

OF THE ADVANCED SEA KAYAK CLUB



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organization

promotion of events and conferences
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SECRETARY:

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AN INTERNATIONAL SEA KAYAKING CLUB
OPEN TO ALL INTERESTED IN THIS ASPECT OF CANOEING

ADVANCED SEA KAYAK CLUB

NEWSLETTER NO.68

JULY 1988

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EDITORIAL

Thanks to Barry Howell we now have available the official report of the
6TH INTERNATIONAL SEA KAYAKING SYMPOSIUM
held last November.

It is obtainable from Barry at £2.00 U.K. or £2.75 Europe, USA and
Australia. His address is:-

BARRY HOWELL, 'BARN HEY', ALLITHWAITE, GRANGE OVER SANDS, CUMBRIA,
L111 7RJ

It is also available from me.

Do not forget the AGM of BCU Sea Touring Committee scheduled for 1st
and 2nd October this year to be held at Harwich.

THE COASTAL ADVISORY SERVICE is now up and running. There are two ways
you can use it. Let me have your name/address and the coastal area you are
particularly familiar with and/or send a stamped addressed envelope for the
constantly up-dated computer print out of those already contributing to this list.

Excerpt from the COASTAL ADVISORY SERVICE list

"Channel Isles; Guernsey
(in return for a slide show can offer
hospitality, accommodation and some gear)

Brian Aplin
Elizabeth College
Guernsey
Channel Isles"

QAJAQ book by David Zimmerly. I reviewed this book in this newsletter
some months ago and have been importing it into this country from the States. I
have sent off for another batch. If you're waiting for your copy please be
patient; if you want a copy send £7.50 to me with your order.

Ant. Card (a fellow Isle of Wighter) and I paddled to Lundy Island a
couple of weeks ago. We went from Woolacombe. Talk about lucky with the
weather!!

We had planned a three day trip. One day to get there, one day to
explore the Island the one day to return.

Our day out and day back were perfect, light airs and warm and sunny.
Our day on the Island saw continual gale force winds - uncanny, particularly as
the shipping forecasts gave no indication of such conditions for the Lundy area.

If you intend doing this trip you should write and book a camp site as camping is limited. Write to Landlord of Marisco Inn. It is worth the paddle if only to sample the Lundy Isle local brew. They have their own brewery which, though small, is worth a 'look see' and a chat with the chief brewer. A year ago Lundy was designated a MARINE NATURE RESERVE.

What makes Lundy so special? Lundy is best known to most people for its natural history reputation (particularly as a sea bird breeding site and bird migration staging post) and for its history of early settlement, shipwrecks, pirates and charismatic owners.

Some people simply visit Lundy to experience a wilder part of Britain, a place away from the pressures of the mainland. Gazing down the steep granite cliffs most will be oblivious to the rich variety of life that exists beneath the surface of the sea. Lundy's position in the south-west and its location close to oceanic water provide the ideal conditions for a number of rare southern species.

The Nature Reserve includes the wreck of MV Robert. The Robert, which sank a mile east of Lundy in 1975, is one of the few intact wrecks around Britain and has developed a distinct collection of marine species all of its own.

If you do make this trip don't forget to make an entry in the SEA KAYAKING LOG BOOK to be found in the Marisco Inn. This Log was started by James Moore and David Taylor in 1983.

A.S.K.C. SHOP

Ties @ £6 00 each
ASKC Stickers @ 35 pence each
ASKC letter headed notepaper @ 50 pence per ten sheets
4th National Sea Kayaking Symposium @ 50 pence each
5th International Sea Kayaking Symposium Report @ £1.00 each
T-shirts - small/medium/large/X large @ £4.50 each (in yellow or black)
Sweat shirts - small/medium/large/Xlarge @ £8.00 each (in yellow or black)
Information Sheets on Tides and Buoyage @ 50 pence each
H.M. Coastguard Paper on Safety @ 50 pence each
ASKC Ski Hats @ £3.50 each
AJAQ book @ £7.50
Ernie's Check List
Coastal Advisory Service List) Free in return for S.A.E.

All prices include postage and packing

MEMOIRS OF A DAY AT SEA
BY ALF HEYER OF CHELMSFORD, ESSEX - 15TH APRIL 1984

Mick and Dave didn't arrive at the Club until 9.15 a.m. We left at about 9.20 a.m. Arrived at Bradwell at 10 a.m. All on the estuary at 10.30 a.m., told not to use the pier by the Sailing Club, we set course 260 degrees for Maldon. Dave told us to set our sights between a buoy and a black flag. At a point in the distance resembling that of a dome, that was our course. (In the meantime, thinking to myself) felt quite rocky feeling the wind against the tide and getting my face nicely sprayed with salt water and also the boat. Felt apprehensive in midstream, felt as though I was coping quite well, paddles felt comfortable. Nearing Osea Island back and legs started to ache and felt quite uncomfortable. Started to lean back too much, told Dave of my back towards Osea Island, didn't think I would make it back, we were going to stop at Northey Island, but told Dave I would be alright to continue to Heybridge. Got to Heybridge at 12.30, tried to get out of my boat, on the left side, got stuck, felt stiff, got out on right side instead with Dave's assistance. Stopped for lunch, had $2\frac{1}{2}$ rolls, hot drinking chocolate, while the others brewed theirs. Mick had a curry, Byron had a Mexican omelette, which half ended up on the grass, these being quick dried foods, and Dave had some soup. During which time they talked me into going back with them. Telling me we will get back much quicker with wind going with tide. I kept my plastic shoes on, getting back into the boat Mick was helping me in, half rafted up with me, got my paddle caught under the bow of Mick's boat, with my finger stuck in between the paddle and the cockpit, ended up with legs in the boat and arse in the sea. Throwing unnecessary abuse at Mick, at which Dave told me to keep my voice down. Dave rafted up, got in the boat comfortably and away. Felt much more comfortable, as sandals had more support on foot rest. Wind with the tide and a smooth effect on the sea, a nice paddle, Dave showed me how to ride the waves, very enjoyable.

Going a bit too fast, Dave told me to slow down, Mick was having slight trouble with his boat or steering, I was also holding paddles too much on left (have to put tape on paddles to keep in correct position). Then Byron started to comment on the black clouds north of us, this was about three-quarters of the way back heading across the water back to Bradwell, a storm started to blow up, Mick seemed to be in a lot of trouble behind me which I didn't know about at that time. I was too much east and then too much west of Dave, I was everywhere. Dave was whistling at me to slow down, couldn't seem to slow down properly, every time I did, I felt insecure. I got too far ahead of the group, which was bad, which also split the group up, with the waves getting stronger and the estuary getting rougher $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ miles away from shore started to get very frightened. Beginning to get quite panicky, scared to turn around to see where the others were in case I went in.

