.K. (NZ) Inc. & mailed to:

**KASK Administrator
PO Box 23, Runanga. 7854
West Coast**

Correspondence/Queries to:

Linda Ingram
KASK Administrator
PO Box 23, Runanga. 7854
West Coast

**Send address changes for receiving the newsletter via email to Linda at:
KASK.admin@xtra.co.nz**

LRB3 - KASK HANDBOOK

For a copy (or trade orders) of this mother of all sea kayaking handbooks, contact Paul Caffyn, RD 1, Runanga, 7854. West Coast.

e-mail: kayakpc@xtra.co.nz

Price: \$24.00

New members: gratis

Make cheques out to KASK (NZ) Inc.

THE LRB3, or the Little Red Book 3rd. 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

SEA KAYAKING NETWORK ADDRESSES

NORTH ISLAND

NORTHLAND Canoe Club

PO Box 755, Whangarei
Brian Lamerton
Ph: (09) 437 2858
email: brian.maree@clear.net.nz

AUCKLAND Canoe Club

22 Spinnaker Dve.,
Te Atatu Peninsula, Auckland.
email: auckland-canoe-club
owner@yahoo.com

HAURAKI Kayak Group

Pelham Housego
PO Box 46-146, Herne Bay, Auckland

WAIKATO KASK Contact

Evan Pugh, RD2, Putaruru
sheepskinsstuff@xtra.co.nz
Ph: (07) 883 6898

RUAHINE Whitewater Club

71 Salisbury St., Ashhurst.
Ph: 06 326 8667 Fax: 06 326 8472
www.q-kayaks.co.nz/pages/club.asp

BAY OF PLENTY - KASK Contact

Iona Bailey, Tauranga
Ph: (07) 576 1492
email: bailhut@clear.net.nz

ROTORUA- KASK Contact

John Flemming, PO Box 1872, Rotorua
Ph/fax: (07) 347 9950
email: shakey@actrix.co.nz

Rotorua Kayak Club
7 Mahana Place, Rotorua

Ph: (027) 292 3138
email: Woolhouse.Clark@xtra.co.nz

GISBORNE Sea Kayakers Club

John Humphris, 3 Matthews Rd, Gisborne
Ph: (06) 868 4657

email: thetrolls@xtra.co.nz or
gisborneseakayakersclub@hotmail.com

Website: www.geocities.com/
gisborne_sea_kayakers/

NEW PLYMOUTH KASK Contact

Bob Talbot,
10 Ranfurly St., Waitara.

Ph: 06 754 4191(H) or 0274 457038
email: ecobiz@xtra.co.nz

WELLINGTON Sea Kayak Network

Christine Coshan, PO Box 26052,
Newlands, Wellington

Ph: (04) 971 2141
email: wellseak@hotmail.com

Website: www.wskn.wellington.net.nz

SOUTH ISLAND

MARLBOROUGH

Helen Woodward
Ph: (03) 579 5669

h.woodward@xtra.co.nz

NELSON - KASK Contact

Nora Flight
Ph: (03) 544 7877

email: nflight@xtra.co.nz

CANTERBURY Sea Kayak Network

Andy & Deirdre Sheppard
53 Kent Lodge Ave
Avonhead, Christchurch. 8004
Ph: (03) 342 7929

email: d_sheppard@clear.net.nz
www.CanterburySeaKayak.orcon.net.nz

OTAGO

Rob Tipa
(03) 478 0360
robtipa@clear.net.nz

SOUTHLAND Sea Kayak Network

Stan Mulvany
03 215 7263
email: eiger@xtra.co.nz
Website: www.sskn.uniformnz.com

SKOANZ

Sea Kayak Operators Assn. NZ
Suzanne Dent, Administrator

SKOANZ
PO Box 1222

Christchurch
Ph/fax; 03 329 8317

email: skoanz@xtra.co.nz
Website: www.skoanz.org.nz

KASK Website: www.kask.co.nz

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THANKS

To Graham Charles, Mark Jones, Marcus Waters for the South Georgia expedition updates and Sandy Ferguson for putting it all together.
To Susan Cade for the Stewart Island cover shots.
To Kevin Killilea for proofreading.

DEADLINE

20 March for material for the next newsletter.

EDITORIAL

KASK Administrator

After almost 18 months in the role of administrator, Vanessa Hughes felt she no longer had the time for this role, with full time work at the local polytech. in 2006. A mutual friend was willing to pick up the administrator role, and with Vanessa's help, there has been a smooth transition. The new lass is Linda Ingram, who hails from New Brunswick, Canada. Sincere thanks to Vanessa for her professional approach to the admin. role. For any changes of mailing address, or queries re membership, please address them now to Linda (email address on page 2).

KASK AGM

The KASK AGM will be held late Saturday afternoon at Coastbusters. Please come along with ideas for the new committee.

South Georgia

A lengthy report on the first kayak circumnavigation of the island, by Graham Charles, Mark Jones and Marcus Waters, has been compiled off the Adventure Philosophy website by Sandy Ferguson. The photos from Graham Charles show the gruelling conditions that the team coped with. The planning, research and preparation involved prior to the expedition commencing, provide excellent guidelines for anyone contemplating an overseas kayak expedition.

Apology

My apologies to Justine Curgenvin, for calling her Jorgensen in the last newsletter. This is the lass who put together the wonderful 'This is the Sea' DVD which was reviewed in the KASK newsletter. Justine has confirmed she will be attending Coastbusters. She sent me 10 of her latest 'This is the Sea Two' DVD, which included a 30 minute segment of Justine, Trys Morris and Gemma Rawlings circumnavigating Tasmania. A full review of this latest DVD is planned for the next newsletter.

LRB4

Most of the new chapters or revamped chapters have been received for the

fourth edition of the KASK Handbook. I am still keen to look at stunning photos for use on the front and rear covers.

Newsletter

Reports by Evan Pugh, Kerry Howe and the continuation of Alon Ohad's Stewart Island trip will be included in newsletter number 121.

Freshwater River, Stewart Island.

Following a letter of concern sent to Maritime NZ, re two close calls with double kayaks on the Freshwater River with speeding water taxis, I have received a response from Nautical Adviser John Whitely. On 31 January, John with other MNZ and Environment South staff, visited Stewart Island to investigate a solution suitable to paddlers on the river and the water taxis. He notes:

'A sign has been erected at the mouth of the river informing users of the speed uplifting', and 'Brochures have been printed and are available at both ferry terminals, on the ferries and at the DoC field office at Half Moon Bay'.

He also notes that there are four concession holders, and they are only allowed to make one round trip from one hour before to one hour after high tide'.

On the brochure the river safety rules state: 'Keep to the starboard (right) side of the river channel.'

'If going upstream, give way to any vessel coming downstream.'

And the notes on radio signals state that boats entering or leaving the river must advise Stewart Island Maritime Radio, on VHF channel 65.

Thus if you are on the river, and have a VHF radio, you will be aware of water taxis using the river, and can advise them of your approximate position on the river.

John Whitely drew my attention to the following, listed under the 'Speed' rules: 'No person may, without reasonable excuse, propel or navigate a vessel at a proper speed exceeding 5 knots within 50m of any other vessel, raft or person in the water.' John states that MNZ will be enforcing this requirement.

KASK

January 2006 President's Report by Susan Cade

There is no stopping time and we are racing into the new year. I managed to spend two stunning weeks paddling with Douglas Flux, from Oban to Port Pegasus on Stewart Island over the Christmas - New Year Period. We were fortunate to avoid the worst of the winds and managed most of the trip we had planned. Stunning country and a lovely remote territory. Except for a few boaties we had the coast to ourselves! One stunning moment for me was when a large seal leapt like a dolphin vertically over the bow of Douglas's sea kayak and then dived between the two boats at a phenomenal speed. Far too close for comfort!

Since I returned to Wellington, Cathye Haddock and I have been in negotiation with Matthew Cant, President of the New Zealand Outdoor Instructors Association (NZOIA), formalizing an opportunity for KASK Network members to gain assessment preparation towards a sea kayak coaching qualification. I know this may interest only a few, but I believe it is important to support and strengthen those interested to develop and strengthen their skills towards coaching others - therefore endorsing, supporting and encouraging the development of sea kayak skills in regions for members of networks that are supportive of this approach. It will be interesting to see what interest is generated in this training opportunity.

In the Wellington area I was interested to see two kayak incidents reported in the Dominion Newspaper. One on 18 January, in rough seas off Plimmerton, north of Wellington, it was reported that two men were clinging to the side of a kayak and trying to swim to shore in high waves and gale force winds. That one man was res-

cued by winch from the Westpac Helicopter (battling winds of nearly 100km per hour), while the other made it safely to shore. It was certainly challenging weather to be out in that day.

Secondly on 30 January, it was reported that two kayakers were plucked from the sea after they were found by the Police Launch after attending another incident. Apparently the kayakers were rafted up, with one kayak swamped from a hole in the hull. They were apparently drifting with the wind. I hope they had been heading towards land!

With reasonable precautions and development of sea kayak skills, many incidents of this nature can be avoided and managed effectively. It will be interesting if possible to learn more about the specific details as significant data may not have been included in the articles, and I for one am left curious, such as to how the kayak came to have a hole in its hull.

