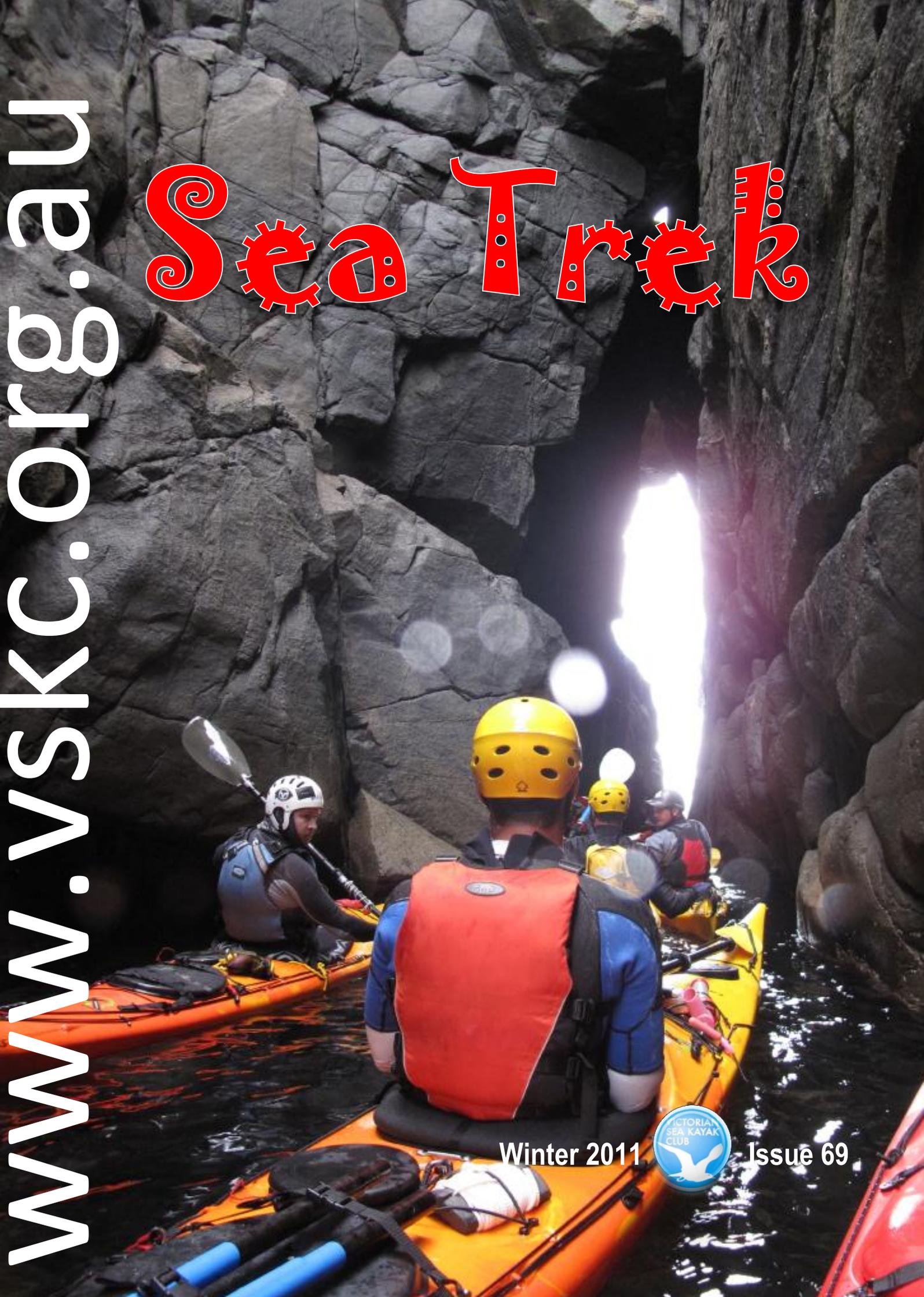


www.vskc.org.au

Sea Trek



Winter 2011



Issue 69



VICTORIAN SEA KAYAK CLUB

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EDITORIAL



Welcome to another issue of Sea Trek. Again we have a terrific smorgasbord of articles, eight from first time contributors (not to mention other seasoned contributors). We have also introduced a number of new regular columns: welcoming new club members; some humorous 'goss' from our 'Onda Waterreporta' amongst others.

We are well on track to deliver four quarterly electronic Sea Trek issues this year together with a new end-of-the-year Sea Trek Annual. This will incorporate all four issues of 2011 in a hard copy booklet of 100+ pages.

Special thanks to all our contributors for this issue and a very warm invitation to others to send in articles for subsequent Sea Trek issues.

On page 7 I have produced some practical guidelines and deadline dates to help you in this. So give it a go. Cheers and happy reading. Bob Fergie (Editor)



Welcome to another edition of Sea Trek, the second for the year.



I am delighted to be able to tell you that under our recently appointed editor –Bob Fergie, we are committed to increase the number of editions we bring to you each year to four. History has shown that with the best will in the world and despite the efforts from a small group of willing volunteers we have struggled to meet our publishing goals for some time.

Partly as a result of this strain on our limited resources as well as to utilise the technical tools now available for the distribution of information, we have decided to alter the way Sea Trek is produced and distributed.

After significant debate at the recent committee meeting it was decided to retire our eNEWS newsletter while strengthening our website managed by webmaster Peter Treby. The committee also decided to publish individual Sea Trek issues on-line through the club website rather than as a hard copy magazine as in the past.. However, hard copies of all four quarterly issues will be printed at the end of each year in the form of a **'Sea Trek Annual'** and distributed to all members in time for Christmas each year.

Current financial VSKC members will receive an e-mail to alert them when a new issue of Sea Trek is up-loaded to the club website. We are now confident that we can publish four editions each year in a way that is sustainable from both a financial and more importantly human resource point of view.

In what we believe is an Australian first for paddling clubs, we will make each new issue of Sea Trek immediately ac-

cessible to a broader national and international readership via the web. Clearly this decision has far-reaching implications for our club as a means of attracting new membership and promoting the VSKC to the wider paddling community! I am confident that these recent decisions will benefit our members as well as increase the opportunities for dialogue and communication.

In announcing these changes I want to acknowledge and recognise the major contribution of a few individuals who have contributed to producing Sea Trek over a long period of time. In particular, the following three people have been tireless contributors.

Roger Ingram first edited and laid out the first twelve editions up to the autumn of 2006, indeed it was his brainchild to produce the first version and for those of us who remember his wit and dry humour, these early editions made very interesting reading.

Since then Alan Wallace very professionally formatted every edition, bringing his considerable printing knowledge and countless hours of volunteer labour to every edition.

Peter Costello has managed the printing of every edition personally manning the press for many hours for every edition. He also created and maintained distribution lists, printed labels, prepared and posted all copies. Peter also took on the significant workload of soliciting commercial advertising, and collecting payments. This has been a huge commitment in addition to writing many of the articles featured over the years.

To all these people we owe a very large vote of thanks indeed.

Since my last 'pod-cast' message to you much work has been going on behind the scenes –

Peter Treby has been busy updating our website with Stuart Truman's expedition and adding Sandy Robson's retracing of Oskar Speck's paddle from Germany to Australia. Peter is also actively developing future plans for the website and keeping the news section current and of interest to club members.

Derek Wilson and Robin Boundy have been busy planning for the annual get-together for the AGM in November at Phillip Island. Don't forget to put aside the weekend of 5th & 6th November in your diaries!

Training Coordinator John Evertze has put together a long term training schedule which I would encourage you all to support. Tony Wennerbom has been busy correlating the VSKC training competencies with other standards in use in Australia, this project is ongoing and we will report back on this in the coming months.

Club member Dave Winkworth has always been a big supporter of the annual Sea Kayak Symposium conducted by KASK the peak body for paddle sports in New Zealand. This year Dave was joined by eight other VSKC members at the Outward Bound College at the magnificent Marlborough Sounds on New Zealand's south island. Joining Dave in presenting workshops both on and off the water were Raia Wall and Neil Brenton. It is rumoured that at the end of the gathering 'Winky' was heard to question (with tongue-in-cheek), when would KASK be renamed AUSKASK!

Back in Australia the real business of the club – getting out on the water as often as possible is alive and well! John Evertze and Tina Rowley led an eventful and successful crossing of Bass Strait from North to South at about the same time that Julian Smith led another VSKC pod from South to North (and they didn't even see each other!). The regular Canadian Bay paddles and Williamstown paddles are also continuing along with the ever popular Saturday morning Red Eye Ricketts paddle. There has been a circumnavigation of Snake Island over Easter, a weekend at Walkerville, rolling nights at Latrobe, and Mentone, a pod of 24 enjoying the Queen's Birthday weekend at Snake Island as well as quite a few members getting together for informal paddles. Often in winter we see some of the calmest days with clear blue water, so don't miss out!

See you on the water

Terry Barry
VSKC President

Earlier this month our ON-DAwater roving reporter travelled down to Portsea for an interview with club secretary David Golightly at the VSKC executive suites overlooking Point Nepean.

“Secretary Golightly, thank you for seeing me at short notice.”

“It’s a pleasure...and please call me David.”



“Well..yes...David...these new club suites are certainly palatial aren’t they!”

“Ahh...they do compensate for the long drive down from Melbourne...but we are negotiating with Lindsay for use of his chopper.”

“Lindsay?”

“Lindsay Fox. He lives just up the road.”

“Ohh. Now, you’ve recently returned from the annual KASK Sea Kayak Forum in New Zealand...”

“I have that. This year it was held at Anakiwa on the Marlborough Sounds...great event...marvellous location...the scenery reminded me of paddling I used to do in Scotland. Mind you, the prices charged for kayak hire reminded me of Scotland too!”

“Were you the sole Aussie representative there?”

“No, there were seven of us there this year...all from the VSKC. Splendid! There would’ve been eight if Mick MacRobb was able to make it. You know, I was so looking forward to Mick presenting Paul Caffyn with a kayak sail!” (laughs out loud).

“You attended the North Island KASK Forum last year as well. Do you travel as an official VSKC representative...I mean...does the club pay for your travel?”

“No, I’ve never asked them...but you’ve just given me a terrific idea.”

“I have?”

“Yes, I’ve got some spare time now...I could be the full-time VSKC international representative. Let me see now...there’s the KASK Forum each year, Rock ‘n Roll, there’s Canoeocopia,

Anglesey Sea Kayak Symposium, Great Lakes Sea Kayak Symposium, Vancouver Island Paddlefest, Scottish Sea Kayaking Symposium

“Err...David....”

“...The Inland Sea Kayak Symposium, the West Coast Sea Kayak Symposium, Bay Area Paddlefest, Ladies of the Lake Sea Kayak Symposium....”

“Mr Secretary....”

“Pack your bags Heather....”

“Thank you for your time David.”

Victorian sea kayakers are ecstatic at the recent sighting of a very rare species at several locations in the state. *Newsletticus Mexicana* has been seen at a number of city locations and also as far east as Gippsland.

Stratford resident, amateur naturalist and avid sea kayaker Annie Woollard trapped one on her coffee table:



“I’m pleased that the species is on the upsurge,” she said. “The one I caught is a very good example of the breed..and it’s a female, so around here we’re hoping to see many more!”

Ms Woollard is credited with the discovery many years ago of that other rare species: the Woolly Bugga.



When asked if she ever intended handing the Woolly Bugga over to the Victorian Museum to be stuffed and mounted she said firmly:

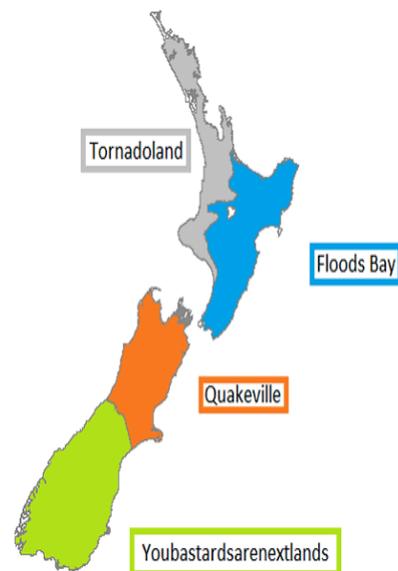
“No, definitely not....I’m keeping him as a pet!”

