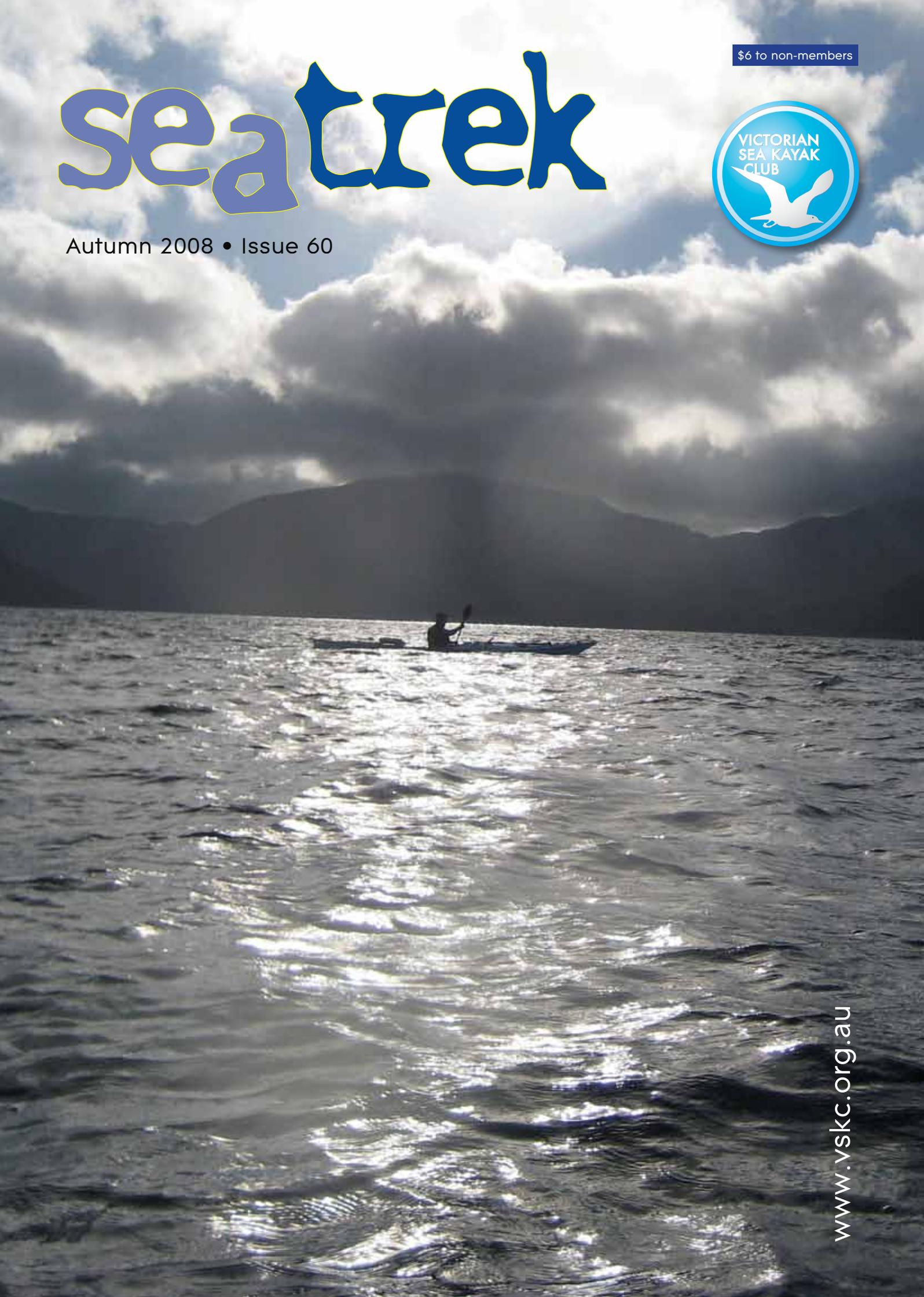


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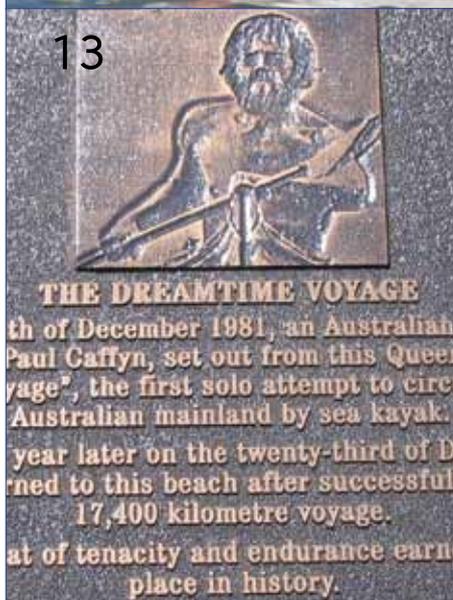
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Cover — passing Sealers’ Cove on dusk

The President comments

by Les Bognar

Welcome paddlers to 2008. We are well into our warm weather paddling season and coming up to more settled weather. This is the best time for some extended trips in our coastal waters. The easterlies settle down and the westerlies have not kicked in.

I have heard members discussing trips to Tasmania and to the Bass Strait Islands. For those of us with less time for longer trips, get on some of the regular trips. If you can't see a trip that suits your time table, contact our club trip convenor Raia Wall to discuss what you might like to do.

At our AGM last November, we presented some initiatives for the year 2008 committee to consider. These included the continuation and ongoing improvement of our current training system and the running of some special events.

On the training and skills development front, Terry Barry gave a great presentation on his research into training models for the consideration of the membership. Options included adopting a training system that complies with the requirements of a national training provider.

The membership clearly supported Terry's recommendation to continue with the current club system and to continue refining it.

It is pleasing that Phil Woodhouse has developed a proficiency manual and kicked

off the level 3 intake in January. It has been said many times that development of trip leaders is fundamental to the viability of our club. The club cannot run trips without trip leaders. So thank you Phil and those level 3 paddlers who continue to run trips.

A special event that was mentioned at the AGM was bringing in overseas 'legends' to visit us to impart their knowledge and experience. I am pleased to confirm that Nigel Dennis will be visiting us in March.

Nigel is renowned as an expedition paddler with a history starting in the 1970s. He is a kayak designer and manufacturer via his company Nigel Dennis Kayaks. He has had a key role in the establishment of training and accreditation standards in the UK.

Nigel will be here for a 'Show and Tell Night' on 29 March. During that same weekend, we will leverage Nigel's know-how through holding training clinics for our instructors and trip leaders. Please check our web site for further details of Nigel's visit.

Late last year, the club held a very special event. It was the commemoration of the Round Australia Kayaking Expedition – RAKE. On 1 December, about 100 VSKC members welcomed Paul Caffyn, Andy Woods and Lesley Hadley back to our shores to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of their successful expedition.

The running of the event and the legacy left behind in the commemorative plaque at the site of the start and end of RAKE is an absolute credit to the VSKC and in particular to the key organisers – David Golightly and Peter Treby.

I feel confident to state that Paul himself was quite moved and very appreciative of our gesture; as the local sea kayaking club, we can feel proud that we have been instrumental in the public recognition deserved by this kayaking odyssey. It is also noteworthy that the Queenscliff Maritime Museum has just received a community service award for their role in the event.

Finally, some important new names on the committee you may need to know. If you are renewing or joining as a member, contact our membership officer, Andrew Campbell. If you want to run or get on a trip then post it up on our web site but if you need advice in organising the trip, contact our trip convenor, Raia Wall.

If you want to find out about training – contact our training officer, Phil Woodhouse. If you want to place a news item on the web, then contact Richard Rawling. All contact details are listed in this issue of *Sea Trek*.

See you on the water.

From the Editor

It's a privilege to be coordinating my first *Sea Trek* issue. I see it as a great opportunity to give back to the VSKC and community of sea kayakers who have all made a positive contribution towards my own experiences on and in the water. Hopefully you all find this issue as equally pleasing as the high standard set by the outgoing coordinator Peter Costello. Well done PC!

Kayaking is enjoying strong growth as a sport, and adventure/multi-sport events like the Anaconda series are starting to lead more and more people into the sport.

As a result, there is an increased need for education in safe paddling techniques and safety gear. Check out stories in this issue on EPIRBs, how to build your own kayak light and the always interesting Kaptin Krusty's Katostraphes. For those starting to advance into trip planning and leadership there is also a great article on the Beaufort scale.

Sadly however, there is only one kayaking trip report in this issue. We simply don't receive enough trip reports, which continues to jeopardise the format and continuance of *Sea Trek* as a regular publication. But this is another great area where you can get involved. A few lines and a pic or two of any trips, events or anything paddling related will be much appreciated as we start to compile the next issue of *Sea Trek*.

Just send your contribution to seatrek@vskc.org.au.

Andy



VSKC agm 2007

Where were you on the weekend of the 10-11 November 2007?

If you weren't at Merricks Lodge for the VSKC AGM, then you missed a great weekend packed full of sea kayaking inspiration and rubbing shoulders with other club members. The organizers should be commended on pulling together a fantastic weekend.

The weekend included some excellent commercial displays where you could check out the latest gear and boats from:

Silverstorm by David Winkworth
Rafta Kayaks by Bob Mitchell
Maelstrom by John Woollard

Gudu Kayaks by Lawrence Geoghegan
East Coast Kayaking with Rob Smith

On the Sunday, a number of workshops were also held so members could chew the fat over such topics as:

Lightweight camping – Terry Barry
Photography – Mick Macrobb
Bomb-proof your roll – Peter Treby
Fibreglass repairs – Bob Mitchel
Wooden boat building – Glenn Taylor

In addition, Malcolm Cowell gave a keynote presentation Saturday night of the many places he has traveled (refer Paddler Profile).



Paddler profile – Malcolm Cowell

by Andy McKie

MC: *Sea Trek* caught up with Malcolm Cowell who was our guest speaker at the AGM.

Malcolm paddled the Prom in '81, Queensland, New South Wales and South Australia in '82/83 and Tassie from '91 onwards, sections of Fiord land and South Island New Zealand from late '80s.

He paddled the west coast of Scotland and Wales coast (solo) in the mid '90s and had a two month solo kayaking trip on the British Columbia and Alaskan coast in 2000, another month in '01.

