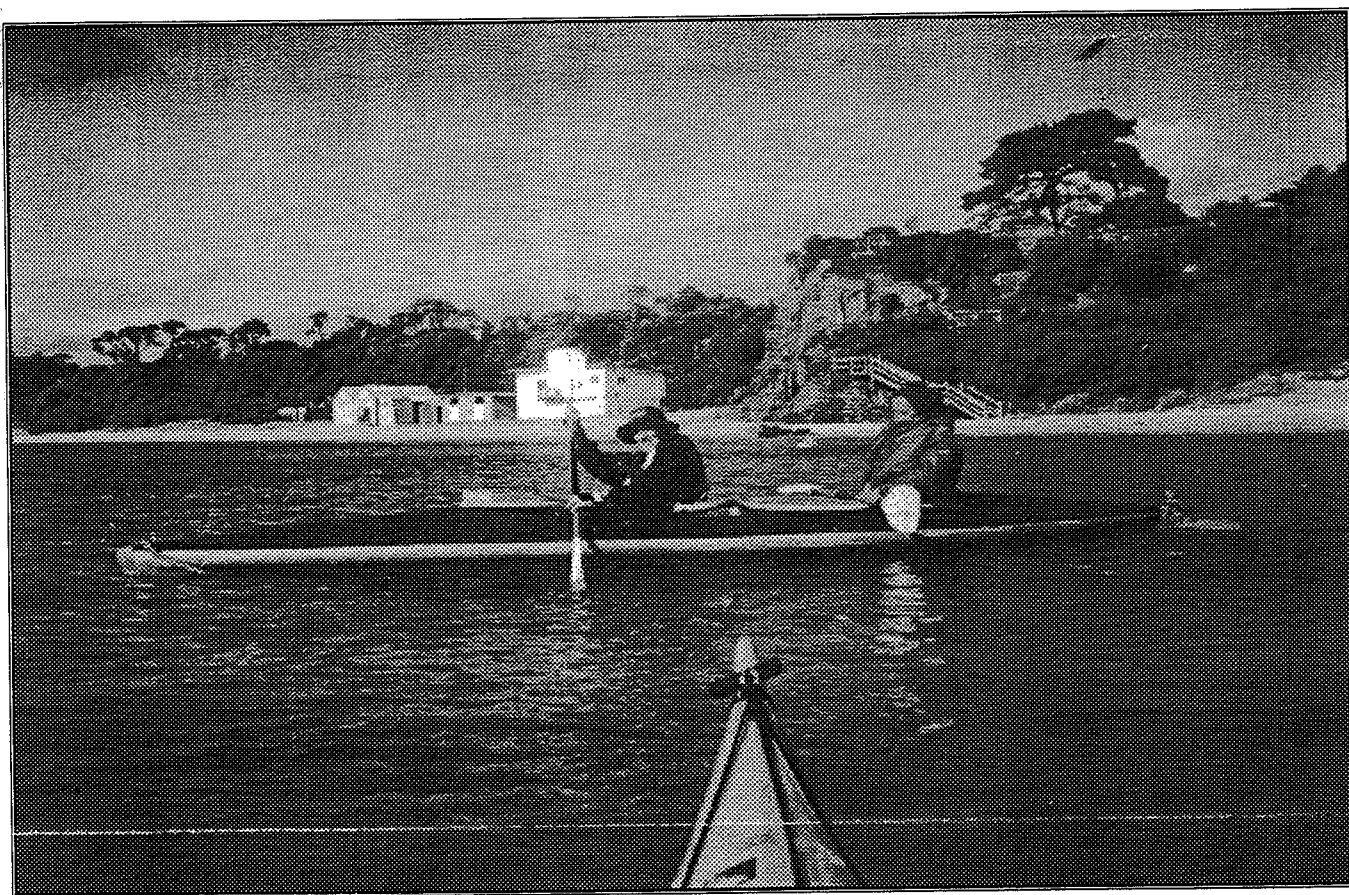


# **SEATREK**

**THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE VICTORIAN SEA KAYAK CLUB  
INC. NO A17985B**

***SUMMER/AUTUMN 2000 ISSUE 37***



Tina & Wolf paddling a Klepper double

## **IN THIS ISSUE**

***TRIP REPORTS FROM WILSONS PROM, BAY CROSSINGS, TASMANIA AND MORE***

***ESKIMO ROLLING TIPS***

**PADDLE AGENDA**

**INFO ON THE FORMATION OF WAVES**

**UPDATED WAIVER AND CODE OF PRACTICE**

# **SEATREK**

**The official newsletter of the Victorian Sea Kayak Club  
Inc. No A17985B**

*Summer/Autumn 2000 Issue 37*

**PRESIDENT**

**Julian Smith 97769583H**

**VICE PRESIDENT**

**Peter Provis 97871916H**

**SECRETARY/TRESURER/PUBLIC OFFICER**

**Bill Robinson 97874704H**

**TRIP/TECHNICAL ADVISER OFFICER**

**Ray Musgrave 03 59752414H**

**EQUIPMENT OFFICER**

**Bill Robinson 97874704H**

**EDITOR**

**Tina Rowley 97769583H**

**VSKC**

**P.O. BOX 426  
SEAFORD 3198**

Send articles to;  
46 Nabilla Ave  
Seaford 3198  
email: [tina@bluep.com](mailto:tina@bluep.com)

If sending 3 1/2" floppy disk  
please have it formatted for pc  
in word or Quark.

**DEADLINE FOR NEXT  
ISSUE:  
END OF APRIL**

**WANTED**

IF YOU HAVE ANY GOOD PICS FOR THE FRONT PAGE OF THE NEWSLETTER PLEASE  
SEND TO TINA (WILL RETURN) IF YOU HAVE ANY ARTICLES FOR THE NEXT EDITION  
OF SEATREK PLEASE SEND BEFORE THE END OF APRIL.

I HOPE PEOPLE WILL ALSO SEND PADDLING DATES FOR THERE PROPOSED TRIPS.  
We have over 150 members and I know a lot paddle whether it be private or on a club trip,  
some may feel a little shy or sheepish but we would like to hear some paddling stories or  
thoughts from you the member, just send it to

**Tina via mail at 46 Nabilla Ave Seaford. Vic.3198 or email [tina@bluep.com](mailto:tina@bluep.com)  
(If on disk done on word, or Quark is good.)**

## **FROM THE SECRETARY'S DESK**

Since the last edition of Seatrek there has been a great deal of activity in the Club both on and off the water, and I propose to list a few of these---

### **Waiver and Code of Practice**

There are more details elsewhere in this edition, but the Committee has put a lot of work in these important issues and now that we have completed the task we look forward to concentrating our efforts on the joys of paddling.

### **Murray Marathon**

In late December I completed my 10th consecutive Murray Marathon and was delighted to have the following VSKC members also competing----Peter Bell, Peter Beckman, Tina Rowley, Craig Thomson and Matt O'Kane. We all finished up with a stack of medals and seemed to enjoy the challenge in the unseasonable cold and at times wet weather. Peter Bell put on a star performance with his first attempt at the big one and even though I have the experience and a fast boat, I was sitting behind him most of the way. I forecast a most promising marathon future for Peter in his Mirage 580 "The Spirit of Dawn"

Craig Thomson and Matt O'Kane put their heavy Spectrums to one side and started building a wooden Chesapeake Double in July, soon after our boatbuilding symposium. They worked long and hard on the project and it is rumoured that they did not go to bed on Christmas night in order to finish it in time for the start on December 27<sup>th</sup>. Eventually it was launched 10 minutes before the start--sea trials consisted of paddling to the start and the boys just breezed their way down the river, and their boat the "Big Woody" has already become a bit of a legend. We were all delighted when Craig received the prestigious Mark Thornthwaite award for the individual who who best embodied the spirit of the Marathon.

Forward Notice---The Echuca 50 km race is held each year in late October/early November and it is quite within the capabilities of most of us in the VSKC. In 1999 we had a good turn up and had a very pleasant overnight camp afterwards at Barmah and drove home again on the Sunday---We are planning to have quite a large party competing in 2000, so start preparing, as it is a lot of fun. Any queries---discuss it with any of the Committee members, as we have all been involved.

### **Canadian Bay Paddles**

The monthly Club meeting and paddle at Canadian Bay is working well with a good turnout, and the ability to learn and practise various skills. With the warmer weather we have had quite a few sessions of rolling and rescue practice which all attending felt was worthwhile.

We make sure that people new to the sport are catered for and make sure that there is a group that is suited to their needs

#### **Dates**

- Sunday February 20th
- Sunday March 26<sup>th</sup>
- Sunday April 16<sup>th</sup>

- Sunday May 21<sup>st</sup>
- Sunday June 18<sup>th</sup>

#### Details

Melway 101 D10. Meet at Canadian Bay Club, at the end of Canadian Bay Rd, Mount Eliza at 9.00 am, with the paddle starting at 10.00 am. Make sure you have adequate clothing, sunscreen, food and water. Include a towel and change of clothes.

#### Bass Strait Crossing

A most exciting piece of news is that Ian Dunn, Peter Provis, Tina Rowley and Julian Smith are preparing for a Bass Strait crossing in late February. I have been lucky enough to share a few of their training paddles with them, and I believe that they are extremely well prepared—four extremely fit paddlers with all the skills and with excellent boats. They plan to leave from Wilson's Promontory and island hop via Hogan, Deal and Flinders islands. They will be carrying the best navigational and communication gear with them, and we hope that if the weather is reasonable that it be a milestone in the history of the VSKC.

#### My Visit to The OSD

Those who attended the AGM will recall what an interesting speaker that Norm Sanders the President of the NSW Sea Kayak was. He is widely known as OSD (or the Old Sea Dog) and is respected throughout the kayaking world for his innovative ideas and inventions.