For many years New Zealand voters have resisted the division of the country into states, preferring not to waste public money on bureaucratic boundaries as has been done in Australia. However, recent natural disasters befalling the country have given the idea new legs.

Prime Minister John Key has commissioned the drawing up of proposed state boundaries along “natural disaster” lines:

Tourists come to our country for adventure,” he said. “Now we can really give ‘em a..er...shake or a wind or whatever they want....and hopefully dislodge pocketfuls of tourist dollars!

The Prime Minister declared that the southern portion of the South Island, which has not recently suffered a natural disaster will have a special name and produced a “proposed state divisions” map of the country for the assembled media.



Senior ON-DAwaterReporta
David Winkworth

WELCOME TO NEW VSKC MEMBERS

It's great having new folk joining the club. In an effort to help new and old members get to know one another, we have invited new members to share a few insights about themselves and the reasons why they decided to join the VSKC. (Raia Wall, Membership Officer)

Tim Clover



I'm from London originally but am living in Middle Park while I'm here with my wife for 2-3 years of work. I joined VSKC with my mate Andrew a few months ago but we're yet to get out and involved with the group - we'd like to grow some confidence on the Bay with you all so we can get out on our own to explore some more! Building on the basics we already know would be great, and now we've got the kit we need we're keen to get out there. We've done a few trips down the Yarra, an overnight trip up at Eildon (40km), and I've had a tootle around Middle Park on the bay and in the lake here. Our Eildon trip had everything - calm, glass-like water and 25kn headwinds and waves all the way back. It was great to just get organised and excited about something again.

I started kayaking because I need to get into some more regular exercise and wanted to meet some people at the same time - sandwiched between the Bay and the lake I couldn't think of a better sport to get into! I joined the club so I could get some more general experience and training, and to hone some skills to go and explore and push ourselves further. I'd also like to learn about tides, currents, winds and safety so that I'm able to look after myself (and others with me).

It would be great to get involved in some group activities and be a part of an active club - look forward to meeting you all at a social event or paddle soon!

Vojin Miladinov



I'm from Melbourne. I joined VSKC end-of-February having started paddling three weeks earlier. That fateful trip to a local kayak hire-place for me was quite uninspiring: I was on a quest for an exercise

form that would be sufficiently distracting to speed up the time, have enough variance so it wouldn't become stale, be suitable for local conditions, and, if such a thing could possibly exist, an exercise form that can truly be enjoyed. I wasn't disappointed!

Sea-kayaking now appeals to me at many different levels not the least of which is revelling in the magnificent splendour of our coastline and the (seemingly) untrodden blue ocean expanse, the people that share it's play, and that innate desire to experience it under one's own steam.

I joined VSKC to meet others who I hoped would be interested in paddling socially from time to time, and to perhaps attend some of the club trip events. To my delightful surprise, VSKC had a whole lot more to offer; I was particularly taken by the welcoming nature of club members and the abundance of training and skill-improvement opportunities.

I am keen to progress my skills and be sufficiently comfortable to participate in some of the more interesting club paddles and expeditions. Having conquered rolling only recently, I'm just now discovering the joys of kayak surfing so there's plenty of good fun to be had in the meantime. Eventually I'd like to be able to assist others along their kayaking journeys of discovery.

Andrew Houghton



I come from the Yarra Valley the land of wineries. I started seriously paddling a TK 1 in 2005 and in that year and in 2006 did the Murray Marathon as a team member in a TK 2. I start paddling a K1 in 2006 and in 2007 did the Murray Marathon with a team in the K1 Holden Cup, and we won. In 2007 I did the full distance with my son in a TK2 and we won the open section. I paddle my K1 at least 3 or 4 days a week and in summer nearly every day and hope to have another go at the Murray Marathon this year.

I bought my sea kayak in 2009 and joined the club in 2010. If I was closer to the sea I would paddle my sea kayak more as I love getting out in the salt water. There are lots of things I like about paddling but mainly I do it to keep fit, have some adventures and spend some

time communing with nature. I joined the Club to learn the skills needed to do some serious adventures like a Bass Strait crossing but first I have to learn to roll the bloody things.

Sue Montford & Maggie McPherson



Our move into sea kayaking grew from wanting to combine our love of paddling with our mutual interest (with Jenny Blakey) in paddling trips through great country. We've all been paddling TKs with the Patterson Lakes Canoeing Club (PLCC) since 2008. Maggie white water paddled for eight years prior to shifting to flat water.

Our first contact with VSKC was in 2009 when Sue struck up a conversation with Andrew Campbell about his kayak (really!), whilst he was getting out of his gear at Sandringham beach. Andrew offered to take us PLCC gals out on a paddle with President Pete. The paddle was rounded off by our host serving thermos coffee and tea.

Over the past two years the three of us have done the Sea Starters' course with Eastcoast Kayaking, and then a three day trip at Wilson's Prom, and a couple of Phillip Island paddles. Finally we felt ready to do the Eastcoast's five day Whitsunday's trip last September.

Whilst on Whitehaven Beach we met David Golightly and Heather Fell in their double kayak with David's "nice to have's", which to our envy included a full size beach towel. Initially we shared the challenge of camping in a 200 mm tropical down-pour, yet subsequently shared some magic days paddling through beautiful scenery, and clouds of butterflies. David encouraged us to come to the VSKC Forum and try some of the training sessions.

Since joining, so many VSKC members have encouraged us and shared their knowledge and expertise, when we've felt timid, stupid and a bit scared, which has given us the confidence we needed to enjoy club paddles. The Club's generosity of spirit is truly inspirational.

South Coast (NSW) / East Gippsland-
members Notes and Chatter



A couple of months ago now we had a big flood here on the NSW Far South Coast....well... big by our standards. 'Possibly not a 1: 100 year event but it certainly messed up local roads and waterways and kept Tathra cut off from Bega for about a week. Most of the local coastal lakes opened to the sea – the exceptions were Middle Lake and poor ol' Wallagoot Lake which hasn't opened since 1998....and even then it was opened mechanically! The mouth of the Bega River, however, just blew out in spectacular fashion! From a half-tide opening about 20 metres wide against the rocks at the northern end of Tathra Beach, it suddenly became a 300 metre seaway!

This wide bar meant that surf could pound right in as far as the bridge. Local council teams shored up the banks at the bridge with huge rocks to counteract wave erosion...and then something happened that I've never seen here before! The surf carried in suspended sand and deposited it right where it was needed. Now we have new beaches inside the bar and the wide bar is developing a middle wave-breaking sandbank!

We reckon this "new" bar is much safer for sea kayakers now. There are good play areas in the surf around the middle bank and the really steep ocean beach has gone. Good riddance too!

The Bega River bar used to be one of those beaches that was always tricky to land on in a kayak....you'd get through dumping surf, hit the steep beach, all the while looking behind for that nasty shore dumper that would threaten to clobber you when your kayak began sliding back down the beach....as you struggled to exit your cockpit! You know what I mean: spray skirt off and not in the boat, able to paddle away.....AND....not out of the kayak, able to run up the beach!

Yep, that's a tricky "zone of transition" for paddlers!

'Went to the annual outdoor gear trade show in Canberra a couple of weeks ago. It's the big show of the year for wholesalers and importers to show their wares to retailers and others in the trade.

If you like looking at outdoor gear then you'll think you've died and gone to heaven at this show! The emphasis is on "rucksack sports" as distinct from the 4WD market, but, having said that, there is a lot of crossover stuff such as GPS, maps, clothing, emergency gear etc.

So what's new for sea kayaking? Well, nothing in actual boats really but there are some gear developments that might interest VSKC members:

Later this year a new range of Jetboil stoves will arrive in Australia, including



a superlight version in titanium. The new models include a large 1.8 ltr pot which fits on the existing burner and a range of 800cc pots which are slightly smaller than the current PCS 1 ltr pot. Check out the Jetboil website.

The new model of the ACR ResQLink PLB (with GPS) is now even smaller and lighter – only 100mm high and it weighs in at a portable 130 grams!

Mission Kayaks NZ, the makers of the EcoBiz single and EcoNiz double will have all their products distributed in Australia from August by Sea to Summit. Hopefully we'll see a few bargains trickle down the line!

Rucsac Supplies, distributor of the ever reliable Trangia, seem to have more models of the stove than ever before. They have had a neat multi-fuel burner for the stove on the market for some time now.

Wilderness Equipment has a new lightweight one person tent coming out soon-looks a bit like the Macpac Microlight but with more headroom.



Impressions of the market? 'Seems to me that some outdoor businesses are doing it a little tough at the moment. 'Just over the GFC and lots of consumers are keeping their hands firmly in their pockets for now. We've also had a La Nina wet summer which slowed sales too. There was talk of businesses having to be clever to attract customers. That can only be good for us, the consumers!

This year, seven VSKC members ventured across the ditch in early April to attend the KASK (Kiwi Assn of Sea Kayakers) Forum at Anakiwa on the South Island. The event is their annual big get-together weekend plus AGM, and is similar to our November AGM Weekend. It's good fun and a great place to meet fellow sea kayakers or to plan an assault on the New Zealand coastline.

Next year, the event will be held on the Banks Peninsula just south of Christchurch. If you're thinking of popping over next year, do give me a call (02 64941366) or send me an email (kayak21@aapt.net.au). I may be able to answer any queries you may have and will certainly forward any tough questions on to the Kiwis for you. Also, this year there was a bit of price gouging by kayak hire operators over there. Stuff them! We don't like that in sea kayaking so next year we'd like to make a group booking for hire kayaks and do a bit of price bargaining.

ATTENTION ALL
S.K.E.G.ers:

If you live in East Gippsland, send in a few notes – let members know what's happening in your part of the State

GUIDELINES for Sea Trek contributors

Sea Trek exists to serve VSKC members and the broader Sea Kayaking community with sea kayaking tales and yarns primarily from current members.

More recently, there has been a very intentional push to broaden the number of contributors (especially new and/or 'first-time contributors').

With this in mind, the following guidelines have been developed. It would be great to have YOU write up an article and it's quite a simple process.

E-mail to Sea Trek Editor (bobfergie@ozemail.com.au)

- Text as a MS Word document,
- Pictures should also be emailed as high resolution jpeg files (because of their size email one per email)

Deadlines have been set for each issue so get cracking to ensure your article is considered for publication.

SEA TREK CATEGORIES	ARTICLE LENGTH	PHOTOS
New member bios	100-150 words	1
Humour	100-150 words	1
Interviews	500-1000 words	3-4
Member stories	500-1500 words	4-5
Safety articles	500-700 words	3-4
Boat outfitting articles	500-1000 words	4-5
Gear and boat reviews	150-300 words	2-3
Resource reviews (dvds, books, articles)	150-300 words	2-3
Photo galleries	Brief one line captions	5-10
Training event reports	500-1000 words	3-4
Day trip reports	300-500 words	2-3
Short overnight trip reports	300-500 words	2-3
Expedition reports	500-1500 words	5-6
Tips for trips articles	300-500 words	3-4
Club event reminders	100-150 words	1-2
Regular club paddle features	300-500 words	5-8
Commercial advertisements	See advertiser specs	1

The Editor reserves the right to edit articles re. length, spelling, grammar and offensive language

SEA TREK DEADLINES	ISSUE 68 (Autumn)	ISSUE 69 (Winter)	ISSUE 70 (Spring)	ISSUE 71 (Summer)
Article contributions from VSKC members	1 March	1 June	1 September	1 December
Advertisements from commercial associates	14 March	14 June	14 September	14 December

GINNI CALLAHAN INTERVIEW part 2, with Bob Fergie

We continue an interview with internationally renowned sea kayaker Ginni Callahan, recorded during her February 2011 VSKC visit. In a conversation with Ginni she made the statement, **'Kayaking is really all about life: the boat is just the tool to get you there'**.