ST: How and when did you get into sea kayaking?

MC: "Basically because of my rock climbing, so I could access the sea cliffs to go climbing"

ST: What's your boat of choice?

MC: "Anything that's available and floats. As for sea kayaking it depends on what you are doing: long trips, short trips, day trips, surf trips, etc"

ST: What other boats have you owned?

MC: "Do you want a whole list? Arctic Explorers, Ice Flows, Nordcaps, All the dagger boats, wilderness boats, plastic boats, fiberglass boats, kevlar boats."

ST: So that's just about every boat under the sun!

ST: What's your paddle of choice?

MC: "For longer paddling I use a Werner Camano. For inshore stuff I've got Lendal ABS's with carbon kevlar shafts. If I'm doing a head banging surf session I want something strong."

ST: What is your one piece of "don't leave home without it paddling kit?"

MC: "Brains"

ST: How often do you get out on the water?

MC: "Usually around 200 days a year"

ST: Have you ever used a dedicated training program?

MC: "Yes. The British Canoe Union Coaches"

ST: was that for a specific event?

MC: "That was coaching training for a Slalom event, equivalent of the AIS type stuff"

ST: What is your favorite trip / place to paddle of all time

MC: "Where ever I am at the time. But actually in Australia it's got to be anywhere in Bass Strait and overseas its West coast of Canada"

ST: Have you ever had a mishap on the water – what did you learn?

MC: "It depends on what your definition of mishap is. You have experiences. Yes I've been plastered by huge surf and I've come across other groups who've had sinking boats."

ST: What's the biggest wave you've been hit by?

MC: "about 7 metres on the west coast of New Zealand. Not deliberately by the way, I wasn't watching where I was going"

ST: What's your next major trip planned?

MC: In a sea kayak? Canada next year, but I'll be paddling bass strait and those little places over the next few months".

ST: Do you have any other long term paddle dreams you would like to fulfill

MC: "Around about 200 year's worth. I've got trips I've wanted to do and will be doing. I'll be in Patagonia in 2010, back into Alaska in 2011 and back into Scotland after that.

ST: What do you eat when in the saddle?

MC: "Anything I can buy in the shop before I get out there. On a serious note, far too much chocolate"

ST: What do you drink when on the stick?

MC: "Lots of water"



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The Beaufort wind scale is a world renowned method for mariners to understand the relationship between wind strength, state-of-sea and wave height. However, you may have noticed in different references the Beaufort wind scale has different values and descriptors for the twelve wind force scales. To help understand this apparent anomaly a look at history will provide a answer.

There is nothing new under the sun

It is speculated ancient mariners also used a rating system for piloting their craft, but no records have been found. By the late fifteenth century, Arab mariners had extensively recorded and categorized all relevant weather related to navigation.

Records from the seventeenth century show wind rating scales, observations and descriptions had been devised and used by mariners. In 1704, Daniel Defoe records a twelve point scale referred to as a 'table of degrees' used by sailors. In 1801 a wind scale had been produced through the efforts of Colonel Capper of the East India Company. Colonel Capper's *Observations on the winds and monsoons* were taken from the scientific work of a Mr Rous.

Refer to fig. 1 Beaufort's scale of wind force from 1806.

The British Admiralty, as you would expect, published a pamphlet on such matters but there was no standard and one naval officers stiff breeze may be a soft breeze to another. In 1805 the commander of HMS Woolwich, Francis Beaufort, devised a numerical wind scale.

Beaufort's 1805 scale consisted of thirteen states of wind strength from calm (0) to hurricane (12). In his private log on 13 January 1806, he recorded for the first time his scale of wind force stating he would 'hereafter estimate the force of the wind according to the following scale'.

At the time he devised the scale of wind force, he devised a scale of weather notation. In fact no record was found in HMS Woolwich's ship's log or in any of

Category	Description
0	Calm
1	Faint air just not calm
2	Light airs
3	Light breeze
4	Gentle breeze
5	Moderate breeze
6	Fresh breeze
7	Gentle steady gale
8	Moderate gale
9	Brisk gale
10	Fresh gale
11	Hard gale
12	Hard gale with heavy gusts
13	Storm

Fig. 1 Beaufort's scale of wind force from 1806

the ship's logs on which Beaufort held command of either the scale of wind force or scale of weather notation.

Interestingly, the sixteen page obituary for Rear-Admiral, Sir Francis Beaufort, who died in 1857, does not mention the scale which bears his name, but focuses on his work as hydrographer of the navy to which he was appointed in 1829 and his twenty-five year administration of the Hydrographic Office of the Admiralty in creating the admiralty chart.

Refer to fig. 2 Beaufort's combined scale of wind force and recorded description of canvas.

Beaufort was not interested in wind velocities as a scientific study, but the effect it had on the prime ship of the day, a fully rigged frigate. In 1807 he combined the first two scales (fig. 1) and his recorded description of the canvas (sails) that could be carried by a fully rigged frigate in different wind conditions (fig. 2).

In 1831 Captain Beaufort commissioned the 1831 to 1836 voyage of the *Beagle* under the command of his friend Captain Robert FitzRoy and carrying the naturalist Charles Darwin. A memorandum to FitzRoy, outlined a version of a wind scale that could be divided into three sections. The first five states (forces 0-4) described a ship's speed with all sails set clean and full, in smooth water.

The next five (forces 5-9) focused on the ship's mission, the chase and its sail-carrying ability. The last three states (forces 10-12) referred to a ship's survivability in gales, storms, or hurricanes. This is the first time Captain Beaufort's scale was officially used.

In 1832 the *Nautical Magazine* published an article entitled 'The Log Board'. This article is the first time a reference to Beaufort's 'scales of wind force and weather notation' had been made public.

In December 1838, the British Admiralty in a memorandum to 'all Captains and Commanding Officers of Her Majesty's Ships and Vessels' made the Beaufort scale official for all ship log entries; as it provided a standard within the Royal Navy.

By the 1850s the scale was adopted for non-naval use and the scale's figures related to the rotations of a cup anemometer but this method was not standardized until 1923. In 1874 the Beaufort scale was revised to reflect changes in the rigging of warships.

In circa 1894 the sail requirements of fishing smacks was included. As the square-rigged frigate disappeared over the horizon of history and the steamship propelled itself into history the Beaufort scale was modified to keep up with the changing technology and thinking.

In 1903 equivalent wind speeds were introduced through scientific observations and calculations. In 1906 the Permanent Committee of the First Meteorological Congress met and adopted the Beaufort wind scale for international use in meteorological telegrams.

The original Beaufort force numbers were altered to refer to the sea's appearance and degrees of motion of trees instead of the sails on a frigate. However, ambiguities arose for the sea state also relies upon swell, fetch, water depth, tidal streams and ocean currents.

Beaufort scale - early nineteenth century					
0	calm				
1	light air	just sufficient to give steerage way.		light breeze	Sufficient wind for working ship.
2	light breeze	That in which a well-conditioned man-of-war with all sail set and "clean full" would go in smooth water from	1 to 2 knots		
3	gentle breeze		3 to 4 knots		
4	moderate breeze	That to which she could just carry in close "full and by"	5 to 6 knots	moderate breeze	Forces most advantageous for sailing with leading wind and all sail drawing.
5	fresh breeze		Royals, &c.		
6	strong breeze		Single-reefed topsails or topgallant sails.	strong wind	Reduction of sail necessary even with leading wind.
7	moderate/near gale		Double-reefed topsails, jib, &c.		
8	fresh gale/gale		Triple-reefed topsails, &c.	gale forces	Considerable reduction of sail necessary even with wind quartering.
9	strong gale	Close-reefed topsails and courses.			
10	whole gale/storm	That which she could scarcely bear with close-reefed main topsail and reefed foresail	storm forces	Close reefed sail running, or hove to under storm sail.	
11	storm/violent storm	That which would reduce her to storm stay-sails			
12	hurricane	That which no canvas could withstand.		hurricane	No sail can stand even when running

Fig. 2 Beaufort's combined scale of wind force and recorded description of canvas

In 1927 a German sea captain Petersen, devised and published the familiar sea state descriptors from 0 to 12. Petersen's scales were merged into Beaufort's wind forces scale. Even though mariners and meteorologists had adopted the Beaufort wind scale in 1906, it was not until 1939 that it was adopted by the International Meteorological Organization.

The International Meteorological Organization adopted the correlation with wind speeds at 6 metres (31 feet) however, the USA and UK had already standardized their measurements at 11 metres (36 feet). In 1946, the International Meteorological Committee further defined the scale by ranges of the wind speed measured at 10 metres (33 feet) as represented in Fig. 3. To categorize cyclones (hurricanes, typhoons, tornados etc), forces 13 to 17 were added.

In 1971 two separate cyclone categorization systems were developed; the Fujita-Pearson scale (Fujita scale) for tornadoes

and soon after the Saffir-Simpson scale for hurricanes.

Strictly speaking the scale and descriptors are for a fully developed sea; meaning the wind over its maximum distance has produced waves of maximum height. If you refer to nautical wind, time and fetch tables you will see the correlation.

The following warning used to be attached to the copies of the Beaufort scale issued to mariners: 'a guide to show roughly what may be expected on the open sea, remote from land'.

In Australia, winds are classified in to a broad range of Beaufort scales of: light wind classes 1 to 3 (1-10 kn), moderate wind classes 4 to 5 (11-21), strong winds classes 6-7 (22-33 kn) and gale force winds classes 8 to 9 (34-47 kn). For authoritative information on interpreting and understanding the BOM marine forecast go to Marine Weather Services at <http://www.bom.gov.au/info/marine/marpamp.shtml>.