I was particularly impressed with the Inuit Classic which Norm designed and decided to buy the boat he with him at the AGM, so for the first time in my sea kayaking career I have a boat that I did not build myself. My wife and I drove up to Tuross Heads on the NSW South coast and stayed with Norm and Mona in their beautiful house on the edge of the water. I picked up my new boat from Norm and was lucky enough to be present when he launched the prototype of his longer version of the Inuit which is 17 ft 6 in long and will be known as the Explorer. It is a beautiful kayak to paddle and I predict that we will hear a lot more of them in the future

My new boat is an Inuit Classic—only 15 ft 6 in compared to my 17ft 6 in Patuxent, but a really great kayak. It does not have a rudder, but is very responsive and seems to handle the waves really well. It is the easiest boat that I have encountered for rolling and I believe that it is the type of kayak that could appeal to quite a few of our members. Feel free to have a look or a paddle at one of our Canadian Bay Paddles or the Come and Try Day on Sunday March 19<sup>th</sup>, at Mount Martha.

Norm has a workshop that many of us would dream about, with a great deal of space and overlooking the water. He has a collection of beautiful wooden sea kayaks that he has built—cedar strippers and ply hard chine kayaks, and also several of his various inventions. One that impressed me was his woodchip fired billy that is small enough to fit in to a hatch on the Inuit---I hope to give more details in future editions, provided it is not covered by an OSD patent.

### **Come and Try Day**

Following the success of our Come and Try Day in 1999 we plan to repeat the performance on Sunday March 19<sup>th</sup> on the beach at Mount Martha in front of the Mount Martha Life Saving Club which is just south of the bridge over Balcombe Creek.

We hope to get several commercial operators to attend and request that as many members attend as is possible. It is a chance to try other types of kayak and a great opportunity for those entering the sport to be able to try a variety of craft at the one location

### **!!!GREAT PRODUCT DISCOVERY!!!**

#### **SEA TO SUMMIT DRY BAGS**

Sea To Summit dry bags are light weight bags greatly suited for sea kayakers, these bags are a lot lighter in material than most heavy duty bags which makes this bag easier to store when on a trip where storage is already pushed to it's limits!

These bags have been tested by a few members who are all amazed at how air tight these lightweight bags are. Whats more they come in various sizes ranging from XXS to XXL in a selection of colours and at a reasonable price making them great bags to store small items in up to bigger items.

These bags can be found in most outdoor stores or by contacting direct

**Sea To Summit Pty Ltd**

6 Brown St, East Perth, WA 6004 Ph (08) 9221-6617

Email: [seatosum@iinet.net.au](mailto:seatosum@iinet.net.au)

I can assure you an email gets a very quick response.

### **EDITOR'S NOTE**

The committee occasionally get asked why there seems to be not many paddle trips advertised, the committee feels that they should not be the only members who should make these trip paddle agendas. Being over a hundred and fifty members we feel that contributions should be made outside of the regular trip organisers who run these trips continuously. Even a suggestion of a place to paddle or a weekend away can be arranged if you feel yourself not up to being the organiser. A bit of input from all members would be greatly appreciated.

Even trip reports, handy tips or something you feel should be mentioned will get published as after all this is your magazine and I cannot do it all by myself.

# ESKIMO ROLLING TIPS

Below are some points on the various aspects of rolling that may be of some use to you in a self-analysis of your technique. If you have a friend who is a proficient roller, he/she may wish to add to or delete some of the points here too.

- \* Use a dive mask for repeated practice. You won't do a nose dribble over the dinner table six hours later.
- \* Have frequent breaks from rolling practice. Don't get stale.
- \* Set up. Do it properly. Get this bit wrong (eg. when you are tired) and you can muck up the whole exercise.
- \* Paddle over the side in the screw roll or extended paddle position
- \* Lean well forward
- \* Push paddle forward too for a longer more effective sweep
- \* When upside down, you will need to use your stomach muscles to hold yourself in the setup position. Roll over either way...
- \* Push paddle to the surface. WATCH BLADE ANGLE.
- \* Rear blade must clear the bottom of the hull when upside down.
- \* Paddle Sweep. Watch the angle of the working blade - too steep and it will push water and provide poor support. Too flat and it will be easily pulled down. When you get it right, notice where your rear hand is on the edges of the rear blade.
- \* Sweep paddle in a firm, powerful arc. It needs good motion for support.
- \* Keep the blade up. Do not pull on it too early. Remember that it needs to be moving for support.
- \* Swing the body out with the blade - keep watching it all the way. This may ensure that you keep your head down for the hip-flick / exit.
- \* Looking towards the bottom will also ensure that you keep your head down.
- \* Lean Back. The hip-flick is an important part of the roll.
- \* Practice your hip-flick against a jetty or the side of a pool. You should be able to flick up with minimal force on your hands.
- \* Lean back. The lean back as you rise brings your body closer to the longitudinal axis of your boat. If you do it well, you should not have a problem with your head coming up first.
- \* Try an exaggerated throw-back of your head with the lean back.
- \* The most common errors in rolling are probably:
  - \* Head up first
  - \* Paddle pulled to bottom
  - \* Failure to lean back.

Are any of these your problem?

Once again, if you have to 'muscle up', you have mucked it up.

When you are rolling OK on one side, swap to the other for variety. You will find it quite different, but at least you will not have to wet-exit to get up. Try varying the power put into your roll. You will soon work out just how much is needed for the conditions you are in. It will also save you the embarrassment of 'going around again'.

I wish you competent rolling. David Winkworth  
(Taken from the NSW Sea Kayaking web page) [nswseakayaker.asn.au](http://nswseakayaker.asn.au)

## TRIP REPORTS

**January 8/9th 2000 Distance Paddling- Canadian Bay/Portarlington/Canadian Bay**

**Ian Dunn-Rader X**

**Peter Provis-Selkie**

**Julian Smith-Selkie**

**Tina Rowley -Artic Rader**

**Bill Robinson-Kayak (a home made job)**

This trip was mainly aimed at doing some long distance open crossing paddling to build endurance and stamina for future trips.

Saturday saw Ian, Peter and Bill set off from Canadian Bay, Mt Eliza to their destination Portarlington. Bill paddled with Peter and Ian for 20kms then turned and went back to Canadian Bay. (Took Bill 1.30 to paddle 20km's back-the bake beans must of kicked in!!!) Peter and Ian continued on to Portarlington.

Julian and Tina set sail from Sorrento at 3.00pm (Some people have to work) paddling across to Mud Island in record time. After a short break we continued across the Bay stopping to ask a fisherman if they had a mobile phone to make contact with the others. Finally we made contact with Peter courtesy of a female fisherwoman sorry fisherperson, alright fisherman (sounds better even if it is discrimination)

The main town of Portarlington was a great welcome to see, being summertime the fair was on along with a jazz festival and the late night markets, which certainly make you feel hyped up after a long days paddling.

Sunday saw the four of us get up early making a 7.00am start for our return trip across the bay of 40km's. During this time we all remained together stopping frequently for food stops and the occasional ship going passed. We eventually made it back to Canadian Bay in the early afternoon meeting up with Bill again. By Tina Rowley.

**Saturday 22nd January Sorrento to Canadian Bay**

**Peter Provis Selkie**

**Julian Smith Selkie**

**Tina Rowley Artic Raider**

With winds in our favour we set off from Sorrento on a compass bearing heading for Canadian Bay. Up went the sails and kite hoping to make a remarkably quick journey back for our estimated thirty five kilometre paddle. Seeing the kite up Julian asked if he could have a go, (which turned out to be for 25km's!!!) This proved to be a bit worrying for all as the shadow of the kite on the water represented a huge stingray to which two LARGE BRONZE WHALER SHARKS intercepted. Thankfully both sharks confused quickly swam away (lucky for us). Everything seemed well until we passed Mornigton where a storm came through picking up the wind and waves making it great surfing for Julian and Peter who both had their sail and kite up. I chose not to put my sail up not wanting to scream out of control. Nearing Canadian Bay the wind and waves rose again by another front making both Julian and Peter scream louder with joy as they surfed down the waves still with their sail and kite up. Closing in on Canadian Bay I saw both Julian go under trying to put his sail away and Peter go in trying to get his kite down.....Well even if they did think I was a chicken I knew what was coming.....Anyway it was a great paddle and took us

... by Tina Rowley

## Last Trip for the Year

### **East Coast of 'The Prom' – 25-31 December 1999**

Jeanne & Ian Dunn (*Mirage Double*), Pete Provis (*Selkie*), Ray Musgrave (*Greenlander*), John Hyndman (*Greenlander*)

The last week of 1999 was a windy period along the eastern seaboard of Australia. The prevailing north-easterlies enabled a record time for the Sydney to Hobart yachts. It also made for some bigger water than usual along the eastern coast of Wilsons Promontory.

The five of us intended to travel independently to a rendezvous at Johnny Suey's Cove. Jeanne and I planned to go down on Christmas Day, Pete Provis was to arrive Boxing Day, and John and Ray were to start their regular end of year trip the next day.

It is always best to leave Port Welshpool just after high tide because this gives an assisting current out through Corner Entrance. But, due perhaps to Christmas spirit, Jeanne and I left our departure a little late, and the retreating water meant dragging our heavily laden double *Mirage* through the shallows to get into water deep enough to paddle. We had a week's supplies on board.

Although assisted by the outgoing current, as soon as we rounded Little Snake Island we were confronted by a strong ESE wind blowing in through the Corner Entrance. I reasoned that this would set up quite steep waves in the Entrance and rough water along the coast all the way down to Johnny Sueys Cove. Rather than battle the sea, we decided to relax and camp at Biddies Beach until morning. After all, it was late on Christmas day, and we were on holidays!