Dave started to calm me down, felt much more secure when Dave was there. He asked me to slow down and wait for the others, but the wind was too strong and was pushing me forward, and Dave coaxed me back into land on the mud bank and felt very, very relieved. Dave set straight off for Mick and Byron to help them out of trouble. Could only see Byron's boat, thought Mick had gone in, started to get worried, carried on pulling me boat across the mud, quite deep nearly lost sandals, took them off, then went back to see how the others were getting on. Could see everybody, seemed to be O.K. Mick was laying across his canoe with Dave paddling along with Byron, weather brightening up considerably. Then Mick got up and paddled on his own. All seem to be O.K. Now for the trauma of getting into my boat from the mud bank, landed on my arse again in the mud, glad there was nobody there to see me, most embarrassing, stuck my paddle in the mud and got into my boat quite well then. Paddled up the edge of the creek, decided to turn back, getting too breezy. Got to the ramp, smashed boat against concrete ramp, was not very pleased, never mind, young lads from Sailing Club helped me carry my boat up the bank, very grateful to them. By that time the others were heading towards the ramp. Gave the others some hot chocolate when they arrived. Byron said Mick and himself rafted together while they all waited for Dave, that's why I could only see one image. All glad to be safely ashore; after that circumnavigating the Isle of Wight is completely and utterly off for this year, until more sea canoeing is experienced. Now get out of this wet suit (or mess suit) (not sure whether it's that or mud).

P.S. We had Dave quite worried. I think he lost a few more hairs off the top of his head????

THE SMALL ISLES BY ANOTHER NAME
BY DAVE MARTIN OF PORTSMOUTH CANOE CLUB

John, I enjoyed Jon Nicholls' article on the Western Isles (usually known as the Small Isles) in the May Newsletter. It brought back memories of a very similar trip I did two years ago. I hope that more sea canoeists will be encouraged to visit this beautiful area. However we need to be aware of our impact on both the local communities and the environment. To this end, it behoves us to do our homework in advance. Jon may have been relying, to a certain extent, upon the knowledge of other members of the group. No problem there. However his article contains some misleading comments. Considering the wide readership of the Newsletter, I will straighten some facts and add others as a service to prospective paddlers in this area.

The Islands of Muck and Eigg are privately owned. One should enquire on arrival, or at least, camp tidily and unobtrusively. Canna has been owned by the National Trust for Scotland since 1981, although its former owner, the naturalist and historian, Dr John Lorne Campbell who bought it in 1938 lives there still. Permission to camp should be sought from the NTS at 109 Church Street, Inverness, IV1 1EU. Rhum is owned by the Nature Conservancy Council (not the National Trust) and is operated as a gigantic outdoor laboratory. They go as far as ferrying the refuse generated by the 20 or so inhabitants off the Island. Because of limited facilities, permission to camp should be sought in advance. Write to The Head Warden, White House, Kinloch, Isle of Rhum. The Island may be closed for a week in May and a week in August. Camping, and indeed landing, is permitted only in L. Scresort. Whether one actually lands elsewhere is up to the individual and situation.

Jon's group may well have paddled 15 miles from the mainland before landing on Eigg, but the open crossing is somewhat less than 9 miles (nautical). Or has Eigg moved since I last looked? Rhum has an interesting history, with the Bullough family figuring prominently around the turn of the century when the castle was built. The son, Sir George, had the family mausoleum at Harris erected. He moved his father's remains from the nearby hillside tomb which he is said to have then blown up! It sounds as if Jon landed at the bay of the 'singing sands' on the west coast of Eigg. The sand is supposed to be silvery white and to sing or squeak as it is walked upon. It tends to come and go with storms. When I landed there, there was little sign of the sand and it sounds as if Jon found more seaweed than sand. Has anyone seen the sands? Is it time to make the Trades Descriptions Act?

Some recommended reading for island 'baggers' includes: "The Observer Island Britain", Peter Crookson, Book Club Associates, covering all our major islands in a semi-glossy format. Slightly more factual, less glossy and with maps is "The Shell Book of the Islands of Britain", Booth and Perrott, Guideway Windward. Its coverage is similar, but with more emphasis on the Scottish Islands. For a not too heavy history of the Islands of the West Coast of Scotland, try "Scottish Islands", Grimble, BBC.

I much enjoyed Jon's article, all the more for the lack of unplanned situations and problems. The organisation was good or the gods were smiling on them. If anything untoward happened, we didn't hear about it.

From: 72, Whittingham Road, Mapperley, Nottingham, NG3 6BH. Tel.: 0602-609931
29th March 1988

Dear John,

I thought I'd drop you a line about this season's activities at Valley, and of course, at Current Trends too, as you'll probably put it in the newsletter so that other people can have a read as well.

Its been quite a big change for us to go over from sea-kayak manufacture with some accessory sales, to a full-blooded retail outlet with a cafeteria as well as a canoe school. Of course, sitting at the top of the artificial slalom course at H.P. has meant that we've looked at inland canoeing more than we have done in the past, but there's still plenty for the sea canoeist at Current Trends.

One thing we've done is to try and create a resources centre, so that not only can you look at boats and equipment, but also there is a notice board for individuals who want to sell their own things, sea boats, paddles and I don't know what!

However we also have reference copies of tide tables and the Admiralty Pilots, so if sea paddlers want to plan a trip in advance they can come in and look up the tidal information at no cost to themselves!

This won't get into your newsletter until after Whitsun, which is when we'll be having our usual Nordkapp Owners' Meet at Nigel Dennis's School of Sea Canoeing at Treaddur Bay on Anglesey. It's always at the same time every year the first weekend in May, including the Bank Holiday Monday (April 29 to May 2 this year). Of course we get lots of people who don't have Nordkapps its just that Nordkapp owners get free dormitory accommodation, and anyone else has to pay Nigel as normal very inexpensive anyway.

Our most exciting venture this year is the sail/canoe/sail holiday on the William McCann, the ketch that will leave Holyhead on 9th July with sea kayaks on board and sail north to the Hebrides for two weeks. The canoeists on board will help sail the ketch and then use it as a base for sea kayak exploration of the area. The beauty of the idea is that you don't HAVE to paddle you can walk the hills or just lounge on board. It's all found, including instructors and leaders if you need them, plus kayaks, B.A.s paddles, etc. For two weeks it'll cost £495.

We've several new lines at Current Trends, too besides our on-going canoe-school programme and the cafeteria.

The Aeroquatic, a blow moulded and therefore very robust plastic boat from the States, is proving very popular and we're onto our second container load already. Although it is designed for high performance on rapids, the surfers are finding a delight too. We've a demo boat available so folks can always come and try it on the slalom course.

We're finding the KOKATAT clothing (formally called Blue Puma in the U.S.) is really attracting the discerning canoeists who want top quality. We sold out of the 'dry tops' on the first day of the Crystal Palace Exhibition in February. People kept looking at the price, going away and looking at the British made garments on other stands and then coming back and buying Kokatat! Sadly we just hadn't imported enough.

I'm still busy helping out at Current Trends, as the weather can make a tremendous difference to the numbers of people coming into the building. I'm a dab hand at wiping down tables now and I can rustle up a mean omelette any time you like!