Beaufort scale number	Descriptive term	Units in km/h	Units in knots	Description on land	Description at Sea
0	Calm	0	0	Smoke rises vertically	Sea like a mirror
1-3	Light winds	19 km/h or less	10 knots or less	Wind felt on face; leaves rustle; ordinary vanes moved by wind	Small wavelets, ripples formed but do not break: a glassy appearance maintained
4	Moderate winds	20 - 29 km/h	11-16 knots	Raises dust and loose paper; small branches are moved	Small waves – becoming longer; fairly frequent white horses
5	Fresh winds	30 - 39 km/h	17-21 knots	Small trees in leaf begin to sway; crested wavelets form on inland waters	Moderate waves, taking a more pronounced long form; many white horses are formed – a chance of some spray
6	Strong winds	40 - 50 km/h	22-27 knots	Large branches in motion; whistling heard in telephone wires; umbrellas used with difficulty	Large waves begin to form; the white foam crests are more extensive with probably some spray
7	Near gale	51 - 62 km/h	28-33 knots	Whole trees in motion; inconvenience felt when walking against wind	Sea heaps up and white foam from breaking waves begins to be blown in streaks along direction of wind
8	Gale	63 - 75 km/h	34-40 knots	Twigs break off trees; progress generally impeded	Moderately high waves of greater length; edges of crests begin to break into spindrift; foam is blown in well-marked streaks along the direction of the wind
9	Strong gale	76 - 87 km/h	41-47 knots	Slight structural damage occurs - roofing dislodged; larger branches break off	High waves; dense streaks of foam; crests of waves begin to topple, tumble and roll over; spray may affect visibility
10	Storm	88 - 102 km/h	48-55 knots	Seldom experienced inland; trees uprooted; considerable structural damage	Very high waves with long overhanging crests; the resulting foam in great patches is blown in dense white streaks; the surface of the sea takes on a white appearance; the tumbling of the sea becomes heavy with visibility affected
11	Violent storm	103 -117 km/h	56-63 knots	Very rarely experienced - widespread damage	Exceptionally high waves; small and medium sized ships occasionally lost from view behind waves; the sea is completely covered with long white patches of foam; the edges of wave crests are blown into froth
12+	Hurricane	118 km/h or more	64 knots or more		The air is filled with foam and spray, sea completely white with driving spray; visibility very seriously affected

Fig. 3

Accessed from <http://www.bom.gov.au/lam/glossary/beaufort.shtml> 19Dec07

Notes: the description at sea does not mention 'far out to sea' where the waves are in deep water and unaffected by the sea floor.

Beaufort scale numbers and descriptive terms such as 'near gale', 'strong gale' and 'violent storm' are not normally used in Bureau of Meteorology communications or forecasts.

Lorne Anaconda Adventure Race 2007

by Grant Suckling

Adventure racing (AR) is quickly gaining momentum throughout Australia and can be enjoyed by anyone with a dusty old pair of KT26s, a rusty Malvern Star in the shed, and any old seaworthy boat (let's assume we've all got one of those!).

For me, sadly, that's a lot of codswallop. The past year has bought about some fairly serious stretch marks for the family budget, the first of which was decided as I staggered over the finish line in thirtieth place at last year's Anaconda AR at Lorne in 5:24:39 muttering the words "I've gotta get a faster boat".

In a matter of weeks, I had ordered my Epic V10, a very fast ocean racing ski that comes in over 10 kg lighter than my Mirage 580. The V10 paddles beautifully and has been a joy to get to know, hard to believe from my first wobbly paddles that you can edge these beautiful boats right down to the gunnels and feel absolute comfort and stability. For those of you who have not had the chance to experience the joy of unrestrained speed, I highly recommend giving one a try.

So, the boat was under control for 2007, "don't worry honey, that'll be all I need to get", I said cheerfully.

Rapid Ascent, who organise ARs including the Anaconda National Series, run course familiarisation days which are a lot of fun. They're basically organised training sessions where you go over the course and can get some pointers from some of the best going around. I partook in two this year, and fortunately only managed to snap one bike.

The good news was, I would receive a warranty credit for the frame. The bad news was my brakes and wheels, basically everything wouldn't fit on the new style frames. The message from my wife was reasonably clear at this point – you better go really fast!

With the gear under control I got on with the last of my training. It's been a big year in that department for me, kicking off with several sea kayaking trips in preparation for the Bass Straight crossing with Andy McKie and Shaun Connolly (see Andy's story from last *Sea Trek*), followed by some tippy months in a K1 chasing the boys from the Geelong Canoe Club up and down the Barwon River. I had a pretty decent time in the Mars Challenge paddle, and also ran a PB in the Melbourne Half Marathon (87 minutes).

The final weeks before Anaconda, Lorne saw me training with AR legend and *very* tidy paddler, John Jacoby. An insight into how and where he trains was shocking at first (!), but I soon began to enjoy pushing that little bit harder and found that I was feeling reasonably strong.

The weeks wore down before I knew it, and before long I was enjoying the 'taper', eating plenty and resting lots. I had arranged a four day weekend for the Lorne

race and was looking forward to getting to Cumberland River early to kick back and relax. Things didn't go to plan on the Friday however and the relaxing day I had planned was spent with last minute preparations and errands that had to be run.

I finally completed the camp setup late in the afternoon feeling reasonable shagged, and was just about to sit down for a well earned rest when I decided it would be wise to get the bike and boat off the roof and give them the quick once over. A good habit I guess, especially when you realise you've lost you rudder!

Okay, no rudder ... I don't care how good you are, you can't paddle a 6.5 metre boat that's barely over 40 cm wide in an ocean race effectively without a rudder. The next 3-4 hours were spent scanning the side of the road between Geelong and Cumberland River looking for it, the whole time rocking back and forth in my seat whilst muttering incoherently, all to no avail.

It was during this time that I put the call out to some of the great people that I've had the pleasure of meeting over the past year in an attempt to find a replacement.

In hindsight, if I'd have known to expect the speed with which the alarm call went through the paddling fraternity in Geelong and surrounds, I could have saved a couple of hours drive.

Before I knew it, every man and his dog was chasing a rudder for little old me. I received two very kind offers to lend matching rudders within two hours, both from complete strangers, one with a full 3 degrees of separation!

I picked up a loan rudder from 'G-Boards' in Torquay. The rudder was off a brand new boat which meant that they couldn't sell it, but their compassion for my plight outweighed their sales aspirations, an unusual attitude in a modern world, and one for which I was sincerely grateful.

At just after 8 pm I rolled back into camp where my wife was putting our girls to bed. Feeling like I'd already raced, I crawled into bed knowing that something wasn't quite right with the mechanics of my stress addled body.

That night I woke with uncontrollable shakes, unable to get warm one minute, and saturated with sweat the next. Stress reached peak levels when the left hamstring started to cramp at around 2 am, not what should be happening this close to the race, especially when I'd done all the right things – Chiropractor, massage, kept the fluids up, eaten the right food.

The following morning I had sore muscles throughout my body. The illness climaxed during the competitor briefing that evening when my neck seized up as well. I knew I was sick, that was a no brainer. The question as to whether I'd get better or not before the race was dealt a blow when I met a mate in the race area who had pulled out of the race. He told me "I can't regulate my body temperature, my muscles are all sore, feel like crap. Felt worse yesterday so could probably do it, but not sure ..."



With Luke showing the same symptoms, I decided to hold onto the fact that he had felt worse yesterday, in the hope this was a 24 hour bug that would be right in the morning. I went to bed very early with a couple of Nurofen and a herbal calmativ/muscle relaxant tablet, and hoped for the best.

Morning came swiftly, which is always a good sign. The neck was a little stiff, but not disastrous. Legs felt okay I guess, maybe not 100%, but markedly better than yesterday. She'll be right!

The event area was buzzing. Everyone was in high spirits, the weather forecast was in and those whose balance in a boat was an issue were in for good news. Calm seas, again! John Jacoby is the luckiest race director in the country, three years in a row of calm seas and balmy weather in Lorne!

As we unloaded the boat, I bumped into numerous people I knew, but the sad face of Terry Poole stood out. His son Ben has represented Australia six times in kayaking, but Ben had snapped a borrowed boat the day before and was going to have to paddle a short stubby plastic boat without any chance of being even remotely competitive. I realised I still had the phone number of the bloke who'd offered me his rudder, Glen Martini. He hadn't planned to use his boat, also an Epic V10, and as luck would have it, he was standing 100 metres away. He very generously allowed a complete stranger to borrow it for the day, and Ben's

Grant — well clear of other paddlers

eventual time helped his team to a podium finish in the mixed teams' category, thanks in no small part to Glen's generosity.

As I was ready to depart, I wandered past Michael Young, he had just learned that Dana Wagner had lost the knuckle of her two piece paddle. "Do you have a spare paddle Grant?", said Michael "yeah, no worries mate" I replied.

It wasn't until I allowed a large car out of the car park ahead of me to ease the flow of traffic that my support crew, Glen Pasque, laughed and said in jest "geez mate, if good karma counts today, you'll go top ten!" I laughed too.

Seemingly moments later the race had started. It seems to happen like that. The build up lasts for an eternity, then you don't even remember the gun, you're just in the middle of hundreds of flailing arms and legs and life outside the race no longer exists.

The swim was first, my weakest leg, 1.9 km from the Lorne pier to behind the breakers in front of the Lorne SLSC, then swimming parallel to the beach to the rock groyne 500 m further down the beach.

As I swam I ran the mental diagnostics on the body, no alarm bells, swimming smoothly, concentrate on technique, slow down, it's going to be a long day.

I hit the beach feeling good, ran the 500 metres to transition smoothly without any issues, things with the body might be okay. Transition to paddle was so fast it shocked my support man, Glen.

I was super keen to get into the kayak, my best leg, and take back some of the places I'd lost in the swim (141 to be exact). I glanced at my watch as I jumped into the kayak, I had done the swim over a minute faster than last year, and was feeling relaxed and confident as I pulled though the very small beach break at Lorne.

I made a bee-line for the end of the pier, and already noticed the inexperienced paddlers drifting away to sea as they paddled off the racing line. I concentrated hard on my technique as I hunted the ocean for every tiny advantage. The Epic V10 will run on the smallest imaginable waves, and every little bit counts once you turn around the breakers past the pier and make for Artillery Rocks.

My paddling experience and comfort in my boat helped immensely as the crowd continued to paddle out to sea, my confidence in the safety of the nimble kayak allowed me to shave good distance off the paddle by heading point to point and comfortably negotiate the rebound swell as I continued down the coast.

The hour and 15 minutes it took to paddle the 13 km (this includes transition to run) went by surprisingly quickly.