It was interesting to see a sand bar appear across the entire front of Biddies Beach; extremes of tide-height were being experienced due to the coincidence of perigee of the Moon and perihelion of the Earth. Even the 'largest moon of a Century' featured on the evening news – but at this time of year all the news-hounds are hard up for a story!

Thankfully, by next morning the wind had eased off, and we were able to pass through the Entrance quite easily with the next tide. The sand bar which extends out from the Entrance was exposed to almost 2 metres above the water, and large waves arising from SE swells were breaking around it.

Despite the incoming 2 metre swells, it was comfortable enough going down the coast because we could readily point into the occasional bigger swells (up to 3 metres) which threatened to break on us. At times we were several kilometres off shore, but the wind was dropping and I felt this was better than being in the surf-zone all the way.

Landing at Johnny Sueys Cove (there are various spellings for this great little cove) was uneventful in one metre surf – apart from (I'm embarrassed to say) an earlier mistaken landing at the small cove at the south end of three-mile beach which closely resembles JSCove! At least I know I am not the only one to make this mistake.

We had a free choice of campsites, and placed our small tent within the protection of the tea-trees, but looking out to sea. Some hours later, we were joined by Pete Provis who had paddled his *Selkie* from Port Welshpool on an assisting tide.

The next morning, we were joined by Ray Musgrave and John Hyndman in their *Greenlanders*, and our group was complete. We filled in the rest of the day variously strolling the beach and playing on the metre high waves still rolling in. I used Pete's *Selkie* (which is enjoyable to surf), and John's *Greenlander*.

Following day, we did the 'standard trip' out and around Rabbit Island. Saw thousands of sea-bird foot prints (penguins or mutton birds?) and the resident Cape Barron geese. There is at least one little platform which would be suitable for a small tent to go on, but the thousands of avian footprints indicated a noisy night camping there at best.



We tentatively aimed our boats toward Miranda Bay, but the surf was marginally large for an easy landing, so we idled back to JSC for another bout of eating etc. The fishing was proving frustratingly uneventful, so Ray and John said they would move camp the next day to Chinaman's Beach. Jeanne and I in the double, and Pete in his *Selkie* said we preferred to paddle down to at least Refuge Cove and "maybe the lighthouse".

When the day dawned, there was a stiff south wind blowing along the coast, and our fall-back plan was to also turn Northwards if the going was too tough. However, we turned southwards out of JSCove and plugged onwards, and eventually reached Refuge Cove a few hours later after encountering some very honest water along the way. Our double is 7.25 metres in length, and Pete said it looked "quite tiny" at times on the big swells coming in. If our boat was dwarfed, imagine how small Pete's single seemed! Some swells were well over 4 metres and seemed like incoming mountain ranges. We had to stay some distance offshore to avoid the worst of the reflected waves. The water immediately south of Refuge Cove's entrance (we overshot to avoid bad water, only to find worse stuff) was absolute washing-machine stuff. At least the wind had dropped off a bit. Refuge Cove was wonderfully calm and lived up to its name perfectly. We camped two nights there.

On the 'idle day', Pete and I tried paddling the double towards the lighthouse, but very strong winds, rough water opposite Cape Wellington, and incompatible paddling styles, caused us to retreat back to Refuge Cove after a frustrating hour on the water. My back is still bruised Pete! Jeanne and I climbed Kersop's Peak in a vain effort to see Hogan Island, but the sea mist (foam and spray?) meant we could not even see a definable horizon.

Next day we paddled the 45 km back to Port Welshpool. Not only is that a very respectable distance, but the water was far from benign. We stopped for lunch at Johnny Sueys Cove (and handed some spare water to some thirsty bushwalkers) before encountering a broad expanse of breaking 3m seas near Lighthouse and Hunter Points. Mostly we could pause or race to avoid the breaking crests, but one wave clobbered us with a sobering force and we needed a monumental brace to hold the double upright. Surfing sideways on a 3m breaking wave some kilometres from shore is a memory that quickly focuses the mind. Skill, that Jeannie attributed to me for keeping us upright, had more than an element of luck in it! Pete was at the time still flying his kite, although by then the wind had dropped to a gentle breeze. Mostly he was quite hidden amongst the waves, and the only way we knew his position was by following the line back from his kite that was flying well above the water.

We stopped briefly at Biddies beach to catch our breath from the exciting water, and to snack on some of our remaining food, and then paddled up the Lewis Channel to Port Welshpool. From memory the trip from Refuge back to Port Welshpool took a bit over 7 hours, including all stops. Not a bad way to finish-off the year. Being also the last day of the Millenium, we celebrated – after refreshing showers – at the local pub and had an enjoyable counter-tea meal before driving back to Melbourne before midnight.

## Seakayaking in Tasmania January 2000

After recently purchasing a double Mirage Seakayak we decided to travel to Tasmania for two weeks to seakayak. We spent a week on Macquarie Harbour with the Mirage. We then hired a collapsible Feathercraft boat from Roaring Forties Ocean Kayaking (Kettering Tasmania) and flew to Bathurst Harbour in the South West for our second week.

### Macquarie Harbour

Macquarie Harbour is on Tasmania's west coast and is accessed via the village of Strahan. After disembarking from the Spirit of Tasmania we drove to Strahan, had coffee and bought some beer to fit into the small spaces left in our boat. We paddled across the Harbour to camp at Betsys Bay late in the evening. The next day the weather was perfect and we paddled south and visited Sarah Island which has ruins of a original convict settlement that predates Port Arthur. The Frenchmans Cap peak accompanied us the entire way. The next day took us from the salty water and coastal vegetation into the fresh water of the Gordon River. The water turned fresh and cold and is a dark

was a Tasmanian Devil or an axe murderer outside our tent! Next day bought us back down the river and across to Pillinger in the Kelly basin which is the site of an old railway. We camped at Farm cove with the company of snakes and bull-ants. The weather was still fantastic for our paddle back to Strahan and completely still water. A great trip.

### **Bathurst Harbour/Port Davey**

We hired our K2 Expedition Feathercraft boat from Roaring Forties. We spent the morning learning the skills of getting a bunch of aluminium pieces to turn into a boat. Luckily we had the patient assistance of Ian who runs Roaring Forties. We then bundled onto a light plane to fly to Melaleuca in South West Tasmania. The flight was spectacular across Federation Peak. After spending the afternoon assembling the boat for a second time in the day we paddled off down Melaleuca Channel into Bathurst Harbour (yes we were still speaking to each other at this stage). The sunset was spectacular and it was possible to see the Western Arthurs from our campsite. Unfortunately we spent the evening scrambling up creeks trying to find fresh water which was unusually scarce as a result of the dry weather.

A small front came through that night but next day was fine (again!) and we paddled past the imposing Mt Rugby and into the channel that connects Bathurst Harbour to Port Davey. We spent the night in Bramble cove at a beach which had fresh water, great snorkelling (with abalone) and spectacular views of the Breaksea Islands which protect the harbour from the swell of the southern ocean. We also met some Tasmanian seakayakers who were well equipped with sails. We offered them a cup of tea and they offered us crayfish which we thought was a pretty good exchange! The next day we ventured out into Port Davey and paddled to Forbes Point – as far as we dared in the swell. Port Davey is spectacular with cliffs and islands everywhere. We were right at the bottom of Australia in the Southern Ocean and we felt insignificant. After another night at Bramble Cove we headed north and paddled into the fresh water and up to the Davey Gorge. After a night in Bond Bay we paddled back towards Bathurst Harbour and camped at Balmoral Beach. We had a spectacular view to the mountains to the north and also a spectacular view of the squall as it came across the water towards us. Our luck with the weather had finally ended and we spent the next day reading books in the tent. The following day we were due to fly out again from Melaleuca but were unable to do so because of the weather conditions. We managed to get a flight out the next day and went out and bought a tattslotto ticket after the plane we flew out on crashed 20 minutes after we had arrived safely in Hobart (all on board are safe).

Two fantastic trips that I would recommend to anyone. Please call if you would like more information on 9818 0918 (David & Jenny)

## **Furneaux Islands Trip Report:- Jan.'98**

(or, "The Gourmets Guide To Flinders Island"!)

By: John Hyndman.

Special guest at our VSKC annual general meeting at Flinders in November '97, was 'living legend', Laurie Ford. For those who weren't in attendance, or are new to sea kayaking, Laurie has twice crossed Bass Strait from south to north and returned, once solo; has paddled most of the Tassy coast, including the rugged south-west; has paddled the Fiji Islands, the Greek Islands and Japan; and was instrumental in the founding of the Maatsuyker Canoe Club. At the meeting, he kindly extended an invitation to all present to join his proposed Flinders Island Christmas trip, in the hope of re-kindling an inter-state trip interchange. Many showed interest, but the numbers flagged to zilch rather quickly when it came to the crunch. After hastily re-arranging our annual leave, and adding some accumulated RDO's, Rex Brown and I were able to make up a contingent to wave the flag for Victoria . . . such offers don't crop up all that often! Local knowledge and expertise count for a hell of a lot in these volatile waters of the 'Roaring Forties', and there are few kayakers who can boast Laurie's knowledge of the area.

Anyway, I don't intend to present a blow-by-blow journal of our adventures (if you want to see a full account, look up Laurie's web-site:

<http://www.tassie.au/~lford/maatstra.htm>), but will give a precied account to show where we went, what we saw and the paddling conditions as we found them.

After an un-eventful crossing of Bass Strait to George Town on the Devil Cat, Laurie was there right on time to greet us and lead us to Bridport, home of the forth member of our group, the intrepid Jeff Jennings. Here we spent the night in preparation for an early start to Little Mussleroe Bay. We had a great evening soaking up a few final largers (Jeff and I), while we viewed Jeff's mind-blowing collection of videos and stills that he has accumulated over many years of sea kayaking some of the most picturesque

and challenging waters the world has to offer . . . right there in Tassy!

