

Sea Trek



Winter 2017
Issue 90



www.victoriansseakayak.club

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Sub Editor
Laureen Knight

*Into the gloom towards Port Welshpool Snake Island Queens Birthday
Photo: Michael Feller*



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Where Kayaks Live



VSKC

Victorian Sea Kayak Club



President's Heads Up *Sea Trek* Winter 2017

It certainly has been cold this winter and that is a great time to build resilience as a sea kayaker. It has therefore been very encouraging to see the active paddling program that has been underway during the winter months, in particular the fantastic rolling skills series, which has been very well attended. Me, well I had the chance to go sailing for a month in Scandinavia, and although it was 'summer' we had some atrocious weather. The good news though is that sea kayaking, especially in the Alan Archipelago between Sweden and Finland is stunning. So put that one on your bucket list. I have!

The Club has been busy progressing an important review into our skills grading system, and associated training and trip leadership activities. I am pleased to report that a representative working group has now tabled recommendations for the Committee to consider and that process is now underway. Announcements about this will be made in the next couple of months. It will be an important step in the Club harmonising what it does in these areas with other major sea kayaking clubs in Australia.

It was with real sadness that we witnessed a tragic loss of life of a sit on top kayaker on Port Phillip Bay just recently.

Out on a short fishing trip, a Japanese visitor has most likely experienced a capsize and then circumstances that ended up being beyond his abilities to cope with. Sadly, his body has not been recovered. The day he went out (from Altona) was strengthening wind wise, and the Saturday he was reported missing was one of the windiest days I have ever seen on the bay. These winds were offshore relative to his launch point. The coroner will no doubt consider what has likely happened in this case, but it reminded me yet again of the need for thorough risk and self-assessment when going paddling. Are the risks involved manageable, have I got the right gear, am I wearing a PLB on my life jacket, do I have the right emergency contact protocols in place, have I really thought through one 'could' happen on the trip and most importantly, have I self-assessed that I can handle conditions that are likely to be encountered? In fact, do your self a favour and check out this YouTube clip that dramatizes a nice trip in great conditions that started happily enough, but ended in near tragedy

(See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w_TDyAtXdFM).

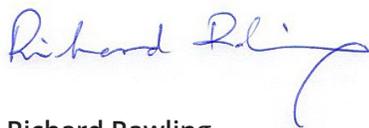
Our Club has a robust safety system,

but it is only as good as we all make it. So I strongly encourage all members to think safety, practice safety and actively debrief with each other when things do not quite go to plan. That is how we learn and become better sea paddlers. That is how the Club continues to enjoy the confidence of authorities that we are running a responsible and sustainable safety system.

I mentioned in my last column, that it is really great to see many members, taking up the challenge and getting graded. This has continued apace and I particularly want to congratulate all recent newly or upgraded members because you are all helping to lead the way towards the sustainable paddling community as mentioned above.

At this time of year, we are actively gearing up for our exciting AGM weekend in early November. I mentioned in the previous issue that this will be held at Barwon Heads this year on the second weekend in November. Book it in, as it is going to be a cracker, with two great speakers, heaps of paddles, commercial displays, a social program, and more.

We have had tremendous feedback regarding the work that Ben has been doing in reformatting Sea Trek, especially better featuring the fantastic photography that members consistently undertake. I am seriously looking forward to the photo competition at the AGM weekend, especially the awarding of the inaugural Mick MacRobb prize for photographic excellence. So spread the word about this event, and if you have not already done so, dust off the paddling gear and get out for some great spring season paddling.

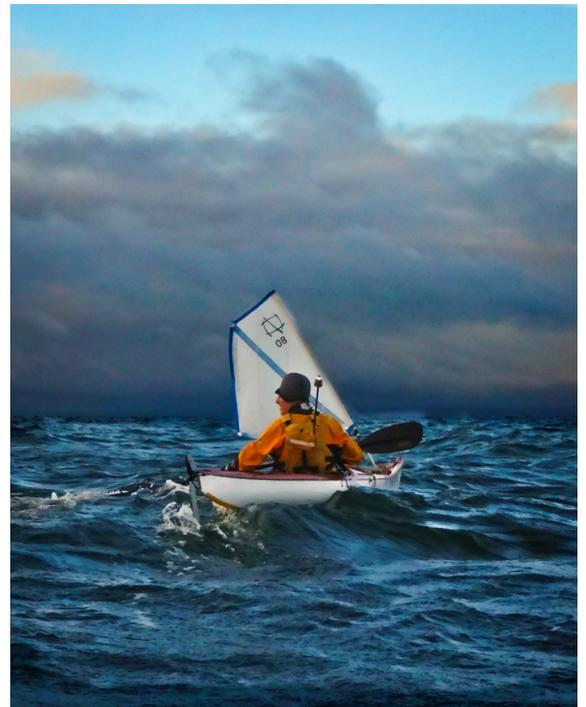


Richard Rawling
VSKC President

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Cover

Photo: The Winter Red Eye, Ben Flora





Pizza at the Prom 2016, Photo: Ben Flora

Editorial Musings

Once I became a member of the VSKC, it was all terribly exciting, I could finally see what paddles were posted behind the membership firewall of the website. I joined the club two years ago, and noticed many paddles on the calendar, to pick and choose from. Of course, I had to pick the grade zero paddles at first, but as time progressed and my skills improved, I was able to venture onto harder and harder paddles. Over these last two years, I have learnt that the club has a series of paddles that I would term as 'the unofficial paddling calendar of the VSKC'. These are the paddles that are posted on a regular basis by our volunteer trip leaders, some each week, some each month and of course the big annual ones, every year. These paddles range in skill levels from the easy beginner paddles, through to a multi week expedition paddle with challenging seas. Each paddle is posted by our volunteer and well experienced trip leaders. We can't guarantee that they are posted each year. However, due to popular demand, many have become yearly events. Some fill up fast and others take their time.

I hope this unofficial calendar will give you a better understanding of what paddles to look out for and plan to attend. If any of these excite you, keep an eagle eye



2017

out for them to be posted on the website and register with the posting trip leader ASAP. Some you will have to grade up for, and train up for, and others you won't. Either way, I can say that during these last two years there hasn't been a paddle that I have been on that wasn't an adventure in one way or another.

So here they are the 'unofficial' paddles of the VSKC.

Very regular paddles:

1. Canadian Bay - Last Sunday of each month, from Canadian Bay, Mt Eliza. New members paddle and the location can change depending on the weather.
2. Red Eye – Every Saturday morning from Ricketts point regardless.
3. Westernport Mud Fun – Every Thursday evening, Daylight savings months from Crib Point.