As I neared the turn around the buoy, I decided to count the returning paddlers to see how far from the front I was. Twenty remained ahead of me as I charged to the beach at Cumberland River Great paddle! Now I was feeling good, but for how long? I had no way of knowing how many of the



people ahead of me were teams and how many were individuals, but knew I must surely be well ahead of expectations at this point. Transition to the run felt slow, but it was essential to wash sand off my feet before putting shoes on or blisters would be terrible over the arduous terrain to come. The run starts with a river crossing, so shoes would be saturated from the outset. Within the first five minutes of the run, I knew I wasn't 100%, but I also knew I was better than expected considering yesterday's illness. I overtook two individual racers in the first couple of kilometres, and was careful to regulate my speed so as not to spend it all too early. The climb was a killer as expected, slowing me to a walk on more than one occasion.

Once on top of the hill, the fresh team runners started to pick me off, but I didn't see another individual until half way down the other side, where Rob Preston bounded past me like I was standing still! "Here they come", I thought,

After belting down the hill back to the ocean, there's a further 6 km run along the rocky coastline back to Lorne over rocks that in places are big enough to dwarf your average car.

Fatigue had well and truly caught up when I reached Lorne, muscles had started to feel empty and the initial alarm bells had started to call faintly from various corners of the body. What was unexpected was the enthusiasm of the massive crowd as I made my way up the beach to the transition chute.

A voice boomed over the loud speakers "Ladies and gentlemen, Grant Suckling, what an amazing effort! Up in seventh place, that's an incredible effort, give him a huge cheer as he passes through, fantastic stuff!"

Seventh place, wow! Tingles trickled all the way from the top of my head down my back as I allowed the applause to carry me up the stairs into the second last transition for the day.

Familiar faces greeted me with surprise and enthusiastic encouragement as I ran to my bike, or rather, someone else's bike. Good thing I figured that one out in time! What a relief it was to sit down on my trusty steed, I knew the feeling wouldn't last, but thoroughly enjoyed being off my feet for a while.

The bike leg is where the illness caught up with me, a sheer in my pelvis that had caused the hamstring spasms had been sufficiently aggravated to tighten up my lower back and cause a horrible pain just below my twelfth rib on the left hand side.

The pain increased in intensity with every bump as I pushed onwards up the seemingly endless hills. Near the top, the leg cramps started to come, I had taken on electrolytes, plenty of fluids, and plenty of carbohydrates, but racing at this pace was always going to catch up with me.

300 metres before the top I was caught by another individual, Tony Freijah. Tony is an awesome athlete from Geelong, and seeing him there only bought one thought to my mind, do I have a right to be at this end of the field with blokes like this?

Somewhere in my head I could hear the word "no", but encouragingly, a few other words too "maybe" "why not", followed by a little Leyton Hewitt "c'mon!".

My optimism was short lived and replaced by fear that ten more people would catch me before the line. It was this fear and determination that drove me on to complete what was the tenth fastest individual male bike time for the day, a feat which I still find hard to comprehend, considering the emotional hurdles I faced on that hill.

Those of you who run know that 2.8 km is not that far. However, the last leg of the Anaconda AR is the most cruel punishment I have ever experienced. To hop off one's bike and run over soft sand having already raced for over four hours hurts, a lot. The whole time you wonder how many other competitors might run you down as you struggle to get messages from your brain to your legs.

Assistance came from the dozens of team competitors wandering along the beach towards the final transition to run with their riders back along the same beach. Unfortunately they all spoke the same words "not long now...". Not wanting to disappoint them I elected not to ask them to turn around and take a look for themselves at the speck in the distance that resembled a mirage which could have been the finish line!

I forbade myself a look back up the beach behind me until the last few hundred metres. What a relief, I had been near panic since Tony passed me but not a soul was there, I would hold eighth position!

Moments later I saw Iris and the kids, and Iris' parents who had come down to see me race, they were exploding with excitement for me and I finally knew beyond doubt

that I had obliterated last year's demons. Hopefully I can bury them a little deeper next year!

I was now Grant Suckling – top ten Anaconda Adventure racer, time 4:35:43!

A note on next year

As normal as paddling is to us in the VSKC, it is completely foreign to the majority of sports enthusiasts attempting this race. Accepting that the ocean paddling skills we as sea kayakers possess are fairly unique, we can make a difference by participating in these events to encourage a generation of active healthy people living it up in the great outdoors.

I encourage you all to challenge yourselves to put together a team and assure you the rewards will come on more levels than you will expect.

My congratulations to everyone at Rapid Ascent for what is an awesome event and thanks to everyone involved, especially those passionate enough to dedicate their time for free to assist and motivate others.



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If there is ever a coming of age, then the Victorian Sea Kayak Club has emphatically, as well as formally, been presented to the world-wide paddling community.

2 December 2007 was the day when sea kayakers from Australia, New Zealand and around the world acknowledged publicly, the achievements of expedition sea kayaker Paul Caffyn. The VSKC initiated event was organised to commemorate and celebrate, Paul's epic sea kayaking adventure twenty-five years ago around continental Australia.

The voyage was known as 'Round Australia Kayak Expedition' aka RAKE and was successfully completed in December 1982. Paul departed Queenscliff in December 1981 from in front of the Port Phillip Sea Pilots station and headed off in his anti-clockwise circumnavigation. Three hundred and sixty days later, with the tenacious support of two faithful friends Andy Woods and Lesley Hadley he returned to the same location after paddling 9420 nautical miles (17 446 km) in the often life-threatening epic journey. Some years later in 1992, Paul published his account in a book entitled *The Dreamtime Voyage*.

Twenty-five years ago, Paul and his support team were cheered on the beach below Shortland's Bluff by a handful of people, including a Channel 10 TV reporter who opened a two dollar bottle of cheap bubbly and sprayed it over Paul's head. Later in a wonderful reflective tribute, Paul writes. "The dreamtime voyage was complete. My impossible dream had been realised. Lesley, Andy and I, faces flushed with excitement, toasted each other's health with swigs from the bottle. We'd made a

brilliant team. There was no way I could have achieved the goal without Andy and Lesley's support".

Twenty five years later, Paul and Andy re-enacted the last stage of their historic achievement by paddling back to the place where it all began and finished. Paul paddling his original 'vitamin C yellow' RAKE kayak *Lalaguli* which translated means 'water nymph' for the final time before it goes on display at the Queenscliff Maritime Museum.

Under a brilliant blue sky and on a turquoise patchwork colored sea, they were again greeted at the beach by Lesley and of course the 'cheap bubbly'. This time however it was to the applause of a hundred invited guests as well as other on-lookers and representatives of the local media.

A surprisingly loud 'boom' from the Queenscliff Maritime Museum's miniature canon, the same one Les Irving-Dusting used to send Sandy Robson off on her journey around the coast a year previously, echoed across the waters of The Ri' and from high above on Shortland's Bluff, a lone piper, Roy Kilner, played Paul's favourite pipe tune – *Going Home*.

In contrast to the original 1982 landing, many special guests joined in the celebrations of the RAKE crew's achievements including the mayor of the borough of Queenscliffe Cr Pat Semmens accompanied by counsellors Val Lawrence and Stephen Lee. In her address, the mayor proudly reminded the RAKE team that the town had carefully preserved the original celebratory (but empty) bottle

from 1982, which is now on display in the historic museum.

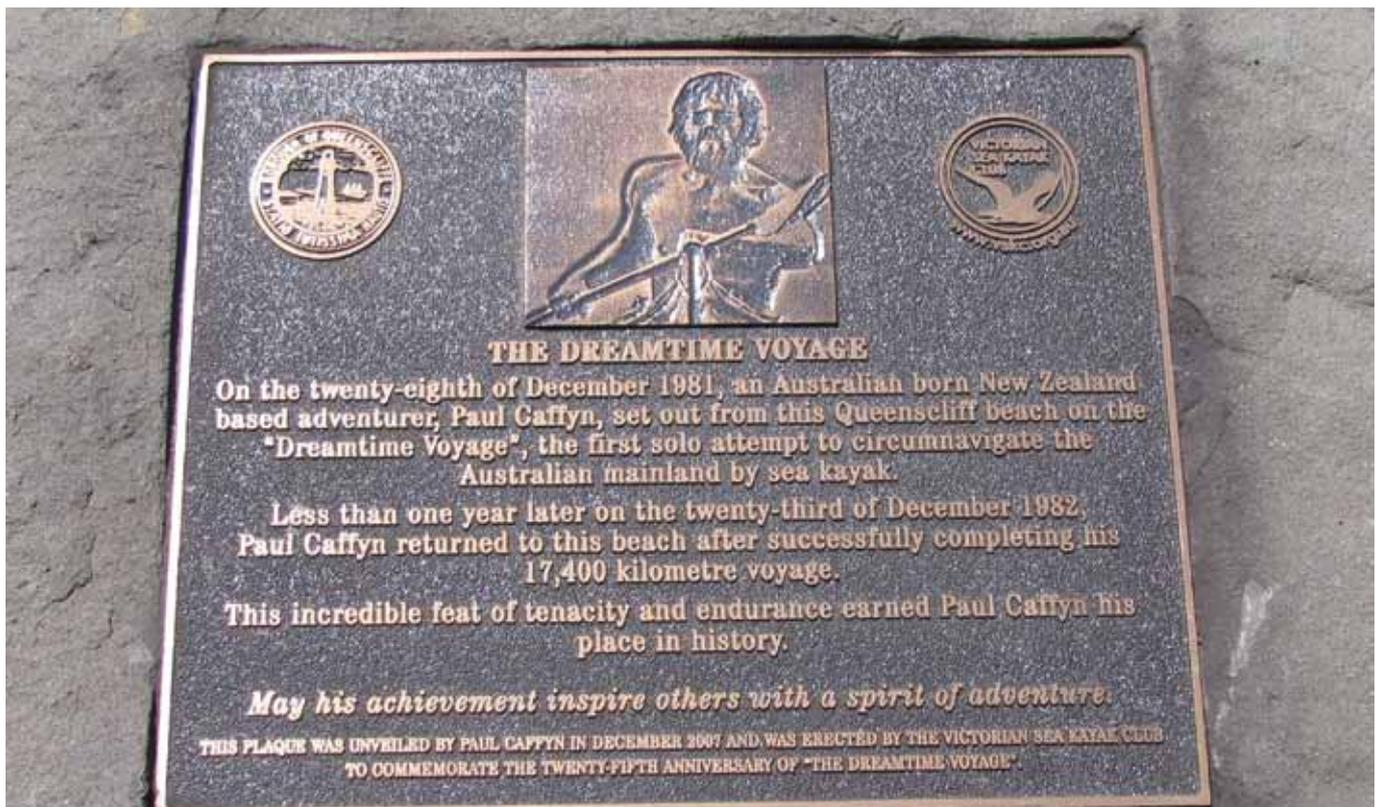
The Queenscliff Maritime Museum staff turned up in strength led by the chairman and 'canon-master' Mr Les Irving-Dusting, curator June Negri and their board.

