

# Newsletter



of the



**An international sea canoeing association open to all interested in this aspect of canoeing.**

**Aims:**

**Promotion of sea canoeing • Communication • Organisation of events and conferences • Safety and Coaching**



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## Editorial

And a Happy and Prosperous New Year to you all. Here's to a better summer than last year. I hear about some good sea kayaking but I have also heard many of you say that you have not had the kayak out quite as much as usual as the weather had not been that encouraging. So what is going on. What news do I have for you.

The fourth issue of the magazine I edited for the first three issues, 'Ocean Paddler' has recently been published with it's new editor. I breath a sigh of relief that it continues whilst I go off in another direction. I did not want to feel responsible should it not have continued as we owe you all a successful European based magazine. I note Kevin Mansell is now a consultant to 'Ocean Paddler'. I wish him and the magazine well.

So what is this direction I intend to follow. Actually it is no big deal. I always intended to develop I.S.K.A. once I retired from full time employment and now I have the opportunity. We shall be actively encouraging a larger membership and we shall be improving on the quality of this newsletter.

The next edition of the ISKA newsletter will be in a magazine style format. It will contain more pages, will have coloured front and back cover and will carry advertising. The next edition of the ISKA newsletter will then come out like this one with the subsequent one being back to a magazine style again. That is, you will still receive six newsletters a year but three of them will be bigger and better. Bringing in advertisers will allow us to do this whilst remaining within budget.

So who is 'we' and 'us' that I am referring to. Previously I have managed ISKA single handedly. Now we have Keith Maslen as Deputy Editor, Graham Edwards as Designer and Chris Pearce as our consultant.

Duncan Winning has agreed to be our Scottish Representative whilst Frank Goodman will contribute his Questions and Answers section.

But without you it ain't going to work. We need readers if we are going to attract advertisers. We are going to need material from many of you if we are to attract readers. I have enclosed an ISKA subscription form in the hope you can persuade a buddy to join us. As for sending us material for the newsletter, *please, please, please* let us have something. No matter how short or long, no matter what it is about (but keep it relevant!), with or without pictures, with or without spell check. We will make it all print ready, just send us your letters, views, opinions, trip reports, etc. etc. This is your newsletter.

Last August saw us strutting our stuff at the Festival of the Sea at Portsmouth. We had a huge stand and with help from Portsmouth Canoe Club attracted a lot of interest in sea kayaking. ISKA went to Paddlefest last November in Nottingham at BCU HQ and met with the Canoe Trade. We shall be at the International Canoe Exhibition over the weekend of 27/28th February at **STAND N2**, so see you there. We shall be at the Scottish Canoe Exhibition 29/30/31st May, 1999 and shall try and be at as many events as possible, including the Anglesey Symposium 1/2/3rd May, 1999. May is a busy month as we shall have a presence at the Pewsey Canoe Show in the south of the country over the weekend of the 22/23rd May.

The Newfoundland Sea Kayaking Symposium is being held between 17th and 20th June. It is being staged, as last year, over on the west side of the Island at Corner Brook. We use a huge Ski Lodge. I know it is a long shot but if any of from Europe can get over for this event I just know you will not be disappointed. Keith Maslen is running a sea kayaking expedition on the north side of Newfoundland. Whales, icebergs, old fishing communities, islands, wild scenery. You'd love it. Contact Keith on 01246 582274 for further information. Keith has also agreed to undertake gear and services reviews for ISKA so if you would like anything tested and reviewed in this Newsletter, let him know. Enjoy the ISKA newsletter, and do encourage others to join us. **It's your Association.**

From Harry & Chris Simpson

John & Jenny  
John,

You have prompted me to write about equipment. Here are my thoughts for what they are worth. I used to be quartermaster for the local scouts so have a fair idea of what breaks and what works.

#### Stoves.

I used to have a small petrol Optimus when we used to camp on the motor bike. It was terrific but like all liquid fuel stoves you have to prime and they are a bit messy. This includes the Whisperlite that we bought for use in Sweden on the islands. The first night it would not light and had to be stripped in the dark. They are best on Coleman fuel and really don't like petrol.

We moved to a Coleman gas stove with a piezo igniter. Piece of cake to light. Easy to turn off and on between courses. Definitely gets my vote. Only problem was that when we went to the States we had great difficulty getting Coleman resealable cartridges. It was the same in France. Calor is probably as good but can't comment.

Trangias don't fit in Valley hatches, but the main problem is they are not hot enough and can be a real problem if you are uncky enough to knock them over or over fill.

#### Tent

We have used a Wild Country Quasar for the last 6 years. The only problem we have had is that the sealing tape on the groundsheet lifted in the heat in Corsica. This was replaced under warranty. The alloy poles seem to last better than fibre glass that were fitted to vango tents that the scouts used. The fibre was inclined to split but did easily repair with fibre glass tape. I did see an alloy pole split on the same tent in France last year. Poles are a problem packing. they dont go in Valley hatches. I used to keep them in the cockpit on my Shoreline but now have the Buccaneer and EVERYTHING goes in the hatches.



Talking of hatches.

Kayakers can get neurotic about dry hatches. A weeks trip definitely loses a lot of it's charm if everything comes out wet every night. Fortunately I have not had this experience.

Chris's Baidarka was an early one and had leaky (about a teaspoonful) hatches. I ended up drilling the mounting holes in the flange and pouring in resin to fill the void. They now bulge or sink when the boat goes in the water and are 99.9999% water tight.

My Buccaneer has large hatches. I like them. Putting sleeping bags in a valley hatch is the best way I know of removing skin from the back of your hands! With the big hatch you can arrange the way you pack the boat and Chris's camp seat even goes in.

North Shore have pin holes in the bulkhead to minimise temperature change vacuum sucking water in. Even rolling sessions in the pool leave the hatches dry despite the cockpit being full of water.

## Kayaks

My first sea boat was a Shoreline which was very similar a general purpose boat that I was used to and fine for short expedition or day trips. However the main reason I changed to the Buccaneer was I could not keep up with Chris in the Baidarka. Problem solved.

The Buccaneer is big, stable, fast, well built and with the skeg tracks well. I have the bulkheads placed as a footrest a couple of inches longer than my leg length and the space filled with a V-shaped piece of closed cell foam that I can stretch my leg into to change seating position.

