

# Ocean Kayaker

**INTERNATIONAL SEA KAYAKING ASSOCIATION  
and NORKAPP TRUST NEWSLETTER**

**NOVEMBER 1999**



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# editorial

by John Ramwell



I read in CANOE FOCUS, October, '99 edition, the in-house magazine of the B.C.U., of the death of a young paddler whilst canoeing down the River Blade. Let me quote from the final paragraph; "Another issue from which we must learn concerns the more immediate aftermath of the incident. While being supportively and sympathetically questioned by a local policeman the organisers of the trip were told to wait to be questioned by C.I.D. officers. These officers adopted a far more aggressive stance as they were trying to establish whether there was any question of payment to a leader, i.e. they were trying to establish responsibility. Trip organisers and especially professional leaders need to be aware. Only after an hour of intense questioning were they fully satisfied that the club and the trip were none profit making and entirely voluntary, after which they left".

Have you seen the TV adverts. extolling the public to contact the advertiser, a law firm, if they should recently have been involved in any injury, accident or dispute not their fault? They offer a 'no win, no fee' arrangement!!

We are clearly now in a very litigious society. Who can blame anyone for taking legal action if there is hard cash to be won. Of course we are that much safer from incompetent operators than hitherto BUT we are rapidly coming to the stage when some of us are going to be asking whether it is worth taking responsibility for others on the water. Personally I have yet to reach this conclusion but it might only take a one or two of us to be taken through the courts (rightly or wrongly) to leave a lot of inexperienced paddlers to fend for themselves and so learn from their own mistakes rather than learn about safe practice from the more experienced. I do not have the answer to this situation. Do you?

\*\*\*\*\*

My address is, for copy for this magazine:

5, Osprey Ave., Westhoughton, Bolton, Lancs, BL5 2SL  
and I can be reached on 01942 842204.

***It is renewal time again....as most of you will know, membership runs Jan. to Jan. Though I am investing to improve the quality of newsletter the subscription is remaining at £8.00. PLEASE RENEW PROMPTLY***

# CONTENTS

third outer hebrides symposium  
Amelia Bryant.....p1

positioning systems  
Ron de Vos.....p4

b.c.u. sea kayaking festival  
Dave Evans.....p8

Letters  
.....p9

book review  
Tom Thomas.....p12

doubtful sound, nz  
Tony Brunt.....p13

pumps  
Peter Carter.....p14

information for safe travel  
Travel Direct.....p16

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**John Ramwell**

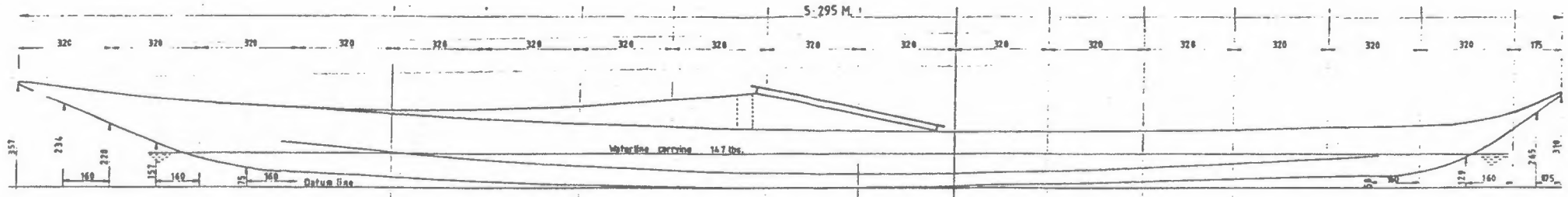
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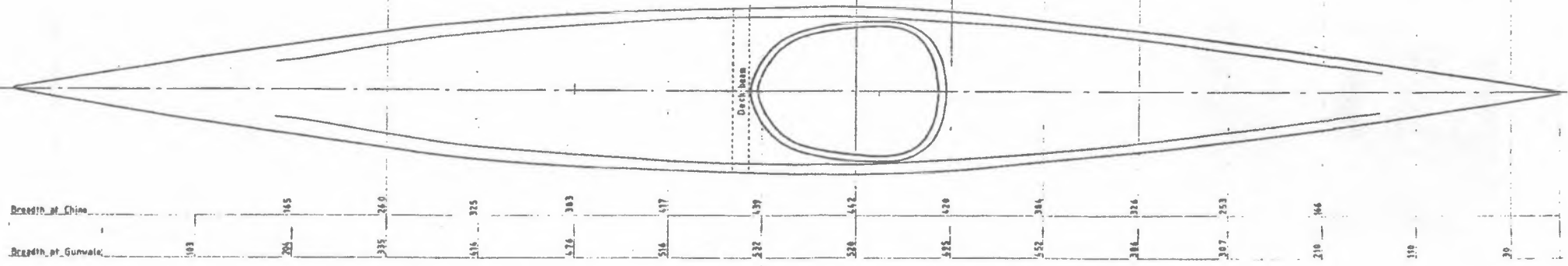
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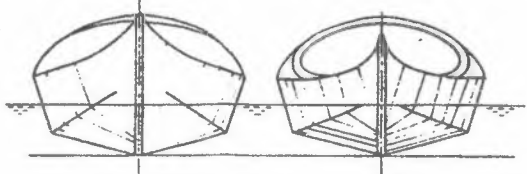
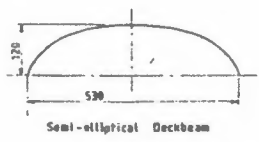
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Datum line to Gunwale			285	285	335	315	303	287	262	232	195	152	146	146	146	146	146



Width of Chine			145														
Width of Gunwale			103	205	335	315	303	287	262	232	195	152	146	146	146	146	146

Dimensions in mm.

Drawing No. 90 - 12-07



# ANAS ACUTA

Southwestern Greenland type Kayak

Designed by Geoff. Blackford.

© August 1970

# The Third Outer Hebrides Sea & Surf Kayak Symposium

by  
**Amelia  
Bryant**

**September 1999,**

**Hosted by Uisf Outdoor Centre**

*"The Outer Hebrides archipelago lies in the Atlantic Ocean off the western seaboard of Scotland, the last inhabited land before North America and has been described as Islands on the Edge of the world'. North Uist is the jewel in the Hebridean crown. Spectacular hills and sea cliffs. Rolling moorland speckled with fresh water lochs, the machair flatlands studded with wild flowers and teeming with birds. All this and bordered by miles of clean uncrowded whitesand beaches and clean green water. The variety makes this one of the best coastlines in the world for exploration by sea kayak'*

*"A sea kayakers paradise whether beginner or expert!"*

This arrived through my door!  
Quote's from the Uist Outdoor Centre's programme for the symposium.

I didn't even think twice, I booked a boat, paddle, B&B and a flight and that was that! I had often heard of this gathering of sea-paddlers in the Outer Hebrides, it sounded remote and wild and this opportunity was not to be missed!

## **FRIDAY:**

On arrival I was met by Bryn an instructor from the centre; a friendly young laid back guy with a smile that later, I would find out made the school girls blush. Straight away I was taken to the local school for a rolling-clinic session, which I had specifically made

Already within an hour I had achieved an eskimo roll which, has been an objective of mine for quite a while thanks to Guy Jackson, the local dentist and sea-kayak expert. I was now grinning from ear to ear this was excellent, I was having a brilliant time already!

In the meantime, the glass windows that surround the pool area were full of school girl's faces waiting to catch Bryn's eye, he should have inscribed his telephone number on the bottom of his boat as he demonstrated another perfect hand roll!

The symposium had started the day before my arrival, this consisted of: kayak-orienteering, a South Uist



sure I was booked for. There were four of us and an instructor each.

Day Paddle, 1-3 Star morning workshop and paddling the sea



loch's of Lochmaddy. I was met by Alyson Keiller the centre's manager who was instantly very friendly and helpful and pointed me in the right direction for my B&B. Later we had talks and slides in the village hall. the first talk was given by John-Paul Eattock which involved 'Surf' tides, waves and surf etiquette', and the second was John Love from the Scottish National Heritage on 'Wildlife in the Outer Hebrides', both were very enlightening and engaging. Everyone then proceeded down to the village for a few pints at the Lochmaddy Hotel which was followed by a Ceiidh - it sounded brilliant from my bedroom; I didn't make it I'm ashamed to say, I was totally eskimo-rolled-out!

### **SATURDAY:**

A hearty fry up and off I went to the village hall to browse over the options for the day, about six options and you want to do all of them! Some were for a full day and some for half days. I decided to choose a full days paddle to get out and experience the Hebridean wildlife and sea air. The trip was a circumnavigation of the Isle of Ronay, approximately fourteen kilometres. The expedition was led by Steve Maynard, a five star sea coach and Katie Gibb a four star coach, and so the nine of us paddled off with packed lunches which I have to say were delicious. The leeward side of the island, was choppy with a brisk easterly wind. We passed Heron nests; branches hanging from their homes as they clung onto the sides of the islands. The water was so clear and clean, tiny islands dotted everywhere almost like giant mole hills. After lunch we split into two groups some went back and the rest of us decided to carry on around the island. On the seaward side of the Minch, the wind was significantly stronger, gusting Force 4, the cloud was hug-



ging the land and you could see rollers ahead as we moved away from the loch and out into the sea. The waves were breaking against the high impenetrable cliffs. it was looking feisty, my adrenaline was pumped. I suddenly felt very excited and the notion of being aware of my surroundings was magnificent, I was about to embark on a fair ground ride as the boat moved at a quarter angle across the waves. I felt safe in my kayak, after all there was Steve with more than a decade of coaching and the rest of the group were very experienced. As we crossed the swell near the rocks, a wave broke under my boat - I survived that one! Now I was feeling confident. It was hard work and gradually as we paddled around the island the wind and the tide was behind us. it was a fantastic day. After three helpings of Chili-concame and a few glasses of red wine, there were talks from Duncan Winning OBE, President of the Scottish Canoe Association, his topic It's Inuit In't If. presenting the history of the kayak, the second talk was from kayak designer/builder and expeditioner guru Nigel Dennis, showing slides from his trip to Cape Horn and Easter Island.