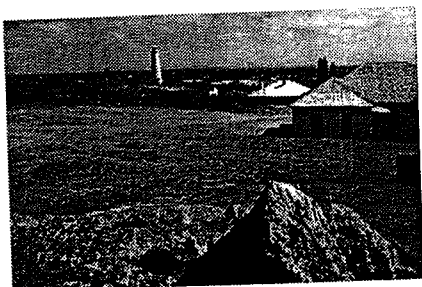
As we stepped from our cars next morning at Little Mussleroe, and were nearly knocked-down by the howling westerly, and peered out to sea across the notorious Banks Strait, I half jokingly said to Laurie, "Surely, you don't intend starting out in this?", expecting his reply to be something like, "Shit no, we're not completely crazy clobber! We'll wait until the wind drops off a little". Instead of which he looked me up and down in stunned disbelief and said, "Yeah! Forty knots is ideal for sailing . . . we can spend a bit of time on Swan Island until the tide's right, then head across to Clarke".

The trip started out well with Jeff filming proceedings on video, and Laurie, with **two** sails up, running circles around us and running at break-neck speed down the face of every big wave that offered itself. His glee was soon to end though, after an extra strong gust of wind blew one sail to rags, and the second mast jammed in it's step, proving *difficult to remove in a capsized and roll situation*. The temporary loss of a sail only slightly slowed him down, and the sewing kit and patches were brought out as soon as we landed on Swan Is., and an expert repair was effected. In fact, this was the pattern for much of the trip . . . no repair job was ever beyond the realms of possibility, and the necessary materials were always miraculously produced, despite the fact that his boat always seemed half empty and weighed next-to-nothing!

Disaster struck early for Jeff too, when one of the locking latches on his waterproof video camera housing popped open and allowed water into the lens mechanism, and shorted some of the electronics. A hasty field stripping in the lighthouse-keepers house on Swan Is. failed to remedy the problem, so he phoned his wife in Bridport to have a replacement flown out to Lady Barron. Unfortunately for our hopes of having our trip recorded on video, the second camera proved also to be defective!

Our brief stay at Swan Is. was punctuated by morning tea with cakes, and a special "Swan Is. Pizza", prepared by mein hosts and island caretakers, Ken and Susan

Stoneman, which made tearing ourselves away to tackle the rest of the Banks Strait crossing at 6pm somewhat of a battle, and set a dangerous precedent for gourmet dining that was to plague Rex for the rest of the trip! But leave we did, and as we passed the lighthouse in glassy-smoothe conditions, the Stonemans and their guests lined the cliff-top to wave their farewells. The *real* adventure had now begun!



Swan Is. 'Gourmet Resort'.

The tides sweep through Banks Strait at an average 3 to 4 knots, with localized tide-races of around 5 to 6 knots. The best time to cross is about two hours before slack water/low tide so that the change of tide part way over would cancel-out the eastward drift by carrying you back to the west an equivalent amount, which is preferable to battling into a current head-on. However, having spent the day on Swan Is. waiting for the wind-against-tide effect to abate, we had missed the optimum time, and would now have to allow for the out-going tide to carry us on a wide arc out into the Tasman before we would reach our intended landfall at Moriarty Pt. on Clarke Is. An area that lies off this point, known as Moriarty Banks must be avoided at all cost! Laurie had warned us that if we saw we were being carried into this area of turbulence where the currents meet on a shallow bank, "You'd best cut your own throat and be done with!" With this warning fresh in our minds we headed cautiously north by north-west, taking the big glassy ocean swells on our beam.

A short while after leaving the sanctuary of Swan Is. a gentle breeze from the south-east had touched me on the right cheek, which caused me to steal a backward glance in that direction. A small, dirty looking fog-like cloud could just be seen there on the

horizon. No cause for concern . . . we paddled on, and the breeze freshened sufficiently to raise sails.

Seven-thirty pm., and the light seemed to me to be fading rather prematurely, so I glanced to the south-east again and recall feeling rather shocked at how rapidly the little fog bank had turned into a looming steel gray storm cloud which now extended well to the east, and round to the south-west. I dropped back to Rex and suggested he look over his shoulder.

"Shit! 'Doesn't look good,'" was his retort.

The south-easter freshened to a brisk 20 knots with gusts that prompted me to stow my sail, while Laurie revelled in the conditions and made *more* sail. The tide against the wind caused the sea to 'lump-up' and become sloppy, and a few large drops of rain lashed our faces. The going became more and more difficult . . . paddle, paddle, support, paddle and support again. I wondered what the people who watched our progress past the lighthouse on Swan Is. would have been thinking as they saw the rapidly building storm-front closing in behind us. They would have been concerned for our safety, I'm sure, as only a sea kayaker can know the capability of these wonderful sea-worthy craft. The rest of the world thinks we're crazy!

We managed to keep together reasonably well while there was light enough to see, despite the four meter swell, but once darkness settled upon us it became very difficult, and land was still a long way off. Laurie disappeared into the gloom in an effort to reach a safe landing site and set-up a beacon, before complete darkness made it impossible. I soon found it impossible to look behind to keep tabs on Rex, without losing sight of Jeff, so I started a flashing red light and attached it to the back of my PFD hoping Rex would be able to follow, then took a compass bearing on Clarke Island roughly where I'd last seen Jeff heading for, and '*went for it*' determined to land on the first beach that presented itself. At this point I was extremely pleased that I had made the effort to rig-up a light for my compass in the weeks preceding the trip.

Just as I came within earshot of the breakers thudding on to a beach, I was

relieved to catch sight of a glimmer of light dead ahead, but it disappeared and I felt I may have imagined it. There it was again, and I knew it was Laurie on the beach directing us in. In no time I was broaching onto a sand beach, and felt the elation of having firm ground beneath my feet. I was a little concerned for Rex, because he had no compass and I had no way of knowing if he'd been able to keep visual contact with my flasher, but five minutes later he too made a safe landing and was much relieved to have caught sight of Laurie's guiding light, just when grave concerns were starting to creep into his thoughts. So ended our first crossing of the brooding Banks Strait where the restless waters are never ever stationary. It certainly lived-up to its reputation for being unpredictable on this occasion, and I hoped that it was just letting us off with a warning . . . the prospect of the return crossing in two weeks time would enter our thoughts often during our stay, and we often joked about it, but not without some real trepidation and respect!

Well before the cold light of dawn had shown on the eastern horizon, we were awakened by a phrase that was to become familiar to us over the ensuing days, "Leaving in five minutes cobber!" Laurie never seems to sleep ; doesn't eat breakfast, and very little lunch; and always seems to be packed and ready to go. We hastily pack-up, have a swallow of water and a muesli bar, change into our cold, wet paddling clobber, and we're off through the small surf to find Moriarty Bay, where we'd hoped to be last night.



*Relaxing in the placid Kent Bay.*

By morning tea time we were gliding across the Armstrong Channel , that separates Clarke Is. from Cape Barren Is.,

and shortly, entered the sheltered waters of Kent Bay where Capt. Bishop had established a base-camp for his sealing operations back in 1797-8. From here we rocketed through Sea Lion Narrows which runs at 10 - 12 knots, and slogged, in a tide-induced steep 'slop' around to Petticoat Bay, on the south east of Cape Barren Is. where we camped the night.

Interesting water effects greeted us 'round Cone and Jamiesons Points as we headed Nth-east, then finally, we rounded Cape Barren which was sighted and named by Tobias Furneaux in 1773 , then followed the coast to the Nth-west, via Harley Pt. We were trying to make up the lost time in an effort to reach the wreck of the "FARSUND" by 11 am. at which time Laurie and Jeff had arranged to meet-up with some friends who were shipping their kayaks over to Lady Barron on the "MATTHEW FLINDERS", then spending a week paddling on the west coast of Flinders.

We were only an hour and a half late in reaching the wreck, but there was no sign of any other kayakers. Strong currents ripped around the "FARSUND", and as we ventured in to take some photographs, Laurie was 'spectacularly demolished' by a sudden eruption of dancing pressure waves that simply appeared out of nowhere. There was no way that Jeff and I were going to venture in by the same route, but Laurie soon had himself safely re-installed and sail stowed away. We pressed-on for Lady Barron after a brief photo session.

Here we learnt that the ferry, "MATTHEW FLINDERS" had been grounded on a rock and wrecked the previous day, preventing the arrival of the sea kayaks we were to have met, so we carried our heavy kayaks up onto the lawn of the Ports Authority Office. Rex had been suffering a lot of discomfort from a hastily modified seat, so with his boat unloaded, Laurie set to work with a borrowed angle-grinder, CSM and resin, and did an expert rebuild. The locals here were most obliging, and one bloke even gave us the use of his Lada Niva to drive up to the general store for some 'goodies'. A gourmet counter-tea of scallops at the pub and a few beers wound-up a memorable day.

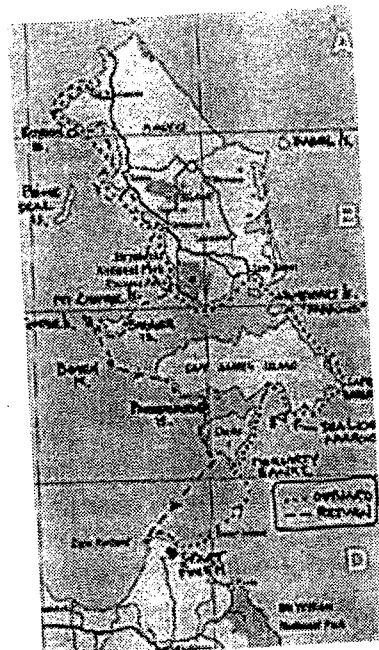
Next morning found us 'flying' through Franklin Sound before a brisk sth-easterly, heading for Trousers Point on the Flinders west coast. The pressure of such high speed sailing was more than Jeff's rudder pin could stand, and metal fatigue caused it to snap; the sudden loss of steering causing his boat to round-up without warning. He spent the last seven or eight K's to Trousers Pt., rocketting along, madly trying to maintain steerage with a high ruddering support, in a flurry of spray. A new pin was soon improvised, and normality restored at our nights camp.