Ginni what do you mean by this?

In theory, the taking off of the leash or rein when you're out on the water lets you learn things without realizing you're in class.

Take for example kids and kayaks. Even if you just throw them in the pool with nothing but a handful of kayaks and no paddles they are going to learn things. They're going to learn about team work; they're going to learn a little about physics. Or at the beach with sit-on kayaks in Mexico, they might sit at the front of the boat and it begins to point up wind. If they all lean on one side of the boat it flips over.

So there are lots of physical things they can learn about. But you can also learn about the value of stillness, and awareness in seeing your surroundings.

You can learn about trust too. I remember a woman who came on a kayak trip with me (she was a therapist which is interesting because she brought that sub-context to the surface a bit). She'd always had trust issues in her life (long story there) and being able to roll in deep water was terrifying for her and she worked really hard just to do a capsize/wet exit and assisted rescue anywhere.

She was also a stick paddler so the balanced brace for her was OK in shallow



water because she knew there was ground underneath to support her if the brace failed. But in deep water to trust it and relax in it when you're physically opening your body to balance on the water was all too hard.

Then on the last day on our last crossing there's this channel that's close to a kilometer deep and she worked up the courage to do it. And she did-doing a balance brace right there. We got a picture and

she came up so excited. Then five minutes later this whale comes by!

Yes there is so much to learn from life—things like perseverance, and friendship and team work and helping others out.

So yes, 'Kayaking really is all about life; and the boat is just a tool to get you there.'

Next Issue, Ginni has some very insightful things to say about encouraging more women and families with children to participate in sea kayaking. (Ed)

SOUTH-NORTH BASS STRAIT CROSSING, March 2011 by Brian Roberts

Brian is originally from Canada before settling in Australia with his family. He first took up sea kayaking four years ago while based in Queensland, paddling around Byron Bay and the Whitsundays. Moving to Melbourne in June 2009, he joined the VSKC and began participating in various club paddles as well as the Hawkesbury Classic and Murray Marathon. On the 8th April this year he joined one of a select/elite group of ‘paddling seniors’ (60+ years young) who have paddled across Bass Strait. What did that involve? Read on. (Ed)

The expedition started in Tasmania, not Victoria as is most often the case. The logic for this was threefold:



Firstly, the WEATHER: if the main crossing was not achievable due to the notorious Bass Strait weather then at least there would have been some good paddling up the west coast of Flinders Island. This is as distinct from “sitting” at the Prom for 10 days and then heading home without “striking a paddle stroke”

Secondly, PADDLE FITNESS would be increased as the distance from North East Tasmania to North East Flinders Island – approximately 178 km - is about the same as the crossing from NE Tasmania to Wilson’s Prom – approximately 155 km.

Finally, WEIGHT. The boats would be lighter as the bulk of food would have been eaten; and in theory easier to paddle

As everything in life is pluses and minus, the minus in this strategy is that the main crossing is always playing on your mind as to whether the goal of crossing Bass Strait will be achieved; and this may impact on the full enjoyment and breath-taking scenery of Flinders and surrounding islands

Below is Brian’s summary of the trip which began (as most crossings do) in late March 2011.

Day	Date	Distance, km	Time hrs.	Wind speed km	Speed km	PADDLING FROM	PADDLING TO	COMMENTS
1	22 Mar			Storms		Little Musselroe, Tas		Stalled by storms
2	23			Storms				
3	24			Storms				
4	25	38.3	6	Easterly	6.4	Little Musselroe	Preservation Island	4-6 m swells
5	26	35.4	6	Calm	5.9	Preservation Is	Trouser Bay, Flinders Is	Calm, dolphins
6	27	12.0	7	North, 10-20	1.7	Trouser Bay, Flinders Is	Whitemark, Flinders Is	Climbed Mt Strezlecki (4 hrs. in morning),
7	28	43.0	7	North, 9-18	6.1	Whitemark, Flinders Is	Roydan Is	Long day
8	29	40.0	7	Calm	5.7	Roydan Is	North East Riv, Flinders Is	Leisurely stops (Killiecrankie)
9	30	10.0	3	West, 40-50	3.3	North East Riv, Flinders Is	Inner Sister Is	Ugly crossing with heavy conditions
10	31			Storms		Inner Sister Is		Marooned by also time to recover
11	1 April			Storms				Huge Westerly swell/waves
12	2			Storms				High pressure system stuck off to west
13	3			Storms				Considered abandoning trip
14	4			Storms		Finally weather gods smiled:	able to head North on potentially the most dangerous crossing of the trip	
15	5	67.1	8.6	Calm	7.8	Inner Sister Is	Deal Is (Erith)	8 hr. hike around Deal Is
16	6	41.6	6.7	NE, 18-27	6.2	Deal Is (Erith)	Hogan Is	7 hr. hike around Hogan Is
17	7	52.1	6.7	E, 18-27	7.8	Hogan Is	Refuge Cove, PROM	Wild and woolly whitecaps
18	8	42.1	6.3	E, 5	6.7	Refuge Cove, PROM	Port Welshpool	Calm recovery paddle

Total paddle days 10 days
Total bad weather days 8 days
Total distance 382 km
Number of paddling hours 64 hours
Average paddling speed 7.2 km

PADDLERS **Julian Smith** (Trip leader), Nadgee Multiple crossings
George Appleby, Maelstrom Second crossing
Andrew Broovset, Raider X First crossing
John (Macca) Old, Mirage 580 First crossing
Brian Roberts, Nadgee First crossing

Photos by George Appleby



HIGHLIGHTS

Flinders and related islands

The scenery in this first part of the trip was breathtaking. It reminded me somewhat of the Canadian Rockies where I was raised. I will definitely return and explore this area again in the future.



Banks Strait Crossing

First day paddling after sitting in Little Musselroe for 3 days. The 4 – 6 metre swells were initially a bit intimidating but after acclimatising they were quite enjoyable as they weren't breaking or white capping at the top. Unfortunately, Julian and Andrew were sea sick but the rest of the pods' stomachs remained intact.

Fresh fish

At last count approximately ten different types of fresh fish were caught and eaten: abalone, squid, salmon, flat head, king fish, trevally, gummy shark. I can't remember the rest not being a fisherman.

Andrew was the keenest fisherman and no sooner had we landed (and sometimes before, i.e. fishing out of kayak) he was out with rod and reel. I think he was carrying three rods but one was lost on the crossing to Deal Island.



Brian Roberts



WEEKEND IN PARADISE or a slow paddle up the lake by Tony Cusack

John and Annie Woollard corralled a motley group of reprobates – and some very pleasant partners – for a slow paddle up Gippsland Lakes over the Easter break. The plan was to meet at Stratford on Thursday evening where the hosts would cater a lavish spread, 5 star suites would be provided for as many as arrived and the following day would see a leisurely repast of hot cross buns to set Good Friday in good stead.

In the event, the meal was delicious and the accommodation grand – although somewhat different than I imagined of a 5 star establishment. John did assure me that sleeping on the floor under a kitchen table was absolutely de rigueur in 5 star circles – having never darkened the doors of such an establishment and respecting his worldly demeanour, I had no choice but to be flattered by the trouble he had taken to ensure comfort fit for a king.



The route was to take us from Marlay Point, through McLennan's Strait, across Lake Victoria to Storm Point then into the Bunga Arm for 2 nights at the Parks Victoria camping site and finally on to Paynesville on Tuesday morning. Well – best laid plans and all that – wouldn't you know it, the weather conspired against us. Still, it provided some useful focus for Friday morning while Annie busied herself churning out hot cross buns.

Turns out everyone had the same idea and we had buns coming out of our ...

After much consultation, reference to 47 different weather sites, attempt at a phone call to the weather station at the Sale Air force Base – *'ring back Tuesday we are on holidays'* – it was concluded that a start from Marlay Point was intemperate! An alternate was quickly compiled, who knows, the leader who was not the leader may have snuck in some planning. In any



event, a forecast of 30 knot winds across the lake was thought to be a little more testing than the assembled cared for. So, a start from Holland's Landing was the go, paddle to Storm Point for 2 nights then on to Bunga Arm for the other 2 nights as planned. A quick call to the Sharps to divert them on their way down and we were off.

It was such a gentle day, well some thought so, others were less enamoured with the conditions. After a patient wait for the change to pass through, we set out onto a somewhat choppy Lake Victoria. It was not to long before some difficulty was experienced and a number of boats rafted up to provide support. The rest simply coasted along. Would have to go down as the longest leg without a stroke being made – wind was moving us along at about 6 km – without a sail! Happily everyone arrived at Storm Point without so much as a swim amongst us. Obviously weren't trying hard enough.

The camp site was a treat, no facilities but wonderfully remote so this was not really an issue, plenty of space for privacy when required. It was not a long time



before tents were set up, shelter setup was overseen by Terry and the billy was on. One would think this enough for one day, but no this was not to be. Out came the culinary efforts, probably crowned by David and Heather's gourmet damper! Now I wasn't taught in the scouts to use such ingredients as zucchini or to wrap a damper in foil – if you didn't chew on a coal or two you were a wuss – in producing this work of imagination, but then what I baked didn't taste anything like it either. In any event it was delicious and set off the evening wonderfully.

Day 2 saw the camp a hive of activity – at about 11am! I think the first stirring at the camp fire after breakfast was someone suggesting lunch. This of course galvanised the more energetic and we launched into afternoon activity, mostly so that we wouldn't feel guilty when we got stuck into delicacies again in the evening. Bart set off to give Margaret some coaching in rolling, Peter and I took a sail down the lake to test how the double performed, others took a long

walk down the beach. The more adroit mechanically decided to commence a boat modification workshop and succeeded in carving up Heather's seat, well reforming it to her, er, um, yes.....

Once again, the evening was a pleasant affair, with dishes of great creativity appearing. The odd dram as well – in fact I had forgotten to mention that David brought Annie a bottle of single malt which she very generously shared, well until it was almost gone, she quite rightly kept the last few millilitres for herself. Certainly not enough to get a hangover from. At this point we also came to marvel at Jill's skills at tending the fire, could almost be called a fixation if it wasn't done with such skill and panache. ☺

Day 3 Sunday was just a delight, the day started calm and cloudless. The group paddled to Forge Creek Picnic Area for a toilet stop, very genteel this Gippsland Lakes paddling, then on to Sperm Whale Head for lunch. A small contingent took a diversion to the MLC camp to restock water and met up some short time later. By now, moving up into Lake King the water traffic had begun to get quite busy and noisy. After the relative tranquillity of the lower lakes, this was something of an intrusion. Bloody tourists! Still, have to allow the riff raff out from time to time. We paddled on into the afternoon and eventually arrived at the designated campsite - Gannet. What elegance, what comfort, what facility and all in a bush setting - even a dining room laid on. Once again tents were quickly assembled and dining arrangements established.... some thought the Taj Mahal was a poor comparison.



Now, it turns out that this was a day of some significance! Our honourable non-leader had attained a milestone of some substance. Good cheer and gaiety was called for, in the event we had a cake – well in fact a number of cakes, one of which contained David's balls, er.... I mean balls made by David. Heather and David also led us in traditional Easter egg rolling they brought from their youth - nice touch in decorating. The evening meandered on into late with many if not

all of the problems of the world solved. Being able to sit around a campfire didn't encourage anyone to hold back.