Current annual paddles, usually the same time of the year:

4. Pizza at the Prom. September regular with delicious oven cooked Pizza. Tidal River Camp site Wilsons Prom.
5. Annual General Meeting. Currently in November Four day paddle festival and the most fun of them all. A must for any member.
6. Red Eye Xmas Paddle – Last Saturday before Xmas with a breakfast feast.
7. The Day After Boxing Day Christmas Turkey Burn-off - Across the Bay. A day or two after the Xmas feast. Sandringham to Port Arlington and return. 75Kms, across Port Philip bay, one to definitely train for.
8. Sorrento Circuit. Between Xmas and the New Year. Sea life aplenty, but not for the newbies as strong summer winds can make this 30km paddle taxing.
9. Snake Island Easter Paddle. Iconic and amazing. Vast flat scenes and very secluded. Ideal camping trip, well suited for beginners.
10. Cattleman's Hut Queens Birthday Paddle – Stay at the Cattleman's huts opposite the Prom on Snake Island. Warm camp fires and a large hut. Camping luxury at it's best.
11. Fawkner Beacon: Sandringham to Fawkner beacon and return. Usually around the Winter Solstice.
12. Werribee to Portarlington and return. –Autumn or Winter paddle and precursor to Turkey Burn-off.
13. Lorne to Kennett River. A superb blue water paddle along a great coastline. Involves surf landings / surf launches and additional bit of surf play. Not for the faint hearted.

| Red Eye Dawn Patrol: Photo: Ben Flora



14. Torquay to Bells Beach or Point Addis return.
15. Port Arlington to Queenscliffe and return. Usually a level 1 training event in the summer.

Other annual paddles, but anytime throughout the year:

16. Crib Point to French Island overnighter – Good intro to camping and a summer event.
17. Johnny Souey return from Port Welshpool – Posted when ever a leader feels like it.
18. Wilson's Prom circuit – Posted whenever a leader feels like it and weather conditions are favourable.
19. Flinders back beach to Cape Schank and return.
20. Cape Wollamai to Cleeland Bight and return.
21. French Island Circumnavigation.
22. Cape Liptrap – various routes, but usually Walker-ville to the cape and return.
23. Level 1 Training, - Best to learn your skills before attending these so you can get signed off and progress up a level.
24. Level 2 Training – Location can be anywhere. 2017 was at Johnny Souey.
25. Level 3 Training. Location and content a well kept secret.

Rare and Iconic paddles:

Not really posted, but members create these by word of mouth, once their experience is high enough. If you are keen on any of these, start talking to our experienced members, lots to learn and train for here.

26. Bass Strait – North to South, South to North.

27. Tassie Expeditions - Maria Island, Freycinet, Flinders Island.

Any avid reader of Sea Trek should notice that there are plenty of articles and trip reports about these paddles. Even in this Winter Edition about half the articles are from our unofficial paddle list.

Safe reading and paddling

Ben Flora



Snake Island Easter Paddle 2016 : Photo Ben Flora

Icy Cold

Geoff Murray, An interview with the Editor.

words Geoff Murray and Ben Flora



Geoff Murray paddling Antarctica : Photo Diana Galbraith

Back in 2015 when I, the editor of Sea Trek, was investigating sea kayaking, I stumbled onto www.seakayakforum.com. Being a photographer, I naturally gravitated to the TOPIC section called Photography. Many posts and images on this forum came from a "Geoff" in Tasmania. A few years later, and within the blink of an eye, I was on the VSKC committee and the editor of Sea Trek. Whilst putting together Sea Trek 89, Autumn 2017 edition, I was corresponding with Paul Caffyn from New Zealand, and discovered that a photographer from Tasmania was on his trip. At this point the penny dropped and I realised that the Geoff from the

Sea Kayak forum was the same Geoff on Paul Caffyn's Antarctic trip. His name is Geoff Murray. I checked out his web site and was blown away by the images he captured on that trip and his photography in general. Not only that, but serendipitously and to my surprise and delight, I discovered that our president and vice present were planning to ask this very Geoff, Geoff Murray from Tasmania to come and talk at the VSKC, November, AGM. The good news is that it's all booked in, and I have asked him a few questions to wet our appetite. You can't miss our November AGM, as I am sure Geoff will present a feast of images and stories.



Photo: Geoff Murray

Editor: How long have you been kayaking?

I first sat in a kayak about 12 years ago. Prior to that all my exploration had been on foot; bush walking.

Editor: Why did you start kayaking?

Well, like a lot of aging bush walkers, it seemed a good way to travel and explore the coastline, while carrying my gear relatively easily. It was also a great way for my wife and I to share time together. She doesn't have time to paddle as much these days, due to grandkids, but she is a very accomplished Greenland roller.

Editor: Where do you kayak the most?

Mostly close to home in South East Tasmania as time dictates. We have some excellent coastline down here, plus a favourite spot is a little tide race at a small town called Dodges Ferry, south of Hobart. It's a great place to "park and play" and can give some good thrills on the right day.

Editor: I have noticed that you are a very accomplished photographer as well. What came first? Kayaking or photography?

Photography by quite a few years. My dad was a wedding photographer, so I learned some of the basics there, but it was only really once, when I had been bush walking for awhile, that the interest grew. Then one day, I was talking to a tourism operator in the Derwent Valley and he suggested I approach Tourism Tasmania to buy my images. I sold a lot of images to Tourism Tasmania. They didn't pay very well, but I did eventually supply images to many Austra-

lian and International clients over a period of around 10 years. The photography industry now is really struggling thanks to digital imaging.

Editor: Do you have a story about one of your favourite kayaking photos that you can share with us? (Along with the photo...)

I have this one which was about half way through the Lake Fjord Expedition. We had been searching for a place to camp for a long time. We were all cold, tired and looking forward to getting off the water. But we couldn't find anywhere, so we had to backtrack quite a few kilometres to a place we had seen earlier. It was a very bleak day that really stuck in my mind.

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Paddling Lake Fjord, East Greenland : Photo Geoff Murray

How did you prepare for your latest adventure to the Antarctic?

Well, I was already pretty comfortable at paddling in cold places, having already been on 3 expeditions in East Greenland, but what I wasn't prepared for was the total lack of forgiveness the Antarctic coastline showed. Kilometre after kilometre of unapproachable ice cliffs. A very committing place. You can't prepare for that, you just have to deal with it.



Photo: Geoff Murray

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Of course, I researched the region as much as I could beforehand and gathered the best gear I could. But it's really a case of prepare as well as you can, then cope with what presents itself.

What is your next kayaking adventure in the pipeline?

The next trip will possibly be a 10 day solo paddle in the Chilean Patagonian Fjord system, to a glacier called the San Rafael Glacier in Laguna San Rafael National Park. That will be a year or two away though. Plus, I was offered a job guiding last time I was in Greenland, so once I retire I will be heading north.

What are you going to talk about at our next VSKC November AGM?

The subject will be "Paddling in Cold Places", and will combine a description of my last expedition in East Greenland in July 2016 to Lake Fjord (Tugtilik), and the recent expedition in February 2017 to Graham Land on the Antarctic Peninsula. Our Lake Fjord trip was very satisfying as we were only the 4th kayak expedition to reach Lake Fjord in the last 84 years. (Paul Caffyn was in the 3rd party to reach Lake Fjord by kayak).