### **SUNDAY:**

The 'First Outer Hebrides Sea-Kayaking and Surf Competition' was organised by Alan Gibson at Radical Moves in Anglesea and John-Paul Eattock who is about to 'surf his way around the world' soon! and whose dog has just made an entry into the '2000 Edition of the Guinness Book of Records' the record being the "most extreme sports participated in by a dog"!!!!

I decided I was going to give surfing a go. I had told JP that I was very apprehensive about it, and was worried about being upside down for most of the time. he assured me that it wouldn't happen and if it did that was part of the fun!! I gave in - I decided to put the anxieties away and try it. Lots of people during the symposium had tried surfing whether they were novices or at an intermediate level; there was instructing for all. The competition was going to be on Soltas beach, here the sea looked ferocious, but was instantly distracted with the white sand as far as you can see with high dunes to exemplify seclusion, the sea was an alluring crystalline green, no litter, no pollution, no crowds, just 'surf dudes' having a competition in unspoilt nature - perfect!!

I entered the novice class, I was put

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Commencing in June 2000 Peter Bray an ex-SAS soldier is to undertake a single handed totally unsupported 3000 mile crossing of the North Atlantic in a purpose built Kayak.

When the Challenge is funded all monies then raised are for two children's charities

namely Rainbow/Cope Charity No.1014051( A children's Hospice) and Taste for

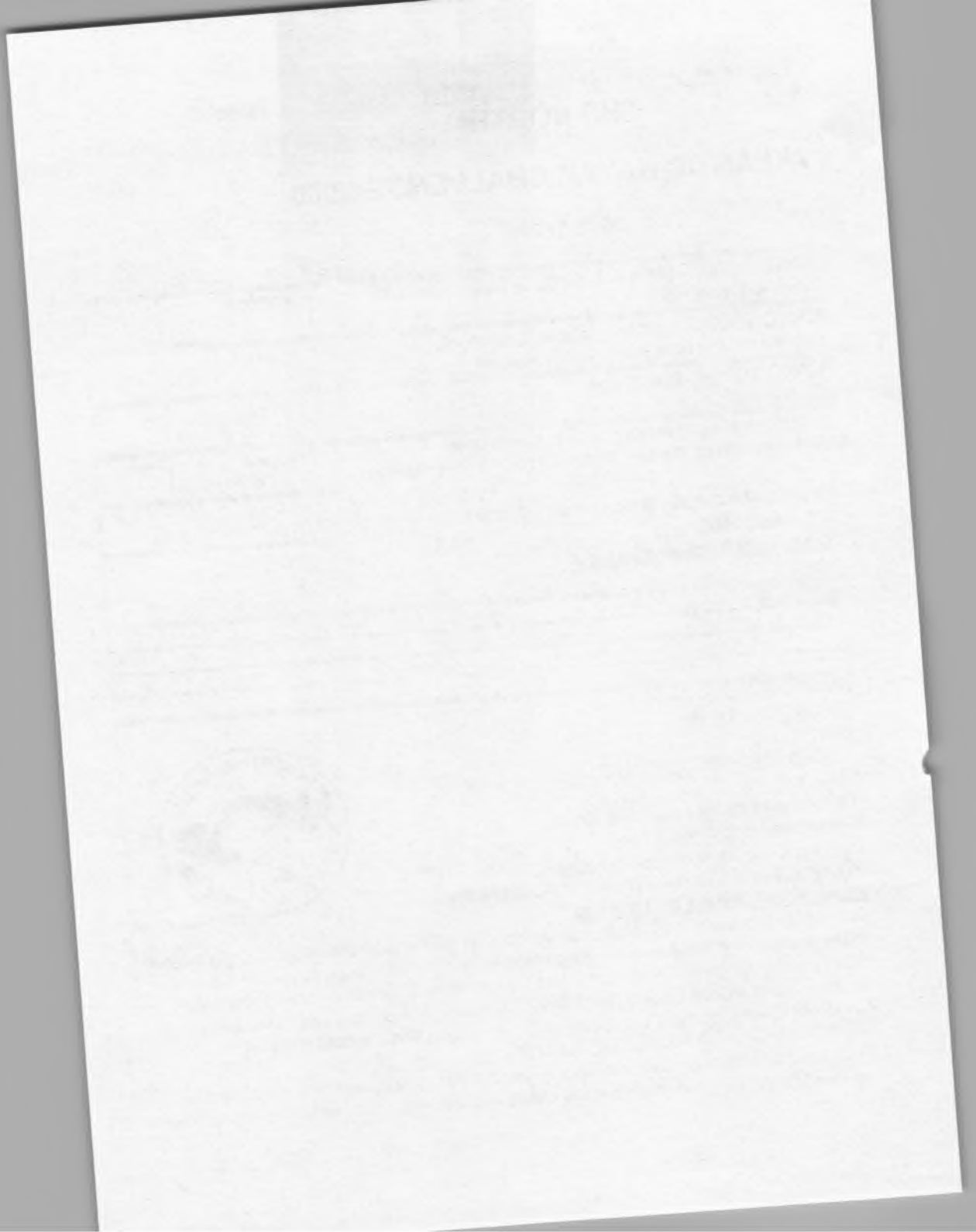
Adventure Charity No.1027330 for the under privileged and disabled children

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Jim Rowlinson(Project Manager) at the above address. Your help would be appreciated







into a play boat and given a quick surf lesson from Terry, a new acquaintance from the symposium. Points were distributed accordingly for Best Wave, Longest Wave, Style, Worst Move But Still With A Smile On Your Face! Longest Swim etc. or in my case how many times I was dumped underwater, luckily Terry was there to prop me back up, I couldn't rely on my eskimo-roll technique quite yet - not in these conditions anyway, instead I would prop my head out of the water with my arm. while still cap-sized and wait for poor Terry to battle through the waves to put me back up again. I can see why this could become addictive. to get the best wave and ride it without being dumped! When the competition was over at lunch we all piled back into the Land Rover to the centre. Everyone was buzzing, chatting and exchanging stories from their various adventures - a great atmosphere!

After lunch we had a quiz. The prizes for this and the Surf Competition were given: paddles from Ainsworth and Radical Moves, a helmet from A.C. Canoe Products, a bottle of Talisker whiskey, gift vouchers from Carlisle Canoes, beer from Skye Brewery, neckseals from Aquatec Jeva supplied sandtes and video's and Outdoor Leisure Supplies donated a dry bag which had the following inside: first aid kit, fleece jacket, life jacket. whistle, there were plenty of prizes to be won! That afternoon some of us went through the Canoe Safety Test syllabus, that was instructed by Jim McCutloch a paddler for twenty years and registered representative for Strathclyde East. The evening talk was given by Niall Johnson the founder of Uist Outdoor Centre and the Symposium, a keen wildlife enthusiast. His lecture was about 'Outer Hebridean Wildlife From A Kayak'

with excellent photo's. All these lectures made you not want to go back to stay for longer and explore by kayak, the wildlife and islands in the remotest parts of Scotland.

### **MONDAY:**

I was feeling well and truly fit. I entered myself for the 'Race Around The Maddies', ten kilometres. Six people set off, this included a young guy from Tokyo called Yojiro Hiki (who heard about the symposium by coincidence, he just so happened to paddle by the centre one day to stop for the night, he'd just paddled from Inverness!)

Along the way we saw a pod of porpoises, it was only brief but something I've never seen; a very sublime experience. I saw harbour seals popping up to find out what the hurrying was all about, I was told to wave to the seals, as they're very inquisitive they'll come closer apparently. It was the only day I saw these mammals, the sea was calm, the wind had dropped. At lunchtime the H.M. Coastguard from Stornaway came to give a talk. We were given the opportunity to fire some 'white-light' flares, this was to familiarise ourselves with the procedure - just in case it's needed. The helicopter arrived to give a rescue demonstration, the exercise was to pick up a hypothermic victim from a party of kayaker's all rafted together - 1 volunteered to be the victim and I was hoisted up by the winch man into the Sikorsky helicopter - amazing! those men were brilliant.

There were many other sea-kayaking activities going on during the symposium such as; an Inuit paddle session, a day trip to the Sound of Harris, and the Sound of Barra, talks on navigation and weather. John MacAulay's lecture on cultural links between Hebridean's and the

Norse, also author of books including 'Seal Folk and Ocean Paddlers'.

Gradually people started to disperse. getting equipment together, loading kayaks on car roofs Some were exchanging addresses and others reclaiming the odd water bottle or sock! Suddenly all the fun had ended - it was time to go home. The whole experience is something I shall never forget, the Outer Hebrides is a very special place. I met a lot of new friends and experienced an outdoor centre that excels above the rest . . .

*I will definately be going back next year!*



### **EVENTS PAGE**

**The next issue of Ocean Kayaker will carry the events page for the year 2000.**

**I need your event details sent to me as soon as possible.**

**Basically I require dates, venue and contact address/tel. No. of organiser.**

**Any other information such as the level of paddler you are wanting to attract and a description of the event would be very useful.**

**The ISKA web site will carry this events page and will be updated as the year progresses. As necessary this newsletter will also carry updated events information.**

## The development of

# positioning systems

## as a mirror of time

by  
Ron  
de Vos

**I**n the question 'Where am I?' lies the essence of everybody's existence. The positioning of a spot on earth runs parallel to the development of the thinking human being. At first there is nothing, than considering and testing to come to a theory. And after that the development of means to check the theory in practice.

To establish the position on earth, navigation instruments are, up till now, devised and developed. The latest in this development is the GPS. One push on the button is enough to find your position, expressed in degrees latitude and magnitude with an accuracy the even the most demanding haddock could wish for.

If this development turns out to be a mirror for the functioning of our establishment, an emergency signal will have to be transmitted by the thinking human being. The past must be recalled to provide the brain with new impulses.

Noah released his pigeons in order to follow them to the nearest land. Later this idea was developed by Irish monks, who studied the migration of birds to reach Iceland. But also the Arabs used birds. When the captain released a bird which continued circling above the ship than land was far away. However, if the animal disappeared from sight, the sail must be set to follow the bird. Beside birds the

Vikings also used whales to show them the way to Greenland.

