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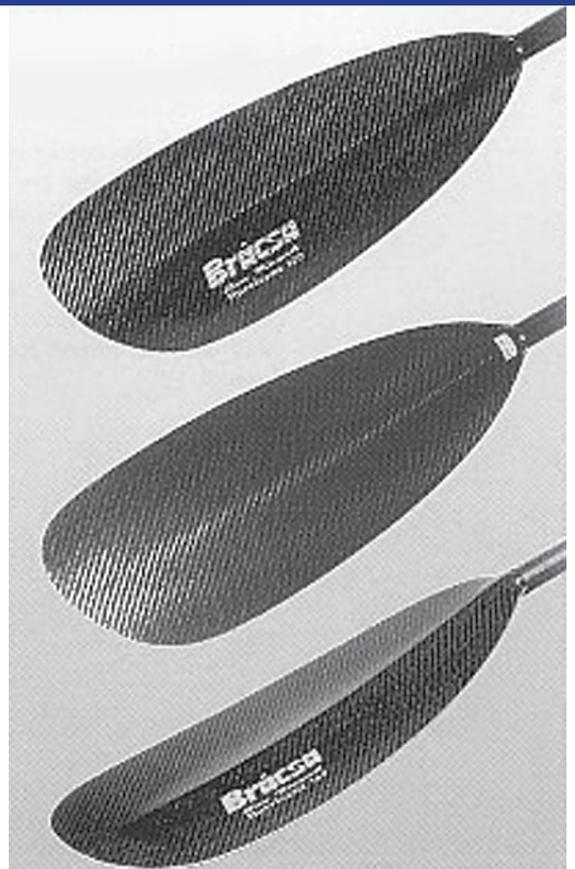
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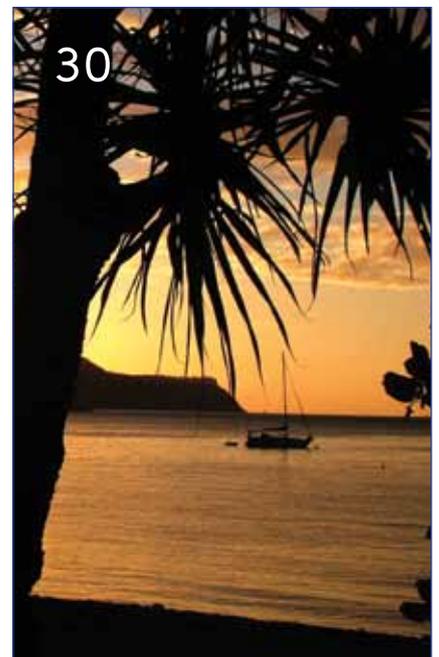
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Cover — VSKC paddlers take to the water at Sandringham, where they will finish just over 40 hours later

From the editorial lounge

2006 is turning into the most adventurous year the VSKC has had in many years. I am sure the influence is due to the enthusiasm of many newly qualified paddlers coming through the training ranks and opportunities like the CanTeen Challenge and the Contourers Challenge that get us outside the square of our usual thinking.

A growing number of our paddlers are bringing back stories from far and wide with Andrew Mathews set to provide stories and photos of an Arctic trip in August, and more and more of us are heading north during winter.

Access to interesting paddle trip reading is growing on the web and here is an interesting 'blog' to keep an eye on - Andrew Hughes is currently paddling a solo and unassisted sea kayak expedition from Hobart, Tasmania to Cape York, Queensland. He is going ok in the Whitsundays at time of printing. Along the way, schools will be joining in an exciting adventure learning program. It's going to be a huge year for Andrew, so stay in touch on <http://pandoz06.blogspot.com>

It won't be long before the AGM is here and you will read further on about what can be expected this year. Dates are posted so lock them in.

Our new kids on the block

As the days grow shorter, darker and colder our membership gets stronger with another 18 new members joining since the last issue. A warm and hearty welcome to you all. May you dress warmly and enjoy the fruits of our almost deserted waterways and make the most of the Winter paddling, where light northerlies and variable winds make for perfect conditions.

Russell & Ginette Abbott, Nigel Bickerstaff, Russell Blamey, Lindsay Bridgford, Ray Clifford, Stephen Cody, David Cole, Tony Coventry, Arno Haemmerle, John Hammer, Leigh Hilton, Edward Hughes, Peter Manning, Michael McCallum, Andy McKie, David Moate and Allan Wallace (the second).



The Skipper's bark

by Peter Treby

25 years ago Paul Caffyn paddled a Nordkapp right around our island continent, taking a year to do it. This trip stands as a landmark sea kayaking voyage, and has been described as one of the greatest small craft voyages of all time. You will read elsewhere in *Sea Trek* and on the VSKC website of our plans to celebrate this silver anniversary. The trip started and finished at Queenscliff, in our paddling domain. I urge every member to lend support.

Paul started the trip with a rudderless and skegless kayak. At Gabo Island, he had the alarming experience of being unable to turn upwind in a gale. So the boat was modified, and by Brisbane had acquired a Tasmanian style 270° flip-over, deep draft rudder. That Nordkapp style is now made by Sisson in NZ, and will be included in speed tests of 12 sea kayaks to be conducted at Geelong by Rapid Ascent, assisted by the AIS and University of Canberra later this month. The results should be interesting.

Sea kayaks continue to evolve. The long overhanging bow of the Nordkapp may have advantages for Greenlanders sliding onto icefloes, but the plumb bow of the modern surf ski may handle rough water better. Have a look at the video promoting Epic Kayaks here:

<http://www.epickayaks.com/news/details.aspx?nid=685&id=3058&tImg=3761>

Sea kayaks will continue to evolve. We can expect that high speed ocean racing surf skis will be a significant influence.



Letters

Thanks Peter and David,

We were proud to be part of your fundraiser for Canteen and all members involved have been very positive of the event and were praising your level of professionalism and skills. There has been a very good article with two pictures in *The Mail* on the Mornington Peninsula on page 12. Most appreciative of the mention.

Thanks for the opportunity to be part of it and look forward to maybe catching up down the track.

Regards,

Craig Borschmann
Manager Search & Rescue

At right — Promoting CanTeen — the club president and the club 'elder statesman', photographed alongside a very tall Redmond Symons while awaiting their ABC Radio interview by Macca on the "Australia All Over" program recently.
Below — the scary shark pic

Peter Treby wrote:

Check this: <http://www.snopes.com/photos/animals/sharkkayak.asp>

And this: <http://www.whitesharktrust.org/pages/mediaarticle/media26.html>

It turns out the shark-with-paddler photo was genuine!

So it is open to be reinstated to vskc website prominence?

Cheers PT



AGM 2006

This year's VSKC AGM will again be held at the luxuriously appointed Portsea Camp, situated atop the cliffs with million dollar views overlooking the bay and south channel toward Queenscliff and the heads.

Book the second weekend of November in now (nights Friday 10, Saturday 11) for a huge weekend of fun, socialising and learning.

We will host and toast the return of The John Rymill Expedition who will be our Saturday night chefs and key note speakers, thrilling us with their recent trip along the Antarctic coast.

The inaugural VSKC Perpetual Photographic Trophy will be launched, so sort through your best piccies and bring them along – up to A4 size accepted (prints only). There will also be paddles – for kids, partners and the more adventurous; training, show-off and skills sessions; Level 1 & 2 grading.

Sunday morning there will be a volunteer coastguard rescue exercise, Trangia cook-off (so bring your stove, metho and tastiest recipe); gear discussions; as well as lots of

opportunities to catch up with old friends and make new ones.

Anyone wishing to be nominated for positions on the committee or wishing to help out with any of the roles should start thinking about this now.

Just a reminder that annual fees are due at the time of the AGM.

Further details including Portsea Camp booking forms, committee nomination forms and annual membership form will be mailed out closer to the event and will also be downloadable from the web site.



Caffyn's quarter century – Around Australia Kayak Odyssey

This year sees the twenty-fifth anniversary of Australian born Paul Caffyn's legendary solo circumnavigation around mainland Australia in 1982 – a feat that to this day has not been surpassed.

We were privileged to have Paul as guest speaker at our AGM two years ago (twenty-fifth year of the VSKC, in fact) and it doesn't matter whether you had paddled for years or were new to sea kayaking, all were left in absolute awe of his achievements. These include the first circumnavigation of New Zealand, Great Britain, Japan and our homeland.

For those who were not there to see Paul recount his journey of the paddle from Queenscliff to Queenscliff, it is aptly described by John Dowd, the respected author of the US publication *Sea Kayaker* as:

Amongst sea kayakers, Paul Caffyn is almost in a class of his own. After he finished his awesome circumnavigation of Australia, the silence was deafening: few of his peers knew the significance of what he had done, and perhaps those who did felt lost in his shadow. Not only is Paul's Australian adventure a pinnacle for sea kayaking, it should eventually be recognised as one of the great small boat voyages of recent history, along with those of Slocum, Shackleton and Franz Romer.

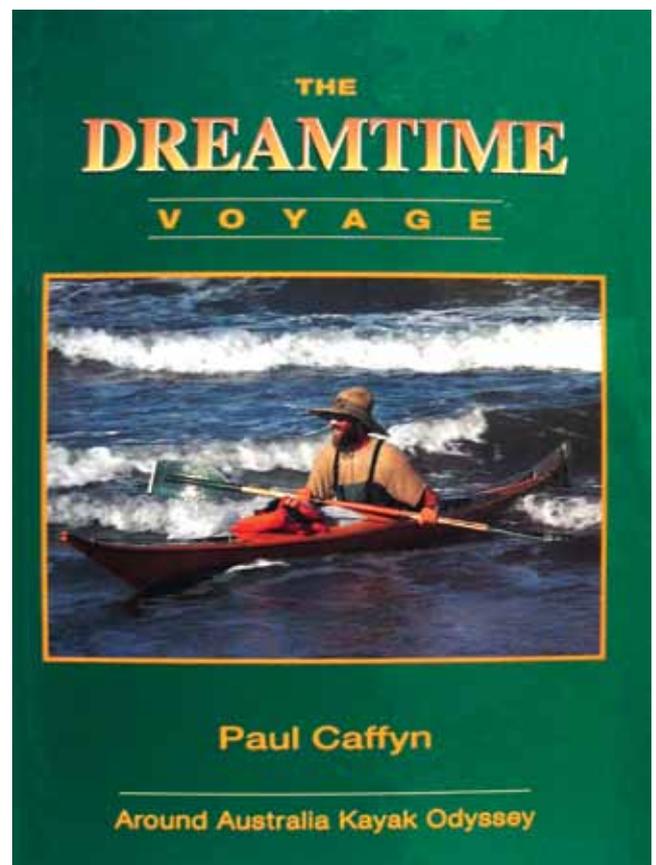
For those who have not read about this remarkable voyage, *The Dreamtime Voyage* (first published by Paul in 1994) relates the story of this 360-day, 9,420 nautical mile epic journey that commenced 28 December, 1981.

Over the last twelve months, our own mild-mannered 'super organiser' David Golightly, with support from members of the committee, have been involved with the Borough of Queenscliff and the Queenscliff Historical Society to do something to honour Paul and ensure recognition of the twenty-fifth anniversary of this event.

This is too significant an event for us in sea kayaking to let history slip by without occasion. The VSKC has put forward a proposal for a plaque to be created and mounted on a pedestal honouring Paul's achievement. We intend to have Paul out for the unveiling.

As a club, we will be looking to members for support of this occasion with your presence and with a contribution to make sure it happens. You will hear more about what, where, when and how much once we get confirmation through from the Borough.

This is a once in a lifetime opportunity for us in the VSKC to provide honour for a living legend and make sure that local Australian paddling history is cast in stone.



I think we can — I think we did! CanTeen 2006

by Peter Costello
and Peter Dedrick

Paddlers – Chris King, Peter Sharp, Ann Sharp, Raia Wall, Neil Brenton, David Golightly (TeenTeam); Andrew Campbell, Peter Treby, Greg Power, Neil Power, Roger Taylor, Greg Gleason, Phil Woodhouse, Todd Truscott, Les Doyle, Helen Doyle, Tony Chick, John Evertze, Grant Della, Andrew Mathews, Peter Dedrick, Mark Heggie, Catherine Clancy, Derek Wilson, Les Bognar, Richard Rawling, Tim Wise, Craig Evans, Jarrod Frith, Hrjove Miskov, Peter Dingle, Karoline Klein, Penny Drumor and Peter Costello (organiser).

It was with a heightened level of nervous energy that we all set up in front of the Kayak Shop late Friday afternoon. CanTeen and VSKC banners proudly displayed, adding to the sense of occasion. Friends,

family, CanTeen staff and kids, and curious onlookers were there to see the first wave of 14 paddlers off into the night – the first night.

After gratefully accepting a cheque from paddler and Bayside City Council's Mayor Derek Wilson, we headed to the water.

CanTeen scarves adorned the heads of all paddlers – as was the theme throughout the Challenge. For the first of many occasions during the journey, Volunteer Coastguard was there to watch our backs.

For many of the 34 paddlers, CanTeen would be the first time they had paddled in the dark. For many, this would be the longest distance they had ever paddled. For all of us, this was the first time we had ever been part of a 40 hour, 200 km paddling, fundraising event.

The weather was perfect (although chilly) as we headed SE to our first checkpoint at Edithvale. Spirits were high, conversation raging and 1 km into the journey Hrjove (Captain Nemo) changed course to cause the first concertina pileup. Much laughter ensued as we sorted ourselves out and wondered how this rolling mass would survive the next 199 km!

At Edithvale, pizza and pasta was all the rage for dinner with 'Papa' Treby giving away slices to anyone in range.

After the signing paddlers back on the water, I headed off with Mike Young (head land crew) in the trusty Volvo wagon and Rob Smith's 10 kayak trailer to Mt Eliza to get some sleep before the 2300 shift. After setting up the kayaks in front of the Sea Scout hall (kindly opened up for the occasion) we jumped in sleeping bags and tried to get some sleep on the soft grass before the on water crew arrived. Well,

the mossies were tenacious, even with Rid and a bag over your head, so we gave up. It wasn't long before the ingeniously crafted LED lights of Chris King and Neil Brenton fame, modeled on this occasion by Peter and Anne Sharp were seen in the distance, well before the group spotted us.

It was just spectacular in the dark along this coast we had covered many times before on regular monthly paddles. A wet stop at Mt Martha and although there was the tail end of a party at the LS Club, we were not invited in – it was cold and if they had hot coffee brewing, the Challenge may have stopped there and then.