Both of these trips were conceived to visit places explored in the 1930's by an Australian explorer, called John Rymill. Rymill became the default leader of the 1932 Lake Fjord BAARE Expedition (British Arctic Air Route Expedition) after its leader, Gino Watkins, died in a kayaking accident only a couple of weeks into the expedition. Rymill then visited Antarctica in 1934-37 for the BGLE or British Graham Land Expedition, where he and his men made a valuable contribution to scientific and geographical knowledge of Graham Land, on the Antarctic Peninsula.

Paul Caffyn is a great lover of polar history and is particularly interested in Gino Watkins and John Rymill's exploits, so he was the person that conceived the idea of visiting both sites. Paul paddled up to Lake Fjord in 2007 with Conrad Edwards, so that made three of us who had been to Lake Fjord (Conrad was on the southern trip too).



Antarctica Photos: Geoff

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Thank you Geoff Murray.

I am sure many in our club will be looking forward to your presentation at our next AGM in November. I know I am.

One not to be missed!

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A refuge hut built by the Argentinian navy in 1955 on Petermann Island. In the middle of a Gentoo penguin colony.

Photo Geoff Murray





Photo: Stephanie Gras

OMG - Red Eye Dolphins



Photo: Nic Faramaz



Can it be a spider dolphin?
Photo: Nic Faramaz

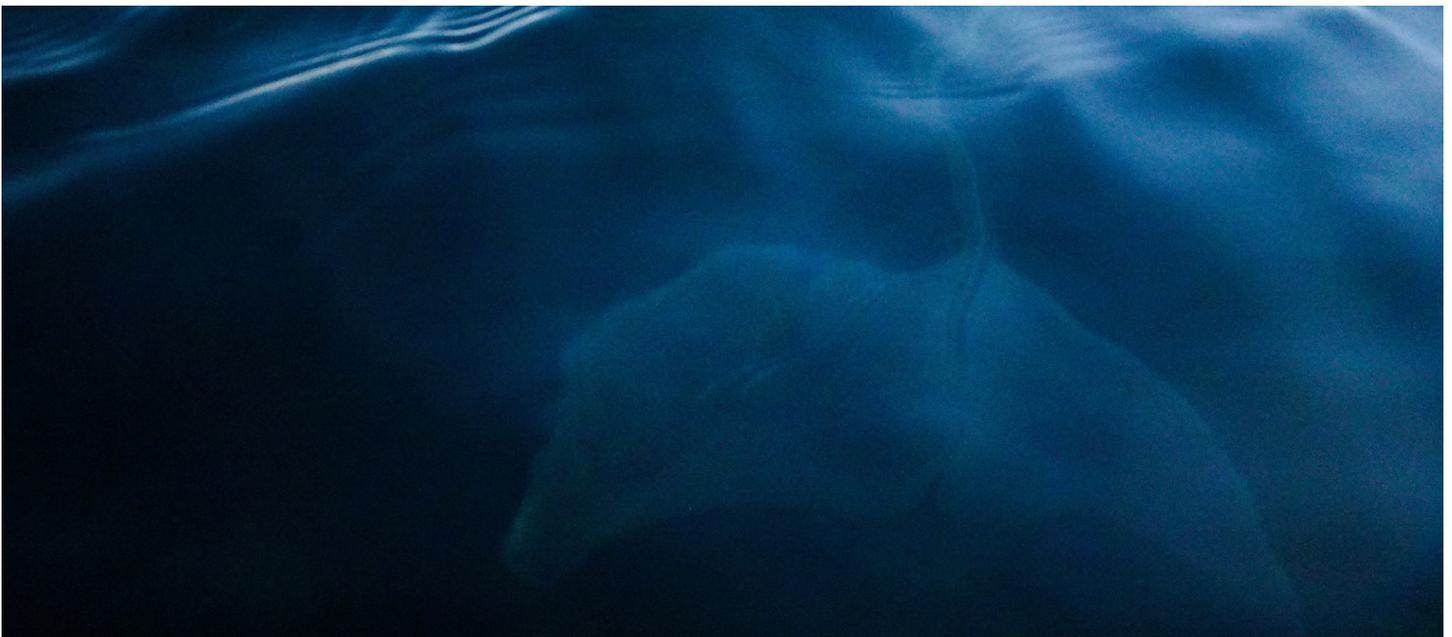


Photo: Andrew Campbell

June 2017

Red Eye Dolphins

Photos: Ben Flora





Cattleman's Hut

Snake Island and the Prom,

Words and Photos: Michael Feller



June 10-13

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For once, in complete contrast to the Queen's Birthday Saturday in 2016 which was windy and dramatic, we had a very pleasant, sunny, windless paddle out to Snake Island, encountering a couple of dolphins who swam right past us less than half an hour after leaving Port Welshpool. Steve claimed he had organised this encounter for us. Swans and many sea birds also welcomed us. Of the 30+ people who had initially signed up for the trip, 21 finally set out, so it was still a popular trip with a reasonable mix of experienced and less experienced paddlers. This mix was to prove important the next day.

We stopped at the Snake Island jetty so those who hadn't been there before were able to see the sights, then continued to a sandy beach on Little Snake Island for a leisurely lunch, the glorious sunny, calm conditions imposing no time constraints on the party. From there it was a straightforward paddle along the west side of Snake Island to the track leading to the cattlemen's huts. These were reached in the mid-afternoon after stowing away all the boats up in the sand dunes. At the huts, tents were set up or bunks claimed, fire-

wood was collected, and a serious campfire was established. A new concrete fire pad had been built so this formed the social focus for the next couple of evenings. Saturday evening's fire was warm and relatively smoke-free in the absence of wind.

Sunday dawned sunny with a freshening breeze. We were on the water by 10, as planned. The paddle across to the northern part of the Prom saw 19 kayaks (two people had decided not to come for different reasons) spread out somewhat, so after we put ashore at Bid-dy's Cove on the northernmost part of the Prom, it was decided to split into 3 groups of 6 - 7, with each group having one class 3 paddler and at least one other experienced and strong paddler, with the aim of keeping people closer together - a wise decision as was shown later. People generally did keep together within their group, although I occasionally dropped back a bit while taking photos. I regard the Prom as the Promised Land - the most beautiful place on earth - and not capturing its beauty in photos is almost sacrilegious. Rounding Pt. Singapore the wind picked up and whitecaps became prominent, so photography had to stop in the



interests of keeping together. Rounding White Dog Pt. into Corner Inlet the wind dropped off and we had a whitecap-free gentle paddle into Tin Mine Cove where we stopped for lunch.

During lunch the wind picked up and it got cooler, so we left, although I am always reluctant to leave my "Promised Land". Heading out of Corner Inlet into the channel between the Prom and Snake Island, the wind continued to increase up to 17 knots. Larger waves, many breaking, became a challenge. The first capsize soon occurred, but that kayak was quickly righted, drained, and its owner reunited with his seat and paddle. That kayak had been in the fastest group, but the capsize allowed our group to catch up. Thereafter our 2 groups paddled almost as one group through the waves and wind, without further mishap, back to Snake Island. Fortunately the wind and waves were almost from behind, making the paddle less difficult than it could have been.