A planned lay-day gave us time to climb the spectacular saw-toothed peaks of the Strezelecki Range, known as Flinders Peaks. The view from these usually cloud-shrouded granite ramparts was well worth the effort . . . and the blisters!

Striking northwards for Emita where we intended checking-out the museum, we stopped for yet another gourmet feast of pies and pasties at the Whitemark bakery . . . despite objections from Laurie, that Rex's boat wasn't getting any lighter!

At Allports Beach near Emita we were entreated to a meeting with 'budding' sea kayaker, accomplished musician, juggler, . . . a.a. and local school teacher, Bruce Evans, who thoughtfully brought us some of his ( at this point in time ) very precious rainwater. The entire area was in the grips of the worst drought in recorded history. Bruce regaled us with a demonstration of his juggling skills, using skittles that he'd fashioned himself; each one requiring 8 re-cycled plastic Coke bottles! Being an ardent consumer of Coke himself, Laurie endeavored to duplicate one of these skittles . . . but with only moderate success!

*Jeff's Greenlander 3 and powerful sail.*



*Route taken.*

overture!!!? ' Wonder what 'wild herbs' are growing out there on Prime Seal?

The sea was calm as we nosed our way back across Arthur Bay, and despite a gentle breeze 'on the nose', the going was easy. As we rounded Long Pt. with Whitemark again in sight, we found we were battling a strong ebb tide current. I found Jeff's description, "... like having your paddles set in cement ", an apt one. Then a sudden cloud-burst obliterated everything beyond 50 meters. Just as it started to clear a bit, I heard a curious roar, and then a flapping sound behind, and looked back to see Laurie with both sails up, and Rex attempting to deploy his sails ( the flapping sound!). The wind had changed, and now a storm was sweeping in from the north-west, preceded by a tremendous gust of wind. Laurie came from 100 meters behind Jeff and I in a trice, and shot past to reach Whitemark well ahead of us. Rex never did quite get his sails sorted out before the gust hit, and not being able to get them down either, just concentrated on staying up-right until the wind blew him up on the Whitemark beach. I wasn't game to put my sail up with so much electrical pyrotechnics about ... I was worried I might get my 'just deserts' for an ill-spent youth!

The weather hereabouts sure is changeable; it can blow from all points of the compass during any 'normal' day. The forecast seems to be a standard Strong Wind Warning ... **but NO DIRECTION IS GIVEN!** Can you believe that?

Anyway, while the rain and hailstones blew through, we had a quick game of pool at the pub, raided the bakery again, then changed back into our cold, wet paddling gear, and continued on our way to Trousers Point ( much to the amusement of the freight-handler at the wharf, whose shed we used as a change-room ).

We were cold and wet by the time we arrived at the camp-site at Trousers, and the Nth-westerly was roaring through the sheoks and had the appearance of continuing through the night. It did ... and all the next day ... and into the next! Laurie would have gone next day, despite a 9km crossing into a 25knot head-wind and biggish seas, to reach Mt.Chappell Is., but

agreed to wait a day to let thing settle down a bit. We might as well have gone the first day, because things weren't really much better when we left the day after.

During our lay-day, Jeff, Rex and myself tramped around to Big River 'to advance our knowledge of Flinders Is'. ( and to kill time ). We had to do a bit of bush-bashing, and in so doing, upset one of the locals who attempted to bite Jeff. We weren't going to argue with the five foot reptile, and hurried off to get a change of underwear for Rex ( he's got a 'thing' about snakes!)

We packed anyway, and got started for Chappell by about 7.30am, with the hope of getting some assistance from an out-going tide. The wind at Whitemark was given as 19knots, but I reckon it was probably more like 25 where we were, right 'on the nose'. It looked like being a real slog.

As we drew away from the shelter of Trousers Pt. the seas became large and steep. Rex told me later that he was counting seven paddle strokes to reach the top of the biggest ones! I wondered why they weren't breaking. They reared-up ominously, as if they were about to break, but came to nothing. Except the one that got me, that is! I was caught-out nicely by a fairly unspectacular-looking wave that just stood-up a little steeper than the rest, and broke without warning. I was slightly quarter-on to it, and as it broke I made the mistake of reaching forward to my right to support into the crest. Unfortunately for me there was no back to the thing, and the highly aerated foam gave no support, and I capsized to my right. A roll should have been easy, but the wave breaking in my face had caused me to exhale what air I had in my lungs in an effort to clear my airways. I baled-out, rolled the kayak up and hopped back in, but before I could get settled I was rolled over again. I was just going for a re-entry and roll when Laurie drew-up along side and rafted-up to lend a hand. We were underway again in no time. In hind-sight, I would have been better to have done a low-support on my left and behind ( the down-hill side of the wave!).

After a tendon-tearing slog, during which a sudden eye-stinging rain-squall had obscured all visibility ( "wiped Chappell!"

the radar screen", as Rex descriptively put it ) we finally made a landfall on Mt. Chappell Is., home of the biggest and stroppiest black tiger snakes known to man! The first bite brought a yelp from Jeff, but a close inspection of the leg of his thermals revealed nothing more than a wounded scorpion that had somehow taken up residence.

We climbed the mountain before lunch, and only saw *five* snakes . . . the other 3995 must have been waiting for the rain to stop before venturing out!

A short hop across a strait brought us to Badger Island, where Alf Stackhouse has held a grazing lease for many years. One of the lower, more arable of the Furneaux group, the history of the island makes for interesting reading. It was first occupied during the lawless days of the sealing era of the early 1800's when absconding convicts, naval deserters and adventurers of every kind took up residence with their kidnapped aboriginal women slaves/concubines/ wives (call 'em what you will) to eke out a living from sealing for skins and oil. After the seals were wiped out, never to return, a half-caste aboriginal woman, Lucy Beedon took up residence on Badger, where she established a school and set about trying to raise the general morality of the mixed-race of people known as the "straitsmen". Her grave can be found in a pretty spot near Lucy Point. Despite seeing nearly as many snakes here as we did on Chappell, I could happily spend more time on this island, exploring and photographing.

As I awoke to a perfect dawn, Badger Island was to turn on a display that will live in my memory as long as I live. I had purposely oriented my bivvy-bag so that I could get a view through the mozzie-proof screen of the sky to the south and east, and the beautiful little bay. I like to look out and see the Southern Cross if I awake during the night. Anyway, as the eastern sky started to 'colour-up' with the rising sun, I was lying there watching, mentally preparing myself to leap out and grab my camera when the light was at its best. A dark object broke the placid waters of the bay and arrested my attention. Unzipping the bivvy entrance, I sat up and was entreated to a ten minute

'dolphin ballet'. A small pod of dolphins was breakfasting on fish not 20 yards from the beach with the rising sun colouring the scene, and here I was lying watching from my bed! It was as if it was coriographed especially for me. By the time I remembered I should be photographing the performance, it was all but over.



*Aloe vera, Badger Is.*

With a feeling that 'nothing can top that', we headed for Goose Island with its lighthouse that marks the the western approach to Banks Strait from Bass Strait. Landing on Goose would not be easy with any sort of sea running, but conditions were near perfect and we simply landed on gently shelving granite and carried our kayaks up out of harms way. Yet another visual feast was our reward. Goose is a tiny island that the seas would break right over in a westerly blow, and supports only pigface and a few stunted shrubs, and yet several families lived here for long periods in isolation in the days when the lighthouse was manned.

We waited on Goose Is. only long enough for the tide to change in our favour, then made a bee-line for Cape Sir John, 20 k's away on Cape Barren Is. Roughly mid way we stopped on Boxen Island; just long enough for Rex to leave his sunglasses behind. Laurie generously volunteered to go back for them, but upon returning claimed that he'd found them okay, but had slipped and smashed them on the rocks. He later surrendered them to Rex. declaring that they



didn't match his eyes and he wouldn't be seen dead in them!

We were hoping for a 'cushie' night in the hut on Preservation Island, as a 'finale' to our two weeks amongst the islands, but it wasn't to be. The owner of the establishment and a few of his mates had flown over from Launceston for a few days, so we had to be content to bivvy on the 'front lawn'. This little island is the site of the shipwreck that sparked the beginning of the end for the Bass Strait seals. In 1797, the "SYDNEY COVE" was deliberately grounded adjacent to Preservation Island, and all hands and most of her speculative cargo of spiritous liquor, bound for Sydney, was safely landed to save both from certain destruction. The story of the ships Chief Officer, Hugh Thompson and Supercargo, William Clarke's amazing journey, first by long boat to the 90 Mile Beach where they were again wrecked, and then on foot to Sydney to raise the alarm, is an almost unbelievable adventure. Only three of the original seventeen officers and crew survived the trip.

Our adventure was drawing to an end. All that remained was a two hour paddle 'round the sth-west of Clarke Is. to Rebecca Bay, then the 20 odd k's across Banks Strait. We'd hoped for a Nth-westerly to speed us across this formidable stretch of water, but it wasn't to be. In fact, it was right on the nose, but fortunately, only a gentle zephyr. By heading directly for Cape Portland, instead of going via Swan Is. we were able to extract a minimal amount of assistance from the wind, but towards the end of the crossing we suffered burn-out against an adverse tide-set. This soon changed after we turned our bows eastward for Lt. Mussleroe, and raced along in a brisk tide-stream.



*Goose Is. Light.*

#### **Equipment:**

Laurie Ford, Sea Leopard - twin sails.

Jeff Jennings, Greenlander MkIII- single sail.

Rex Brown, Greenlander MkIII- twin sails.

John Hyndman, Greenlander MkIV- twin sails.