Incidents do happen and the most important thing is that we learn from our experience and that others can also benefit from the knowledge gained.

It won't be long before the Coastbusters 2006 Sea Kayak Symposium in Auckland, from the 17-19 March and also the KASK AGM. The symposium certainly sounds like it is shaping up to be very interesting, with a good line up of expert guests from within New Zealand and from lands afar. There will also be interesting practical pod activities and workshops on the Sunday. I am looking forward to it.

Thanks again to the committee and others that have been busy with a number of KASK projects and activities.

So happy paddling all.
Susan Cade

TECHNICAL

Light/flag mast and fitting by Kerry Howe

I have a mast/flag on my sea kayak and it also holds a C-light at night.

Mast: my preference is for a thin, stiff mast to avoid windage. I've found the best masts are made from old/damaged fishing rods that you can usually get for nothing from a fishing tackle shop. Or you can buy flash carbon-fibre fishing rod blanks.

Mast fitting: For years I thought I had the perfect system. I simply drilled a hole in the horizontal part of the rudder flange and inserted a 7-8cm stainless steel nut and bolt. The mast simply fitted snugly over the sticking up bolt, plus I tied the mast to the kayak with a loose cord and a clip so that if I tipped upside down and the mast fell off, the bolt it would not be lost.

However this system I eventually found to have a potentially serious flaw. Once on Great Barrier I came ashore on a surf beach. When I hopped out onto the sand a large wave washed up the beach, caught the empty kayak and rolled it over and over. The mast simply bent right around the hull putting enormous pressure on the bolt, bent the rudder flange, and thus

Mast mounting



jammed the rudder lifting pulley. I had to dismantle the whole rudder mechanism and straighten the flange with some difficulty.

Now I use a different system. My fishing rod mast is simply tied to a short length of bamboo with thin elastic/bungy cord. The bamboo fits into a home made holder (made from half a nylon fishing line spool and short length of aluminium tube) which in turn is tied with elastic cord under where my rear deck lines meet.

If the kayak gets rolled on the beach again, the mast will simply pull away to 90 degrees plus from the bamboo stick as the cord stretches, and in really dire circumstances the bamboo stick will snap long before the fishing rod. Also by having the holder tied onto the deck and not on a hatch cover (or rudder flange), there is no damage that it can do by way of wrenching.

Kerry Howe

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Kerry Howe has been sea kayaking for about 20 years. He has sea kayaked extensively around the top of the South Island, in many locations in the lower North Island, and in recent years has solo kayaked from East Cape to North Cape including to and around Great Barrier Island.

Mast mounted on the kayak deck



Mast mounting

He has written many articles on sea kayaking trips, safety issues and equipment. His articles have appeared in the *Seacanoelist Newsletter*, the *KASK Handbook*, *NZ Kayak Magazine*, *Wilderness Magazine*. He has been the editor of the *Auckland Canoe Club Newsletter*.

He has also recently published *Coastal Sea Kayaking in New Zealand. A Practical Touring Manual*, (New Holland, 2005). This publication has been endorsed by Coastguard Boating Education.

For his day job, he is a Professor of History at Massey University, Albany Campus, Auckland. He has written 8 books on aspects of New Zealand and Pacific history.

TRAINING

**Instructor Training For
'Sea Kayak 1'
from Susan Cade**

The New Zealand Outdoor Instructors' Association (NZOIA) received funding in the 2005/2006 Water Safety New Zealand funding round, to run four two-day sea kayak instructor training workshops, two in the North Island and two in the South Island (Auckland, Wellington, Nelson and Dunedin. Course locations may be varied to accommodate demand).

New Sea Kayak Instructor Awards have been developed over the last two years to strengthen the standard of sea kayak instruction being delivered in various settings eg, school programs, clubs and the commercial sector.

KASK, NZOIA and Sea Kayakers Operating Association Of New Zealand (SKOANZ) have collaborated to develop syllabi for the new sea kayak awards.

The purpose of the workshops is to support and encourage people who instruct sea kayaking in various settings, to work towards gaining an industry recognized award.

KASK has been invited, along with Education Outdoors New Zealand (EONZ), to encourage and support members to take advantage of this training opportunity.

Level 2 Sea Kayak instructor award holders will run the workshops.

The workshops are targeted at 4-6 people who want to become sea kayak instructors, voluntary or employed.

The workshops aim to develop sea kayak instructional skills, and are a step on a training pathway towards later gaining the NZOIA Sea Kayak 1 instructor award. If there is a high demand for places on the workshops, candidates who aspire to later gaining an award may have first preference.

Course content will be based on the Sea Kayak 1 award syllabus.

Candidates will receive feedback during the workshops on their strengths and areas they need to work on to prepare for their award assessment.

The vision is that ideally candidates will have an assessment 6 months to a year later.

KASK'S Commitment:

KASK is committed to support current KASK members who are currently sharing their skills and knowledge with others in their local area/network. This does not mean that KASK is pushing assessments of members, but it is supporting the development of consistent recognized coaching and therefore supporting skill development around regions.

Costs:

This will be in part a further subsidizing by KASK for KASK applicants. This will depend on a number of factors including level of interest in applicants, location of courses and availability of instructors in the area with the skills already in networks.

There is a plan to seek some funding to support attendees that wish to complete the assessment

An ongoing fee for those who later go onto completing the assessment, is an annual \$200 NZOIA membership fee. We are aware that this may well be an issue for volunteers taking an instruction role within networks. This may be something to negotiate within some networks, or within their instruction role.

Skills Required:

While there are no formal pre-requisites for the workshop, candidates are expected to have intermediate to advanced sea kayaking skills, most of the skills covered in the Proficiency Award.

How to apply:

Candidates can request an application form from Susan Cade either through email susan.cade@xtra.co.nz or by phone (04) 5675593

Candidates will also need to have the

skills for the Sea Kayak Proficiency Award

Details that are requested include, endorsement of the application from local sea kayak network contact or member/s.

List your activities instructing and sharing your sea kayaking knowledge and skills with your local network/friends/ school parties etc., over the last two years. And then Susan will verify details with candidate's local network contact person. The final decision will go through the KASK Committee based on areas need or other relevant factors.

Sea Kayak Instructor Training 2006

Courses are open to both NZOIA members and non-members, through funding from Water Safety New Zealand.

Sea Kayak Level 1 Training / Refresher

| | |
|------------|-------------|
| Auckland | 25-26 March |
| Wellington | 1-2 April |
| Nelson | 8-9 April |
| Dunedin | 25-26 March |

Cost: Members \$75
Non Members \$150

- This course is designed for those people wishing to prepare for the joint NZOIA / SKOANZ / KASK Sea Kayak 1 assessment.

- It is suitable for those who are already competent sea kayakers with some leadership experience.

- The course focuses on personal skill development, instructional technique, and group and risk management.

- See the award syllabus on our website for further details:
www.nzoi.org.nz

NEW ZEALAND TRIP REPORTS

A Day on Lake Taupo by Evan Pugh

I have paddled around lake Taupo on various occasions, four day trips covering the 166kms of shore line and a two day trip, point to point around the complete lake.

This time would be different as the weekend was right there was a full moon, but there was a small low pressure system directly over the central North Island - a high would have been better. I stayed Friday night at Waitahanui which is approximately 8 kms south of Taupo township, and on the morning of Saturday the 17 December I was on the water at 4.45am paddling north into a light chop along Five Mile Bay before sunrise and cutting across to Rangatira Point where I got out for a stretch.

One of the fishermen there was reeling in a medium size trout as I departed with a tail breeze which would accompany me for the next 20kms as I headed west. 8kms further on, I stopped again at Tahunatara Point as I knew there were no more stops before Boat Harbour and it was raining as it had been from half an hour after the start of the day, mainly a light rain but sometimes downpours.

The 9.15am weather forecast was for 10 knot variable winds, possible thunderstorms so I was happy with that, as I had been a bit concerned it could blow up later on. Taupo Coastguard are on channel 61 and cover you all weekend but only at certain times during the week and weather forecasts are several times during the day.

With a slight breeze helping me along, I was paddling slower than normal enjoying the day, with Kinloch way in the distance on past Kawakawa Bay, and a rest at the lovely Boat Harbour where I put on a second polypro, since I was wet and didn't want to get cold.

I also had a ten minute walk in the bush for a leg stretch.

From here on, the half metre chop was all over the place. As I cut across Waihora Bay and followed the cliffs, the wind across the lake was up and down creating a slop which if nothing else loosens up the hips especially since my boat was empty and light. I stopped again at Waihaha. There was one family camping there but I didn't see them as it was bucketing down at the time. I went and stood in one of the loos for a while to get out of the wet stuff.

On I ventured and along the shore of Whanganui Bay with a dozen small tents there but no one to be seen. This is where the rock climbers come as there are great cliffs to climb, but not today. Cherry Bay with one large yacht moored was to be my next stop for ten minutes and yes it was still raining.

Around the shore then cutting across to the Karangahape Cliffs where it was settled with basically no wind and, as with the trip so far, I could only see about 2kms as there was a misty cloud all about but I found this good, as the lake became small rather than seeing the vast distances to be covered.