Day 4 began quietly with the fire being stocked up from the evening. You can imagine my horror as it began to smoke



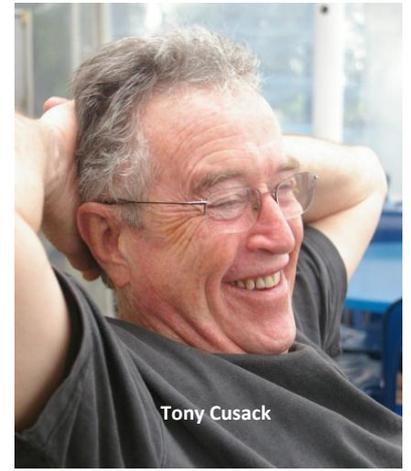
copiously just as the breeze pushed around to send it towards Tony and Jill's tent. I had visions of them being asphyxiated. Fortunately it caught (much blowing and fanning from me) before any damage was done – phew. People emerged slowly and a quiet breakfast was had before a stroll along 90 mile beach. Just beautiful, it never ceases to amaze that an area of such beauty and isolation is so relatively close at hand. Following a leisurely morning a number of the more energetic paddled on up the Bunga Arm to the first blow hole, a little under half the full length of the water way. Interesting area where the sea has breached the sand dunes into the lake on occasions.



The evening once again was a culinary delight, however given everyone was intent in off-loading their nibbles, some chose a low key meal in the end. At this point, it should be noted that the club must pay some attention to coaching in light weight camping. Heather's pewter wine goblets seemed just a little excessive it was thought!

Day 5 was a glorious sun rise and dead still, for those of us up bright and early it was something to see. Didn't last though with a thick fog rolling in within a short

while to greet the late risers. An early departure was agreed to get city travellers and those from the Western Districts on the road by lunch. A paddle up the arm and out into Lake King in the fog was interesting, the only blessing was the fog kept the tourists in port. By the time we paddled out into Lake King the fog had lifted and presented a glorious day for the paddle into Paynesville. Many thanks to John and Annie for their leadership and effort, we all agreed this is a beautiful place to paddle and one we do not visit often enough.



Tony Cusack

Into the mist



A trio of twins – Tasman that is



New Zealand (Aotearoa) the Land of the Long White Cloud, a country we had always wanted to visit. The opportunity to combine the three-day KASK Forum (Kiwi Association of Sea Kayakers) with a two-week paddle around the Marlborough Sounds with friends was just too good to pass up.

Decision made, flights, accommodation and equipment booked we (Bart and Margaret De Vries, John Meertens and Sue Davis) departed for Christchurch. We agreed to meet up with David Golightly and Heather Torbet at the Forum in Anakiwa as they were joining us for the first few days of our trip.

Our first day didn't quite go to plan. On our arrival at Christchurch at 12.30am we discovered that the hotel we had booked was closed due to the recent earthquake and there were no hotel vacancies in town. Fortunately, due to the kindness of a taxi driver and a hotel concierge, who allowed us to take refuge in the bar of his fully booked hotel, we avoided having to spend a cold night on the streets.

A 6:30am start saw us on the bus to Picton and on our way to the Forum. Unfortunately the five-hour scenic drive was wasted on us as we spent most of the trip catching up on lost sleep.

On arriving at Picton, situated at the head of the picturesque Queen Charlotte Sound, we caught up with Craig Martella from Sea Kayak Adventures. We collected our hired kayaks, shopped for our

week's groceries and then Craig dropped us off at Anakiwa.

The Forum was extremely impressive. Clean and comfortable bunk house accommodation, accompanied with hearty meals, informative presentations and extensive on and off water workshops, made for a great time by all. There was definitely something for everyone, regardless of experience.

The organised paddle and overnight stay at Mistletoe Bay provided further opportunity to mingle with the local paddlers. That night however, the heavens opened up and ended what had been a weekend of ideal weather. The campgrounds quickly became water logged encouraging most of the campers to seek shelter in the camp kitchen and spend the night sharing their many kayaking adventures.

Early next morning there was a huge exodus of paddlers, most returning home and some, like us, planning to investigate the Sounds. With a forecast of 30 knot headwinds and rain we opted to be transported by mini bus to Punga Cove in the outer Queen Charlotte Sound area. This area was visited by Captain Cook and has a memorial at Ships Cove to celebrate Cook's landing in New Zealand.

We set up camp for a few days at nearby Cannibal Cove, a beautiful bay providing a small grassy clearing, clean drop toilet and a picnic table and we had a million dollar view.

Over the next couple of days we meandered along the coastline around Mo-

tuara and Long Island. We were immensely entertained by the antics of some inquisitive and playful seals and by a number of dark, eerie caves, which dared us to investigate.

We also hiked to the top of Motuara Island to take in the breath taking panoramic view.

From the top we could see smoke coming from our campsite so we knew we had visitors. On returning, we found the small campsite fully occupied by paddlers we had met at the KASK Forum and Tim Taylor, a solo paddler, circumnavigating NZ. Poor weather had forced a lay day in his attempt to cross Cook Strait. That evening after a few drinks there was lots of laughter and conversation sitting around a warm, crackling fire built below the high tide line.

The next morning saw the end of Heather and David's holiday and they returned to Picton by water taxi. We took the opportunity to relax and spend the day fishing as the season for Blue Cod had recently opened.

Over the next six days we paddled extensively around the Sounds.

We paddled to Blumine Island for a leisurely hike to the WW2 gunnery emplacement. On the way we spotted a pod of dolphins and a tour group who were swimming with the dolphins. It was difficult to decide which was the most entertaining, the dolphins or the wetsuit clad tourists floundering in the water making comical noises in an effort to attract the dolphins. In high spirits we continued on and camped at Ratimera Bay where we once again met up with our KASK friends.

From Ratimera Bay we returned to Picton to replenish our food supplies and launder some clothes. We then returned to Mistletoe Bay for a hot shower and a comfortable bed, in a warm cabin.

The following morning we were once again picked up by Craig and transported to Broughton Inlet on Kenepuru Sound and then paddled to Putanui Point, where we stopped for lunch. Our intention was to continue on to Jacob's Bay however a strong head wind, funnelling down the sound persuaded us to make a change in plans and opt for a closer campsite at Pipi Beach. Not that we were disappointed as this was another wonderful, wind protected waterfront campsite.

We set off early the next morning, paddled to Nydia Bay for lunch and then on to Penguin Bay, Fairy Bay and Jacobs Bay where we camped for the night and did a spot of fishing. We did however

have to throw them all back as they were undersized.

The next morning the weather was misty and thick clouds hung low across the mountains and did not lift until around lunchtime. We paddled to Stafford Point and then across to Capsize Point and stopped for morning tea at Kauauroa Bay.

We then headed in the direction of Maud Island, which is a protected sanctuary for an endangered frog, and landing is by permit only. The water surrounding the island was exceptionally clear and we spotted a huge stingray nestled amongst some rocks. Eager not to disturb we paddled on to our next destination, Waiona Bay. It was another fantastic campsite so we were more than happy to stay for a couple of days, relaxing and once again trying our hand at fishing.

We had kindly received an invitation from one of the Kiwi paddlers at the KASK Forum to stay at his bach (holiday house) in Penzance. With poor weather forecast we decided to take him up on his hospitality and opted for an early start. We were all packed and ready to go when John announced he had misplaced his camera and then proceeded to spend close to an hour looking for it. This included unpacking the kayak (double) not once, but twice. It was eventually found in Sue's pocket.

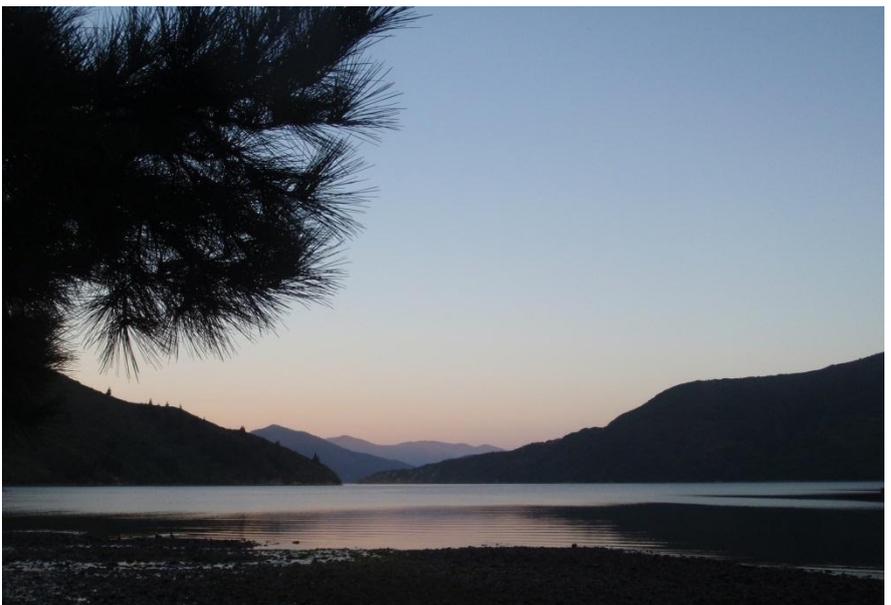
Believe it or not there was no further mention of the incident.

Penzance is an extremely picturesque spot with breath taking views and an abundance of lush green vegetation. We soon discovered why. It rained non-stop for 2 days. Our plans to go bush walking were cancelled, as the rain was constant and heavy. Fortunately, not only did we have warm, comfortable accommodation we also had an impressive supply of old KASK kayaking magazines to keep us entertained.

The final day of holiday had arrived and as agreed Craig arrived early in the morning to ferry us back to Picton. We caught the bus back to Christchurch and this time we were able to fully appreciate and enjoy the scenic drive between Picton and Christchurch.

We all have fond memories of our visit to New Zealand. We met friendly and interesting people, paddled in one of the most picturesque area imaginable and shared the experience with some great friends. Really, it doesn't get any better than that.

For anyone interested in going to New Zealand we would certainly recommend Sea Kayak Adventures. Craig's knowledge of the area, his willingness to assist and his friendly outgoing personality all contributed to a great trip.





Being a part of the Department of Defence, Elizabeth Thomson (ET) and I tagged along on the Army White Water Association (AWWA) signature sea kayaking adventurous training event 'Exercise Tasman Advance' held over the 5th to 15th January in Tasmania. Sixteen kayakers spent 10 days gaining new knowledge and skills whilst experiencing the thrills and spills of sea kayaking in and around the pristine waters of Hobart. The association offered sea kayaking experiences ranging from entry level to advanced expedition.

The Exercise was conducted at three



separate locations. Starting at Bruny Island the entire group was taken through their paces with the novices being introduced to the essential skills of how to safely control a sea kayak, whilst the more experienced refreshed their skills in the cooler waters of the southern ocean. One test that everyone didn't get out of was the 200 m swim in full kayak gear. Once everyone was evaluated, the remainder of the Exercise was conducted in two pods that allowed the instructors to set challenges appropriate to experience levels, thereby making the 10 days truly adventurous. Two days were spent on

Bruny Island exploring sea caves, sliding through floating kelp forests and visiting some well-known rock formations, such as *'The Monument'*, and the *'Fluted Cliffs'*. Each expedition included further skills practice in trip planning, group management on the water, and delivering pre-launch briefs.

From Bruny Island, the group then moved to Triabunna in readiness for the 18 km crossing to Maria Island, famous for its penal history and cliff lines. It was here that both groups experienced expeditionary kayaking where all food, camping equipment and clothing for the next 3-4 days needed to be safely stored within the kayak. Pod One explored *'The Fossil Cliffs'* on the northeast side of the island, while Pod Two was afforded the opportunity to circumnavigate the island thus exploring some new paddle locations for future trips.



Over the course of the exercise, the paddlers were allowed to experience challenges that pushed them out of their comfort zones. In addition to the expected physical demands were the mental challenges of coping with the sheer distance of cliff lines with no safe landing, finessing boat control in confused and relentless seas, managing the boat through tight slots and gauntlets, and judging the swell while entering caves with appropriate safety plans ready to be enacted should something go wrong. All these required calm deliberation, the control of anxiety, and cooperation within the pod.

