

ADVANCED SEA KAYAK CLUB NEWSLETTER

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



AIMS

1. Promotion of sea canoeing
2. Communication
3. Organisation of events and conferences
4. Safety and coaching

MEMBERSHIP

COSTS : £3.00 per annum

Details from Secretary:

John J. Ramwell

4, Wavell Garth, Sandal, Wakefield, W. Yorkshire, WF2 6JP

FROM ME (EDITORIAL)

Here's a surprise for you!! Another A.S.K.C. newsletter hot on the heels of the last one. No. 35 was dated April, the month it was due out. This one, the Valley Canoe Products Special, has the correct month of publication, i.e. March - a bit 'back to front' - who cares!

I hope you are able to join FINOM. I look forward to publishing a report in this epistle for those of you who are not fortunate enough to make it.

Now to introduce this VALLEY CANOE PRODUCTS SPECIAL NEWSLETTER

The profile on Frank (Goodman) was discovered in a recent American Canoe Magazine and it appears here for the first time in the U.K. Perhaps I may be allowed a small contribution to this article here in my editorial. I first met the Goodman brothers, Frank and Dick, at the first and only BCMA Canoe Exhibition at Granby Hall, Leicester, many years ago now. Both had worked hard to set this exhibition up, which included a temporary raised swimming pool. I was asked to manage this pool over the weekend and I duly arrived Friday evening to find the floodlit pool ready for use and the exhibitors putting finishing touches to their stands. During that night at about 1.00 am the police called me out of my caravan parked at the rear of the hall. "Are you anything to do with this exhibition?" they asked. I agreed that I was. "Then you'd better come quick, there's been a tidal wave down Leicester High Street". Yes, - the pool had collapsed and effectively wiped out the show. Persuading Dick and Frank I was not playing silly jokes (they've been known to pull a few in their time!!) I managed to get them along to start mopping up operations which took us 'till 10 in the morning, just in time to receive the first visitors. Despite this tragedy, both brothers maintained a great sense of humour and knuckled down to make the most of a bad job. In similar circumstances there is little doubt I would have 'gone to pieces' as the one or two who know me well would testify!!

In the rest of this Newsletter you'll find a Safety Quiz. You'll have to wait 'till the June Newsletter for the answers to this. There are also two excellent articles on Eskimo sea kayaking and kayaks, one entitled "Skins, Sticks and Bones" and the other "Form followed Function".

There is also an article about a party of sea canoeists coming to grief. As I replied to the member who sent this article - though worth publishing, we have to accept that this sort of epic will occur from time to time and is certainly not a reflection on the vast majority of sea paddlers.

Together with the odd bit of correspondence - that's it! Hope you enjoy it.

Good paddling

Nanuk

A.S.K.C. SHOP

- ASKC stickers @ 30 pence each
- ASKC letter headed note paper @ 5 pence per sheet
- 4th. National Sea Canoeing Symposium Report @ 75 pence each
- Circumnavigation of Nunivak, Alaska, Report @
- ASKC Information Sheet on Tides and Buoyage @
- ASKC T shirts, small/medium/large/X large @ £3.50 each
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- ASKC wollen sweaters, hand made to order @ £16.00 each. For this item send to Mrs. Sharon Rowe, Siabod Cottage, Plas y Brenin, Capel Curig, N.Wales. (state chest measure)

FOR SALE FOR SALE FOR SALE

Angmagssilik Sea Kayak with built in buoyancy fore and aft. Rear hatch cover complete with spray deck. Will consider offers around £80. Contact: Dave Youren, 25, Millfield Crescent, Pontefract, Yorkshire. 'phone Pont.705369

ADVANCED SEA KAYAK CLUB - VALLEY CANOE PRODUCTS SPECIAL.

Tel: 0602-614995

Valley Canoe Products Ltd.,
Private Road 4,
Colwick Estate,
Nottingham,

23rd. March, 1983

Dear Canoeist,

FINOM Mayday Bank Holiday, 1983

When John's Newsletter came through the post the other day I cursed myself roundly for having missed the chance to let members of the A.S.K.C. know about 'FINOM'. However, I discovered that John was sitting on so much material, that he was desperate to get another letter out to you, but couldn't afford the postage! To cut a long phone-call short, we decided that I could add some info. to a special newsletter so I could mention Finom, John could get an extra letter outat no expense, as I'd pick up the postage bill.

Thus, everyone should be happy! In fact, as this will be a special Valley Canoe Products newsletter, John suggested I added some advertising material. Well, there isn't really time to go to town on this, except to say that Valley Canoe is well, and busy attending to canoeists needs! The only special thing this spring has been the tremendous response to V.C.P.s new buoyancy aid, the Tabard, now being modified to have three pockets for expedition use.

If you have't heard, Finom stands for FIRST INTERNATIONAL NORDKAPP OWNERS MEET, and, in spite of what Jim Hargreaves says, (he said that it should be called the First Universal Canoe and Kayakists International Nordkapp Gathering I can't think what he was getting at!) all we want to do is to have a weekend for paddling and talking, stiffen it up with a couple of lectures and support it with a bar!

Of course talking to Nordkapp owners is preaching to the converted, but we're offering free accommodation to them to say thankyou for their interest in our interests, but of course, any person who wants to come along will be most welcomeand the accommodation prices are very reasonable anyway.

There's an application form in with this Newsletter - just fill it in and send it to Nigel Dennis in Trearddur Bay, if you'd like to come.

We've had to alter the Lectures slightly, but we've Sam Cook from the Nordkapp Expedition of 1975 and Nigel Dennis of the Circumnavigation of G.B. Expedition 1980 our host, of course.

We should have a finominal time hope you can join us.

Best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Frank Goodman.

