



Feb 1990

VICTORIAN SEA KAYAK CLUB INCORPORATED

January Newsletter 1990

SECRETARY-TREASURER
"MARRIE" 4 OAKWOOD LANE,
TECONA, VICTORIA 3160 754 2476

Dear Member,

And a Happy New Year to All!!! At last things are getting back to normal after the usual Summer exodus to foreign parts & one end of the country to the other... President Mal to Europe and the UK, Vice-President Earle off to England to settle.

Looks like a bumper issue this time round. Many thanks to Mark Tregellas for his year-long serial "Game For A Laugh" which concludes this issue, and our other intrepid contributors!

Great suggestion from John Basemore for a "Technical Tips" column in future newsletters...so send in same & they'll be published with pleasure.

Does anyone know of a typewriter I can beg, borrow or buy for the Club? This gallant old campaigner I've been using for years has definitely seen better days (give me a ring on 754 2476).

COMING EVENTS

February 16th/17th VBCE Skills Improvement Course
& Proficiency Testing

March 3rd/4th Instructors' Course

March 24th Bay Day VACA & VBCE

For further particulars, contact Mal Cowall (059) 66 5110

Details of other events planned follow in newsletter.

Don't forget to up-date your membership subscription (due October '89 for the '89-90 financial year) and help to keep us in the black! And remember, contributions to our Club newsletter are always VERY welcome - the only way we can keep this publication going in fact!

Cordially yours

Sally Barton.

Secretary-Treasurer

5 January '90

The President
Victorian Sea Kayak Club

"Milber"
Higher Street,
Kingswear,
TQ 6: OAG UK
080 425 766 A/H

Dear Sir,

re Resignation of post

It is with much regret that I must offer my resignation from the post of Vice President effective as of January the 1st 1990.

My family and I are moving to the UK to take up residence for an indefinite period, enabling me to better pursue my plans in the Arctic.

In addition I believe the Club should appoint another member as Technical Officer, as well as appoint a new Public Officer. Given the renewed surge of interest in the Club and the fine calibre of members attracted to sea kayaking I have no doubt the right people will step forward immediately to serve their Club.

Should the Club in its wisdom require me to serve as Overseas Representative on a post of a similar nature I would be happy to comply.

Yours faithfully,

E.deB. Bloomfield.

We're calling for Volunteers on this one! Contact either Mal (059) 665110 or myself (754 2476)

29/10/89

Dear Editor,

Enclosed is an article you may wish to include in a forthcoming copy of the VSKC newsletter. Ali & I joined the club earlier this year after doing a couple of rather laid back trips over the last couple of years (being mainly white water paddles).

WE're currently planning a combined peddling and paddling trip through Norway/Sweden/Finland for next year. WE've recently bought a 2nd hand Klepper Aerius II which will be towed on a trailer behind our touring tandem.

It may be that you receive a slightly more adventurous article in a year's time!

Yours faithfully,
Rodger Grayson.

Membership Update- January 1990

Alex Acatos, 29 Kandra St Bayswater North 3153 729 0858.

Andrew Cope, RMB 8860, Conway Rd. Drouin. Sth. 3818
(051) 220297 or (056) 276 363

"Game for a Laugh" by Mark Tregellas (Conclusion)

The next morning I woke feeling groggy and sore. We would be here for a few days until I was well enough to travel again. It's not a good camp as there are thousands of mosquitos here, and all of them are Malarial carrying Anophelies. They even bite through twin layers of clothing, nothing seems to stop them. John prepared the Surabenn for drying and laid it out on a rock. We ate the second fish we'd caught last night for breakfast. My moral is feeling very low, bad luck seems to have a monopoly on us. John went out hunting and shot a wooly monkey but failed to bring it down. Later that day he went to see how the fish was drying out and found that it had been taken by vultures. I think we both feel the same way, really bad. It's just so hard to keep your spirits up when everything seems to be going against you. My foot is healing slowly with no sign of infection. This morning we found the hook on our night line had been pulled out straight. There must be some really big fish out there. John went out hunting again and shot a brusoue. It's a large bird similar to a Turkey, jet black all over with a bright slash across its cheek. It was delicious but did little to cheer us.