Although we encountered steady drizzle, once on the water we hardly noticed, silly hour came at around 0400 when David Golightly called his son Andrew in Spain to let him know he was bobbing around in the darkness and we found out it was also raining over there – 'the rain in Spain falls mainly on the ...', well it was funny at the time. Were we getting delirious already?

Tookgarook and time to get off and snatch some rest. 65 km of the journey completed on schedule. Once everyone was sorted on the water and the matchsticks placed delicately into Hrjove's eyes (Capt'n Nemo said Portsea or bust at this stage) we went in search of Grant's haven at Blairgowrie to be greeted by coffee and hot toast – oh yeah! No sleep, a crook tummy and in no time it was get up and get moving to Portsea for the Heads' crossing.

Captain Nemo was ushered off the water 16 hours and 80 km later. What a fantastic effort from the youngster!

A beautiful sunny morning was upon us (thank God for sunglasses). More paddlers from Tory's Portsea retreat joined us. Paul Copeland and the Volunteer Coastguard were ready to go as nine of us took a glassy crossing to Queenscliff. With conditions like this I could sleep and paddle at the same time.

A few photos with Coastguard out in the middle, tips for those new to the channel



Top left — full wardrobe was all the rage
Left — nervous energy abounds
Below left — just bobbing around in the channel with our Coastguard mates
Below — the race to the front of Doyle's coffee van was hotly contested



about the speed at which the tankers travel and we were soon beached next to the jetty and lined up at the Doyle's traveling cappuccino van. Tod who started after us from Portsea popped in and then continued his solo attack on the rest of the paddle.

I marveled at the jump in energy with every influx of new and refreshed paddlers, this just kept the rolling mass going and going.

The paddling was easy, with tide assist and a gentle southerly breeze.

For me it was a drive of Time Wise's 4WD and the chance to get some sleep at a spot Les Doyle said we could crash at. Well Celia's house was part of the old Indented Heads Hotel and beautifully finished. With cookies and other delights popping out of the oven, it was an absolute oasis and I nearly forgot to recharge the battery for my light in preparation for night number two.

After a couple of hours sleep I felt remarkably refreshed and joined in at checkpoint nine – Portarlington. Getting into wet gear still didn't feel good at all. The paddle along these low cliffs was interesting and we saw plenty of debris from ships strewn along the beaches.

As we pulled into Clifton Springs, I was feeling somewhat depleted and again lined up at the Doyle's coffee van. Was I the only one who had 3 teaspoons of coffee and 2 of hot chocolates in the one cup? Looking at some of the faces around me, I knew just how much effort had been put in to date. How would our temperament stand up to the rest of the trip?

Classic lines like 'help I am stuck on a rock' certainly helped to keep a grin on our faces and thanks Helen for not getting angry about the scratch under your kayak.

Werribee Coastguard joined us at this stage. Inquiring as to what our plans were in heading north, they eagerly grasped our float plan from David Golightly, marveling in the detail to which our planning was laid out.

We took off into the sunset for the very difficult task to find Kirk Point after waiting for one ship to clear Geelong channel (check shipping movements with Andrew the marine controller at Geelong 5247 0300 if crossing this channel).

Darkness fell upon us, the gummy bears I had been given had turned into a slimy mess in the front of my PFD, I dropped my apple while trying to get my phone out. It was Yvette and Demons had won – aah life was good again! Goodnight kids.

It was as we neared the shore of the western side of Avalon that those of us with compasses and those with GPS had a short discussion on reliable navigation at night. I headed us closer to the lights and where we knew the shallow coast was, just to be sure. Again the cry went up 'help I am stuck on a rock' sorry Andrew Mathews and yes Phil, you were right, we were correctly on course in the first place.

Time for me to get off the water again and I headed to Werribee with Andrew Mathews and Mike via a pizza shop. I was glad to have Mike doing so much of the land crew work as I was enjoying the paddling and getting too tired to look after the paperwork. At Werribee River jetty, we parked and tried to sleep before the guys got in. Again, I was exhausted, but only gained about half an hours shut-eye. Flicking on the wipers regularly to per out and see if any lights were yet in sight.

I had the thought whilst looking across at the Coastguard vessel on the previous leg, there they were traveling at snails pace, huddled under their hooded rain jackets, hands wrapped around a coffee to keep themselves warm, smell of diesel wafting up from the back of the boat, hour after hour flanking us, probably bored silly at this ridiculous hour of watching us doddle along, while there we were, cruising along, chatting, having a great adventure, a fine bunch of friends doing what we enjoy most for a worthwhile cause.

Well, how wrong could I be! After the Challenge, I voiced this to Craig Borsemann SAR of Coastguard. His answer his crew were feeling terribly sorry for us lot, struggling along in the dark, hardly making progress in the cold and wet, whilst they sat up high in the protection

of their cabin, warm and full of comfort. (Amazing how we sometimes see things so differently isn't it?)

Well the guys finally reached the shore, looking at the faces, it had been a long grueling leg. Navigation along that part of the bay was very difficult during the day, let alone at night. I watched Peter Sharp join Roger Taylor, Tony Chick and John Evertze and head off into the dark, it was raining, cold, the wind was picking up, it was nearly midnight on day two and 150 km completed. I was glad it was them, not me as they headed off for another 18 km leg.

We drove to Altona pier, a frequent landing spot for the Williamstown paddles, but at 0130 it was a cold and bleak place. I was trying to sleep and not think about getting out of the car into the icy wind and getting cold wet gear on again. Thankfully the weather had been so good for the first half of the paddle, as it would have been incredibly difficult had it have all been like this.

Lights sighted out through the rain – the Coastguard boat. The guys can't be far. Now for a quick changeover, so those continuing don't get too cold. A quick discussion with Coastguard about us heading straight for Gelibrand light, then we are off. Quartering sea and wind behind we make good speed.

Knowing that the next stop is Williamstown Sailing Club helps (thankyou Les Doyle) and the chance of a hot shower if required, then a gear-up for the triumphant last leg. As we approach the point, we see the incredibly bright night lights aboard a moored container ship, then round the point into the tranquil calm of Williamstown Harbour.

TeenTeam members on the CanTeen 2006 paddle



We heave our kayaks up the ramps at the end of the sailing club and then join in the excitement. Eleven of us gear up to cross the two channels and head for home. We get the message that our honourable president is paddling down from Sandringham to join us.

Peter D – The Canteen paddle was one of those ‘must do’ paddles, even if it involved arriving at Williamstown well before dawn on a bleak, drizzly Sunday morning.

We left at about 5.30 am under the leadership of Pete Costello who lead us

through the moored boats to the edge of the shipping channel where we regrouped and waited for a ship to pass. Never having been this close to a ship before, I wasn’t sure what to expect by way of a wake. Fortunately, however, it was going slowly and passed before us without incident.

When we regrouped on the other side of the channel, it seemed a good time to tell our leader I had never paddled at night before. ‘Just stay there!’ was all he said, pointing to a spot about a metre behind him, as if I was going anywhere else. As we

headed towards the green light on the new St Kilda pier kiosk, I realised that night paddling is certainly different to paddling in daylight. The first thing you know of a wave is when it hits you.

The second lesson came, when there was a Scottish cry from the rear “Have you seen

this ship, Peter?” We looked south through the rain and gloom to see beaming lights from another ship where a ship wasn’t supposed to be, or so we thought. Was it moving or stopped? Heading towards us or turning? Should we go or wait? We went fast and kept going till we were well clear of all channels.

We pulled in at Brighton to collect some weary paddlers for the last leg. Missing Peter T, unbeknown to us he had passed in the dark and was at Port Melbourne, we waited, he again shot past us and when he entered Sandy asked ‘Where are they? The growing crowd said “Look over your shoulder!”.

A triumphant 15 paddlers abreast headed up the Sandy channel and a prouder moment was never felt. We then tucked in to a hearty barbecue breakfast provided by the Hampton Sailing Club, thanks Leigh-Brennan Smith, an ex-VSKC member.

The total fundraising for CanTeen exceeded all expectation at \$8 250 !

A huge thanks goes to so many people – the paddlers (especially TeenTeam), our families and supporters, Coastguard, Rob at the Kayak Shop, Hampton Sailing Club, those who loaned houses and provided hospitality for weary paddlers to recover in, the sponsors of our prize draw – The Kayak Shop, Canoes Plus, Nestle Pakenham, Lightning Cleaning Products and Capacity Sports. Of course a huge thanks passed on to you all from the gang at CanTeen.

... and now for next year?



Heading off to Clifton Springs



The breakfast party



We're back!

Cape contourer's challenge

By David Golightly

The Qantas Club was as usual a haven of quiet for its many frequent flyers. I was between delayed flights, I had run out of work, red wine and reading material (and not necessarily in that order), when I came across a magazine I had never before read called *Victoria's Postcards*.

The headline article was titled *Victoria's Greatest Capes*, a clever play on words I thought. For me a cocktail of ocean, cliffs, wind and weather were a heady mix, I retired into a quiet corner to take it all in.

The article hypothesised that Victoria was blessed to have some eighteen maritime capes along its Bass Strait coast, most had an interesting history, dating back to the early 1800s, arguably the golden age of discovery along our coastline.

I read on and realised these capes, while undoubtedly presenting a formidable challenge, also held incredible potential as an amazing sea kayaking adventure and opportunity to learn more of our history.

Within days I had embarked on a journey of amateur research. Firstly I wrote to the writer of the magazine story in a lazy attempt to capitalise on his research, disappointingly he chose not to reply.

Unfazed, I pushed on with an idea for sea kayaking – an extension of a Scottish based concept of 'munro bagging' named after its originator, a man called Munro. Back in the nineteenth century Munro derived a method of climbing or 'bagging' all mountain peaks in Scotland in excess of 3000 feet in elevation. The de facto collective name for mountains that met the criteria became 'munros'. A munro was 'bagged' or claimed when a successful ascent took place.

To my mind, it was a small step from bagging munros to "contouring capes" but would it catch the imagination of the VSKC members?

I continued with my research and after much web surfing I discovered 'toponymy' which apparently means – study of the place names of a region – from the Greek *topos* (place) and *onama* (name). Through this link I found two great sources of information, director of the Asia-Pacific Institute of Toponymy Dr Flavia Hodges

of Macquarie University and chairman of the Victorian Place Names Committee, Associate Professor Ian Clark who is based at Ballarat University.

Through them, I was directed to the Australian based newsletter of placename enthusiasts. In one edition alone was much of the historical data I was seeking, namely who discovered the capes, when they were discovered and who they were named after. In addition and of particular benefit to kayakers, the latitude and longitude of each cape was given.

By now Peter Treby had joined the research team and between us we managed to establish that Victoria could claim twenty-two capes, not eighteen as stated in the magazine article. Admittedly this included retaining the name Cape Everard in lieu of Point Hicks, the site of Cook's first landfall in 1770 and named after Lieutenant Zackarah Hicks who was credited with being the first to spot landfall. This cape was subsequently renamed Cape Everard in 1843, only to revert back to Point Hicks in 1970 during the lead up to the bicentennial celebrations of Cook's arrival.

From west to east some 500 nautical miles separate Cape Montesquieu from Cape Howe, whilst the cape located furthest north lay at a latitude of 37° 29' S compared with the most southerly cape at 39° 04' S

By now my research had reached a stalemate, it was time to front the VSKC executive committee with the idea. To my delight, the concept was quickly accepted and the pressure was on to bring it to fruition.

This involved enlisting the help of VSKC webmaster Craig Evans, and sourcing on-line charts for all the Capes, and for this Peter Sharp (and his brand new Garmin GPS) kindly offered to help. Before long, we had twenty-two individual charts downloadable from www.vskc.org.au.

Craig developed the portal titled "Cape contourer's challenge". Rules were written, data fields created and beta tests were conducted; forms for VSKC legal waiver and float plan pro-forma downloadable from the web.

First challenge attempt – Cape Schanck, was posted week one in July by Dana Halsvik, accompanied by Terry Barry. Unfortunately an adverse weather forecast forced a postponement.

So the challenge is out there and it is not a challenge to be taken lightly. The majority of these capes will require good trip planning as well as a skilled group of paddlers, and favourable weather.

The ultimate prize will be special recognition as a *cape contourer*, after all twenty-two capes have been 'bagged'. The format of this special recognition is being kept under tight security but I can reveal that the award will only take place at a VSKC AGM and will feature any paddler who has completed the last of the capes in the preceding calendar year, albeit for the majority of club members it may take years to bag them all, after all it's not intended to be a race.

Club members will always know of 'contouring attempts', as all trips must be posted on the VSKC website.

So, welcome on board the VSKC "Cape contourer's challenge". Who will be the first to lay successful claim to 'bagging' all twenty-two capes and which calendar year will see the first paddler honoured?

REF	NAME	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE
1	CAPE MONTESQUIEU	38° 08' S	141° 10' E
2	CAPE DUQUESNE	38° 22' S	141° 22' E
3	CAPE BRIDGEWATER	38° 23' S	141° 23' E
4	CAPE NELSON	38° 26' S	141° 32' E
5	CAPE SIR WILLIAM GRANT	38° 24' S	141° 37' E
6	WEST CAPE	38° 25' S	141° 59' E
7	CAPE FREDERICK	38° 24' S	142° 00' E
8	CAPE REAMUR	38° 23' S	142° 08' E
9	CAPE VOLNEY	38° 46' S	143° 16' E
10	CAPE OTWAY	38° 51' S	143° 30' E
11	CAPE MARENGO	38° 47' S	143° 39' E
12	CAPE PATTON	38° 41' S	143° 50' E
13	CAPE SCHANCK	38° 27' S	144° 54' E
14	CAPE WOOLAMAI	38° 31' S	145° 19' E
15	CAPE PATERSON	38° 40' S	145° 36' E
16	CAPE LIPTRAP	38° 54' S	145° 55' E
17	CAPE WELLINGTON	39° 04' S	146° 28' E
18	EAST CAPE	37° 48' S	148° 44' E
19	CAPE CONRAN	37° 48' S	148° 43' E
20	CAPE EVERARD *	37° 46' S	149° 16' E
21	CAPE HORN	37° 29' S	149° 40' E
22	CAPE HOWE	37° 30' S	149° 58' E



David Golightly rounds Cape Liptrap

Phillip Island long weekend Level One and Two assessments and intakes — 11 – 13 March

We arrived at Cowes on Friday night to find the group already installed with chairs, chatting in the darkness under a tree. Unfortunately that tree was the roost of some very squeaky creatures that spent the evening pooping on us, not even Les Doyle's singing would disperse them. It was warm and pleasant, a few had been to the pub for dinner. The caravan park was very full; we were surrounded by families armed with small children on bikes.