The ultimate aim of Tasman Advance was to give each participant lessons in leadership, planning, logistics and teamwork – all necessary skills in the modern workplace, and more specifically for those seeking to progress onto be considered as a sea kayak trip leader. Learning by doing and facing new challenges made this adventurous training event a valuable activity for ET and I as we prepare all future expeditions.

We were able to gain a very different perspective about trip planning, risk management and then conducting an extended expedition trip in the wild, natural seascape of Tasmania. Something that we are keen to share with others should anyone be headed down that way in the near future.



Tony Wennerbom



Dave and Sue Winkworth could hardly believe their luck, two years in succession with superb weather to enjoy a weekend at Mallacoota in far eastern Victoria, running what has become one of the club's most popular events. The benign forecast was almost identical to 2010 and one with which even less experienced paddlers could safely undertake iconic trips on the Bass Strait coast.

This year an increased number of VSKC paddlers turned up after a 500 km journey from Melbourne with some forty-three club members of all grades making the trip.

The weekend was underway quickly with what is now the established pattern of a pub tea on the Friday night in Mallacoota, this proved to provide a great opportunity to get to know some of the new club members who had come along on the trip.



Typically Dave was well advanced with his planning for what trips may be on offer the following day with a wonderful array of sketches, charts, maps, weather, tide data and sign-on sheets already prepared and on display in the communal camp kitchen. Dave himself would lead a Mallacoota Lakes trip as he needed to be back in camp early to fire up the camp ovens for a demonstration of his culinary skills later that night when he had raised

expectations by promising much by way of treats for dinner.

As it transpired, two Lakes trips went ahead to cater for the significant numbers wanting to experience the local waterways. Neil Brenton led one pod out from Gypsy Point into the upper reaches of the waterway with many paddlers on the return trip *capturing* 'Cape Horn' in traditional VSKC style, the only recognised inland waterway Cape included in the club's long-running Cape Contourer Competition.

Meanwhile Dave Winkworth took a large group on a shorter across to Cemetery Point to the east of the bottom Lake then back to the camp.

After returning to camp, cleaning up and donning our 'party gear' we all gathered at the camp kitchen to examine progress on the Mallacoota Masterchef cook-off. A variety of camp ovens were well advanced, allowing Dave and Sue to relax and chat about the day's activities as well as tomorrow's prospects.

Drinks and nibbles were produced all around and soon the chatter increased in volume and in the variety of subject matter under discussion. The party was soon joined by past VSKC President Peter Provis and his partner Nicola who now live locally. In addition and to the delight of many we were then joined by a VSKC founding member Steve Weston and his wife Paula from Portsea, who entertained the masses with stories of the VSKC in its earlier formative years when under the stewardship of founding President Earl de Blonville. A great night was then had as we tucked into a feast of roast chicken and vegetables, supplied and cooked by the Winky family.

True to his vice-presidential style, Derek Wilson did his homework then stood to propose a vote of thanks to Dave & Sue whilst formally introducing the gathering of luminaries including our ever active life member Bill Robinson and his wife Kate.



After desserts, coffee and liquors it was soon time to retire and prepare minds and bodies for the Sunday programme was to feature a trip to well the known but less visited Gabo Island which is located almost on the unseen line which marks the transition from Victoria into New South Wales.

Sunday dawned to a superb sunrise and magnificent views out along the coastline and the Lakes system from the well positioned elevated campsite. The camp slowly came to life as breakfast was taken and the group prepared for the day's outings.

The paddle plans included a much appreciated John Woollard instructional trip up to Gypsy Point by car then a meander paddle down through the lakes to the boat ramp in Mallacoota, a journey very much enjoyed by those who had looked forward to a weekend which promised 'trips to suit all levels of experience'.

Two different pods made their way to Gabo Island in perfect Bass Strait conditions. A Bart De Vries led group aimed for an early start due to the need to get back home to meet work commitments. Half of the paddlers in the Dave Winkworth led pod drove around to Bastion Point to set off through an easy surf departure with the others opting for the more challenging trip across the notorious Mallacoota Bar into the open waters of Bass Strait.

As it turned out Bart and his group were still in the lovely little cove adjacent to the only jetty and landing place on Gabo Island, when Dave and his pod arrived some hours later. It was a beautiful day, so much so that many of the paddlers elected to remain down by the water to relax and get some sun.

Meanwhile the visitors who had never been to the island before took the obligatory walk to the southern end of the is-

land to climb the lighthouse and take in the view across Bass Strait towards Tasmania in the unseen distance. After descending from the lighthouse a sudden shout alerted the group to the sight of Dave Winkworth and Tony Chick, who rather than relax with the others had decided on the spur of the moment to circumnavigate the island and were now threading their way through the rock gardens and seal colony south of the lighthouse



All too soon it was time to leave the beach and make our way back to Mallacoota. The selected route was via the northern end of Tullaberga Island which turned out to be much more interesting than the more exposed southern tip.

On arrival adjacent to the Mallacoota bar, a number in the pod decided to attempt the tricky bar crossing back into the Mallacoota Lake system, leaving Dave to ferry his less experienced group through the surf and onto the beach at Bastion Point. To their great delight the paddlers were treated to a lovely display by a pod of dolphins that played and showed off for some time in the waters just outside the surf zone. After a safe landing Dave gave an impromptu lesson on rolling with the use of his newly made single ended 'T-handled paddle.



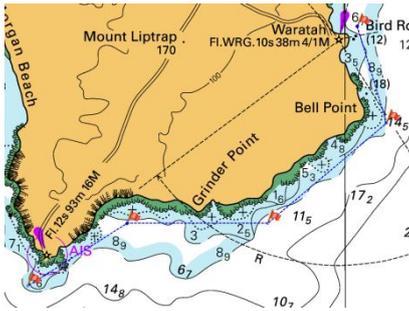
Reluctantly the paddlers left the water and made their way back to camp after experiencing an absolutely fabulous and privileged day on these waters. At dinner that night as we all enjoyed the left-overs from the night before.

Dave then announced plans for a Two-Fold Bay venue for 2012, information well received by the club members present who

were busy taking a mental note – get in early, missing out is not an option!



WALKERVILLE OVERNIGHTER by Ken Bulkeley



The weekend of 16-17 April found Terry Barry and his wife Deb, Robin Boundy, Laurie Brown and I along with my son Lincoln nestled in amongst the tee trees at Walkerville foreshore camping ground for what turned out to be a brilliant couple of days paddling along the coast to Cape Liptrap.

Four of us set out on Saturday morning at about 10.00 am with a 10-15 kn onshore breeze. We headed to Bird rock where we were able to sneak through a passage in the middle of it to find a handful of cormorants wondering who and what the unexpected visitors were all about. Conditions allowed us to hug the reefs and outcrops and we stopped a few times taking in the scenery with ruins of old lime kilns and jetty remnants to look at as we continued on.

Terry found another gap which had just enough water to let him through and we paddled through rock gardens playing rock lotto all the way to our first stop at Bear Gully campground.

We stopped here on the northern end and had morning tea on the beach, while listening to the strains of ACDC courtesy of the campers dotted along the foreshore.

Soon after leaving Bear Gully we saw the Cape Liptrap lighthouse for the first time and it looked nice and close. It looked pretty much like that for the next hour or so. Finally, we found ourselves directly out from the Cape where Robin promptly "bagged" it with a roll.

After a little encouraging from Terry I decided to have a go for myself. So, that's one down for me. How many Capes are there around Victoria's coastline? Can't be that many surely!

A couple of lazy Sea lions poked their heads up as we paddled past, looking for passes through the rocky outcrop at the Cape before swimming off but the one up the top must have had prime position because he just gave us a halfhearted wave and went back to sleep.

We'd seen the wreckage of an old timber fishing boat while paddling down the

coast on a remote beach so we decided to pull up for lunch and stretch our legs to suss it out on the way home. Maybe half of the hull had been deposited over the rocks and was left high and dry on its final resting place above the high tide line. We wondered where the rest of it had ended up. Maybe it's still out there somewhere, floating just below the surface, waiting.

The sea was a little bit messy on the way out with the wind from the southeast and we were hoping to be able to sail back for the last leg but it wasn't to be as the wind died away mid-afternoon. The tide had been going out for most of the time we were on the water so a passage that Terry had passed through had a huge rock in the middle of it when we returned. Every once in a while a wave would stand up just to keep us on our toes while edging



around the headland outcrops.

Back to camp at about 3.30 and we'd been on the water for some 5 1/2 hours. An occasional look at my GPS on the deck showed we were getting along at 7 km but probably averaged less than that. We figured we'd covered somewhere around 26 - 28 km for the day. All in all an excellent day's paddle with little swell and the opportunity to get close to an interesting stretch of seemingly remote coastline only a couple of hours drive from Melbourne.



Sunday shaped up to be as good weather wise as Saturday had been and we headed off towards Waratah Bay in search of some surf to dabble in. Pretty lackluster it proved to be, so we headed further along to Sandy Point. Heaps better there.

We put in at Ned's lookout and thoroughly enjoyed ourselves in 1-1.5 m waves for the next hour or three. A nice clean shore break and we all ended up-side-down at various stages but it was the most fun I've had surfing a kayak ever. I must say those Nadgees Surf well.

No loops were had on the day so we must go back and try harder next time. Lots of getting trashed while sideways in the foam and occasionally tripping over, caught out leaning the wrong way. Surfing backwards kept Terry and Robin up to speed with reflexes and bracing/rolling practice. Rolling under waves as they peeled over and generally messing around was great fun. I was busy just paddling in a straight line as I'd brought along a little plastic river boat. Laurie just made it look easy, catching just about anything that came along and looking very professional. Must be all of that practice he gets around Westernport.

An excellent spot to spend the weekend at short notice and somewhere I've wanted to paddle for a while. Thanks to Terry for posting a trip that turned out to be relaxed and entertaining and thanks to Deb, Robin, Laurie and Lincoln for great company over the weekend.

ISRAEL TO MELBOURNE AND BACK by Sarit Krupka

Paddling on the other side of the world – for me that is Melbourne Australia.

My name is Sarit. In 2003 I sat for the first time in a sea kayak and felt an immediate connection, it was magic. I was as enthusiastic then as I am now. I paddle two times a week all year round at the warm waters of the Mediterranean Sea with the Terra-Santa club (see picture below) (www.seakayak.co.il) in Israel.



Sarit on Mediterranean home waters

In addition to the Mediterranean, I have also paddled in the *Dead Sea*, the lowest point on earth, the Jordan River and the Sea of Galilee. My first experience of kayaking outside of Israel with the club was a 7 day kayak expedition in Donegal, Ireland in July 2006. The Dodecanese Islands in Greece followed. For me, nothing compares to the feeling of freedom I experience on these trips. Definitely the best way to see and feel the world. Thankfully I have a loving and supporting husband, whom I managed to lure into this sport (and so our three wonderful children knew the word kayak before many other words)

As an exhibition designer, I travel to different places around the world. Two great passions of mine are traveling and paddling, put them together – and it's a winner. Some places I have managed to kayak in during these exhibition work



travels are, Manhattan, San-Francisco (USA), Norway, Simons Town and Cape Town (South Africa).

While working in Israel on the booth for the Avalon Air show I started searching for a sea kayak club to paddle with in Melbourne. I contacted Terry Barry and Peter Treby through my friend and fellow paddler Karel Visel - The kayak weatherman (www.kayakweather.com). Terry arranged a paddle for me, and handled all the logistics with the great help of David Golightly. And so, I found myself truly excited paddling beside six wonderful paddlers near Portsea, Port Phillip Bay.