The 'Kalbarri Piper', Ken Wilson who twenty-five years ago piped Dvorak's *New World Symphony Going Home* for Paul as he set out from Kalbarri and later at Denmark in WA travelled all the way from Perth to be part of the event. Now eighty, Ken commented "I wouldn't have missed this for the world'.

Present also were sea kayakers representing the Kiwi Association of Sea Kayakers, Julie Reynolds; Western Australia Sea Kayak Club, Terry Bolland; Lee Killingworth and Stuart Trueman from the New South Wales Sea Kayak Club; and the Tasmanian Sea Kayak Club represented by Carolyn and Basil McKinley. Earl de Blonville, a former VSKC president also travelled from interstate to join in the celebrations.

After some time on the beach conducting media interviews and taking photographs it was time to commence the official part of the event. *Lalaguli*, was carried ceremoniously up from the beach and placed in front of the official dais on top of the bluff, which over looks what is now unofficially known as 'Caffyn Cove'.

Near the historic Queenscliff fort, another moment in history was about to be frozen for all time. A magnificent bronze plaque set in local stone and bearing witness to the spirit of adventure and the strength of friendship awaited unveiling. Fittingly for



the first time in twenty-five years, the three RAKE crew were reunited at the scene of their greatest triumph.

Salutations and felicitations were made under a blazing sun by Queenscliff mayor Cr Pat Semmens and the current and former presidents of the VSKC, Les Bognar and Peter Treby.

As all the speakers recounted Paul's achievements in sea kayaking and particularly RAKE, he fidgeted in his chair and called for brevity. Lesley sat between Paul and Andy with a smile that competed with the brilliance of the sun. After Paul had spoken briefly and thanked all concerned, it was finally time for the unveiling of the RAKE commemorative plaque.

The plaque was hidden under the cover of a tepee shaped structure appropriately constructed from paddles and a black curtain. At the invitation of VSKC president Les Bognar, Paul stepped forward and unveiled the plaque to the accompanying 'wow' that rippled through the crowd.

Lesley Hadley read out loud the inscription to the crowd including the special words – "May his achievement inspire others with a spirit of adventure" and then it was over to a photo session around the plaque for the three adventurers. After the photos, it was time to move down to the Queenscliff Maritime Museum.

Lalaguli was picked up and ceremoniously carried down the bluff to the accompaniment of kilted pipers Lindsay Burgess and Roy Kilner; followed by a large group of people in procession. Bemused on-lookers picnicking in the park stared at the procession, took photographs and even asked questions.

The understatement in their replies belied their comprehension of what Paul

had gone through and the goal he had achieved. In fact who can? Possibly only Andy who accompanied Paul on many legs of the trip and, of course, Lesley who as Paul says in his book "never failed to believe in what I was doing and never doubted that I had the capability to persevere and complete the trip, even when I thought the end of the world was nigh."

To this day, despite somewhere in the order of twenty attempts, Paul Caffyn's circumnavigation has never been repeated, this gives some inkling as to how tough a time he and his team really had in 1982.

At the Queenscliff Maritime Museum in front of the entrance doorway a life size model of *Lalaguli* and Paul with a broad brim straw hat beckoned the curious to stop and look. We were greeted by the very hospitable and pleasant *Friends of the Museum* who had done a wonderful job of laying on refreshments and organising a display of the RAKE adventure.

Inside the QMM building, *Lalaguli*, complete with paddle and Paul's PFD, were handed over to the custodianship of Mr Les Irving-Dusting and June Negri. Paul also kindly gifted a signed copy of his book *The Dreamtime Voyage* for the museum library. After the handing over speeches the grateful guests enjoyed a continuous supply of sandwiches and finger food.

By 1600 hours, VSKC members and guests had started to depart for the two hour drive back to Melbourne and the Mordialloc Sailing Club for the 'after party'.

The Mordialloc Sailing Club was decorated with many letters of tribute to Paul; sent to the VSKC from the 'who's who' of sea kayakers from around the world.

Contributors included the respected John Dowd, founder of the acclaimed magazine *Sea Kayaker*, who describes Paul Caffyn as 'In a class of his own'.

Following a welcome and introduction by Les Bognar, representatives from the various sea kayaking bodies were given the opportunity to say a few words in support of the celebrations. Paul, much to the delight of the audience, magnificently dressed for this auspicious occasion in a grey tuxedo, presented a slide show covering the 1982 expedition. Andy and Lesley assisted Paul in the re-telling of their adventure by reading from their personal diaries.

Unfortunately, time did not allow us to hear all of Lesley's and Andy's adventures on how they got supplies through to Paul in the remote areas of Australia driving a Holden HQ panel van, *Ulladulla*, into and out of places that locals thought impossible. However as Paul acknowledged in his book 'The successful conclusion of the Dreamtime Voyage was purely the result of a team effort'.

At the conclusion of the RAKE team's presentation, Paul publicly thanked the Victorian Sea Kayak Club and in particular the event management team of David Golightly and Peter Treby. The next day Paul had one last commitment, a ten minute interview on the ABC radio programme *Australia All Over* with Ian (Macca) McNamara. A program which also coincidentally has been on-air for twenty-five years and as well as being broadcast nationally is listened to around the world via the web.

So after quarter of a century, the RAKE crew who had not previously been reunited as a group of three finally came together to share with and inspire us with their wonderful personalities, special bond and their unique account of *The Dreamtime Voyage*.



On Friday 30 November 2007, two paddlers "K" and "A" were driven to Tidal River at Wilson's Promontory by a friend. They had hired, but not paid for, two sea kayaks from The Kayak Shop at Sandringham. They had also hired two 406 Mhz epirbs. They had GPS and compasses, and mobile phones. They did not have handheld VHF radios. The pair intended to paddle a Bass Strait crossing via the "eastern route", i.e. from Wilson's Promontory via Hogan, Kent Group, Flinders Island, to the Tasmanian mainland.

K and A had started hiring kayaks from Sandringham in January 2007. They do not appear to have done any sea kayaking before then. They were sponsored for the trip, with the intention of raising money for a children's charity. By June 2007 they told Rob Smith, proprietor of The Kayak Shop of their plans to cross Bass Strait.

Rob had advised them to seek advice from experienced kayakers before doing so. They responded that they did not want to talk to people who would only tell them not to go.

Their kayaking experience seems to have been limited to hiring kayaks and paddling on Port Phillip.

The pair did not leave a trip plan or float plan. The epirbs they hired, being 406 Mhz epirbs, were identified with them as hirers, but had their own mobile phones as the contact. As the pair carried those mobile phones on their trip, this left rescuers with no shore base with which to check their intentions.

K and A launched from Tidal River on Sunday 2 December 2007 at midday, intending to paddle around to the east side of the Promontory, as the first leg of their trip. That day, a NNE wind blew most of the day, at between 15 and 20 knots, giving a tail wind across land for the initial trip south to the tip.

The pair paddled to Norman Point. They said to police that the weather became worse. That impression may have been because they were then out of the shelter of Norman Bay, and the fetch for the chop was now greater. They continued south but became separated, probably after they had passed Oberon Point. A paddled back up towards Oberon Point. He did not know where K was.

He reached a place near a large cave along this section of steep cliffy granite coast. He tried to land but abandoned his kayak, then scrambled onto rocks. The kayak and all gear stored in it has not been recovered. Police thought it may have sunk. A moved about 50 metres away from the water into scrub. There are no walking tracks along this section of coast.

In the evening, A set off his epirb. Aussar picked up the signal around 10.00 pm. A rescue call out was then referred to Victoria Police. Gippsland Water Police from Paynesville responded, bringing a small "rubber ducky" vessel and search and rescue equipment including rope and

a radio signal tracking device, which can be used to home in on an epirb signal. A helicopter and a fixed wing Dornier aircraft were despatched. The air search narrowed the search area to the coast south of Oberon Point.

By Monday morning, 3 December, the wind had dropped to 5 knots in the early hours around 4.00 am and shifted to W to SW. It picked up to 18 knots at 6.00-7.00 am, then dropped again to under 10 knots. Police who conducted the rescue thought the conditions reasonable.

Police arrived at Tidal River around 3.30 am and launched before dawn, around 4.30 am. Prior to launching, they learned that the other epirb held by K had been activated. They carried a tracking device. They used the device all the way south past Oberon Point and further, until the epirb signal started to get weaker, then backtracked. They shouted and eventually located A on the rocks around 6.00 am.

They stopped the boat. The police could not bring the boat close to the rocky shoreline due to swell. They threw a line to A who was asked to wrap it around his arm. He came close to the water's edge, and police pulled him into the water and brought him onboard the inflatable. It was an "eyeballs like saucers" situation for A. He was dressed in shorts over synthetic long johns, spray skirt, and spray jacket. He was hypothermic and was placed in a Mustang suit for warm up.

The vessel headed back towards Tidal River. Along the way, two police jet skis coming south were given the news. They continued south to search for the other paddler. The rubber duck returned to Tidal River after 8.00 am.

After separating from A, K had continued paddling around the bottom of the Promontory and landed at Little Waterloo Bay. After A was missing, he set off his epirb. The helicopter one located him and picked him up, leaving the kayak there.

The air ambulance helicopter then flew to Tidal River, picked up A, and the pair were taken to Latrobe Regional Hospital, Traralgon West. They were not physically harmed and were discharged into care of relatives on Monday afternoon.

Considerations and discussion:

These kayakers were poorly prepared for this trip. A Bass Strait crossing requires experience, seamanship, skill, proper equipment, and fitness. Even then risk is not eliminated.

The kayakers did not get full advice as to what is required for a Bass Strait trip, nor listen to the advice given.

The kayakers were apparently unable to stay together and handle conditions which were within the range of competent sea kayakers.

The pair were fortunate that their trip concluded so early, when they were within reach of a relatively quick rescue, rather than having difficulties in a more remote part of Bass Strait.