You were talking of having one of your A.S.K.C. meetings with us sometime in the future, so if you do, you can sample the food at first hand I've put on half a stone this winter, dammit!

All best wishes, Frank

HIGH ADVENTURE ON VIOLENT SEAS

WELCOME TO STORM SURFING

By Will Nordby

No doubt about it. A newsletter published by a group called Force 10 piqued my curiosity. Ocean whitewater tours and storm sea skiing; were these new terms in the vocabulary of coastal kayaking, or merely euphemisms from a creative mind? And who was Steve Sinclair, the head guide/instructor of Force 10?

I'd never heard of Sinclair, although I'd been kayaking for over a decade. The interesting thing was that all this activity was taking place practically in my backyard. Elk, California, "the home of storm sea skiing," was less than a three-hour drive north. Being not only curious, but also somewhat skeptical, I had to investigate.

It was a cold blustery February morning when I arrived at the small coastal community of Elk. Due west, beyond the windswept bluffs, the Pacific Ocean roared its presence. Surely no one would be out paddling in such stormy conditions. But, upon checking at the Force 10 office, I was told Sinclair was indeed storm sea skiing. Directions for the best vantage point were given and a few minutes later I was at the beach.

Squinting against the force of the wind and flying sand, I scanned the ocean's tumultuous surface, eyes watering. Swells crashed against sea stacks, sending spray high into the air. Five minutes ... 15 minutes ... half an hour passed. I was about to turn away when I glimpsed a tiny figure in a black wet suit and white helmet paddling from behind a distant islet. I stared, fascinated.

Sinclair rose and fell from view in response to the undulating mounds of water. Riding atop his 19-foot blue and white surf ski, Sinclair aligned himself in front of a towering wave. The tempo quickened as he revved his paddling rate to a flat-out sprint.

As the wall of gray-green water steepened, Sinclair ruddered onto the face and accelerated. Twin plumes of spray roostertailed from the ski's narrow stern. Using deft body and paddle control, he rose to the shoulder of the wave and locked in for the ride. Just before the crest broke, he quickly turned and popped over the top hanging precipitously in mid-air, his blunt nosed bow angled skyward. The wave he'd been riding slammed onto the beach.

When I could see Sinclair again, he was moving seaward. It wasn't too long before a breaking wave loomed in front of him. Immediately he responded by pointing his bow toward an unbroken section. With piston-like strokes, he launched himself up the wave's face and punched through. My initial skepticism changed to respect. This man knew what he was doing.

For the next half hour or so, I watched Sinclair in action. Bracing, ruddering, leaning, paddling, he manoeuvred his surf ski like a

chess master to avoid being checkmated by the ocean. Even though the surf ski was designed differently than a sea kayak, I could see where much could be learned from Sinclair's techniques. My own skills in handling surf were downright pathetic. In fact, I went out of my way to avoid coastal surf, just like many other sea kayakers I knew. Now here was an opportunity to change all that.

With a final wild wave ride, Sinclair came flawlessly onto the beach amid the slurry of broken water.

Later, at the Force 10 office, we sat down to chat. Here is some of what we talked about.

Q: . How did you happen to get involved with storm sea skiing?

A: Like everything, it was a roundabout way. I'd always had a love for water sports. In high school, in Los Angeles, I was on the swimming and water polo teams. Same thing in college. Then I got into body surfing for a long time and worked as a lifeguard. Around 1970, I decided I wanted to go on an expedition using some kind of a human powered apparatus.

Q: Did you have a particular trip in mind?

A: Yeah. Thought I'd go from California around Cape Horn to Florida. I spent a lot of time looking at different floatcraft and dories. Then one day, a friend came up to my lifeguard tower at Will Rogers Beach near Los Angeles and told me my high school coach and buddy, Gene McCarthy, had bought me a wave ski. I really didn't want it but McCarthy knew I'd go out and bash, mash and trash the thing - which I ended up doing.

Q: Did you ever go on your trip?

A: Yeah, but not the one I originally planned. In 1978, three of us tried to paddle from Puerto Penasco (Mexico) to New Orleans by going through the Panama Canal.

Q: Did you make it?

A: No. We didn't get along and, as a result, broke up. I paddled as far as Guaymas.

Q: Whose idea was it to start Force 10?

A: Mine.

Q: How did it come about?

A: I'd damaged ligaments in my ankle playing city league basketball. Because of that I couldn't do my regular workout, running 10 to 13 miles a day. So, I just really got into surf skiing. It was while I was laid up with a foot cast that I thought about setting up Force 10.

For a couple of years I'd been doing odd jobs and just got tired of it. I was bored. Since I liked going out on the water, I thought it'd be great as a job. I know friends who felt the same way. So, I got Force 10 going in the fall of '81. I was skilled at a lot of things but I really liked being on the water.

Q: How many people work at Force 10?

A: I have four friends who help me. They have other jobs as well. They are Steve and Charlie Acker, Dave McCutcheon and Tim Taylor. These guys are all great ocean men.

Steve Acker is a diver. He also builds the Odyssey Surf Ski here in Elk. As a builder and paddler, he really understands the stresses the ski takes. Charlie is a former lifeguard and rescue boat operator for the city of Los Angeles. He also is a diver. Dave McCutcheon was a student of mine in swimming and water polo. Although he wasn't a paddler, he learned very quickly and has developed into a good ocean tactician. I knew Tim vaguely when he was growing up in San Pedro. One day he came by when it was blowing about 45 knots and there was a sea cranking outside. He seemed to think this storm sea skiing was fun. That's the attitude I like my guides to have. He's also done a lot of body surfing.

Q: What services do you provide?

A: We pilot two-person kayaks for guided ocean whitewater tours. We also teach people how to go in and out of surf lines. We can show someone in a few lessons, using their kayak or ours, a lot of stuff that's going to save their life.

I have my own rating system. All I relate to is whether someone can handle himself in the ocean. My evaluation doesn't revolve around a guy who can do all the British Canoe Union type requirements. We've had people come here wanting to rent our doubles for their own use. Then they become irate when I won't let them. They say they've taken classes and did this and that. And I tell 'em, "Good for you". Very few of those people know how to get through surf. I've seen too many go out and get eaten for lunch in surf lines.

Q: What does one of your tours consist of?

A: When we take passengers out, they sit up front in our doubles. They help paddle but sometimes there are a few who just want to observe. We take them out through pretty good surf, but never in winds over 35 knots.

Q: I'm intrigued with the surf ski. How does it compare to conventional kayaks? Any why do you prefer to use it for ocean paddling?

A: You have to remember that I came to ocean paddling as a swimmer, body surfer, wave skier and lifeguard. I'm simply conditioned to being in the water. Consequently, I have a high confidence level of being able to

swim ashore in case I separate from my ski. I just don't have this kayaking mentality of sitting inside a kayak and hoping I don't fall out.

It seems manufacturers make all sorts of grandiose statements of how safe their boats are without actually testing them in real ocean conditions.