**Approx. Distance Travelled:** 380 kms

**Greatest days' travel:** 43kms

**Average Days' travel:** 38kms

**Weather:** Bad . . . except for the odd day . . . which was worse!

**Wind:** Strong . . . most days, Stronger on others

**Highlights of the trip:** "Swan Is. Pizza" / Whitmark bakery

**Quotable quotes:** ". . . leaving in 5 minutes clobber!" Laurie Ford.

" . . . an' two pies, one sausage roll . . . guess I better have one of those beesting cakes too!" Rex Brown.

*Recommended reading:*

**The Furneaux Islands**, Vol.1 by Richard Fowler.

**Flinders Island**, by Jean Edgecombe (Algona Books).

**The Wreck of the Sydney Cove**, by Max Jefferies

**Guiding Lights**, by Kathleen M. Stanley

*Maps & Charts:*

**Tasmap Topographic 1:100,000** Flinders Is.

" " " Swan Is.

**Nautical Chart**, Eastern Bass Strait, Aus 445a.

# **PADDLE ADGENDA**

## **REGULAR ONGOING EVENTS**

**Pool nights (Rolling nights)** Held by VSCK and Patterson Lakes Club

First friday each month Jubilee Pool Frankston 7-30pm to 8-30pm some plastic kayaks available ring Julian Smith 03 9776-9583 or Phil Savage (Patterson Lakes Canoe Club) 03 9772-9729

## **REX BROWN'S HOBSON BAY AREA SEA KAYAKING**

Friday and Saturday night's, sunday paddling. Interesting paddle trips around docks and Yarra mouth ports area and Altona to Corio Bay. Paddles stopping at very nice places for coffee and light snacks if your interested, and why wouldn't you be!

If you want to paddle on these days just give Rex at call on 03 9391-6889 or 03 9391-3839.

## **FEBRUARY**

Saturday 11 to Sunday 12th Corner Inlet

**Date February: Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> / Sunday 12<sup>th</sup>.**

**Place:** Corner Inlet / Port Albert Area. Meet at Welshpool Pub Friday night or at the Caravan Park at what is known as the long pier at Port Welshpool on the Saturday morning early.

**Distance:** Up to 20 kilometers to furthest camp site less to the nearest. And return on Sunday to Port Welshpool

**Comments:** Either paddle around the outside of Snake Island to Port Albert entrance or Kate Kearney entrance this will depend a lot on the weather conditions. If the weather is not conducive to the outside plan, a trip up the inside of Little Snake and Snake Island is a just as good scenic wise. Once again drinking water is a problem so enough has to be carried for the trip duration. Because of lack of good campsites to accommodate large groups, again a maximum of 6 paddlers (3 experienced to 3 lessexperienced) is envisaged this number causes the least amount of damage to campsites. The paddle around the inside even though fairly sheltered can be hard against a strong head wind so once again paddlers will have some experience paddling into head winds. The paddle around the outside will only be attempted if (a) the weather conditions are right and (b) the group is deemed to be capable to do the paddle. There are some excellent walks on both the islands some of the last known coastal banksia forest left in this state of Victoria. A major problem can be sand flies so be warned. Any further enquiries please do not hesitate to contact me.

**Contact Ray Musgrave (03) 5975-2414.**

## **Sunday 20th Canadian Bay**

contact Bill Robinson 03 9787-4704

Melway 101 D10 meet at the Canadian Bay Club at 9.00am paddling at 10.00am.

## **MARCH**

March Sat 11th/Sun 12th/Mon 13th (Labour Day)

**Date:** March Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> / Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> / Monday 13<sup>th</sup>. (Labour Day)

**Place:** Jonnie Sussie Bay (Wilsons Promontory) Meet Port Welshpool Caravan Park or Welshpool hotel Friday night or early on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup>. Paddle to Jonnie Sussie on the Saturday camp and return to Port Welshpool on the Monday.

**Distance:** Approximately 25kilometers one way.

**Comments:** This is on of the better small bays of the Promontory. Weather permitting a trip to Rabbit Island and circumnavigate said island, but as we have found out that on previous occasions you can be lucky on the day. Will have 2 overnight camps in this area. The idea being there are some excellent walks from Jonnie Sussie with fantastic views plus fishing can be very good. Once again drinking water is a major concern so enough water for the 3 days will have to be taken plus spare for a couple of days incase one gets weathered in. There is always a possibility on this part of the coast this could happen weather patterns are sort of predictable but the duration can be a bit of a concern. Maximum of six paddlers for the group once again because of permit limitations. Because of some of conditions that can be encountered experienced paddlers are preferred. I will be obtaining the permits early February would like to know by then of interested paddlers. Again kayaks and paddlers must be seaworthy; kayaks to the minimum requirements as listed in the club checklist. If you wish to partake and some doubts about what the requirements are or your abilities for this trip please do hesitate to phone and discuss it.

**Contact:** Ray Musgrave (03) 5975-2414.

### **March 18th to 25th**

NSW Club paddle on the Murray (see details in newsletter)

### **March 19th**

Come and try day at Mount Martha contact Bill Robinson on 03 9787-4704

### **March 26th**

Canadain Bay paddle

Contact Bill Robinson for details. 03 9787-4704

### **April**

#### **April 16th**

Canadian Bay paddle

contact Bill Robinson for details 03 9787-4704

#### **April 21st to 25th (Easter)**

Easter Mallacoota to Eden

Trip convenor **Julian Smith 03 9776-9583**

Having only done this trip once (Easter 99) there are other paddlers with greater knowledge of this coast and between us we will plan campsites most likely being Gabo Island, Nadgee Lake, Disaster Bay, Merrica River. Possible plan is to meet Mallacoota caravan park (the one at the bottom on the water) on Friday morning complete some sort of car shuffle to Eden and get on the water and camp at Gabo Isle (Bring ear plugs if you don't enjoy penguin night life!). The coast line along this trip some of the most interesting and possibly exciting you will find anywhere particularly Gabo Isle, green cape, Nadgee. This trip will suit experienced sea kayakers in sea worthy kayaks. Most landings involve some surf, paddle grade would be minimum proficiency level along with self rescue ability and extended trip experience as conditions can change quickly and there being long non-landable sections of coast. Our trip last year had fine weather, no wind at all, until the last day, but a trip a week later experienced tough and demanding conditions with big seas testing everyone to their limits. If you like to kill and eat fish (as we do) there is good fishing along the entire way, also oysters at the rivers and spearfishing possibilities. Campfires are possible at all campsites should the weather be unsuitable to leave Mallacoota an alternative may be to spend a

**NSWSKC**  
**THE MURRAY PADDLE**  
**18th - 25th March 2000**

**THE STORY SO FAR.....**

This week-long paddle is a relaxing discovery cruise along an interesting 270 km section of Australia's greatest river, starting at Yarrawonga and finishing at the historic port of Echuca. We will pass the towns of Cobram/Barooga, Tocumwal, Picnic Point and Barmah on the paddle, finishing at Echuca. Most of the paddle will be through River Red Gum Forests which line both sides of the river.

Echuca was once Australia's second busiest port, servicing up to 240 boats annually. From here, paddle steamers pushed higher up the Murray, and also serviced towns and stations on the Darling and Murrumbidgee Rivers. Echuca is proud of its heritage and there is plenty to see there for those interested.

Below is a proposed timetable for the paddle followed by some relevant notes. It is subject to change, depending upon the wishes of the participants.

**SATURDAY 18th March**

Drive to Yarrawonga, meeting at Yarrawonga Caravan Park which is situated on the Victorian bank of the river immediately below the wall of Lake Mulwala. Prepare for an early start Sunday - we can leave vehicles at this park in a secure location for the week - see note below.

**SUNDAY 19th**

Paddle for the day, possibly not the full daily distance required, as paddlers stretch unused muscles. Camp.

**MONDAY 20th**

Paddle for the day. Camp.

**TUESDAY 21st**

Rest day, possibly near the town of Tocumwal where we can eat out and relax etc if desired.

**WEDNESDAY 22nd**

Paddle for the day. Camp.

**THURSDAY 23rd**

Paddle for the day. Camp, possibly near Barmah which has a nice hotel on the bank of the river.

**FRIDAY 24th**

Paddle for the day, finishing at the Port of Echuca. Stay in caravan park on the bank of the river.

**SATURDAY 25th**

Pick up hire car (see note below), complete car shuffle before lunch. Sightseeing or snoozing in the afternoon. "Completion of Paddle" Dinner in Echuca.

**SUNDAY 26th**

Pack up, drive home.

Well, that's a possible outline for the trip with a rest day factored in. The daily average over 5 days paddling is 54 kms/day. Bear in mind that the current runs at about 2 knots in summer, so the effective paddling equivalent in still water is probably near 30 kms. We can delete the rest day and paddle a 45km average/day over 6 days. I rate this paddle as a Grade 2 on the Club's grading, except that the daily distances are higher. There will be no surf, whirlpools, constant headwinds, big surf break-outs etc. The distances should not be difficult for paddlers who have done some modest training before the paddle. I promise you that you'll be a stronger paddler at the end of the week!

At the start of each day, we will set a location on the maps as a destination. Paddlers can take as long as they like to get there. We will have a sweep-person to bring up the rear each day because it's difficult to paddle against the current..... so we can't go back to look for anyone.

## **VEHICLES AND THE SHUFFLE**

We can leave the vehicles at Yarrawonga Caravan Park for \$5.00/vehicle/week. Re the shuffle, I suggest we hire a car at Echuca for about \$100 all up for the trip to Yarrawonga and back and split the costs. Echuca - Yarrawonga is 140 kms.