Saturday was the Level 1 and 2 assessments. We were supposed to be ready with boats all geared up and minds as sharp as whips on the beach for inspection; after briefing from Terry Barry first and the break down of groups.

John Woollard was planning to do a Level One intake, but there were no takers, so he came with the Level One group. There were 15 candidates including myself, which makes a little tricky for me to tell you what the Level Two group did. I know they paddled down to Seal Rock and looked for the sharks ... but couldn't find them (phew).

Before we hit the water, our boats were inspected for pumps, sponges, decks, paddle leashes, hatches, lunch, sunscreen, PFDs, whistles, communication device (mostly a mobile phone in an Aqua Pac), footwear, hats, extra clothing, cags,

snacks, water (at least 1 litre) and personal medication.

There was a brisk easterly wind, which we decided to paddle into, as we were intending to travel to Turtle Head on French Island; we were required to make a 15 km paddle at a reasonable pace without undue stopping.

The tide was running out and so we set off. There was a split in the group when one half decided to head straight across to Turtle Head bashing against the tide and winds and the second group felt it would be less difficult to travel further up the coast line shore hugging, staying out of the wind and then cut across in an arc with the current.

As it turned out, the first group arrived far sooner than the second, so in that instance the hard slog was the quicker of the two.

We met up with another group just out for a paddle and we all inhaled our lunches. After lunch we did some stroke drills, broaching and the like. Darren went in, just to be friendly and let us see a rescue demonstrated. We headed directly back to the back we launched from at Cowes Caravan Park, it was rather choppy again and windy and the group was not so good at sticking together ... but we were reminded about that.

Once back we had to demonstrate we could perform a wet release, and then an assisted rescue. No one appeared to have any difficulties with these drills, but no one was in danger or big seas, but it's nice to get confident at these things. I suppose that's why the rolling

nights are in swimming pools, not a dark scary ocean.

Once we were all wet, we returned our boats to shore and had to swim 25 metres in paddle gear, including shoes. Jacki found it harder going than she expected and felt a bit asthmay, I had my puffer in the front pocket of my PFD and was able to give her a loan, once I established that it was the correct medication for her.

Terry Barry spoke later how giving a stranger a puffer which is wrong could in fact make them worse, which demonstrates the need to always have your own medication with you, even if you don't think you will need it.

That night was again very warm, and social. The birds did not return that night, so we were able to sit and chat and plan without the constant fear of a new hair do.

Sunday was so hot it felt as though you could bite hunks of air out and chew it. The official part of the day started with a briefing again with Terry. The intention was to have a flare demonstration, first on the shore and then on the water. Terry asked for volunteers, and I naturally went for it, but I guess no one else did because Terry and Les Doyle took the other two.

John Woollard donated a pack of four which were of date, but still functional. There were two day flares and two night flares — the day ones send out orange smoke and the night ones are an intensely bright flame.

Terry had contacted the authorities (police, SES, the local yacht club etc) to let them know/get permission for our demonstration. The first flare was set off on the beach, showing how to get it out and strike it. I was surprised that it is for the entire world lit like a big waterproof match.

Terry, Les and I got in our boats and paddled out 10 metres, tipped ourselves in

Tony Wennerbom performs the 'John Wayne' re-entry (left)



Paddler with orange flare in the water

and set off the flares. All went according to plan, although the other people in the camp site may have been a little tired of the opaque orange smoke blasting through their tents. I had to use my teeth to open the plastic casing for the flare while holding onto the kayak, and the caps were quite tight to get off. Terry discussed having flares and tow rope in a package velcro'd to the upper edge of the cockpit where they could be accessed as soon as a wet release was performed, or even before.

While I was floating around in the water, another kayaker went passed and asked if I was OK. I said yes, it was all part of a demonstration, and he said he thought so as there were 50 people on the beach watching. I had to agree and confess that we were all part of VSKC; so, naturally, this bloke asked for a card ... I told him to land and come on down.

I did a little test on my day time lurid orange smoking flare and held it under the water, and when it came up it spluttered for a moment and then continued to smoke – but it did not do so under water and I didn't hold under for that long.

One important point about flares – no point in using them unless you can see a possible savior.

Following the flare demonstration was the Level Two intake; again conducted by Terry Barry. The session started off with a

lot of technical chat about maps and charts and various marine markers – “Is there any RED PORT LEFT in the bottle” was a good little ditty to remember, also the left referred to applies entering ports, not exiting, except where Americans have been (Japan, the Philippines for example), but let's not mess with that.

Then we broke up into groups for a skills training, I went with Peter Treby whose main intention turned out to be that one at least of us should fall in so a rescue could be mounted. There was a lot of sweeping strokes until our ears were touching the water, except only Peter was that far over. Stopping in three strokes, weaving, nothing got us out; he was finally reduced to saying what his real agenda was. Then we all obliged (oh OK not all of us) and tipped ourselves in, and a couple of T-rescues were executed. I have seen these maneuvers referred to as cross rescues also. By 12.15 the wind had come up and it was becoming unpleasant, so Peter called lunch break and we all went in.

The idea was to have a surf session in the afternoon, and Peter Costello had come down especially for this, but when Peter Treby, Peter Costello and another fellow whose name I have forgotten (I'm sorry) drove to most of the ocean side beaches looking for a suitable break, there were so many extenuating circumstances we did not find a suitable spot. There was either

no surf. Or surf and loads of people in the water which we thought may be in danger from our boats (shore breaks). We met a group with white water kayakers who were packing up to go because there was not enough grunt to pick their boats up (so what hope did we have?).

I was flagging by now and starting to feel a sleep was the most attractive option; but the men I was with were DETERMINED. Finally a paddle from a lee side beach, under the causeway and back to Woollamai was settled on; I took Peter's car back to the camp site and had a snooze. Tod paddled across to Hastings hoping to get a ride back with the wind on his kite, but it dropped out.

That evening was again relaxed and Les sang some songs. I especially liked the one about Dr Harry. A change came through whipping through the trees, and suddenly the heat was gone. It rained heavily during the night, Jackie and Phil's tent leaked so that Jackie's favorite pillow floated away and may not recover: I discovered the tent I bought 17 years ago had finally reached the end of it's useful life, and I think a number of similar discoveries were made within the group.

Breakfast was wet, paddling was cancelled and we all went home ... a rather 'wet' end to what was otherwise a great weekend. You know when the weather is that hot the change will be extreme too, so there was no surprise, we had just hoped to get one more session of paddling in

Finally, I am really impressed by the culture of sharing of knowledge within the club. Frequently more experienced paddlers stay with 'junior' paddlers to help them develop their skills even when a more exciting paddle was in the offing. I have noticed this many times since I have joined VSKC and I really admire this in within the club.

Left: Disembarking after trying the 'John Wayne' re-entry

Below: on the beach at Cowes



Nadgee Coast — Bitangabee to Mallacoota

27 – 30 December 2006

by Raia Wall

Arriving at Mallacoota on Boxing Day, we set up camp in the caravan park and made a final weather check at the internet café. With a strong SW change forecast for our second day, we reconsidered our starting point, so as to (hopefully) ensure passage around Green Cape before the change came in.

We decided to start at Bitangabee. If we started from Eden as originally planned, there was the possibility of having to spend an extra day in a NP campsite (booked out no doubt) with no permit for that day, so we decided to take Green Cape on the first day and shortened the trip.

Deb drove us all up in the Barry car, testing the suspension! Bitangabee Bay is very sheltered and we launched into a flat sea. Exploring close in to the rocky coast

we investigated a couple of rocky little 'beaches' both before and after Green Cape but alternate camping possibilities seem limited there.

Green Cape, with its white lighthouse and historic buildings was soon past. Entering Disaster Bay we saw quite a lot of people on the cliff, fishing in the sea rather far below. The police launch was cruising around and appeared to be looking us over at one stage, but after we went to shore and I decide to have a swim they went away ...

A NE wind sprang up as we launched again to cross Disaster Bay, so sails up and we absolutely flew across to Merica River (~14 km in an hour). We aimed at where the river came out then pulled the kayaks upriver to the campsite. After

lunch, we explored upstream on the dark still, quiet river (marred only by the crunching of plastic brushing past oyster shells).

Rising at first light the next morning, we packed quickly to get on the water before the change came through.

With the tide in, we paddled down the river and out onto the sea — an unexpectedly easy departure.

With the swell still small we were able

to paddle close in to the cliffs and peer into sea caves. After a stretch of cliffs we arrived at Jane Spiers beach, which looked quite interesting and had what could have been a little creek — quite tantalizing despite the beach being quite steep at high tide and with a shore dump.

"Let's have a look!" declared Terry and as the person closest to the shore, I indicated I would go first — looked not too hard I thought — just paddle in on the back of a wave, then jump out and pull the kayak up before the next wave.

Yeah sure! I had it all visualized, but things went sadly wrong, not enough time between waves. As I followed my wave in, the next one snuck up behind me, sucked me back then fell on me. Smacked down in the sand, I struggled up and tried to drag my kayak clear but it turned into a tug of war with the sea, with my boat filling up with sand and water becoming increasingly hard to drag clear.

The guys out the back were wondering why I wasn't getting up the beach. Neil came in and suffered the same fate, but at least between the two of us we got the boats up the beach. Terry thought he'd show us how it was done, but got wiped out too (though initially he thought we were too busy to notice this!). Needless to say the creek was dry and it wouldn't really have been that great a camp site!

Getting back out was interesting. Neil and I with a handy push shot through the break but Terry had to battle it out by himself. This took some time and I needed it to unclog my rudder slides from all the sand. I'd shoveled most out on the beach, but enough remained to jam up the rudder.

Neil rounding Green Cape



A sequence of photos of Neil's approach to Nadgee Beach, demonstrating what happens when one braces on the wrong side



Once reunited and with functional rudder we set off again. The breeze picked up a bit and we raised sail – the swell was increasing and the sky was becoming overcast. Passing a break in the cliffs, a gentle waft of warm land breeze came out – possibly a forerunner of the southwesterly change, but it carried with it a strong aroma of the bush. It was a rich flowery scent – I called it a ‘purple’ scent, but neither Neil nor Terry noticed it. I smelled it again in camp at Nadgee beach but it dissipated after the SW wind came through.

Next to the cliffs approaching Nadgee Beach, a fin suddenly appeared, then another – a pair of dolphins feeding along the cliff line just before we reached Nadgee beach. The bushwalkers on the cliffs observing us land later said the dolphins were playing in the surf – a lot more gracefully than Neil and I.

Terry went first – to show us how it was done and to ensure he had the camera ready to record our poor efforts. He took a good sequence of Neil demonstrating what happens when you brace on the wrong side. I came in well on a small wave, but came off it too soon and tried to turn to face the beach (as I had broached left and didn’t want to drag my boat the extra distance). Bad idea. Spitting sand for the second time in one day.

It was still only 10.30 am when we arrived – 18 km before morning tea time. We set up camp and got to know our neighbors – a couple of experienced bushwalker/ travelers from Vancouver. We were soon joined by a solo bushwalker, who we later

found out was having navigational issues, in part caused by reliance on a compass that pointed south (the wrong end of the needle had been painted as north).

He later set off again for a camp further north only to reappear later that afternoon having walked in a big circle. Terry’s wilderness first aid kit came in handy as the bushwalker had also gained a couple of ticks in his journey, which Terry kindly removed. I can recommend that members carry a small mirror in their kits for times like this when ticks may become attached in personal but hard to see places.

Having decided to set aside an extra day to explore the Nadgee area, we settled in for some serious relaxation. The clouds rolled away, a breeze blew and it was a lovely day. The next morning we explored up both branches of the river, as far as we could go before fallen timber blocked the way.

Good manoeuvring practice with some ‘limboing’ under logs. The banks of the river closed in and the bush had a close, almost primeval feel.

After lunch something more energetic – a walk to Nadgee Lake. The track was well marked, if a bit prickly and the coastal heath still had some flowers visible. Quite a warm afternoon and we were glad of a swim when we reached there – and another in the river when we got back. Our fellow campers had all departed, and despite seeing a number of other walkers, no-one stayed to camp.

Departing at sunrise the next morning, the swell was not too big, but when the waves are breaking close to the beach it

is difficult to build up much momentum on your own and when you are sitting down it is hard to see what big waves are coming in from the distance.

I sat in the white stuff for a while before I took a run at it. Again, last one off the beach has a disadvantage – Terry almost got through

the first crest but was carried backwards, rolled and was washed upright high on the beach. It was another glorious day, with a convenient NE wind so once we were all together the sails were up again. The swell was a bit larger than the previous days and there was a bit of bounce off the cliffs, so we didn’t travel as close in as previously.

The beach at the north end of Bunyip Hole, just north of Cape Howe, looked like it could be a good alternate camp site, but we decided to hang back and observe from behind the breakers this time!

Cape Howe on the NSW/Vic border, is an area of active looking dunes, consuming the bush to the north and sloping down onto the rocks just above the water. The border itself is marked by a rather unremarkable, plain wooden post. As we approached the cape we could see a lot of splashing offshore – a herd of seals, many floating with their flippers in the air.

Rounding Cape Howe, Gabo Island and its pink granite lighthouse appeared in the distance. Our feeling of being in the wilderness began to dissipate with the appearance of fishing boats and noisy motorboats. We rounded the southern end of Gabo to get a good look at the lighthouse, and did the gauntlet called Drakes Passage, then paddled up the western side to the small sheltered beach. When we arrived there were two speed boats of people standing around on the beach drinking champagne and eating strawberries! Clearly we had left the wilderness behind! It was too hot to consider exploring Gabo on foot, so we stretched our legs, had a swim and continued on to Tullaberga Island for lunch. There is a little beach on the side facing Mallacoota and I had a quick snorkel and it was the best snorkelling spot of the trip, but I couldn’t stay long as the guys were frying in the sun!

Returning to Mallacoota, we landed at Bastion Point to the bustle of the boat ramp. The waves were small on the bar but at low tide we probably would have had to walk our boats up the river. A wonderful trip in perfect conditions!