Te Hapua Bay is lovely but I decided not to go in for a stop but to carry on down this great piece of shoreline and stop at Whareroa (Te Hape Bay) as it has a changing room toilet block there which I used for a half hour break enabling me to lay down for a stretch on the long bench seat. This was great as I was out of the rain, the wind wasn't a problem as it was light or non existent now, but water had gotten in through wherever water wants to get through, so I was wet, wet, wet.

Once this sheltered rest was over, south I went past Kuratau and the sandy beaches down past Pukawa to Parapara Point and over to the Tongariro Delta where five boats were in the different outlets of the river with their lines out. I went between some of the boats heading for a landing spot and had the largest trout I have seen jump out of the water in

front of me. I hope the guys in the boats saw it too.

Again a stretch and walk around - then along the shore of Stump Bay with a slight southerly breeze behind me I paddled the 7kms to the boat club where I used the changing room for a half hour rest and a good dry down adding a third polypro layer, sorting some more snacks and getting the head torch out ready for night fall.

In the water again I paddled past Motuoapa Peninsula, then across to Oruatua. It got dark, pitch dark. The moon would be up at 10.20pm. It was now 9.30 and massive thick dark cloud layer right across the lake. My new head torch was crap. I could not see past the bow of my kayak so I turned my torch off lining up the lights of Taupo township 30kms away and the car lights on the highway to my right about 500 metres to a kilometre away.

I was way offshore as there are lots of boulders, just under the surface on this side of the lake, which I knew I would not be able to see. Now that it was dark, the worst weather hit me. It was mainly a northerly which was head on thankfully, but gusts of around 20 knots hit me from left and right which caused me plenty of concern, so I slowly worked my way closer in for my own comfort and safety.

The winds abated after half an hour as the cloud shifted on then would hit again with the next cloud working its way slowly across. I knew I had about four hours to go and this became a struggle to such an extent that I paddled into Motutere near the camp ground at about 10.30pm with the intention to stop but after a look at the map I decided to carry on towards the lights in the distance.

This became a bit of a mission as I passed Hatepe and started along the white cliffs which took forever and the shadowed scenery to my right seemed to stay in the same place. But the moonlight was now showing through a gap, which I followed and stopped on the beach near the northern end for a quick stop, even though I only had 4kms to go. I needed the

stop mentally. I landed in the waves on the beach, got out and realised it had stopped raining which was great as it had rained the whole trip.

Back in the kayak, around the end of the cliff and along the shore near the few lights to find my start finish point at 1.30am Sunday morning. Tired, sore and wet I got back to the van and slept for an hour, as I was all hyped up and had trouble nodding off. I had completed lake Taupo in a day 109kms - time in the kayak 19hrs and two minutes, the last five hours were slow and hard work with the head wind, chop and next to no visibility.

I had taken with me sandwiches, bananas, cashews, walnuts, three drink bottles which I fill up from the lake, a tarp I would have used if I had to stop, spare polypro, a small towel and a hot head for my head if I needed it. A VHF radio which would have been no good at night as no one else was out there, but I had GPS and the usual paddling gear. I had intended to have longer breaks, but due to the wet weather I shortened these which caught up with me later.

Evan Pugh

FOR SALE

In the note from Chris Ingram, he says the kayak is a bit small for me. Must have shrunk!

Nordkapp, yellow
Post 1988 model
Near new condition
Two spray skirts
\$2,900

Contact:
Chris Ingram
(07) 578 3606
54 Harvey St
Tauranga

CALENDAR

'Stretch your Horizons'

Coastbusters 2006 Sea Kayakers' Symposium

March 17-19

Milford (Auckland) and Sullivan's Bay

Held every 2 years (this is our 11th event). Run by kayakers (non-profit) for kayakers.

It's a great weekend, full of fun, knowledge & amazement: Workshops, demonstrations, on-the-water adventures. From novice to expert, you'll enjoy the interaction with New Zealand's best sea kayakers and some of the World's finest who we've flown in to add some spice.

The last event filled up weeks before the weekend – so please don't delay.

Check it out at: www.coastbusters.org.nz

Not internet connected ? Don't worry, send any questions to:
Coastbusters, POB 101-257, NSMC and we'll get you an answer.

The following talented paddlers appearing are:

Justine Curgenvin is a young British film director with a passion for Sea Kayaking. She's filmed the most eye-stretching Sea Kayaking videos you've ever seen. She's led expeditions to Kamchatka and Tasmania (1400 km circumnavigation) and filmed some of the World's great paddlers on some of the World's great waters. Whether it's awesome tidal races off the Welsh coast, the bergy bits of Greenland and Newfoundland or the Manatees in Florida, Justine will share her experiences in a workshop and give us an entertaining after-dinner talk. Take a look at www.cackletv.com

John Kirk-Anderson - one of last event's most popular speakers – returns with another thought-provoking workshop. John is not only a kayaker of great skill and experience, but probably NZ's highest qualified instructor, with both SKOANZ and BCU certification.

Freya Hoffmeister and Greg Stamer, two world-class Greenland paddling gurus, will share their knowledge and fascinating experiences in a Friday-night presentation, a demonstration on Saturday afternoon and a workshop in the Sea on Sunday afternoon. If you saw Shawn Baker's demo at the last event, you won't be bored! Greg is one of the folk he learned from.

NZ Experts on a host of Topics. Get ready for some hard choices – because you won't fit them all in! Auckland's Best Kept Secret Destinations, Trip Planning, Yak Maintenance, Be-Kind-to-Your-Body Physio, Foodie Frenzies- sensible and extreme, Skin on Frame Boats – would you enjoy the challenge? A return of DoC, for an update on their plans for kayaking resources. There will be lots more, as we tee up the speakers – keep an eye on the website.

Display of Cedar-Strip, Stitch & Glue and Fabric-on-Frame kayaks – examine these interesting and beautiful boats and discuss them with their builders. You might even get to try one on Sunday afternoon.

Sunday morning's justly famous, on-the-water, 'pod' session – don't leave your boat at home!

Sunday BBQ – yes all this and we feed you too. Today's BBQ, Saturday's lunch and buffet dinner are included in the price. You look after grog & camping / accommodation (see web for suggestions).

Sunday afternoon on-the-water workshops – a range of 'try it, you might like it' and hands-on-the-water experiences – if you've any stamina left after the BBQ.

Plus... the steak knives! In the tradition of Coastbusters 'you'll talk about it for years' special events, we have something up our sleeves that you won't believe. Half the organising group keep chuckling – the other half are just shaking their heads.

Accommodation is your responsibility. You can use nearby camp-grounds (see web-site for links & details) or local motels, or stay in Auckland itself. Note that Milford is about 20 minutes north of Auckland. Meals provided at the Symposium (as part of the cost of the registration fee) are as noted on the form above: Saturday's teas, lunch & banquet dinner and Sunday's BBQ. Alcohol is your affair – we suggest you bring some beer / wine if you want some – but don't have more than one at the BBQ – not if you're rolling in the afternoon!

Schedule: Provisional – check Website for minor changes / updates:

Friday Evening: (Don't miss it) Milford

Registration from 6:30 pm

Welcome & Lead-Off Session 7 pm

Finish about 9:00pm

OVERSEAS TRIP REPORTS

**First South Georgia Kayak
Circumnavigation
Compiled from the
Adventure Philosophy
website updates
by Sandy Ferguson.**

**Photos supplied by Graham
Charles**

EXPEDITION BACKGROUND

Situated in the furious fifties, at a latitude shared only with Cape Horn and giving rise to the old mariners saying "in the forties there is no law - in the fifties there is no god", South Georgia is one of the most dramatic landscapes and wildlife havens on the face of the earth. 'A land doomed to perpetual frigidness, whose savage aspects I have not words to describe', Capt. James Cook.

To circumnavigate this hostile and beautiful land in any vessel is a journey worthy of respect - to sea kayak around South Georgia is a world-class adventure and in an age where genuine adventure objectives are few - the circumnavigation of South Georgia remains a coveted world first.

The Adventure Philosophy team of Graham Charles, Marcus Waters and Mark Jones are uniquely qualified to succeed with this audacious goal. Having already proven themselves as world class adventurers and one of the worlds best adventure teams, they traversed 500 miles of the Antarctic Peninsula unsupported (2001) by sea kayak and then battled 300 miles of Tierra del Fuego gales before pioneering a new route through the Darwin Cordillera (2003).

South Georgia has an abundance of wildlife matched only by the Serengeti. It is a place where southern ocean wildlife abounds in such stupendous numbers that landing on some beaches is almost impossible. It also has a rigorous adventure heritage. It's most famous adventurer, Sir Ernest Ernest

Shackleton, put South Georgia on the map by landing the James Caird at King Haaken Bay in 1916 and crossing the island against all odds to raise the alarm to save his men on Elephant Island. The Adventure Philosophy team hail from New Zealand - home of Shackleton's remarkable navigator, Frank Worsley, who steered the James Caird on its remarkable journey to South Georgia.

Steeped in history, rich with wildlife, and epic potential, The Unclaimed Coast is a classic adventure journey and a fabulous opportunity for people to share in this wild and wonderful part of the world.