## Footwear

For anything longer than a day wet boots are cold , wet and stink. For the

last 3 years I have opted for sailing wellies. You can still get a wave over the top or step out in a dee bit but thermal socks and wellies are the

business for me. I tried swimming in the local pool with them on first and

surprise, surprise I did not immediately sink to the bottom.

Warm feet on a wet day are luxury.

## Sleeping matress

Camper mats are good and cheap but present problems in packing. They don't easily go into Valley hatches. I have seen people put them on the floor of

the cockpit flat or in the same place as a knee tube but I like a dry bed. As a silver wedding present we bought each other Thermarest mattresses. Not cheap but good. Main problem is getting them into the stuff bag which requires a fair bit of grunt. The best way we have found is to roll them up loosely and close the valve and then roll them up tightly with valve shut. Takes longer but works. The camper mat is now stuck to my seat and thigh grips.

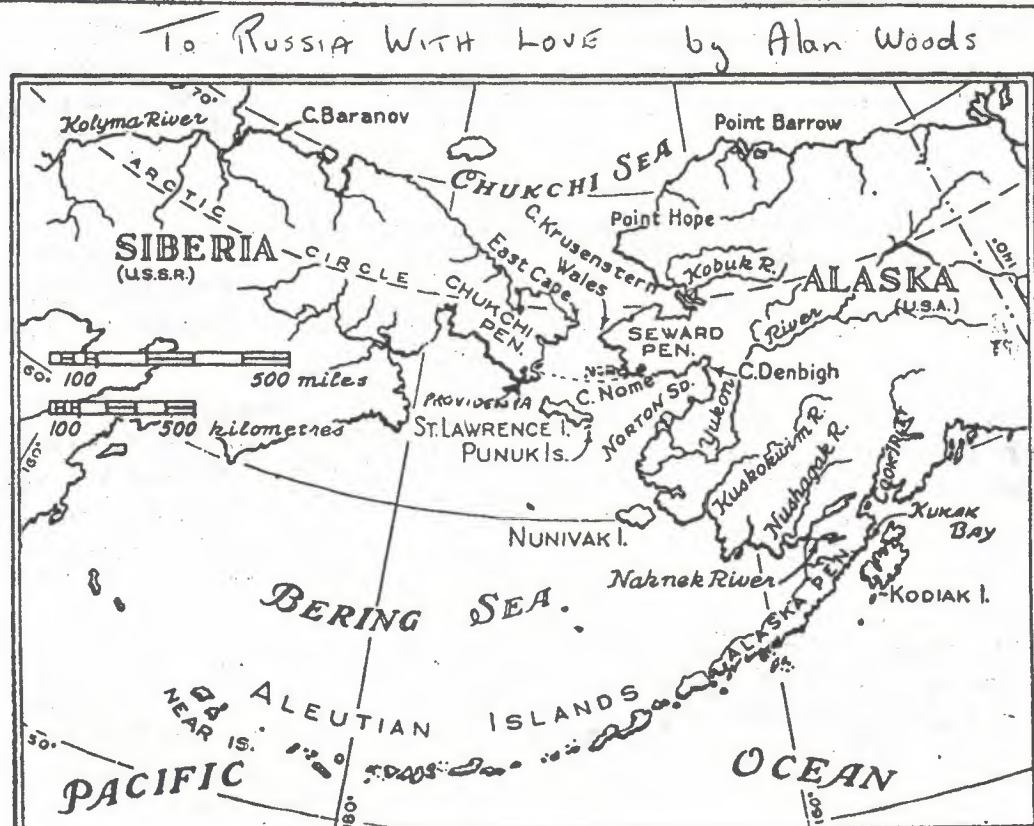
## Umbrella

A big golf umbrella is like an instant tent. You can even sit in your boat and have lunch with it over your shoulder or use it to sit behind on a wet beach to relieve mild hypothermia. Beware, they do sink.

John, I have rambled on enough. Feel free to use or discard as

appropriate. I look forward to reading feedback from other members. We now have a digital camera at work so maybe we can send some digital pictures.

Harry & Chris Simpson





# To Russia With Love

BY

Alan Woods

It all started in October 1991 with a small ad in the Sea Kayaker magazine advertising a Sea Kayak Proznik in Providenyia Russia. Put that in front of someone with itchy feet and a desire to see Russia and you get instant drooling at the prospect of the trip.

So started seven months of letters, training and phone calls to organize the trip. Most of Telecoms profit this year would have come from my calls to Alaska and Russia trying to find out what the hell was happening. Finally after throwing lots of money into a ever deepening pit I headed for Alaska and a meeting with my paddling partner Margin Kuizenga of Fairbanks. I still didn't know if paddling a Klepper double in a cold hostile land with someone you had never meet before was going to work out but the time was past for worrying.

We got our first indication of the fickle weather in the region, when we couldn't leave Nome which was nice and sunny because Providenyia was fogged in. At least this gave me a chance to meet the group and to form first off biases. First of all and most importantly for them was 10 U.S. Special Forces Soldiers all done up in matching Patagonia clothing. The Top sergeant and myself took a instant dislike to one another, to him I was a noisy useless civilian and a non U.S. one at that and to me he was a product of a overly arrogant "we are god's gift to the world" type of Yank soldier. Bevan Walker and Nora Flight, good fellow Kiwi's who I was very pleased to see. George Headly, a wandering Canadian who occasionally seemed to fit in some work around his kayak trips. Tully Hammil who when I first met him was bouncing off the walls with coffee addiction, but who turned out to be a very well informed and enjoyable companion. Finally Ioel and Patti Mieir a very fit laid back couple from the States.

Finally we got clearance for Providenyia and took off at last for Russia. Our first indication of the difference in the countries was the S.A.M missile and Radar sites we crossed over on the trip. landing on the very rough gravel runway was very disconcerting with stones flying in all directions including into our propellers.

Our first sight of the locals were the border guards who greeted us on arrival, most of whom looked as through they should have been in nappies not uniform. Customs was easier than I had expected. Once through The customs we became acquainted another much more important custom in Siberia, the dreaded "Tundra Time" where the time taken to do anything is inversely proportional to how long you wish it to take.