After beaching and carrying our kayaks up into the sand dunes we could see no trace of the third group. But we were in radio communications with them and learned that they were about half way across the channel. Shortly thereafter they radioed in requesting assistance. Things had not gone that well – with 2 capsizes,

including one caused by a neoprene hatch cover not being put in place beneath the plastic cover, allowing water from waves to fill the front storage compartment of the kayak. The kayak's owner had to be supported by other kayakers while the kayak was towed. Another kayak was also being towed, resulting in very slow progress. Terry and Peter geared up, then began paddling back into the wind and waves to assist the other group, while most of the rest of us waited on shore.

Finally the missing group was sighted and we noticed that Terry and Peter would paddle past them, considerably downwind if both parties kept their existing courses. Again the radio came in handy to convey this observation, but at around the same time Terry and Tony sighted the other party. They were able to then link up, rearrange the ferrying and loads, and head back to our beach. To our great relief they finally arrived back. Two of the party were quite cold and were directed to quickly get to our fire where hot drinks also awaited. The rest of us sorted out the kayakers, putting them away, before also returning to the welcome fire and camp.

Needless to say there was much discussion about the day's events around the evening campfire before we

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all turned in, generally warm, but some more tired than others. At least one person will forever ensure that their neoprene hatch covers are fastened before setting off on a paddle.

The fire was smokey that evening as it had become windy. That did not deter Sarah from celebrating her “21st” birthday with a scrumptious “cake” she had made. Discussion about the planned return to Port Welshpool the following day also ensued. Weather would be important, based on the day’s events. The forecast was for the strong wind to continue.

Next morning it was still windy. The group went down to the beach where 7 people decided to paddle back, with the rest of us deciding to wait for the wind to drop (the tide was still favourable until early afternoon). Some who could have easily paddled back opted to stay to assist the less strong and less experienced paddlers. This is a reoccurring and great aspect of VSKC trips – the unselfish and thoughtful behaviour of the stronger more experienced paddlers towards others. It is to be hoped that the club will continue to have such impressive leaders.

The paddling group phoned in around 1pm to say that they had made it back to Port Welshpool without any

further dramas. The wind still had not died down much by then so the decision was made to spend another night on the island. Mobiles were pulled out and bosses and family were duly notified of a day’s absence, then most of us set off on a walk east to the “Big Hole” – an attractive pond at the end of a shrubby grassland. Kangaroos, swallows, several species of ducks, parrots, and honey-eaters, as well as an active willie wagtail, provided faunal entertainment, as they had on previous days. That evening was cooler than the previous two so the wood stove inside one of the cattlemen’s huts became the heat source. Luci lights, a brilliant invention, provided the major light source. The mob provided dwindling rations and the conversation source.

By Tuesday morning the wind speed had halved and the forecast was for a further steady decline, so everyone packed up, cleaned up the camp area, then returned to the kayaks, heavily laden with gear. Kayaks were carried to the water and loaded, the daily paddling plan explained, then the troops were off into decreasing waves and wind. By the time we reached the first channel marker, it was almost calm. The current then assisted us along the channel and into Port Welshpool. Most of us then had a late but welcome lunch in Welshpool before parting.



Many thanks to Steve for leading this highly enjoyable and educational trip. Many thanks also to Sarah, Terry, Peter, Martin, and Greg for their assistance, guidance, and conversations.



Pizza at the Prom - 2016

Photo: Ben Flora



First Light - Pizza at the Prom





A Ripper Day Out

Rip Circuit 19 May 2017

Words Peter Newman

Photos: Ray Pilbrow

Yeah, we all love a bit of spectacular real estate, don't we! Down here at Point Lonsdale the real estate is about as good as it gets. The houses along Point Lonsdale Road have a view to die for that takes in the front beach below, and then beyond and over the water to Point Nepean. I could imagine myself sitting on my deck on a hot summer evening with a nice glass of pinot watching the ships, (and maybe the occasional kayaker), as they pass through the Heads. Anyway the Point Lonsdale front beach was the first stop on a 'Rip Circuit Odyssey' undertaken by Helmut Heinze (trip organiser), me, Joe Alberico, Ben Flora, Andrew L, and Katie & Ray Pilbrow.

I know Helmut had been fretting about this trip for some time, because as we know, the Rip has a bit of a reputation. In fact, the very boat that bought my great-great-grandfather Donald, out for the gold rush, ran aground on the Lonsdale Reef in 1850. It is interesting to think that had it not been a calm night when this happened, I might not have been here to enjoy Helmut's trip some 167 years later.

Anyway, I am digressing, which often happens after

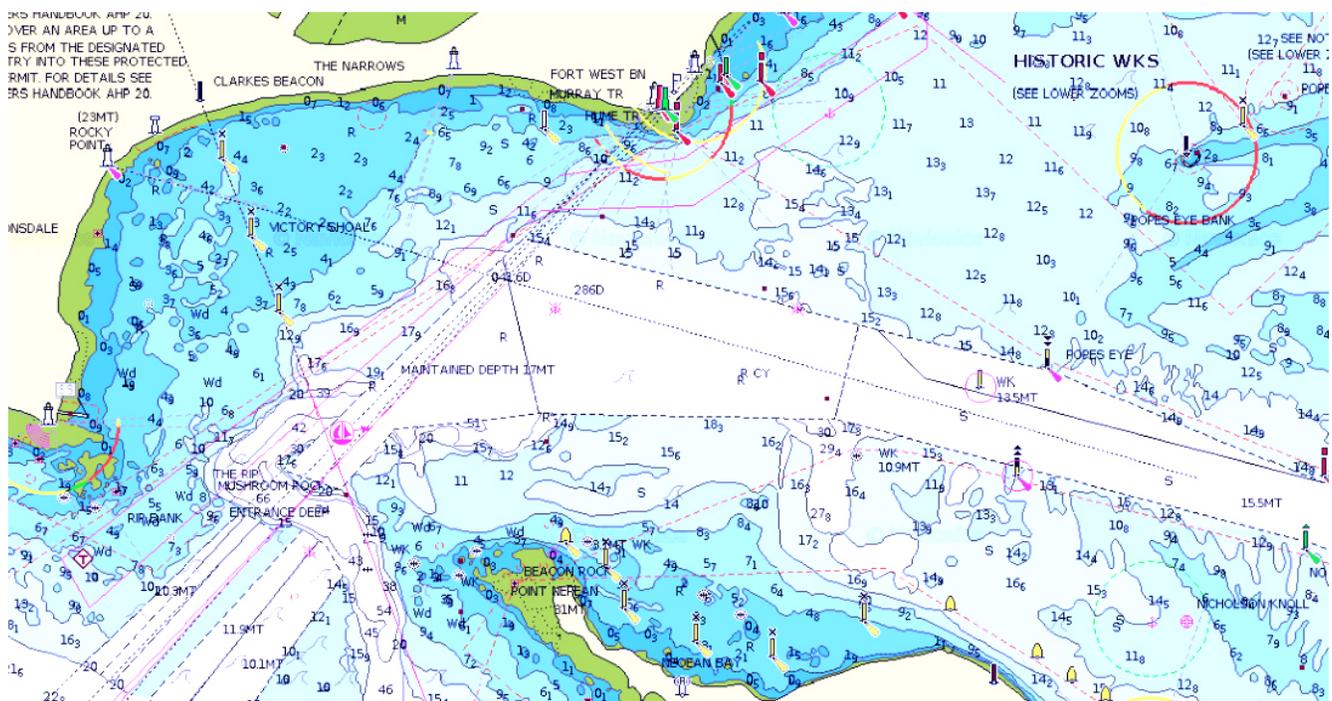
several wines. So, back to the trip...