Six days later we were still at the same camp and I went over our supplies. We only had enough supplies left to last us one more month. It was time for a serious rethink. Another month would see us to the mouth of the Cuc river, where unless a miracle happened we could run out of food. The Rio Cuc was just over half the total length of the river we would have to paddle. The thought of living off the land for five hundred kilometres wasn't very appealing, and judging from our hunting, fishing success to date would be almost impossible. We finally found an answer. A week's paddle up the Rio Ipitinga was to a mining camp called Fleshea, with over three hundred men in it. If we could go there and fly back to Monte Dorado we could re-equip ourselves, then fly back and start afresh. It would only leave us two months to complete the trip before the rains started, (and from what we'd seen of the dry season we didn't really want to hang around for the wet). That night our nightline went five times and each time we lost the fish. The sixth time was lucky though and we landed another huge Surabenn. The vultures won't get this one.

Four days later my foot was better and we left to go up the Ipitinga. We were feeling good about it and happier than we had been in weeks. Paddling down stream was a snap, if only we could paddle upstream like it. Shortly after lunch we heard an aircraft and were amazed when it landed only a few hundred metres from us. We stopped and went for a look. Hidden in the jungle was a rough bush landing strip and a small hut. John immediately started talking to the pilot and hissed at me to look real sick. Before I knew what was going on, we had a free flight back to Monte Dorado. There was a family which looked after the airstrip and we left the canoe with them. One hour later we arrived at Monte Dorado, we couldn't believe our luck. We went to the hospital so they could have a look at John's feet which were really bad by this stage, then went for a meal of steak, eggs and beer. It was a weird feeling to be back in a town again. Later that night I started a fever and gradually became hotter and hotter. When my temperature reached 106° Fahrenheit I became delirious and thought John was trying to kill me. It was a night I'll never forget. I was still in a fever when I went to the hospital the next day and found out I had Falciparum Malaria. This is the worse form of malaria and if left untreated will kill you. I started on a course of Quinine and sweated the rest of the fever out.

Woke the next morning feeling like a ten ton truck had rolled over the top of me. John then told me that my passport had been destroyed by the heat and mildew of the river and that I would have to go to Belem to get a new one. It would take me over a week to get over the Malaria. I really feel it's time I took the hint. I talked it over with John and I knew he was disappointed by my decision, but I had spent time thinking it through and he couldn't change my mind. It had been an adventure I would never forget, the problem was deciding when to end it. For me it was when my health was affected. I would have the Malaria for the rest of my life, was the river trip really worth that? I left John with mixed feelings. I felt that I had let him down but I also felt that I had made the right decision to end it there. One thing is for certain, the experiences we shared both good and bad, will always be remembered. It was the toughest thing I've ever done but I wouldn't have missed it for the world.

John and I returned to Belem where I recovered from my Malaria and obtained a new passport. There we met a young Swiss bloke Peter Straub. He wanted to do a river so he and John decided to return to the river. They resupplied themselves and returned to the river while I headed for the United States. John and Peter got a motorized canoe to take them back up the river to where we left the canoe. The airfield was owned by the camp and the boat they got was resupplying the hut there. They continued upstream from last camp aptly named Burnt foot camp, and one week later came to a large waterfall. They portaged around that and the river went dead smooth with not one rapid for over two hundred kilometres. The hunting and fishing got no better and they ran out of food in the Tumucumaque mountain ranges looking for the crossing. They didn't find it but did find a small group of prospectors waiting for a plane to take them out of their camp. John and Peter decided to go out with them and waited for the next two weeks for the plane. They hunted until they became too weak to do so. They had run out of food, medical supplies and most important anti-malaria tablets. One of the miners died on Christmas day 1983 from Malaria and they buried him on a hill top. Eventually the plane came and they returned home where they went into hospital.

John entered the Guinness book of records at the London school of tropical medicine as having the highest malarial blood count on record and still be alive. He has both Falciparum and Vivax malaria and two types of intestinal parasite. Peter contracted the same and included one of the nastiest diseases of the Amazon, Laismaniasis, which will remain with him the rest of his life. Letters from him a year later have him still recovering from it. To have struggled up all those rapids and to have found out that they ended on further up river was a cruel irony. In hindsight though I'm glad I made the decision that I did. I didn't think the price paid with their health was worth it. What do you think?

410 Station Street,
North Carlton
Jan 5 '90

LETTER FROM EARLE

Dear Sally,

The call of the Arctic has finally proved too irresistible a force to be ignored.

Following my expedition to Greenland last year I've decided to move to England and establish a base in Devon. This will enable me to organise further exploration sorties to the Arctic much more easily than I can from Australia.

This will mean that another VSKC member will now have the opportunity to serve the Club as its Public Officer with incorporation matters. As for my election as Vice-President, I am honoured that the Club places such a value on my contribution, however, it may be in the Club's best operational interests to offer that role to another (more local) member, in which case I would resign due to moving abroad. In this circumstance I should like to offer the Club my services as Overseas Representative.