After introductions to Oleg Guyfullin, our host for the trip, and an official welcome from the local commissar and some of the local Eskimo's, we quickly realized that speech making is a passion second only to vodka drinking amongst the Russian people. Finally after four hours we headed for our camp-site at Svetok (flower) bay. On the way there we passed through the military township of Ureliki, and although I had seen video's of the area

it did nothing to prepare me for the dirt and state of decay. Once at Svetok bay we set up camp and assembled our kayaks, a new and novel experience for me, never having used folding boats before. We were watched with some amusement by the local children, who apart from looking like grubby little urchins were very friendly and seemed to enjoy helping us set up our equipment.

For the Russians life begins at 10 pm. so Oleg was all for us going to the local disco. We were very reluctant as we had bounced around to many time zones to go partying with young Russian teenagers. The next three days were taken up with lots of speeches' cultural displays and a very large picnic where all the locals were invited to try out the kayaks and umiaks. We spent the evening demonstrating kayaking skills and taking the locals for rides in the boats, they also seemed to pick up the basics very quickly. I think at this stage a description of the umiaks is in order, the umiak (or Bidaria in Russian ) is a distant cousin to the kayak. The local umiaks are about 6 to 7 metres long and 3 metres wide, the frames are made of wood gathered as drift wood or scrounged from the wharves, the frames are lashed together which makes a strong but flexible framework. The outer covering is of walrus hides, the hides are prepared by burying them for a month or two in straw to rot the hair off it. As the skins are too thick to use at this stage the skin is split so it is about two thirds of its original thickness, this is a skill that is fast disappearing as the old timers die off. The hides are then trimmed and draped over the frame, the first skin is stretched into place and lashed to the frame, the next skin is butted up against the first and blind sewn to it so there are no stitches thorough the hides, both hides are stretched again and relashed. This continues until all 3 or 4 skins are fitted, the skins are, continually stretched until they are drum tight, the seams are then sealed with walrus blubber or in the working boats by painting. The umiaks are fitted with sails and paddled, but the more common thing nowadays is to fit an outboard to them. The Umiaks are extremely tough and sea worthy boats, the walrus hides being tougher than wood for beach landings; and the boat being flexible absorbs a lot of the wave energy that can break normal boats.

The fourth day we were due to paddle to Sereniki village, a distance of about 60km. After many discussions with Oleg about the time we were to depart, it was decided that a compromise between the 6 am that we wanted and the 12pm that he wanted would be 9am. We were ready at the appointed time, but no Oleg (tundra time had struck again), Oleg finally arrived at 2pm, by this time we were more than a little hacked off as some of our gear had been stolen while we were waiting for him.

As usual the by early afternoon the wind had picked up, so it was a good bouncy paddle down to the old Provideniya township on the coast. This township was abandoned in the early 60's after a landslide, there were old aircraft and boats lying where they had been abandoned 30 years ago, they were still in quite good order considering their 30 year life in the open.

We hung round for 2 hours waiting for the umiaks to catch up, they had stayed behind to load all the gear and food. While we were waiting Bevan, Nora, Marin and myself went exploring around the site, we found old walrus skulls and a lot of abandoned junk, We finally left for our overnight camp-site, by this time the wind was quite brisk so it was a case of head down and paddle for the next couple of hours We finally got our camp set up and dinner cooked by about 10 pm., more caribou meat and pickled cucumbers for dinner, a vegetarian nightmare.

The beach had a pile of rusting fuel drums that were slowly leaking their toxic wastes



into the soil. It was the first time I had seen any attempt to clean up the environment at all even if it was only to concatenate the pollution in one spot.

The next day we were away fairly early after a breakfast of burnt boiled rice. We paddled round the bird bazaars on the Sereniki cliffs, it was great to see the thousands of birds lining the cliff and swimming in the water. Some of the birds were molting so after launching their take off from the cliff their lift off altitude was about 2 fathoms, we were bombed by falling birds several times on the trip. The most impressive part of the coastline was the large vertical tors sticking out of the rounded bare weathered landscape.

By early afternoon the wind had got up once again and it was almost impossible to paddle into it. After fighting our way past one of the cliff faces, Oleg told us to turn back to one of the previous beaches to wait for the others to catch up. This was not a popular idea even if it did make sense, as we had expended a lot of energy getting to where we were.

We stopped at the beach for 5 hours while waiting for the wind to die down, we had lunch of red caviar and boiled salmon soup with seconds, it was actually quite good and was one of the few meals I went back for seconds for the wind died marginally in the late afternoon so we headed off to Sereniki village. It took 3 hours of dodging in behind bluffs and lots of grunt to get to the village, the army boys as usual took the direct route and used bloody minded strength instead of skill to beat us to the landing site. By the time we landed we were cold, hungry and losing our sense of adventure. We were welcomed on the beach by the local Eskimo's and the inevitable border guards with their passport and visa checks. We had a few problems with the local drunken Eskimo's who insisted on hugging us and inviting us back to their apartments for dinner. I found it disconcerting to be hugged by a large vodka soaked Eskimo lady intent on warming me up I think. We finally got our camp set up and went into town for dinner at the only restaurant in town, the food was no different to our own, just standard walrus and caribou meat with pasta.

Sereniki was a much tidier town than Provideniya, you could almost detect a sense of local pride. Unfortunately the beach was rancid with old walrus blubber and the fox farm behind us added to the cocktail of smells the farm held several thousand small blue foxes in primitive battery farming conditions, it was very hard not to sneak up there at night and let them free.

The next morning the sea was quite rough and the wind had changed to the north with a corresponding drop in temperature. We had a day, of looking round town, when we toured the blubber rendering factory we met our drunken Eskimo friend from the night before, her job was to scoop the left over renderings out of a large vat by hand. The smell was horrendous, I now saw why she would get drunk all the time, if I had her job I would make sure I would never get sober.

We had a opportunity at Sereniki to talk to the local Inupiqu Eskimo's and Chuchi herders about their lives and how they got on with the Russians. Most of them disliked the Russians intensely for taking their culture away from them and forcing them to adopt the standard Russian food and customs, in the last 30 to 40 years most of their traditional skills have been lost by the old people dying out and the forcing of the children to learn only the Russian customs and traditions.