We were told by Helmut to be at the Sorrento Beach, at the end of St Pauls Road at 9am, so we could get the boats ready, have a briefing and be on the water precisely at 10. I was running a few minutes late as I pulled into the car park, but not as late as Ben. I could see Helmut's concern about the possible repercussions our lateness might have on his schedule. But all was good and we actually were away with typical Germanic precision right on 10am. Past the ferry terminus we went and through some surprisingly choppy waves halfway between Point King and the South Channel that were likely caused by the fast tidal flow. Those waves were quite steep and close together and had us all thinking, 'crikey if it is like this just here, what's it going to be like at the Rip?'

Past Sorrento, we pointed our boats towards Shortlands Bluff on the opposite side of the Bay, knowing that the strong ebb tide would sweep us past that landmark, and on towards Point Lonsdale (but hopefully not out through the Rip). I think someone suggested at some stage that we might drop in at Chinaman's

Hat, but the fast current meant that was never going to be an option. We waited at the shipping channel for two big boats to go past, and then made a dash across to the other side. We arrived at Lonsdale Beach at about midday, having hardly raised a sweat.

We all admired the view, and I admired the real estate, as we enjoyed our lunch and waited for slack water. Trying to figure out exactly when it will be slack water is difficult. The way it works is that the tidal flow at the Rip turns at the same time that it is low tide at Williamstown. On this day, low tide at Williamstown was at 2.30pm. Low tide at the Rip is 3 hours earlier, and so while we were at our lunch break, the tide was rising at the beach, yet water was still flowing out through the middle of the Rip. It's a bit like an eddy in a river, where you get the main stream flow, with back eddies at the edge. Simple isn't it! Anyway you just have to time your crossing for that period (slack water) when what is going out through the middle, is roughly equal to what is coming in at the edges. As I say, that happens at the same time that it is low tide at far away Williamstown. So write that down for future reference!



Yachting Australia publishes a useful guide to getting in and out through the Rip that can be found at <http://www.yachtingaustralia.com.au/site/yachting/rycv/downloads/the%20rip.pdf>

This guide says that it is during the slack that “yachts like yours and mine” (which, for our purposes, we read as “kayaks like yours and mine”) “make our hurried entry and exit from Port Phillip”. Otherwise it says there is not only the current to contend with (which can run up to 6 knots or more), but also waves, whirlpools and overfalls. In short, these are not the kind of conditions that you would want to be kayaking in. The danger is exacerbated when the tide runs in the opposite direction to the wind. So it is important for us kayakers to wait for the slack tide.

The Rip Guide provides a lot of information about getting in and out of the Rip. In summary, on top of Shortland Bluff there are a number of lighthouses and how these line up defines the various approach channels - the Eastern Channel, the Main Shipping Channel, the Western Channel, Four Fingers West

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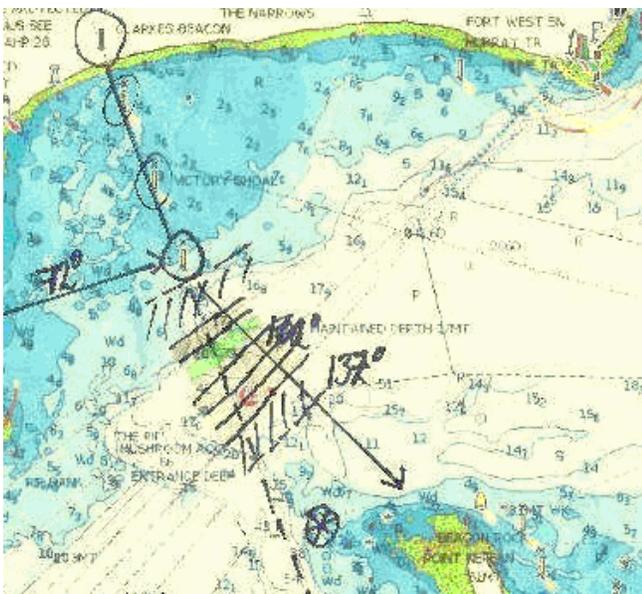


and the Fisherman's Channel. They all run parallel with each other, so to make it easy I'll just describe them collectively as "the Channel".

Because we did not want to go in or out of the Rip, our aim was to cross the Channel as quickly as possible. To do this, we initially followed what is called the Clarke's Transit. Behind the Point Lonsdale Front Beach there is a triangular shaped beacon called Clarke's Beacon. The Clarke's Transit line is a bearing of 160 degrees from this Beacon. It will take you across the Rip to the west side of a dangerous underwater rock known as Corsair Rock that is located off Point Nepean. Of course, this bearing is assuming you are a small yacht heading for Westernport. In our case, we wanted to



head towards Portsea. So our tactic was to follow the transit line to the northern edge of the Channel, whereupon we would then cross the Channel at a right angle on a bearing of 137 degrees which would take us to the inside edge of Point Nepean. From there, we would follow the magnificent coastline of Point Nepean to Portsea.



To follow Clarke's Transit to the edge of the shipping channel, you don't actually need to look at your compass because there are three lead markers that line up with Clarke's Beacon, and delineate the transit line. If you follow these leads they will take you to the edge of the shipping channels. Pushing off the beach at 1.45pm, we headed first for the second lead marker and from there to the third marker. It was by then 2.15pm and slack water at the Heads. Looking left and right and being satisfied there were no ships bearing down on us from either direction, we then spent 15 minutes crossing the Channel, reaching inside the Heads at Point Nepean National Park at 2.30pm. It was an uneventful crossing really except for a seal that popped up midway across, and took a playful dive towards and under one of the kayaks.

Knowing exactly when you are in and out of the shipping channels is important when you are doing this Rip crossing, and it is easy to know. Quite simply, when you depart from the lead marker (on the Clarke's transit) and take a look back towards Shortland Bluff, you will see a sequence of lights whose transition tell you in which of the 4 channels you are (Fishing, West, Main,



East) and whose alignment with the white back-light give you a precise indication whether you are at the edge of one of the channels or in the middle. For example if you see a only a green light you have made it into the East channel, and when you no longer see it you have successfully passed all shipping lanes.

Having completed the Rip crossing, we then had the benefit of the turning tide to assist us on our way back to Sorrento, with a brief stop for a bite to eat, at the Quarantine Station. This section of coast is just so beautiful, and it is no wonder it is a regular feature of VSKC paddles. There is a fair bit of real estate porn' to be enjoyed here too, as we paddle past the cliff-top mansions along the Portsea - Point King - Sor-



rento coastline. We finally got back to our start point at 4.15pm, which was 15 minutes ahead of Helmut's schedule!