With Homer's Odysseus we have one of the first sailors who tried to find the inscrutable seaways by using celestial bodies. To avoid the call-note from the most pernicious women, who had their stand on top of cliffs as hopeful beacons, Odysseus took the open sea. The square sail lulled from left to right together with the rolling of the ship. It was hard for the already balding sailor to follow Calypso's godly message, namely to keep The Great Bear, the star-constellation that never took a bath, at portside. He stretched his arm and with his middle finger and forefinger pressed tightly together he checked if the thickness of these two finger fitted between the lowest star of the Great Bear and the horizon. He nodded satisfied, only two hundred miles to go.

In those days, we are talking about 1182 BC, he could not make use of the Polar star, the celestial-body that became later the most important guiding star for our sea-farers. The Polar star was in those days about twelve degrees from the true North. Instead the Old Ones used star Kochab, one of the watchers of the Small Bear. They already knew the important guiding star for our sea-farers. The Polar star was in those days about twelve degrees from the true North. Instead the

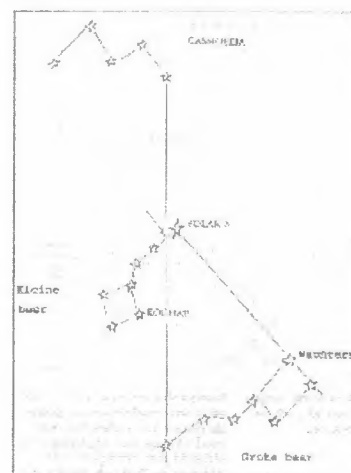
Old Ones used star Kochab, one of

the watchers of the Small Bear. They already knew of the Small Bear. They already knew that most stars were glued to the firmament as a fixed point and consequently had a declination.

It was not easy to observe, for a certain port, the altitude of a bright star and determine the difference each month. The sailor first had to go to that latitude, where the star had the same height above the horizon and than simply go east or west to reach that port. The Ancients not only used the Pleiaden, small boats and Orion to find their ways across the Mediterranean, but also the sun was perfect orientation point.

The declination is the latitude of a celestial body in the firmament expressed in degrees. The sun has in midsummer a northerly declination of 23.5°, in spring and autumn 0°, and in winter 23.5° south.

The later Greeks exchanged the



mystic for a more philosophic approach to the problem 'Where am I?'

For us known as barbarians To answer that question, it was necessary to solve another problem first viz. where in space is earth located.

They observed the east to west movement from sun and stars and saw the celestial bodies make half a circle on the horizon. Those who possessed the art to explain life in the darkness of a cave, knew that if they wanted to understand reality, they had to abandon their observations. In this way they found out that the earth was round and rotated round a imaginary axle. With the knowledge that stars don't move they understood that earth circled around the sun and not the other way around.

Mathematics were integrated in navigation. In 190 BC the mathematician Hipparchus divided the circle in  $360^\circ$  and those in minutes and seconds. The theoretical science was based upon the knowledge of a sailor. In 320 BC Pytheas, probably a scholar of Aristoteles made a trip to our regions.

## The Gnomon

The Phenicians have been here before but as they were afraid of competition little is known. The Greek Pytheas however wrote down everything. At home he had done a lot of preparatory work. Thus he had made a gnomon ; a vertical pole placed on a horizontal plane. And made his measurements at the moment that the sun had a declination of  $0^\circ$ , being apparently above the equator. He divided the angle, shown by the shadow from the pole at one hour before and one hour after midday, in exactly two parts. The found line ran exactly north-south. With the length of the shadow-line he calculated the latitude position of his residence. On his trip to the British Isles and further to Iceland

and the Elbe delta he made various discoveries.

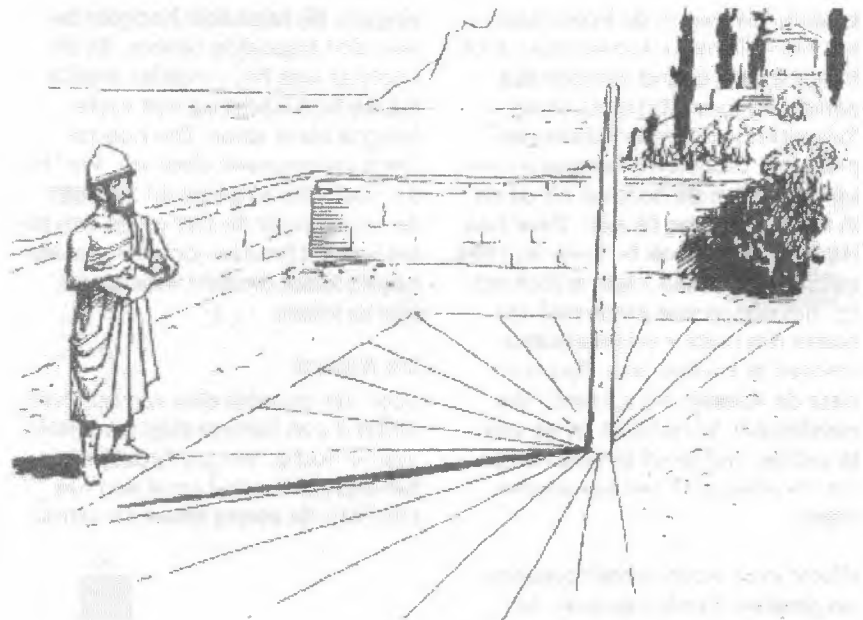
He noticed that the polar star, in those days probably Kochab, was not exactly in the north. He, for the first time, measured the angle in degrees from star to horizon.

That a sailor worked theoretically was rare. Only John Davids, who developed at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century the forerunner of the sextant, had a sea-faring occupation. The normal sailor was often too far away from scientific insight. He looked up to the vault of heaven and basically he saw everything around him moving. The essential problem, which held up the development of astro-navigation during ages, is touched upon, namely to bring the insight of the sailor into agreement with a reality that cannot be observed.

On the other side of the world, in the silence of the Pacific, under the firmament with millions of stars glued to it, appeared a canoe, on one side supported with two sticks and a small float. The sail, slightly swollen by the wind, drove the ship,

consulted the latitude-angle, and then shouted a new course to the helmsman. The man on the stern dressed in a single robe knew the way.

The idea, to sail by the stars sounds very romantic, but this trick could only be done by sailors with an incredible amount of experience in their own sailing area. A Polynesian making a trip on the North Sea would be absolutely blind. They did not have a compass or a chart, only some ground-plan on bamboo on which the known islands were shown. In the North-Pacific they probably used the star nearest to the extended north pole-axle. On the southern hemisphere this star cannot be seen. The Polynesians therefore used an imaginary intersection on lines originating southward from the Southern Cross and the Centaur constellation. Probably just after the start of our era, they started to use a small tool for astro-navigation namely for the above mentioned "latitude-angle". It consisted of a bamboo-stick where on one side a



filled with goods and some passengers slowly forward into an area with thousands of islands. With his legs folded crosswise under his body, he searched the sky,

horizontal stick is attached and on the other side a little noose was knotted. The distance between the horizontal stick and the noose showed the height of a certain star.

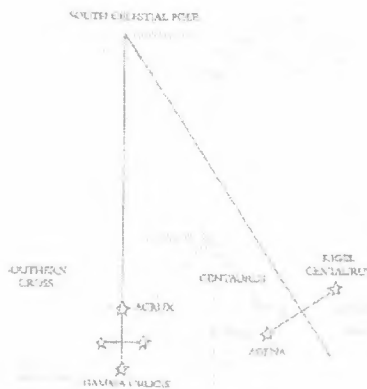


This distance was established, in the port of call, beforehand. At sea the navigator stretched his arm putted the horizontal stick on the horizon and if the star concerned appeared in the noose, he was on the desired latitude to reach that harbour. If the star was above the noose he knew that he had to sail away from the star and if the star was under the noose the course was to be altered to the star. Each harbour and every island demanded its own latitude. However this latitude had a practical problem; it is hard to see the star as well as the horizon in one glance. This also bothered Henk Bezemer. He sailed in 1994 in a little sailing vessel from Plymouth to the Azores with only some material on board to make ancient navigation instruments. He wrote: 'To see the horizon and the star at the same time we should have been equipped with chameleon eyes.

Deserts are compared with oceans. Mystics believe in dead seas, that changed into sand. The waves are the wrinkles. The sun was the enemy, so the nomads, accompanied by their four-legged dessert-ships, moved under a crystal-clear starry sky to the oasis where they mixed their dates with water. In a harbour they attracted the attention of an Arab who sailed in his Dhow the Red Sea and even the Indian Ocean. Between them there was a transfer of knowledge and of course it was logical that the question 'How do you come here' should be answered.

According to Henk Bezemer the Phenicians knew the technique of the Zenith-stars. They also understood by intensive observation that certain stars had a more or less fixed position in the celestial arc. They picked the star that had the same declination as the place they went to. If the desert traveller had the star perpendicular above his head, than it only was a matter of going east or west. Arabian sailors integrated this knowledge in their own navigation theories. Beside the fixed stars, they

also used those, that described a small circle at the horizon. When the star reached its highest point,



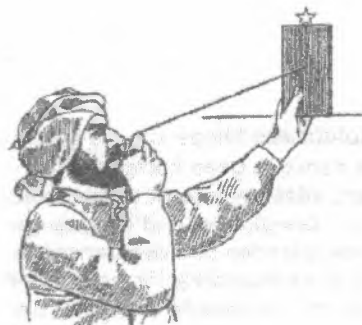
they knew that they were on the north-south line.

They measured at an exact time the heights with their hand, fist or a number of fingers. To certain heights belonged certain harbours.

With the polar star, as this one remained at the same height during the night, it was easier. That height was indicated by a notch in the mast, in such a way that the helmsman could keep the star at level with the notch, in order to reach the harbour for which the notch was made for.