406 epirbs attached to person were effective in summoning outside help.

Handheld VHF radio, or other effective communication would have helped rescuers locate A when they got close.

Separation of the two kayakers triggered subsequent events. It is important to remain with other paddlers in a pod. Group split can lead to trouble.

A could have bush-bashed around to Oberon Bay and walked out, but police do not think that would have been a good idea given the difficult terrain, as he may have become lost or injured.

K may have been able to evacuate himself by foot.

The rescue helicopter *Helimed* one is operated by the Metropolitan Ambulance Service Air Wing, <http://www.ambulance.vic.gov.au/Main-home/What-We-Do/Air-Ambulance.html>. Helicopter ambulance services are charged at \$2,865.45 for the first hour, and \$47.76 for each additional minute. Ambulance membership and other insurance should be considered as part of trip planning.

This incident report has been prepared on available information. It is possible that details may change if further material comes to hand.



Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPRIB) by James Bate

During the annual general meeting there was some discussion concerning Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons (EPIRB), and listening to the discussion, it occurred to me that some additional information would be of use to the members of the VSKC.

Emergency beacons

They have a variety of titles depending on the intended user/craft. They all operate in the same fashion. PLB is a personal locator beacon for individual adventure usage. ELT is an emergency locator transmitter and used in aircraft. EPIRB stands for emergency position indicating radio beacon and is intended for boats. In normal usage, most people just use EPIRB (or distress beacon) as the generic reference, which I will adopt in this article.

The system

The Cospas Sarsat system that receives the signal from an EPIRB when activated consists of satellites and ground stations. The world is divided into areas of responsibility, indicating who is responsible for monitoring which geographic area. In Australia, this responsibility falls to AusSAR, which stands for Australian Search and Rescue. AusSAR is a business unit of the Australian Maritime Safety Authority.

AusSAR is located in Canberra and has two primary roles, which interlink. It is responsible for monitoring the EPIRB system in Australia's area of responsibility, the Australian Search and Rescue Region (SRR). This is done by the Australian Mission Control Centre (AUMCC), which is operated by AusSAR. AusSAR also operates Rescue Coordination Centre Australia (RCC Australia).

RCC Australia has responsibility for all search and rescue (SAR) involving civil aircraft, merchant ships outside port limits and small craft beyond the capacity of local SAR resources. Police are in charge of local SAR resources in each state and territory. RCC Australia co-ordinates aircraft and surface vessels involved in SAR operations within the Australian SRR.

When a ship or aircraft is in distress in the SRR, RCC Australia coordinates the response. Australia's area of responsibility covers 10% of the earth and extends down to Antarctica in the south, half way to New Zealand in the east, half way to Africa in the west and north to PNG.

If an EPIRB is activated, a response is coordinated from AusSAR, which may involve local emergency services such as state police or contracted aircraft maintained by AusSAR. The geographic location, availability of search resources and the distance from shore in the case of a maritime search, all are considered prior to an initial response being despatched.

The EPIRB is an essential safety tool for use in the case of a life-threatening situation or injury, which is the equivalent to the "mayday" call on a marine, or

aviation radio, i.e. the vessel or craft or person is "threatened with grave or imminent danger". This is not something to be activated for lower levels of threat or concern.

In Victoria there have been instances of EPIRB activation by solo bushwalkers for example, when too tired to make it back to the start location or minor leg injuries. The adage when going into remote areas is "I got in here, I'll get myself out" Unfortunately some are ignorant of this self sufficient philosophy and as a result, time and effort is expended when not necessary or could be better utilised for someone who really needs assistance.

Activation – what happens ?

At the moment, the system is about to transition to the newer technology that underpins the 406 MHz EPIRB system.

The old system operated and still does until February 2009, on 121.5 MHz and 243 MHz. 121.5 is the civilian frequency, and 243 MHz is used by the military. All commercial aircraft monitor 121.5 MHz as routine during their flights. If they hear an EPIRB on this frequency, they will report it to AusSAR(assuming they are within Australia's area of responsibility) .

121.5 MHz

After activating a 121.5 MHz EPIRB, the EPIRB needs to sight the satellite at the same time that the satellite sights the ground station. If this triangle is not completed, then no signal is registered. This is a significant shortfall in the system. Assuming a signal is registered, initially two positions are indicated on the screen in Canberra. It is then necessary to wait for a second satellite pass, (average time interval is 45 minutes), to confirm which is the correct position.

The position indicated will be an area of probability of up to 20 km diameter. A search aircraft is then despatched to the area to get a view of the target. When the aircraft is within range, they will pick up an audible tone on 121.5 MHz, and then home in on the audible tone or by using on board direction finding equipment. Once the beacon is homed in on, it is then a matter of identifying the target.

When the search aircraft is overhead, this is the time to declare your position. This can be done by radio (if carried), flare, signal mirror, fire, strobe, V sheet etc.

Looking for a head in the water or a bush walker amongst trees, is difficult for the searchers at best. The more visible you make yourself, the greater the probability of detection.

Due to the older, less reliable technology that underpins this system, false detections are common. Items such as set top boxes and microwave ovens have been known to cause these.

The EPIRBs in this system are also not registered, so the initial search craft has no idea whether they are looking for a skier, bush walker, yacht or kayaker. Obviously

if the EPIRB is tracking up the Hume Freeway, there is a good chance it is in a boat on a trailer. If it is over a remote bush area, it could be a walker, four wheel driver or downed aircraft.

406 MHz

Due to the change in 2009, the number, size and type of available 406 MHz EPIRBs has expanded. The 406 MHz EPIRB has been available for a long time, but from a kayaker's point of view, it is only relatively recent that units of a suitable size to be carried in a PFD have been available and at a reasonable cost.

These units have an individual identification code and can be registered to a user, within the country of purchase/use. This is of great assistance to the emergency services, as it tells them who owns the unit, what sort of craft it is used on, and the name and contact details for the registered user as well as emergency contacts.

This information can eliminate false or inadvertent activation quickly if the user is contacted via phone, and indicates that the unit is in the yacht, on the trailer and parked in the driveway. It also gives the search personnel a type of target that they may be looking for.

When activated, a 406 EPIRB, reports its activation to the first available satellite visible to it. In this system, the satellite stores the information 'till it sights the ground station, and then sends the signal. This is a significant improvement over the older system, and results in quicker recognition of activation. The area of probability given is up to 5 km. 406 units are also available with an incorporated GPS, which gives a position via a lat./long. being transmitted to the AUMCC in the first instance. There is therefore no need to wait for a second pass to confirm the location.

Searchers then transport to the given area, and when close, can track in on the audible tone on 121.5 MHz. When deploying any EPIRB, it is important to ensure that the unit has a good view of the sky, to allow it to sight the satellites. If on the land, place it in a cleared space or if in the water, allow it to float a couple of metres away from you on a stout tether to your PFD. This prevents your body shielding the unit. Prepare to signal the searchers when they are within view.

A couple of years ago, a kayaker activated an EPIRB when crossing Bass Strait. He was travelling solo and had come out of his boat, lost his paddle and was fatigued. He was then winched up within a couple of hours by a helicopter.

So what happened in the background to result in the rescue of this individual? The following is a general guide only.

The old style EPIRB activation was received in AusSAR via the AUMCC with two possible positions given. AusSAR then request Air Traffic Control to ask all aircraft in the vicinity of the two positions to monitor the distress frequency 121.5MHz.

This activation would be passed to a Marine Search and Rescue Officer (SARO). Tentative planning and information gathering would commence. The possible locations, weather and potential resources available for response would be investigated. The local Rescue Coordination Centre (RCC) would be notified.

In Victoria, the RCC is located at the Victoria Police, Water Police and Search and Rescue Squad offices in Williamstown, Melbourne. It is staffed 24 hours by police officers. It is the contact point for all marine and land search and rescue incidents through out Victoria. Phone numbers (03) 9399 7500 or toll free 1800 135 729 (listed on rear of boat licence). If you report a person overdue or lost to any police station or to the phone operator on

000, the information is passed to the RCC for action.

After confirmation of the location, an initial response would be despatched. This may be a contracted fixed wing aircraft or local emergency service resource such as a police helicopter or vessel, ambulance helicopter or commercial vessel which is nearby.

Depending on what the initial response asset reports, additional SAR assets would be despatched as required.

If the EPIRB activated was a 406 and was registered, then the AusSAR SARO would know what they were looking for, in the example given, a sea kayaker. They would also contact the emergency contacts listed on the database to confirm that the user was in the field.

Summary

The 406 EPIRB digital system is superior to the earlier analogue version. If carried on the person and registered, it gives the user of the device, the best chance of timely rescue following an incident of "grave and imminent danger"

There are many units available on the market, varying in size and price. There is a local manufacturer, KTI, whose units are worth a look. It is worthwhile spending the extra money and purchase a unit with built in GPS. This ensures the best response. Cost starts at approximately \$400.

See the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) web site for further information (www.amsa.gov.au click on the "beacons" icon).

'08 OVCA Charity Challenge Sat & Sun 12 – 13 April

Course: Rye – Portsea – St Kilda (RMYS)

The Charity Challenge paddle aims to raise awareness and funds for a nominated cancer charity. With 2008 already underway, so too is the preparation for this year's Charity Challenge paddle.

While details and fund raising packs will be communicated soon, now is the time for you to start planning for your own involvement.

The success of this event is a direct result of the countless hours and selfless efforts of people both on and off the water.

Feedback each year from all those involved has been a resounding acknowledgement that this event is indeed a fun personal 'challenge' and provides our club with a great social event, supporting a deserving cause and is well worth being part of.

So while it may seem still some time away, now is no better time to start planning and thinking about the fundraising. How do you plan to be involved? Fund raising, land crew, paddling solo or name and get your own team together?

If you do plan on paddling, then now is the time to start thinking about your boat setup, safety gear, clothing, what you plan to eat, lighting, course familiarisation and building up your fitness to achieve the distance you plan to do.

If planning to complete the whole distance, then 100 km and paddling through the night requires some preparation and training. Appropriate lighting, clothing, food and hydration are even more important when you are not part of a team and getting sleep in between sections.

The distance you paddle is your personal challenge. The challenge for the VSKC is to have as many members (and guests) as possible raising funds for the OVCA charity. Last 46 paddlers raised a whopping \$13,450 and wouldn't it be great to achieve a similar result this year.