This was a really lovely day out, thanks to Helmut's great organisation. As far as I am aware, this is the first time the club has done this circuit. It is a circuit that needs to be taken seriously, because without proper prior planning and precaution, things could go terribly pear-shaped out here. With proper precautions being taken and a trip leader like Helmut, it is highly recommended. It is a very interesting part of the Bay to paddle. We all enjoyed the day immensely.

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Johnny Souey Workout
Cold and Wet

Photo: Kate Alberico



Congratulations go to:

Joe Alberico, Katherine Botherway, Kate Alberico, Katie Pilbrow and Ray Pilbrow for obtaining their level 2 club grading at the Level 2 assessment weekend.



Photos: Kate Alberico

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Johnny Souey Again

Level 2 Assessment Weekend 15/16 July 2017

July

Words Katie Pilbrow



Photo: Terry Barry

The weekend started for Ray and I about a week beforehand. I was heading up to Sydney for the week, Ray was working, which included two trips to Perth. I needed to get our kayaks and gear ready before I left for Sydney. The gear sat in our lounge room (excluding the fresh food) for the week ready to be packed into the car.

I arrived back home on Friday 14th at 5pm and Ray from Perth at 11pm. Our alarm was set for 3am Saturday morning as Port Welshpool is a three and a half hour drive from our home near Tullamarine Airport.

We arrived at Port Welshpool at 7:30am after driving through some heavy rain, showers and windy conditions. Port Welshpool was dark, windy and very cold. The first piece of advice from Terry, our leader, was

get your kayak gear on and pack your kayak quickly, as we are going to get wet before we got on the water. The thoughts going through my head at this time were, 'What are we doing here? I have never paddled in such cold conditions.' and 'These Victorian Sea Kayakers must be tough.' So it was now time for me, the "NSW sook", to get a solid dose of "sooky spray" and get on with the task at hand – pack my kayak in the rain and cold.

Our team for the weekend consisted of our leader Terry, assistant leader Helmut, and the rest of us – Joe, Kate, Kathryn, Ray and me.

When our kayaks were all packed the trip briefing was given by Terry. He explained what was expected of us over the weekend. We would be watched and assessed

the whole time. The exercises we needed to complete and the skill levels required. We were also introduced to our kayaking companion for the weekend, "Spikey". "Spikey" is a rubber dog toy under the dubious control of his master Terry. It turned out that "Spikey" was not very obedient in that he kept falling into the water and constantly needed rescuing. He usually fell into the water out to the side of our pod or behind us and this happened on a regular basis. There were no favourites as we all took turns in the rescues. A fun exercise that certainly showed any weaknesses in our paddling and manoeuvring skills.

After our briefing we were on the water, under the jetty and on our way to Johnny Souey Cove on the eastern shore of Wilsons Promontory. We had the tide in our favour as we headed down the channel then out into Singapore Deep. Many squalls passed through, some heavy rain along with numerous showers. Tide and waves mixing, increased wind strength as the squalls passed all made for some exciting paddling. It was interesting to see just how close we all stayed together,

always looking out for each other and Spikey.

We had a short stop at Biddy's Cove for a hot drink and something to eat - too cold to stay for long. Then on around and down the coast past Lighthouse Point towards Johnny Souey Cove. As we paddled by Three Mile Beach we headed closer inshore to avoid the main tidal flow that was now against us and to practice our bracing & surfing skills. We all had a go. Some of the waves gave us a good ride and a face full of water, with a few of us getting dumped up on the sand after bracing into the wave and riding it in sideways. Lots of fun.

We still had about an hour to go before we rounded Three Mile Point just prior to reaching our destination for the night. The whole trip (approx 28kms) took us about six and a half hours with the one stop and playing in the surf.

Johnny Souey Cove is a beautiful spot. Ray and me had not been there before, whilst most of the others had. Terry showed us around and we selected our campsite. It was cold and we were all damp, some wet,



Photo: Kate Alberico

which proved the point of needing to have the correct gear, especially when paddling in winter. Ray's cag for example is good for mild conditions but not so good in cold conditions. Water seeps in the cuffs, arms become cold, and then water trickles down to the body when the arms are lifted. Staying warm while paddling is fine but as soon as you stop the body chills. The lesson here is get a new cag with a good seal around the cuffs.

Terry selected a beautiful sheltered place for our kitchen fire where we all sat and cooked our dinner. We reminisced on the day's kayaking and contemplated how beautiful the area is and what a privilege it is to be able to enjoy the area, albeit in the middle of winter, through the Kayak Club. Camaraderie, safety, knowledge, skills and learning. It even rained on us as we were enjoying dinner but Terry to the rescue, had a tarp that we put up.

The technical exam followed. Helmut had put together this exam covering navigation, weather, the use of a compass, reading maps, harbour lighting & signs, safety on the water and medical conditions. This generated lots of learning and discussion and reinforcing of current knowledge.

After a long night sleep it was still hard to get up in the morning. The thought of putting on damp/wet clothing wasn't good. We had planned to be on the water by 9am. We achieved 9:30 with a polite but firm response from Terry, "get up earlier". Point taken and understood. He showed us a photo he took while most of us were still in bed of a beautiful sunrise. The early morning light is always best.

During the first hour or so of our paddle back we still had to contend with rescuing "Spikey". Minimum of two rescues each. Ray was getting ready to use his kayaking knife to deflate "Spikey". Towing came next, Single tows, dual tows, short tows, long tows, changing towers. Interesting seeing some of the different equipment. Ray carries a waist, bum bag, type line. Works well until you need to swap with another tow person, passing the belt onto the next person and making sure they fit the belt correctly is interesting, especially

in choppy water. Always important to have good, strong, easy to use tow points and to get connected quickly and be able to operate your system easily & efficiently with cold hands.

We stopped again at Bidley's Cove for a brief lunch then headed back up the side of the main channel to Port Welshpool with the tide in our favour. We needed to prove we could complete a controlled wet exit and take turns rescuing people who had fallen out. This was a very cold experience near the end of the trip. Once back in our kayaks it was a reasonably brisk paddle back to Port Welshpool due to the need to stay warm.

With the kayaks by the cars and a change of clothing completed Terry and Helmut gave us a debrief. We all passed our Level 2, but fair to say this is just the beginning of lots more paddling, lots more skill improvement, and lots more fun, safe kayaking expeditions.

A big THANK YOU to Terry and Helmut for their time, company and sharing their knowledge and skills with us all. We had a wonderful time, with a fantastic bunch of people, in a beautiful location. Thank you.



Photo: Kate Alberico

Fawkner Beacon

Not far from us all





Fawkner Beacon Paddle to the middle of Port Philip Bay early morning adventure 3 days after the winter solstice

June



Photos: Ben Flora

Where Kayaks Live

*Words & Photos
Andrew Campbell*

My kayak use to live outside leaning against the side of the house. It wasn't ideal and getting it on and off the car was a chore.