During the paddle Terry enlisted everyone in an important mission: to keep an eye out for dolphins for me. In the Mediterranean Sea there are many beautiful creatures that can be seen during a paddle: birds, flying fish, jumping fish and sea turtles, but dolphins are a rare sight. The wind was strong but we were sheltered by land. The kayak and kit that David lent me were a perfect fit and I felt comfortable and happy. I was also very impressed by the Australian made electric bilge pump gadget. During the paddle I had a chance to get a bit more acquaint-

ed with everyone, which is a big part of the fun for me.

The scenery was beautiful and the commentary Terry shared was truly interesting. At some point someone noticed dolphins approaching and suddenly they were there in plain view, and then, just beside me, majestically flowing in and out of the water. I took one "out of focus" picture (too excited) but quickly put down the camera and the rest of the time I paddled along trying to seize every moment and remember every detail I see: I recorded in my mind their eyes, fins, colour, motion. WOW. Out of breath. I felt so very lucky and I think I was not the only one.

We landed on a beach for lunch just as the sun came out from behind the clouds, a perfect setting. On the way back two kayak sails were up, an uncommon thing for me (like lime flavoured chips).



Just before reaching shore we had fun with a little rolling. Bob made every possible roll with his Greenlander paddle. Impressive!

Our day ended off with coffee and chips at a nice local cafe. The wonderful six paddlers from my "other side of the world" gave me a perfect day and made a dream come true.

Thank you Terry, David, Bob, Tamsin, Robin and Scott, who were so friendly and welcoming.



Standing: Sarit, Robin, Scott, Terry, David. Kneeling: Tamsin, Bob



Melbourne was bathed in warm sunny weather over the Easter long weekend – a-typical of most autumns in the recent past. The sky was blue, the temperature comfortable and the sea calm, not a wisp of wind. A perfect day for a family picnic on the Bay near Frankston.

Kayaking is a family affair in the Fergie/Stewart households. It hasn't always been the case but since Grandpa Bob was introduced to the sport...we have never looked back! Today was a good example of intergenerational learning.

The kayaks were on the beach ready for launching – but where was Dad? Brandon was rummaging through the rubbish bins, but why? With a grin on his face he produced two crinkled empty plastic drink bottles. What on earth for I can hear you asking...so did we! He blew up the bottles as if they were balloons, proceeded to strap them either side of an Inuit wooden paddle and then attach it to the back of the Nordkapp deck. What a

novel idea...homemade floats for his two and a half year old daughter, Arieta.

Kitted out with spray jacket and PDF Arieta smiled with glee as she sat between his legs, she with her paddle and he with his. Then off they went – she mimicking his strokes at half the pace and he gingerly paddle longer strokes while at the same time trying to avoid hitting her head in the process. It was quite a sight to see. She clearly felt safe, smiling at the thought of being in control of a five metre boat, with her own paddle that Daddy had made, putting her trust completely in him. Of course grandfathers, grandmothers and uncle were all nervously hovering close by in case anything untoward happened.

As this little armada slid over the glassy sea, we all enjoyed the opportunity to hone our skills, encouraging each other in the process. It was good to greet the fishermen and see Port Phillip Bay from another angle (although it would have

been nice not to have had to put up with those noisy jet skis). A good time of fun and fellowship though it all went all too quickly... we had to get back for the routine afternoon nap for a certain little girl who had delighted us all with her antics.

Having the opportunity to teach our grandchildren in those informal and serendipitous times is so precious. Encouraging them to respect the sea and be responsible for the material things we have are important legacies for older generations to pass on to younger ones.

Kayaking is so much fun whether in a group or solo like the Freya's of this world. We have thoroughly enjoyed the communal aspects of the sport as families but also in a broader sense too.

That's why we love being members of the Victorian Sea Kayak Club. We appreciate the inclusiveness of the club--open to all ages where everyone seems willing to teach and support others, in spite the age and experience differences.

I reckon that in a few years' time it will be the grandparents being towed by the young-uns. But that's okay...maybe that's what life is all about: sharing knowledge and dreaming as we grow together, training wheels and all.



Brandon and Arieta working on their sculling brace



Victorian Sea Kayak Club members, Tina Rowley, John Evertze, David Winkworth and myself attended the 2010 **Kiwi Association of Sea Kayakers** (KASK) Forum at Taurikura on the edge of Whangarei Harbour on New Zealand's North Island, which was a first visit for Tina, John and I but our other attendee David Winkworth, is a regular delegate and visiting instructor each year.

Before leaving the Taurikura Forum last year Paul Caffyn urged us to consider coming back in 2011 as the venue was planned to be on the outstanding Marlborough Sounds near Picton on the South Island. As a result nine VSKC members turned up at the Outward Bound College in Anakiwa in early April this year for what promised to be a big event.

Joining Dave Winkworth and myself from last year's delegation were Heather Torbet, Neil Brenton, Raia Wall, Bart and Margaret de Vries plus their friends and club members Sue Davis and John Meertens. A total of nine attendees, so we were certainly there in strength, particularly as Neil and Raia were both lined up to join Winky in presenting on and off water workshops at the Forum.

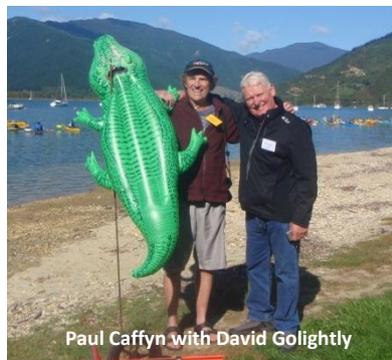
The tragic Christchurch earthquake devastated the city just five weeks before the event, causing chaos to the organisers as well as frustrating travel plans for many. The only personal KASK issue was a fortunate near-miss, when John Kirk-Anderson who is New Zealand's highest qualified Sea Kayak Instructor, narrowly missed death or injury, when his office building collapsed around him, resulting in the loss of his notebook computer and all the information he was planning to utilise when organising the on-water skills activities of the Forum. Whilst we visitors saw nothing of the damage in the city, as it was out of bounds to all but rescue teams, we nevertheless met locals who were clearly still reeling from the experience.

It's a four hour drive from Christchurch to the small village of Anakiwa which is located is about twenty kilometres from the Cook Strait ferry terminal town of Picton. Most of us hired cars for the journey and so had the benefit of a lovely drive following the East coast of the island for almost the whole route. Practically all of New Zealand is picturesque and the section along the route to Picton does not disappoint, with soaring mountains and a surf swept coast to gaze upon. The actual venue for the event, was the Outward Bound College in Anakiwa. Situated as it is about fifty metres from the water's edge provided a convenient and huge advantage for sea kayaking

styled events, in addition the under-roof facilities, were superb and the 'tucker' magic!

Our good fortune kicked in early at the Forum, when Heather and I arrived somewhat later than expected and so missed Paul Caffyn's opening remarks, including what was by all accounts, a terrible Scottish joke! A more fortunate piece of timing however ensured we experienced an outstanding audio-visual presentation by Paul Hayward and Natasha Romoff titled "*Alaska without the Cruise Ship*". One couldn't help but marvel at the Alaskan scenery as well as the impressive organisation which went into the trip; this was sea kayaking in an extreme environment indeed.

Space does not permit me to go through the entire programme for the weekend but one thing that a visitor does get is an understanding off the number of paddlers in New Zealand who undertake significant voyages each year. Indeed I recall last year, listening to a presentation by Colin Quilter about his solo journey around Stewart Island, the most southerly island of New Zealand. This year it was the turn of Max Grant and his daughter Melanie, who had just completed a circumnavigation of the surf swept and often exposed coastline of the South Island. This was yet another outstanding presentation, a feature of KASK Forums.



Paul Caffyn with David Golightly

I cannot let any account such as this go by without mentioning the wonderful meeting that Paul Caffyn and I had with famed British canoe designer and author Alan Byde, who now lives locally in Picton. Dave Winkworth and Paul Caffyn had alerted me to his local presence prior to me leaving Australia, so armed with my copy of Alan's book "*Living Canoeing*" I came away with it autographed by Alan some forty-two years after it was published! During the sixties and seventies Alan was a legend in canoeing circles in Britain.

A great deal of fun was had during the 'Evan's Exemplary Sea Kayak Examination' a quiz competition which with typi-

cal good-humoured Trans-Tasman rivalry was stacked against us Australians – I mean how are we antipodeans supposed to know the answer to the question – "*How long is the Waikato River*"? Rising to protest, Dave Winkworth in his 'quiet and understated style' declared the whole show null and void, only to be told to go and do his homework – after all this is Rugby World Cup Year and like the All Blacks, KASK would give no quarter!

Given that the VSKC plagiarised ideas from KASK for our own Forum in 2010, it will come as no surprise to learn that activities such as a Photo Competition were popular, with high standards set by the reputable 'snappers' who took part, including our own Neil Brenton who walked off with a major prize.

In announcing the winners and despite protestations from all Aussie's present, in an unprecedented move for KASK, 'Hanging' Judge JKA sensationally disqualified our Dave Winkworth from the photo competition claiming that as good he may be - "*How could Winky be the photographer and the subject in his action rolling photograph entered in the competition*"? While being led away for later sentencing, Dave appeared to mutter "I was framed, I'm innocent, honestly"!

An event highlight that we visitors from 'across the ditch' were looking forward to was the mass paddle and camp-out scheduled for the Sunday afternoon and evening. Approximately one hundred and forty delegates attended the Forum and of these some eighty-seven set out by kayak for Mistletoe Bay on the north side of Queen Charlotte Sound, a journey which basically contours the famed Queen Charlotte Track. This beautiful series of 'Sounds' or Fiords make for the most wonderful relatively sheltered paddling destination one could wish for. The excellent camp-sites are provided and maintained by the Government through the Department of Conservation or DoC as it's known locally.

Mistletoe Bay was typical of these sites with a wonderfully grassed meadow to pitch the myriad of brightly coloured tents on, as well as a large shed equipped as a camp mess hall, complete with tables, chairs, running water and cooking facilities. Even the onslaught of heavy rain didn't dampen the evenings camaraderie as various groups completed their final plans for the next few 'free' days on the waters of Marlborough Sounds – the Australian delegation were no exception with most of the VSKC paddlers planning to stay for a week or more – but that as they say "*Is another story*"!

EXPEDITION PLANNING part 2, by Robin Boundy

In Sea Trek Issue 68 Robin provided some really helpful advice about expedition planning, addressing 'who should participate on the expedition?' and 'Rules for participation'. Below Robin continues his advice (based on his November 2010 VSKC Forum presentation).



TRAINING FOR AN EXPEDITION

When training for an expedition like a Bass Strait Crossing, it should almost become an obsession, a lifestyle where everything you do on a daily basis in some part is contributing to the expedition. Raia Wall rode her bike to work, rain, hail or shine for months leading up to our trip, losing a phenomenal 16 kg in the process! Neil gave up sugar and take-away foods losing significant weight also.

Doing some weight training for extra strength definitely helped me when it came to powering into wind and seas or moving heavily laden boats. Cardiovascular training can be a life saver as you are certain at some time during an extended expedition to find it necessary to punch into a tough tide or head wind, maybe for 10 km or more to meet your destination.

Our training trips consisted of both blue water and Bay paddles in a variety of conditions. On some of our training days, we added extra weight to the boats and I highly recommend that you practice the formations you plan to paddle during the expedition. This will highlight any issues of paddlers not sticking to their agreed positions in the pod and also allows you to practice the best formations in rough conditions.

So the long day paddles, the short high intensity paddles combined with good diet and other exercise, had the five of us fighting fit by the time we were ready to depart.

We took the weekend off before our departure. That small break allowed our bodies to recover from months of training and by the date of our departure, we were jumping out of our skins to get going. During the break from training, there is still plenty to do. You are in the final stages of getting all your gear and equipment together, all your food prepared and going over extensive lists,

double checking your route, tide tables, weather and float plan. You are also trying to stay healthy knowing a simple cold could prevent you from participating on the expedition.