The publicity we generate also means that many people hear about OVCA and their work with ovarian cancer that hopefully will lead to better awareness about early detection and as a result, less lives being lost to this disease.

So lock away this weekend, send an email with your details to peter_c@inet.net.au to express your excitement at being part of this years challenge and start clocking up some nautical miles.



How to build a LED night light for your kayak

by Neil Brenton

Over the last year or two some, VSKC members have been experimenting with lights for night paddling. Listed below are the instructions for a light which I've built for night paddling. It is advised you read all instruction first and that you have some soldering knowledge. I hope you find this information useful.

Parts list

- 3 x 1.5 V AAA batteries (Alkaline preferred)
- 3 x AAA individual battery holders
- 1 piece PCB to attach battery holders to
- 2 glass reed switches
- 0.30 metres of 25 mm grey PVC electrical conduit
- 0.60 metres of 20 mm grey PVC electrical conduit
- 3 pieces of wire 1.0 m long (3 different colors)
- 1 hobby magnet
- 1 x 25 mm conduit end cap
- 1 x 25 mm plain to screw male adaptor for electrical conduit
- 1 x 25 mm plain to screw female adaptor for electrical conduit
- 4 x 25 mm couplings for electrical conduit
- 2 x 20 mm couplings for electrical conduit
- 1 orange conduit box (Clipsal CLF 20) optional
- 100 mm PVC clear conduit available from me at a cost of \$1 p/p
- 3 Blue super brights about 3000/3500 mcd LEDs

- 1 x 1/4 watt 18 ohm resistor (for white LEDs)
- 1 x 1/4 watt 33 ohm resistor (for blue LEDs)
- 3 white LEDs superbrights about 3000/3500 mcd if making the light dual color for all water paddling (I would recommend this for the sake of a few dollars)
- PVC plumber's glue (bottle of)
- Heat shrink

- Heat glue gun
- 1 x clear 35 mm film canister. End cut off to make diffuser
- 1 electronics soldering iron
- Hacksaw

A note on LEDs

The average blue LED runs on 3.5 volts DC and the average white LED runs on 4.0 volts DC so step down resistors are needed in both circuits. Some brands of LEDs run



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on different voltages and you will need to check with manufacturer's specifications.

Assemble all the gear required. All electrical gear is available from an electrical wholesaler

Electronics gear is available from electronic dealers. (See photo a)

1. Assemble LEDs. (photo b)

Bend the legs of the LEDs at right angles. Solder all short blue LED legs together to make a 3-point star then do the same with the long legs. Note long legs are positive.

Do the same with white LEDs.

Attach an appropriate resistor to the long leg star point on both groups of resistors. It should be noted that all LEDs are polarity conscious so whatever you do make sure all legs are facing to same way. The three LEDs need to be kept very close to each other so the fit inside the clear 25 mm conduit.

2. Battery holders (photo c)

Now presuming you have some electronic skill you need to make the battery components up to create a 4.5 volt cell, which means joining all battery holders head to tail (-ve at the bottom, +ve at the top). Solder the wires together.

3. Connect battery cell to LEDs

Once you have 4.5 volts cell created, it time to check to see if the LEDs work. Solder a wire tail to each end of the LEDs and connect to the batteries. If the lights don't work then swap thee wires around so you either get blue or white LEDs working.

Take note which is positive and which is negative. Do this to both lots of LEDs.

Once you have all negatives worked out then join the star together so you have six LEDs joined either at the negative.

With the resistor attached to the positive, now attach the three lengths of wire to the

to the three points common negative and each end of the resistors.

4. Reed switches (photo d)

Next we measure 300 mm down from the LEDs and cut the wire that goes to the top resistor and LEDs. Solder in the first glass reed switch. Slide heat shrink up the wire over the reed switch (care should be taken not apply to much pressure to the switch they can break).

Cut the other wire that connects to the positive leg of the other LEDs about 75 mm below the current reed switch and solder in the next reed switch. Slide heat shrink over the reed switch.

Before you shrink the insulation take a magnet to the side of the reed switch and check the operation of the LEDs. Both sets of lights should turn on individually. If all works the heat shrink can be shrunk on the reed switch. Now slide a bigger piece over the three cables so you end up with a stiff set of wires. You only need enough heat shrink to cover all the switch area. Do not cut wire to length.

The rest of the production is quite simple.

5. Magnet slide. (photo e)

Take a 25 mm conduit coupling. Cut a 5 mm long ring and put to one side and drill hole to suit magnet in side but don't drill the hole too big. You want the magnet to be a tight fit so it doesn't fall through. If you make a mistake, rotate the coupling and have another go, place two short piece of 25 mm conduit in each end and cut flush, now glue the magnet into place and cover with duct tape or 40 mm heat shrink. The sliding magnet is now complete.

6. Tube assembly (photo f)

Take a 20 mm coupling but do not glue anything yet. Place two x 25 mm couplings on the end of the 20 mm coupling. Take the

clear tube and stick in the 25 mm coupling.

Put on the 20 mm conduit in the other end, you now have base for the light. Slide the 25 mm ring you cut earlier over to the middle of the clear 25 mm clear conduit and put the 25 mm conduit end cap on gently (we may need to remove it again to get the light and cabling out).

7. Battery compartment (photo g)

Take the 25 mm conduit, cut a 20 mm coupling in half, place it inside a 25 mm coupling then fit a to the 25 mm conduit. Cut a 50 mm long piece of 20 mm conduit and stick inside the 20 mm coupling. If all this works you can glue these piece together. Place hot glue in the 20 mm end to seal the conduit.

You can now can stick a chair stopper or a orange conduit box (Clipsal CLF 20) unit to the base of the light depending on boat in which is being built for.

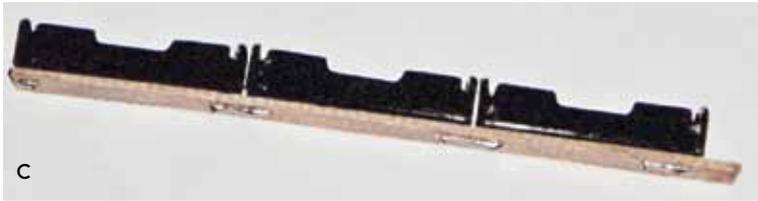
Cut the 25 mm conduit to 300 long. Glue the 25 mm female plain to screw adaptor to the conduit.

8. Gluing it together

Pull the light section apart and lay on your work area in order and start to glue all the top of the light together but not the cap.

Once this is done, slide the light assembly into the light and see where the lights sit, if too low in the lens, a few turns of electrical tape at the point below the last group of LEDs will act as a rest for the lights. When happy, you can sit the end cap on but don't glue yet.

The light needs the magnet slide placed up the conduit and a 5 mm piece of 20 mm coupling ring slid up behind to the location of where the magnet turns on the bottom group of LEDs. Then fit the half 20 mm coupling to the end of the conduit, followed by 25 mm male plain to screw adaptor.



Check the wire length and cut to allow the batteries to just rest on the bottom of the 25 mm conduit fitting, now the light is working, the second set of LEDs will work as you slide the magnet up and down the 20 mm conduit. If happy with over all finished height, you can now glue the 20 mm coupling and 25 mm plain to screw male adaptor together. If all is working, you can now glue the end cap on.



I recommend hot glue for the wire in the bottom half on the light to prevent pulling on the reeds switch during battery changing.

You can now put on the film canister and apply tape (reflective works well) to stop the diffuser from sliding to far in either direction (photo h).

Now drill holes in the 20 mm coupling below the lens (photo i), to suit your tie down position on your boat. I use a three-point attachment (photo j).

You may find four better. Be sure the light guys don't interfere with your paddling stroke.

This light has been developed from ideas arising from discussion and feedback from a number of VSKC members. Thank you to all those involved. Happy paddling.



Paddling online

Unfortunately, we can't spend every day and night on the water, so when you're looking to paddle from within the comforts of your own home make sure you check out the following sites online.

www.nga.mil

The US Navy sailing directions are available as a free download. This allows quality information for all areas, of the sort contained in piloting publications including all of the Australian coast, to be downloaded as a zip file.

Find US National Geospatial Intelligence Agency at www.nga.mil. Go to

publications, and use the drop down menus to find applicable files. (thanks PT)

www.youtube.com

If you're looking for some inspiration of places to go or maybe moves not try alone, then you can easily loose yourself in hours of kayaking video on youtube. Searches to try are *Extreme Sea Kayaking*, *Kayaking with Killer Whales*, *Kayak Surf Coast Rica Negra*. BTW make sure you use a broadband connection rather than dial up to make sure your online paddling experience is smooth and fast.

www.crossingtheditch.com.au

You should hear that the "rats" made it. This their official site full of podcasts (turn your volume up), forums, pics and plenty of information on how this duo made history by paddling from Australia to New Zealand.

www.vskc.org.au

A new design for the club's website, featuring more content and updated more often. Check it out weekly to make sure you keep up to date!

If you find a site online you think might be of interest to others, then we want to know about it hear at *Sea Trek paddling online*.

Please forward any worthy links to seatrek@vskc.org.au

What's coming up?

What	When	Contact
Sea Proficiency Course	Jan to Oct	Phil Woodhouse
Log book day @ Canadian Bay	10 Feb	Julian Smith
Log book day @ Canadian Bay	2 Mar	check website
Charity paddle	12-13 April	Peter Costello
Log book day @ Canadian Bay	18 May	check website
Log book day @ Williamstown	13 Apr	check website
Rolling nights @ Latrobe	1st Thur of month	Greg Gleason

For all the latest on trips, rolling nights and other events coming up, make sure you visit the club's website: www.vskc.org.au

In early October, Tod and I were in Byron Bay with another couple. On the second day we were there, we decided to see if we could see any of the humpback whales we had heard were in the bay with their calves. The manager at a dive shop told us there were families and 'pursuit' groups about.

Pursuit groups are a female who does not have a calf and has not mated being pursued by several males, all eager for her favours. They are very active and demonstrative during this period.

We launched from Watego beach and paddled out into the bay proper. To the west with Mt Warning in the distance, we saw some spouts, so we stopped and watched. Some flukes were waved about but not much else. Tod suggested we go a little closer, but at that moment I saw to our right a mother and calf about 100 metres away, and closing. They came quite close and then veered off out to deeper water near Julian Rocks. It was as if she was bringing the baby over for a look.