THE 'NORTHANGER'

Many people are wondering about the role of a support yacht and why we have it down there. The simple answer is because we have to. South Georgia is administered by the British and their safety regulations require that sea based expeditions have their own means of possible search and rescue. The 'Northanger' is our yacht. It is a 54ft steel Damien II ketch-rigged yacht designed specifically to access remote, high latitude regions. To visit the Northanger website, <http://www.northanger.org/about.html>.

We'd like to introduce you to the rest of the team working with us down there. Greg Landreth and Keri Pushuk are the owners of the 'Northanger' and have spent the last 10 years sailing in Arctic and Antarctic waters, including wintering over in the ice in Greenland in 1999. Greg is a very experienced mountaineer and adventurer in his own right. Kevin Nicholas is a long time friend of ours and a UIAGM certified guide. Zak Shaw is along to lower the average age (he's 25) and is there to add youth and vitality. Zak is a high performing all rounder and is as useful in gnarly whitewater as he is in the mountains. Kev and Zak will be doing some 2nd unit filming for us in-between their own adventures and exploring where they can. They will also be providing 3rd party updates and commentary on how they see the weather and conditions and how we are progressing. Back in NZ, we have some fabulous

support behind our website with Bronwyn Gay - design, Richard Rowe - updates and construction, and Gary Lee from e2media hosting and constructing the site. And we have 'eye-in-the-sky' weather txt's from Mike Atkinson and Anna Jones.

UPDATE 1 - 17 July 2005

The start of the expedition is not till the end of the year but a huge part of the logistical puzzle is behind us. We have just freighted the boats by ship to Chile and then onto the Falkland Islands with the help of Gerry Williams at Pacific Basin Exports. Fitting 6m long kayaks into the hold of a passenger liner is a complex business and Qantas pulled some amazing strings to help us. In the end, however, shipping proved an easier option and less fraught with potential problems.

Scott and his team, at Paddling Perfection, have done a fantastic job of customising the Bears to our requirements, which includes additional reinforcing, bracing, camera mounts, and personalised deck fittings. And check out the 'hands-off!' colours they have put together. That ought to make the leopard seals think twice before they take a chomp out of one.

Undesired close encounters with wildlife are a significant possibility and Gerry Clarke's description of fending off the attacks of an Elephant seal makes sobering reading in his book 'The Totorore Voyage'. Dealing with the wildlife will be just one of the challenges we will face at South Georgia Island. Cold is another and the Bears have been lined with cockpit insulation to reduce the amount of toe wiggling required to stay warm. No drawbacks and a silver-lining! Can't complain about that.

The final 4 months or so before we leave will be hectic and pass quickly as we juggle work with training and final preparations of which there is plenty to be done yet...

UPDATE 2 - 17 August 2005

Organising an expedition to any remote part of the world is a complex and time consuming exercise in planning, organization, and logistics. South

Georgia Island has proven to be no different and it is satisfying to see most of the bigger pieces of the puzzle in place so early.

Our plans have been approved by the South Georgian authorities. The kayaks have arrived in Valparaiso en-route to the Falklands. We have most of the equipment that we need to make it work, and we have a lift to South Georgia Is. and back.

Sourcing partners with the equipment and financing we need to be successful is an important part of the pre-expedition planning and we are happy to announce the Canoe and Kayak franchise are backing us again. Canoe and Kayak is providing any kayaking equipment we find ourselves short of, nearer to leaving and it is a vital cash sponsor. We will be writing a series of articles post expedition for NZ Kayak Magazine capturing the adventure of kayaking in the Furious Fifties.

Big thanks to Chris Turner of Sydney, Australia, who has put his electronic expertise to good use and built a solar charger for the expedition that will enable us to film video and digital stills without a huge reliance on batteries. Chris big-wall climbed with Jonesy in Yosemite in the early nineties and has become a close friend of the team since.

Donald Caulder of Sunspots, the Rotorua kayak shop, <http://www.sunspots.co.nz/> has built us three lightweight Kevlar helmets, which we will be grateful of when we are faced with landing in surf on steep beaches littered with aggressive fur seals. Hmmm. Maybe we should have got him to build us some Kevlar body armour as well.

Thanks to all the many others who have offered support. We couldn't do it without the goodwill that comes forth along the way.

UPDATE 3 - 30 September 2005

Auckland Airport

They adventure is underway.

After an insane last week running like headless chooks we have the whole team and some 200 kg of luggage

assembled for take off. In our indomitable style, we were still fundraising until almost the last second with a meeting with a potential sponsor less than 48 hours from takeoff – watch the sponsor's page to see if it was successful.

Debbie Summers, from Stanley, has unpacked our kayaks and sent us a picture to show they are in good shape. Now if we can get all our luggage and food there to meet the 'Northanger' we will have an expedition.

Many people still haven't looked at a map to figure out much about South Georgia – so here goes your lesson: South Georgia is a sub-Antarctic island some 170 kilometres long and varying from 2-40 kilometres wide. 161 glaciers, ice caps and snowfields cover about 75% of the island in summer and the winter sees the island covered completely in snow.

It lies very close to the Antarctic Convergence (where polar waters meet the warmer waters of the Atlantic) so the waters are rich in krill for penguins and whales. The mountainous terrain provides a haven for an abundance and diversity of wildlife rarely seen on the planet. South Georgia is home to over 30 million seabirds. Albatrosses, cape petrels, giant petrels, Antarctic prions, penguins, gulls and shags all call this home.

It was discovered in 1675 by Antoine de la Roche, a London merchant blown off course. But, it wasn't until almost 100 years later when Captain Cook mistook it as Antarctica (and subsequently named the south-east corner as 'Cape Disappointment'), that the island attracted large numbers of sealers on learning of Cook's reports of the huge seal population. The fur seals were then hunted to near extinction. Since the banning of seal hunting, the population of fur seals is now estimated at around three million (not much room for our tent in there!). Both elephant and fur seals have their young on the island beaches and reports from South Georgia are that the first elephant seal weaners have been born in the last week.

UPDATE 4a - 02 October 2005

Stanley

Well, we managed to move 28 items of luggage weighing 365 kgs and all pieces made it to Mt Pleasant Airport in the Falkland Islands. We were quite the sight in Santiago and the mini bus driver had never seen anything like it. Our kayaks are here and we now have the job of testing all systems before we leave for South Georgia. We arrived to a fabulous BBQ put on by Debbie Summers in Stanley and it was in true Falkland's style. We BBQ'd dressed in full down jackets and hats with a blazing fire on the lawn drinking all manner of alcoholic concoctions and eating southern tooth fish and moonfish kebabs - yet it was only 4°C! These Stanley-ites are crazier than we are.

A marvellous welcome into this community of 2000 people. The Northanger is due in here in the next day or so and we will be locked and loaded and fully rested and ready to go when it gets here.

Update 4b - 05 October 2005

The 'Northanger' pulled into port this morning after a run of good weather from Ushuaia in Argentina. We are spending the rest of the day loading our kayaks and gear on board and we have a fabulous weather forecast to head out into the south Atlantic.

We are very excited about this next leg of the journey and can't wait to get to South Georgia and, well, to get amongst it! We've spent so long planning and organising this. We have great sponsors and great support so all we need are the weather gods on our side and the job will be done.

UPDATE 5a - 08 October 2005

We left the Falkland Islands with steady NW winds between 25 and 30 knots which offered fantastic sailing with following seas and gave us a chance to find our sea legs and get accustomed to our new home aboard Northanger.

We made 6-7 knots all night but about 5am this morning, the wind died and conditions became quite balmy. We all ate lunch sitting on deck enjoying

the display from dozens of Wandering and Black Browed albatross which traced lazy figure eights across the bow and stern. 3-4 Hour Glass dolphins have been with us through the night and are still surfing the bow wave.

This balmy calm in the southern ocean is a little disconcerting as there is only one thing you can be sure of here - a storm is not far off. Satellite images tell us this is the case and we continue to watch and hope it tracks south.

We spend our time either on watch, in bed, eating or testing and re-testing our equipment and systems. The night watch is covered by Kev, Zak, Greg and Keri and gives us a chance to catch up on fatigue from the last few weeks of getting an expedition like this from concept to reality.

Update 5b - 10 October 2005

They say that 'in the 40's there is no law but in the 50's there is no god'. Well we've been having a taste of that over the last 36 hours. Winds picked up to over 40 knots and the sea came with it building a very confused swell and chaotic cross chop which the Northanger has been rocking violently in for nearly 24 hours. Even Greg was heard muttering something about our particularly nasty sway.

Our poor kayaks lashed to the front deck took a pounding but appear to be in fine shape and we hope this introduction to the southern ocean bodes well for them.

It is with quite some trepidation that we (lying immobile and feeling vulnerable with sea sickness) consider the challenges of the SW coast of South Georgia. Mother Nature rules supreme out here and with a very short blow she can build devastating seas which we have to make sure we are not caught out in.

Presently the winds have died but left the awful swell and our job at them moment is to keep enough food and fluids down - to hopefully, be in good shape when we arrive.

We can't help but consider, again, what a feat Frank Worsley pulled off by skippering the tiny James Caird 800 miles in this pitiless ocean from Elephant Island to South Georgia and allowing Shackleton to raise the alarm and save his men.

UPDATE 6a - 13 October 2005

Grytviken

We pulled into King Edward Point this afternoon and have cleared our requirements here. We are clear to go!