Look at the designs of sea kayaks. They're all basically flat planes and V-shaped bows and sterns. The fat sterns lift up on waves and cause the bows to dig in and you have to really work to keep from broaching. The surf ski, on the other hand, has a narrow tapered stern that offers less resistance. Along with the rounded bottom and blunt nose, you can easily carve out of a wave.

In sea kayaks, the foot braces are set so your legs are apart and practically straight out. You can't drive off your legs properly. With the surf ski, you're on top of your feet and in line with the keel. This allows you to get leg power into your strokes and have a better feel for keel movement.

If you dump over in a ski, you simply roll or climb back on and you're back paddling again. With a sea kayak, if you don't roll, you have to pump out the water and flounder to get back in. The problem is multiplied in surf areas.

Most sea kayaks are not strong enough to withstand the force of a breaking wave; the ski is. And I certainly wouldn't want to be caught inside a kayak when a wave broke on top of me.

I'm not just totally pro surf ski and anti kayak. There are quite a few viable designs. You just have to be more adept in handling a sea kayak on a surf bound coast. People have to be aware of what real ocean paddling is like and be prepared for it. I'd recommend that kayakers who want to do coastal cruising seriously get used to being in the water; know how to swim near wash rocks; be able to read surf; and drive off their legs for maximum power. But above all, they should know how to use their kayaks in surf. It doesn't do much good to read or talk about it.

Q: Over the years of your storm sea skiing, what procedures have you developed?

A: The first thing I do is study the ocean surface from a high point. That's when paddling really begins. I start eyeing wave sets to read their tempo. When it's real wild and windy, it's really confusing. All the time I'm moving my ski or kayak down to the beach, I'm looking to see how the surface is setting - what its tempo is. It really takes practice. Sometimes I misjudge things myself. I try to gauge everything from where I'm standing near the surfline to about a mile out. It's like getting the rhythm of a jump rope before you jump in. I just wait until I think I've got it.

There are a couple of methods I use to launch my ski. Either I hold it or push it from the back. When the surge is right, I run forward and hop

on and paddle strongly to get beyond the shore break. My bow is always pointed straight into the sea. With a kayak, I put my foot in the boat and kick it off to give me initial momentum. It's timing and momentum that's important. I would never sit in a surfline. Most kayakers I see who do that get sucked into a trough as a surge recedes and get hit by a breaking wave.

Once I'm headed out, I concentrate on my trajectories - the way I approach an area so I'm set up for what the ocean is going to do. I always have myself prepared to head into whatever is coming toward me. That requires setting my course way in advance. It's like in lifeguarding. A great lifeguard works on prevention first. If you don't, then when the sea attacks, you don't have time to compensate and you find yourself at a broad angle.

When I'm preparing to land in surf, I look seaward about a mile to check for hills, bumps and irregularities. Instead of just a straight horizon line, you have to imagine a couple of artificial horizon lines going out so you can look into the depth of the blue surface and see if it has any sharp irregularities. Then you can spot sets coming in.

Just as I time waves for launching, I do the same thing for landing. I'm particularly watching ahead to see how the whitewater line forms on the beach after a wave recedes. The top of the line marks the point where I will ride in on my ski. The bottom of the line, on the other hand, marks where I will land a kayak; specifically my double. I've found double can't ride a wave parallel like ky ski, so I take them in perpendicular. The whitewater line also tells me if the waves are hitting at an angle. If so, I set up my approach accordingly.

To land with my ski, I select a wave and put my blunt bow onto a small hump which follows the crest. It's sort of a pocket that pulls me forward with the main wave. I do the same with my double, but it requires greater skill to maintain position because there's a tendency to be pushed ahead by the wide stern. I constantly have to back paddle and correct to keep from going over the crest. It's a much more critical manoeuvre than with a ski. But it works.

Q: Why does storm sea skiing appeal to you?

A: It's fund and wild. You can shoot yourself off the back of waves and float through the air to the bottom of troughs. It's a great rush. Then when you hit bottom, you've got another wave coming at you. I've been doing it for years but still get a tight stomach.

You don't just try to maintain headway, you charge uphill on the wave face. Wind and rain are just added elements. I'll go out and do things that are commonplace to me and others will think I'm insane. But I enjoy it. It's exhilarating.

PARADISE ISLANDS

After 45 years the Farne Islands have yet to lose their fascination for fisherman Bill Shiel. Peter Hetherington discovered why on a voyage.

As inhabitants of an island nation the British - particularly the English - often display an astonishing ignorance about the smaller islands off their shores. Remember the widespread impression, before the South Atlantic war, that the Falklands were somewhere up north beyond Scotland?

Most Brits have probably heard of the Hebrides (although the location is often in doubt), Orkney and Shetland, the Scillies, maybe even Lundy and Fair Isle and - thanks to a millionaire hot air balloonist - Rathlin Island as well.

Perhaps Holy Island, or Lindisfarne as it is often known, can trigger some response because of its association with early English Christianity. But what of the Farne Islands, seven miles south?

There are plenty of them - 15 to 28, depending on the state of the tide - and at this time of year they are home to around 100,000 sea birds of 17 varieties, 5,000 grey seals and nine wardens employed by the National Trust to safeguard the wildlife and shepherd the thousands of visitors.

The Farnes lie between $1\frac{1}{2}$ and $4\frac{3}{4}$ miles from the coast of North Northumberland: small rocky outcrops, with basking seals and magnificent dolerite columns - the pinnacles of Staple Island the stack of Inner Farne - which give the islands a grandeur, and sense of isolation out of all proportion to their size and distance from the mainland.

They brought peace to hermits and monks for 900 years. St Cuthbert died on Inner Farne in 687 and a chapel bearing his name, completed in 1370, is well preserved, while the shells of monastic buildings remain.

Now the islands, known as Farena Ealande in Anglo-Saxon times (islands of the pilgrims), have assumed another role. They are an ornithological paradise, a huge bird sanctuary of international importance and, invariably, they leave the Nikon-wielding visitor quite breathless as the puffins, guillemots, razorbills, terns and a host of other species swoop around an intruding vessel. There is just too much to photograph.

"The place never loses its fascination," says Billy Shiel, as he guides the 36 ft Glad Tidings III - a fishing vessel (crabs and lobsters) which doubles as the Farnes bus service - past the pinnacles, with authoritative running ornithological and historical commentary. "Every journey is different. After all these years I've never lost interest in the place."

Mr Shiel, 60 next birthday, has been doing the Farnes run for 45 years from his home port of Seahouses, a quietish fishing village complete with boatbuilder and kippering plant which, regrettably, has fallen victim to the odd amusement arcade.

His father had been doing much the same for nigh on 60 years before and a 15 year old son will eventually take over. The Shiel enterprise has three vessels - Glad Tidings I, II and IV as well - including a traditional East Coast coble, with Viking origins, built by Archibald Dawson in his small yard beside Seahouses harbour.

We leave the port at 10 a.m. for the first of Billy's daily trips, building up to a steady eight knots. Around 50 school-children are on board for a practical natural history lesson.