## The Kamal

For the development of tools, a higher degree of intelligence is needed. From the Arabs it is known that they used the Kamal at the end



of the first century as an astro-navigation tool, so if history does not cheat on us, about the same time as the declination angle in the Pacific. Nowadays, one can find

now and then, beside the old VOC-compass the Kamal on board of a Dhow. The skipper of the Dhow supported himself with one hand on the railing and in the other he held the block with a knotted string from the middle. Over the starboard railing he searched the sky for Kochab, the star that glittered so nicely against the northern hemisphere. He spitted in the water put the string in his mouth and let the knots slip between the teeth. The first knot was for the port of Jeddah. He had made his own Kamal and in every important port that he had visited during his journeys he had measured the height of the stars.

For each port he had made a knot in the string. He wanted the next knot, when that one stuck behind his teeth, he stretched the string, lowered his hand a bit to bring the underside of the block level with the horizon, he turned the block under Kochab. The star appeared just above the top of the block. The course was maintained. They would see land in daytime.

That only relatively small angles could be measured with the Kamal, was no problem to the Arabs, as the for them important stars, were low at the horizon.

There were also Kamals, where the distance between two knots meant one fist high or more or less  $1^{\circ} 36'$ . Four knots meant a height of  $6^{\circ} 24'$ .

The knowledge about the declination of the stars and the correct heights belonging to certain ports, the Arabs would later use in his adapted navigation instrument, the astrolabium.

Around the year 900 it was a coming and going of Vikings with their boats, in the northerly seas. Their trips were mainly between Greenland, Iceland and the Scandinavian countries, however it is known that they called at the north-east coast of America. Leif Eriksson, 'the Lucky One' was the first to visit that country. However it was Bjarne Herjulfsson who saw the promised land for the first time. From his report one could gather

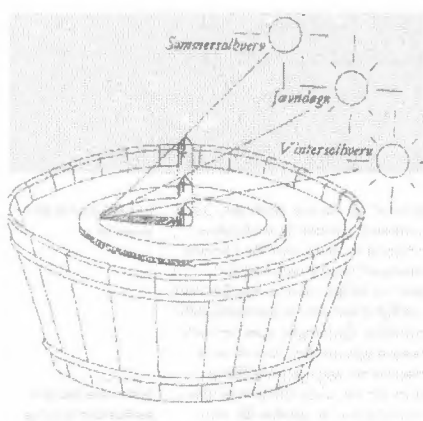
that he used the sun to find his way. Bjarne had looked at his men and asked: 'I want to make a quest, to find my father. Who is coming with me?' All agreed. The wind was unfavourable and the mist drew curtains before the sun. When the sun reappeared, the right course could be followed after a period of "halfvilla" (being lost). They finally encountered land, but with neither mountains nor glaciers. Instead heavily wooded hills appeared. This was not Greenland. They sailed more to the north and after a couple of days they again saw land but the wind changed and the land disappeared from sight. Soon after that they did discover glaciers and high snow-capped mountains, it appeared to be an island. Only when they neared a long outstretched spit of land, they saw for the first time a human being. There the father embraced his son and they never separated again. One day they were visited by Leif, son of Eric the Red, and they told him about the land that Bjarne had seen. Leif bought a ship and pushed off with 35 men. Did Bjarne give him a latitude to sail on? Anyway he sailed straightaway to America and set foot ashore on the north-east coast of America in 1002.

The idea is that the Vikings were mainly led by the shadow of the sun. They did use the Polar Star, but as the star cannot be seen during the northerly summer, they had to change to another celestial body. The discovery of a half wooden disc and a triangular shaped stone on which hyperbolic curves could be seen, put scientist's and sailors to the idea that they had to do with a sun direction finder. The hyperbolic curves turned out to be created by a gnomon. In summer when the sun had its most northerly position, on a certain latitude between 60° and 65°, where most crossings took place, the shadow of the gnomon was measured each hour. From connecting the extreme points a curve proceeded. The smallest shadow line was exactly on the

north-south axle. After that it was not so very difficult to make a compass chart. On their way it was only a matter of checking the shadow of the sun against the curve to find the correct direction. Also existed a sun shadow-board. It is supposed that the board was used in the following way. The Vikings placed, in a bowl filled with water, a wooden board with in the middle a Gnomon of a certain length. The length depended on the season. On the board a circle was made. The circle was made by measuring at a certain latitude, at noon exactly, the length of the sun's shadow. When at sea, the shadow-point of the gnomon touched the circle during the observation made at noon, they were on the correct latitude.

Both instruments were tried at the replica "Saga Siglar" and it was found that the accuracy of the sun direction finder was between 3 and 5 degrees. The experiment with the shadow-board appeared to be very difficult, because it was hard to keep the bowl full with water on a rolling ship.

There also exists a saga in which



the Vikings used a "Sun Stone". The stone brightened in the direction of the sun, even if she disappeared behind a thick fog bank.

When about the 11th century the in Iceland living Oddi Helgason calculated the declination of the sun, it should have been possible to use latitude navigation, as it was

done later for the first time by the Portuguese. This point however is not very clear, as well as the fact from whom the Vikings got the idea of using the Gnomon. Did it come to the knowledge of the Vikings by descendants from the Greek Pytheas, who visited the northern seas and the Vikings. In that case it required from the Norsemen, for us known as barbarians, rather a mental effort to use the Gnomon for their own purposes.

### Sources:

1. Latitude hooks and azimuth rings by Dennis Fisher; published by International Marine Camden, Maine, 1995
2. The Viking Compass guided Norsemen first to America, by C.L. Vebaek and S. Thirlund. Published by Gullanders Bogtrykkeri a-s, Skjern, 1992.
3. No star to America, by C.L. Vebaek and S. Thirlund. Published by Gullanders Bogtrykkeri a-s, Skjern, 1992.
3. No star at the Pole, by David and Joan Hay. Published by Charles Knight and Co. Ltd, London, 1973.
4. Vier Zomers zeilen by Henk Bezemer. Published bondon, 1973.
4. Vier Zomers zeilen by Henk Bezemer. Published benk Bezemer. Published by Hollandia B.V., Eemdijk, 1997.

With thanks to Maritiem Nederland and special thanks to Gerard Lucas for the translation.

# BCU *Sea Kayaking* *Festival*

10-12 September

by  
**Dave  
Evans**

**S**IXTY paddlers descended on the Cwm Pennant Mountain Centre in North Wales over the weekend of the 10-12 September for a Sea Kayaking festival. The event was organised by Cwm Pennant on behalf of the BCU Sea Touring committee, with the aim of providing a regional event that would attract not only established sea paddlers but also appeal to newcomers to the sport. The figures speak for themselves with thirty-nine participants who had not been to a previous sea Kayaking event attending for the first time.

## **Demonstrations**

Saturday's programme consisted of a distress flares demonstration and a demo kayak session in the morning followed by an afternoon paddle along the coast from Pwllheli to Criccieth. Despite dire warnings of bad weather the morning was dry with everyone having a good opportunity to paddle kayaks supplied by P&H, Valley, and Nigel Dennis. The flares demo threw up some interesting and disturbing concerns with several people experiencing difficulty in letting off some of the

flare types. These problems are being followed up with Pains Wessex via Mike Lynskey, the flares demonstrator.

After a dry warm lunch on the beach the promised rain did materialise in the afternoon, and in very large amounts. Luckily the wind had dropped so the rain just flattened the seas even more.

## **Entertainment**

Derek Hutchinson provided the evening entertainment with the film premier of a Sea Kayaking video made in the Farne Islands for American TV and featuring, guess who! Derek gave an amusing and informative introduction to the making of the film, but where did he get that hat!! Contrary to popular belief it doesn't always rain in Wales and after the formal entertainment was over we went outside for a bonfire under a clear starry sky, aided by one or two alcoholic beverages, hic!

The metfax forecast for Sunday promised winds up to force 7 but in the event this was modified to 4 to 5 and then only later in the day. The decision was taken to start and finish early and so 50 paddlers set off in two waves from Abersoch out to the Tudwal islands. The seas were quite lumpy between the islands and only one small group of 8 successfully attempted the

circumnavigation. Everyone met up again on our own private beach for lunch, returning en masse to Abersoch in the early afternoon.

By common consent the weekend was a great success. Up to 20 people were turned away in the week prior to the event as 60 paddlers seemed to be a reasonable maximum to organise without pushing up my stress levels too high. There is no doubt however that we will be running a repeat event next year, so book early to avoid disappointment.

## **Courses**

Cwm Pennant runs Sea kayaking courses and expeditions throughout the year for all ability levels, and the Centre is also available for clubs or groups looking for a venue for their own event. Contact Cwm Pennant for further details.

**Dave Evans, Chairman**  
**BCU Sea Touring Committee.**  
**Cwm Pennant Mountain Centre.**  
**Cwm Pennant**  
**Garndolbenmaen**  
**Gwynedd**  
**LL51 9AQ**

01766 530682

E-mail: [cpennant@lbhill.gov.uk](mailto:cpennant@lbhill.gov.uk)





# Letters

**Dear John,**

Good luck with your new magazine, I have greatly enjoyed my involvement with our club's publication over the years, and Paul Black has now taken it over enthusiastically.

I would like to make a (personal) comment relating to your discussion on an international /coaching scheme. It seems to me that conditions can vary considerably between different parts of the world - ability to handle surf or clapotis or tidal rips is crucial in some regions whereas crocodiles and sun burn are much more relevant in others. It will be difficult to insist on proficiency in-for example - surf, for a region/country that doesn't have any. I suspect that a good way to go would be to promote a standard, then leave individual countries/bodies to decide how much weight to put on individual aspects. I look forward to a good discussion!

Regards,  
Mike Emery  
150 Summerleas Road,  
Fern Tree,  
Tasmania, 7054

**Hi John**

You said you would show my brief note on the Skye trip in ISKA News.

Having measured the distances more accurately, here is a more up to date version.

Two of us did the trip. Ewan Gillespie from Dingwall joined me, & although we had others lined up for the second week, we were round in under a week.

It actually took just over 5 days of paddling.