This appointment would enable me to attend to any Club business in the UK and to send back reports of Sea Kayaking activity and developments. Naturally, I shall always be available for any help or advice on matters which fall within the province of my experience.

Your newsletter (read yesterday due to being abroad for the last six months) was, as usual, a delight to read. Always so chatty, witty, friendly and interesting. I hope that other members realise what an important bond it provides to keep us all in touch and together and how much work goes into its publication. I find it so much more interesting than other newsletters I've read. They would do well to emulate your ebullient style. Well done and keep up the good work.

Kindest regards,

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Reprint of an article that appeared in the Melbourne Uni Mountaineering Club newsletter the Mountaineer. The saddlers had been white water paddling on the Nymboida prior to this trip.

Wet Dreams and Dry Reaches

With the Nymboida behind us, Dave, Tony, Rob, Joc, Ali and I headed further north to Rockhampton for some Sea Kayaking through the Keppel Is. The drive north was punctuated by a gastronomical interlude of majestic proportions. Tony's sister had kindly offered to store the river boats and excess gear: As a reward for the privilege, she and a friend felt compelled to put on a fabulous spread from which it was difficult to extricate ourselves. But extricate ourselves we did, and Ali, Tony and I decided to drive straight through leaving Rob and the others to grapple with a Basil Fawltly protege at a Toowoomba Caravan park.

A day spent in Rockhampton was consumed largely by sussing out of the locals. The Dive shop operator took great delight in vividly describing the giant coral snakes that just lurve curling themselves around the legs of southern snorkellers and of course about the stingers and sharks. Sharks were OK but the stingers weren't as a number of people had been stung during the summer - no problem to shameless MUMC machos - panty hose are the answer! Never a sexier sight did one see, Ali and Joc had to be restrained although when Ali donned her Lycra pants, Dave's limb control sharply deteriorated.

We'd organised with a local Sea Kayaker, John Hughes, to hire some Sea Kayaks for Rob, Joc, Tony and Dave (2 K1's and a K2 - the mean machine!). His help in organising the trip was fabulous and he, his son Glen and another local, Brian, joined us for the trip.

From Rocky we collected our boats and headed for Emu Park on the coast where we had a few days to get gear organised and battle the plague of Green Tree frogs. This also gave us a chance to begin our transition into Nth. Qld. mode. Essentially this consisted of eating, sleeping and moving very slowly. We decided that any one day could contain only one stint of physical activity be it paddling, snorkelling, walking short distances or throwing a polo ball. Any more than this was likely to cause serious heart damage - we stuck to this rigorous regime religiously.

The trip we'd planned consisted of island hopping the Keppel group from south to north and back again spending two nights at each of three islands and one night on a fourth prior to our return. This allowed us time to explore each of the areas and minimised the agony of watching Rob and Joc pack their boats! The main island group is 10 to 15 km off-shore and for our first crossing we decided to stop off at Pelican Is. about five km from the coast. It was Rob and Joc's first sea outing and a memorable one it was! Butterflies in the stomach decided flight was in order and the sweet smell of chunder filled the air as we snuck out from behind the shelter of Pelican Is. With 10 km to go we decided Joc would be better off in the K2 with Tony, while Rob decided to soldier on. The change over of Dave for Joc was carried out at sea by rafting up the boats. Joc's antics in joining the raft were somewhat akin to watching the QEII berth, with the sea kayak proving a little less nimble than the river boats. Dave and Tony pined for each other for a while as Joc had spilt up a truly beautiful relationship but they soon recovered and we were off on the first of eight fantastic days.

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The islands are generally small with cliffs along the eastern coast and small beaches separated by rocky headlands on the west. Vegetation is mainly coastal scrub with some Pandanus Palms and She Oaks behind the beaches. These made ideal camping areas with the sea breeze keeping down the worst of the sand-flies and mossies, but not so the possums, which were over friendly on one island in particular. Fresh water was scarce on most of the islands although the rain prior to our trip had filled some of the higher rock pools to form great fresh water baths.

The snorkelling off all the islands was terrific with coral and fish in abundance - even the odd sea snake to keep things interesting. John decided that a night dive was in order so Rob and I joined John and Glen in our after five wear. Rob looked stunning in his panty hose with matching cotton shirt topped off with fine imported (Taiwan) rubber boots while I donned a particularly slinky lycra body suit! Diving at night was terrific fun and a little eerie with only the shaft of light from the torch to see by and total darkness everywhere else. The idea of the dive was to see the coral "blooming" but unfortunately visibility was poor due to a lot of coral spawn in the water. Nevertheless it was not completely wasted; a small shark slinking through the illuminated patch of sea floor saw to that!