There is a moderate breeze and the spray soon lashes the deck as Glad Tidings punches the waves towards Longstone Island. Soon the seals are everywhere. The children enthralled. "They are inquisitive animals," says the guide book, "and often come quite close to the boat to inspect the passengers."

We soon clamber ashore on Staple Island, which is linked to the neighbouring Brownsman Island at low tide. Three of the wardens, who all work on short National Trust contracts, live there in a small house from April to the end of August and - occasionally - wait a long time for rations and visitors.

Tim Barton, the 24 year old head warden, a botany graduate, says they were cut off for eight days in April although they always keep a week's ration in reserve.

The island astounds the young visitors. Only a rope separates them from the breeding sea birds, mainly shags and guillemots nestling only feet away on the rock ledges with their young. "They're tame," says an excited child. "Don't touch them, they can give you quite a peck," replied Ian Burton, another warden, who spent last season on Inner Farne, which extends to over 16 acres.

Ian, aged 27, a former oilfield engineer in the Middle East, is fascinated by the shags. "I could watch them for hours. You get to know the individual birds and their characteristics - some are aggressive, some biddable, some just uninterested."

But he says the secret of living on the islands for months on end, with two colleagues, is "not to get so fanatical about birds that you bore everyone. If you were bird mad everyone would go crackers. You've got to talk about other things."

He cannot contain his enthusiasm, however. "We get people coming who have travelled the world saying they've never been to a place where you can see so many birds together at such close range."

Tim Barton, of course, denies that the birds are tame ("They do feed for themselves") but acknowledges - on Staple Island, at least - that they are "very tolerant" of humans because they come into contact with so many of them.

John Osborne, aged 22, the youngest warden, was on that youth-testing expedition, Operation Raleigh in New Zealand and - like others before him - had an association with Manpower Services Commission schemes and voluntary work before he arrived in the Farnes. "The pay is not great but you do this work for love more than anything else. These islands are unique for the variety of birds." He is most enthusiastic about the roseate tern - "Britain's rarest sea bird" - which has been breeding nearby. There are 12 pairs in the Farnes.

On the return journey Billy Shiel displays an infectious enthusiasm for the islands as Glad Tidings glides up a rocky inlet for a closer inspection of the bird colonies and stops momentarily beside the pinnacles. After two and a half hours the vessel returns to port. A few hours later, she'll be back at sea with another party.

GUERNSEY CANOE CLUB EXPED' 1987 - PEMBROKESHIRE
BY STEVE DORRITY, GUERNSEY, CHANNEL ISLES

Once again the intrepid (or is it tepid) paddlers of the Guernsey Canoe Club were on their way, this time to the frozen wastes of South Wales. The trip across from Guernsey went surprisingly well and we settled down at Portsmouth to wait for the arrival of John who was to provide the trailer for the canoes.

After packing all the gear into the ex-army trailer we had hired, we set off on the open road. First stop was Haverfordwest where we found a place to stay, a most fortunate choice as it had a pub at the front. The next day we moved further west down to Musselwick near Milford Haven; a few days were spent sorting out boats and gear, with a "warm up" paddle around St Anne's Head. This paddle was undertaken in stiff winds and high seas and was followed by an epic portage up a cliff to get back to the road.

The expedition proper set off from St Martin's Haven after a packing session that lasted about three hours! First we headed for the infamous Jack Sound; just about everyone we had spoken to warned us away with stories of doom and gloom. As is usual whenever we're warned off it was pretty boring, the scenery was very nice though and we watched the Puffins wheeling around us, one, in his efforts to escape from one kayak almost crashed into another one! While exploring a passage we met up with our first Seals and spent 20 minutes or so taking pictures and trying to persuade them to come a little closer. Our first night's campsite on the move was a beach I had seen from the cliff top, boldly declaring that there would be plenty of room to spend the night, despite the big tides, so having pitched the tents everyone else watched the tide rising whilst I sat in the tent cooking the tea with my fingers crossed!

The following day found us spending the night at a great site at Solva; the only problem being the local tourists used it as a footpath for their evening constitutional (look it up), the local pub was very pleasant though and some expedition members found it necessary to supplement their rations with a large portion of chips. The following morning we paddled a little way into the cove for a look; it was very similar to Norway in appearance, probably because it was a glacial meltwater valley and so was formed in a similar manner to the Norwegian coves. The next few miles were paddled in an air of trepidation, as we were about to turn into the infamous Ramsey Sound. As we drew nearer to the headland imaginations ran riot, amplifying the sound of the sea to the point that some of us could hear it running in the Sound, five miles away! In fact as is often the case the Sound was quite flat, although still running at a fair rate.

The tides in Ramsey Sound behave in a very odd fashion with the current running in both directions simultaneously, thus making it possible to slip from one current to another and ride up and down the Sound. Other games were to be found in the whirlpools and overfalls off Black Horse Rock.

The campsite at Whitesands Bay was basic but cheap and so was very satisfactory so far as we were concerned. After a walk into St David's we looked up Andy Middleton, the brother of Sue Middleton an ex-colleague of mine, and made use of the excellent facilities at his outdoor centre for showers and a general clean up.

The next day found Adrian, Dominic, Lesley, Ricky and myself heading for the Bitches in Ramsey Sound to play. The reef that makes up the Bitches extends for about one mile or so from the island of Ramsey itself and causes the tide to race around it, in the confined space of the Sound this makes for exciting paddling. The tide on the day we were out was not a particularly high one but the stiff Force 5 wind against the current made up for this. We decided to make as much ground as possible using Ramsey's helpful eddies, before attempting to cross over to the island and the Bitches. The overfalls were being very playful and as we made our crossing we soon lost most of the ground we had gained.

Paddling hard we just made it into the eddy below the Bitches where we sat and got our breath back. Adrian had taken a roll on the crossing and had done well to stay in his boat; as we rested we took in the white water all around us and the adrenalin started pumping again. Lesley decided that discretion was the better part of valour and volunteered to take the photos.

The water on the upstream side of the Bitches was approx. 2ft higher than our side and was causing a lot of turbulence, the first few ferry glides caused a few rolls as people got used to the ferocity of the water. Later I climbed out onto a rock and Dominic our resident stuntman paddled into the white stuff for some photos, one game involved surfing on the standing waves caused by the stoppers, an interesting experience in sea boats! As we played in the race two large rigid hull inflatables arrived and gave us a display of highly skilled driving as they motored up and down the overfalls, they ran trips out of Whitesands Bay by picking up trippers from the beach, but there were no luxuries like landings and the trippers had to wade out to the boats. Having exhausted ourselves we turned back to Whitesands for cream teas and icecreams, etc.

Over the next few days we had high winds and some time was spent flying kites from the campsite; however, we did manage to get out for a paddle around Ramsey in fairly high seas, the 'back' of the island providing some spectacular scenery and wild life. Once again we were joined by the inflatables who were as close to the cliffs as we were; in fact we followed them into some of the best caves! The only accident of the trip occurred while we were based at Whitesands - Adrian sprained his ankle coming back from the pub!