That night we had a display of Eskimo dancing by a small group of women that were trying



to revive the old dances. We then competed in some Eskimo games, which were all very physical, like throw the harpoon which was a 6 foot length of 3 inch timber that was very heavy. For the first time our military friends came in handy, as they were both strong and stupid enough to compete with the locals. The weather did not improve the next day so we filled in time visiting people and looking round the area. That night the army got into a fight with the locals over their attempts to go to bed with any woman over the age of 16, so it made it necessary to leave town in a hurry. We loaded our boats onto a truck and drove overland to Provideniya bay, the trip was only 36km but it took 5 hours of bone jarring and teeth rattling driving to get there. It was very cold and un-comfortable and by far the most depressing day of the whole trip. It was hard to summon up any interest in the bleak but still very beautiful tundra we were crossing.

We reassembled our boats and the next day paddled down to the end of Provideniya bay to look at the seal colonies there, it was good to paddle with the strong northerly behind us and we made good time surfing down to the end of the bay; Joel and Patti put the sail up on the feathercraft and had a free ride down, I can see the advantages of the sails now. When we pitched camp the wind was so strong I had to put extra guys out on the tent to hold it down. It was very cold and even with a wind break the fire seemed to put out little heat, we all headed for bed early to get warm.

The wind had dropped a little the next morning, but we were faced with a very stiff paddle into the wind to get back to Svetok bay. It was very much woollen hat and pogies temperature today. We had to work hard to make progress into the wind and for the first time on the trip I started to burn out, slip streaming the very much fitter Bevan and Nora gave us enough of a break to make Svetok bay in good time. Our army friends still insisted on taking the direct route which must have been brutal on their arms even for people as strong and fit as they were. We dismantled the boats and got changed, then had to hang round for 2 hours in the freezing cold for the bus to Provideniya. Finally it arrived and we piled on, happy to be heading for a warm apartment and a hot shower.

We had two days to fill in before the flight back to Nome so we drove over to New Chaplino, there for the first time on the trip we caught a glimpse of the true culture and pride of the Inupiat Eskimo's. The joy and intensity they put into dances was great to see, for the first time we saw men participating in the dances, they played walrus skin drums to provide the beat and chanted the songs. The dances were very realistic with scenes of hunting and village life played out in dance and song. The pride these people had in themselves as a race was reflected in the tidiness of their village and the liveliness of the people. I was please we had gone to New Chaplino last as it restored some of my dreams of how the Eskimo lived and finished the trip off on a positive note.

After spending as many rubles as I could, we boarded the bus to the airport and the usual 4 hour wait to argue with customs and to have the farewell speeches was sorry to leave Oleg and his group who tried hard to show us a good time and to accommodate our various weird and wonderful ways. It was also sad to split up the civilians of the group, all of whom made excellent travelling companions.



From:- Nigel Tuffley

POOLE  
Dorset

Dear John,

I took part in the Arctic Sea Kayak race in '95 - I'd love to do that again - I had good intentions of writing a report about the race and our subsequent paddle around Nordkapp and also the islands on the Norwegian - Swedish border. I will let you have the details eventually but for now I'll tell you about our first paddle above the arctic circle, having spent three days driving from Dorset via Belgium, Netherlands, Germany, Denmark, through Sweden and finally into Norway. We ( Anthony, Jon and myself ) were playing at tourists and went to investigate the whale watching ships but we were horrified by the cost of over 50 quid each - the Norwegian skipper did not seem amused when we asked did we get to keep the whale. Having decided that £150 between the three of us was way beyond our budget we came up with the cunning plan, - on display was a chart showing where they had sighted whales earlier that day, only a mere 7 NM offshore - yep we were going to paddle out to see the whales. The hard part would not be getting to the right area, but in actually locating the whales, but I figured that if we set off well before their afternoon cruise, we could be 6 or 7 miles offshore and the would lead us to the whales. So we set off from a suitable spot nearby wearing only helly vests with b. aids on top. The sea was calm there wasn't any wind. Heading North west into the Arctic Ocean from Vesteralen is the start of a long, long journey to nowhere, and as we got further offshore we bobbed up and down on the swell enjoying every minute and anticipating what was to come .

After a little over an hour we sighted the whale watching ship steaming out towards us, you can imagine our excitement as we watched one of the crew climb up to the look out position at the top of the mast. The plan was coming together, all we had to do was to follow the whaling ship and they'd lead us to the whales. The sea was picking up a little, just the sort of place to meet Moby Dick. As well as following the whaler we also scanned the horizon for dorsal or tail fins as well as keeping a weather eye wide open. A very dark small low cloud appeared on the horizon and the wind strengthened enough to make me put my dry cag on, within only a few minutes the low,small cloud had grown and the wind was beginning to whip up the water, the low cloud was heading our way fast and bringing the waves with it. Jon was putting on his dry cag, Anthony left it a little later to put his on. Whales were no longer on our agenda that day as we turned and ran for home, the wind increased in strength to a good F5 but sadly not quite in the direction that we wanted to go, so we surfed a little and all the time tried not to go too far down wind. Although we had visual contact with the shore all the time there was still the all too common disagreement about where we'd left the car, and although the tidal range is small the tide had gone up the beach leaving a number of small islets that weren't there when we departed. The final outcome was Kayaks 3, whales nil, but there was a lone seal playing hide and seek around the islets. The lesson for the day was that although there was no chance of benightment, the weather could change very fast. We were never able to get a weather forecast during the whole trip and whilst UK was sweating in one of the hottest summers we were paddling in thermals and dry suits as a procession of low pressure systems was pushed further north instead of making British holiday makers wish they'd gone abroad for their holidays.



# Lost tribe of black Eskimos found at pole

by Nicholas Hellen  
Media Correspondent

A LOST tribe of dark-skinned Eskimos who are descended from the first black man to reach the North Pole have been discovered living at the edge of the polar icefields. The hunters are the direct descendants of Matthew Henson, a former Washington hat shop assistant who reached the pole with Robert Peary in 1909.