## **MAPS**

Everyone will need a map. CMA topo maps are no good because they are made in NSW and map details finish at the river (Abolish the States I say!). NatMap 1:100000 maps do not show place names in enough details. The best maps are the "River Murray Charts" compiled by Maureen Wright. These come in a book form and cover the river from Yarrawonga to Renmark. They include great anecdotal information and cumulative mileages along the river. So, if you're coming on this trip you WILL NEED the River Murray Charts. They are available from the Echuca Tourist Information Centre. Call 1800 804 446 or (03) 54827555. The cost is \$15.95 plus postage. Use your credit card. I suggest you photocopy the pages needed for this trip and leave the book of charts at home. The charts are in black and white and copy clearly. They may be useful the the next Murray River trip from Echuca to Robinvale in 2001.

## **HAZARDS**

There are three main hazards along the river - sunburn, snakes and mosquitoes. Avoid sunburn by covering up well while on the water. There are plenty of shady campsites along the banks and overhanging trees to shelter under while afloat. Having said that, I would advise that you also take a sprayskirt and a cag in case the weather turns cold while on the water. Black snakes are the main snake species along the Murray. They like to eat frogs etc and not humans. Be careful where you tread when walking along the banks. They are not an aggressive snake unless cornered. Mosquitoes live along the Murray and they DO like to eat humans. There are 3 nasty mosquito-borne infections that occur along the Murray: Barmah Forest Fever, Ross River Fever and Murray Valley Encephalitis. You don't want to catch any of them. Cover up at night and use a repellent.

## **BITS AND PIECES**

Fires are OK along the banks but there may be fire bans in force. I suggest a stove. Some of the banks are high and you wont want to lug your boat up each night. I suggest a large nylon or string bag to move camping gear to camp, leaving the boats just above river level. NRMA and RACV maps are useful in conjunction with the River Murray Charts to monitor your progress. A compass is very useful if you lose your spot on the map. Many bends in the river look the same!

Typically on the Murray in March the nights are cool and the days warm. I don't expect too many campers along the river as we will be paddling outside school holidays and also in mid-week. In some areas we may see some water skiers. The navigation rule on the river is keep to the right but cutting the corners is OK if you're careful. The river meanders all the way and covers 3 miles for every road mile on average.

You'll need all your usual kayaking gear with the exception of a PFD...unless you can't swim.

Any suggestions, changes or questions? Call or fax me on 6494-1366.

Email: [storm@acr.net.au](mailto:storm@acr.net.au)

Cheers

Dave Winkworth

## The Formation of Waves

Ocean waves are generated by the wind blowing over water. They may vary in size from ripples to waves as high as thirty metres. As waves move across the ocean, only the wave moves forward, the water particles stay behind.

Waves on the sea can be a confusing and changing mixture of crests and troughs, with waves of different shapes moving in different directions. A description of the sea surface may therefore be difficult. Nevertheless, some basic understanding of waves and how they can change is important if you wish to become successful and safety conscious in your water activities.

There is considerable interaction between individual waves – fast moving waves overtake slower ones and often combine to either reinforce or cancel each other. As waves move away from their area of formation they become more organised and regular. These waves (called swell waves) with their regular movement, may travel thousands of kilometres before they ultimately dissipate as a result of air-sea friction or by breaking on shore.

### Some terms to understand

**Wind waves (local seas)** are produced by the local prevailing wind. They travel in the direction of the prevailing wind.

**Swell waves** are the regular waves that have moved away from the area of their generation. Their direction of movement is independent of the prevailing winds.

**Wind duration** is the time over which the wind has been blowing.

**Wind fetch** is the distance that the wind has been blowing over the sea.

**Wave speed (V)** is the rate of movement of a wave.

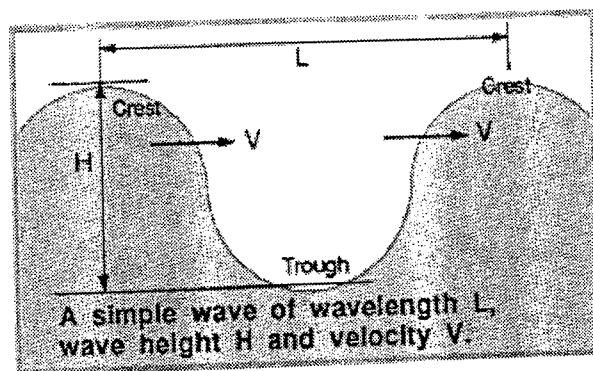
**Wavelength (L)** is the distance between the top of the crest and the bottom of the trough.

**Wave period** is the interval (measured in seconds) between the passage of successive crests past a given point.

**Wave height (H)** is the vertical distance between the top of the crest and the bottom of the trough.

**Significant wave height** is the average height of the highest of the waves. It is about equal to the average height of the waves as estimated by an experienced observer.

These waves are produced by the local prevailing wind. Their configuration depends on wind speed, wind duration and wind fetch. Wind waves are steeper than swell waves, with shorter periods and waver lengths. The sea appears more confused than for swell alone. The higher the wind speed, and the longer the wind duration and fetch, the higher the wave and longer the period.



The tables below show significant wave height for various wind speeds, duration and fetches.

**Wave height as a function of wind speed and fetch distance for differing directions.**

Fetch nmi (Duration)	Wind speed	Wave height			Fetch nmi (Duration)	Wind speed	Wave height	
		m	ft				m	ft
Fetch 10 (2-3 hours)	10kn	0.3	1.0		Fetch 30 (Duration)	10kn	0.5	1.5
	15	0.5	1.8			15	0.9	2.8
	20	0.8	2.7			20	1.3	4.2
	25	1.1	3.7			25	1.7	5.5
Fetch 20 (4-4.5 hours)	10	0.4	1.2		Fetch 40 (Duration)	10	0.5	1.8
	15	0.8	2.5			15	0.9	3.1
	20	1.1	3.7			20	1.4	4.7
	25	1.4	4.7			25	1.9	6.1

**Note:** A range of wind duration for wave height development is given. **The lower the wind speed, the longer the duration required to develop the wave height.** The longer duration applies to the lower wind speeds and the shorter duration applies to the higher wind speeds.

**Wave height and period as a function of wind duration for unlimited fetch.**

wind speed	Duration 3 hrs			Duration 6 hrs			Duration 12 hrs			Duration 24 hrs		
	Wave height period			Wave height period			Wave height period			Wave height period		
	m	ft	sec	m	ft	sec	m	ft	sec	m	ft	sec
10kn	0.4	1.2	2.3	0.5	1.6	2.6	0.6	1.9	3.0	0.7	2.2	3.4
15	0.6	2.0	3.1	0.9	2.8	3.7	1.1	3.7	4.2	1.4	4.5	4.8
20	0.9	3.1	3.9	1.3	4.3	4.6	1.9	6.0	5.3	2.3	7.5	6.2
25	1.3	4.2	4.5	1.9	6.1	5.4	2.5	8.3	6.4	3.4	11.0	7.4
30	1.8	5.8	5.2	2.4	8.0	6.2	3.4	11.0	7.3	4.5	14.6	8.5
40	2.7	8.7	6.3	3.8	12.5	7.7	5.3	17.5	9.2			
50	3.7	12.0	7.4	5.4	17.7	9.0						

Waves tend to travel in groups (called wave trains). Each group consists of a number of waves of irregular height. Each individual wave has its own speed and direction of movement and there is continual interaction between these waves within the groups as well as between the sea waves and the swell. On occasions, when two or more crests interact simultaneously, an abnormally high wave can develop (often called a king or rogue wave). This wave can create a quite dangerous situation. Generally, in open water, a wave of 1.86 times the significant wave height can be expected in every thousand waves. For a significant wave height of 3.8 metres and a period of 7.7 seconds, this means a wave of 7 metres can be expected every two hours or so.

### **Swell waves**

Swell waves are wind-generated waves that have moved away from their area of formation. As they move away they become more rounded and regular in height and period and can be detected thousands of kilometres from their source area. These waves may have lengths from 30 to 500 times their wave height.

### **Waves approaching the coast**

Sea waves and swell approaching the coastline have their characteristics progressively affected by decreasing water depth. Waves slow down as the water becomes shallower, with those of longer wave length (such as swell) sensing the sea bottom and slowing down at first. At different points along the wave, the water depth may vary - hence different sections of waves travel at different speeds. Waves change direction by swinging towards the area of shallower water, and depending on the ocean bottom effects, may either increase or decrease in height. Swell moves from the Southern Ocean over the continental shelf and ultimately to the shore.

### **Breakers**

As a wave moves towards the shore, the depth of water becomes so shallow that the wave collapses or breaks. This depth is approximately 1.3 times the wave height. Therefore a 1 metre wave will break at a water depth of about 1.3 metres. When a wave breaks its energy is dissipated by turbulence, frothing water up on to the beach. Where sufficient swell exists, good surfing can be experienced along the coast when offshore winds prevail. These offshore winds will increase the height of the wave before it breaks because the wind blows directly into the steep side of the wave. This gives the top of the wave time to increase in height before it overruns the lower portion of the wave and breaks.

Victoria is fortunate that it has irregular coastline which provides for local offshore winds at different locations whereas the prevailing wind may generally be onshore. By using the forecast wind, tidal information and your local knowledge you can make an educated guess as to what conditions will be for seakayaking.

### **Rips**

When waves approach the beach at any angle they create a current in shallower water parallel to the shore (the longshore current). Under certain conditions this current will turn and run out to sea creating a rip which is dangerous to swimmers but can be beneficial to seakayakers getting off a surf beach. Take that extra time to survey the wave conditions, watch the wave trains, possible rips and take advantage of what is offered by the sea.



### **Tides and tidal currents**

The moon (and to a lesser extent the sun) creates the tides due to gravitational forces of attraction. These forces of attraction vary because the sun, moon and earth are in constant motion in relation to each other.

There are normally two high and two low tides each day, although at some places only one of each may occur. In Victoria, for example, two tides are clearly evident each day east of Cape Otway, but west of this point only one high and low are discernible.