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Days were spent exploring rock pools, avoiding sunburn, sleeping, watching crabs, eating, watching impersonate crabs, sailing the sea kayaks (great fun, especially in the K2) and occasionally even paddling course all this was aimed at maintaining our rigorous regime of inactivity.

Paddling between the islands gave an opportunity to see giant turtles (whose breeding ground is on one of islands in the group), flying fish and rather large fish leaping from the water. Robland Joc saw some dolphin and allegedly the shadowy figure of an eight foot shark.

Nights were spent eating sleeping, watching satellites and shooting stars and of course eating and sleep. Never have so many slept so much for so long! The locals showed us up by late nights and early mornings with their extra time spent fishing - given that no fish were caught, I preferred our option.

One day we decided to drop in at the Great Keppel Resort - a truly jolting experience. This was probably most dangerous paddling we did with speed boats towing inflated bananas, yachts towing dinghies, flying skiers, speed boats towing parachutes, speed boats towing flying planes, helicopters and ferries from the mainland making for somewhat cluttered paddling conditions - not to mention the swimmers and sun lovers sloping themselves - the resort must be owned by a surprising dermatologist! Needless to say we didn't long - just long enough for Rob and Dave to don their reflective glasses and practice the time honoured art of perverting.

Most mornings began late and of course slowly but on one occasion, yells from the water of "does your work" dragged us from the land of nod. We grabbed the portable CB and poked our heads out of the tent to a trawler on the rocks 100m off-shore with another motoring around a little further away. There is almost of tidal difference around the Keppels so running aground at high tide leaves you well and truly out of water when the tide drops. Apparently the skipper had fallen asleep and run onto the rocks about 3am. Paddled out to poke fun at them and see if there was anything they wanted other than a large anonymous letter into which they could crawl. We took some pics. for them, dropped an anchor and returned to shore to wait and eat. Luckily there was no damage and by 10 am the tide was high enough to refloat - all rather comical really.

John and Brian decided to head for home a day early while Glen had left a couple of days previously for a party in Rocky so there were just the six of us for the remainder of the trip. The weather had been superb with light winds and low swells but the locals must have known something! The weather report was for a westerly southerly change with little change in the sea conditions. As it turned out, the afternoon brought a fantastic display of thunder and lightning in the western sky as a powerful front approached. The wall of rain racing across the sea from the mainland was an awesome sight but the fresh water was welcome. Sunset came in the aftermath of the rain and the glowing colours of the layered clouds were magnificent. While watching sunset we discussed what we should do. The weather was calm following the storm so a night crossing would have ensured easy paddling conditions but visibility was not too good - the weather report for the next day for winds and swells increasing but at least we'd be able to see each other and it gave us a chance to properly and get some sleep. We aimed to leave at sunrise, hoping to beat the worst of the weather but it came in earlier than expected and we ended up crossing when it was at its worst. Nevertheless the crossing was great fun and a real roller coaster ride with a very steep swell. Rob and Joc proved they'd gained their sea legs and not a sign of diced carrots and plenty of whoops of delight as we shot up the face and down the back of the passing swell. We couldn't have hoped for a better way to end a fabulous trip.

A BBQ at John's ended our time up north and the long drive back to Melbourne seemed to drift along with minds wandering to the past months paddling and time together.