Henson's polar exploration received little recognition in his lifetime. While Peary became a rear admiral, Henson worked as a railway porter, a janitor and a messenger. He died in 1955, aged 88. Now his 30 American descendants plan to rehabilitate his reputation by helping Debbie Allen, the Hollywood producer of *Amistad*, Steven Spielberg's film about slavery, when she makes a film about the explorer. Denzel Washington is expected to play Henson, with Michael Douglas as Peary.

Black America has seized on Henson's story. He was selected for the final push to the pole ahead of five white men in Peary's team, but contemporary accounts relegated his role to that of a valet. A row between Peary and his rival, Frederick Cook, about whose expedition reached the pole first also deflected attention from Henson.

The mixed-race Eskimos still live close to the landing sites used by Peary's ship, the *Roosevelt*, in the 1909 expedition. Peary also had children by his Eskimo lovers and academics now believe that other polar explorers left children behind. Samuel Allen Counter, professor of neuroscience at Harvard University, said: "There are some exceptionally white Eskimos living there."

Henson, who had a talent for dog-sledge driving, first met the polar Inuit in 1891 when he arrived with Peary in a 28-ton sealing ship, the *Kite*.

Both had little idea what to expect. The only previously recorded encounter between these Eskimos and outsiders was in 1818, when a British



Love in a cold climate: the only known picture of Alequasina, who bore Peary a child

navigator recorded that they asked him: "Why do you bring this floating house into our land?"

They were right to be wary. Diseases introduced by the *Kite* reduced their number from 238 to 158 within eight years. Peary also stole three enormous meteorites, which the Eskimos had used as a source of iron for tools, and sold them to a New York museum for \$40,000.

Peary was anxious to build close links with the Eskimos. To reach the pole he needed their skills in building igloos, driving dogs and living on seal, caribou, musk ox and polar bear.

The explorer also had a more personal motive. On his earlier expeditions he had been accompanied by his wife, Josephine, because he claimed an active sex life was essential for "the retention of the top notch of manhood". Later he took nude photographs of Eskimo women and both he and Henson installed Eskimo mistresses, Alequasina and Aqattantuuau, in their ship during another expedition in 1905. The women gave birth within days of each other in the ship's boiler room. Henson returned to see his son, Anaukaq, on the 1909 expedition.

Peary and Henson reached the North Pole on April 6, 1909, and never saw their children again. Counter said: "Each expedition relied on

massive sponsorship, and there was no way for a man such as Henson to return in person." However, Henson took his responsibilities as a father seriously, sending presents to his son in the baggage of later expeditions. Separated by thousands of miles, Henson and Aqattantuuau resumed their previous lives. She married an Eskimo man and her son by Henson in turn had five sons, who still survive.

Some of Henson's descendants, who live on a diet of raw walrus and polar bear stew, hope to fly to America next month for a ceremony when the US Navy names a warship after Henson.

His bequest to the black Eskimos may have been even more precious. Allen believes the polar Inuits were dangerously inbred before the black explorer found himself a girlfriend. "The influx of new Afro-American genes, after centuries of isolation, may have saved them," said Allen.



Living spirit: Matthew Henson's Afro-American genes may have saved the inbred

Henry Napartuk 1947 Eskimo and walrus



Dear Readers,

A photocopy from an original drawing by  
Henri Napartuk, eskimo artist of "L'Association  
cooperative Eskimo-Indienne", Great-Whale River, P.Q.,  
Canada.

Yours in kindred spirit, T. Lockie.



From: Graham North <gnorth@globalnet.co.uk>  
To: John Ramwell <jramwell@provider.co.uk>  
Subject: I.S.K.A. Nov 1998 International Qualifications  
Date: 20 October 1998 19:49

Dear John,

Having received the latest ISKA newsletter I read of International Coaching aspirations. Having this year been involved in teaching Kayaking within the EEC to English speaking foreign paddlers I can see the benefits of an internationally recognised standard for Kayak Coaching. Regional variations of language, emergency procedures, environment etc were not a problem. the BCU system is seen by others as something to aspire to.

Gaining English qualifications is seen as a good thing in other countries, yet some national bodies seem reticent to follow a uk system and will not recognise uk qualifications, this places extra financial burdens on paddlers, my recent experience is that foreign Kayakers are willing to join the BCU to gain duly earned recognition of their abilities. Their countries own system clearly under resourced and not valued.

In many cases these paddlers rely on the outdoors for a livelihood, paddlers are resorting to there own methods of gaining skills as their national body gets left behind.

My experience has been that exporting the BCU system may have some regional variations, however those on the receiving end are keen, and will continue to look towards BCU/English coaches for as long as their own National body ignores the need for up-to-date qualifications.

An International system seems a good idea, an International standard qualification would have many advantages.

1. Interestingly you can teach english as a foreign language. TEFL courses. e.g teach english abroad
  2. You can have an international drivers licence or drive in the eu on a uk licence.
  3. Many countries have teacher exchange arrangements with the uk. why not reciprocity in the kayak world.
- Perhaps the nub of many problems is memebership fees, insurance cover and accepting qualifications.

I hope to be coming to the Canoe Exhibition and will look out the ISKA stand.

I will gladly write to the I.C.F. perhaps you can let me have a name/address to direct my letter to.

Best wishes Graham North

### For Sale

P & H Umnak, full expedition kayak, hatches, pump, etc. Excellent condition. £350 ono.

North Shore Designs Shoreline. Full expedition kayak. Hatches, pump, etc. £400 ono

Both boats open to offers, particularly if sold together.

Contact Peter Garrard at 33, St James Meadow, Boroughbridge, Yorkshire, YO5 9NW.

Nordkapp Cape Horn kayak. Excellent condition. Yellow over white. £475. Telephone Terry Hilton on 01934 832452.

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### Events 1999

I would like to have included a copy of the Scottish Sea Kayaking Association 1999 calendar which is as busy and impressive as ever. Suggest you contact the SCA Representative for a copy. Ian Webster, 29, Renshaw Rd, Bishopton, Renfrewshire, PA7 5HN - 01505 863885.

I have mentioned some 1999 events in the editorial. Check these out.

The NW Sea Kayakers (NWSK) have put together an productive calendar for this year. Contact Pater Hatt for a copy (send a SAE) to 7, Saxon Close, Elton, Bury, Lancs, BL8 2RY 0161 762 9594.

Lots going on in 1999. Let Peter Hatt know about your plans so that we can publicise them in this newsletter.