We made a start on the Saturday & got 8 miles under our belts. 34 miles on the Sunday passing the Cuillin Mountains in glorious sunshine, 21 miles on Monday with the roughest water of the whole week at Idrigill & Neist Points. 39 miles on Tuesday across the sea lochs at the northern end.

Stormbound with gale force winds on Wednesday. 34 miles on Thursday got us to Broadford, & 28 miles under the bridge, through Kyclerhea & back to Armadale on Friday. The threat of more gales at the weekend spurred us on to finish on Friday instead of Saturday.

I will write a proper

account for ISKA sometime soon. When you're up this way I'll show you the slides. Just sent 2 films away this morning for

processing, & another is in the camera with a few more shots to take.

It's a good circumnavigation & can definitely recommend it. May and September are probably the best times for the lack of midgies & the best chance of settled weather. Not that we got settled weather!

See you soon.  
Mike Dales

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**Hi John,**

Thanks for publishing my bit on Pacific Island Navigators. The way you set it up looked great. Did you scan the text at some point?

It was also good to see my bit of art work published to illustrate Adrian Mould's story (p.9).

I am interested in your remarks about certification and the BCD. I agree that it might be useful to have another

certification program available to paddlers. The US certification program has been captured by commercial enterprise. Certification here requires large financial investment and commercial support of the agents doing the certification. Like, work for them or provide them with free labor at boat shows in exchange for certification. By forcing people to retake the program and by dividing the certification into numerous subdivisions of certification, a continuing stream of financial reward is assured for the businesses engaged in training and

certification. I assume the BCU employs a similar strategy.

What are the objectives that you are trying meet with your proposal?

Thanks,

Chuck Sutherland

<http://www.enter.net/~skimmer>

\*\*\*\*\*

**Dear John**

The Inverness & Nairn Canoe Club have been fortunate to receive a grant of £4745-00 towards a fleet of six P&H Capella sea kayaks from the National Lottery Awards for All Scheme. The boats & equipment are provided from Scottish Paddler Supplies and Mke has been extremely helpful in every respect. The boats will allow the club to develop into stronger and more diverse group whilst making full use of the excellent opportunities around the Inverness area for sea

canoeing. The club & its members would like to express our thanks to the Awards for all team for their generosity.

Steve Mackinnon

SCA LCO Inverness & Easter Ross

\*\*\*\*\*

**Dear John**

Have finally got round to reading the article in July's Ocean Kayaker. I have to agree with you and share your doubts as to the integrity of Ric's claim. The Lizard/Plymouth bit had me wondering when I read it in Canoeist.

I can't help wondering why, when setting off on an attempted circumnavigation, you would take a vehicle around with you? Surely it would make sense to leave it at a convenient spot close to the start/finish point.

The temptation would be too great not to put the boat on the roof and miss a few miles. As you say the log of the trip and the 'road map' need to be seen to substantiate his claims. I look forward to the next article, and Ric's reply if he ever sends one.

Regards,

Craig Addison

\*\*\*\*\*

**Dear John**

*Prosecution or the Tale of the Frozen Friesian. Taken from "Treasna na d'Tonnnta" Irish Sea Kayaking Association*

*newsletter.*

Last August, a paddler set out alone against an awful forecast (if he heard it) from NW mainland Germany to the island Langelness in "Riddle of the Sands" country. He got into trouble. Nothing exceptional perhaps except that as he floundered in the water, a ferry passed him, quite nearby, and several passengers, who saw him waving his paddle, reported his plight to the captain, then assumed all was alright when the ferry didn't stop. In fact the captain ignored the information.

The paddler died, from hypothermia. The body washed up eventually. Some passengers heard the news on radio, and reported the captain of the ferry, who is now being prosecuted.

On land it is quite legal to ignore anyone needing assistance and even a doctor can ignore anyone needing attention. Not so at sea. There are international conventions, but in

Germany there is also a specific criminal law and they intend roasting the bad guy.

David Walsh

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**Dear John**

Once again thank you for the newsletter. Having to put one together myself makes me appreciate the time and effort that go into it. The article about the Duty of Care was particularly enlightening and very relevant, could I use it for my club newsletter? (Rutland Canoe Club)

With reference to the "GB Circumnavigation Saga"

A lot of my kayaking is done solo, and I have to admit that when telling "stories in the clubhouse", the odd wave has grown a foot or so and possibly the wind gained a point here and there. I have found though, that writing it down and then re-reading it tends to bring them back to size. I think your analysis sounds feasible, and I agree with the mileage calculations. The most I have got my laden Orion to do in one day is 33 miles and the conditions were very favourable. I think you were right to set the ball rolling, the claim must be able to stand on its' own legs.

I have attached a story which may be worthy of inclusion in a future edition. I am not claiming any "Firsts or Fastests" and I don't owe a sponsor. I just enjoy kayaking.

In 1994 I did a circumnavigation of Corsica all except for the bit between Bonifacio and the Gulf of Santa Manza. Corsica appeals to me as a more mature paddler because of the lesser tidal considerations (like humping a loaded boat up the sands at Calgary on Mull, when the sea disappears into the sunset), the water temperature (over 20c), and the weather being a bit more reliable so that you don't have to carry so much clothing. That time I went in September, the oracle predicted it not too hot with less likelihood of strong winds. In the event it was not a "normal" September, autumn had set in early, the place was deserted and it was windy.

The bit I missed irked me, so this year I decided to complete that bit and then to cross over to Sardinia. I went in the middle of



August which, this year turned out to be very hot, and not knowing what water supplies were available on the islands, I decided to allow myself four days self sufficiency for the crossing in case the wind got rough and I was "island-bound" for a time. I was using 3 to 4 litres a day whilst paddling down the Corsican coast so the carriage of water was a consideration. The longest open sea crossing is between the islands of Lavezzi and Razolli, less than six miles if you follow the archipelago and island hop. The crossing was a bit uncomfortable with an "over the right shoulder" sea. I had left it until later in the day to allow the wind to die down a bit. I paddled along in the shelter of Razolli and did the very rough little bit between it and its neighbour, Budelli. These islands are part of the Italian National Park, and wild camping is discouraged. I didn't feel like going much further so I landed in a tiny cove which was wooded to within 10ft. of the high water mark and made myself as unobtrusive as possible. I didn't put the tent up, I prefer to use a small collapsible bed (the Thermarest is uncomfortably hot), and sleep in a lightweight bag with the top half inserted into a home made mosquito net bag.

I had been plagued with wasps, so, the rubbish bag was tied up and sited as far away as it would go, which wasn't far given the space I had got.

I settled down for the night as it got dark, keeping a torch handy and putting a couple of sizeable pebbles near at hand, (I had been troubled by wild pigs on my previous visit.) I must

have gone off pretty heavily but awoke with a start, feeling that something had nudged the bed. My senses were very sharp and I lay there listening to the various night noises and rustlings. Nothing happened so I talked myself into believing that the bed had moved on the pebbles and tried to get off to sleep again.

Tiredness took over and I drifted into nod only to come round again to the sound of the rubbish bag being ransacked. Hedgehog? Mouse? Torch on, .... Nothing. .... A couple of pebbles thrown in its' general direction didn't produce any result, and quiet descended again. But, I had to admit to feeling a bit uneasy, and took a long time to drift back into sleep with the torch in my hand. Another rude awakening,.... Something landed on the Mosquito net next to my head and I was bolt upright before it had come to a standstill. Torch on.... got it... scrambling up the slope under the low trees... ..a rat, and it was black. The pebble missed, not by much, but a hit would have been more satisfying. Discretion got the better of valour, it was either a night paddle or the tent up. The tent alternative seemed the better idea, but, have you ever tried to put up a 3 hoop tunnel tent in the middle of the night after you've just been scared out of your wits? It's not easy, first I had to get it out of the back hatch, the rods had to be sorted and socketed, then the pockets are invisible in the dark, and as for getting tent pegs into a pebble shore, well I gave up and just put a pile of pebbles inside, in each corner. I was amazed at the feeling of security a

nylon tent gave. But, I think I will be looking for one of the newer models that erect with the flick of the wrist. I had always been led to believe that rats generally kept away from humans, don't believe it. Reading a bit about them since I got home has made me rethink about the way I will handle food and drink storage in future. Apart from Weils Disease they can carry a large variety of other nasties which are transmitted by contamination with their urine. So from now on the pots get put away into hatches and the non tinned food will be in vermin proof containers. Washing up will never be left until morning! If any members are thinking of paddling in that area, I would be pleased to pass on what information I have. The West Coast of Corsica takes some beating, some of the islands are works of art and most of the locals I met have been very helpful.

A change of subject..... VCP type hatch covers.

Am I the only one who is disappointed with their life expectancy? Of the 5 replacement hatch covers I have bought, One seems to have lasted for ever, but the others only stay leak-proof for two seasons, and have to be supplemented with plastic bags. Not a good advert for the industry. There must be a Rubber, Plastic or Polymer more suited to the duty. I completed my last trip with the front hatch covered with a supermarket carrier bag, held on with an inner tube rubber band.

Best wishes  
Neil Juggins  
Empingham

Oakham.

e-mail

neil.juggins@lineone.net

\*\*\*\*\*

### Dear John

At the meeting of the BCU Sea Touring Committee, held on the 28th March 1999, the following topics were among those discussed:

International coaching awards  
STC Development plan

Expenses and ICE Expenditure by the STC  
1999 Symposium progress

Other STC sponsored events

The retirement of Geoff Good

The Dorset Coast Strategy

The full minutes and events calendar are available, upon the receipt of a

SAE, from the secretary,

Craig Addison, 96 Recreation Road, Branksome, Poole, Dorset, BH12 2AL

Many thanks,  
Craig Addison



## BOOK REVIEW

by Tom Thomas

"The Sea Around Us", by Rachel Carson, is published by Oxford University Press as an Oxford Paperback and retails at £7.99.

First published in 1951 "The Sea Around Us" was a major success for a scientific book, selling over a million copies. The 1951 version was updated by Carson herself up to 1961 and then with introductions by Ann H. Zwinger and afterword by Jeffrey S> Levington we have a fully updated "classic".