PLANNING FOR EXPEDITIONS

When planning an expedition, it is important to do your research. We studied the weather patterns for Bass Strait for the time of year we wished to paddle. I crossed Bass Strait many times on paper. I would email Raia after reading a favorable weather report for Bass Strait and say, "we are going today".

From there we would make our way across Bass Strait deciding when to go and when to sit out the weather. From this exercise you will soon realize how scarce the good paddling days are. You also get to learn from your bad decisions safely! It is important to study both marine and topographical charts for the entire route. I also zoomed in with Google earth on every island noting all possible safe landing area's and bail out points imagining different wind and sea directions for each location.

By the time our trip commenced, I had such a vivid mental picture of the entire route that I felt as long as I had a watch, tides tables and a compass, I could paddle the route in the dark without a GPS. We chose March for our expedition, we felt from our observations that March gave us the best chance of getting the appropriate weather to do a crossing, taking into account the best balance of weather, daylight hours and temperature. Ideally you should have enough daylight duration to successfully paddle from one location to the next.

If it is necessary to paddle in the darkness, make it in the morning at the start of the day. It is much easier to paddle out to sea in the dark whilst you are fresh

and alert than paddling into an unknown shore in the dark possibly tired and unable to see any dangerous obstructions in the water or to accurately access the entry conditions. This also highlights the benefit of taking a mental note of the surroundings when you arrive at your destination and if necessary turn your kayak as if you are leaving and note the compass bearing and distance required to clear the beach, cove, headland, rocks etc. before continuing on your calculated compass bearing to your next destination. On leaving Winter Cove in the dark, I knew I had to paddle approx. 1.1 km on a bearing of 100 degrees to avoid rocks approx. 250 m off the S.E side of the cove before taking our S.E bearing to Flinders Island.

FLOAT PLAN & LAND SUPPORT

You should list on your float plan your expected start date, a trip overview, communication and safety equipment carried and details of the participants, their mobile phone #'s, boat descriptions and car registrations if applicable. This person or persons will be your main contact throughout your journey; will know your movements and how to respond should they not hear from you at the required time.

On our Bass Strait Crossing, it was decided that any emergency callout would be made by the paddling group. As there were 5 of us, all with epi-rbs, mobile phones and two spot trackers, it would be unlikely that one of us could not get a call out if needed. This also removed the unnecessary pressure on the shore contact and the paddling group should they end up in an area difficult to communicate back to shore.

Next issue, Robin continues with Gear and equipment, Food and Consumables, and Navigation (Ed)



Peter Costello, Raia Wall, Neil Brenton, Tom and Robin Boundy



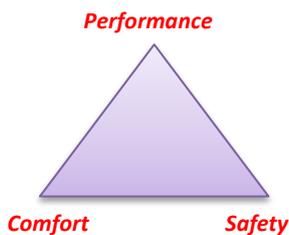
Don Andrews off Moruya Heads.

We always seem to start these notes with definitions.....so....let's look at a definition for "efficient." Google them up and you'll find there are quite a few but the one I like is :

“Performing or functioning in the best possible manner with the least waste of time and effort.”

LEAST WASTE OF TIME AND EFFORT. That seems to me to be very important for a sea kayaker. Our bodies are our engine so if the body's not working efficiently then we could be in serious trouble on the ocean!

In talks I often use a little triangle with the words performance, safety and comfort on the points.



These key words are all closely related as you will see. If one is absent, it compromises the other two. Today we are going to look primarily at PERFORMANCE and touch briefly on COMFORT.

I propose to cover and expand on seven key points of efficient paddling. In the next Sea Trek Issue I'll develop this further (showing you how you can quantify any improvement or change you may make to your paddling style in the comfort of your own lake).

I have limited the key points to seven. I think that if this number of key points is increased, it will also increase the likelihood of you forgetting a couple of them!

To help you remember as you paddle along, you have been issued with a waterproof laminated card listing the 7 points, which I suggest you attach to your spray skirt pull-cord. You should arrange the card so that it lies flat on your spray skirt...in easy view.

SIT UP! SLIGHT LEAN FORWARD

No slouching! If you find that your seat or cockpit arrangement is conducive to slouching then you will need to do something about it. We might as well cover comfort here. You need to be comfortable in your kayak – you really do. If you are uncomfortable for any reason, your discomfort will impinge on your performance...and that's not safe! We spend long long hours in our kayaks some days and we need to be comfortable. So, attend to your seat, your backrest, your footrests, and your thigh braces...whatever you need to do to make yourself comfortable in a "sit-up" position. Your feet should definitely have solid footrests to push against. Your main connection to your kayak during forward paddling is through your feet! Have someone look at the lordosis of your spine too as you paddle. Consider wearing a kidney belt perhaps. I used to wear one on long days of motorcycling and it really made a difference to posture.

A note on backrests: There should not be excessive back force on your backrest during paddling. You need to maintain flexibility. Also, your backrest should be absolutely no higher than your coaming behind it. Having said that though, your back rest will tell you if you're beginning to slouch as you'll feel increased pressure against it.

That "slight lean forward" mentioned above is important too. That will give

you a longer reach for the catch and increase the length of your stroke. If you're going to put that blade in the water...might as well make it a good stroke! So, sit up with a slight lean forward and get up and over that paddle! You'll find you'll have greater control of the placement of the blade.

STRAIGHT ARM FOR CATCH. LOOSE GRIP ON SHAFT

A full stroke! That's what you'll get with a straightened arm for the "catch." Fantastic! Why waste the energy needed to put that blade in the water? Make it a good stroke by starting with an extended arm. The torso rotation (See Point No. 6) you used at the completion of the previous stroke will put you in the perfect position for a good reach-forward for the catch on the next stroke. Smoothness is important – sea kayakers have to paddle all day. Smoothness feels good – one stroke blends beautifully into the next

Loose grip on shaft! This should be all you need...just the fingers around the shaft for the catch...no thumb required! I mention this as a safety item really. A death grip on the shaft can lead quickly to tenosynovitis which a nasty disabling wrist injury. Get this one and you may need to be towed home! So, a relaxed grip is the way to go! It also feels good to control the paddle with a loose grip!

In very strong winds you may find the blade is being blown around a bit and occasionally striking the kayak. In very strong headwinds, lean further forward to lower your frontal profile and perhaps lower your shaft angle too...and prepare yourself for that long slog home into the wind! Says Paul Caffyn: "Wind is the curse of the kayaking class!"

BLADE IMMERSERD BEFORE POWER

I know this is just common sense but it happens often. Get that blade fully immersed before applying power. How will you know if the blade is not fully in before power is applied? You'll see it and hear it. There will be a splash of water behind the blade and you'll hear a "ker-shlook" sound too as the blade comes back towards you. This is called "ventilation." It's the sucking down of air along the blade....and it will reduce your efficiency.

Sitting up with a slight lean forward will give you more control over the immersion of the blade. Do it!

KEEP PADDLE ANGLE UP

Ever watched sprint kayakers? They have a ridiculously high shaft angle...but then they only have to paddle for 500 metres...you may have to do it for 50 kilometres. A low shaft angle, on the other hand, goes with slouching and tiredness and a low shaft angle also increases the turning moment of the stroke. This means that more of your precious forward stroke energy is going into trying to turn your kayak...which you'll probably then cancel with a kick of your rudder...and waste even more energy!

As you paddle your top hand should most definitely cross the centreline of your kayak. This is a good indication of quality torso rotation which I'll cover in a moment.

I'm not saying that you have to have a ridiculously high paddle angle – You'll find that very difficult to maintain for long periods but you should be conscious of your shaft in the centre coming close to the deck – that will indicate a low paddle angle. A little aid that may help you be aware of "paddle angle droop" is to strap a 2 litre PET drink bottle longitudinally in front of you. When your shaft starts touching the bottle, you'll know your paddle angle is getting down. Time to lift it a bit!

BLADE MOVES OUT FROM KAYAK, ARM ONLY SLIGHTLY BENT

Now we're getting into the nitty gritty of efficient paddling! Your blade should MOVE OUT from the side of your kayak as you draw it back. This is so very important in gaining an efficient paddling stroke!

There are 2 reasons for this:

Firstly, if you draw your blade straight back along the side of the kayak (as I have seen in supposedly informed kayaking texts) you need to bend your arm significantly. This brings into play your bicep, which in the scheme of things is NOT a big muscle. You will find that your biceps will fatigue over a few kilometres and you will be tagged as an "arm paddler!" In my experience "arm paddlers" are not good paddlers over long distances.

Watch an arm paddler sometime. It just LOOKS inefficient! Pull a blade straight back and a vortex will form at each side of the blade. This is water streaming off the face of the blade into a small whirlpool form, sucking air down with it and it reeks of inefficiency! By moving your blade out from the kayak, your arm will have a much lesser bend at the elbow and you'll bring your super-strong torso muscles into play. Much better!

Secondly, when you move your blade out from your boat, it is actually SCULLING! Yes, that's right! That means your blade is developing LIFT. Not only is it not pulling back through the water as just mentioned...it is actually trying to pull forward! Less turbulence...much smaller vortex...and only on one blade edge! Yes! Try the Sculling Draw Stroke and you'll see what I mean about lift.

Your blade should need very little guidance to find the right angle – just your fingers around the shaft should be sufficient. There is some turning moment to the boat with this stroke but it is more than compensated for by the lift created.

Note re. Wing blades: Wing paddles work by developing lift in the "outward" stroke described above. However, if you use one or intend to use one, be aware that a really good high angle shaft technique is required for them to be an advantage over a good flat-blade paddle. Up to you! Use a wing paddle because you're keen to develop a high angle stroke, not to be trendy!

Now, let's move on to the next of the nitty gritty points:

FOLLOW BLADE WITH TORSO ROTATION- EXIT LEVEL WITH HIP

Torso rotation! This goes with the straighter arms and the outward stroke of Point No. 5. You use large body muscles that, with a little exercise, can keep going all day. Sea kayaks are not race boats – we build up to our desired cruising speed and hopefully hold it all day! With good posture and good technique we can do this!

There is a specific set of muscles involved in torso rotation. If you haven't used this sort of paddling action before, then these muscles may need a little exercise to develop their potential. But don't despair! It doesn't take too long...but does require regular paddling. When you start out, try short distances first, and build up to longer duration over time.

So, these muscles we need to use for efficient paddling: they are called the Obliquus Abdominus. They wrap around and across our abdominal area at an approximate angle of forty five degrees, connecting our ribs to the sides of our pelvis. There are internal and external Obliquus muscles which run in opposite directions aided by a big transverse muscle called the Transversus Abdominus which gives us core strength and support...much like a kidney belt would do. It's beyond the scope of these notes to go into further detail about these muscles here but I will outline their position and how they work during our session.

Torso rotation is a bit of a wind-up and unwind action. Wind-up at the catch and unwind with the exit of the blade...and the exit of your blade should be at hip level. There is no point carrying your stroke any further (unless you are doing a steering or correction stroke) because you will just be lifting water. So get that blade out at hip level to be ready for the next stroke.