## *Sir Alistair Dunnett*

Sir Alistair Dunnett died in his ninetieth year in Edinburgh at the beginning of September.

Most knew of him through his highly successful career in Journalism having been in turn the editor of the Daily Record then the Scotsman, which under his hand was transformed from having a falling readership to what was described in The New Statesman as "the best written, best produced and in many ways the most civilised paper in Britain".

Among his other achievements were , Chairman of Thomson Scottish Petroleum and The Scottish Daily Newspaper Society. Membership of The Scottish Tourist Board, The National Trust and the Organising Committee for the 1970 Commonwealth Games. He was knighted in 1971.

This son of Kilmacolm, in Renfrewshire, was a man of quick wit, great intellect and vast knowledge.

On the canoeing front, in company with his life long friend James S Adam, also a journalist of high standing, he undertook a committed trip from the Clyde to Kyle of Lochalsh in Lochaber sectional canoes in 1934. In an era when such sea paddling trips were not quite as common place as they are now. During that adventure he and Seamus made a point of camping on Rhum, where visitors were not welcome. Strange that sixty four years on we are in the middle of debating possible changes in the law of the land to give our citizens greater rights of access to our countryside. He would have said about time too.

Alastair wrote about his paddling ventures in the well known book "Quest by Canoe". Later to be re-published as "To Late in the Year" and yet again more recently under the title "The Canoe Boys".

Perhaps not so well known was his, behind the scenes, assistance to the Scottish Canoe Association, in a number of ways, in the 1960's. Especially during the period when his old paddling mate Seamus Adam was their Honorary President.

His passing should not be mourned. Rather, a long, valuable and highly successful life celebrated. He was a fine example of a Scotsman, we could do with a few more like him.

Duncan R. Winning OBE,  
Honorary President, Scottish Canoe Association

## Over the Minch -- James S. Adam

Reviewed by Duncan R. Winning

James, or Seamus he is known to his friends, had paddled from the Clyde to Kyle of Lochalsh the year before in company with Alistair Dunnet in Lochaber sectional canoes. Their plan had been to get to Stornoway in the outer isles but, as the alternative title of Sir Alistair's book "Quest by Canoe" states they had left it "To Late in the Year".

Undaunted, even though Alistair could no longer accompany him, Seamus decided that he would finish their uncompleted adventure. So it was that on a "keen and invigorating" day in the summer of 1935 he was back at Kyleakin ready to set off, this time paddling a Quensferry Senior canoe from the same builder as the Lochabers, John Marshall from the shores of the Firth of Forth.

Three days paddling took Seamus from Kyle up the east coast of Skye then over the sea to the Isle of Scalpay in the Outer Hebrides. For present day paddlers, with the quality of kayaks and equipment currently available and the level of paddling skills considered appropriate for sea kayaking, that would represent a committed paddle but in the mid thirties paddling a relatively short wide kayak, just under fourteen feet long, in exposed waters with strong tides it was a serious undertaking. That this was also the first known solo kayak crossing of the Minch, as the waters separating the Long Island from the rest of Scotland are known, only adds to Seamus's achievement.

An account of his Minch crossing makes a fitting opening chapter to what is in reality a collection of autobiographical tales each one of which could well stand on its own and cover a wide variety of topics from mountain, river and sea to a collection of amusing after dinner anecdotes. Ideal bedtime reading.

As is to be expected from one who rose to the heights of the journalists profession Seamus's use of language is exceptional, he even manages to work in three of the native tongues of Great Britain in addition to English and that's just in the first chapter.

Among the historical photographs illustrating the book are two of a fine looking clinker built wooden sea canoe taken on Loch Lomond in the mid 1930's by which time I reckon the boat would have been over sixty years old.