The book is some 250 pages and is full of description of the sea. The book links together the creation of the earth, the history of the sea in geological development and the role of the sea in the emergence of life.

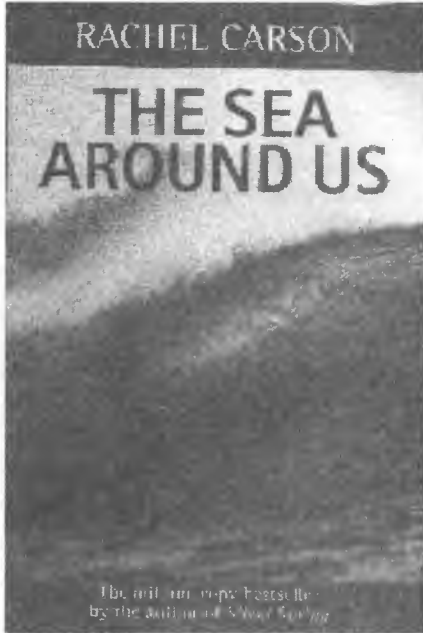
The book does not contain one suggestion that will help to paddle or to navigate. Instead this book gives you a sense of where we as human beings fit into the bigger picture. The historical context and the fact that Carson concentrates on the sea as a whole not just on the surface gives the book an unusual depth. It is a book to swim in not to float on.

There are fourteen chapters broken into three sections - Mother Sea, the Restless Sea and Man and the Sea About Him. Together the chapters manage to give a scientific overview with passionate description and some passages of poetic writing. When awarded the National Book Award for "The Sea Around US" Carson is quoted as saying:

"The winds, the sea, and the moving tides are what they are. If there is wonder and beauty and majesty in them, science will discover these

ocean kayaker. November

qualities. If they are not there, science cannot create them. If there is poetry in my book about the sea, it is not because I put it there but because no one could write truthfully about the sea and leave out the poetry."



Each chapter opens with a classical quote that have set me off to look up the works from which the quotes come. I am also seeking out Carson's other works - particularly "The Silent Spring" which brought the world's attention to the danger of indiscriminate use of pesticides, and "The Edge of the Sea".

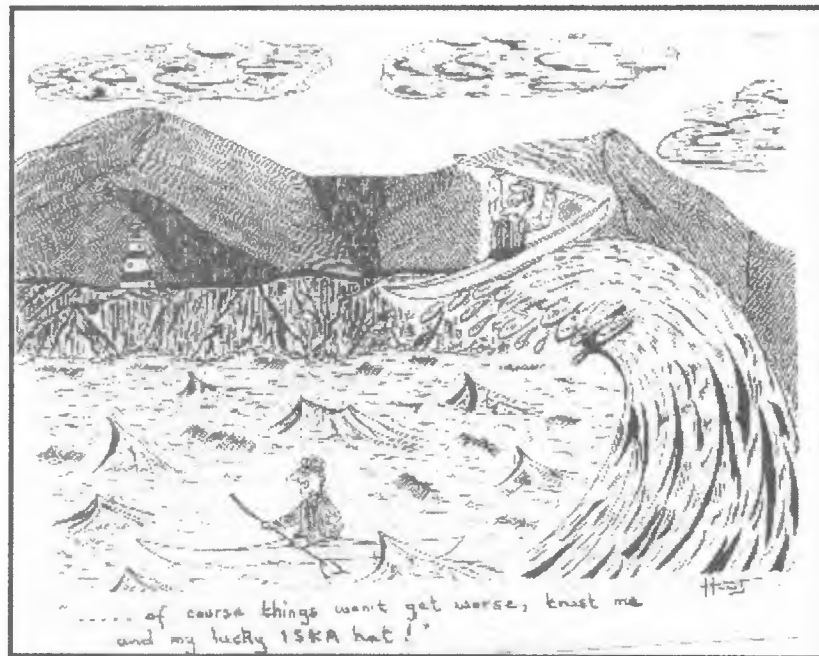
That Rachel Carson was able to create such a scientific overview and enthralling description in 250 pages is some form of miracle. That the book was a major catalyst of ecologi

cal understanding and part of the revolution of caring for the natural environment is less surprising. The book entices you by answering the big questions, when it has you firmly in its grip it delivers the sucker punch - We have responsibilities!

People are different and for many a book with so much scientific content may be a real turn off. I understand this but would urge everyone to at least give the book a chance to change perceptions. The book is suitable for the avid "cover to cover" reader and has lots for the "dipper". My copy has accompanied me on a variety of trips and is ideal for those days when the weather is too bad to go paddling.

.....

**DON'T FORGET TO  
RENEW YOUR I.S.K.A.  
SUBSCRIPTION FOR  
NEXT YEAR**

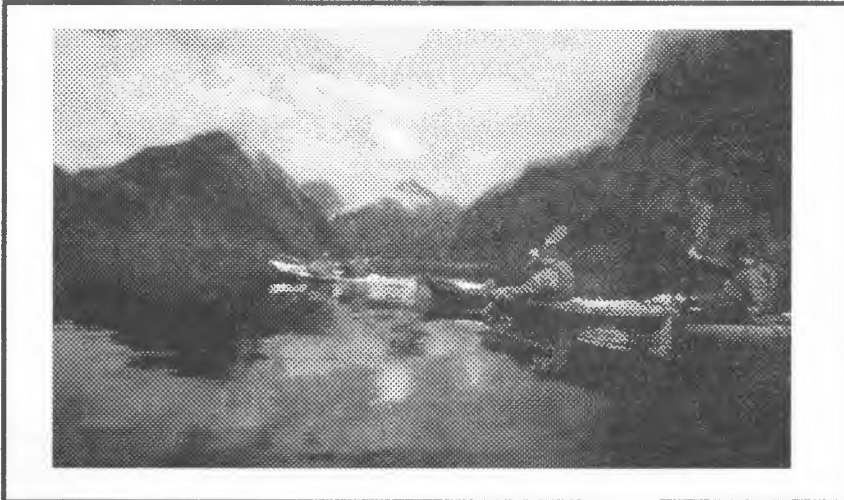


Thanks to Huw Jones from Haverfordwest for the cartoon

## Doubtful Sound

by Tony Brunt

Feelings of anticipation slowly leech into my barely conscious mind as I load my gear into the trailered boat in Te Anau, at a time the sun even deems too early to be up. Before the sleep has been truly rubbed from my eyes we are rushing full speed over the still waters of Lake Manapouri. In the east the sky lightens over the Takitimu ranges heralding the sun's eminent arrival. The day promises to be a good one, something to be cherished in this wilderness area famed for its spectacular scenery, changeable weather and annual rainfall that is measured in metres!



After an hour and 30 kilometres we arrive at the Manapouri Power Station at the head of west arm. The ubiquitous Fiordland Sandfly makes its unwelcome presence immediately felt, evoking one of the worst of human emotions, the lust for revenge! Whilst frantically swotting the little beasties we load our gear into the waiting 4 wheel drive which transports us the remaining 20 kilometres over New Zealand's steepest and most expensive road, reputed to have cost around \$2 per centimetre to build. It was designed to bear the weight of the huge generators that were taken from the cantilevered jetty in Deep Cove to the Manapouri Power station built in the

late 60's and early 70's. The bonus from such development is that visitors can now access some of the most spectacular scenery in New Zealand with relative ease.

The view from Wilmot Pass gives us an overview of the sound: Malaspina reach, bounded by high peaks, connects to Deep Cove. Here the salt water of the ocean mixes with the fresh water of Lake Manapouri, delivered through 10 km of solid rock by way of the Manapouri power stations tail-race.

Our group consists of me, the token Kiwi, an American couple, two Canadian sisters, two Germans and one Englishman. For our guide, Daphne Taylor, the fine weather is a pleasant change from what has been

a windy season. When asked about working in such petulant conditions she just shrugs and philosophically notes, "after all, this is Fiordland, you just have to accept the weather as it is and make the most of it."

Hardly a breath of wind disturbs the crystal clear water as we paddle out from Deep Cove. The water is as flat as the proverbial pancake. I feel a part of the environment bobbing along in my sea kayak and reflect on what a perfect platform it makes for exploring the sound and for having chance encounters with the dolphins, penguins and seals that call these convoluted waterways home.

Our journey takes us past Rolla

Island, which stands at the narrow entrance to Hall arm, effectively the first on the left as you travel out of Deep Cove and into Malaspina Reach. A sudden downpour is totally unexpected and so ferocious that it has us all laughing at the pure power of it. The drops can be seen bouncing back off the surface. Fortunately it doesn't linger, yet it serves as a reminder to all who venture here: the weather can and will change without warning. The sea remains calm, the air hanging limp like our sails of nylon which we had optimistically raised on paddles in the hope of a wind assisted paddle. Alas, no such luck, resigned, we continue to expend energy till we fetch up under the imposing mass of Mt Danae at the end of the arm. A short journey back along the north western side ends at the only campsite in Hall Arm, beside Garnet Burn. We chat with some Department of Conservation staff who are here to check whether any possums have made it this far. (Opossums (*Trichosurus vulpecula*) are a small furry Australian marsupial introduced

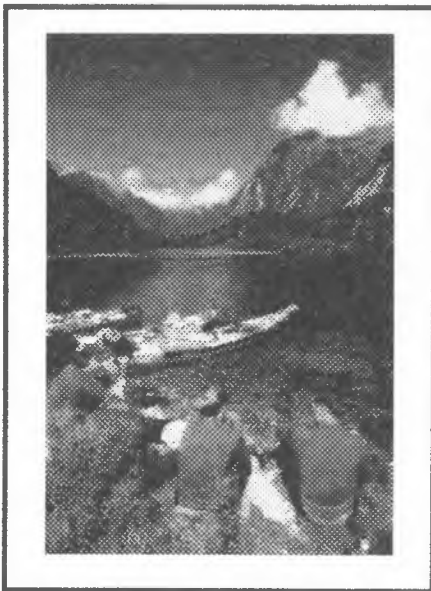
to Southland in 1858 by early settlers to create a fur trade. Unfortunately the fur trade failed, but the Opossum, which is protected in its native Australia, has thrived, eating its way through and destroying our native forests, being declared a Noxious animal in 1956. Its population is estimated at around 70,000,000!) Daphne has never seen any at the campsite, but the DOC workers tell us they have seen possum sign on the other side of the river. A worrying find.