Terry Barry, Arctic Raider; Neil Brenton, Dagger Cortez and Raia Wall, Dagger Cortez.



Paddling up the Nadgee River involved ducking overhanging logs

Raia & Neil coming through the Gabo Is gauntlet Drakes Passage



On the wild side — Melbourne's penguin parade by Peter Dedrick

A few years ago, I was paddling a kilometre or so offshore from Ricketts Point when I heard a dog bark, or so I thought. Then some small heads popped up and I realised it was a raft of Little Penguins.

Little Penguins, or Fairy Penguins as they are also known, are seen quite often in northern Port Phillip Bay, normally where the anchovy schools are. Schools of Australian salmon and flocks of terns, cormorants and Australasian gannets may also be active at the same time.

Phillip Island Penguins have been known to feed in Port Phillip Bay but most sightings are of the colony that established itself on the St Kilda breakwater in the 1950s. The colony now comprises about 700 birds, numbers having increased in recent years on account of the plentiful food supply.

Some penguin facts:

Penguins are thought to have diverged from other birds about 65 million years ago, their closest relations being the albatross, petrels and shearwaters (mutton birds). Little penguins are found in southern Australian and New Zealand waters, in water not colder than 5°C.

Males weigh an average of 1170 grams and females 1050 grams. Normal life span is

around 6 years although the oldest known living St Kilda penguin is 25 years.

Their top speed underwater is about 6 kph. St Kilda Penguins normally start breeding in August and September with most chicks hatching in November. A pair will lay one or two white eggs about the size of a chicken's egg (55 grams). The eggs hatch in about a month and both parents are involved in incubating and feeding. The chicks grow quickly, reaching the same weight as parents in about a month, and go to sea in about eight weeks.

They are said to exhibit the same diversity of pair bonding as St Kilda's human population.

A volunteer group, Earthcare St Kilda, monitors the St Kilda colony on Sunday nights, fortnightly throughout the year. Others can attend by prior arrangement. You can even sponsor a penguin for \$20 a year – the ideal Christmas gift for anyone who paddles a 'Penguin'.

For further details contact Earthcare St Kilda at earthcarestkilda@mossie.com.au

An evening paddle around the St Kilda breakwater is also highly recommended.

(Source: *St Kilda Little Penguins* by Earthcare St Kilda)

Earthcare St Kilda volunteer Ruth Dedrick subdues a penguin so it can be weighed and measured



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A day at the beach — 2 July 2006

By Grant Della

We met at Torquay to very rough seas blowing from the south west for our planned paddle from Torquay to Point Addis. The conditions were too big for an enjoyable paddle.

Beach cricket was out of the question as Peter Treby did not have his favorite willow bat with him so the decision was made to move to Point Roadnight where the surf was working. The waves were about 1 metre and holding shape up to the beach, not dumping.

For me this was the largest surf that I had paddled in so I was a bit anxious. Initially I charged at the waves but later realized that a steady rhythm is all that was needed to break through. A few rides on the smaller beach break gave me confidence to try the larger waves further out. After paddling waves in Port Phillip Bay it was a welcome surprise to be picked up on a wave so easily and thrust forward with speed.

The waves gave rides of well over 100 metres, so I began to relax and experiment with boat control. With the greater speed I found that it was possible to lean very heavily on rudder strokes which maintained the kayak in a straight line.

In the situation where the kayak broached, supporting on the larger waves was OK as long as the kayak was leaned into the wave allowing the water to pass under it. Eventually the kayak would rise up the face and safely fall behind the wave. The trick is to hang on.

Dana coped very well with his Greenland paddle and Peter very happy with his wing paddle in the surf. I had made up a

splash proof bag for my camera and Peter took a couple of pictures near the shore. I was not prepared to take it out into the larger surf as I rather fancied having both hands on the paddle this day.

After lunch, we took the kayaks to the Torquay beach near the boat ramp. I always moan at putting on wet and clammy kayak gear but Peter scoffed and reminded me "It is voluntary y'know!"

The waves were very chaotic and tended to dump. Under these conditions it is difficult not to broach, but a good support stroke into the wave results in an upright outcome. Tony Chick launched his newly built sea kayak. His own design, fabricated foam sandwich laminated construction.

It was designed for surfing conditions. The hull has a lot of rocker and large volume in the bow. I took it for a short paddle in the surf and found it very easy to turn, especially in front of a wave. The larger bow volume kept me noticeably dryer breaking out through the waves (compared to my Selkie).

A paddle to Point Addis will have to wait for another day but it was great to build on surfing skills

Participants: Tony Chick, Mirage (trip leader); Dana Halsvik, Mirage; Peter Treby, Nadgee and Grant Della, Selkie



Above: Dana coming in on a shore break



Left: Tony Chick's chick-yak



Grant coming in on a shore break

This is just a compilation of my notes that I put together when I first got interested in sea kayaking beyond just paddling around. Take this information for what it is that being notes taken down by an amateur as a reference point.

Consult authoritative publications like the Australian Pilot when you are planning any maritime activity. I have started with the big picture and will work down to the local factors that affect us noticeably more as paddlers. I chose to start with oceans, coastal waters, waves and surf, tides, tidal streams, weather, navigation etc. I hope this may be of use to you.

Ocean currents

The world's oceans cover more than 70 percent of its surface and contain about 97 percent of its water. Ocean covers about 60 percent of the Northern Hemisphere and about 80 percent of the Southern Hemisphere.

Water in motion is called current; its direction is called set; and its speed is called rate. For sea kayakers, moving water is one of two reasons for the discrepancy between dead reckoned and actual boat position. This discrepancy will be addressed in a navigation topic.

Currents are referred to by their force mechanism either:

- Wind driven. Which drives the majority of the world's surface currents and makes up 10 percent of the oceans; or
- Thermohaline. Which are currents driven by differences in heat and salt and are typically sub-surface and make up 90 percent of the world oceans.

Currents are further classified by their depth (surface (10m – 200m; called the Ekman layer), intermediate, deep or bottom). Note however, the classification is a guide.

- Periodic current. A current which changes its speed and direction cyclically at regular intervals i.e. tidal currents.
- Seasonal current. A current that changes speed and or direction due to seasonal winds.

The mean circulation of ocean currents are semi-permanent and experience little periodic or seasonal change.

- Coastal current. Flows outside of the surf zone roughly along the coast.
- Longshore current. Is generated by waves hitting the beach at an angle and which flows parallel and inside the surf zone.
- Offshore and inshore. An ill-defined distance from the shore or close to!² However, the Bureau of Meteorology issues Routine Coastal Waters Weather Forecasts for areas within 60 nautical miles of the coast and High Seas Routine Forecasts for areas beyond the coastal waters surrounding Australia.³

Ocean currents are the result of two forces: wind affecting the surface and thermohaline circulation being the differences in temperature and salinity between the surface and deeper waters.

The oceans, due to their size, absorb more than half of the sun's energy and have an enormous ability to store, move and slowly release this heat energy. For example, the heat energy being moved southwards in the different Indian Ocean currents in one second could fuel a 2 400 watt heater for 17 000 years.

This movement of heat energy has a dramatic effect on our environment and as paddlers; we see and feel the effects of this process in the wind, rain and weather patterns as well as in the movement of the oceans in the form of ocean currents.

The major ocean currents are driven by the earth's general wind circulation and sinking cold water in the polar and subpolar oceans. The effect being the ocean currents redistribute the heat energy absorbed from the sun throughout the world's oceans by carrying it away from the regions of greatest heat in the tropics towards the colder polar regions.

Currents are the horizontal movements of water not caused by tides and usually follow a seasonal pattern.⁴ The wind moving across the water produces surface and generally horizontal ocean currents. The wind affects the upper 100 to 200 metres⁵ of water depth but the flow of the wind driven currents can extend beyond 1000 metres in depth.

The horizontal circular closed loop movement of the wind driven currents are called gyres. These large ocean gyres can be millions of kilometres in area. In

the Southern Hemisphere, gyres rotate in an anticlockwise direction. And in the Northern Hemisphere in a clockwise direction. Major gyres are situated around 30° N and south of the equator. Continental landmasses affect gyres but Below 60° S continents do not hinder the path of the currents. The Antarctic Circumpolar Current, also called the West Wind Drift is an example and is the only current to circulate the earth.

Winds are part of the mechanism which cause 'upwelling' by moving the coastal waters offshore and allowing the colder deeper waters to rise up to the surface near the coast. The opposite of upwelling is 'downwelling' where the winds are part of the mechanism that causes the surface waters to sink.

Thermohaline circulation produces vertical circular currents from the surface moving down to the oceans floor and back up. Scientists liken the ocean's temperature layers to the cross-section of an onion with its many different layers with the upper 2.5 metres having the same ability to store heat as the entire atmosphere. Surface layers may be tens of metres thick. The deep layers beneath have been found to originate from thousands of miles away and can take up to 1 000 years to reach the surface.

For Australia, two deep layers off the Tasmanian coast originate in the Northern Hemisphere and in the Antarctic. This is seen in the thermohaline circulation that links the world's ocean currents and is known as the Conveyor where the cold, dense, salty water from the North Atlantic sinks to the depths to act like a plunger forcing the water to move and thereby drive the global circulation. The Conveyor determines our climate by transporting heat and moisture around the world.¹¹

Another thermohaline example is the Bass Strait Cascade. This is described as a type of submarine waterfall at the eastern end of Bass Strait where saltier cold surface waters sink through downwelling to move underneath the East Australian Current before moving northwards and has been identified by its signature of temperature and salinity 1200 km away.

Other factors influence the oceans currents rate and set like the Coriolis effect, land masses the depth and shape of the ocean's floor, gravity, solar heating and factors like El Niño.

El Niño causes the movement of warm (30°C or more) western Pacific waters to move in to the central and eastern Pacific Ocean. This causes major weather pattern changes affecting the whole Pacific. For Australia the cooler ocean waters means: less convection and therefore less rain, and an easing of the east to west trade winds that normally direct warm water to the northern shores.

Indian Ocean water temperatures at times



Figure 1 Southern Hemisphere¹

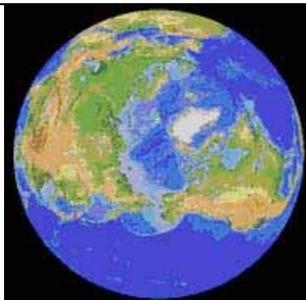


Figure 2 Northern Hemisphere

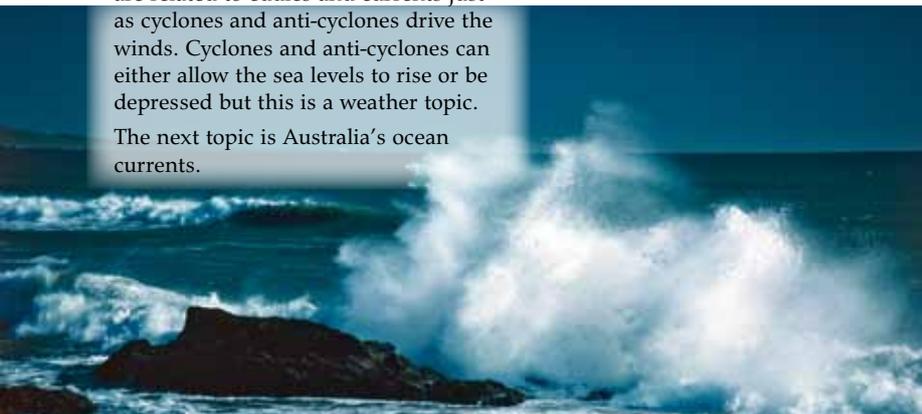
affect the effects of El Niño on Australian rainfall, particularly across the western and southern part of the continent.

ENSO.¹² El Niño/Southern Oscillation. Ocean currents and winds over the equatorial Pacific are strongly linked in that one cannot change without affecting the other. ENSO is the condition in the tropical Pacific Ocean where the reversal of surface air pressure at opposite ends of the Pacific induces westerly winds.

The westerly winds drive the ocean currents eastward which strengthens the equatorial counter-current causing extensive ocean surface warming and a continuation of the effects. When the warm currents reach either the western or eastern Pacific land masses they are deflected back in the opposite direction thereby bringing that period of El Niño to a close.

Ocean eddies are spawned by strong ocean currents and are typically 100–200 km in diameter and circulate both clockwise (cold) and anti-clockwise (warm)¹³. They may contain currents of up to four knots, reach the sea floor and circulate for several years before losing momentum. Variations in sea levels are related to eddies and currents just as cyclones and anti-cyclones drive the winds. Cyclones and anti-cyclones can either allow the sea levels to rise or be depressed but this is a weather topic.

The next topic is Australia's ocean currents.