The day we left Whitesands was sunny with light winds and we set ourselves a crossing of some 16 miles to a distant headland, the night was spent under bivvi's as the beach was unsuitable for pitching tents. During the evening a lone seal appeared and seemed a bit put out that we had pinched its beach, the night was very clear and I spent part of it with my head out of the bivvi looking at the stars. Next day we rounded Strumble Head and passed the lighthouse then on to Fishguard for lunch. The place we chose to stop at had a small but steep beach and this caused a few problems as the waves were dumping; however we all got on the water without too much of a soaking and set off for a small bay near Moylgrove, the only suitable spot on that particular piece of coast that we could spend the night. After a few hours John started to slow down and it became obvious that he was having some difficulty in keeping up. As there was nowhere to land apart from Moylgrove we had no choice but to go on. Leaving Lesley, Dominic and Adrian to look after John, Ricky and I set off to find out if there was anywhere suitable to rest for a while. As we drew closer to the shore it became obvious that in the conditions on the day we would be unable to land without considerable risk to boats and bodies. In the water near us were two men who were swimming around the rocks; at first we thought they might be in trouble and went to see if they were O.K. As we approached the men they called out that there was a lagoon through one of the gullies, this I took to be the Witches Cauldron a local beauty spot, sure enough the gully led to a cave and on to the Cauldron. The Cauldron is a collapsed cave and quite a spectacular phenomenon. Out of the wind John perked up a bit and soon we were able to continue around the corner to our stopping place at Moylgrove. One the way around Dominic and I made a detour through some interesting caves that passed right through the headland.

A late start was followed by a gentle paddle to Cardigan Island where we met up with more Seals and on to Aberporth where we saw some Dolphins playing in the water. Our last campsite "on the road" so to speak was on a sandy beach near Aberporth; here we met up with what appeared to be a youth club on a cycling holiday but turned out to be a single family! The last day on the water started off very warm and sunny and we only managed about two miles before an icecream stop was called for. The coastline along this section was almost

entirely cliff with few landing places, very reminiscent of the south coast of Guernsey only not as high. As we rounded the last headland into Newquay we had a bit of a culture shock. Newquay is a brash loud seaside resort very different from what we had grown used to. After consulting the local tourist office we set off for a campsite across the bay where we spent a few days sorting ourselves out. John and I set out on an epic journey to collect the cars and the following day we all set off for home. The drive to Weymouth was uneventful apart from John's trailer collapsing under the strain and British Channel Island Ferries threatening to not take the boats back on the ferry.

As usual the trip was good fun and I can heartily recommend the Pembrokeshire coast for anyone who enjoys paddling in exciting surroundings.

From: Ken Fink, Maine, U.S.A. 25 January 1988

One of the ways I can judge what the new interest in the sport is going to be as the next season approaches is to count the number of inquiries I receive between December and February for brochures. This year we are at over 300 already. The numbers are well ahead of last year. What is interesting about the U.S. is that there are always pockets of interest that develop independently of influence from anywhere else since the country is so large. Sea kayaking is up and running in the NE, Midwest (Great Lakes), NW Alaska and in northern California. The new area this year is the Southeast U.S. We still have the Gulf coast to go. When all of the coastline of the U.S. is paddling, it will be interesting to see how many boat models are still being peddled for paddling. Racing is also becoming more of an interest. It is hard to convince organizers to hold races on the open ocean because of liability potentials. Every time the fog drops in or the wind goes above 8 knots, organizers run their alternate course - well in the protection of an estuary or bay. In the races we have had here - "The Race of Truth" and "Tour di Verona" - which have substantial open water portions with heavy surf and large swell and wind waves, we have had very few problems. Paddlers have flipped, lost their spraydecks, filled with water, or froze into immobility when confronted with paddling through the "Bulldog". All returned to the starting gate under their own power except one open boat paddler who was brought in by our assist launch. With open water paddling, every year is different and challenges change to keep the course from becoming boring with repetition. Everyone agrees the races are both a challenge and fun.

THERE'S A HOLE IN MY BOAT TOO ...
BY PETER J. CARTER

The Conventional wisdom has always been that kayaks are too slow to use dinghy self bailers. To remove water we have used various receptacles, sponges, manual pumps and the high tech solution, the electric pump.

In my case the view was based on some sailing experience and some experiments years ago with a folded tinsplate replica of a self bailer which didn't work. On reading of Dave Youren's experience I repeated my experiment, again with negative results. That prompted me to examine self bailers, and then buy one. I chose the cheapest (I have a family of sea boats to support), known in Australia as the Ronstan RF 249* and fitted it to a boat. It worked.

Why did the real thing work when a similar sized replica did not? The RF 249 is designed to be fitted from outside the hull, rather than from the inside,

and the outer plate which closes against the seal is rather larger than the chute. That means that it creates vortices and it seemed to me that the device owed its efficiency as much to the vortices as to Mr Bernoulli. It should therefore be possible to improve its efficiency by generating more powerful vortices.

Normally one wants to reduce vortices, because they waste energy, hence the wingtip sails on some aircraft, and of course the famed winged keel. But there are times when a well placed vortex can hold a flow in place, as on the Boeing 727 fin, and hold an aeroplane in the air: Concorde and shuttle orbiters are supported by vortex lift, as is, in part, by the F/A-18.

Designing a plate to generate vortices isn't difficult, and the first attempt was a plastics one attached under a pane of glass. It was tried in the bathtub, with some dye tracing the vortices.

The next task was to compare self bailers with and without a vortex plate. Two were fitted to an old boat, with bottomless cans fixed inside the hull so that each had its own water supply. A measured 500 ml was poured into each can, and the boat paddled. The difference was dramatic.

Fitting the self bailer to most boats is straightforward. Kayaks with cockpit liners are more difficult. It would be possible to rigidly fix the liner to the hull, but that would introduce a stress point, so the connection between liner and hull should be flexible, and this is an area needing further development. To make the vortex plate, apply mould release around the area then lay up two layers of glass. When it's set, pull it off, trim to shape and smooth the outer surface. Clean up the hull and bailer then attach the plate with a pair of small bolts through a hole drilled through the bottom of the bailer. It's all there in the diagrams. For new boats, a form can be used to mould a recess.