Rodger Grayson

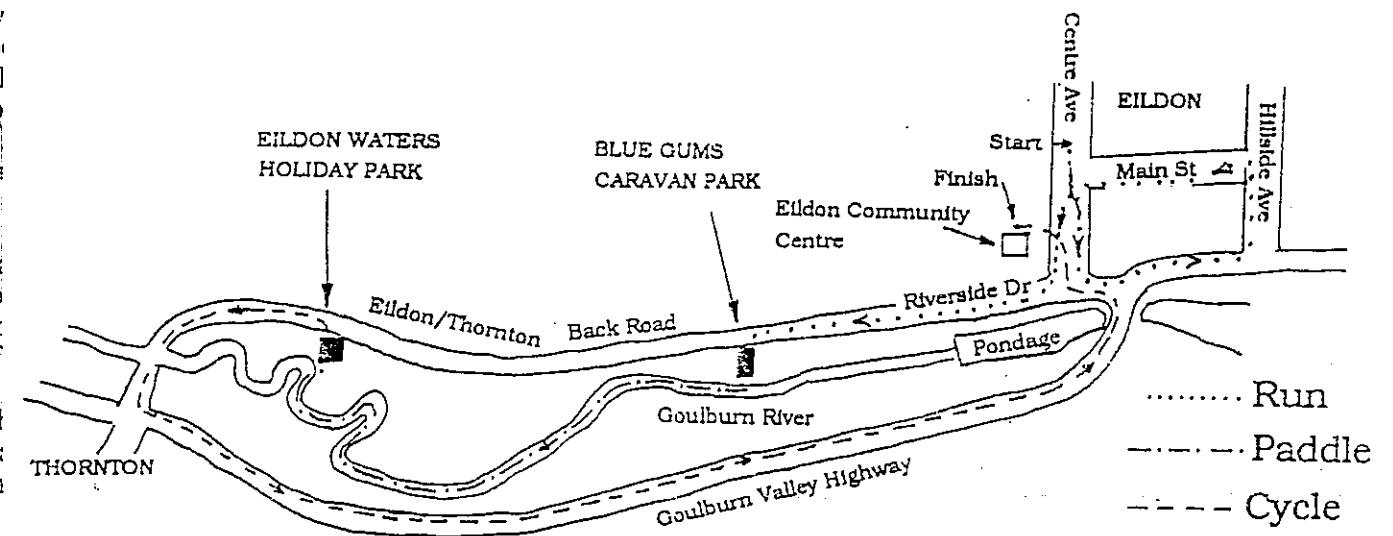
EILDON TRIATHLON

Conducted under the
VICTORIAN AMATEUR CANOE ASSOCIATION

SUNDAY APRIL 1, 1990

10am

Run 4.7 km Paddle 6.0 km Cycle 16.8 km



The course will be the same as last year and hence suitable for people who would like to try this style of triathlon for the first time or improve on their 1989 time. There will be a few more classes in 1990 than compared to 1989.

Classes

Details of individual classes, pairs and team events are on the entry form which will be available early to mid February. The paddle may be canoe or raft.

Further information from:

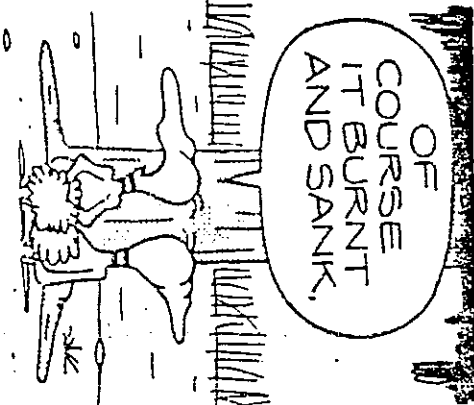
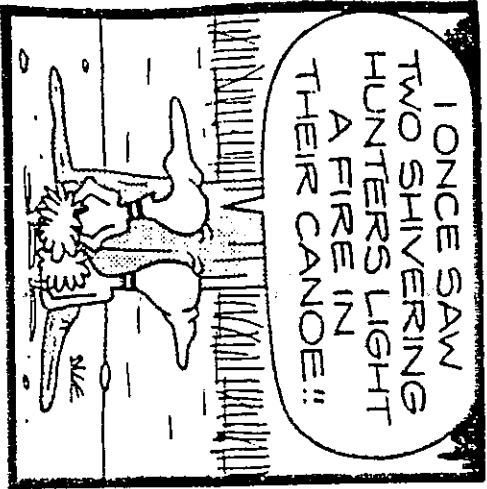
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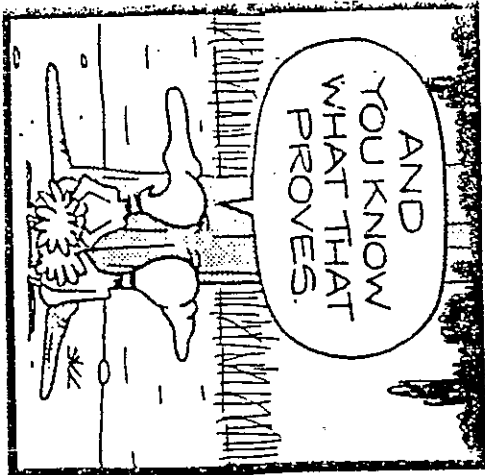
This event is proudly supported by:

BLUE GUMS CARAVAN PARK and EILDON WATERS HOLIDAY PARK

MARK TAMS



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An Old Frank Alford joke.
and still as relevant as ever.