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 - 13 Bowditch, American Practical Navigator, Ocean Currents, Ch.32, Para. 3210

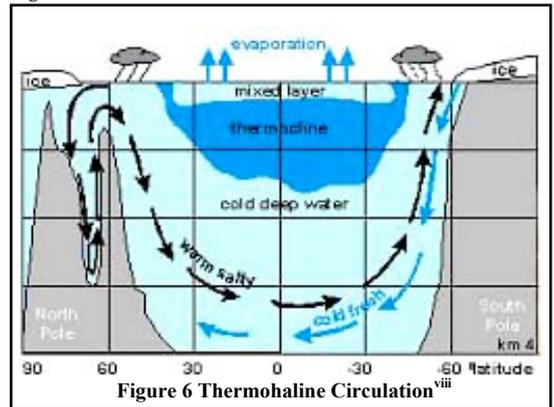


Figure 6 Thermohaline Circulation^{viii}

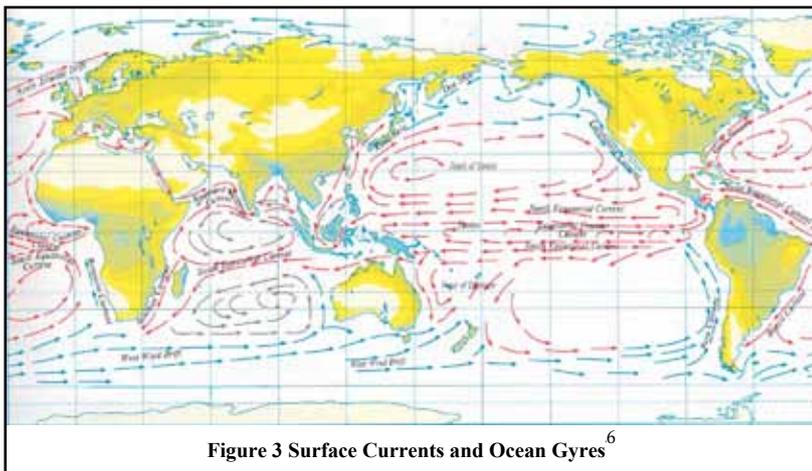


Figure 3 Surface Currents and Ocean Gyres⁶

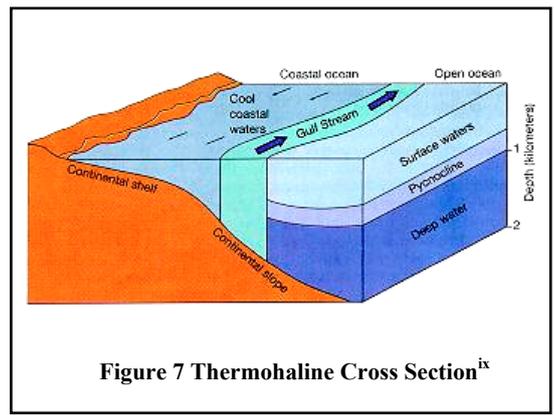


Figure 7 Thermohaline Cross Section^{ix}

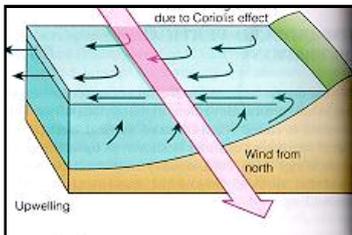


Figure 4 Upwelling

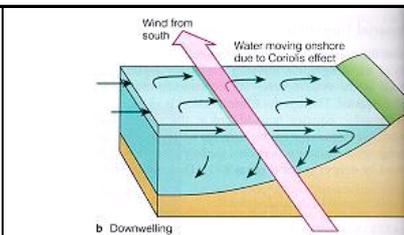


Figure 5 Downwelling^{vii}

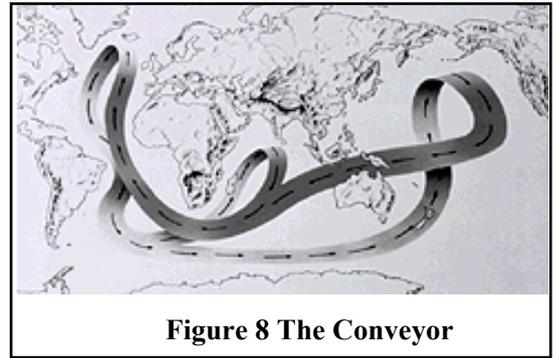


Figure 8 The Conveyor

Hybrid wooden kayaks wood strip/stitch & glue by Richard Rawling

For those interested in joining the VSKC kindling club, there is a construction method that allows you to experience the two main types of wooden kayak construction in one single boat.

The method is known as hybrid stitch and glue. Typically the deck is built using wood stripping and the hull built using stitch and glue techniques. One of the problems with full stitch and glue construction is that you have to try to get difficult compound curves on the deck in plywood, and it will not bend far in three dimensions! Wood strip methods allow you to get more complex curves and end up with a boat that is comparable to any glass boat in terms of shaping.

The boat I am building at present is called the Cirrus by One Ocean Kayaks. The designer is Vaclav Stejskal and his website is a treasure trove of building advice and technical data – well worth a look (details of the hybrid Cirrus can be found at http://www.oneoceankayaks.com/stitchglue/Hybrid_Cirrus.htm).

The main advantage of Vaclav's method is the jig that you build to hold the stitched hull in a defined shape (see attached photo), as well as providing positive forms for the deck stripping. Other methods of S&G construction sometimes do not feature such an approach and rely on complex levelling methods to get a true hull.

Once the S&G hull is wired onto the chipboard forms, the deck is wood stripped with bead and cove strips. I am using western red cedar, Huon pine and African mahogany. But in reality you can use any light, pliable wood as it gets sandwiched completely in glass and epoxy resin (do not use polyester resin for this construction as it is not flexible or strong enough).

When working with epoxy resins, you must control temperature of the resin and the room (it must not fall below 16°C or it will not set well and can remain soft). There are many tricks for doing this that I will be pleased to share with interested members.

Vaclav's website provides some great information on the use of carbon fibre moulding methods to make the cockpit, hatch and rudder mouldings, again well worth a look.

The photo sequence included here shows the initial jiggling of the hull, the wood stripped deck underway and the start of the glassing of the deck. I am trying to get the boat on the water later this year, but a busy work schedule is playing havoc with best laid plans! This is a hard

chine boat that may not need a rudder at all (we shall see). It has really beautiful lines for a wooden boat, just gotta watch the rocks! I will be pleased to answer any questions from interested members (rrawing@bigpond.net.au).



Work in progress —
the woody being by R. Rawling

Apollo Bay to Torquay, well, maybe not this time

Words & pictures
by Tony Chick

When Mother Nature gives the big don't argue, even the best laid plans have a tendency to go out the window.

The plan: hope for tail winds and swell to do as fast a trip from Apollo Bay to Torquay as possible, a regular training run for a few West Coast VSKC members.

I feel this trip is fairly unique, and should be seriously considered by more VSKC crew.

Where else have you got a near to a 100 km downwind ocean run, with road access and a roadside ocean view of virtually the entire run? (If there is another out there, I want to know about it.)

If the swell is not large, there are many bail out points, go like the clappers and if you blow up, ring your long-suffering partner, to pick your sorry bones up by the side of the road. Too easy! But I digress.

The weekend was locked in, camping gear stacked in the corner in anticipation, car shuffles cleverly eliminated, what happens when you are too organised? Neptune steps in and sticks his trident right where it's not required, in my float plans.

The preceding week started off brilliantly, small 1.5 m waves on the reefs, light wind. But it was not to last.

Blind Freddie could see this was going to turn ugly, very ugly.

How ugly? 45 kt + WSW wind, for near three days straight, whipping up washing machine suds of impressive scale. 7 m swell (buoy weather data), 3-3.7 m+ cross-onshore storm waves on the reefs and some beaches.

Saturday comes around, time for plan B, forget the kayak and go wave sailing at Point Danger. The swell has dropped to a solid 1.8-2.4 m, 25-30 kt WSW and some of the best downwind wave sailing of the year is to be had.

But hang on, this is a kayak mag.

Hope it cleans up a bit more for tomorrow and plan C.

Plan C: Sunday. Leave the camping gear in the corner, do a day paddle.

John Evertze and I drive down the Ocean Road to assess the action.

Another advantage of a road along the route, you know exactly what you are getting yourself into and more importantly, how you can get yourself out of it.

We decide Kennett River to Lorne is doable. Lorne is easy to land in a large SW swell and Kennett, a soft wave for entry and slightly in the lee of the full ground swell. We opt to not tackle Cape Patton

further south as the swell is still large and very much focused on the Cape. We consider there is minimal room for error if conditions happen to deteriorate slightly when rounding the Cape.

The idea is to have fun, not be in bum cheek clenching survival mode. Cape Patton can wait for another day.

This trip turned out to be one of the better downwind runs I have done, 2.4 m ocean swells, about 1 m seas on top and 25 kt W decreasing tail wind. There is still an abnormal push of water flowing up the coast, a leftover from the week of storm conditions. We certainly got our fast run.

To run at speed with a fast ocean swell, I find you can catch wind chops to gain speed and try to link these smaller runs onto a much faster moving, proper swell. The most fun you can have wearing a skirt!

We end the session at Lorne in style, by me getting cleaned up outside the pier by a wide set, bad enough, but a camera held in between the teeth and an audience of the Lorne fishing clubs "pleasant Sunday morning" drinking session, add to the pressure.

One of those times you find yourself upside down and vow, "I'm not coming out of this boat, even if I drown!"

Down here on the West Coast, there are very few regular sea kayak paddlers, six to be exact. It's possible to get a paddle in somewhere on this coast in nearly any conditions and don't believe the hype, near flat is the norm.

Get onto it.



Left: bommie off the Lorne pier as we land
Below: John Evertze in the following seas



Beach roller

Anyone with a heavy double sea kayak or single with an expedition load on board, will be aware of the difficulty in launching your craft from the shore.

Particularly if you use craft of composite construction, dragging them over sand or a coral debris beach is not an attractive option.

On a recent trip to the Whitsunday's in September/October 2005 we got around this problem by using a PET bottle as a roller. We used a 1.5 L PET mineral water bottle (with parallel sides), wrapped in duct tape as a beach roller. It is necessary to have the bottle filled with water to avoid crushing it.

This worked well for us during fifteen nights out, with no damage occurring to our composite boats.

Moving a kayak using two PET bottles as rollers and (inset), a well taped bottle



Stroke identification

During a barbecue, a friend stumbled and took a little fall. She assured everyone that she was fine (they offered to call paramedics) and just tripped over a brick because of her new shoes. They got her cleaned up and got her a new plate of food.

While she appeared a bit shaken up, Ingrid went about enjoying herself the rest of the evening. Ingrid's husband called later telling everyone that his wife had been taken to the hospital. At 6:00 pm, Ingrid passed away.

She had suffered a stroke at the barbecue. Had they known how to identify the signs of a stroke, perhaps Ingrid would be with us today. Some don't die. They end up in a helpless, hopeless condition instead. It only takes a minute to read this ...

A neurologist says that if he can get to a stroke victim within three hours he can totally reverse the effects of a stroke ... totally. He said the trick was getting a stroke recognized, diagnosed, and then getting the patient medically cared for within three hours, which is tough.

Recognizing a stroke

Have the sense to remember the "3" steps, STR. Read and learn! Sometimes symptoms of a stroke are difficult to identify. Unfortunately, the lack of awareness spells disaster. The stroke victim may suffer severe brain damage when people nearby fail to recognize the symptoms of a stroke. Now doctors say a bystander can recognize a stroke by asking three simple questions:

S * Ask the individual to **smile**.

T * Ask the person to **talk – to speak a simple sentence**. (Coherently, i.e. . . It is sunny out today.)

R * Ask him or her to **raise both arms**.

Note: Another 'sign' of a stroke is this: Ask the person to 'stick' out their tongue. If the tongue is 'crooked', if it goes to one side or the other that is also an indication of a stroke. If he or she has trouble with any one of these tasks, call 000 immediately and describe the symptoms to the dispatcher!

The Arch at Walkerville, Phil Woodhouse & Greg Murray paddling through at high tide



Mallacoota rescue 29 May 2006

On Monday 29 May 2006, VSKC member Andrew Mason was involved in the rescue of a sea kayaker at Bastion Point Mallacoota.

Bastion Point is a launching and landing point for abalone boats. There is a surf break running in to the shifting bar where the Mallacoota Lakes drain out. Rips shift around.

Andrew is a fisheries officer, and was waiting for returning abalone boats around 1.00 pm. He saw a sea kayaker in the surf who had paddled about 300 metres out. Andrew spoke to the paddler's wife, who was watching from shore. The paddler was capsized by a wave. He wet exited. He tried to re-enter his kayak three or four times by scrambling up the back deck, and failed, then held the boat, but did not seem to make progress towards shore.

The surf was running at a solid 1.3 m, with close sets. Conditions were such that Andrew would not have taken his own sea kayak out. The previous day former club president Peter Provis, a strong, experienced paddler with excellent surf skills, had been surfing his sea kayak in the same area.

He was capsized and forced to wet exit. Conditions had not moderated by the next day. Gabo Island to the east reported swell from the south at under 2 metres. Mallacoota reported WSW wind at 10–11 knots, with gusts 17–21 knots over the rescue period. Water temperature was 14.4 °C.

The paddler was wearing a pfd and paddling gear. His boat was a plastic sea kayak, an Australis Trilogy. His wife told Andrew that he wasn't a strong swimmer, and that he had an ankle injury. Andrew stripped down and swam out to the paddler, who had lost contact with his kayak. Andrew was able to swim in towing the paddler for about 100 metres. An abalone boat came along and the paddler and Andrew got aboard.

The paddler had swallowed seawater and vomited over the abalone catch. The boat motors stalled, but thankfully restarted, and all landed. The abalone boat returned and recovered the kayak.

The paddler did not need medical treatment. He was embarrassed to have caused the need for a rescue, was grateful for his rescue and wanted to pay. He made a donation to a local charity.

Comments

1. Surf is powerful and testing. Paddlers need skills in locating rips, timing sets and the best path through breakers, bracing, rolling, strong forward paddling, and positioning with reverse paddling. Launching into surf without these skills will be a learning experience. The necessary skills are acquired by starting in small surf and building up. It is a feature of sea kayaking that it is easy to get into conditions which quickly go from manageable to threatening.
2. Waves always look smaller from shore than when you sit amongst them in a kayak.
3. If you paddle alone, the ability to self-rescue is mandatory. You get yourself in, you get yourself out
4. Andrew Mason showed a lot of courage, as well as swimming strength and rescue skill, in going to the paddler's assistance.

In the shed

By Grant Della

I had been considering for some time a way of making my camera splash proof. A waterproof camera enclosure was out of the question as my current digital camera is not worth it and a total new rig is very costly. I have seen plastic bag type covers but an optical quality window for the camera seemed difficult until the penny dropped – use the glass out of a SLR screw on UV filter. The glass is perfect and big enough for the job (not to mention only a lick over \$20).

The overall design is a window using the UV filter with a bracket. The bracket maintains the camera aligned to the window. This arrangement is mounted inside a sturdy plastic bag with a hole cut for the window. The window is firmly attached to the bag with a 10 mm plastic ring each side of the bag, 8 stainless screws and an O-ring to cushion the glass. The plastic bag has a Velcro fold over type seal and was bought from a \$2 shop. All of the buttons can be operated reasonably well through the bag.

I am very satisfied with the result. Some pictures were taken at Anglesea from the beach break and at this stage is splash proof.



Kayakers log – Easter 2005

by David Golightly

Friday 25 March 2005

After a 2.5 hour road journey from Melbourne's eastern suburbs we assembled at Long Jetty, Port Welshpool at 1030 hours. The "Barry family" Easter paddle contingent comprised: -

Terry Barry	Deb Barry
Phillip Barry	Neil Brenton
Raia Wall	David Golightly

Geoff Brewster subsequently joined the group late on the Friday night and left again on Easter Sunday.