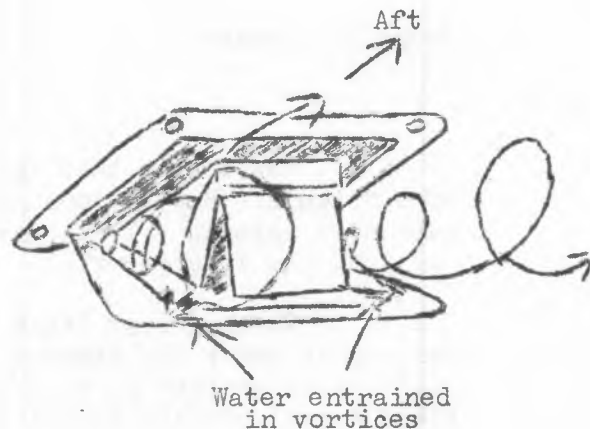
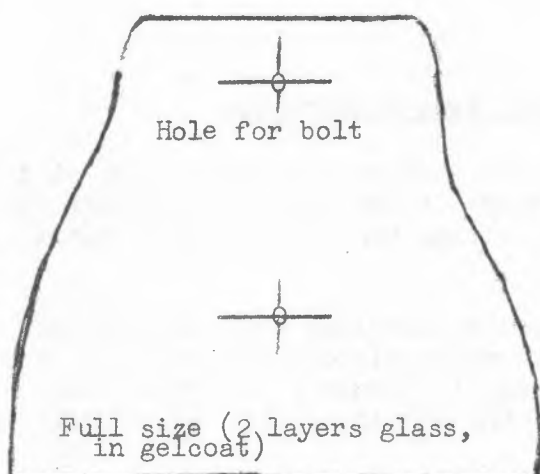
Inevitably there is a drag penalty, but it is minimal, particularly when compared to the weight, expense and maintenance penalties of plumbing and electrical systems. A swamped boat is simply paddled, draining itself as it goes. For maximum benefit, as with pump systems, the cockpit volume must be a minimum, so that the boat can be paddled comfortably when swamped. This is appropriate technology.

There is a new sound in sea canoeing. It is a sound very like water going down the plughole.

Reference: 1. Youren, D. Letter to Editor, Newsletter of Advance Sea Kayak Club, March 1987

- * It's made in Denmark, so would be on the European market with some other name. Australian suppliers are intrigued with the ideas presented here, but I have yet to hear from the makers
- * It can be argued, through the bound vortex theory, that all aerodynamic lift is generated by vortices.

Self Bailer Vortex Plate



Re-enter and Roll Self-Rescue with Paddle Float
by Dave Ide of Petoskey, Michigan, USA

Because I paddle alone most of the time, I've given considerable thought to self-rescue if I should miss my roll, alone and far off-shore For this rescue the kayak should be equipped with deck lines, a built-in pump, paddle-float and paddle leash. This set-up is standard on most British expedition kayaks.

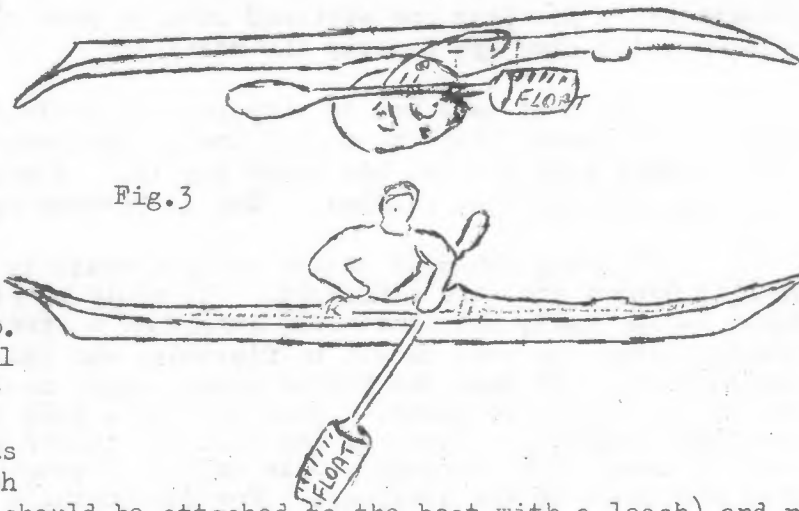
Fig.1



Fig.2



Fig.3



After a wet exit, immediately face the kayak into the waves. Now take time to put on your nose clips, place the paddle-float over the blade and blow it up. Facing the stern, take several deep breaths, grasp the cockpit on each side, now swing your legs up between your arms and into the cockpit. Attach

your spray-deck (your paddle should be attached to the boat with a leash) and roll up. There is no need to sweep the blade, because the float makes it easy to just pull up on one side. Facing the side the pump is in, hold the paddle shaft and deck-line in one hand and lean slightly toward the float. Stability is very good now and you can pump the boat quite easily. Move the paddle to the other side of the kayak if your pump intake is drawing air, and by controlling the lean you can place the water where the intake is. When the boat is dry, take a minute to catch your breath, then manoeuvre out of any danger (the kayak can be paddled slowly with the float attached). When you feel comfortable, squeeze the float against your chest to expel the air, and stow it on deck Well done!

I have practiced this method in Force 5-6 conditions and can complete it from wet-exit to a dry boat in 7-10 minutes. The attached float is not necessary under mild conditions, but in heavy weather it adds a great amount of security to rolling and pumping.

Anyone having suggestions or questions about this technique please feel free to write or call me. (I'm listed in the newsletter.) Thank you.

From: F. Wondre

A 'new' rescue technique

Now I know that this is not a new rescue technique, it came via a friend of a friend. But it does not feature in the books or coaching courses that I have come across. It is given an airing here in the hope that it will find its way into the literature.

There are at least two people paddling when one capsizes. The rescuer can either empty the flooded kayak across his own deck or pull it over his deck while it is upright so that the cockpit is just in front of him. A few well-timed waves actually take a lot of the strain of this procedure. The swimmer

then climbs onto the rescuers front deck. This configuration is quite stable in a moderate sea. The rescued person can now pump out the kayak using a deck pump while the rescuer holds the cockpit and offers reassurance and general verbal encouragement to do it faster. The extra height of the open cockpit above the water greatly reduces the likelihood of passing waves re-filling it. The rescued person can then get into the kayak, finish mopping up and put on the spraydeck, all well above any wave crests. The rescue is completed with a seal launch off the rescuers deck. Not very good for the spraydeck but then all is fair in rescue practice and a real emergency.

There are, obviously, occasions in which this rescue will not work but it appears to extend the range of conditions in which a rescue can be attempted with a reasonable chance of success. Why not try it. A name? How about the put across.

From: Peter Lamont, 11 Cullipool, by Oban, Argyll, PA34 4UB - 9 March 1988

Dear John,

I noticed in Newsletter No 66 a comment concerning paddling techniques. "No work had been done on feathering and its possible effects on tinosynovitis." I had thought the causes of this condition were well understood. The explanation, as I understand it, is as follows.

As the wrist bends the tendons connecting the forearm muscles to the hand slip over the bones of the wrist. Cells in the tissue surrounding these tendons secrete a lubricating substance. When the hand is gripping the paddle tight the forearm and hand muscles are under tension. In the contracted, tensed condition blood flow is restricted through muscles.

With a tight grip, blood flow through the wrist is reduced. Cells supplying lubricating secretions are deprived of oxygen and energy to manufacture lubricant. In this situation if the wrist is then bent, insufficient lubricant supply results eventually in friction. Where friction occurs cell damage results further increasing friction and the damage escalates rapidly.

The effect of feathered paddles is twofold. First, the feathering means the wrist is bent back, then forwards, in between successive strokes. Second, the blade in the air at first twists as it describes the arc to its zenith from where it is broadside to any beam wind. A wind from any direction can catch the blade at some point in its arc through the air but of course beam winds are the most troublesome. With all the paddle area at the end of the shaft there is maximum leverage. The result, in moderate winds and upwards and especially in gusting conditions, is that the blade in the air is tweaked around so that a tight grip has to be maintained for control. There is little relaxation for blood flow and the wrist still has to bend!

Fear and concentration can also be reasons for a continuous tight grip on the paddle. Anyway the above is how I view tinosynovitis. I no longer have the problem - an unfeathered, narrow-bladed paddle avoids it recurring.

Yours,

Peter Lamont

CANOEING AND ACTIVITY HOLIDAY 1987 -
ISLE OF BARRA - OUTER HEBRIDES

The Isle of Barra is the second southernmost inhabited island in the long chain of islands known as the Outer Hebrides. It has been immortalised as Great Todday in Compton Mackenzie's novels, especially "Whisky Galore" (which describes an event that really happened.

I have paid nine visits there in the past 15 years, the first being in 1972. Generally I have come over in my pocket cruiser "Minique" and therefore have a fair idea of the canoeing and activity opportunities that exist there. In the past decade the island has become increasingly popular with canoeists. This will be the XVIIth activity holiday that I have led in the Hebrides.

In 1987, as in 1986, the main activity will be canoeing. We shall go over by the steamer which runs from Oban to Castlebay, and make our base on the island, where the following opportunities exist:-

The north-east part of the island has a sheltered fjord-like structure where beginners can start canoeing in complete safety;

there are sandy beaches, often with surf, on the west of the island;

there is a sandy beach, generally surf free, in the north of the island;

a small tidal rapid rushes into and out of a tidal loch in Castlebay itself and is Grade II at many states of the tide;

there are several inhabited neighbouring islands, such as Watersay and Eriskay, immortalised in the Eriskay Love-lilt and as the place where Prince Charles landed and from where he went "Over the Sea to Skye";

the sandy beach in Watersay is "like something out of fairyland";

several challenging uninhabited neighbouring islands such as Sandray, Gighay, Hellisay and Mingulay - Eilean mo Chridhe ("Island of my Heart");

generally weak tidal streams;

some sheltered crossings - and some exposed ones for the more advanced;

some cliffs and headlands for special outings, again for the advanced;

fine walking country when weather prevents canoeing; and

interesting bird and animal studies, e.g., skua, golden eagle, whales, basking sharks, seals and many others

In this venue it would be possible to do anything from One Star to Sea Proficiency, and to gain good experience towards the Advanced and Life-guard Certificates, as well as having a generally interesting time.

I am expecting to bring up my Sea Kayak and three other kayaks: in addition we should have the use of up to six other boats, but participants may well wish to bring their own boats.

The dates chosen are July 11-26, which should mean a fairly quiet time as far as the local people are concerned, since, though it is in the school holidays, the island children will nearly all be concerned with their Music Festival: this would be of great interest to us, as well. It may be

possible to combine this holiday with a week's white-water canoeing on the Scottish rivers.

There is a certain amount of entertainment on the island in the form of visiting singers, ceilidhs, discos, dances and so forth;

Licensing hours adequate. Inns in Castlebay and Northbay;

Religion R.C. Masses in Castlebay, Northbay, Eriskay and Watersay;

Language Gaelic; English generally spoken;

Accommodation: choose between camping (no public camp site), B and B, caravan hire, Inn, modern hotel or rental of a house;

Transport: by road or rail to Oban, thence to Castlebay by steamer or by road, rail or air to Glasgow, thence by air to Northbay;

MacBrayne's can sell you a circular tour ticket, so you can see the other islands in the Outer Hebrides as part of this holiday.

Disclaimer: while I shall take the normal level of responsibility for canoeing activities specifically under my charge, I cannot be responsible for any person taking part in the holiday, and suffering any accident or loss as a result of events or actions not under my immediate leadership.

Enquiries to: Nick Hodson, British Canoe Union Senior Instructor (Sea)
57 Tredegar Square, Bow, London E3 5AE

From: Abe Harvey, Southend Canoe Club and Sea and Mountain Pursuits,
22 The Crossways, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex SSO 8PU

"SEASCAPE" DOUBLE SEA KAYAK

During the summer, July/August, I assisted on an expedition to circumnavigate the Isle of Mull in a clockwise direction, starting and finishing north of Oban. The party was made up of four adults and four boys 16-18 years, from Southend High School for Boys.

We called in to P and H on the way there to change some paddles, etc. and we saw a double canoe there which we rather lightheartedly offered to road test and to our surprise Dave Patrick accepted.

This turned out to be an absolute boon, as one of our party of boys was smaller than the others and also he hadn't taken full part in the extensive training programme that the others had done, so it was decided he should paddle with me.

At the end of the first day we encountered strong head winds and choppy conditions and we found that we could stay at the front of the group despite the rather wet conditions in the front of the boat.

Despite the fact that it is very broad in the beam I never found that I struck my thumbs when paddling but I was able to take photographs even when conditions were lumpy.

There were some minor faults however, when the sea was short and steep, occasionally a wave came up the foredeck as the front was dipping and the front paddler got rather wet.

As the front paddler was rather short and the seat is low his buoyancy aid pushed the spraydeck below the level of the cockpit rim which

meant that there was a lot of water lying on the spraydeck so some seeped in past the waistband. A half-day in these conditions allowed about 6/8 litres of water to enter. We found that wearing the spraydeck over the buoyancy aid overcame this problem but it made the jacket rub under the arms. Otherwise we found the seascape to be quite fast particularly into wind, very stable in all conditions and with the rudder very manoeuvrable.

The load carrying capacity was good with a screw hatch in the front and a spraydeck type hatch at the stern and a lot of room between the two paddlers. This could have been sealed with entry behind the front seat to provide an excellent storage space.

I was very impressed overall with the seascape and would suggest that it would be very useful in an expedition of young people where you might have sickness or injury where a strong paddler could almost carry the weaker paddler.

From: Tom Hocking, Captain, Prairie Schooners Ocean Kayak Club

Fellow Sea Kayakers,

We are a small but enthusiastic group of paddlers living on the Canadian Prairies some considerable distance inland from the best coastal kayaking areas. This has made informal communication with the active kayaking fraternity very difficult. For this reason we are attempting to compile information on kayak touring destinations worldwide that will help us to plan subsequent trips.

We are hoping to benefit from the experiences gained by other paddlers who have travelled to places we have not yet been.

You may help us in this endeavour by completing the enclosed questionnaire and returning it in the supplied envelope.

We have recently visited Pacific Rim National Park and the Johnstone Strait region of Canada and Glacier Bay in Alaska.

We are also interested in locations suitable for winter trips of one to two weeks duration to places such as, perhaps Baja or Belize but are finding it difficult to find information on these areas of particular value to kayakers.

Since we use folding boats, we are not restricted to those destinations only accessible overland or by surface transport.

Thank you very much for your kind attention and interest in helping us to plan our next adventure.

Sincerely,

(Sgd.) Tom Hocking