It is a fantastic feeling to be poised on the brink of such a major adventure. We have a lot of support here and are very excited and very nervous about getting underway. The wildlife is astounding and it is such an honour to be about to embark on a journey sharing the home of all these creatures. Are there many places at all on earth where this abundance and wildness are combined? We will pack our Sea Bears as soon as we can and bid our farewells.

UPDATE 6b - 14 October 2005

Grytviken. We are off!

It is snowing heavily and windy out, but it is time to roll the dice and go to school in South Georgia.

Patience and prudence is the key from here on in.

UPDATE 7 - 17 October 2005

54° 4' S - 36° 56' W

We left Grytviken with the snow falling in big fluffy clumps. The wind had dropped away to a whisper and the tussock and cliffs looked enchanting dusted in white. The water tempera-

ture is such that the snow does not melt, but forms patches of slush ice on the surface.

After months and months of preparation and the last two weeks on inactivity, it feels great to be underway. Already it feel a great privilege to be travelling in this dramatic and beautiful coastline as we are under our own steam, landing as the island allows.

We are in an Antarctic bay after two days and it certainly has a polar feel to it. A 30 knot breeze, that is blasting our Macpac Hemisphere tent with sand and spindrift, is turning the bay into a sea of whitecaps. This from flat calm in 20 minutes! We share our beach with about 80 elephant seals, a colony of fur seals, penguins and a cacophony of other birds, all which give us the distinct impression of living in a zoo. With the backdrop of snow capped peaks, this is a stunning place.

UPDATE 8 - 19 October 2005

54° 1' S - 37° 28.5' W

A brutal day slogging into squalls and head winds for a miserable 16 km. Our bodies are taking a hammering as are our supplies of anti-inflammatories. Hardly seems worth the effort put in, except we are 16 km further than we were this morning. We were forced to spend a second night at Salisbury Plains with strong winds and snow flurries all day long. Stunning place!

A backdrop of some 6000 King penguins, the adults wandering past our

The team departing from Grytviken



tent to the sea in a constant stream, mapping along the coastline before diving in. Beside us was a harem of 60 or so elephant seals, one of dozens and dozens that dot the bay. The sheer magnitude of wildlife is staggering!

It is very cold. As cold as anything we experienced in Antarctica. The sea cliffs are hung with icicles, and if the sea was fresh water it would be frozen. Even the warm north-westerly wind brings snow.

This evening we watched a couple of elephant seal bulls battle for the harem out of the door of the Hemisphere. Then the beach master looked menacingly in our direction, and as we watched in horror, 4 tonnes of undulating blubber was coming straight

for the tent. Another late arrival bull lay beside us and the 3 of us were scrambling for the back door - vision of some flattened billies and 3 depressions in the gravel being the last signs of Adventure Philosophy. Not sure we will sleep so well tonight!

UPDATE 9 - 22 October 2005

Coal Bay 54° 2' S - 37° 56.5' W
We left the last updated camp and headed out in another snow storm. The wind backed us and we took a chance on a long run to Elsehul. A more dramatic day we couldn't have imagined.

It snowed heavily all day, visibility was less than 800 meters and all the while we crept along dark brooding cliffs, caked with snow and hanging

with stalactites of ice. We drew into Elsehule with wind and seas rising. It was bitterly cold.

We rested a day in high winds, elephant seals as our room mates once again. They seemed to warm to us this time. One large fellow decided to investigate the tent door. His snorting through the door proved that oral hygiene is not a priority for these creatures.

Temperature dropped dramatically and our beach froze. The wind dropped also, so we headed off this afternoon to round the north-western end of the island, and point our Sea Bears south for the first time.

Minus 5 and freezing southerly winds straight from the South Pole ensured our kayaks were caked in ice, with icicles hanging from our caps and hoods. A surreal introduction to the south-west coast.

We are now set to head south and are feeling strong.

**'Northanger' Update
19 October 2005.**

South Georgia's impetuous and difficult weather has already shown us that this adventure will be less than easy. Progress for the kayakers has been slower than we anticipated. While we on 'Northanger' at times have enjoyed some positively balmy weather, the lads have been battling into strong winds and big swells. Tomorrow we hope to have a clearer idea on when we might be rounding the north-eastern tip of the island. Meanwhile we have been observing abundant wildlife, in particular bull elephant seals looking after their girls, while younger males constantly search for a chance to get some girls of their own.

'Northanger' Update - 22 October 2005

Last night 'Northanger' came in to a very windy Elsehul to find the lads camped on a crowded beach. Anchor watch was organised for what could have been a long and anxious night, but thank goodness the strong southerly wind eased around midnight and

Freezing paddling conditions - icicles on the camera



concerns about dragging on the anchor were alleviated, allowing us to get a good night's sleep. This morning we resupplied the kayakers with another 10 days food for their push around the North Eastern tip of South Georgia and down the exposed south coast.

They were in excellent spirits and feeling strong and confident, although they did complain a little about the cold conditions, certainly significantly colder than anything encountered on their 2001 Antarctic Peninsula Expedition.

They left Elsehul today with a very favourable forecast for the next 2 days at least, and were sighted some hours later from Undine Harbour away off in the distance, having rounded the north-eastern headland through Bird Sound in good time and heading south east.

Tomorrow 'Northanger' will also venture round the corner to attempt its own circumnavigation of South Georgia, something rarely tried in a small sailboat. Good anchorages are few and far between, and only offer safety if the winds aren't from the southerly quarter, a big ask at this latitude.

UPDATE 10 - 25 October 2005

Holmestrand Bay.

54° 14' S - 37° 15' W

For the last two days we have battled bitterly cold south-west headwinds from our camp at Coal Cove in Undine Harbour to our current position at Holmestrand Bay. After leaving Coal Cove the 26 km crossing of Ice Fjord was as the name suggests - icy. Every paddle stroke was an effort as we muscled the kayaks through the breaking waves and the wind sent spray crashing over our heads. In the sub-zero temperatures our jackets and kayaks quickly became encased in ice, fingers and noses turned numb. We felt worse for wear as we paddled into the protection of Elephant Cove - an amazing amphitheatre of ice cliffs and buttresses and home to nesting gentoo penguins. The temperature was minus 4° Celsius and I'm sure three wet, shivering figures fumbling with their tent looked a pitiful sight to the wallowing elephant seals.

Yesterday we made our second major

crossing passing King Haakon Bay - where Shackleton landed after his historic boat journey escape from Antarctica. In a relentless freezing SW wind the miles were hard won, made more challenging by the maelstrom of confused waves off Cape Nunez. As we rounded the point the full south-west coast revealed itself - a dark and foreboding proposition. The last challenge to our 10 hour day was landing at Holmestrand with icebergs and thick brash blocking the beach.

We're paying the price of travelling this spectacular coast, with aching arms, backs and frost nipped toes. The temperature hasn't risen above zero degrees Celsius in the last three days and with the wind chill it's frighteningly cold.

Despite the trials it's good to know that somethings don't change - Graham continues to amaze Jonesy and Marcus at his ability to lose large objects in a small tent, Jonesy has, of course, already broken Marcus's kayak and Marcus likes to pretend his breakfast cooking duties don't exist.

We're poised for a crux leg of our journey - the long, exposed coast to Ducloz Head.

UPDATE 11 - 27 October 2005

Ducloz Head. 54° 30.5' S - 36° 37' W
Strong wind from the south pinned us down for another day. On the 26th we left Hammerstrand Bay with trepidation. This was one of the crux sections down to Ducloz Head - 56 kilometres of some of the most exposed and remote coastline on the planet.

Slowly we paddled down the coast where a heaving swell created huge haystacks of whitewater over reefs. The shoreline began as large glaciers slithering into the sea and soon became enormous black cliffs veined with ice. It was as though a range of jagged peaks had been scalped at their steepest and sunk into a wild seascape. The workload increased with visibility reduced to just few hundred meters. We followed a compass bearing through a maze of brash ice leads with Cape Darnley and its booming ice cliffs on our left.

It was a dramatic day and a highlight as we crossed the half way mark, exhausted, sore, but with great satisfaction.

Diaz Cove. 54° 44.5' S - 36° 18' W

Another 35 kilometres today has us poised at Diaz cove after wind halted progress south. The large tabular bergs that lie off the coast are a constant reminder of how close we are to Antarctica, as is the cold. The transition from our dry suits to our fleece and down is a race against lost circulation and inevitably leaves us with aching fingers and numb toes.

The cold is the price for being in South Georgia so early in the season. This was essential to avoid the staggering numbers of aggressive fur seals, which would make landing impossible and will arrive very soon. It hard enough as it is to find a flat spot that hasn't already been claimed by the wildlife.

UPDATE 12 - 29 October 2005

Williams Harbour.

54° 50.5' S - 36° 0' W

If fortune favours the bold, we fully deserve our success on the south-west coast and the reward of travelling this spectacular coastline in such an intimate manner. Yesterday around noon we rounded Cape Disappointment and in a reversal to its name we were ecstatic.

A south-west swell was kicking up a very confused chop and backlash from the cliffs and we were tossed around like little corks in the sea. It has taken us 7 days and 201 kilometres of anxious paddling through brash ice, on compass bearings in the mist and racing the wind shifts to get to the southern end of the island.