After securing cars in the Long Jetty Caravan Park (\$2.00 per day per car), the group departed the beach at approx 1200 hours which coincided with high tide (springs). This plan was designed to give the group an easy six nautical mile run generally south around Little Snake Island, then down the entrance channel alongside Snake Island. Unfortunately as it transpired, the positive benefits of the ebbing tide were more than offset by the force 6 winds from the south-east.

With Terry and Deb paddling a double and the rest of the group in a variety of single kayaks we battled down the Lewis Channel into the teeth of a 15<20 knot south-easterly which was increasing in velocity as the day progressed. As a result Terry and Deb took Phillip under tow. This decision proved timely as the conditions worsened and all paddlers had difficulty in handling the wind strength.

Our planned destination was a cattlemen's hut known to be a short distance north of Bently Point which is located at 38.46.05 S; 146. 29.08 E. Eventually we landed on the beach and began a search for the hut, which was found to be some 300 metres inland from a point approx 200 metres north of Bently Pt. The entrance to the access track is unmarked, however from the sea can be found slightly to the north of two obvious sand-hills.

The hut is owned by the local Cattlemen's Association who kindly make it available

to visitors. Contact numbers are available at the hut so Terry called to ask permission to stay, surprisingly given the holiday period; no bookings had been made so we were granted approval. The term 'hut' rather understates the substantial complex of timber buildings at the site including covered verandas, fly-screened common-rooms (this is part of the Ranger Station also located at the site), long-drop toilet, bunkrooms, gas-fired cook-tops, indoor and outdoor fire-places etc etc. This was a great find and one that warrants future visits. In addition kayaks can be left in relative security at the beach hidden within the sand dunes. The one downside is the fairly tough walk-in over an undulating sand track, albeit only for five minutes.

We were all pretty tired by the time we had disembarked and carried all our gear to the campsite so we lost no time in getting the billy boiled while we selected our various tent-sites and set-up camp.

Later that night after dinner and a mug or two of red wine and/or port, the peaceful scene was disturbed by the 2230 hours arrival of VSKC club member Geoff Brewster who had paddled solo from Port Welshpool in the dark to join us.

Saturday 26 March

The plan for the day should conditions permit, was to cross Corner Inlet to the East Coast of Wilson's Prom then journey south down the coast to Johnny Souey Cove, have lunch then turn-around.

We were all feeling the effects of a very tough slog the previous day even Terry who had borne the brunt of a long tow in adverse conditions had a painful shoulder. Deb and Phillip opted to stay on-shore for the day.

As it turned out, the weather was perfect for our day on the Prom and we all looked forward to a good day on the water. Terry and David elected to give the double kayak a try while Neil, Raia and Geoff paddled single kayaks. We set-off in little

more than 5<10 knot light winds across the Singapore Deep to group up at the #6 channel marker before continuing on to the east coast of the prom. As we meandered down the coast we decided to head for the breaking surf on the sandbank located to the west of the #4 channel marker. Whilst from Snake Island it appears that the sandbank and the resultant breaking seas extend in a westerly direction to meet with the prom coast, in actual fact there is a significant gap, this allows sea-kayakers to contour the coast and avoid the sandbank. However with Terry Barry and Geoff Brewster in our group, we were clearly not going to take the easy route! Through the middle we went, occasionally catching a wave as we surfed our way toward the coast.

When we reached the Wilson's Prom coast, Terry encouraged us to test our skills in the breaking surf by paddling close in-shore parallel to the break zone with occasional forays seaward to turnaround to catch another wave. With the exception of Geoff, we all took turns in having a swim. Paddling the double kayak with Terry, David's skills were sorely tested and it wasn't long before he had Terry 'tasting sand'! All good fun and a great experience, however it is inevitably tiring, so after landing for a snack-stop at Hunter Point, we started to question whether our original destination was still achievable.

The experienced paddlers Terry and Geoff, continued to keep an eye on the others and eventually decided to cut short the trip and land in a beautiful bay at the extreme Southerly end of Three Mile Beach (less than a nautical mile from our planned stop!). The weather was fantastic but the marine life refused to show an interest in Geoff's baited-line, as he attempted to supplement the evening meal with some fresh fish, while the rest of us enjoyed a leisurely lunch. Whilst it was disappointing not to make it to Johnny Souey Cove, we had all enjoyed our extensive surf skills



sessions, albeit depleting our stored energy in the process.

On the return journey the wind picked up which added to the ocean swell coming from Bass Strait, made for the occasional big wave. Once or twice we were threatened with capsize in these conditions as a wave took one of us by surprise. This was especially the case as we paused off Lighthouse Point in the vicinity of Whale Rock, while Geoff paddled ashore to investigate an apparent lone paddler on this remote beach. It turned out that there were a pair of paddlers in a double, who were very comfortable with their situation so Geoff rejoined us and we continued north to land at the lagoon located just south of Entrance Point. It's actually possible to paddle into a small creek linking the lagoon with the open sea so Geoff and Neil did this and paddled for a short distance into the lagoon.

Speaking of Whale Rock; this unlit and unmarked navigational danger is significant for sea kayakers as it "covers and uncovers". As a result it could well be invisible in fairly insignificant seas until kayakers were literally on top of it. Anyone paddling in the region would be well advised to take careful note of it's location then give it a reasonable berth in anything but perfect conditions.

After a short rest at the lagoon, we again set a course for the #6 channel marker as we recrossed the entrance of Corner Inlet to land at 1530 hours on the beach at Snake Island. The crossing back to Snake Island was significantly enhanced by paddling in the midst of a large flock of circling migratory birds as they skimmed over the surface with occasional dives for food.

Needless to say the day's exploits were relived around the evening campfire as the whisky, port and red wine loosened inhibitions and tongues. One of the great advantages of the location of the camp on Snake Island, is that fires are permitted, unlike the Prom where they are banned. A campfire is a great addition to any remote camping experience and certainly added to our enjoyment of our current environment.

Easter Sunday 27 March

The forecast of 20-25 knot north-easterly winds with an increase in velocity as the day progressed proved to be accurate and as we looked out over Corner Inlet we realised there would be no paddling for us today. In fact later in the day, as we walked the beach around Bently Point, we judged the wind velocity to have reached Force 6 on the Beaufort Scale. Geoff Brewster had commitments elsewhere so he had departed for home earlier in the day. The rest of the party filled the day by exploring the island tracks followed by a swim.

Another great aspect of the Cattlemen's Hut site on Snake Island is the opportunity to view a variety of wildlife. There is an abundance of wild deer, kangaroo, birdlife and koala around the vicinity of the camp, none of which seem overly concerned with the presence of humans in their environment.

Monday 28 March

Terry's plan for the day, weather permitting, was to cross the entrance to Corner Inlet once more, contour the coastline in a generally north-westerly direction towards Tin Mine Cove then strike out for the main shipping channel and follow it round to Port Welshpool and home.

Fortunately, the forecast was kind and after clearing up the campsite, ensuring we had left the place as we found it (or better), we lugged all the gear down to the beach and reloaded the kayaks.

At approx 1000 hours we headed due west to reach the Prom coast at Biddies Cove, a lovely inaccessible spot on foot, but readily so for those with marine transport. Two yachts were moored in the cove, one of which it turned out, was skippered by the owner of Sea Kayak Australia, a Melbourne based adventure company. As Terry chatted to the yachtmen the rest of us began to explore the area behind the beach and as it appeared

camping was permitted at this national park location, we promised ourselves a return to this site in the future. Terry had been to this area before and showed us his preferred 'RandR' sites.

After embarking once more, we continued in lovely conditions around the typically granite clad coastline, sheltered from what was an increasingly strong north-westerly wind. When we reached the most northerly point on the Prom coast, we set course for the main channel marker, which separates the two main deep water approaches to Barry Beach, (Toora Channel) and Port Welshpool, (Lewis Channel). Our objective being, to position ourselves high enough up the Inlet to allow sails to be set and a subsequent wind-assisted run up the Lewis Channel to Long Jetty. Every little while a Fairy Penguin would pop up the surface and check us out as if to question our presence in their domain

We reached the main channel marker with relative ease and as we continued to follow the deep water with the Barry family setting sails and as a result the pace. Along the way Terry continually tested us on our knowledge of cardinal markers and their importance to kayakers. All too soon we landed at Port Welshpool in what was now the best weather of the day. With reluctance we unloaded the gear, recovered our vehicles and repacked for the journey home.

This really is a great kayaking destination and one that belies the impression given when studying a marine chart for the area. Over a hot lunch in Welshpool we agreed that we must revisit the area and in Terry's case organise a VSKC overnight camp in the near future.

Melbourne, 31 March 2005



We had been invited to a wedding in Cairns on the Friday of the Queens Birthday long weekend. The friends getting married were originally from Melbourne, but now resident in Weipa, Queensland. I think they surmised the turn up of guests from Victoria would be greater if the wedding was at Cairns compared to Weipa. I think they were right.

So having decided to attend the wedding, it was time to look at things to do prior to the wedding. A sea kayak trip incorporating Hinchinbrook Island seemed the obvious thing to do. Due to the time limit we had of two weeks, it was decided to fly and hire boats.

I contacted Coral Sea Kayaking at South Mission beach, which is opposite Dunk Island, whose proprietors David and Attie assisted with local information and planning. They hire boats and equipment and conduct guided trips in the local area.

They have a range of Mirage and Dobbie doubles. The singles are Ocean Raiders (Canoe Sports) or Greenlanders (Penguin). At the time of planning this trip, cyclone Larry was about to arrive on shore in the vicinity of the trip, so this led to some uncertainty regarding national parks being closed due to storm damage.

A week after the storm, it was confirmed that while Hinchinbrook Island and the Family group to the north had suffered damage, the only island closed that concerned us was Dunk Island. We took Dunk out of the itinerary and finished the planning.

Planning

To assist in planning, Attie sent some helpful articles and contacts and the Queensland Parks site has some useful information. Most of the information on the parks site is of a general nature. The chart for the area, Aus 828 and the map sheet, Cardwell 1:100,000 provided more detailed navigation information.

Cruising the Coral Coast by Alan Lucas provided further insights which were of assistance, but certainly not of the detail found in the sailing guide to the Whitsunday's *100 Magic Miles* by David Colfelt.

Due to the presence of crocodiles in Hinchinbrook channel, Queensland Parks does not permit sea kayaking in Hinchinbrook channel, which is between the mainland and the island. Not having travelled in waters inhabited by crocs before, we were certainly mindful of them through out our trip.

Area and conditions

The coast line of tropical North Queensland is bordered by the Coral Sea. The Great Barrier Reef lies approximately 30 kilometres plus off shore. As a result, all the coastal islands are protected from any large swells that may come in from

the Pacific. Between Innisfail and Ingham lie 22 continental islands, 18 of which are national parks. Hinchinbrook Island at 39,000ha is the largest national park island in Australia.

Prior to leaving Melbourne, we had been taking an interest in the weather around Cairns and Hinchinbrook area. Every night it was the same, rain and 28 degrees. This was not promising. Following cyclone Larry, the wet season was running much longer than normal. For two months it rained non-stop, at one stage dumping in excess of 300 ml in 2.5 hours on Mission Beach! Fortunately for us, it stopped raining three days prior to our arrival, and we had warm overcast weather.

During the period May to October, the SE trade winds are consistent in direction but vary in force. We experienced winds between 5 kt and 30 plus kt. Temperatures ranged between 18 and 27 degrees for the duration of our trip. Water temperature was in the vicinity of 21–22 degrees. Swell varied between 0.5 m to 1.8 m during the trip.

Even though the trade winds are consistent, local conditions were often different to the forecast. For example in the morning, the wind often started in the west till around 10.00 and then swung around to the S – SE and built for the rest of the day.

Tidal streams are moderate with most areas only recording 1 kt. The only exceptions to this were in obvious locations such as Hinchinbrook channels exit at the southern end, which can reach 3 kt. The tidal range at the time of our visit was in the order of 1–1.5 m.

In September/October 2005, we did a 16 day trip in the Whitsunday's, and had many problems with sand flies and mosquitoes. It got to the point after two particularly bad camp sites for flies, that if the next one was the same, we would have abandoned the trip. Things improved and we continued the trip as planned. With this in mind, we were conscious of anti insect measures for Hinchinbrook. As it transpired, the flies and mosquitoes were about, but no where near the numbers we had encountered in the Whitsunday's. Yahoo!

Crocodiles prevent any swimming/snorkelling at all on the east coast of Hinchinbrook and force modifications to behaviour near water. As it turned out, we did not see any crocs or their sign. Apparently this is the norm for east coast travel.

Hinchinbrook has a walking trail that traverses the majority of the east coast called the "Thorsborne trail". It is 32 kilometres long with designated camp sites. This is very popular, with most people taking three days to complete the traverse and enjoy the area. Booking in advance as much as 12 months is often

required. We met some walkers at Sunken Reef Bay camp site, but only saw a few after this from a distance. In the majority of cases, the camp sites used by sea kayakers are not available to walkers. We did not see any other sea kayakers during our trip and very little boating traffic. Compared to the Whitsunday's, the area is deserted!

The plan

The plan was to traverse the east coast of Hinchinbrook from south to north and then island hop through the Family group and finish at South Mission Beach which is opposite Dunk Island.

Lucinda on mainland at the southern end of Hinchinbrook is the obvious launch site. It has a jetty to service container ships collecting the sugar crop. It is rather long at 5.7 km. We stayed at the Wanders Holiday Village, which is 300 m from the water, near the sugar jetty, the night before launching.

It was full of grey nomad barra fisher folk when we arrived. We borrowed the caravan park's wheel barrows to get all our kit down to the launch site near the sugar terminal. With a 12 year old son, the daily distances were modest, with the average being 15 km. The longest travel was 19 km and the shortest 12 km. The largest crossing was 15 km.

Day 1 • 1/06/06	Lucinda to Sunken Reef Bay. (HB east coast)
Day 2 • 2/06/06	Sunken Reef Bay to Banksia Bay (HB east coast)
Day 3 • 3/06/06	Banksia Bay to Sunset Beach (HB east coast)
Day 4 • 4/06/06	Sunset Beach to Goold Island. (Family group)
Day 5 • 5/06/06	Goold Island to Wheeler Island (Family group)
Day 6 • 6/06/06	At Wheeler Island. Day trip to Budg – Joo Island (Family group)
Day 7 • 7/06/07	Wheeler to South Mission Beach. (shower & red wine!)