I discovered by accident the idea of my kayak living in the garage suspended above the car. I could have fun lowering the kayak onto the car with one hand, leaving me free to enjoy a Peter's Drum-stick at the same time! Perfect.

Equally, raising the kayak to the suspended position above the car in the garage on return was so quick and easy, I had plenty of time to do other fun stuff....

The details.....

How long is your kayak??

My Sisson Arctic Raider is a bit more than 5.5m and with a garage 6 m



in length, perfect placement is critical. At each point where the kayak is suspended, I have added a short length of rope to ensure perfect positioning of the kayak in the garage.

Where to start?

Three heavy duty Zenith Screw Eyes in roof joists.

What next?

An anchor point on the side wall near the roof line, an anchor point to tie down the kayak - at a convenient height, and an anchor point on the floor (see the note below).

What other parts are required?

Nine shackles of various sizes, two large Cast Snap Hooks to quickly attach the kayak, six single pulleys (with swivel?), two double pulleys and two triple pulleys. I prefer yachting pulleys as they offer less resistance than the pulleys generally found in hardware stores.



What about the tie down point?

A Staple Plate with Ring makes my life easy.



Are there any other pointers?

I have added a hook on the side wall which I use to temporarily hang one rope whilst I tie/untie the other rope from the kayak. I simply then clip them together on the side wall after loading my kayak on the car to keep them out of my way until I get home. I also use the hook to hang the coiled rope when the kayak has been stowed and is suspended from the roof (see photograph on the previous page).

Are the pulleys helpful?

Without the pulleys, you will need to be able to take the whole weight of the kayak with one hand whilst tying the knot to the anchor point on the side wall with the other hand. Not impossible, but keeping the kayak close to the roof is much more difficult without pulleys.

Can you store a loaded kayak on the roof?

I seriously doubt it and don't recommend it! ***Are there any other pointers?***

Does the kayak get in the way?

No. I don't even notice the red/yellow flag hanging from the end of my kayak. In addition, the kayak is safe from any accidental damage that might otherwise occur.

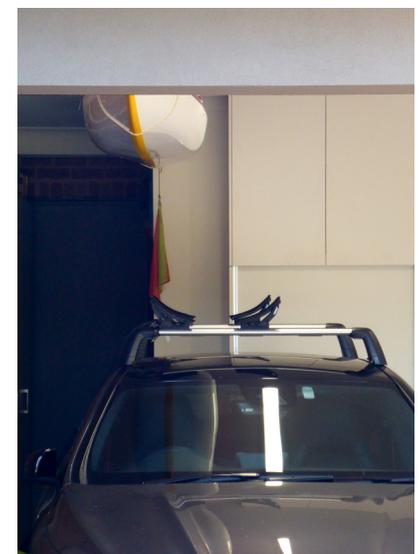
Is there anything else to consider?

You may need to consider where your light(s) are located as a kayak could reduce what light you do have in the garage. In our case, we have fluorescent style LED lights on both side of the garage and haven't ever found it to be an issue.

Any other suggestions?

Yes, make sure you have untied the kayak before driving out of the garage as this can only end in tears, and yes, I have done that but only the one time.

Note: Although the photographs show the pulleys positioned on the side wall near the floor, they could instead be positioned between the kayak and the roof. I may reposition the pulleys to be between the kayak and roof as this is probably the better option. I guess I'll have to fix it one day, when I have run out of other fun stuff to do.





*Start with a pre made bed
Tips on how to do this on the
previous two pages*



Drive car in with kayak



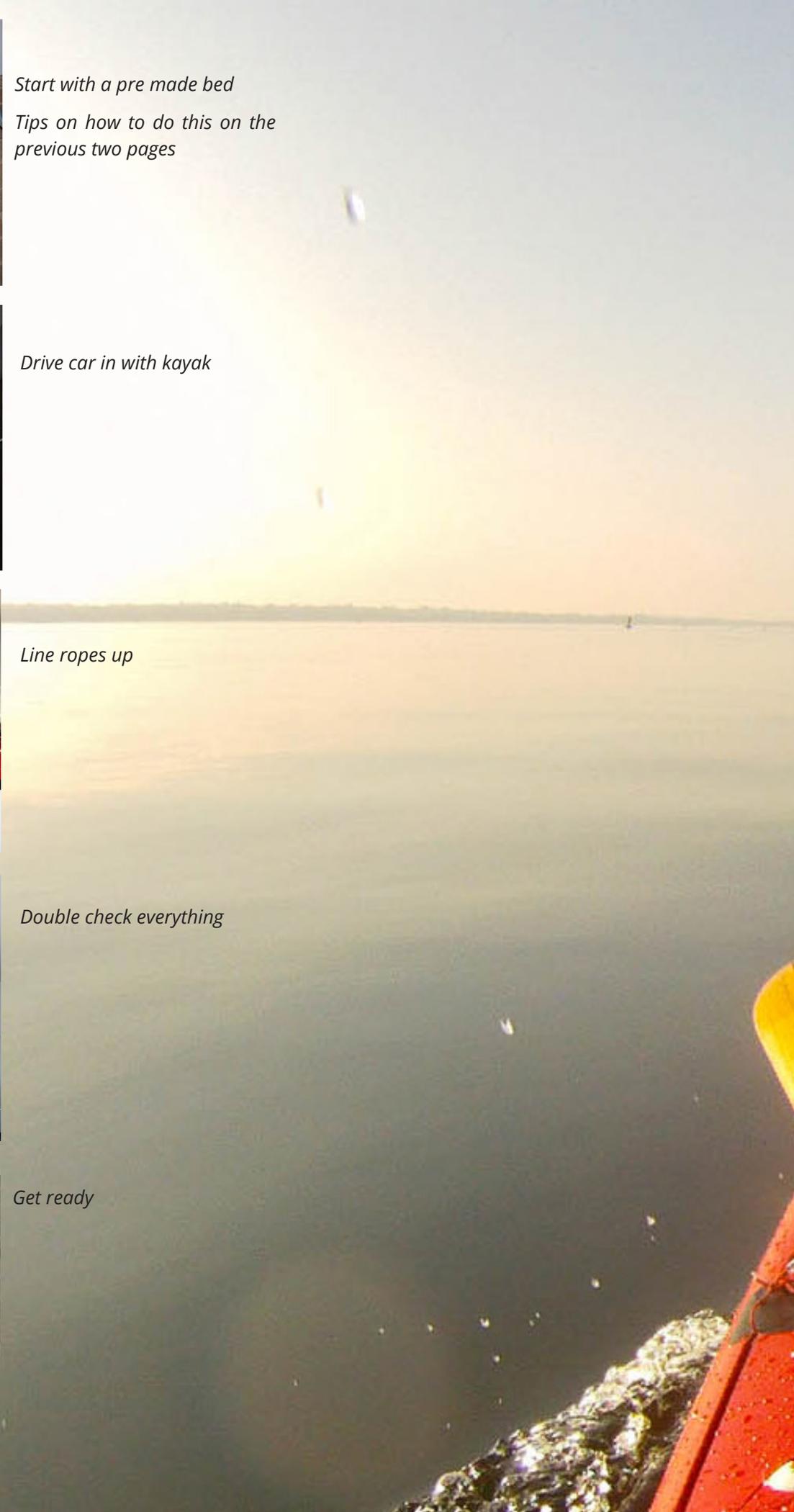
Line ropes up



Double check everything



Get ready



Pull the levers



Baby is all tucked in



Job is done



useful piece of hardware

The Mirror

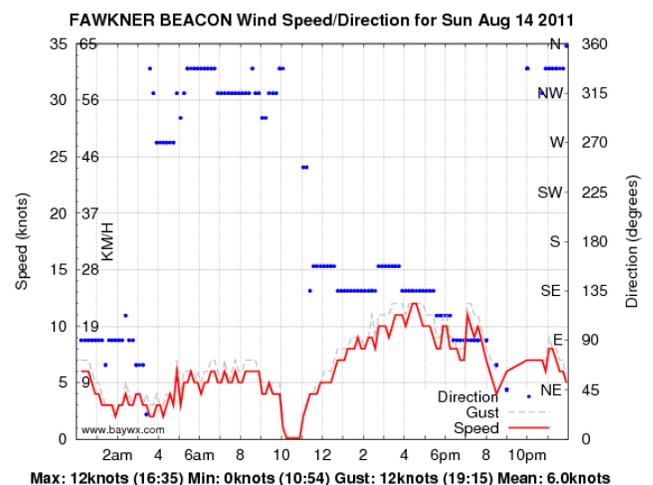


Photo: Andrew Campbell

I have been paddling Port Philip Bay for about thirteen years and usually have a camera handy, just in case. In all that time there has only been one occasion when I was paddling Port Philip Bay and it was mirror-like. The photograph was taken using a GoPro Hero 1 at about 10:15 am on 14 August 2011 and shows the view a short distance from Rickett's Point looking toward Mentone.

The wind plot for that day is available using the archive at <http://www.baywx.com.au>, there was no wind for about 15 minutes just after 10am

Words: Andrew Campbell



Sea Sickness

Words Sue Mountford

Ben has encouraged me to write about what it's like to get sea sick, so if this topic is not for you or you're reading this whilst eating our breakfast, please skip it.

The first thing to say is getting sea sick was a first for me, and came as a complete surprise. After six decades on this planet and nearly six years of sea kayaking at times in ocean swells I considered myself "bomb proof" and have never considered sea sickness as a possibility; no matter how rough the boat trip.

On Anzac Day weekend I headed off for Tina and John Evertz's surf training weekend at Kennett River. On Saturday we paddled to Cape Patton. We launched through one meter surf and paddled through an on coming and at times rebounding swell. I had no signs of sea sickness that day.

The following day we had breakfast early and headed off for a paddle to Lorne some two hours or so later. The surf at Kennett River was lower and not dumping as aggressively as the previous day, so launching was gentler. On this trip we were paddling in a larger swell than the day before, probably 1.5 to 2 meters in a following sea. I was enjoying catching runs on the swells.

About an hour into the paddle I had a slight sense of nausea in my stomach. I continued to drink water hoping it would go away. About fifteen minutes later I started to get hot, and undid the zips in jacket to help me cool off. My body temperature lowered, but

the sense of nausea did not go away. The feeling of nausea strengthened over fifteen minutes, then there was no escaping I was about to vomit. I could feel my paddle stroke start to weaken. I asked John to raft up with me, which he did at lightening speed without hesitating? I dry reached and was only able to stop after bringing up some bile.

Once I stopped reaching I felt the nausea had gone and I was OK to paddle on. John assessed we were half way to Lorne and after Jamieson's River beach there would be few places to land. He advised we should abandon the paddle and go in. I accepted John's advice because I had no way of being sure I wouldn't get sea sick thirty minutes later.

John and Greg rang Tina to come and do a car shuffle. Roger B got me out of the wind and fed me hot cross bun....it filled a big hole in my stomach.

So there you have it!

I'm left wondering what were the triggers for sea sickness this day which weren't present on other days in similar conditions. What I do understand is I now have a risk which I need to pro-actively manage. I can't second guess what triggered my sea sickness, and create a risk for myself and others on future paddles.



Photo: Maggie McPherson

What the.....?

Words: Peter Costello

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I found this gem on the roof of a tradie ute, in the back street opposite the Life Saving Club.

Whilst taking the photo of this gem, the tradie starts talking to me. I ask if it has been in the water, he replies 'yes, I paddled it in the Murray this year'.

My response was 'Mad Mick would have been pissed off at being upstaged by you!'

His reply 'I am Mad Mick!!!'

He said that he tipped out quite a few times but only lost one 'tinnie' - a can of original Coca Cola - Big Bill's red doctor and Mick's staple energy diet downed at every check point along the way. Yes he completed the whole 404km.

Why Mad Mick you ask?

Participating in the Murray a number of years ago he broke his paddle. Being opposite a bundle of people camping, he scrambled up and borrowed a spade. Completing the days paddle under 'shovel power'. That is where the legend started, he has only grown his reputation since then.



Photo: Peter Costello

KASK Kayak Fest 2018 - Wellington

2-4 March 2018

Ngatitoa Domain, Mana

Learn new skills, meet new people, explore new waters

From the calm of the Pauatahanui Inlet, to the surge of the Plimmerton Harbour, the KASK Kayak Fest 2018 – Wellington promises to introduce you to new places, all contained in a small area.

There will be classes for learning new skills, polishing up on those already learned, or go with a group to the nearby Mana Island reserve.

Visit the link for more information at:

<http://news.kask.org.nz/kaskkayakfest2018>

Contact the event team by email:

kayakfest@kask.org.nz

The following Int. Kayak Week in the Sounds:

<http://news.kask.org.nz/kaskkayakfest2018/ikw2018/>



Paul Caffyn from KASK, is inviting members of the VSKC to the 2018 KASK Kayak Festival across the Tasman Sea.

For those of you that don't know Paul Caffyn, he is the first person to circumnavigate Australia in 1981/2. He also circumnavigated Great Britain with Nigel Denis in 1980. There is a plaque in Queenscliffe, Victoria, commemorating his Australia circumnavigation, and the kayak he used to paddle around Australia is permanently on display in the Queenscliff Maritime Museum. He has written 5 books on kayaking, which includes, "The Dreamtime Voyage", the story about his trip around Australia.

Some of the KASK crew 'accompanied' Geoff Murray to Antarctica in February 2017. See image on the next page.

What an opportunity to meet other paddlers, and plan trips to far out places.

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10 February 2017.

The KASK team of six Kiwi paddlers and one from Tasmania, about to head south from Enterprise Bay for the Argentine Islands on the Antarctic Peninsula.

From left: Conrad Edwards, Susan Cade, Diana Galbraith, Paul Caffyn in the bow, Bevan Walker in the stern of the double, Geoff Murray and John Gumbley.

Photo: Cath Hew

Sounds like an adventure.



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Antarctica Photo: Geoff Murray