"Over the Minch" by James S. Adam

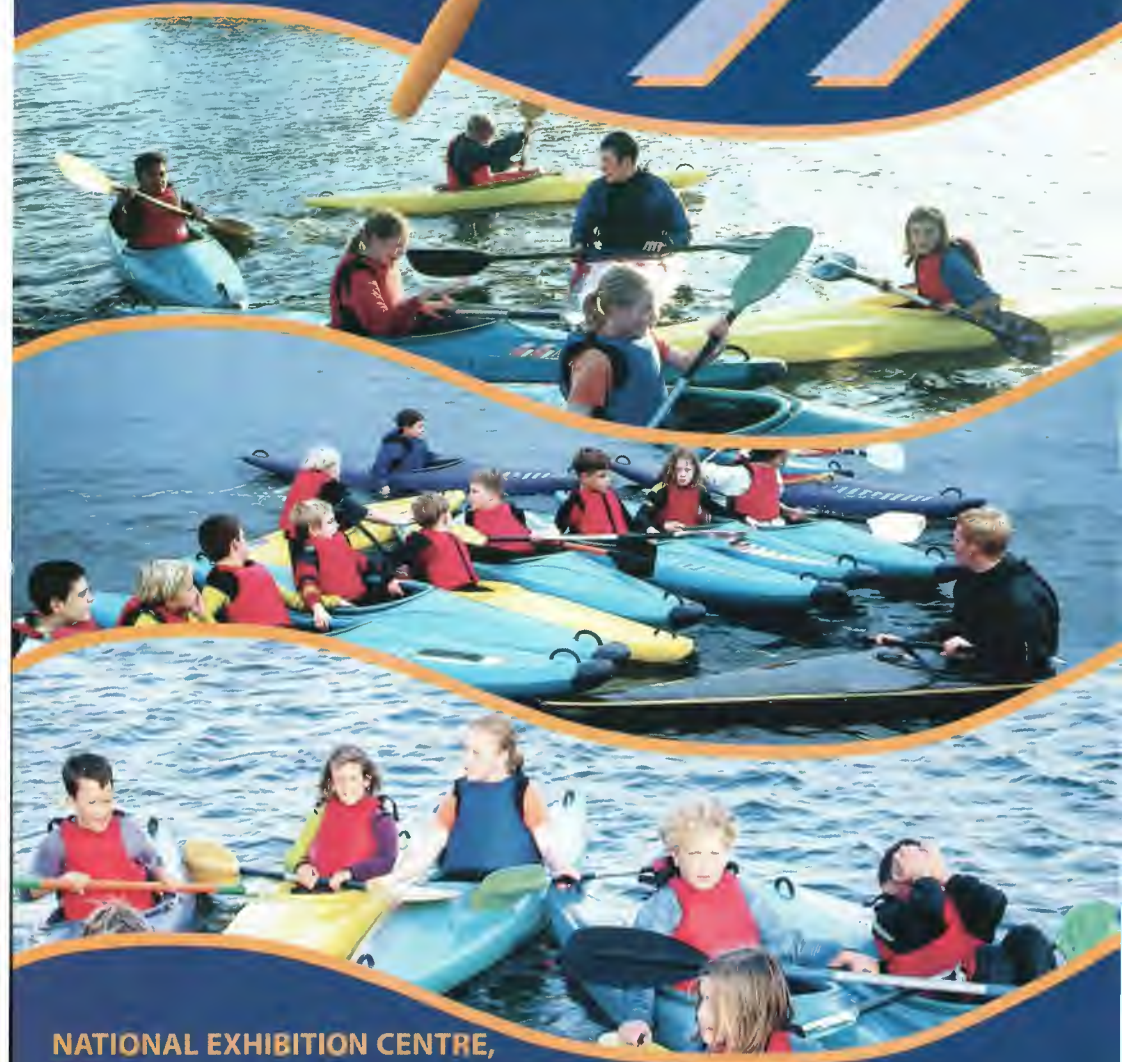
99 pages, 20 illustrations, £6.75



# CANOEING

INTERNATIONAL CANOE EXHIBITION

# 1999



**NATIONAL EXHIBITION CENTRE,  
BIRMINGHAM**

**Sat/Sun 27th - 28th February 1999**

10.00am - 7.00pm Sat 10.00am - 5.30pm Sun  
Adults - £9.00 Children/OAP - £5.00 Family - £27.00

**FREE PARKING**

Telephone Enquiries: 0115 982 1100



# INTERNATIONAL CANOE EXHIBITION '99

Once again the Exhibition is attracting Exhibitors from home and overseas wishing to display their latest products supporting the sport and pastime of canoeing/kayaking. The Exhibition will be completely occupying the Pavilion of the National Exhibition Centre at Birmingham, and will be linked once again to the National Boat, Caravan and Leisure Show. This therefore provides all visitors with an opportunity of a full days programme, covering all aspects of leisure on the water and on land.

It is hoped to reintroduce the popular lecture programme and space has already been allocated for the setting up of a small lecture theatre. Further details will be announced in CANOE FOCUS, the official magazine of the British Canoe Union. It is planned to include a varied feature programme covering some recent expeditions, as well as training and coaching subjects.

## HOW TO GET THERE

The National Exhibition Centre (NEC) is situated in the centre of the country, just outside the City of Birmingham, at the very hub of the UK Motorway network. Access by road is via the M6, M42 or A45, and the route into the Centre is clearly signposted on all these major roadways.

Access by train is via Virgin Trains and Birmingham International Station is situated adjacent to the Centre, there being a connecting walkway into the heart of the NEC complex. Frequent services run from New Street, Birmingham (a 10 minute journey), from London (an 80 minute journey), as well as from many other regional centres.

Should you be planning to come by air, Birmingham International Airport is also adjacent to the Centre. Many domestic as well as national airlines have a scheduled service operating.

## PARKING

There is free parking at the National Exhibition Centre. A shuttle bus service operates from the various parking areas to the front entrance to "Canoeing '99", and back at the end of your visit.

## TICKETS

Tickets are available daily at the door and cost £9.00 for adults, and £5.00 for children under 16 years of age and old age pensioners. Tickets purchased in advance are subject to a £1.50 discount. The closing date for advance bookings is 15th February 1999.

**All applications for tickets bought in advance will also go into a draw and will be eligible for a prize of £100.00 worth of vouchers, which can be spent at the Exhibition. The draw will be made during the week before the Exhibition and the winner notified accordingly.**

The National Boat, Caravan and Leisure Show, is being held in the adjacent halls to "Canoeing '99". Visitors to either show will be able to interchange without further charge.

## REFRESHMENTS

There are refreshment areas, a licensed bar and cafeteria available within the Exhibition area, as well as many others in the National Boat, Caravan and Leisure Show, and the Piazza.

## FACILITIES FOR DISABLED PEOPLE

The Exhibition is in one building where every facility is on the same level. The interchange to the National Boat, Caravan and Leisure Show is by stairs. However, people in wheelchairs can use the outside ramps to move to other halls. A special information sheet for the disabled can be sent on request.

## ADVANCE BOOKING

Complete this section, and send it with your remittance and a self addressed prepaid envelope (SAE) to: **The British Canoe Union, Adbolton Lane, West Bridgeford, Nottingham NG2 5AS.**

	Number	£	:	p
Adults at £7.50				
Children/OAP at £3.50				
<b>Total</b>		<b>£</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>p</b>

Please cross all cheques and postal orders and make payable to "The British Canoe Union". Tickets will not be sent unless this application is accompanied by a prepaid SAE.

**The last date for applications is 15th February 1999.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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## Treatment of Hypothermia.

1. Mild hypothermia (victim shivering but coherent). Move victim to place of warmth, remove wet clothes, give warm, sweet drinks; no alcohol or caffeine. Keep victim warm for several hours.

2. Moderate hypothermia (shivering may decrease or stop). Victim may seem irrational with deteriorating coordination. Victim should be kept lying down with torso, thighs, head and neck covered with dry clothes, coats or blankets to stop further heat loss. Obtain professional medical attention immediately.

3. Severe hypothermia (shivering may have stopped. Victim may resist help or be semiconscious or unconscious). Removed from water, victim must be kept prone, on back and immobile. Victim must be handled gently. Cover torso, thighs, head and neck with dry covers to stop further head loss. Arms and legs must not be stimulated in any manner. Cold blood in extremities that suddenly returns to the core may induce cardiac arrest. Seek medical attention immediately.

4. Victim appears dead. Little or no breathing or pulse, body rigid. Assume victim can be revived. Look for faint pulse or breathing for 2 minutes. If any trace is found, do not give CPR. Medical help is imperative. If pulse and breathing are totally absent, CPR should be started by trained medical personnel.