So called flat bladed paddles generally have a concave face. This is for blade strength but also so that when the blade moves through its power stroke, at least one part of the blade will be perpendicular (and working!) in the water. By the time the blade reaches your hip level, all of the blade area has ceased to be efficiently working and it's time to get it out. Now for the return phase:

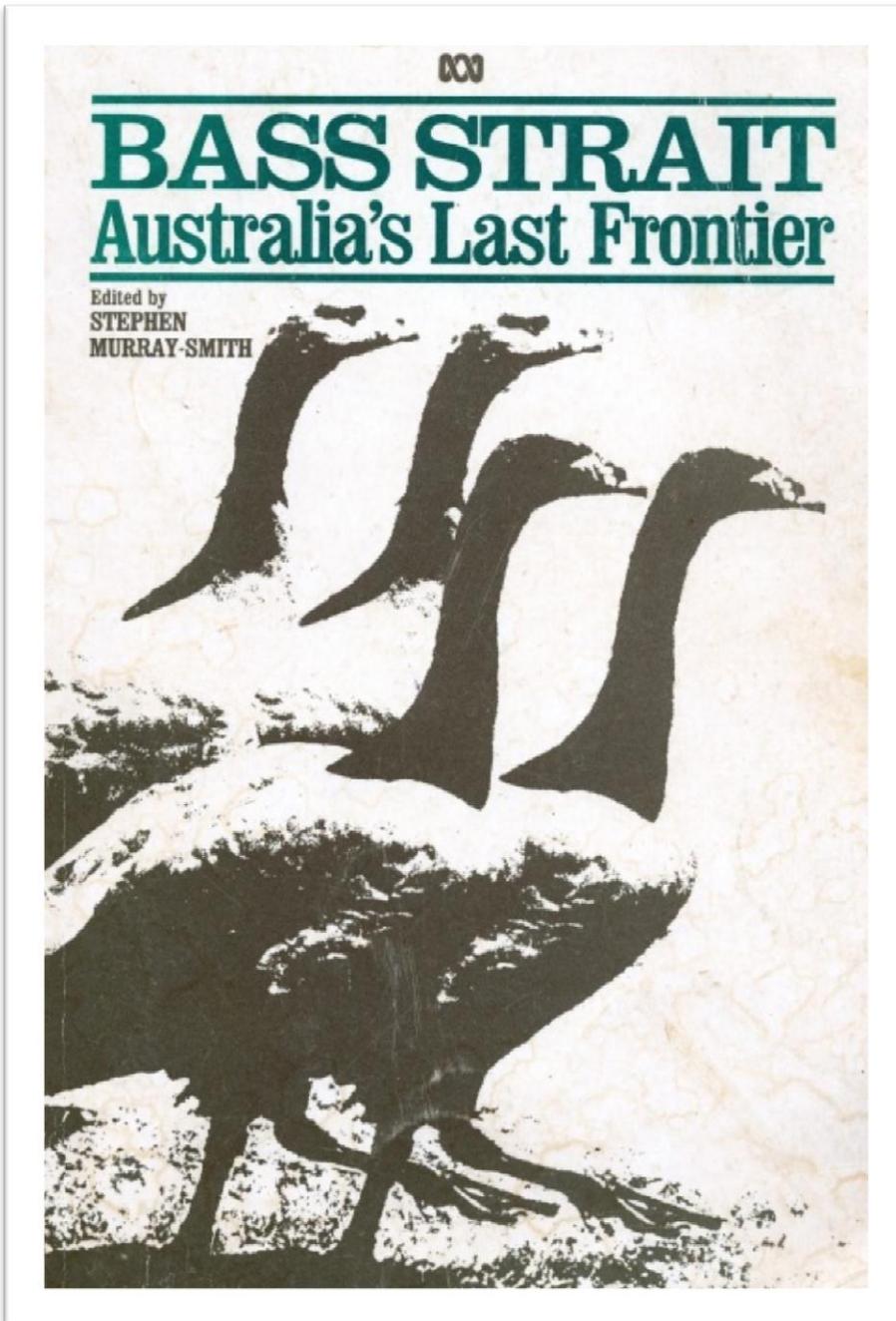
THUMB SUPPORT OF SHAFT FOR RETURN PHASE

Just as the catch needs only your fingers, so the return phase needs only your thumb under the shaft for support. Every few strokes at least, you should extend your fingers to relax them.

Well, that's efficiency in paddling, but what else can you do? Here's a few tips:

Keep your kayak hull as smooth and shiny as possible. This applies to 'glass AND plastic boats. Dragging boats up the beach will scratch your hull more than you realize and slow you down – dragging boats is not cool! Get a set of wheels or a paddling friend to help you carry your kayak. Wax polish your hull regularly. Keel protection strips with a rough or "dimpled" finish will also slow you down. If you use a rudder, have a close look at the leading and trailing edges of the blade. If they're squared off – as most are from the factory, why not get that file out to sharpen them up! Distribution of gear in your kayak is important. Too much weight, (even day gear) in the rear hatch will slow you down. Water should be stored amidships as much as possible. We want the bow of our kayak to lift over waves BUT not to lift excessively during paddling. It can be a fine balance! Be flexible in your cockpit! Be ready to lean forward when even a small wave picks you up to catch the ride, however short it may be. At the end of the day's paddle, a lot of short rides add up.





Edited By Stephen Murray-Smith, Australian Broadcasting Commission First Published 1969, Revised 1987

I have been lucky enough to have kayaked across Bass Strait in the VSKC trip in 2007, which was led by Julian Smith, and I have been the land based contact for the majority of VSKC crossings in recent years.

I am passionate about the Strait and have attempted to enhance my knowledge on all aspects of the region. I have read widely on the subject and for the past 3 years have been able to spend most of January on Erith Island with my family and a few friends when we are left with

our kayaks and gear by a yacht and we revel in the joys of island existence.

Stephen Murray-Smith was a renowned academic historian at Melbourne University and he and his family have maintained and stayed at the Erith Island hut every summer for the past 40 years. He was the authority on Bass Strait and was known and respected by all. He collected the biggest library of books about Bass Strait and Antarctica in the world and this is still maintained by his family today.

Stephen died in 1988, but his ashes and spirit are still in Bass Strait. Each time I am at Erith I pay homage to him at the

small plaque on a granite rock above the hut.

The ABC commissioned a series of talks on Bass Strait in 1969 and Stephen was the editor. The book was such a success that it was revised in 1987.

I have one copy, which is one of my most treasured possessions. It is now a bit dog-eared as I have carried it in my boat and was very proud to have it in my hand when I finally got to enter the Great Cave of Erith

The book has 11 different chapters on all aspects of the Strait ranging from the early history of European settlement, to the prehistory and geology of the area. My favourite article is the Prehistory of Bass Strait by Professor Rhys Jones who was one of the greatest archaeologists in Australia. He did some remarkable work in the Great Cave of Erith and was able to document how people and animals had used the cave about 10,000 years ago when the Bassian Plain existed and when it was possible for people and fauna to move from the mainland to Tasmania.

I firmly believe that most VSKC members should have a copy as part of their library and as a result I have scanned the book and have it available as a DVD when can be easily viewed on a computer

If you are interested in obtaining a DVD of the book from me please email me at booyak@tpg.com.au and for \$12, I will post you a copy.

All proceeds will go to the Murray-Smith family for maintenance of the Erith hut, which has been used by all of us who have made the crossing. It has provided shelter and water, which has been greatly appreciated by kayakers



Bill Robinson

PIMP MY BOAT: foot brace customising by Andrew Hurnard



Andrew Hurnard

Twelve months ago I started looking around for a new Kayak to replace my aging Prijon Kodiak. After a couple of test paddles and submitting a cost benefit analysis to my long suffering and infinitely patient better half (who is also proof reading this!), I took delivery of a shiny new Tahe Marine Reval Midi.

The first few paddles weren't so great – my feet and lower legs went completely numb, which was a blessing because it meant I didn't feel the pain in my feet from the foot pegs anymore. The problem was that other than this, the Reval Midi handled like a dream. Something had to be done...

Fast forward 8 months and the Reval Midi is taking on the armchair-like comfort of the Prijon and I have learnt a bit about kayaking ergonomics. It's been a bit of a rollercoaster, lots of trial and error (at times mostly error) and surfing the net for kayak outfitting ideas (see the resources section at the end). Now the end is in sight, I thought it was a good chance to put pen to paper and document what I've learnt.

Having said this, I'm no expert, and since we're all built differently, things that worked for me may be completely wrong for you.

FOOT PEGS/BRACE:

No doubt the best solution is a foam bulkhead, but these are expensive and chances of getting it right the first time (right place, right angle to support your foot when you push against it etc.) is remote, so you'll be needing a fair bit of that expensive foam.

The option I ended up using was a bar rather than pegs. A brace bar means you aren't restricted to where you can rest your feet like you are with pegs. You can go from a knees up paddling position thru to a legs straighter power paddle position and anywhere in-between.

The big problem with a brace bar is the very real danger of getting your feet caught behind the bar, and being trapped in an up-turned kayak. The solution was

securing the brace bar to the supports with bungy cord. With this in place, if you do get your foot caught, a small amount of pressure in the direction of the seat will pop the brace bar off the supports and out of the way.



Note the slight widening in the middle of the Brace bar. As you move your feet around the bar you may find you need to do this so the balls are always the part of your feet resting on the bar.

A FEW HANDY HINTS

The ball of your foot only should rest on the brace with your foot at a comfortable

angle (the only way you will know it's a comfortable angle is trying different locations and going for a paddle).

Your toes are best not resting on anything and being able to wiggle freely.

Any foot brace/pegs need to be strong. You generate a surprising amount of force when you push against them when you're paddling or even just edging.

A final note - mucking around with your cockpit outfitting can be very time consuming (and apparently addictive). If it's not broken – don't fix it, and spend the hours saved paddling.

SOME HANDY RESOURCES

Williamstown Steel Merchants: Aluminium and marine grade stainless steel. And best of all, they have a large offcut section you can fossick through.

East Coast Kayaking (aka The Kayak Shop): Rohan has stock on hand of the Nadgee foam seats and can probably source additional foam of the same type for a new backrest too.

Kayak Outfitting Websites I've used when looking for ideas:

<http://kayakfit.tripod.com/>

<http://gnarlydognews.blogspot.com/>

<http://www.ukseakayakguidebook.co.uk/outfitting-sea-kayaks/article-seakayak-outfitting-deck.htm>

Andrew Hurnard works in that most nebulous of industries "IT" and has a deep seated aversion of all things computerised. He has a very patient wife, two lovely boys and lives in Newport within kayaking towing distance of the Bay. Andrew has been Sea Kayaking for 10 years and joined the VSKC 18 months ago to meet like-minded people to paddle and talk kayaks with. (given his youngest son is 18 months old this shows an immaculate if somewhat hopeful sense of timing on his part). Not surprisingly he has managed only one club trip since joining. (Ed)



LAST BUT NOT LEAST, A WORD FROM OUR SPONSORS

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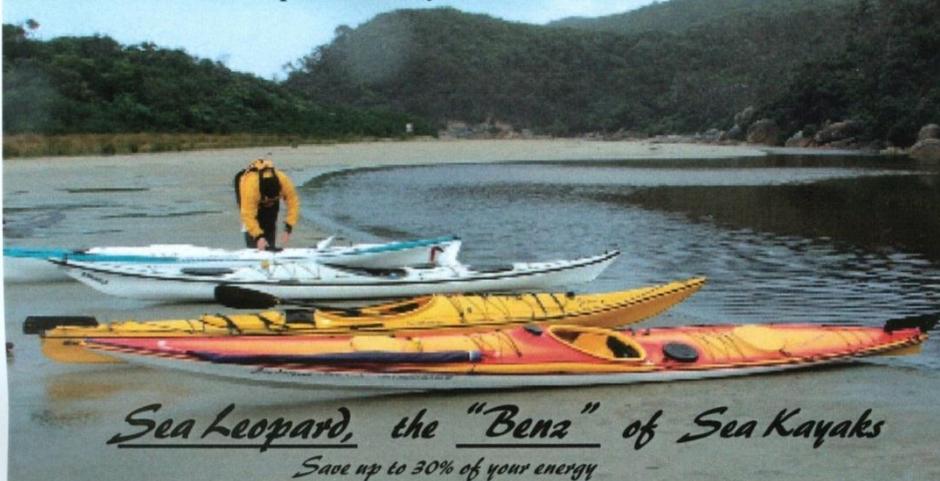

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You've got to wonder what the poor people are doing! (Paul Caffyn)