The tidal rise and fall in sea level in an area forces water to flow in and out of that area. Quite strong currents may be generated by the tides at entrances to inlets, bays harbours, river mouths and around reefs. The maximum tidal current experienced in Victoria is about 8 knots (15 kilometres per hour), measured at Port Phillip Heads and the inlet to Lakes Entrance.

### **Ocean currents**

Ocean currents are large-scale movements of water in the oceans and result from a combination of the rotation of the earth, landmasses and differing water salinities and temperatures.

Scientists in the Bureau of Meteorology are developing computer models of the ocean as has been done for the atmosphere. When perfected, prediction of ocean currents will help in search and rescue activities and many commercial enterprises.

### **The forecast description of sea state**

The Bureau of Meteorology forecasts the wave height of sea and swell in metres. The figure given is an average for deep water in a particular area covered by the forecast. Some local knowledge of how the different wind directions and speeds affect that part of the sea into which you are heading is very important because of the large variability that can occur around the coastline.

This variability is a result of many effects such as coastal topography, local winds, shapes of bays, sea bottom topography and tides. It is not possible therefore to cater for all these variations in the coastal water forecast. As sea and swell are independent, it is important to realise that even though the weather conditions may indicate light winds, with consequently smooth or light seas, there may be in fact a moderate or heavy swell which has been generated in the Southern Ocean.

Most of this material has been reprinted with permission from the Wind Waves Weather Victorian Waters booklet produced by the Bureau of Meteorology.

### **Some anecdotal material**

"The Theory of Statistics of a Stationary Random Process show that one wave in 23 is over twice the size of the average wave. One wave in 1175 is over three times its height, and one wave in 300 000 is more than four times the height of the average ocean wave." There have been two documented cases, one at Port Phillip Heads and another at the western entrance to Western Port Bay over the last ten years.

Waves generated by storms in the Southern Ocean arrive as ocean swell from the south-west and the south-east. They are widely spaced, with wave periods of 10 to 16 seconds, and they produce breakers up to 3 metres high. In addition there are locally generated waves, produced by onshore winds (mainly south-west to southerly but occasionally south-easterly) in coastal waters. Wave periods of less than 6 seconds and during storms can form breakers several metres high.

Variations in wave energy along the Victorian coast are related to the degree of exposure of each sector to ocean swell and storm waves.

High wave energy coasts can be defined as those where estimated mean annual significant wave height exceeds 1.0 metres

Moderate energy wave coasts 0.3 to 1.0 metre.

Low energy wave coasts where it is less than 0.3 metre.

Examples of a high wave energy occur on the southern coast of the Portland Peninsula, with a mean annual wave height of 2.7 metres being recorded off Point Danger between Warrnambool and Cape Otway, and at Cape Schanck, Cape Liptrap and Wilson's Promontory.

The eastern and western coasts of Port Phillip Bay are moderate and low energy coasts respectively.

Onshore gales raise the nearshore water level and drive large waves onto the coast. Abnormally high tides of more than 1.52 metres above datum occur in the northern part of Port Phillip Bay when intense depressions passed through Bass Strait and strong northerly winds backed westerly then southerly. There has been flooding on the northern coasts of Port Phillip Bay when sea levels rose temporarily more than 2 metres because flood water discharge was accompanied by low atmospheric pressure, southerly gales and a high tide. In Port Phillip Bay and around lagoons, notably the Gippsland Lakes, water levels are usually high after episodes of heavy and prolonged rainfall and discharge of river floods.

The rise and fall of tides in Victoria generally has a range of less than 2 metres during fortnightly maximum (spring) tides in Bass Strait. Tide range increases into inlets and embayments where the tidal flow is magnified by the interacting with narrow configuration, attaining more than 3.3 metres towards the head of Western Port Bay and only 2.7 metres at the mouths of rivers draining to the northern shores of Corner Inlet. Because of the narrow entrance at Port Phillip Heads spring tides diminish from 1.1 metres at Point Lonsdale to about 0.6 metre at Williamstown at the head of Port Phillip Bay.

Tidal currents are strong where they pass through narrow straits, as at Port Phillip Heads and the entrances to Westernport Bay and corner Inlet.

The intertidal zone is typically 50 to 100 metres wide along the ocean coast and 20 to 30 metres wide around Port Phillip Bay. In Westernport Bay the area of marshes, mudflats and sandflats exposed at low spring tides is about 270 square kilometres (nearly 40% of the area submerged at high spring tide).

Corner Inlet and the region behind the barrier islands (Port Albert area) to the east has an intertidal zone of about 180 square kilometres, Port Phillip about 28 square kilometres and Andersons Inlet, the largest estuary in Victoria, 16 square kilometres.

In 1826 The *Astrolabe* under the command of Jules Sebastian – Cesar Dumont d'Urville (1826 – 1829) led an expedition to Australia and Oceania. When making his way across the southern stretches of the Indian Ocean he encountered a gale with mountainous seas and which a man was lost overboard. Dumont d'Urville, in his narrative, expressed the opinion that the waves reached a height of 'at least 80 to 100 feet'. In an era when opinions were being expressed that no wave would exceed 30 feet it was received with some scepticism. Dumont d'Urville, smarting at this ridicule, was provoked to make an indignant rebuttal of this charge.

HMS *Herald* under the command of Captain Henry Mangles Denham (1852 – 1861) during a voyage around Australia and the south west Pacific encountered similar mountainous seas in the Southern Indian Ocean. Calculating wave height in such

conditions is always difficult and allowing for error the waves encountered were well above 30 feet, some estimated 60 feet.

Twentieth century wave observations of the Southern Ocean from satellites now suggests that, at least in a once in a hundred years context, Dumont d'Urville's estimation was not altogether implausible.

Regards Ray Musgrave.

### **RE THE NEW WAIVER AND CODE OF PRACTICE**

Included in this mailing are two new important Cub documents-----

#### **Code of Practice**

We are indebted to Ray Musgrave who has worked on the matter for a considerable time. It is a series of guidelines rather than rules which state how members of the VSKC should act when participating in all the various facets of our sport. We request that all members read it carefully.

It also is intended to demonstrate that we are responsible members of the community and are fully aware of the risks we undertake, and it illustrates that we have a code of practice to hopefully cover these situations.

#### **Club Waiver**

A considerable amount of effort has been put by the Committee in to the preparation of the new Club waiver, and it is intended to be viewed in conjunction with the Code of Practice. We sought two independent legal opinions which both strongly advised us that such a document was necessary. The new waiver is basically a combination of the waivers used by our colleagues in the NSW Sea Kayak Club and Red Cross in the Murray Marathon.

We must emphasise that we have not gone out on our own on this matter—we are merely falling in to line with the policies of similar clubs within Australia and overseas.

**Please**—Read it—Fill it out and forward it back to the Hon.Sec at P.O.Box 426 Seaford 3198---If you have already paid your 1999/2000 subscription, please mark it as "Duplicate". If on the other hand you have not paid---fill it out and post it with a cheque ASAP as otherwise your membership will lapse as renewals were due in November



## VICTORIAN SEA KAYAK CLUB Inc. Registered No. A17985B

THE VICTORIAN SEA KAYAK CLUB is a group of people who enjoy paddling in open waters. There is no such thing as a completely safe trip, as even the most sheltered and protected waters can become dangerous in adverse conditions. Weather is not always predictable, adverse changes can, and will, occur suddenly. Even with the best information at the time, available conditions can be misjudged. Please read carefully Release and Waiver of Liability, Indemnity Agreement and Assumption of Risk. The trip coordinator on club organized trips acts as a focal point to bring together the ideas, energies and resources of the group but are not formal leaders. They are not paid.

### RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY INDEMNITY AGREEMENT AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK

Read carefully before signing

I am aware that my participation in VSKC activities are dangerous, physically demanding and hazardous, involving risk of injury, death, or personal property loss or damage. The risks include, but are not limited to, injury or fatality due to immersion underwater, impact with submerged or exposed objects, slipping and falling, accident or injuries in remote places without medical facilities, sprains, strains, dislocations, or other injuries, exposure to temperature extremes or inclement weather, accidents while travelling to and from activity sites and other risks that may not be known. I am also aware that weather and sea conditions are unpredictable and are dangerous.

In consideration for being permitted to participate in these activities I AGREE.

### AGREEMENT

The Club agrees to allow the participant (a current financial member of the Club) to be involved in activities sponsored or run by the Club or by any member of the Club ("the activities") on the following conditions set out below

1. Any person who is involved in any such activities associated with sea kayaking does so at their own risk and hereby attests that they can swim and are medically and physically fit to participate.
2. It is a condition of participating in the activities that its members, officers and agents are absolved from all liability arising from injury or damage howsoever caused (whether fatal or otherwise, and whether caused by negligence or other breach of duty) arising out of the activities.
3. For myself, my dependents, my heirs, executors or administrators, I waive, release and discharge the Club, and any of their respective officials, servants, volunteers and agents from and against all and any claims or actions which I (or persons claiming through or under me) may have against them or any of them with respect to death, injury or loss of any kind whatsoever suffered or incurred by me even if such death, injury or loss was caused by or contributed to by the act, default or omission (amounting to negligence or otherwise) of the Club, and any of its respective officials servants or agents.

It is also a condition that the participant is solely responsible for the seaworthiness of any equipment used by the participant

The Club is entering in to this Agreement as trustee and agent for its members, officers and agents.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Yearly Membership Dues: ☐ \$25 Individual ☐ \$35 Family

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ E Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Post Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Experience/Qualifications: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

All subscriptions due by the 2<sup>nd</sup> week November.

Please include this entire page, including signing the liability waiver!

Make cheques payable to VSKC and send to: VSKC, PO BOX 426, SEAFORD, 3198



**RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY**  
**INDEMNITY AGREEMENT AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK**