

Sea Trek



Issue 93

Winter 2018

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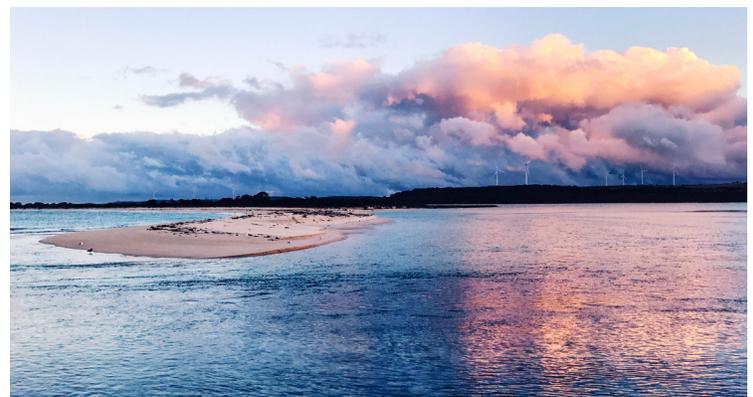
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President's Heads Up

Sea Trek Winter 2018



VSKC
Victorian Sea Kayak Club



As winter starts to loosen its grip, I know that many members have been out paddling in some tempestuous and cold winter seas, and many escaped to warmer climes to enjoy paddling further afield. Either way, our great sport has a lot to offer at this time of year. This year, I escaped to warmer climes, France, and spent an enjoyable few weeks driving around the south west and a week on a canal boat touring some of the canals around the Garonne River. I visited the Atlantic surf coast west of Bordeaux, and it was very interesting to see how French life-guards operate these beaches – more regimented and explicitly signposted than here, but really professional from what I could see. We spent a few days in Arcachon and there were quite a few sea kayaks out and about, with some great water, and oysters to be found!

I am very proud and excited to see the Club's new grading model progressing with skills training at all new grading levels well under way. Indeed, it was great to hear that Steve Collins and Andrew Campbell, both current VSKC Grade 3 Trip Leaders, have been approved as Sea Leaders under our new Australian Canoeing (AC) aligned model. Well done guys! The work being put in by our trainee instructor group is fantastic, and a great credit to them all. They are doing this under the watchful guidance of Club Assessor Terry Barry and Instructors, John and Tina Evertze. What a fantastic team effort from all concerned. You will find some great articles in this issue relating to this training program.

It is still the case though that over half of our club members remain ungraded, and we are keen to see that gradually

reduced over the next couple of years. An important first step in this regard is introduction of our new VSKC, Sea Kayak Basics grade. This will be signed off by the relevant Trip Leader at our regular introductory paddles, notably Canadian Bay, and will be mandatory for members to hold this entry level grading to participate in any formal Club paddle going forward. More details concerning this will be provided shortly.

It is certainly hats off to one of our members, Roger Greenwood for his solo crossing of Bass Strait. This is a gutsy and impressive undertaking, especially considering some challenging issues that befell initial plans. Roger's recollections of his trip and the events that led up to it are well worth reading, and if you see Roger around, a well-earned beer is well and truly in order. I do recall tailing him once down the Murray in a recent Murray River Marathon, and doing that across Bass Strait would be interesting! Well done Roger on a really great adventure and achievement.



Mount Martha July 2018 : Photo: Richard Rawling



Sorrento Rip May 2018 : Photo: Kate Alberico

I am looking forward to our Spring paddling season and there are some great paddles lined up. There are already over 30 members booked in for our annual Pizza and Paddling at The Prom in September! Plans are also well in hand for the AGM Weekend , with some further details in this issue. So, again, I commend this issue of Sea Trek to you all and thank Ben again for his fantastic efforts to keep raising the bar on the production of our Club magazine. See you on the water!

Richard Rawling

Richard Rawling
VSKC President

Cover

Photo: Red Eye
Ben Flora

Waratah Bay May 2018 : Photo: Ben Flora



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Walkerville South May : Photo: Ben Flora

Editorial Musings

It's not long until our AGM. Time to start thinking about what videos and photos you want to enter into our competitions. Last years 6 videos were a blast and this year we hope many avid explorers will enter some videos from places far and wide. Don't forget we will be running the Mick MacRobb photo comp as well. The club member submitting the best photo of the year will be awarded this trophy.

I have been hearing some wild and wonderful stories during our coffee catch up after the red eye lately. All those members who have been paddling for many years must have some good stories to tell. Like the graveyards of kayaks and being covered by whale goo.

If you feel inclined to write up a yarn that you would like to send into to Sea Trek to publish it will be welcome.

If one can also produce some photo's to go with it even better. I hope you enjoy this edition of Sea Trek and as you read on one will see not all paddles go to plan. It's a good reminder to really evaluate every paddle you undertake, no matter who is leading and participating so that you are prepared to make the right decisions at the right time.

Editor: Ben Flora



August 2018





Signing on at the Red Eye Ricketts Point Photo: Ben Flora

Rhythm of the Murray

Words Tamsin Jane : Photos: Bill Robinson



The essence of this trip is a shared journey of two people immersing themselves in the admiration of nature.

Like myself, and the majority of paddlers in the VSKC, paddling occurs on salt water, blue water, and where the environment is often very unpredictable. One's stroke is determined by the ocean, wind, swell, waves and the movement that comes to us. This dictates the type of stroke and rhythm we are in. I often feel that on the ocean I move with the motion of the sea and I enjoy the "play" it provides. Sometimes, it can be a fight, as nature's strength and prowess always dictates. We paddlers, just need to be wise and aware. As a paddler the more time I spend on the sea, the more I enjoy its movement and appreciate the diversity and challenges it provides. However, this paddle was on different waters, the inland flows of the Murray river.

During most weeks, I usually paddle with Bill Robinson out of Canadian Bay on Port Phillip bay, we do a return trip to Mornington Yacht Club. On these paddles we chat a lot. On one such paddle we both mentioned that we would like to take some time out and do a section of the Murray River. So then the planning began. Bill did most of it. As most of you know, Bill completed the full length paddle of the Murray River. In 2005, he did a 6 weeks solo and traveled a distance of 1986km. I

felt that with his knowledge and experience, he would select a fantastic section we could leisurely paddle. We planned this trip to be seven to ten days. The section he chose was Wentworth to Renmark, approximately 260km down stream. Along this stretch, there are several locks, so the flow and tenacity of the water is insignificant and gentle.

On the 19th March we set off in our cars, in convoy, stopping several times for a Bill tea and wee stop. The towns we went through were, what can I say, passed in a blink! The land was very dry and barren. God knows how anything grows! After arriving at Wentworth, dinner was on the cards. Bill had an "army surprise dehydrated dinner" and I got a lasagna from the pub, delicious. Bill's meals and diet on this trip was in fact a highlight... about that later!

On Tuesday, the 20th March we did the car shuffle and then set off, setting up our first camp only 10km down stream. Selecting and setting up camp for Bill has many prerequisites, which include; a good shower tree, easy entry and exit from the bank, preferably Murray sand beach and plenty of fire wood. For the camp set up: get fire on, add two oily cans of water on the fire, set up shower, tents, then have a bush shower, while the dinner is cooking on the fire.



Now for Bill's survival meals:

Breakfast : muesli, cuppa tea.

Lunch : can of sardines, vita wheats and peanut butter, cuppa tea.

Dinner : 1/3 cup rice, 1 packet dehydrated peas , can of sardines and the piece de resistance, sweet chili sauce.



Now I can understand a lot of you may be thinking, NO WAY would I eat that! But I gave it a go, and I can tell you from experience this dinner is BLOODY beautiful! It's exactly what you need nutritionally for distance paddling!

Over the next eight days we paddled 260 km, passed through four locks and met almost no one on the water. What bliss! This seclusion in nature is what made this trip truly memorable.



The Murray River holds so much history. It's river system is sacred to the indigenous people, it has supplied resources for living, shelter and a place of worship for many generations.

The evidence of the impact from early settlement and urbanization in this area was in fact incredibly disheartening. On the left hand side was mainly crown Victorian land, pretty untouched and underdeveloped. However, on the right, was privately owned, mostly farming. This contrast in landscapes due to human impact was shattering, in fact I felt a great sadness!

The left hand side was alive and thriving, native plants with well established old Murray red gum trees. It is full of animals and life. The other side had often been cleared out, farmed with goats, sheep, cows, but we did spot the occasional Emu. I don't want to go into a debate about the conflict of land and our relationship with it, but it's a debate that I think needs to be addressed in this area.

The Murray River paddle allowed me to get into a rhythm that was very different to any ocean or blue water paddle. Its rhythm was calm, the smells often mesmerizing. After the rain the smell of gum leaves and dirt radiating out from this dry land was so organic and beautiful. The animal sounds throughout the day and night: boo book owls, wrens, cockatoos, kookaburras, emu, kangaroos. We spotted spoonbills, cormorants nestling in overhanging willows, eagles, herons, fish jumping randomly out of the water and even the evidence of turtles.

Although many would say brown water is not their thing, "it's boring". I would say, it depends on what you are after, I felt that the Murray allowed me to sit, be present and take in all its sights, smells, sounds and most importantly be with nature.

We also witnessed a random land slide as one of the cliffs fell away, cascading, taking out trees, large boulders on its way, it was quite exciting to experience! So if you want a change in speed and a different experience in your kayak, get out on the Murray, it may take you down a gear or two and recharge your batteries! A test of steel....



2018





Tamsin on the Murray : Photo Bill Robinson

Bass Strait - Solo



Congratulations to Roger Greenwood for completing a solo Bass Strait crossing!



VSKC Sea Leader Intake

Words Peter Newman, Vice President VSKC

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The club conducted an Australian Canoeing Sea Leader extravaganza weekend at Walkerville North on the 19th and 20th May. This included the opportunity for existing level 3VSKC members to be assessed at the AC Sea Leader level. In addition there was a more informal intake for those who want to tackle the Sea Leader assessment later this year.

The trainee sea instructor candidates are Helmut Heinz, Peter Wilson and Katie Pilbrow, who were accepted into the training course at an intake weekend at Barwon Heads held in April.

The weekend at Walkerville North provided the opportunity for Terry Barry, our resident ACA accredited assessor, and Instructors John and Tina Evertz to watch over the trainee Sea Instructor candidates as they oversaw the training for the ACA Sea Leader intake, comprising Ron Morris, James Balnaves, Tom Holley and Ben Flora. A number of other paddlers who were not part of the Sea Leader intake also attended the weekend and were also able to participate.

The weekend was an important step in the implementation of the club's new grading model, which was discussed in a recent President's newsletter. This will see the club align itself over time with the Australian Canoeing (ACA) grading model. Importantly the future Sea Instructors will enable the club to undertake active in-house training and assessment of members up to the level of Sea Leader (which will replace the Grade 3 level, without a leadership component), while the future ACA Sea Leaders (which replaces the Grade 3 level which includes the leadership component) will ensure an ongoing trips program into the future.

Our trainee Sea Instructor candidates took the Sea Leader candidates and other paddlers through a wide range of exercises including paddle skills, surf skills, towing, rescue techniques and the like. They also assessed each boat for compliance with VSKC set-up standards, and discussed matters such as float plans, communications and navigation.

After so much talk about the new grading model, the weekend was an important step in bringing the new model into fruition. The Sea Instructor and Sea Leader candidates learnt a lot from Terry, John and Tina and also from each other. It is obvious the club is entering into a new era of professionalism and that there is a great deal of support for the new grading.

Aside from the training aspects, the weekend was also enjoyable from a social viewpoint in the same way that other club events such as the AGM / paddle fest weekend, the Pizza at the Prom weekend and the Easter trip to Snake Island are.

The Walkerville North camping ground is a fantastic venue for a weekend away, with great facilities and no crowds at this time of the year. Hopefully a training weekend like this could become a regular event on the club's program.



Here is what Tom Holley, one of our more recent new members and a Sea Leader candidate, had to say about the weekend:

Walkerville



Photo: Ben Flora

The club is alive and well, with this weekend being a culmination of many contributing successes.

First of all, the new grading model shows initiative and determination from the committee. To even try to make change is hard work, but now it is actually happening.

It is great to have so many people willing and excited to be involved at every level. From Terry Barry kindly giving of his time and expertise, to those going for assessments, to those getting leadership hours up, putting in countless hours of time and effort, to those such as myself part of the intake group, ready to become the next generation of sea leaders. The club is really pushing on and becoming the best it can be.

There's never been a better time to get involved, get on the water and find some adventure. The good times were not only shared on the water though, with many meals shared, stories told and friendships formed over the weekend. It was so good to be gathered by a toasty fire while debriefing and sharing highlights from the day and talking long into the night to the sound of some mellow guitar in the background.



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As for the “on the water” action, it might be better described it as “in the water” action as all the wannabe sea leaders were ordered to plunge themselves into the freezing water a long way from land and in a 20 knot wind and decent swell as part of a full-on rescue scenario. It wasn’t long though before everyone was successfully back in their boats and making their way back safely to shore.

For those with rudder boats, the weekend’s activities were made all the more difficult because rudders were banned! Too bad for those of us who were in Mirages! But it was all part of ensuring we could control our boats by edging and paddle strokes rather than be over-reliant on the rudder. That made things interesting when we were faced with different towing and rescue situations, all in a strong (20-30kt) crosswind.

All in all, it was a great weekend and everyone involved seemed to thoroughly enjoy themselves and appreciate the opportunity to practice and revise some critical skills.

Photos : Ben Flora





Sea Leader Intake weekend. Walkerville

Photos : Ben Flora



Walkerville North



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Photos : Peter Newman





Photo : Scott Jukes

The Assessment

Two fearless (?) VSKC Level 3 trip leaders met with Terry Barry, Scott Jukes and Tina Evertze for the first Sea Leader intake of VSKC Level 3 paddlers.



The Sea Leader candidates were Steve Collins and Andrew Campbell.

Under the watchful eyes of the assessors, the candidates were put through their paces as they participated in exercises designed to test their paddle skills, leadership and communication skills as well as their towing and rescue skills, in several simulated exercises! They also had to submit a paddle log, a trip plan and complete a written exam. As Sea Leaders, not only were their boats checked but also checks were made to ensure that they carried the appropriate safety equipment that a Sea Leader was expected to have.

Walkerville May 2018



Terry Barry, Scott Jukes and Tina Evertze

Andrew Campbell said:

I was keen to build on my existing skills and get critical feedback on how I can improve. I was also a little nervous about what might happen.

(All) The assessors were helpful and knowledgeable and did identify a number of areas that can benefit from further practice, which I will now focus on.

One test that I was particularly unprepared for was "being rescued" - in a timed exercise! I am sure it looked awkward, it certainly felt awkward. I think the last time I was rescued was about 14 years ago? To say that I was out of practice is an understatement!

I would certainly encourage other Level 3 paddlers to have a go.

Photos Andrew Campbell



Steve Collins said:

Like Andrew I was a little apprehensive leading up, to and during the initial stages of our assessment for the AC award of "Sea leader". My main concern was the written exam that we were to sit on the Saturday afternoon. I spent quite a bit of time going back over everything we had learnt for Level 3 and trawled through the Australian Canoeing website learning as much as I could from there.

The on water skills that we needed to display were no different to what was expected of us when we were assessed for Level 3. Although, I must say that Andrew set the bar pretty high in the surf component by doing a spectacular forward endo and pirouette first up (I am sure he meant it). The time on the water was a lot of fun. The feedback from Terry, Tina and Scott was very valuable, especially in letting me know that some of my paddling strokes needed to be sharpened up.

It was like doing a level 3 refresher course, I really enjoyed it, and gained a lot from the experience. Like Andrew, I would recommend other active level 3 paddlers give it a go. And as to that written test! I should not have worried so much, it really was not that bad. Many thanks to Tina, Terry, Scott and Spike.

When asked if he had fun, Andrew said:

I enjoyed the surf! We had to demonstrate that we could competently surf, do a roll in the surf and surf backwards. I don't get much opportunity to practice surf paddling on the red-eye.

Anyway, on my first surf onto the beach at Waratah Bay I managed to (a) surf the wave (b) do a forward endo; (c) roll-up in the surf; and then (d) surf the wave into the beach backwards!

I don't think that was what Terry had in mind.

After playing in the surf for a bit longer, Terry admitted that Steve & I had demonstrated sufficient competence in the surf. So it was time for the next test...





Sea Leader Intake Walkerville

Photos Andrew Campbell



Snake Island 2018



Words : Glen Colledge

Photos : Richard Rawlings



It was with Great Fortune that Yvonne and I, both current SKCWA members, traveling OZ, opportuned a place for two on the Club's Annual Expedition to Snake Island. A half hour phone conversation with Richard Rawlings a week before the event was enough to have our details happily added to the list of participants.



Twenty four fully loaded kayakers embarked from Port Welshpool at 10.30 am 30 March bound for Snake Island a mere 17 k SE paddle. However, to add interest to the affair the synoptics predicted a tail breeze of 17 knots with gusts of 20 knots admirably mixed with occasional squally rain. A nice start Richard. But we knew all this well in advance, as the data was duly monitored a week before. No surprises here. The sombre, pre-embarking shore brief was a stern, no bull, "keep together, slowest double kayak leads the pod" There were three double kayakers in the group. One of them being a slinky, black latex and aluminium number, expertly assembled on the beach and captained by Helmet, faithfully crewed by Xufang.

So.... we all knew well in advance, that this leg would be very interesting. Two capsizes on route ensured no one was caught day dreaming. These incidents provided the opportunity for certain members to experience full immersion and implement well practiced rescue techniques. After dealing with these interesting conditions for an hour or so we landed on a very interesting soft beach, populated by fast approaching, looming large, long dead gnarly old tree trunks. Once again all were given a valuable opportunity to exercise skills such as submerged hazard negotiation, choppy shore break landing, soft sand exits and dealing with early signs of hypothermia. The scene was very mildly reminiscent of the D Day landing of allied troops on the obstacle infested beaches of Normandy. After a very brief stay all safely exited that place and duly landed on Snake Island without further incident. All Kayakers disgorged their contents and camp was made in the quiet protection and soft sigh of the surrounding acacias. All kayakers were then secreted in various spots high on the sand bank, safely amongst the bush away from the buffeting wind and the fast approaching high tide.

So.... we all knew that day two, 31 March, would be very calm, sunshine, peaceful and relaxing. Synoptics were

true to form which enabled the group to take an early morning very leisurely paddle around the eastern end of the island and a quick Northerly channel crossing, land for lunch and return to base, A total distance of about 16 k....No problem



So..... day three 01 April was once again predicted calm, sunny conditions. All successfully paddled to Port Albert for the obligatory fish and chip lunch, followed by a quick return. About half of the group elected to return via the channel through the mangroves. The receding tide made the journey mildly interesting for most, but a pain in the backside for the doubles as they heaved through the mud. Total distance approx. 20 k Sooo easy.

Day four.....02 April, we all knew well in advance what the return journey would be.... A BLOODY SLOG. The 17k return to Port Welshpool straight into an accurate synoptically predicted 17knot breeze was slow, altogether slow and also not fast. Beach brief was similar to day one, "doubles lead, try and get some protection from the island". Meanwhile, the white caps in the channel were angrily rearing and starting to join with each other in a nasty sort of way. The group left Snake Island at 09.30 am and arrived Port Welshpool as the sun was sinking a 5.20pm. A stop half way for lunch enabled paddlers to refuel and regenerate in preparation for the final push.

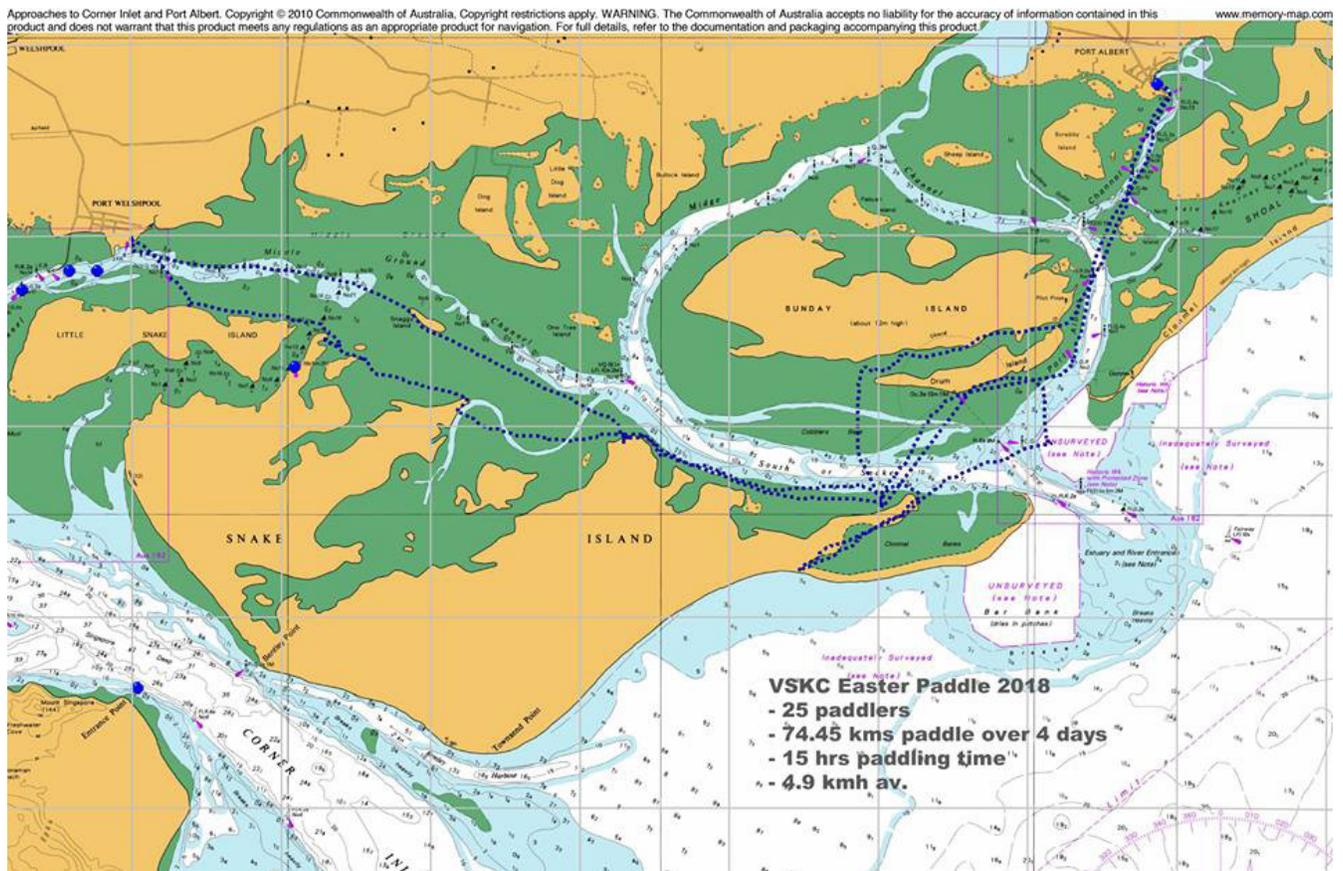
During lunch, looking back at where we had just paddled it seemed there was no problem at all. GoPro footage is the same. Filmed action often looks very tame.

The journey gave some members an excellent opportunity to exercise their towing ability. The thought of those foolhardy Antarctic explorers of yesteryear towing heavy rotten sleds for thousands of kilometres over icy slopes, treacherous crevasses and through blinding blizzards springs to mind.

A few days later and refreshed, efficient Richard emailed all participants photos which only tell of happy faces and a map showing our route which accumulated to approximately 74 kilometres over four days.



All in all a brilliant expedition, experiencing exactly equal easy cruise versus challenging conditions. Leadership was excellent which catered for a broad experience. Weather prediction was accurate, Camp dynamics and



paddle protocol were all efficiently managed. It was encouraging to see radio communication effectively utilised. Yvonne and I wholeheartedly thank the members of VSKC for the overwhelming hospitality and the friendship that has been generated through our brief participation.

We both look forward to further interaction during our travels.

Glen Colledge
SKCWA 275



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Addendum to Snake Island

Contrasts between WA and Vic

In addition to the Snake Island report, Richard asked me to share a few words on my Sea Kayaking impressions of Victoria and possible contrasts between WA and Victoria.

So at Richard's request, please bear with me as I humbly offer my personal thoughts.

1) The club

2) Paddling locations

3) Perth paddling

1) The club.

I see both clubs in Victoria and WA operating very similarly. Clubs are very friendly. Both welcome interstate members and show genuine interest in new starters. I think Vic club is a little more focused on training. However, during my one year absence, Sandy Robson, in line with Canoeing Australia requirements, has implemented many initiatives designed to train more qualified leaders and improve overall competency.

WA currently has a population of 2 to 3 million and our club has 102 financial members. Victoria's population is 6 to 7 million with club membership of 230 plus. Who knows why membership is such? On another note, my perception is that the average age of Vic members is a little younger than WA. I don't think we have any 23 year old members!!

SKCWA is broadly divided into 3 groups. 1) Perth/Fremantle 2) Mandurah 3) Albany.

I mixed with the Perth group and regularly had peer group paddles twice a week from Hillarys Boat Harbour. Every Wednesday morning between 6 and 10 of us would paddle out of the harbour for approx. 2 to 3 hours (12-15k) and return to the harbour to practice rolling etc. On Saturday 20 to 25 paddlers would repeat a similar

routine. Every Sunday there would be a programmed event for all members with a qualified sea leader in charge. These events were generally an islands paddle or coastal treks usually covering 20 to 30 k. All paddles concluded with a coffee and a hearty kayak yak. The coffee after aspect is a universal thing everywhere. During a typical year trip leaders would undertake expeditions to distant destinations like Shark Bay, Rottne Island or Ningaloo Reef.

In summary, WA members don't experience the ever present, subliminal temptation of a grand "local" challenge such the Bass Strait Crossing. Possibly, this prevailing environment can tempt the average kayaker into another realm. During the brief period I have mixed with the VSKC I have paddled with several members who have completed major expeditions. I must admit, that during my short contact with those kayakers the tantalizing seed has been set. Maybe.... one day.... I too, could complete such a feat.

2) Paddling locations

Since contacting VSKC 5 weeks ago I have paddled a section of The Barwon River, Joined an expedition to Snake Island, paddled out of Batemans Bay, paddled out of Kennett River and Torquay. These locations are all very different in terms of landforms and degree of difficulty. In Victoria all these locations are easily accessible. To achieve such a variety in WA would necessitate traveling in excess of a thousand kilometres.

The big issue in WA is that it is big. The coast running north of Perth is not nearly as indented with rivers and coves as the East coast. Townships are few and far between. The northern WA coast is generally, barren, low windswept limestone cliffs reefs, sand dunes, sparse fresh water and scrubby vegetation. Further North beyond Broome is really wild country. Crocodiles, high tides, rugged amazing topography, sparse fresh water supplies and a lack of townships make that part of the country a real challenge. Whilst in direct contrast, South of Perth offers more scope. Cape Naturaliste and Cape Leeuwin are fantastic locations. Mainly limestone shoreline around Naturaliste giving way to granite as you travel South towards Cape Leeuwin. In addition Augusta, Albany, Esperance, Lucky Bay, Duke of Orleans Bay are all fantastic locations.

3) Perth paddling

There is plenty of scope in Perth, if you have a month or two to spare. Out of Hillarys Boat Harbour there is a small island 3 kilometres off the coast frequented by sea lions. They are very friendly and playful. They enjoy cavorting with anyone who visits the island. In summer, mid-afternoon, the Fremantle Doctor cools down the coast with a welcoming 20knt SW sea breeze. The Doctor flings crazy wind surfers high into the clouds and provides thrilling downwind runs for any long straight and narrow sea kayak. Hook up a sail for added buzz. After an exhilarating hour and a half 20k run, land your craft, smash a cold beer, relax, cool down and contentedly watch the sun set in the West. Further South, a 2 hr drive from Perth, hook up with the guys from Mandurah. They'll guide you around the caves, outcrops, rock gardens and introduce you to the playful sea lions of Penguin Island. In summer after The Doctor has died, take a night paddle with the Fremantle crew. That jaunt always completes with a few beers kayak yak and chips. Take a day paddle around the Swan River into the brand new Darling Harbour in the centre of Perth or the upper reaches of Middle Swan check out the wineries along it's banks. Travel 5 hours South of Perth to Albany. Contact the club captain for every sort of paddle imaginable. Flat water, heavy swell, surf, rebound, magnificent scenery, everything, even a Kalgan River paddle.

In short the West Coast is a different State, of being. On the East Coast I am intrigued by the proximity, density and the huge range of options available. In contrast, the West is generally sparser, drier, hotter and far less populated (WA 2 to 3 million, Vic 6 to 7 million).

However, WA's sense of space, solitude and serenity, often infused with elusive shimmering mirages are all saturated in an immense desert silence. This primeval, natural interaction invariably soothes a certified Sandgroper's soul.

Safe journey.

Glen Colledge
SKCWA 275



Snake Island Photos : Richard Rawling



2018

AGM Survey

2018 Blue Water Festival & AGM weekend, 9th – 11th November, 2018

Peter Newman (Vice President)



Plans are advancing for this year's Blue Water Festival & AGM weekend at Barwon Heads, so please make sure that you put the dates into your diaries.

The feedback the Committee has received (via the post-event survey) regarding last year's event shows the weekend is a highlight of the club's calendar. Nearly 58% of those who attended responded to the survey.

One of the comments we received as a result of the survey was a complaint that club members are never made aware of the results of these surveys. This brief report therefore addresses this complaint!

The survey reveals a high level of satisfaction with the way the event was run last year. However some changes will be made to this year's program in light of the following feedback:

This year we will have only the one guest speaker and that will be on the Saturday night. This is in response to comments that the agenda is too crowded and that members would like to have the Friday night free to simply catch up and socialize.

Some time will be allocated on the Friday night for an "issues discussion forum" with the Committee. This is in response to feedback from some members that there needs to be some time allocated for general discussion with the Committee prior to the AGM, so that these matters do not need to be raised at the AGM itself.

The Saturday on-water program will be modified to include at least one longer paddle of about 5 hours duration for intermediate standard paddlers (Sea Skills / Grade 2). The start and finish time for this paddle will ensure that those who participate will be back in plenty of time so they will not be late for the AGM meeting which will start at 4pm.

A number of survey respondents commented that the AGM went on for too long due to unnecessary discussion and that this has repercussions for the rest of the night. This also causes difficulties for the caterers. Someone suggested that maybe the AGM needs to commence at 3pm, however this would require the Saturday on-water training and off-water workshops to be scaled back.

The Committee considers that conducting an "issues discussion forum" on the Friday night is the best way to

reduce the length of the AGM. The Committee also wants to make the point that members are always notified well in advance of the AGM of the cut-off date and processes involved in getting matters onto the Agenda, and that voting at the AGM should be straight-forward and should not necessitate a lot of discussion. The AGM is not an opportunity to raise matters that are not already part of the Agenda.

A final matter arising out of the survey relates to the matter of whether the AGM weekend should be held in the first quarter of the year (i.e. January to end of March) instead of the last quarter (October to end of December). The rationale for having it in the first quarter is that the weather is more stable at this time of the year.

Three-quarters of respondents indicated they are happy with either option, whilst of the remaining respondents there was a slight preference for a first quarter AGM weekend. Having considered this matter, the Committee decided that the weekend should continue to be held in Q4 for a number of reasons:

There are significant administrative issues associated with changing the AGM to the first quarter, including the need to change the club's Constitution (which would need to be an agenda item on this year's AGM), and issues associated with end of year financial reporting.

Assuming the club did vote this year for future AGMs to be held in Q1, this would mean that there would be no AGM weekend in 2019.

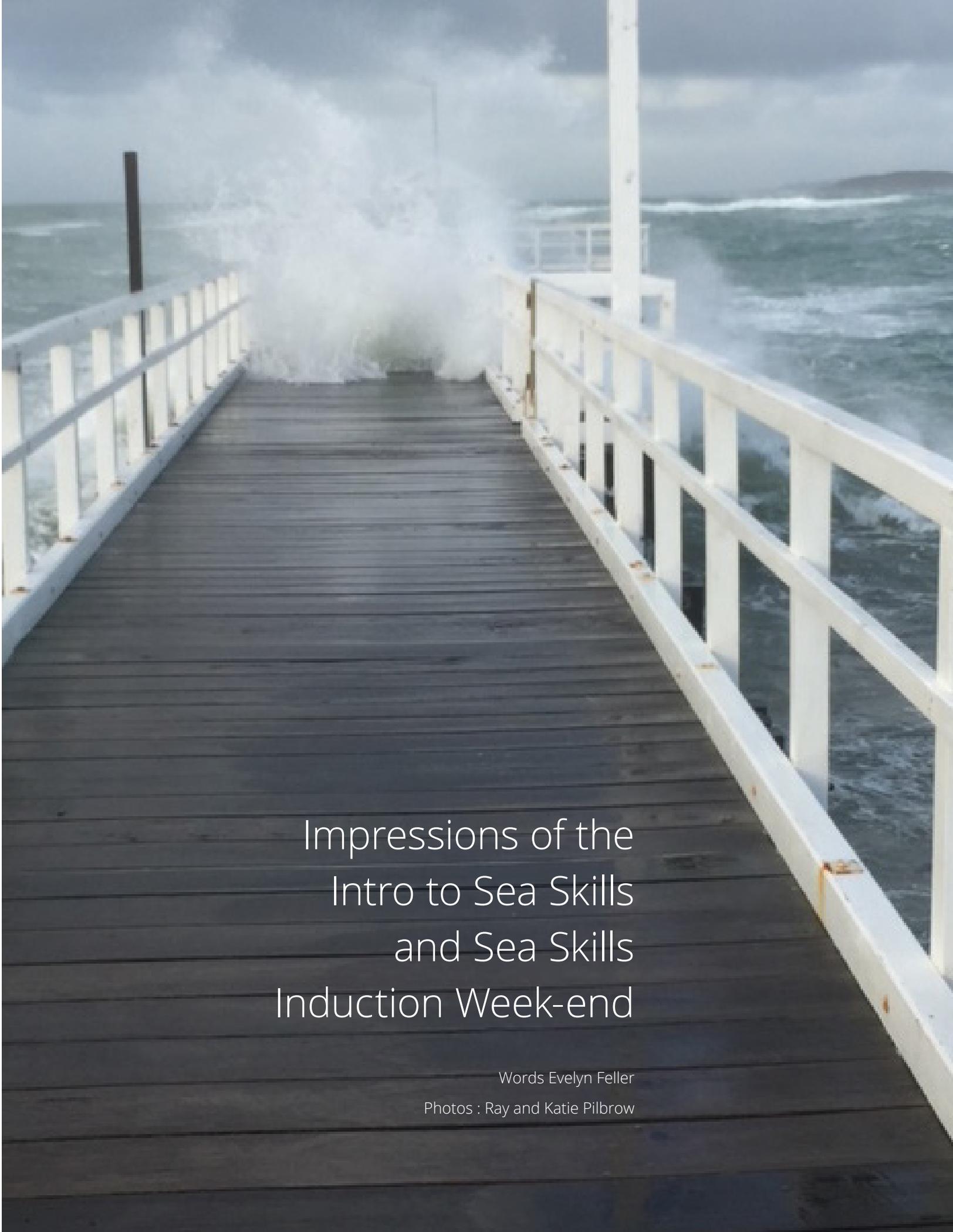
The first quarter of each year includes the New Year holiday period and the Australia Day and Labour Day holidays which people often use as opportunities for a long weekend. And then Easter is soon also upon us. With all these days off over the first quarter, we feel this might make some members less likely to want to take another weekend off for an AGM weekend.

The better weather in the first quarter also means caravan parks will be more difficult to book and will be more costly.

The Committee believes the proposed changes to this year's AGM weekend will ensure the event runs smoothly and gives members what they want. As far as its decision to continue to hold the event in the final quarter of the year, we trust the reasons for this will be appreciated by members.



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Impressions of the Intro to Sea Skills and Sea Skills Induction Week-end

Words Evelyn Feller

Photos : Ray and Katie Pilbrow



So what does a kayaker instructor do when faced with a dismal weather forecast, 8 metre swells, a Force 7 gale and 15 eager candidates? That was the situation for our four instructors, Tina, John, Katie and Kevin for our induction week-end. Following the principles of the risk assessment triangle they adjusted our learning outcomes to the situation and were able to impart a lot of useful and practical information. By the end of the week-end we had seen quite a range of kayaks and learned of their merits and drawbacks. Unfortunately one boat is often not the best performer in every situation and between not wanting to part with a much loved kayak, quite a collection can develop. Sometimes, kayaks have a tendency to breed if they are left in a garage. We learned of the requirements of the various sea skills levels which place a much higher proficiency on handling surf. Keen to get on the water, we headed for a more sheltered section of the Barwon River on Saturday afternoon. In spite of the effects of the wind and the tide, our instructors encouraged us to improve our forward, reverse, sweep and stopping strokes. For once with a foot peg adjustment, I really was able to use my legs much more effectively forward paddling. Steve really put a lot of commitment into his edging and unfortunately tested the real temperature of the river water. With the rain increasing and darkness falling our session finished.

On Sunday the view of the ocean from the cliff tops was quite awe inspiring. Some of us had to cling to the rails to stay upright and Amar demonstrated horizontal coffee pouring. John and Tina kindly offered their place for us to view various kinds of tow ropes and safety equipment. As with every outdoors activity it is a fine balance between having every gadget possible and having adequate equipment for safety. It was a week-end of great camaraderie and exchange of ideas and excellent, encouraging instruction.

Barwon Heads June



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Splash back. Photos : Ray and Katie Pilbrow

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Intro to Sea Skills.
Pouring coffee sideways
in a 40kt gale.

Photo Scott Welch



Look who's happy in a kayak cave! Photo Ben Flora

Corner Inlet Queens Birthday Weekend



Photo Bill Zombor

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Words – Terry Barry

Once again we ventured to the Nooramunga Marine Park for the Queen’s Birthday long weekend in June. Something a little different than the old Cattleman’s Huts trip to Snake Island this year. We completed a linear paddle from Yanakie to Port Welshpool.

The biggest hassle was organising a car shuffle at the start. However this was alleviated by Bill Zombor’s kind offer to bring his kayak trailer. Most of the group met at Yanakie caravan park in the latter part of Friday, set up camp, dropped gear and headed for a rendezvous at Port Welshpool, dinner in the pub (sorry to Sue Collins & Evelyn Feller who stayed at Yanakie and had hard tack). Leaving most cars there we returned to Yanakie for an early start on Saturday. We were surprised to find Bob and Dos Fergie camped next to us in their motor home and Bob took the opportunity to paddle part way with us in the morning.

0730 was the on water time for our first day, we were greeted with light rain as we packed which dampened the mood and our gear! Joe, and Kate were all late pull outs for the weekend so 11 of us headed for the 14km cross-



Tin Mine Cove ahead – Photo

ing of Corner inlet to camp at Tin Mine Cove. A light tail wind of around 8 knots helped us make good time with a 2 ¼ hour crossing via Granite Island. The weather improved, blue sky and the wind abated to almost nothing. After setting up camp and lunch a walk was organised to Chinaman Long Beach via a rock hop along the shore-line and return via the walking track. We all agreed it was most scenic and interesting with a lot of wild flowers along the return.



Chinaman Long Beach – Photo Bill Zombor



Camp Tin Mine Cove – Photo Bill Zombor

June



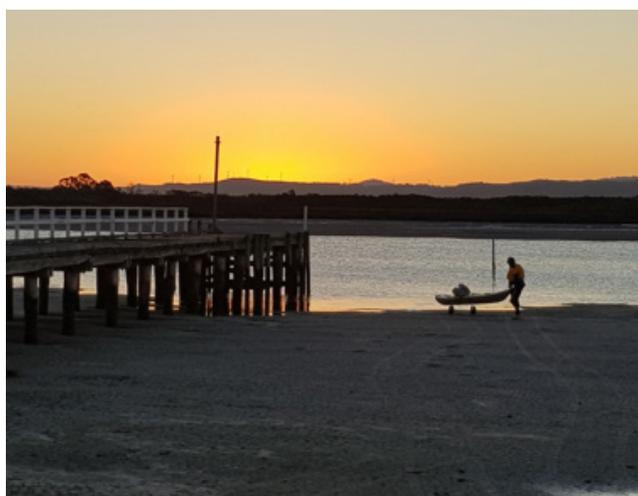
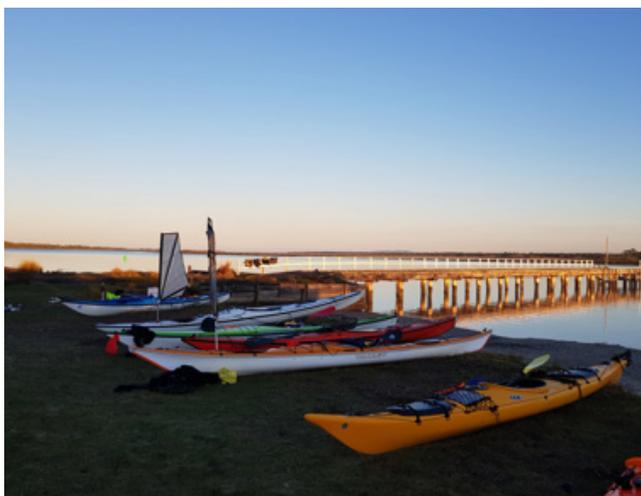
A cool night with heavy dew was followed by a glorious sunny day. Tides dictated a late start of 1330, so an intrepid 7 paddled over to Bennison island and back (about 8km). The rest of us lazed the morning away basking in the sunshine. We then had lunch and departed for another 14 km paddle to camp at the Swashway on Snake Island. Kathryn decided to paddle solo to the Swashway from Port Welshpool to meet us there. Her first solo crossing! (we told her to paddle close to the islands and if she got into trouble just stand up!)

The paddle along the prom coastline was as always interesting and after a quick stop at the northern most cove crossed over to the Swashway. This was an 'honest paddle' with a 10-12 knot headwind, a bit of chop through Singapore deep. With the tide running in we were hoping for enough water to make the jetty. At one point it seemed we were at a dead end but found a channel and arrived at the jetty right on sunset. Kathryn was waiting for us as we arrived. With the air getting chilly we quickly made camp, lit a fire and got into organising dinner. A pleasant night was had around the fire.

In the morning we were once again greeted with a sunny day and a civilised 0930 on water time. We departed at high tide and made light work of the 4 km paddle to Port Welshpool, the end of the trip.

We all agreed it was a very pleasant trip, lucky with the weather, glorious sunrises and sunsets and good company.

Thanks to the crew- Tony Chick, Sue Montford, Bill Zombor, Graeme Robinson, Michael & Evelyn Feller, Steve & Sue Collins, Neil Power and Kathryn Botherway. Leader Terry Barry



Swashway Photos : Kathryn Botherway



Banks Strait 2018

Introduction by Peter Newman

This account by Roger Greenwood of a failed attempt at a night paddle across Banks Strait is quite sobering. Roger, together with Georgia Clark-Edwards and Tom Mackie, teamed up with a group of Tasmanian paddlers led by Laurie Ford. I had put them in touch with Laurie who I had paddled with on several occasions in the past and for whom I have a great deal of respect. I said they would get on like a house on fire and I was right, though not in the way I expected!

Laurie Ford has posted his own account of the trip on his website at <http://www.laurie-ford-kayak.net/Banks%20Strait%202018.html>, which he intends to update once Roger's account is published.

Laurie has acknowledged he made mistakes with this trip, including misreading the tidal situation, and forgetting to turn off his electric pump and running his battery flat. However Roger's account raises many other issues including concerns about Laurie's leadership, the fitness of some of the other paddlers and their refusal to be towed, lack of safety equipment carried by the Tasmanian paddlers, and even differences of opinion about boat lighting.

In hindsight, I believe Roger, Tom and Georgia made a mistake in agreeing to set off on this trip in light of their concerns about the leadership and when they weren't totally comfortable about the situation. However, I probably would have done the same based on Laurie's knowledge of these waters.



Photo Georgia Clark-Edwards

Banks Strait 2018

Words Roger Greenwood



Photo Georgia Clark-Edwards

The following trip report describes a failed attempt at a night crossing of Banks Strait from Little Musselroe Bay (LMB) to Spike Cove on Clarke Island. The members of the paddle were Laurie Ford (Leader), Ian Mac Donald, John Lawler and Toby Clark from Tasmania and Tom Mackie, Georgia Clarke – Edwards and me from Victoria.

The trip reports from Laurie Ford, Ian Mac Donald and John Lawler are appended to this report. These reports are reproduced entirely unaltered. (these don't seem to be here)

I offered to share my GPS data with Laurie on a reciprocal data sharing arrangement but Laurie declined my offer. My GPS data as a KLM file of my track is available to anyone who is interested.

The wind data used in this report is from the weather station at Swan Island.

I emailed this report to Laurie Ford and invited comment and correction of any matters of fact. Laurie suggested that this report is false and misleading although he has declined to elaborate on why he thought this to be so.

Having taken up ocean kayaking in November 2015 it has been a significant goal of mine to undertake a Bass Strait crossing on the eastern route from Musselroe Bay to Port Welshpool. In about May 2017 Peter Newman asked me if I would be interested in joining a Bass Strait crossing that he and Andrew Lerk had planned for around Easter 2018.

While I felt that my skills at that stage were not adequate to the task, I was confident that I could improve to a standard adequate for the trip within the next twelve months.

Shortly thereafter Tom Mackie and Georgia Clarke – Edwards, paddling a Mirage 730 double, joined the trip. With four boats and five people it looked as if we were set for a crossing and organisation for the trip began.

Unfortunately Peter developed Carpal Tunnel syndrome and had to abandon the crossing and about two weeks before our departure Andrew developed a staph infection that had him laid up in hospital. He also had to abandon the trip. At this point Tom and Georgia decided that a two boat crossing was rather more exposed than they were comfortable with and so I was the only boat left in the crossing.

Peter Newman had been in touch with Laurie Ford, the doyen of Tasmanian paddling, during the planning of our trip as Laurie was planning a two week paddle around the Furneaux Group at around the same time that we proposed to leave from Little Musselroe Bay. We thought that we could perhaps join up with him to cross Banks Strait and perhaps beyond.

Tom and Georgia decided to join Laurie and his partners for the two week Furneaux Group trip while it was my intention to head out on a solo crossing of Bass Strait immediately after crossing Banks Strait.

Laurie is hugely experienced in paddling these waters and has crossed Banks Strait 39 times. He came highly recommended by people that I respect so I had every confidence that he was competent and capable of leading the paddle across Banks Strait and beyond.

Laurie agreed with this plan although he made it quite clear that this was two separate and autonomous groups travelling together rather than a single interdependent group. However the changes in Tom and Georgia's plans meant that they could now be considered part of Laurie's Group rather than part of mine.

It was arranged that we would meet at LMB on the morning of the 24th March 2018 and paddle out of LMB for Swan Island at about 1600 hours with the main crossing to Spike Cove on Clarke Island the following day.

Tom, Georgia and I arrived in LMB in the late morning on the 24th March and met up with Laurie and Toby Clark.



Photo Georgia Clark-Edwards

While waiting for the other Tasmanian paddlers Laurie advanced the opinion that the Bureau of Meteorology forecasts were of little value and that he could do better by looking out his kitchen window. A lively and somewhat acrimonious discussion ensued between Laurie and I on the veracity of the Bureau of Meteorology forecasts.

In the early afternoon Laurie announced that we would not be paddling anywhere till about Tuesday as the weather forecast was for strong winds that made crossing Banks Strait inadvisable.



Accordingly Tom, Georgia and I set off to find mobile phone reception up the road to let everyone know that we would not be paddling for a few days.

During this time I took a look at the BoM Marine Wind Forecast for Saturday and Sunday and as I recall it, the prediction for mid to late morning on Sunday 25th March was for 40 – 50 knot winds to the south of Clarke Island.

On arrival back at LMB Laurie informed us that he was contemplating a night paddle across Banks Strait depending on the VHF weather forecast at 1730 hours being favourable.

At approximately 1530 hours Ian Mac Donald and John Lawler arrived and unloaded their boats. At about this time either Ian or John observed that one of the rudder cable shackle pins on my Mirage 582 was completely unscrewed and that I might want to tighten it before we went out.

After listening to the 1730 weather forecast Laurie announced that we would paddle out for Spike Cove on Clarke Island at about 2200 hours that evening and that we should pack our boats before nightfall and be ready to leave at about 2200 hours.

LMB to Spike Cove on Clarke Island is a paddle of approximately 25 km which was expected to take 3 - 4 hours.

With boats loaded I mounted the international standard white navigation light to my boat and asked Laurie if it was acceptable as he had previously specified red navigation lights for any night paddling. Laurie responded that he would; "Smash that light off your boat" if I went out with a white light.

With Ian and Johns' help we managed to find some red material to cover my navigation light and Tom and Georgia used a red dry bag to cover their white light.

As far as I understand Laurie carried a Spot Tracker with an SOS function and a VHF radio but none of the Tasmanian boats carried Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) or Electronic Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) devices.

I do not know what other kayak safety gear the Tasmanian paddlers may have had on board.

Tom & Georgia and I carried three PLB and two EPIRB devices between us as is required under Tasmanian mar-

itime law for off shore paddling. Only Tom and Georgia were effectively dressed for prolonged immersion with light weight wetsuits.

At about 2145 hours we lifted the boats to the water during which Laurie slipped and fell heavily on his backside, although he did not appear to be hurt. We then set off following Laurie into the darkness.

Low tide at Swan Island was at 2214 hours with a height of 0.9 metres and so we left about 30 minutes before low tide. High tide at Swan Island was about 0404 hours with a height of 3.44 metres giving a tide range of 2.54 metres which, as Laurie has subsequently indicated, would create a strong tidal flow through Banks Strait to the west during our trip.

The charts for this area indicate that tidal flows of between 1 and 2 knots can be expected in Banks Strait and given the 2.54 metre tide range, it is likely that the tidal current would be about 2Kn. A tidal flow of 2Kn is approximately 3.7 km/h.

SAT 24 Mar	SUN 25 Mar
▲ 3:19 am 3.43m	▲ 4:04 am 3.44m
▼ 9:52 am 0.46m	▼ 10:38 am 0.44m
▲ 4:02 pm 3.4m	▲ 4:50 pm 3.38m
▼ 10:14 pm 0.9m	▼ 11:02 pm 0.92m

Tide times and heights for Swan Island

Photo Georgia Clark-Edwards



I trusted Laurie's expertise and judgement, as I had not done any research on the Banks Strait crossing and was largely unaware of the tides, tide ranges or tidal flows before we left. This is an error that I will not repeat on any significant paddle event.

Given Laurie's experience on Banks Strait, my own extensive solo night paddling experience and the GPS equipment that Tom, Georgia and I carried, I was not too concerned about navigation and was happy to follow Laurie into very dark night with only a gentle breeze and slight swell. The conditions for a night crossing could not have been better and with the Swan Island light gradually disappearing behind us we settled into a very relaxed pace out into Banks Strait.

After about an hour of paddling, I became concerned about Ian Mac Donald as he seemed to be some distance behind the group and I dropped back to his position. When Ian came alongside, I kept pace with him and watched as the group became increasingly attenuated.

It seemed likely to me at that time that Ian and I were paddling at between 2 and 3 km/h and I was having some trouble keeping my boat on course following the others due to the very slow paddle pace.

This estimate of paddle pace was confirmed later by the fact that, despite paddling on a constant bearing of 0°M, we only made a total of 13 km in a northerly direction (toward Clarke Island) over seven hours of paddling. This equates to less than 2 km/h and while the GPS track log indicates that we were travelling at between 4.1 km/h for most of that time it is apparent that we were only travelling at about 2 km/h in the desired direction to the north and a somewhat faster speed to the West.



Proposed and actual route on Banks Strait

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The remaining paddle pace (2 – 3 km/h) was to the west and was entirely attributable to tide flow.

In short, we travelled 13 km in the desired direction and 16.4 km to the west. In fact, after midnight we made almost no progress at all in the direction of Spike Cove.

This slow paddle speed was purely a function of slow paddling, as neither the wind nor the tide would have had any significant impact on our progress in the direction of Spike Cove. While the tide obviously pushed us out to the west we would have made good time to the north as well, if our paddle speed had been a more normal 6 km/h.

I also lost sight of the lead boat or boats for much of this time and I assumed that the boats ahead of us were following Laurie. I stayed with Ian up to about 0300 hours, as I was concerned about him being left behind by the faster members of the group.

During this time I became concerned that our pace was too slow to complete the 25 km paddle within a reasonable time frame and with the threat of very bad weather in the morning, I was keen to avoid an all-night paddle to Spike Cove. At 2 km/h the 25 km to Spike Cove would have taken approximately 12 hours.

Accordingly, I suggested to Ian that he accept a tow so that we could pick up the pace but he declined. With Ian on tow I am confident that we could have maintained a pace of between 5 or 6 km/h and with a "V" with Tom and Georgia we could have lifted the pace to 7 km/h or faster. At this faster pace we could have made Clarke Island without any trouble within about 3 hours at the most.

After about five hours of paddling and at about 0300 hours we caught up with Laurie and the leading boats and at this point I suspected that we were lost.

On checking my GPS to ascertain our position, I was amused and somewhat concerned to discover that we were an estimated 15 km off course and about this distance to the west of Clarke Island. On checking the distances on my desktop computer it is apparent that we were approximately 20 km off course.

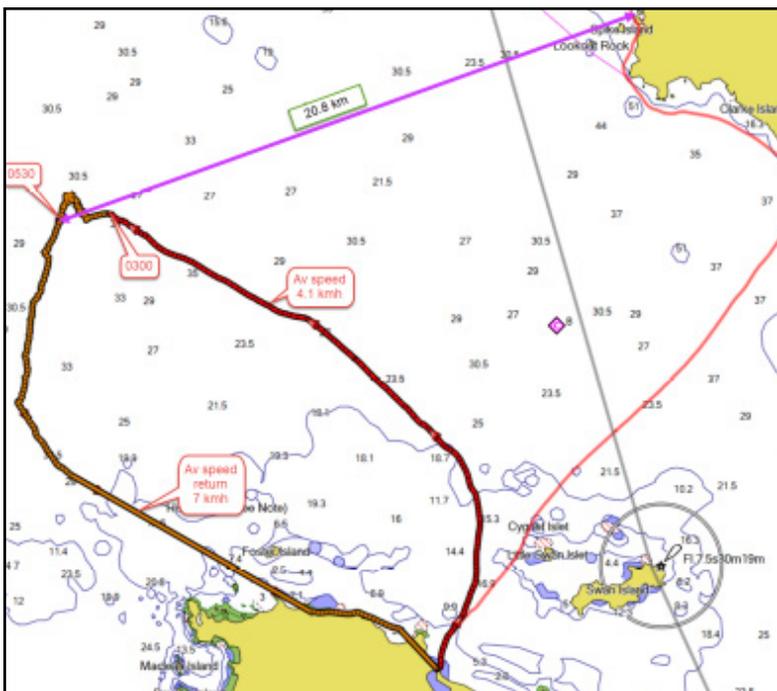
At this point it was apparent to Tom, Georgia and me that we had to change course to the NE and that we had to increase our pace. This could have been readily achieved by towing Ian and heading for Clarke Island as fast as we could go. We were also concerned that the tide was about to turn in the next hour or so and that at our current paddle speed we would be pulled back down Banks Strait and possibly out into the Tasman Sea. Facing the predicted weather conditions anywhere on Banks Strait or in the Tasman Sea was not an appealing option and so we urged Ian to accept a tow and requested that Laurie insist that this action be taken.

Ian and Laurie declined our suggestion.

In our opinion we now had no chance of reaching Clarke Island unless Ian accepted a tow.

However, Laurie insisted that we could paddle NE until we got to Clark Island and he disagreed that at our current paddle speed it would take about 7 hours (based on my then estimation of the distance to Spike Cove).

Tom, Georgia and I were concerned that we would not reach Clarke Island at all given our slow paddle pace, the likely tidal flows and the predicted bad weather for later that morning.



Distance off track and paddle speed

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Despite significant misgivings about this course of action and rather than breaking up the pod, Tom, Georgia and I agreed that we would paddle NE in the direction of Clarke Island as Laurie suggested.

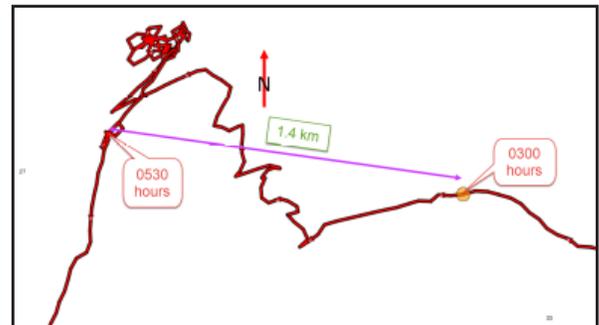
At or about this time Laurie capsized and was assisted back into his boat by Tom & Georgia. He borrowed my manual bilge pump as his electric bilge pump battery was dead and he did not carry a manual bilge pump. I subsequently discovered that, while getting back into his boat, Laurie apparently damaged the cockpit rim of his boat which then leaked significantly.

When I rafted up with Tom, Georgia and Laurie, I was concerned that Laurie looked exhausted and very unwell. I also discovered later that John had vomited twice so far during the paddle and Ian was suffering from hallucinations.

For the next 2.5 hours we paddled NE, although I was having difficulty in maintaining a paddle course because of my inexperience in following a compass bearing at night and our slow paddle speed. Following other boats is not difficult, but maintaining a bearing at low speed at night took some getting used to. This accounts for the very confused path. I later found maintaining a compass bearing at my normal paddle speed much easier.

After a further 2.5 hours of paddling to the NE as suggested by Laurie, (at about 0530 hours) I checked my GPS again to discover that we had made no progress toward Clarke Island. On later examination of the data I discovered that we were actually 1.4 km further away from Clarke Island than at 0300 hours.

At this time the entire group came together and Tom, Georgia and I suggested that we now had absolutely no chance of reaching Clarke Island before the predicted weather deterioration. It was apparent to us that we should all retreat to LMB, with Ian on tow, for the following reasons:



Route after 0300 hours
(1.4 km further from
Clarke Island)

1. We had no chance of reaching Clarke Island before the predicted weather deterioration.
2. We had made no progress in the direction of Clarke Island in the past 2.5 hours despite more or less ideal paddling conditions.
3. Ian's paddle speed, at 2 km/h, was insufficient to overcome even mildly adverse paddling conditions.
4. Laurie appeared to be exhausted and unwell, his bilge pump battery was dead and he did not have a manual bilge pump.
 - a. I did not know at this time that his cockpit rime was leaking.
5. John was vomiting and could be expected to have a reduced stamina as a result.
6. 40 – 50 kn winds were predicted for Banks Strait about mid-morning.
7. I was very unsure of my ability to cope with the predicted conditions.
8. To my knowledge none of the Tasmanians other than Laurie carried any form of electronic distress signalling devices.

Ian and Laurie again disagreed with our suggestions and Laurie announced that we would continue to paddle NE toward Clarke Island.

At this point Tom, Georgia and I decided that we were putting our own lives in danger by staying with the Tasmanians and announced that we were retreating to LMB. I believe that this decision was justified on the basis that, despite clear and incontrovertible evidence from the GPS that we had no chance of reaching Clarke Island and in the face of a very poor weather forecast for later that morning, continuing to attempt to reach Clarke Island at a paddle speed of 2 km/h was a dangerous, incompetent and irrational decision.

Accordingly at about 0530 hours Tom, Georgia and I invited each of the Tasmanians individually to join us and return to LMB. Each of the Tasmanians declined our invitation and Tom, Georgia and I departed the group for LMB at 05:31 hours.

The decision to split the group was not taken lightly and Georgia and Tom earlier argued against it on the basis that our loyalty to the group took precedence over the looming issues of safety. However at 0530 hours Tom, Georgia and I were in agreement that retreating to LMB was the only reasonable course of action.

Immediately our paddle speed jumped from about 4 km/h (mostly tide assisted and in the wrong direction) to 8 km/h and we made good time to the south with a rising NE wind.

Summary		Time		Speed		Elevation	
Points:	75	Elapsed Time:	0:28:53	Avg:	8 km/h	Min:	15 m
Distance:	3.7 km	Moving Time:	0:28:53	Avg Moving:	8 km/h	Max:	22 m
Area:	3274 sq m	Stopped Time:	0:00:00	Min:	4.2 km/h	Descent:	11 m
				Max:	9 km/h	Grade:	-0.2 %

Ind...	Elevation	Leg Distance	Leg Time	Leg Speed	Leg Course	Time	Position
617	23 m	31 m	0:01:02	1.8 km/h	143.6° true	25/03/18 05:28:10	S40 36.472 E147 53.405
618	23 m	43 m	0:00:52	3.0 km/h	222.3° true	25/03/18 05:29:12	S40 36.485 E147 53.418
619	22 m	43 m	0:00:38	4.0 km/h	293.4° true	25/03/18 05:30:04	S40 36.503 E147 53.397
620	23 m	36 m	0:00:42	3.1 km/h	162.3° true	25/03/18 05:30:42	S40 36.494 E147 53.369
621	22 m	50 m	0:00:21	9 km/h	200.4° true	25/03/18 05:31:24	S40 36.512 E147 53.377
622	22 m	50 m	0:00:30	6 km/h	188.4° true	25/03/18 05:31:45	S40 36.537 E147 53.365
623	22 m	50 m	0:00:26	7 km/h	198.6° true	25/03/18 05:32:15	S40 36.564 E147 53.359
624	21 m	50 m	0:00:20	9 km/h	187.3° true	25/03/18 05:32:41	S40 36.589 E147 53.348
625	22 m	51 m	0:00:22	8 km/h	191.9° true	25/03/18 05:33:01	S40 36.616 E147 53.344
626	21 m	51 m	0:00:22	8 km/h	189.6° true	25/03/18 05:33:23	S40 36.643 E147 53.336
627	21 m	52 m	0:00:22	9 km/h	184.7° true	25/03/18 05:33:45	S40 36.670 E147 53.330
628	21 m	50 m	0:00:22	8 km/h	184.0° true	25/03/18 05:34:07	S40 36.698 E147 53.327
629	20 m	50 m	0:00:23	8 km/h	177.2° true	25/03/18 05:34:25	S40 36.725 E147 53.325
630	20 m	49 m	0:00:27	7 km/h	198.8° true	25/03/18 05:34:52	S40 36.752 E147 53.326
631	20 m	48 m	0:00:25	7 km/h	237.5° true	25/03/18 05:35:19	S40 36.777 E147 53.315
632	19 m	51 m	0:00:21	9 km/h	206.4° true	25/03/18 05:35:44	S40 36.791 E147 53.286
633	20 m	50 m	0:00:20	9 km/h	192.7° true	25/03/18 05:36:05	S40 36.816 E147 53.270
634	19 m	51 m	0:00:22	8 km/h	195.2° true	25/03/18 05:36:25	S40 36.842 E147 53.263
635	19 m	50 m	0:00:20	9 km/h	204.2° true	25/03/18 05:36:47	S40 36.869 E147 53.253
636	19 m	51 m	0:00:20	9 km/h	194.5° true	25/03/18 05:37:07	S40 36.893 E147 53.238
637	19 m	51 m	0:00:24	8 km/h	204.9° true	25/03/18 05:37:27	S40 36.920 E147 53.229

Average paddle speed between 0530 and 600 hours

Given the extent that the incoming tide had pushed us to the west, we were concerned that the outgoing tide might pull us back out past Swan Island to the Tasman Sea. We then agreed to paddle to the SW on the basis that it was better to reach the Tasmanian coast to the west of LMB, than to end up out to the east of LMB and have to paddle back against an outgoing tide. Also the north western tip of Cape Portland was the closest land to our location at that time and so heading directly to the south made more sense than the longer, but more direct route to LMB. With the outgoing tide we estimated that paddling to the south west would give us a more or less southerly track.

As it turned out we could have paddled due south as later suggested by Laurie and with the outgoing tide we would have reached LMB sooner than we did. However, our overriding goal was to reach the coast before we

were hit with 40 – 50 kn winds and it was my opinion that reaching the coast to the west of LMB was the lesser of several evils.

At 30 minute intervals we rafted up to check our position to ensure that we were on track and making reasonable progress to the South. Over the first hour the wind began to rise from the north east and by dawn at about 0630 hours the estimated wind speed was 15 kn NE. I was working hard to keep up with Tom & Georgia in their double, although at about this time I was able to launch my sail and make better pace with less effort.

Over the next 2.5 hours the wind kept rising and peaked at between 25 and 30 kn. It was, as Laurie later said, an exhilarating ride and the best mornings sail he'd ever had, although at the time I was extremely concerned that if the wind continued to rise to the extent predicted by the BoM then we would all be in serious trouble.

I was also hugely concerned for the Tasmanians as I was doubtful of their ability to cope with the existing conditions and knew that they would be at serious risk of harm in the predicted conditions. Without electronic distress signalling capacity it is very unlikely that they could have been found and rescued in time if they had become separated and had come out of their boats. I also seriously doubted my ability to cope adequately with the predicted conditions although with electronic distress signally capacity on board, I was more confident of survival if I did end up out of my boat.

At 0708 hours my GPS shut down from lack of batteries. Anticipating a 3 – 4 hour paddle I had not changed the batteries, although with the coast clearly in sight now, this was of little consequence. Accordingly the track section from 0708 hours to 0826 hours when we landed has no recorded track positions. The GPS revived again at 0826 hours, but died completely at 0905 hours.

At 0836 hours Tom, Georgia and I reached the coast and got out to stretch our legs on the beach. We then paddled back down the coast and reached LMB at 0950, or just over 12 hours after setting out the night before. I was relieved that we had made it back to LMB without serious incident.

After getting our boats out of the water and stowing our gear, we headed out to find mobile phone reception to contact Peter Newman to see if we could find out what had happened to the Tasmanians. Peter had access to Laurie's Spot Tracker trace and provided they had stayed together, we should have been able to locate them.

As it transpired the Tasmanians also turned back for LMB at about 0630 hours (about an hour after Tom, Georgia and me) and Ian, John & Toby reached LMB at some time between 1100 hours and 1200 hours. The Spot Tracker trace showed that Laurie had landed on the coast to the west of LMB and so we set out to find him. However, after an hour of searching up and down the coast with no success, we returned to LMB where we found Ian, John and Toby who had recently landed.

I understand that the Tasmanians came in separately and that they had been separated for some time before landing on the coast, although I was not able to accurately determine when they split up.

Tom and Georgia decided that they had had enough of ocean kayaking for the time being and headed off to do some walking around Mount Ossa while Ian and John headed back to Hobart and the entire two week paddle around Furneaux Group was abandoned.

Laurie was found on Monday having camped out in the scrub along the coast and I went out with Laurie and Toby on Monday to collect his boat. I understand that Laurie and Toby later went paddling with Ian and John around Maria Island.

I reset and paddled out for Clarke Island and beyond on the following Tuesday morning on my solo Bass Straight crossing.

Given that the Banks Straight crossing was supposed to be a 3 – 4 hour paddle, undertaken in near perfect conditions to Spike Cove with plenty of time to spare before rising winds were predicted the following day, I can only

say that this was an epic failure. However, it was definitely the most entertaining time of my Bass Strait crossing and the rest of my trip went almost entirely to plan including a 60 km night crossing from Killiecrankie to Erith Island.

Timeline

The following times are generally approximate only, as I did not record or even take particular note of the times of various events during the trip. However, some of the times are accurate as they can be derived from the GPS trace of the trip.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Time - Date</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Notes</i>
1	1100 24/03/18 approx	Arrive LMB.	Met with Laurie and Toby.
2	1230 24/03/18 approx	Argument over BoM forecasts.	
3	1400 24/03/18 approx	Paddling cancelled until Tuesday.	Bad weather on Banks Strait.
4	1430 24/03/18 approx	T, G & R drove out to let all know that paddling cancelled.	
5	1430 24/03/18 approx	Checked weather forecast for Sunday	40 – 50 knot winds forecast (from the Marine Wind Forecast).
6	1500 24/03/18 approx	Laurie decides that a night paddle across Banks Strait is possible.	Pending the 1730 weather forecast.
7	1530 24/03/18 approx	Ian & John arrive.	
8	1735 24/03/18 approx	Laurie announces that the night paddle across Banks Strait is on.	Based on a favourable BoM weather forecast.
9	1900 24/03/18 approx	Laurie threatens to smash the light off my boat.	
10	2145 24/03/18 approx	Depart LMB.	
11	2330 24/03/18 approx	I become concerned with Ian's location and drop back to keep pace with him.	
12	0030 25/03/18 approx	I become concerned about our paddle pace.	Pace estimated at 2 – 3 kmh.
13	0100 25/03/18 approx	Offer Ian a tow.	Offer declined.
14	0300 25/03/18	T, G & R become concerned about our location.	Checked GPS and discovered that we were an estimated 15 km off course (later measured at about 19.4 km)
15	0300 25/03/18 approx	Laurie informed that we were 15 km off course. Suggested that we need to pick up the pace, tow Ian and head NE for Clarke Island.	Offer of tow declined and Laurie insisted that we could make Clarke Island.
16	0400 25/03/18 approx	Laurie falls out of boat.	Cockpit rim damaged. Laurie appears in pain and unwell. Bilge pump dead.
17	0530 25/03/18	Laurie informed that we had made no progress toward Clarke Island. Suggested that we need to pick up the pace, tow Ian and retreat SE for LMB.	Offer of tow declined and Laurie insisted that we could still make Clarke Island. Suggestion of retreat to LMB ignored.

18	0531 25/03/18	T, G & R depart group and retreat to LMB.	Ian, John & Toby invited to retreat to LMB.
19	0615 25/03/18 approx	Wind starts rising from the NE	
20	0630 25/03/18 approx	Tas crew retreat to LMB.	Apparently they retreated when the wind started rising at about 0630.
21	0700 25/03/18	Wind gusting to 26 kn.	
22	0836 25/03/18	T, G & R make Tas coast.	
23	0950 25/03/18	T, G & R arrive back at LMB.	Almost exactly 12 hours after departure.
24	1000 25/03/18 approx	Laurie arrives back at Tas coast.	As noted in his report.
25	1019 25/03/18 approx	Ian arrives back at Tas coast.	As noted in his report. Time at LMB not recorded.



Georgia and Tom



Cag wear injury after 12 hours of paddling!



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