## Planning Ahead

Wearing clothing that permits safe cold water immersion is the only way to combat the risk posed by cold water boating. Such gear can be found at windsurfing shops, and

various canoe/kayak shops. Diving suits (1/4 inch neoprene) are too stiff to permit sustained paddling.

The generic advice to wear layers of clothing (wool, nylon, polypropylene) encourages an unwarranted sense of security in cold water boaters. These fabrics are warm when damp in air because of air trapped in the fibers after they have been wrung out. They do not, by themselves, significantly retard heat loss in cold water. They are to be worn under a drysuit or equivalent outfit.

Clothing routinely used by coastal kayakers includes neoprene boots, gloves and hat/hood (with a chin strap). A farmer-john neoprene (2.5-3 mm) wetsuit worn with a drytop pullover jacket is an effective combination. Drysuits are more flexible, more expensive and are essential on the coldest days of winter. This apparel must be topped off by your PFD. Attach a boat horn to your PFD.

Carry dry clothing in a water proof bag. Take food and a stove with you. Make sure you have all standard kayaking equipment on board including a pump, spare paddle, tow line, weather radio, flares and etc. Your objective should be complete self-sufficiency. Don't take paddlers with you who are not dressed to swim. All group members must be skilled in performing assisted rescues.

Tell someone where you are going and when you will return. Inform them of your return.

Finally, watch the boats around you. Out on cold water, you are depending on one another for prompt rescue in case of an accident.

Prepared for ANorAK at CANOE SPORT '96

© Charles Sutherland 28 March 1996

Charles Sutherland, 2210 Finland Rd., Green Lane, PA 18054

## OFF-SEASON BOATING, COLD SHOCK and HYPOTHERMIA



**The risk of capsizing may be small, but the threat-to-life of such accidents is most serious.**

### Why paddle on cold water?

One day 2 boaters drove south to Chesapeake Bay looking for a place to launch their boats. Everything was frozen solid. Open water appeared at Eastern Neck Wildlife Refuge. Half the bay on the east side was frozen in a thick, white sheet of ice. A narrow lead provided passage to the open water. It was sunny, 38 °F, light breeze and early afternoon.



In a couple hours of paddling they saw hundreds of whistling swans. Everywhere there were mergansers, scaup, buffleheads, black ducks, redheads and canvasbacks. From farther off came the constant "Ow-o.wa.let" babbling of oldsquaw.

The tide, working on the great ice sheet, caused cracks to form. The cracking sounded like the thunder of distant cannons. There were no other boats on the water. In those moments, the paddlers were alone in a pristine wilderness.

Paddling on cold water (55°F or less) carries great risk. In case of an accident, there will be no quick rescue unless it is carried out by your paddling partners. If a capsize occurs, you may not survive long enough to be rescued if you aren't dressed in an adequate wetsuit/drysuit outfit to permit survival in the water. On cold water, we are betting our lives that we have prepared adequately for accidental, head first, total immersion.

## What happens in cold water?

Water removes heat from the body 25 times faster than cold air. About 50% of that heat loss occurs through the head. Physical activity such as swimming or other struggling in the water greatly increases heat loss. Strong swimmers, without thermal protection, have died before swimming 100 yards in cold water. In water under 40°F, victims have died before swimming 100 feet. Immersion in cold water causes a series of traumatic responses that rapidly incapacitate and kill boaters who are not wearing protective clothing.

## Cold Shock

1. Immersion in cold water causes a powerful gasping reflex. If the victim is under water, due to lack of a PFD, water may be inhaled resulting in drowning. The victim may never surface.
2. Exposure of the head and chest to cold water can cause sudden increases in heart rate and blood pressure resulting in cardiac arrest.
3. Other responses to intense cold can cause immediate loss of consciousness followed by drowning.

## Hypothermia

Hypothermia develops more slowly than the immediate effects of cold shock. Survival curves show that an adult dressed in average clothing may remain conscious for an hour at 40°F and perhaps 2-3 hours at 50°F. The crisis is more serious than these numbers suggest. Any movement at all greatly increases heat loss and shortens survival time. Hands become numb and useless in minutes.

Without thermal protection, swimming is not possible. Without such protection, the victim is soon helpless, though still conscious. Subsequently, unconsciousness leads to drowning. Even with a drysuit on, one's hands rapidly become useless in water in the low 40's°F. Protective gloves are important.

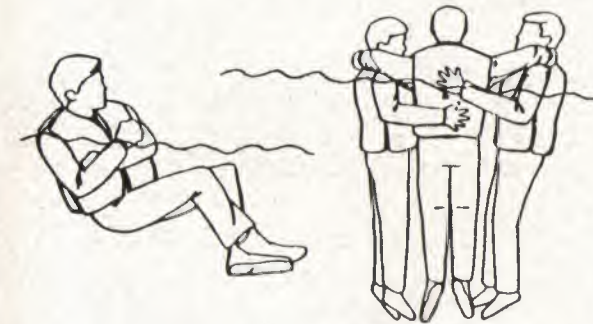
Shivering occurs as body temperature drops from 97°F down to about 90°F. Uncontrolled rapid breathing follows the initial gasping response. This can lead to loss of consciousness. The victim must attempt to recover control of his/her breathing rate.

Muscle rigidity and loss of coordination occurs at about 93°F. Mental capacity deteriorates at this point.

Unconsciousness occurs when the body's core temperature reaches about 86°F. If drowning doesn't occur first, death occurs at a core temperature of about 80°F.

## Once in the water

Try to get back in or on your boat immediately. Do not leave the boat. If you are not wearing thermal protection and can not get out of the water, stay as still as possible. Fold arms, cross legs and float quietly on the buoyancy of your PFD until help arrives (Heat Escape Lessening Posture; H.E.L.P.). If 2 or more people are in the water, put your arms around one another. Stay still and close together (Huddle posture).



H.E.L.P.  
(Heat Escape  
Lessening Posture)

HUDDLE  
to maintain  
body heat

Your ability to survive will depend on luck and how you prepared yourself before going out. Without a life jacket, you may not be found. If you are dressed for the possibility of immersion, a rescue, with the help of your paddling partners, should not be difficult.