Thoughts

All aspects of the trip went as expected. We did not have any mishaps or unexpected events. Even the air lines ran to time! We were overloaded with kit on departure from Melbourne and paid via excess baggage charges. This was with Jet Star. We found Virgin Blue to be more flexible on the return in this regard, and will avoid Jet Star in the future.

We own three Mirage boats which normally we would use, but due to the timeframe for our trip, hiring boats was the way to go. Heather has used an Ocean Raider previously and had no problems adapting. Harrison and I used the Dobbie Double. I had not seen one of these prior,

let alone used one. It turned out to be a sea worthy craft. It tended to bear away from the weather and not weather cock as I had expected. I felt it did not track as well as our Mirage 730.

It is very broad in the beam, with a large centre hatch that could fit in the kitchen sink. This made packing each day very easy. The large centre hatch allowed for out of sync paddling which was a bonus for Harrison and I. No pump of any sort was fitted, which seems to be the norm in the hire/guiding industry. Hand pumps were provided. I think a fitted pump is a mandatory part of setting up a boat. Probably for commercial reasons they do not provide this.

There are no mobile communications on the east coast of Hinchinbrook so we hired a sat phone in Cairns at a reasonable price. In the event we did not need it, but it was nice to have in case of medical emergency. Once you reach Cape Richards, the north most point of Hinchinbrook, mobile communications are good as you head north.

On Cape Richards there is a small resort. They are happy for boating traffic to call in for coffee etc. I have been told they are happy to provide water to kayakers, but we did not need any, so can't confirm this.

Apparently it is owned by a local Cardwell family. There was a large amount of water available on the east coast of Hinchinbrook during our stay. Once we moved onto the Family Group, it was a matter of carrying all requirements.

Rounding Cape Sandwich, with tide and wind in sync, it still provided a good ride for a dollar. Probably similar to rounding the Wood pile on Hook Island. This was a little unexpected due to the small tidal volumes that are predicted for the area. It didn't cause any problems, but certainly made us concentrate for a while.

Hinchinbrook itself consists of rugged, rocky peaks and faces and makes spectacular scenery as you travel by. The highest is Mt Straloch at 921 m. We visited Zoe Falls which was spectacular, but didn't plan any other day walks. There are plenty of options if so inspired.

Camping permits are available at \$4 per person through Queensland Parks. Most of the sites are limited to a maximum stay of two nights and group sizes of 6 or 8 persons. This is a similar set up to the Whitsunday's booking regime.

The camp site on Wheeler Island is on the western aspect facing south. As such it is exposed to the trade winds. This had the bonus of keeping away any flies or mosquitoes, but the negative of feeling like you were living in a wind tunnel, by the time the daily 20 knots plus was going.

We snorkelled at Budg – Joo Island, which we had been told was the best in the area. It was a very poor example of a tropical reef. The reefs at the north end of Hook Island or Hayman Island were easily superior.

This may be due to the proximity of the Family group islands to the mainland and their river outflows. While paddling over

fringing reef at other locations on this trip, they did not appear the same from above as quality reef in the Whitsunday's.

Resources

Camp permits: www.smartservice.qld.gov.au

Enter via Hinchinbrook Island – other camping

Or book via phone at 13 13 04

Boat hire: Coral Sea Kayaking
2 Wall St, South Mission Beach, Qld
(07) 4068 9154.

www.coralseakayaking.com

Sat Phone: Miles Electronics, Cairns,
(07) 4035 1133

Car Rental: Sugarlands Rentals at Cairns and Mission Beach 07 4052 1300. They were the only one we found who would provide one way rentals to Mission Beach.

Accommodation: Lucinda Wanders Holiday Village, (07) 4777 8213.

Charts and book:s Boat Books, 214 St Kilda Rd, St Kilda.

Summary

Would we go back? This is always the question I ask others as an indicator of the trips success or otherwise. Yes we would, but probably not the same route. Maybe Townsville to Cairns by island hopping, which would include Hinchinbrook.

Participants: James and Harrison Bate, Dobbie Double; Heather Bate, Ocean Raider single



Fare ye well to Andy Roberts



Now, where's that pot of gold?

Fran (my wife) and I have this thing about islands and are progressively checking them off our list one by one.

In July this year, we decided to spend a week on Magnetic Island, just off the coast from Townsville, mainly to do some snorkelling that had been recommended to us. However, a week of high winds put paid to snorkelling, which meant we spent our time exploring, bird watching and checking out the old World War II fort on the island.

We also checked out the local sea kayaking operator, Steve Rowland of Magnetic Island Sea Kayaks, who operates out of Horseshoe Bay on the north coast of the island. Steve has a fleet of Current Designs Storm (single) and Crosswind (double) boats. By our second last day, the wind had died down somewhat but was still above the 15 knot limit below which Steve (quite reasonably) won't hire out his boats.

We were, however, able to go on his half day guided trip and after a bit of cajoling he agreed to go to Five Beaches Bay, rather than to his usual destination of Baldy Bay. We had previously walked to Baldy Bay, whereas Five Beaches Bay

is wholly within the Magnetic Island National Park and only accessible by water. Maude Bay (one of the five bays) was also the site of a 'shack' owned by Fran's uncle that we had heard about but never seen.

While not a long paddle it was nothing short of spectacular – high granite cliffs, pristine coves, prolific coral and a variety of turtles, sea birds and other wildlife.

So, what of the silver service bit? Part of the deal was a 'tropical breakfast' which included such delights as freshly brewed coffee. The table cloth, doily and vase of flowers was also a nice touch. A squashed sandwich on the beach at Canadian Bay will never be the same!

Magnetic Island also has potential for more extended trips. It is only 10 kilometres from the mainland and has a number of sheltered bays. Almost 70 percent of the Island is National Park. The only drawback is that camping is only allowed at one place, Horseshoe Bay.

More information can be found on the following websites:
www.magnetic-island.com.au
www.seakayak.com.au

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Once again I arrived late. I stopped at the same place we surfed at on the Walkerville w'end to have a look at the conditions. The weather was "unsuitable" for anything in Melbourne, and I had been chanting a positive affirmation mantra "The surf will be ok" for the whole two hour drive there. Even with my lack of experience, nothing to the south of where I was standing, looked good in fact, just the opposite. I searched the entire caravan park, for the others, except for the rotunda, which I couldn't find. Just when I thought the others had too much sense to drive all the way here in these conditions, I found the rest of the proficiency group and instructors leaving a "square" building they referred to as the "rotunda" (but it was square!). The summary I got of the briefing was along the lines of "Damned the torpedoes, we are going in!" In that instant I forgot all about the conditions I had seen, and started dressing for immersion, very immersion.

The writing was on the wall when I was warned to hold on tight to my kayak as I emerged from the walkway on to the beach, only to find myself four long steps down wind before I could compensate. I am still not sure why I found it funny that my 19 foot Mirage (580 cm) was slowly bunny-hopping sideways down the beach from the wind right before I picked it up to position it ready for launching into the surf. The waves were dumping and brown from the sand, the wind was howling, even when dry on land it was bitterly cold, and the skies were very dark.

In hindsight, after all these clear signs to stay in the caravan park, I think it must of required nothing short of the hand of god to reaching down and smiting one of us outright before we collectively would of thought about giving up without going in.

I was later told that we were on the water for 45 minutes. It seemed like a lot longer. Not one of us got past the surf zone. The swells were coming in close sets with sea on top. I had just enough time to recover from bracing from the last breaking wave, get the bow back into the wind, clear my eyes of water before the next one hit, and they usually hit hard. Some of the pairs of swells came together as one "wave" with the trough between filled in by the sea, easily 10 metres wide. I can only describe it like being on a table or platform 1-2 metres above the surrounding sea. Most of the waves in front of me appeared to break on top of me (I'm not paranoid if it is true!). A lot of them hit the stomach and chest with enough force to make me exhale as if punched. Previously I found surfing backwards un-natural, and uncomfortable, but in these conditions it was the norm, and there was no choice. Most waves would "surf" you backwards at an alarming speed. In more than one instance I surfed backward for so long, and so fast I had to look around to make sure I wasn't going to get myself thrown into the beach.

While the conditions were less than perfect, I am glad I did it, because it made me aware of two things I had not thought about before, and both really concerned me.

The first realisation was that it was almost impossible to keep track of the location of others in these conditions, let alone control the proximity when a kayak came close, especially when concentrating on the oncoming waves. The next was when Neil was forcibly removed from his kayak and swimming with no visible sign of either his kayak or paddle. While looking at Neil and evaluating rescue options, all of which seem to increase the danger to both of us, I eventually figured that OUR best option was for me to increase the distance between us and keep an eye on his location. With a safe beach behind us it wasn't such a hard choice, he may be dumped harshly on the beach with sand in every crack and orifice, but otherwise OK.

Though if it had of been rocks and cliffs in the middle of nowhere, I couldn't of picked the soft option, and we would open a whole Pandora's box of "what ifs". I should also note that my towrope was in the day hatch. I would hazard a guess that if I tried to take one hand off the paddle to pop the day hatch lid, I too would be swimming (with a flooded day hatch compartment)! Rescuing is easy if you have clear visibility, can communicate clearly, and can simply paddle over to a position to carry out the practiced action of a rescue. This was clearly not the bay! As soon as somebody managed to get back on the beach, it had a domino effect on the rest of us. Getting back wasn't as easy as turning around and surfing in, and I seriously considered reverse surfing in, as the last 45 min taught me not to take my eyes off the incoming waves. I managed to broach sideways on a wave and ride it the whole way in. This seemed like the best option for landing in these conditions, and it was the most control I had over the kayak all day. Tina, Peter Treby and myself found our selves 500 metres downwind from our starting point. This surprised me since I had put so much effort into keeping the bow directly into wind and "maintaining" position. Regardless of were I am I always seem to find myself carrying a Nadgee, usually Tina's too! My Mirage may not have handles yet, but it was a lot lighter than a Nadgee to carry up the beach (small victory). I really need to prioritise building a kayak trolley. Those that had them were gloating at those struggling to carry their kayaks up the beach.

I was glad to hear everyone's account of their surfing was similar to mine. Everybody appeared to be satisfied that they put in a good paddling effort, despite the horrendous conditions.

At the first mention of coffee, we were in our cars and on our way to the local café. We also scouted the local lifesaving facilities as a possible location for our next AGM. The way the lifesavers on duty inside their

warm HQ were staring at us, I believe they were praying our group didn't strip off to go for a swim, forcing them to take their posts on the beach.

Later that night we gathered at the rotunda (again, which was not round!) for dinner, and managed to claim a small area from a single group of families. They graciously gave our group a table outside the warming radius of the fire. When they all disappeared, we took over the area immediately surrounding the fire to continue with our grand stories of kayaking prowess. Later the families returned and visibly displayed their disgust at our new position. Apparently their abilities to light a fire gave them "special" rights, I know this because they told us so! We graciously made some room for them, just outside the range of the fire!

Gazing at the stars while falling asleep in a bivvy-bag was magic, but waking up at 4 am with a cold face was not!

Day 2 Sunday 02.04.'06

The skies were blue, and the wind had dropped a bit. Compared to yesterday though, you could have painted a rainbow in the background, and had all of nature's small, cute and furry animals frolicking in the foreground. It was still cold and the waves were dumping fairly far out due to the low tide and gentle slope of the beach. The group, now wiser, more discerning, was procrastinating about getting back on the water. We searched the beach for suitable waves for the assessment. We also considered many options that largely involved staying dry, or bribing the instructors. Finally we accepted that it had to be done, the water is only getting colder by the day.

To their credit, both instructors, Tina and Terry also joined us on the water as a sign of solidarity, or was it sympathy, or even the fear of reprisals? It was good to be back in the surf without feeling like you were on an old sailing ship rounding Cape Horn in a storm. The waves were not ideal, but everybody managed to pass the surf skills requirements. With the mission accomplished, the group called it a day. Today was a great day for those not privileged to own kayak trolleys, as the fifty or more steps up the steep embankment meant that they were useless, and their kayaks had to be carried as well. Only the burning leg muscles and shortness of breath prevented me from gloating.

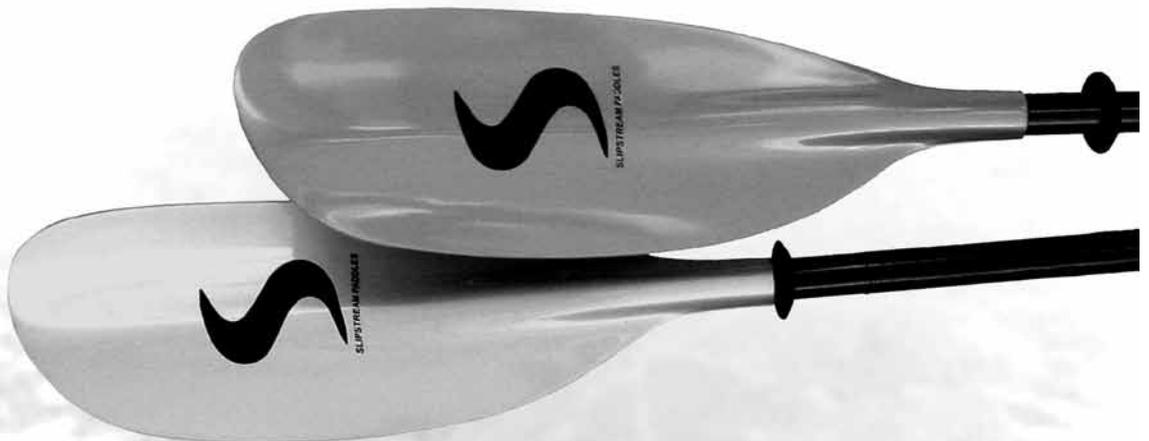
For Mick Mac Robb, passing this assessment meant that he had completed the level three proficiency. For the rest of us, we have to look forward to the next two assessments. If only half the horror stories told over the weekend are true, passing the surf skills weekend in these conditions may have been the easiest stage. (Insert scary music fading out...here!)



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 Armidale, WA
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jeremys24@bigpond.com

Training news

One of the great things being involved in a club such as the VSKC is sharing of knowledge and experience between club members and the opportunity this gives to enjoy the sport more often. It is in this spirit that the club now has twenty-two Level 3 paddlers and nine instructors, giving us a great resource for learning and organising paddles.