Camping is delightful amongst the ancient podocarp forest, albeit a little damp underfoot. A godsend is a sandfly shelter which is large enough to accommodate the whole group, complete with deck chairs and cookers, without it life doesn't bear thinking of.

The following day dawns bright and sunny accompanied by the cacophony

phony of birdsong. The glass like sea looks inviting as we launch to paddle beneath the sheer walls of Commander Peak. A thin veil of water, back lit by the morning sun, glistens and sparkles as it falls seawards. Into Malaspina reach, round Elizabeth Island, named after the Brig Elizabeth, captained by John Grono on his sealing expedition to the area in 1822. A few seals greet us with soulful eyes as they sleepily look up from their slumber. The so called Browne falls (really a cataract) plunges 836 metres down the western slopes further up Malaspina Reach. After a relaxing, sun drenched lunch in Olphert Cove it's time to head back to Deep Cove.

It takes time to ease into the rhythm and routine of this type of traveling before you can really find peace and comfort with the surroundings. As I unpack I realise that two days simply isn't long enough to do justice to the beauty of this place. Clearly, I will have to come back.



Notes:

#### Kayaks

The double kayaks used are extremely stable and comfortable to sit in and can accommodate a lot of gear. Although none of my group were experienced paddlers, they all managed without any problem,

attesting to the claim that you don't have to be an experienced kayaker to enjoy the experience.

#### Camping:

Because of the sheer sided nature of the sounds, adequate campsites are few and far between. The campsites which are available have been painstakingly developed by Fiordland Wilderness Experiences. The changeable weather, strong winds, heavy rain and difficulty in finding campsites are all good reasons to join a guided group.

Independent rentals are available, however proof of experience will likely be demanded before boats will be hired.

#### What to take:

Most of the equipment needed is supplied, or can be hired from the operators. Check before going.

Fiordland National Park is New Zealand's largest at 1,252,297 hectares.

Situated in the far southwestern corner of the South Island it covers some of the remotest and most d landscape in the country. Visitors should go prepared for rain. Some areas such as Milford Sound boast annual rainfalls in the vicinity of 6 - 7 metres!

#### Contact:

Bill Gibson and Daphne Taylor of Fiordland Wilderness Experiences, 66 Quintin Drive, Te Anau, New Zealand. Phone / Fax: (64) (03) 249-7700.

Web site:

<http://www.nzsouth.co.nz/seakayak/fiordland/rental.html>

e-mail: [Fiordland.Sea.Kayak@clear.net.nz](mailto:Fiordland.Sea.Kayak@clear.net.nz)

From Peter Carter Secretary to the Australian Board of Canoe Education, (ABCE) John,

Here follows a response to the pumps bit: on page 9 of the July issue of 'Ocean Kayaker' which was attributed to 'the Australian Board of

Canoe Education'. That item did not come from the ABCE, but was an edited version of an article from 'NSW Sea Kayaker,' the journal of the New South Wales Sea Kayak Club.

Let me set the record straight. The ABCE's 'Award Scheme Handbook' contains the requirements for all the awards, and specifies the equipment to be used for various assessments, including Sea Proficiency (page 9):

'1 Present suitably equipped for the test:

a) kayak, paddle, spraycover and PFD-the kayak must be a recognised sea kayak with:

- \* minimum volume cockpit (bulkheads or integrated cockpit);
- \* positive buoyancy;
- \* all-round deckline system;
- \* toggles or other safe handholds at bow and stern;
- \* pump or self-bailer capable of 'no hands' operation, with sponge as backup;
- \* (optional) rudder or fin;
- \* spare paddle system;
- \* towline;
- \* paddle park or leash;'

Key item here is the fifth, the pump or self bailer, which must be able to operate \_while the paddler paddles.\_ In any contingency situation the paddler's first priority is to paddle, not sit around and fiddle with bits and pieces. The boat must be controllable with the cockpit flooded (minimum volume), and the pump cannot be manual. For most people in Australia at least, the pump will be electric, although *personally I prefer foot pumps.*

*Hand operated pumps on deck do not satisfy the requirement, neither do the hand-held pumps so favoured by the North Americans.*

Something definitely not in the requirements is a paddle float. The paddle float rescue is not endorsed by the ABCE because it leaves the paddler in a vulnerable position, unable



to paddle because the means of propulsion is tied to the boat. At Proficiency level we require paddlers to roll, at Advanced, to be able to perform re-entry and roll.

While I agree with much of what Frank Goodman wrote about pumps in 'Questions and Answers' in the July issue, there is one point I would take up. Frank gives the figure of 130 litres for the volume of the cockpit. I

think that's too high, even if it's never swamped to full capacity. As far as I'm concerned, any part of the cockpit not occupied by the paddler ought to be filled with buoyancy material: the smaller the volume, the lesser the free surface effects as well as the lesser amount to pump. It's a common problem, and I think it's time manufacturers looked at the question of cockpit volume more seriously.

(For my personal views on pumps and rescues, see my Web site: <[www.acslink.net.au/~pcarter/](http://www.acslink.net.au/~pcarter/)>.)  
Cheers,

Peter

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## THE ENDURANCE

by Caroline Alexander (Bloomsbury, £20)

*"I have done it. Damn the Admiralty... Not a life lost and we have been through Hell."*

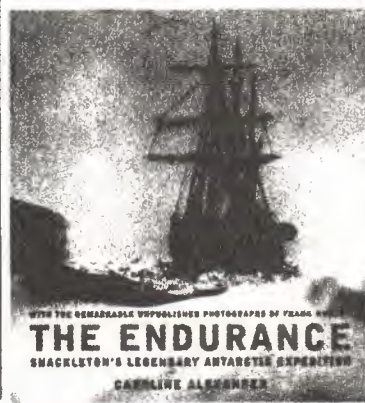
Sir Ernest Shackleton's reputation for leadership is summed up in an apocryphal quote often attributed to Sir Edmund Hillary: "For scientific endeavour give me Scott. For speed and efficiency give me Amundsen. But when disaster strikes and all seems lost, get down on your knees and pray for Shackleton."

Shackleton's epic attempt to cross Antarctica in 1915 is one of the greatest tales of survival and seamanship ever told. It is perhaps only because all hands survived that his expedition has never rivalled Scott's heroic polar journey in the British imagination. In fact, so concerned was Shackleton about those under his command that in an earlier expedition - three years before Scott perished on the ice - he turned back only 100 miles from the pole.

Drawing on a wealth of information from the diaries of expedition members, author Caroline Alexander presents a vivid and moving account of the team's struggle for survival. Frozen in by pack-ice, the

expedition's ship *Endurance* fails to reach Antarctica, and the ensuing escape is as compelling as it is remarkable: huddled together in the 22 ft *James Caird*, Shackleton and four of his crew sailed for 17 days through some of the worst waters in the world to make landfall on South Georgia Island, 700 miles away.

Almost as astonishing are the photographs that accompany the text taken by expedition photographer Frank Hurley. At once stunning and sublime, they are more works of art than expedition records. As with the stories they tell, superlatives fail to do them justice.



## Hit the Water Running

As part of its new Adventure Racing Series, Hi-Tec has launched the Cuda, an aquatic shoe that combines a sticky rubber outsole with a neoprene upper. Designed for a multitude of sports, the rubber outsole is meant to increase its grip in wet conditions, whilst its durability and flexibility enable it to be used for running and biking. The neoprene upper allows water to flow through the shoe without letting in sand and gravel. The only problem seems to be the British climate - without neoprene socks inside the shoe, they're likely to be as cold as a trout in a fishmonger's ice-box. For stockist details contact Hi-Tec on 0171 439 4445.

### Essential Information for Safer Travel

#### Food, Drink & Hygiene

Many diseases are caught by eating contaminated food or drink. These include Travellers' Diarrhoea, Hepatitis A, Salmonella and Typhoid. You can help avoid catching them by paying strict attention to food, drink and general hygiene. If in doubt about the drinking water, boil or sterilise it before use. Better still is to use sealed bottled water. Use this for drinking, washing food and for cleaning your teeth. Avoid both ICE CUBES and ICE CREAM unless you are sure that they are made from clean water. Avoid food which has been re-heated, kept warm or exposed to flies. Avoid uncooked food unless you prepare it YOURSELF. Eating shellfish, even cooked, is particularly hazardous. Remember that salads will be washed with untreated water which will be unclean. Avoid un-pasteurised milk or boil it before use.

#### Travellers Diarrhoea

Dehydration following fluid losses from sweating and diarrhoea and fever, if left untreated, can kill. Travellers' Diarrhoea can affect 1 in 2 tourists. Any bowel disturbance must be treated with liberal quantities of rehydration fluid made up in the cleanest water available. Sachets of rehydration salts are available without prescription & should always be carried, especially when travelling with children. Seek medical advice if you have a temperature, persistent symptoms or blood is passed.

#### Avoiding Malaria & Insect Bites

Many countries have insects which pose a potential threat to travellers. Malaria is a blood disease caused by a parasite which is caught from the bite of an infected mosquito. In the U.K. there are about 2000 cases of malaria each year in people who have travelled abroad. Whilst anti-malarial tablets can reduce the risk of catching malaria they are not 100% effective, so it is ESSENTIAL that you also take steps to AVOID BEING BITTEN. These simple guidelines will help you to avoid catching malaria and other insect borne diseases.