In the distance we could see a group of about six or eight whales putting a real show, breaching, tail slapping, waving their

large flippers and generally looking really *big!* We guess they were a pursuit group, and were very happy they were way over there.

But then they started to move over in our direction ...

A commercial group on sit-on-top kayaks had paddled out to near where we were. Their guide made them stop about 100 metres inshore from where we were bobbing about. It became very apparent the guide was taking advantage of local knowledge, as he had his group parked over a reef, where there was not enough draft for the whales to pass under their crafts. We however, were over significantly deeper water.

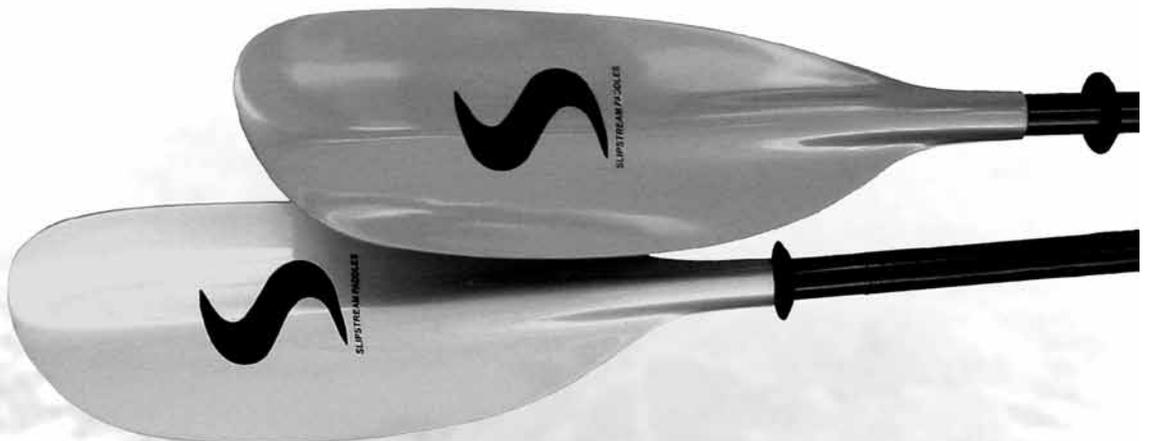
The whales kept coming our way, and turning under us and around us, and then one started swimming with its dorsal fin just out of the water directly at us!

We dropped everything and just started paddling backwards, as fast as possible. All those times I was made to do drills paddling backwards and I grizzled - *I'm sorry!* I went backwards, fast and straight. The whale eventually turned off.

I looked at Tod, who was inshore from me, and saw a huge blister bubble about 15 metres from his boat. I pointed to it in a totally freaked out state, and he nodded back, serenely calm. It turns out that was because he did not want me to look in the other direction and see the blister next to me.

The whales swam under our boats and as they did, they groaned like metal buckling. Then they were gone and we were still sitting in our boats in the same area that we had started in. We had not approached the whales, they came over to us. In fact I am sure they were following when we tried to get away.

Once they were gone it all seemed surreal. Did that really happen? A couple of dolphins popped up nearby, and they looked like toys. A sea turtle stuck up his head too, but the overwhelming experience had worn me out and although I had been bursting to see a sea turtle, it was a case of overload.



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The red eye paddles — a personal perspective

by Greg Gleason

I'll be there by 5.30 am and I'll have red eyes, but it'll be too dark for you to see them — Andrew Campbell.

Frequent participants include:

Peter Costello, Aquanaut; Andrew Campbell, Arctic Raider; Hrvoje Miskov, Nordkapp; Derek Wilson, Raider X; Peter Sharp, Mirage 530; Greg Gleason, Ocean Raider; Grant Della, Selkie; Stephen Della, Selkie; Raia Wall, Raider X and Neil Brenton, Nordkapp.

The difference between healthy exercise and an unhealthy obsession is often all too small (Dr. John Tickell – speaking about golf).

Insomniacs rejoice — there is help at hand. Don't lie awake for hours on end on a Friday night/Saturday morning. Get yourself and your kayak down to Rickett's Point by about 5.30 am. you'll get a good 15 to 18 km paddle under your belt, you'll see (usually) a beautiful Melbourne sunrise and you'll spend some quality time with a group of VSKC paddlers who are feared more than revered — the VSKC Red Eye Rogues.

Led by Peter Costello, this paddle happens every Saturday morning. Bad weather? No such thing. Too cold? Nonsense, can't you recognize an Indian summer when you see one? (through the snow drifts, howling winds and horizontal rainfall). Sporting three layers of thermals and a never-say-die attitude, the group hits the water. A good morning has seen seventeen paddlers in the pod, a bad one might attract one.

But it's quality, not quantity that's the issue here. The pace is brisk (but always so accommodating), the chat is light weight and politically correct, and pod management often resembles something out of one of the radical alternative management journals on participative leadership.

Just as in paddle wear, form follows function in choice of paddle direction. A northerly will see the group strike out for Sandringham, a southerly will prompt the setting of sights on Mordialloc and the beautiful North Aspendale Beach.

Predictably, very light winds bring expressed preferences for both directions and one plaintive cry for Huey to provide us with waves on the way back. This paddler, who must remain nameless (let's call him Andrew C), thrives on an opportunity for a cheap wave riding thrill, deprived of this "fix" he amuses himself by playing funny little games (like running into the back of my Ocean Raider, to see how far off line he can push me).

But it is all in fun and all very polite till the waves are up and suddenly a number of closet adrenaline junkies join the anonymous Andrew C in exposing their true selves. Another anonymous paddler (let's call him Hrvoje M) has been seen to surf right over the front deck of a colleague's kayak! I asked the equally anonymous victim (let's call him Peter C) if he was OK, and he replied "Oh well, I can't blame him, it was a terrific wave".

Andrew C smiles knowingly, "You wouldn't see the club president do that (just don't look too closely at his kayak). Surfing in the dark is lots of fun!".

Do the conditions become extreme? It isn't hard to get swells above 2.5 metres off the isolated danger marker near Table Rock on a windy morning, these waves get so high, a certain ex mayor suffered a minor nose bleed as a result of the altitude (although he claims it was as a result of my attitude).

Mad as we might appear to be on a cold July morning, it is a sobering, reassuring and fairly common sight to see swimmers

with no more than a brave face and a pair of poorly filled budgie smugglers entering the water at Mentone — as my Dad once said to me "don't worry, son, no matter how bad you get, you'll always find somebody that's madder than you". How right he was.

No Saturday morning feels complete without encountering the local life savers out paddling their racing skis. Not only is the view pretty good (they're not all blokes, you know), the opportunity presents occasionally to "test them out".

Unflatteringly known as "trained seals", life savers are not all great paddlers. Whilst racing skis are very quick compared to sea kayaks, Hell hath no boat speed to match Hrvoje when he puts on one of his "little sprints".

If the foregoing hasn't encouraged you to join the Red Eye Rogues, I doubt anything will.

Good paddling.

Greg the Treasure (anonymity preserved)

Typical Red Eye statistics:

Distance — 10 nautical miles (18 km)

Speed (ave) — 4.5 knots (8.2 km/h)

On water time — 2 hours 15 minutes

Max speed — 12.9 knots (23.4 km/h)

(Editor's note — the identities and activities described herein are entirely fictitious, but any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, will make the author think his journalistic skills have improved considerably.)



On the wild side — the guardian of the shark cave

By Peter Dedrick

In the Ricketts Point Marine Sanctuary, there is a large underwater cave that has become known as the Shark Cave. On occasions, up to twenty Port Jackson sharks have been seen there, literally stacked on top of each other as they sleep away the daylight hours.

At the entrance to the cave, under a smaller ledge, lives a mature Victorian scalyfin who apparently sees it as his role in life to keep out unwanted intruders. To inspect the occupants of Shark Cave, you need to take a deep breath, dive down about 3-4 metres and hang onto a rock to stop yourself floating up prematurely.

Some diving weights, to counteract the buoyancy of your wet suit, help in this exercise. Once on the bottom, you are likely to meet the scalyfin face to face as this determined little fish attempts to chase you away.

So what of these interesting sanctuary occupants?

Port Jackson sharks

Port Jackson sharks (*Heterodontus portusjacksoni*) grow up to 1.5 metres in length and usually live in rocky environments on, or near, the sea bed. They have strong, crushing teeth and their diet usually consists of sea urchins, molluscs, crustaceans and fish. They forage for their food at night when their prey are most active, and often use caves and rocky outcrops as protection during the day.

The Port Jackson shark has two similar-sized dorsal fins. Each fin has a spine at the leading edge, which is reputed to be venomous. The spines of juveniles can be quite sharp, but those of the adults are usually blunt. The spines are sometimes found washed up on beaches and have been mistaken for all sorts of things from bird beaks to goat horns. These spines are believed to have given rise to the common name of the family, 'horn sharks'.

Port Jackson sharks are creatures of habit. They can migrate up to 800 km north in summer, only to return in winter for the breeding season. They usually return to the same area and often to the same gullies and caves. The breeding season is usually from late winter into spring.

At this time, divers regularly observe sharks congregating in caves, under ledges and in gutters. The female lays an egg case which is a tough, dark brown spiral about 7-8 cm wide and 15 cm long. It is common to see them washed up on beaches. When first laid, the egg case is soft and the female uses her mouth to wedge it into a rock crevice where it hardens. One young shark emerges from the case after ten to twelve months.

Victorian scalyfin

Scalyfins (*Parma victoriae*) are Australia's largest damselfish and grow to 25 cm. They have a rounded head with eyes close to a small mouth. The back end of the

body is quite square and has a forked tail. Males are grey to purple black. Females are yellow to olive. Both have a fine iridescent blue line around the body margin. Young scalyfins are bright yellow with iridescent lines and a ring on their upper body and fins.

Scalyfins are herbivorous and adults of both sexes tend a territory where they 'garden' preferred seaweeds. As noted above, they are very aggressive towards any animals or divers that invade their prized vegetable patch. They typically shelter under a rock or ledges in the middle of their territory.



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Photo of the issue —
Johnny Souey Point, Wilson's Prom

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