If you haven't been graded yet, please seek out the next opportunity to do so. With over 250 members, not all trip leaders know all members. This way trip leaders can easily reference what you are capable of and ensure suitability for paddles they run. It is vital that you keep a log of your experience and be ready to show it to a trip leader prior to a paddle. If you haven't got a log you can download a pro-forma from the club web page and make up your own book.

If you are a Level 3 paddler and haven't yet led a trip this year, we urge you to consider running a paddle in the near future. The club invests considerable energy into training and this all for nothing if our skilled paddlers don't put something back into the club by running trips.

Eight candidates lined up for Proficiency assessment in May. Congratulations to all those who took part. The level of commitment by all the candidates was very high. Four candidates passed all requirements and the remaining four should finish all requirements in time for presentations at the AGM.

Congratulations also go to Anthony (Tod) Truscott and Greg Murray who also took part in the assessment weekend and are now club instructors. Many thanks to David Winkworth who travelled all the way from Tathra NSW to assist with

assessment of the instructors. It is great to see a succession of paddlers rising through the club and continuing to expand their paddling skills.

The next Level 1 assessment and Level 2 intake and assessment will be at the AGM in November.

Members wishing to enrol in the Level 1 or Level 2 intake or assessment, please enrol by contacting Terry Barry – tby@gwsc.vic.edu.au or John Woollard – woollard@netspace.net.au

Candidates for assessment need to come fully prepared with kayaks fitted out to club standard and have a current log book with at least one overnight trip. Check out the requirements for each level on www.vskc.org.au.

Alan down the river

by Alan Wallace

Having heard that there might be a feeling among some club members that a good place to start in kayaking could be on rivers, my experiences this year prompt me to add some words of caution.

Barb and I are both members of the BMW Motorcycle Club of Victoria (too) and whilst their focus is on riding, they hold a Christmas camp each year and also a canoe trip from Walwa to Jingellic (on the upper Murray) in January.

The Christams camp 2005 was held at a property just outside Alexandra, right on the Goulburn River. A chance to take our kayaks, leaving the bikes at home.

We planned two paddles, from Thorton back to camp and later, from the camp to Molesworth.

As a novice paddler myself (more or less), I was cautious, as clearly the river looked treacherous. The property owner, a local farmer, when he found out our intentions, was highly concerned about us doing these paddles. He gave it the same description.

So if you might be thinking of starting kayaking on a river, then, depending on the river, a good deal of caution might need to be applied.

The upper end of the Goulburn is narrow, fast flowing, shallow and so cold it takes your breath away. And the banks are, to a large degree, lined with almost impenetrable willows and blackberries, making it hard to land if required. I found, in my home made 5.1 m wooden sea kayak, that the fast flowing current controlled my boat more than I did, it was just far too long for the conditions. (a whitewater kayak would have been more appropriate).

At one stage, I was swept into and trapped by an overhanging willow branch. Had I been upside down, I could well have been trapped. It took me quite some time and effort to extricate myself and my wife

and a friend, in her flat bottomed, hybrid canoe/kayak (Chesapeake Mill Creek 16) were in a panic. Although they pulled into a bank, they had trouble getting back to me for the blackberries.

Finally all was well, but the river ruled. In some places, I estimated that the width of clear water was no more than the length of my boat! And always very fast.

The river was shallow, with many pebble races (as I understand they are called) where it was not uncommon to scrape the hull. I re-epoxied my hull after this paddle and now that we have done some of the upper Murray, it needs it again. If you love the finish on your hull, stay out of a fast flowing, shallow river.

As to Barb's experience. Her flat bottomed boat seemed to handle the conditions without difficulty, although they did slam into one very obvious snag, which did some slight damage to the hull (with lots of noise). They had a good paddle, whereas the sea kayak had to be managed 100% of the time, I felt.

Although nowhere near as cold in January, the upper Murray similarly narrow, shallow lots of willows, but not as fast flowing.

River heights are controlled by water releases from dams and so can vary considerably in small amounts of time.

Our a group from the BM motorcycle club were mainly novices in hired Canadian canoes. We kept well away from the willows, but many of the canoeists found themselves caught

up in willows and the water. And we found one particularly treacherous spot, narrow, extremely fast. I managed to get out before disaster struck, but it did trap another.

Being in the water in the Murray did not matter, as it was warm and quite shallow in many places. The Goulburn is fed from the bottom of Lake Eildon, so the water is always very cold, even in summer.

But below Lake Hume, the river is wide, sluggish, and warmer. Is also deeper and still has a strong current. Many hazards remain, such as snags, but they can generally be avoided. And I think a more relaxing experience can be had.

I have looked at a couple of white water kayaking books since and that is quite scary. Safety is still a huge issue. No sharks, the hazards are different (tiger snakes).

Paddling on the Murray in our area (Yarrowonga) is great in my boat, it is only in the shallow, fast and narrow upper reaches where it is inappropriate.

To conclude – river paddling is great, but pick your river. Of course, Bill Robinson might have a different view (along with his greater experience).



Paddling the Goulburn, note the overhanging willows

Whitsundays — Shute Harbour to Hook Island

August 1 – 9 2005

by Raia and Neil

Arriving in Airlie Beach a few days before we were planning to launch, we watched the weather deteriorate over the next three days and wondered at the wisdom (or lack of it) at planning an expedition out to Hook Island when we had been paddling less than twelve months.

We had taken advice from club members experienced in the Whitsundays, planning a trip with distances suited to relaxed, holiday-style paddling and adding items of gear such as a lightweight tarp, that might otherwise have been sacrificed for space. Where possible, paddle in the morning before the winds get strong and aim to land and depart near high tide to avoid exposed tidal flat landings.

"It will be windy" one member said. And indeed it was.

From the lookout at Shute Harbour the course of the entire trip: out to South Molle, across to Cid Harbour on Whitsunday Island and around Hook Island, was laid out like a map. The southeasterly trade winds blew in from the direction of Hamilton Island and I was glad we'd decided against the more ambitious course around the south end of Whitsunday Island.

Our departure coincided with that of Rob Smith's TAFE group, so we accompanied them across to the south end of South Molle Island and felt much more secure for their company in the choppy, rainy conditions. Entering Sandy Bay, we intended to land but spouting almost on the beach alerted us to the presence

of 2-3 whales. Neil and I turned north and headed towards our camp at Paddle Bay, near the resort, shadowed by the whales some distance offshore. We tucked ourselves away in the most sheltered of the campsites as the wind blew and the rain poured down (tarp was very handy) – no going anywhere the next day. There is CDMA access through much of the Whitsundays. With the BOM predicting 30-35 knots, we were wondering when we were going to see that picture postcard weather!

The following day dawned and we could at last see Whitsunday Island again. Quickly packing we set off, aiming to cross to Whitsunday Island and turn north for Hook Island Resort where we had a room booked – a bit of luxury to precede several days of salt water washes.

Even though fully loaded, we found we were travelling faster than expected and the tide was still flooding south as we crossed between South Molle and Whitsunday Islands. This also made for choppy conditions as the wind was against tide.

As the tide turned, the sea flattened somewhat and we were assisted in our journey north, but with some very strong gusts as we crossed the mouth of Cid Harbour. The rest of the trip north to Hook Island Resort past quickly – smooth seas and sails up leaving some big startled turtles in our wake.

The resort is a bit dilapidated but is hospitable, quiet and unpretentious

and will no doubt be redeveloped into something fancy in the future. It is located with excellent views across to Whitsunday Island and the narrow Hook Passage, a nice deck to relax on and watch the boats go by.

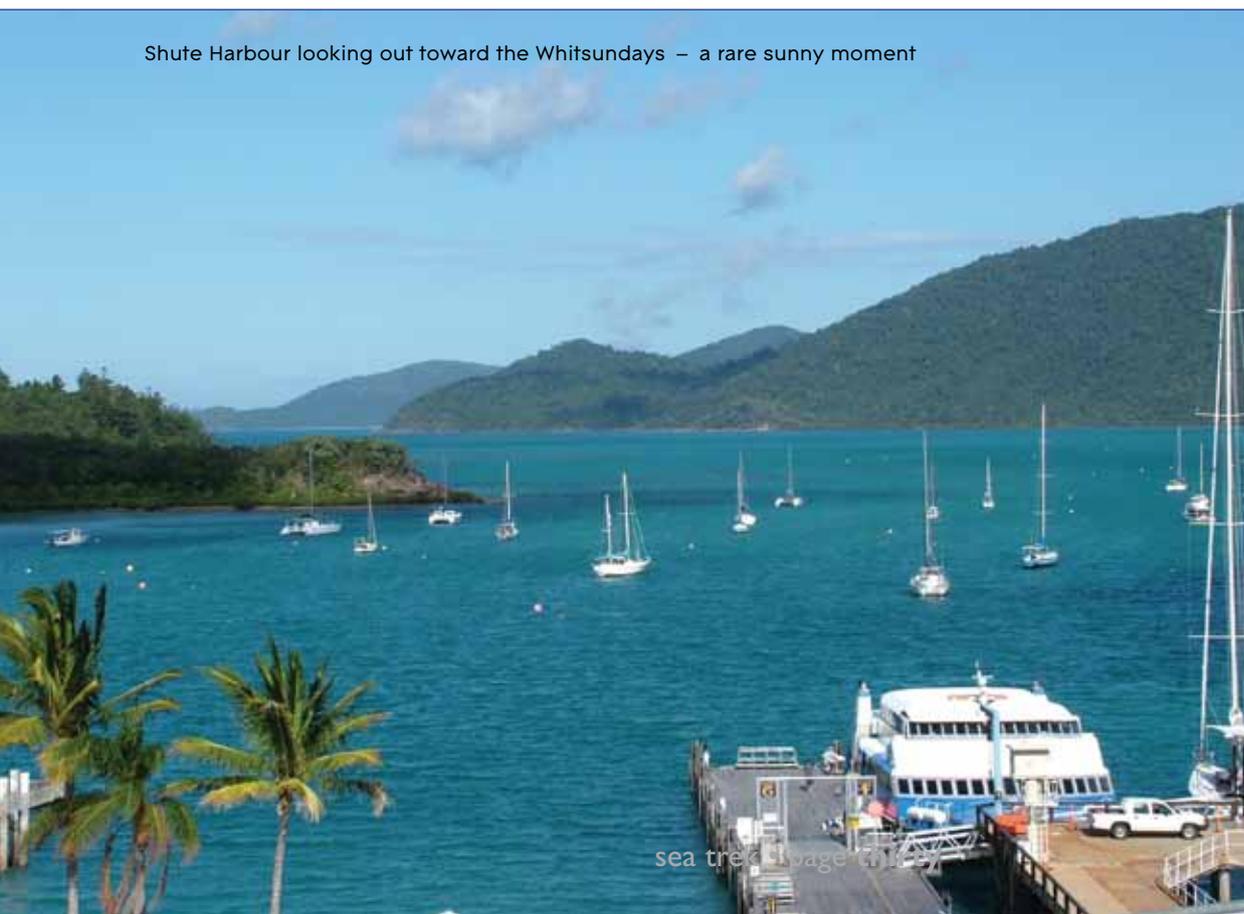
Up the east side of Hook Island, the sea was a bit bouncy from the cliffs, but the wind was behind us (SE again/still) and we made good time to our next camp at Crayfish Beach. A little bit more windy the next day, but probably no more than was predicted from the last forecast before we left Hook Island Resort (13-18 knot SE). This was the challenging bit we had been warned about – rounding the Pinnacles, a very scenic rock formation that David Golightly has some very nice blue-sky, flat sea photos of.

I had planned on arriving at the Pinnacles as the tide began to ebb but once again we were too quick – for plastic the Cortezes cut through the water quite nicely even when fully loaded. We had a 1-1.5m following sea and there was no sitting around waiting for it to drop (or leisure to take photos). It was an exhilarating passage – lots of bracing and edging across the waves whenever there was a gap until after passing the "Woodpile" (more scenic rocks) we entered a bay with quite a lot of yachts sheltering.

A couple of yachts had motored past going south as we rounded the Pinnacles, close enough to see the curious and rather horrified looks on the faces of their skippers as they peered down at us.

The northern end of Hook Island is the most scenic and also tranquil, largely sheltered from the SE. You can see the waves offshore where the big ships pass, but Maureens Beach is quite flat and the snorkelling is great. A rather steep coral beach added to the texture on the hulls of our poor kayaks, but having the camp high up enhanced the view and finally we had our picture-postcard blue skies and seas and wonderful sunsets over Hayman Island. Two days is really not enough, but we moved on (packing up in the rain again) to move the grand distance of 3 km to Steens Beach.

Shute Harbour looking out toward the Whitsundays – a rare sunny moment



More great views and snorkelling and sunsets. We ran out of red wine, so it must have been getting towards the end of the trip. We did really eat well though, dehydrated home-made meals cooked up to tasty dinners without taking up much space or weight.

The trip south down the western side of Hook Island started with a northeasterly wind at dawn and we hoped in vain that it would continue – no such luck as it soon dropped and a 15–20 knot southerly built up. Staying close to shore gave protection from the waves and the current flowing south helped but it was a hard slog.

Once around the point at the entrance to False Nara Inlet we were suddenly confronted by 1.5 m waves. This fortunately didn't last as the wind dropped to 10 knots as we passed Nara Inlet, but also signalled a flood of yachts that had been sheltering in the inlet – out they poured, including one flying the Jolly Roger! (all motoring, we saw very few yachts actually using their sails).

Curlew Beach in Macona Inlet was a welcome sight and we settled into our final camp and watched the clouds building over Whitsunday Island then descending to dump rain on Whitsunday Passage. Our last big crossing was the next morning, from Curlew Beach back to South Molle 7 nm (12km). There was SE wind and waves but we had gained in

confidence a lot from the Pinnacles and crossed in about 2.5 hours, then on to Shute Harbour.

The Whitsundays are a wonderful place for developing expeditioning skills – dealing with the tides and winds, finding a balance between quiet places and touristy places and how much gear to take (lots of water).

On the whole the planning paid off – possibly another month later would have given better weather and maybe

booking the campsites on arrival rather than in advance may have allowed for more flexibility around weather conditions (or resulted in more company in camp, difficult to say). We gained a lot in confidence from this trip and were keen to launch back into Melbourne winter paddling on our return (wind again, but colder!).

Raia Wall
Neil Brenton

Dagger Cortez
Dagger Cortez

Raia at Maureen's Beach



Sunset at Maureen's Beach – Hayman Island in the background



Photo of the issue — poking around Red Point, Cape Woolamai, Phillip Island

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