The final 20 kilometres offered no respite and anticipated landings failed to materialise. There was no choice but to round the cape.

A weight has been lifted off our sore shoulders and the mood in noticeably lighter in the tent, but it still doesn't drown out the 3 unwashed bodies, which have been wet, scared and sweating for 2 weeks now.

We had an approaching south-west-erly as we rounded the cape and immediately the wind and swell became our friend as we galloped east with 20 knots of wind and large waves to surf. We were like little kids on a joyride as we surfed all the way to Drygalski Fiord and slogged back into the wind to make camp at Williams Harbour.

We know never to count your albatross eggs in South Georgia before they hatch and there is still a lot of South Georgia to come. We now have to battle the infamous katabatic winds of Royal and St Andrews bays in the next couple of days.

UPDATE 13 - 30 October 2005

Gold Harbour. 54° 37' S - 35° 56' W
From our cramped and wet harbour, we crossed the majestic Drygalski Fiord through Cooper Sound and made the final 90 degree turn. Soaking up wonderful sunshine we moved 20 kilometres further north and into Gold Harbour.

We knew something was up when two miles off shore we could hear roars, yelps and squawks. As we closed in on the mile long beach we realised the place was teeming with wildlife. Elephant seals filled the beach and penguins the hillside beyond. It took two passes of the beach to find a patch big enough for the tent.

With a huge hang glacier as a backdrop, we spent the day marvelling at the fighting bull elephant seals, the busy king penguins and the scavenging giant petrels.

Ocean Harbour.

54° 20' S - 35° 16' W

South Georgia has a way of keeping you on your toes.

Passing through a narrow reef, a huge wave caught the back of Jonesy's boat. It steepened and steepened to the extent we thought he was going to pitch pole. Fortunately he avoided a full somersault but needed to Eskimo roll to right his kayak.

The rewards here are all the more satisfying for having put in the work. This evening as we crossed Hounds

Bay we had a stunning view through to Mt Paget rising over 9000 feet straight out of the sea. With icebergs to our right and the South Georgia mountain chain on our left, it is hard to imagine a more mind blowing kayak journey.

We are camped at Ocean Harbour and are 25 kilometres away from creating history with the first sea kayak circumnavigation of South Georgia. However with 35 knot NW winds forecast, the Island may have a sting in its tail yet.

14 - 02 November 2005

GRYTVIKEN & A WORLD FIRST!

We've done it! Oct 31 4.30pm - The Adventure Philosophy team secured another well earned place in Antarctic and South Georgian history by completing the first ever circumnavigation of South Georgia by sea kayak.

An extraordinary adventure! On our final leg we were treated to the rare sort of day South Georgia is capable of conjuring up, a window of clear skies and little or no wind. We kayaked out of Ocean Harbour past the rusting hulk of the whaling ship Barnard and up the coast to take lunch at another abandoned whaling station Godthul on a beach strewn with bleached bones. Rounding the final headland we reunited with the Northanger which escorted us across Cumberland Bay, with clear views of the Allardyce Range, and its many unclimbed peaks.

At our journey's end, the BAS Station at King Edward Point, the dozen or so locals had gathered on the beach and turned on a generous celebration, with homemade banners, champagne, NZ flag and Kiwi national anthem by saxophone carrying across the water to us as we arrived. It was a wonderful welcome and we celebrated into the night with them enjoying their warmth and hospitality.

Today we visited the gravesite of Sir Ernest Shackleton, toasting him and the spirit of adventure.

It is not often we succeed at a long held dream and we have a great sense of reward at present. Despite the grim

cold, the sometimes bleakness, and the frequent times of anguish, South Georgia balanced our journey with stunning views of an uncommon place, with extraordinary wildlife encounters, and we have had an adventure experience that we will hold dear forever.

Over the next few days we will have the time to have a closer look at some of the highlights of South Georgia. More skiing, hiking and wildlife encounters are planned before we sail for The Falklands.

It has been an absolutely fantastic journey to date and would never have happened without the shared vision, goal and spirit of our sponsors and supporters. Our equipment has been tested to the limit and we know we have the best there is to offer. We will continue with updates reflecting on our journey and posting images on the website as we have yet to complete our film work in South Georgia.

UPDATE 15 - 08 November 2005

Over the last few days we have experienced more of the conditions that will ensure this island remains forever wild. Whenever the wind swings to a southern quarter the sky fills with snow, ice forms on the yacht's rigging and the decks turn into a skating rink.

We've been humbled by the praise people from around the world, who know South Georgia, have given our kayak circumnavigation. We are extremely proud as Kiwis to have completed a world first expedition in an environment as extreme as the world has to offer. We've realised how incredibly lucky we are to have travelled parts of this island so infrequently seen. Only early sealers and a handful of yachts have experienced the dark south-west coast. To have absorbed the detail of its sheer cliffs, dangerous shoals, and seething breakers is a privilege, borne of our own audacity, skills and chance with the weather. We can't help but feel we've slipped through a chink in South Georgia's armour.

We've been holed up in Ocean Harbour and Cobblers Cove, two indentations on the east coast, riding out snow storms and powerful wind gusts.

During a break we climbed overland to St. Andrews Bay. This must be one of the most densely populated regions in the Southern hemisphere. There is hardly a spare patch of sand on the two mile beach, with over 8000 elephant seals and 150,000 pairs of king penguins in residence.

The cow elephant seals lie like giant slugs feeding their young while the bulls challenge or are being challenged for rights to the harem. Savaging skuas and giant petrels complete the hubbub of life's savagery and beauty in South Georgia.

We are enjoying the company, food and warmth of the team on the 'Northanger' and continuing to capture footage for our documentary and shoot photos for presentations. Soon we must batten down the hatches for our voyage home - but there are still a few sights to be seen.

UPDATE 16 - 13 November 2005

South Georgia continues to captivate and amaze. We were lucky enough to get a weather break and walk over Shackleton Gap from Possession Bay to King Haakon Bay and Peggoty Bluff - the historic site where Shackleton landed the James Caird and prepared for the walk overland to the whaling station at Stromness.

It was a fabulous day and we had superb views standing astride the island looking west to the mouth of King Haakon Bay where we had battled SW head winds and driving snow in our kayaks two weeks before, and to the east Possession Bay where Cook first landed in South Georgia and claimed it for the England in 1775.

We basked in sunshine at Peggoty Bluff and pondered what it must have felt like for Shackleton, Worsley and Crean to have made landfall and face the daunting, unexplored interior in order to raise the alarm to rescue his men. It was obvious, as we wandered back across the island in late after-

noon sun - and Kevin carved some beautiful turns on his skis all the way down to the ocean - that times have changed somewhat.

Over the last day we have been ready to leave but weather has us pinned down. We shared an anchorage with another Kiwi yacht - Evohe - and have considered a NZ takeover as there are more Kiwi's on the island at the moment than any other nationality. Evohe's crew are a wonderful team and the Kiwi spirit of adventure seems to go hand in hand with what South Georgia has to offer. It has been fun catching up with them. We plan to push off for Stanley as soon as the current storm abates.

UPDATE 17 - 16 November 2005

Well, we have finally left the chilly shores of South Georgia and are headed for the ocean.

The worst of the storm has passed and we hope to get a few days sailing before the next system hits us.

The British team who are attempting the second circumnavigation are at sea as you read this. They have a big job ahead of them as winter has not left South Georgia yet, but the fur seals have arrived in hundreds of thousands.

We found it difficult even getting a Zodiac to the beach in the last week, let alone having to get cramped legs out of a sea kayak in the cold and not get attacked by these testosterone pumped bulls who are setting up their territories.

UPDATE 18 - 23 November 2005

We have been sailing now for six days en-route to the Falklands. Ample opportunity to reflect on our time at South Georgia, reminisce about what was gained and ponder what it all means. Outwardly we are, on the whole, unchanged (now that we have shaved four weeks growth from our faces). Inwardly, we feel a whole lot richer for the experience. Inwardly we cannot be unchanged by such a journey.

To have travelled around the island as we have has been a great challenge and a rare privilege. Certainly we have witnessed many things we will cherish forever; we've marvelled at the extraordinary extravagance of wildlife on the beaches we camped on and kayaked along, one outlandish scene of bustling, abundance after another, with the air filled with shed feathers, a cacophony of squawks and grunts, and the musty smell of life and death.

We will forever remember the wildness of the west coast. A brooding icy realm of verglassed rock and cold as I've never known slowly encasing us and our kayaks in an icy armour.

At times we've been awestruck by our surroundings, we've felt the thrill of the chase and won the quiet reward of satisfaction at each day's end in the company of good friends. It was after all a journey of friends who pursued a dream.

Graham Charles surrounded by wildlife on South Georgia



To be the first is coveted by adventurers. If a thing has been done before we are no longer exploring what is possible, only if it is possible for us. The greater the unknown, the greater the challenge and the greater the reward. The experiences we had at South Georgia tasted all the better for the long effort, the anticipation, and for the fact that we shared the experience with as many people along the way as we could, albeit virtually.

The circumnavigation itself was a means, not the end. It was a means to discover South Georgia in a way that few others will have the good fortune to. When one must camp ashore each night and compete for space on the beach, the island is experienced in a way not possible from the comfortable berth of a yacht or cruise boat. The smell of guano, the incessant sound of life, and the pulse of the sea beating on the beach, leave a watermark on the soul. In the end our journey was about seeing and feeling and harbouring what we now have inside us, and sharing some of the awe and wonder and hopefully inspiration along the way.

None of the above would have been possible without the generous support of our wives and partners, and a large number of loyal friends and sponsors to whom we are greatly indebted.

We are currently 200 nautical miles from Port Stanley with Northanger hove-to in big seas. Outside is a wild seascape of tumbled water and airborne spume, and we have just sighted an iceberg and have reports of much more ice in the area. The adventure is certainly not over for us just yet. Images will be easier for us to share once we are back in NZ.

UPDATE 19 - 28 November 2005

After the depressing experience of watching the odometer going backwards as we hove to during a storm - the winds finally changed in our favour.

We slowly clawed back the miles and after eight days at sea finally caught our first glimpse of Stanley's wonderful harbour lights. We dropped the anchor for the last time early Thursday morning and popped the champagne to celebrate our safe arrival and Marcus' 40th birthday.

We have spent the last two days organising our equipment, giving interviews for the Stanley radio station and enjoying the warm hospitality of the Falkland Islanders. A special thank you to Debbie Summers and Sullivan Shipping for their help and support.

The Team.
www.adventurephilosophy.com

HISTORY

'Who Were the Finnmen?' by David Fergus

In his book *Description Of the Isles Of Orkney*, the Rev. James Wallace, minister of Kirkwall from 1672 to 1688, relates:

'Sometime in Orkney are seen these men which are called Finnmen. In the year 1682 one was seen, sometime sailing, sometime rowing, up and down in his little boat at the south end of the island of Eday, and most of the people of the isle flocked to see him and they adventured to put out a boat with men to see if they could apprehend him. He presently fled away most swiftly, and in the year 1684 another was seen from Westray.'

Finnmen - and Finnwomen - played a prominent part in the folklore of the northern islands. They were reputed to be human beings who could, by magic, take on the form of a seal - or perhaps it would be equally true to say that they were thought to be seals who had the magic power to transform themselves into human beings. There are tales of Shetlanders who married Finnwomen and lived happily enough with them until the day when the Finnwoman found her seal skin (hidden by her husband), put it on and escaped back to sea. This old legend has been used in modern times by Eric Linklater in the title tale of his excellent book *Sealskin Trousers and Other Stories*.

The belief in the islands was that the Finn people came from "across the water," in Scandinavia. Certainly the Norwegian word for a Lapp is Finn, and the Lappish (or Sami) people were widely believed to have strange magical powers. The Rev. James Wallace, however, had a different theory about their place of origin. "These Finnmen," he wrote, "seem to be some of these people that dwell about the Fretum Davis." In other words, they came from the Davis Straits, off Greenland, and were therefore Eskimos.

Wallace's son confirmed this theory in a note he added to his father's book: "I must acknowledge it seems a little

Massive seas breaking against the coast of South Georgia



accountable how these Finnmen should come on this coast, but they must probably be driven by storms from home, and cannot tell, when they are anyhow to make their way home again; they have this advantage, that be the Seas ever so boisterous, their boats being made of Fish Skins, are so contrived that he can never sink, but is like a Seagull swimming on the top of the water. His shirt he has so fastened to the Boat, that no water can come into his Boat to do him damage, except when he pleases to untye it."

Apart from the detail about the fish skins, this is an accurate description of an Eskimo kayak.

In A Brief Description of Orkney, Zetland, etc. published in 1701, the Rev. Brand thought that the mysterious visitors came from Finland:

'There are frequently Finnmen seen here upon the coasts, as one about a year ago on Stronsa, and another within these few months on Westra, a gentleman with many others in the Isle looking on him nigh to the shore, but when any endeavour to apprehend them they flee away most swiftly; Which is very strange, that one man sitting in his little Boat, should come some hundred of Leagues, from their own Coasts, as they reckon Finland to be from Orkney; it may be thought wonderful how they live all that time, and are able to keep the Sea so long. His Boat is made of Seal-skins, or some kind of leather, he also hath a coat of leather upon him, and lie sitteth in the middle of his Boat with a little Oar in his hand, Fishing with his Lines: And when in a storm he seeth the high surge of a wave Approaching, he hath a way of sinking his Boat, till the wave pass over, lest thereby he should be overturned. The Fishers here observe that these Fin-men or Finland-men, by their coming drive away the Fishes front the coasts. One of their Boats is kept as a Rarity in the Physicians Hall at Edinburgh.'

Although Brand's reference to 'frequent' visits by Finnmen is an exaggeration, it seems that at least four men in little boats appeared off the

Orkney Islands during the last 20 years of the 17th century. Nor were they the first. As early as 1631 a kayak was found in the North Sea with a dead Eskimo in it. It was taken to Hull where the kayak is still preserved.

Two of the Orkney kayaks were captured, but there is no record of the fate of their occupants. One of the craft was kept as a trophy in the kirk of Burray. The other was acquired by Sir Andrew Balfour, president of the Physicians' College in Edinburgh. On his death lit 1694 the College having "noe convenient place to keep it," presented it to Edinburgh University which already had "the oars of the boat and the Shirt of the barbarous man that was in the Boat."

The University's collection of curiosities was presented in 1865 to the Edinburgh Museum of Science and Art, but by that time no one could be sure which of the two kayaks in their collection was the one captured in Orkney. It may be that it had been destroyed, but there is a very good chance that it is one of the four now possessed by the Royal Museum in Chambers Street, Edinburgh.

In 1728 a kayak appeared off Aberdeen, and according to the Rev. Mr Gastrell who kept a diary of his tour in Scotland it "was driven into the Don with a man in it who was all over hairy and spoke a language which no person here could interpret. He lived but three days although all possible care was taken to recover 'him.'" One account describes him as an "Indian man", but in those days anyone who was obviously non-European was called either an Indian or a blackamoor.

His kayak is now preserved in Marischal College, Aberdeen, where it was on exhibition in November 1987. It has been examined in great detail and is a typical Eskimo kayak, 17' 9" long, weighing 34 lb., and consisting of four seal skins sewn over a framework of Scots pine.

There are no Scots pines in Greenland - or any other trees - but driftwood from Siberia floats down its rivers

into the Arctic Ocean, down the east coast and up the west coast of Greenland.

The evidence of the Aberdeen kayak confirms that the Finnmen who visited Orkney and Aberdeen were Greenlanders, but this gives rise to an even more puzzling question - how did the Eskimos make the journey from West Greenland to Northern Scotland?

Cape Farewell, the southern tip of Greenland, is over 1100 miles from Orkney, and a journey of this length, even under favourable conditions of wind and weather, would have taken many days. It would have been impossible to carry enough food and water for the journey, and modern research shows that a kayak becomes waterlogged if it is in the water for more than 48 hours. They are simply not built for long sea voyages.

Could the journey have been made in stages? The objections to this theory are impressive.

From Greenland to Iceland is around 200 miles; from Iceland to the Faeroes between 300 and 400 miles; and from the Faeroes to Orkney about 200 miles. Now, if the Eskimos made the journey in stages this presupposes that they knew the route beforehand; that they knew where they could put ashore for fresh supplies of food and water; that they must have been able to stay on course in the open sea with no navigational aids; and that they were able to row at a steady 7mph; good going, even for a very fit Eskimo (an expert Greenlander has been known to cover 80 miles in a day).

Another difficulty is that the North Atlantic Drift - the tail end of the Gulf Stream - would have been against the kayaker all the way, pushing towards the north-east while his course was towards the south-east. Finally, why on earth would any Eskimo want to set out on such a perilous journey across the North Atlantic, and why, after having completed the journey, did all the Orkney kayakers make no attempt to land, but 'flee away most swiftly'?

In the face of all the difficulties listed we must assume that no Eskimo made the long voyage from Greenland to Scotland, yet they reached Orkney, Aberdeen, the North Sea and also The Netherlands, where the kayaks of Eskimo voyagers are preserved at Hoorn and Zierikzee.

The problem of the Greenlanders has been examined by experts in Denmark and the Netherlands, and a possible explanation has been suggested.

Greenland was first discovered and settled by the Norsemen around the end of the 10th century. Gradually contact between Greenland and Europe was lost, as fewer and fewer ships made the dangerous voyage across the North Atlantic. In time the island and its inhabitants were forgotten by the rest of the world, and when it was rediscovered by the Danes over 600 years later, the Norse colony had died out and the island was inhabited by Eskimos. Whaling in Greenland waters began around the end of the 16th century - whalers from Hull were operating in 1598 and by the middle of the 17th century ports in Scotland, England, Denmark and the Netherlands were all regularly engaged in 'fishing for the whale'.

A typical cargo brought back to Bo'ness by the whaler Home Castle was 355 casks of blubber, 10 tons of whale fins, 12 jaw bones (worth £3) and 10 whale tails. However, other whalers brought human cargo - Eskimos who had been either kidnapped or inveigled into coming aboard. These unfortunate Eskimos, often with their kayaks and other artefacts, were put on show in European ports as curiosities. In an Amsterdam drinking-place, the Blauwjan, for instance, a man from Greenland was one of the showpieces, along with other exotic exhibits.

In the United Kingdom there are no fewer than 30 Eskimo kayaks in the possession of museums and other institutions in ten towns, all of which, with one exception, are on the East coast. The history of these kayaks is not known, and it seems probable that

several of them were brought back as trophies. In the Netherlands there are preserved eight kayaks in seaports that were engaged in the early days of the Greenland whaling.

A Danish writer, Mikkelsen, has suggested that it is possible that the Finnmen seen off Orkney, the 'Indian' at Aberdeen, and the dead Eskimo found in the North Sea, had all escaped from whalers taking them back to Europe. It is difficult to see how an Eskimo could get himself and his kayak overboard without the help of the crew, but in The Netherlands, at least, there were strict laws against kidnapping or molesting the natives of Greenland.

As they neared Europe the kidnapers may have had second thoughts about their captured Eskimo, and decided to get rid of the evidence by putting their captive and his boat overboard. Or perhaps, just as children often take pity on a captured bird or rabbit by giving it its liberty, so we can imagine Dutch or Scots whalers feeling a twinge of remorse when they saw their poor Eskimo pining in the hold, arid when they made their first landfall Orkney - they put him overboard with his kayak, hoping he'd find his way home. The fact that the Finnmen off Orkney made no attempt to come ashore could be explained by their fear of recapture.

The question of these far-travelled Greenlanders was most recently examined by the Dutch anthropologist, Gert Nooter, whose findings were published in 1971 by the Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkenden in a monography *Old Kayaks in the Netherlands*. He points out that the museum at Hoorn possesses not only a kayak, but also the skin of its unfortunate occupant, who was found dead in it off the Dutch coast, 400 miles farther south than the 'Indian Man' who reached Aberdeen. He therefore agrees with Mikkelsen's theory that the "Finnmen" were Greenlanders who had escaped or had been jettisoned from ships returning to Europe.

The theory may seem far-fetched, but is there a better one?

BOOK REVIEW

Title: 'A Speck on the Sea'

Subtitle: 'Epic Voyages in the Most Improbable Vessels'

Author: Longyard, William H.

Published: 2005

Publisher: McGraw-Hill USA

ISBN: 0-07-144029-1

Content: Softcover, 375pp, black & white photos, bibliography, index

Size: 150 x 230mm

Price: US\$ 13.95)

Availability: Dymocks

Reviewed: Kerry Howe

At one level this book is a fascinating account of epic trans-oceanic sea voyages in tiny, and often bizarre craft sailed by presumably bizarre people. Vessels range from little more than extended lifejackets, to rubber rafts, to kayaks, to rowing boats, to yachts that are 5 feet long... There seems no end to the types of 'improbable vessels', nor to the dreadful privations and misfortunes of those who cross oceans on them. So it is a study of weird craft and not normal behaviour.

At another level, these accounts trace a cultural history of sea going. Until the nineteenth century, small boat sailing was usually due to accident, necessity and survival (such as Bligh). Then humans discovered something called recreational sailing, and, for kayakers, the key mid-nineteenth century figure was John 'Rob Roy' MacGregor. His 1866 book, *A Thousand Miles in the "Rob Roy" Canoe on the Rivers and Lakes of Europe* began a tradition of 'pleasure' sailing and then writing about it that continues to this day.

During the later nineteenth and throughout the twentieth century people took to the seas in rapidly increasing numbers and in ever more remarkable small craft, for reasons of national pride, international rivalry, curiosity, daring, or record setting. It was all about doing it as the first, the smallest, the slowest, the fastest, the farthest, or the most dangerous. It was about being the most perverse, the most pig-headed, or the downright craziest. By the 1990s so many people

crossed the world's oceans in pint size tubs that the author simply has to revert to lists of voyagers rather than try to write about them.

At a third level, the book unwittingly (because the author never really considers this matter) explains why humans behave so differently from other species and why we have moved on from the rift valleys and jungles of our African birthplace – the human capacity for curiosity, for daring, for challenging, for struggling against the odds, for competitiveness, for apparent stupidity, and for technical innovation.

There are hundreds of fascinating voyages depicted in this book. The one voyage that I must mention was by airline pilot Hugo Vihlen who sailed a five foot, four inch 'yacht' across the Atlantic in 1993. Now that's a third of the length of my sea kayak!

The book can be sometimes irritating with its choice of voyagers and its Anglo-American focus.

There's little mention of sea kayak voyages as such, though Ed Gillet's parafoil powered sea kayak voyage to Hawaii from California is there, and right at the end our own Paul Caffyn is mentioned as 'circumnavigating' Europe (no mean feat!), and there are two sentences on his Australia circumnavigation. 'Caffyn', however, is omitted from the index.

Perhaps the book's greatest omission is that author starts his account in 63AD. He should know that the greatest small boat voyages ever were undertaken from about 4,000 – 2,000 years ago by ancestral Polynesians who crisscrossed the Pacific Ocean from Southeast Asia to the Americas, and discovered virtually every island in the ocean - west, east, north and south.

Kerry Howe

HUMOUR

Xmas Party

Jack wakes up with a huge hangover after attending his company's Christmas party. Jack is not normally a drinker, but the drinks didn't taste like alcohol at all. He didn't even remember how he got home from the party. As bad as he was feeling, he wondered if he did something wrong. Jack had to force himself to open his eyes, and the first thing he sees is a couple of aspirins next to a glass of water on the side table.

And, next to them, a single red rose!

Jack sits up and sees his clothing in front of him, all clean and pressed. He looks around the room and sees that it is in perfect order, spotlessly clean. So is the rest of the house. He takes the aspirins, cringes when he sees a huge black eye staring back at him in the bathroom mirror.

Then he notices a note hanging on the corner of the mirror written in red with little hearts on it and a kiss mark from his wife in lipstick!: 'Honey, breakfast is on the stove, I left early to go get groceries to make you your favorite dinner tonight. I love you, darling! Love, Jillian.'

He stumbles to the kitchen and sure enough, there is hot breakfast, steaming hot coffee and the morning newspaper. His son is also at the table, eating. Jack asks, "Son... what happened last night?"

"Well, you came home after 3am, drunk and out of your mind. You fell over the coffee table and broke it, and then you puked in the hallway, and got that black eye when you ran into the door."

Confused he asked his son, "So, why is everything in such perfect order, so clean, I have a rose, and breakfast is on the table waiting for me?"

His son replies, "Oh THAT!... Mom

dragged you to the bedroom, and when she tried to take your pants off, you screamed, "Leave me alone, lady, I'm married!"

Broken Coffee Table: \$39.99

Hot Breakfast: \$4.20

Two Aspirins: 0.38¢

Saying the right thing, at the right time . . . PRICELESS!

A Golf Story?

At dawn the telephone rings.

"Hello, Senor Lucky? This is Ernesto the caretaker at your country house."

"Ah yes, Ernesto. What can I do for you? Is there a problem?"

"Um, I am just calling to advise you, Senor, that your parrot died."

"My parrot? Dead? The one that won the International competition?"

"Si, Senor, that's the one."

"Damn! That's a pity! I spent a small fortune on that bird. "What did he die from?"

"From eating rotten meat, Senor."

"Rotten meat? Who the hell fed him rotten meat?"

"Nobody, Senor. He ate the meat of the dead horse."

"Dead horse? What dead horse?"

"The thoroughbred, Senor Lucky. He died from all that work pulling the water cart."

"Are you insane? What water cart?"

"The one we used to put out the fire, Senor."

"Good Lord! What fire are you talking about, man?"

"The one at your house, Senor! A candle fell and the curtains caught on fire."

"What the.....! But there's electricity at the house! What was the candle for?"

"For the funeral, Senor."

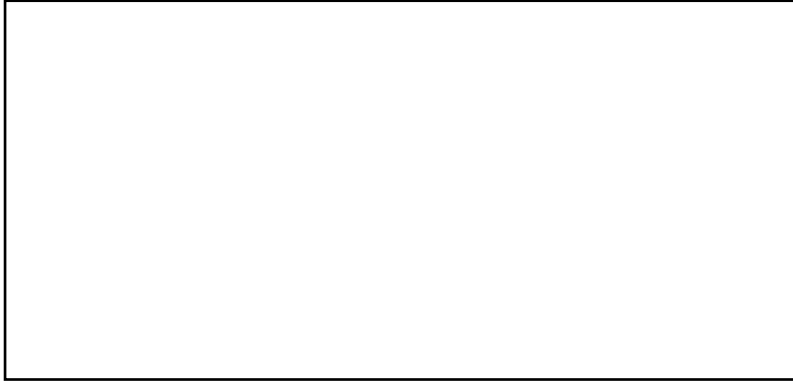
"WHAT BLOODY FUNERAL?!"

"Your wife's, Senor..She showed up one night out of the blue and I thought she was a thief, so I hit her with your new Tiger Woods Nike Driver."

SILENCE.....

"Ernesto if you broke that driver, you're in deep dog doo!"

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- a subscription due notice and up to two reminders are sent out with the newsletters between June and October
- if a membership renewal is not received by 30 September, membership lapses
- new members who join between 1 June and 31 July automatically get their membership credited to the following year, receiving a 14 month membership
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