1. Try to avoid being bitten. Use an insect repellent containing DEET. (Diethyl-Toluamide) They are safe and are very effective.
2. Malaria mosquitoes are most active at night, so cover arms and legs between dusk and dawn.
3. If your accommodation does not have insect screens or windows which close, sleep under a mosquito net. Mosquito nets are more effective if impregnated with insecticide such as permethrin.
4. Start anti-malarials ONE WEEK BEFORE entering a malarious region, ALL DURING THE STAY and for FOUR WEEKS AFTER LEAVING the malarious area. Many of the cases in the U.K. occur due to people not continuing to take their anti-malarials on their return to Britain.
5. If you develop fever or flu like symptoms, even several months after leaving a malarious region, see a Doctor immediately and ask if you might have malaria. The doctor you see might not know you've been away.
6. If you are pregnant or planning pregnancy or taking young children please tell your doctor. Don't assume that he/she will "just remember".
7. Some anti-malarial medicines can be purchased without a prescription. Ask your Doctor or Pharmacist for advice and take this form with you.

#### Plan Your Holiday Jabs

Vaccines are currently available for many infectious diseases. The immunity from vaccines is never immediate or total. It can take several weeks to get full protection. As this may need several trips to the doctor you must plan your vaccinations WELL IN ADVANCE of the trip. (6-8 weeks before travel if possible).

#### Hepatitis B and Aids (HIV infection)

These can be caught by contact with infected body fluids (blood, saliva etc.) and from unprotected sex or drug abuse. These infections are worldwide. Always practice safe sex and never share needles. You may also be at risk in places where screening of blood products and sterilisation of medical equipment is inadequate. If unsure, take a sterile medical kit with you.

#### Sunburn

Try not to get burnt. Repeated sunburn can cause various skin diseases including cancer. Use an EFFECTIVE SUNSCREEN and apply it OFTEN. Do not sunbathe during the hottest part of the day and wear a wide brimmed hat.

#### Accidents

Accidents are the most common cause of holiday disasters. Many of the safety laws protecting you at home simply don't exist abroad. Examples include drink driving, crash helmet and seatbelt regulations. Common sense will prevent many accidents if you just take time to think. Accidents are not confined to vehicles. ALCOHOL is the direct cause of many accidents and complicates others, like falling asleep in the sun. As many accidents are minor, take a first aid kit which is relevant to the type of holiday, and make sure that one of your party can use it properly.

#### Insurance

Do not travel without insurance. Try to assess the potential risks of some of the more adventurous holiday activities before trying them, and remember that some activities will not be covered by standard holiday insurance. Be aware that your insurance will not be valid if you knowingly do not declare an existing medical condition. If in doubt check with the insurance company as you may need to pay a small excess payment.

Further disease information is available from your travel clinic or on the HTD HealthLine 0839 337731  
Calls charged at 39p per minute off peak and 49p per minute at all other times

**Traveller Direct**  
First Aid Kits, Sterile Kits, Mosquito Nets and other hard to find products. Ask for a Traveller Direct brochure at the Pharmacy or Travel Clinic.

IMPORTANT. Every reasonable endeavour has been taken to ensure accuracy of this information and is the latest available to PCA at the time of issue. No liability is accepted for any communicable disease which may be present at any location and which has not been disclosed or displayed. This information is for your personal use only and is intended for use in consultation with your doctor or healthcare professional. Due to the nature of diseases travellers may put themselves at risk and neither HTD nor Pro Choice Applications offer any guarantees to travellers for their health or accept any liability for damages, costs or claims incurred save as specifically excluded under the Unfair Contracts Terms Act 1977. PCA are not the originators of this information.

Do Not Eat Raw or Under Cooked Seafood



Remember Ice is made from Local Water!



Drink Fizzy Bottled Water



Strict Personal Hygiene



Avoid Insect and Mosquito Bites!



Use DEET Based Insect Repellents



If given antimalarial tablets, take the whole course



Use Effective Sun Block!



Carry a Relevant First Aid Kit



Do Not Play with Animals



Use Seat Belts & Helmets



Always Practice Safe Sex



Check if Insurance Covers all Costs



# JERSEY CANOE CLUB



Announces the

## 5th EUROPEAN SEA KAYAK SYMPOSIUM

27th to 29th May 2000

Once again, the Jersey Canoe Club is organising what has become a very enjoyable Bi-Annual symposium.

The format will be similar to previous years, but with more emphasis on practical on the water activities. The main symposium will take place over the holiday weekend with further informal paddles and activities taking place during the following week.

The cost will be £95.00 per person inclusive of the symposium dinner.

For further details or application forms contact either

Jerry Michel Tel. 01534 639390

Kevin Mansell Tel. 01534 45936 & e-mail [kmansell@itl.net](mailto:kmansell@itl.net)

Chris Jones Tel. 01534 734073 & e-mail [cjj@super.net.uk](mailto:cjj@super.net.uk)

or visit our web site <http://www.jcc.org.je>



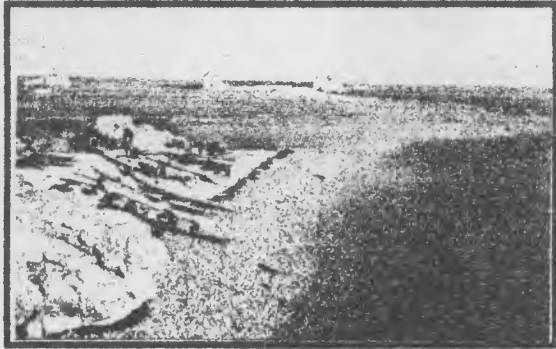
# The 5th European Seakayaking Symposium

Bank Holiday Weekend includes sessions on :

- Local Paddles
- Navigation
- Surfing
- Caves and Jumping
- Tidal Races
- GPS Skills
- Rolling and Rescues
- Inuit Paddling
- Towing
- Basic Skills

- Slide Shows
- Forward Paddling
- Filming
- Open Crossings
- Weather
- Alternative Strokes
- Fishing
- BBQ
- Evening Meal
- Paddles with a Theme

Saturday 27th May - Friday 2nd June 2000



..... and then enjoy day trips along your favourite coastline, overnight trips to other Channel Islands and Offshore Reefs in our spectacular water !

**A week of Paddling for only £95 !!!**

For Further Details re. Programme, Transport/Accommodation Packages

Contact Jeremy Michel Tel 01534 639390

Kevin Mansell Tel 01534 45936 and e-mail [kmansell@itl.net](mailto:kmansell@itl.net)

Chris Jones Tel 01534 734073 and e-mail [cjj@super.net.uk](mailto:cjj@super.net.uk)

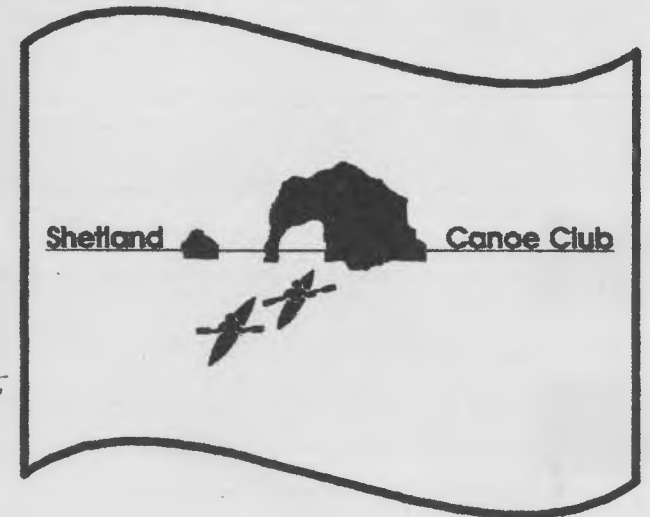
Or visit our Web site <http://www.jcc.org.je>

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# 2000

*Second  
Shetland  
Sea Kayak  
Symposium*



**Bridge-End Outdoor Centre  
Burra Isle  
Shetland**

**7-10 July 2000**

### **Introduction**

Following on from the very successful 1998 Shetland Sea Kayak Symposium, the 2000 Symposium promises to be even better. As it is based on a smaller scale than some other symposia, with only 50 – 60 participants, there is perhaps a better chance to meet and 'chew the fat' with the organisers, contributors and other paddlers. Set also in a group of islands, which arguably, have some of the finest sea kayaking in the world, makes the event not one to be missed.

Shetland is the most northerly land in Britain, at latitude 60 degrees North, being approximately 50 miles north of North Ronaldsay in Orkney.

### **Location**

The 2000 Shetland Sea Kayak Symposium will be based at the Bridge-end Outdoor Centre on the Island of Burra, which is connected to Mainland Shetland via another island and two bridges. The Centre itself has good facilities and we will also be using the nearby Bridge-end hall for catering and lectures. The centre is approximately 20 minutes drive from Shetland's main town, Lerwick, which has excellent leisure facilities and a wide range of shops.

### **Programme**

The programme will offer a range of activities from the leisurely to the strenuous and will be aimed at all paddling levels. There will be practical, on-the-water skills sessions, group sessions, lectures and talks about a variety of subjects, slide shows and also guided paddle trips – something for everyone.

It is anticipated that sea kayak and equipment manufacturers will be represented with demonstration items being available to try.

### **Accommodation and Catering**

There will be dormitory type accommodation in the Bridge-end Outdoor Centre with has cooking, washing, showering facilities etc for those wishing to self cater.

There will also be camping with campers being able to use the Centre facilities. Ample car parking is available at the Centre.

Meals will be provided, for those not wishing to self cater, in the Bridge-end Hall.

Meal and dormitory accommodation is limited so book early to avoid disappointment.

There are also a number of B&B and guest houses in the area.

### **Cost**

Prices have not been set yet as the event is still some way off. However, the event is non profit making and we will make every effort to drive the prices down to the participants. We feel it will be very good value given the standard of contributors, the remote but beautiful location and the good accommodation and catering.

### **Booking**

For more information, or to register your interest, it is not too early, contact Tom Smith, Sunshine Cottage, Bridge-end, Burra, Shetland, tel 01595 859647, email [Tom@televiradio.demon.co.uk](mailto:Tom@televiradio.demon.co.uk)

### **Extended activities**

The week following the symposium will be available for guided trips to suit all skill levels around the spectacular coastal scenery of Shetland. The next weekend (14 – 16 July) will be the annual Papa Stour get together – so why not make a holiday of it and come for a week or more!

We look forward to welcoming you to Shetland and the 2000 symposium.