When all the rivers have been run and in fact are becoming a threatened species, it's time to find a new frontier. In England, with only so much inland water and so many demands on who will use it, that means the sea. And sea kayaking.

Sea kayaking is just beginning to find its way into the recreational forefront in the U.S. And even the most parochial followers of sea touring schools concede the British were pushing the limits of sea kayaking before the rest of the world was even remotely aware of its potential.

Actually, the kayak dates back to the earliest records of mankind. It was the vehicle that followed in the glaciers' wakes; it was at once a home, a lifeline to food, and a hedge against frozen death in the rugged Arctic regions.

That the Eskimos were survivors in a world of hard water is nothing new to Briton Frank Goodman. At 52, he's near epicentre to a widening circle of world-class sea kayakers who make the earth's seas their classroom and playgrounds. Classrooms because above all Frank and his ilk are students of the earth and its creatures. Playgrounds, because beneath it all, they thoroughly expend themselves, and have fun doing it.

To walk through some of Frank's history is a lot like skim-reading "Gulliver's Travels" Starting out as a jazz musician playing a clarinet for a military band, he later played briefly with Turk Murphy in the '60s. About the time his jazz career waned, he discovered the kayak and quickly redirected priorities. By 1969 he was a Division 1 slalom paddler, Not long after he became a Senior Instructor for the B.C.U.

When it became obvious to him that it would be a while before the kayak wave crested, Frank walked away from a 20 year career as a teacher and lecturer to put both feet into Valley Canoe Products, now one of Britain's leading kayak manufacturers. His most celebrated design achievement is the Nordkapp sea touring kayak, which has proven time and time again on seas around the globe to be an exemplary expedition sea kayak.

In 1974, he set a world record for canoe surfing with a four mile run on the Severn Bore. That same year, he and a small group of paddlers made the first successful crossing of the Irish Sea from Wicklow to Aberdaron, Wales, a 60 mile hop with no support craft that took over 18 hours.

In 1977 along with three of England's most seasoned sea travelers, Frank circumnavigated the fearsome tip of South America, Cape Horn. It was another first for sea paddlers, encompassing 227 miles of the world's most inhospitable water in 18 days. The official expedition report includes references to near-insurmountable Force 8 blows, waves breaking 10 metres into the air along the shore sounding like howitzers, wind indicators jammed at maximum 70 mph. So unpredictable is the weather at this edge of the earth's surface that the naval meteorological service refuses to give a forecast, instead issuing synopses that are only good for for four hours! Not surprisingly Frank concedes, "Cape Horn involved me in the most sustained committment I have ever made when kayaking."

There were many times, Frank recalls, when the Cape pressed him on that committment. "At one stage, we sought the apparant shelter between a stack and the cliff, and were tossed about like matchsticks. With the water temperatures at eight degrees Centigrade and the waves dumping on the shore in a very terminal manner, we knew that a capsize would be very serious indeed. Never had I appreciated the true majesty of the ocean as on that day."

The Cape committment was'nt without payback, of course. As Frank recalls, "The northwest corner of Isla Hornos, with its huge stack and arches, the swell booming off their bases and the spray drifting slowly away was the most awe-inspiring sight of my life." He quickly adds with characteristic understatement, "No doubt it was partly so because it was viewed from a kayak that had a three hour

journey to safety ahead of it."

Frank has travelled from Australia to Bermuda and over to mainland Europe entertaining audiences with tales of sea kayaking adventure. And this perhaps melds two very important worlds for Frank Goodman. For beneath all the sea salt, he remains an educator.

That explains how, from 1979 through 1980, he ended up travelling back and forth to remote Eskimo settlements on Baffin Island. Ever the teacher, Frank jumped at the chance to pass on what he knows of kayak building and the boat's place in Eskimo history. His wife, Doreen, and daughter, Anna, both psychologists, helped expand his objectives with a study of the sociological maladjustments that plague the population. Enter Frank the student.

But it was'nt all work in Baffin. Part of the time there was spent rediscovering the Frobisher Bay region by kayak. In his words, "We embarked on what would prove to be 23 days and 260 miles of excitement, breathtaking views, fear, discomfort and mutual, cross-cultural education." An aspect unique to the group travelling with him was the inclusion of a native Eskimo who'd hardly seen trees prior to the trip (much less a sea kayak).

To say his interest in sea kayaking is all-encompassing may be as understated as Frank himself. He is, above all, unpretentious about his accomplishments thus far.

While visiting the U.S. to speak at CANOE'S Sea Kayaking Symposium '82, Frank shared his perspectives on sea kayaking and the role it continues to play in his world in the interview that follows.

ON AN 18 HOUR CROSSING SUCH AS THE IRISH SEA, HOW DO YOU KEEP IT ENJOYABLE?

The thing that interested us was the fact we became highly aware of what was going on around us in terms of stars ... we picked up stars to steer by rather than watch the compass. And we saw the moon rise as though we could feel the earth rotating towards the moon. It seemed to happen so quickly and obviously. So you became so much more aware of your surroundings in a way that you don't get under normal living conditions.

Actually, I don't think a long crossing is that enjoyable. It becomes rather boring. Whereas if you're paddling along a coastline, you've got more interesting water, because you have either tide races or reflecting waves off the cliffs. You've got the interest of the surf running up the cliffs or whatever.

We were glad we'd done it (crossing the Irish Sea), for no other reason than it gave us confidence, because the biggest enemy of the sea kayaker is fatigue. And if you can sit in your boat for 18 hours and do a stroke every two seconds at least if you've got the strength and mental approach where you're happy to keep going, then you know that within reason you can tackle most things.

Oh, you get instances. I heard of a fellow who was five miles off shore on a 15 mile crossing and gave up, - just refused to paddle, for no other reason than he could'nt face it. His mind closed out on him, and they had to tow him the five miles to shore

Now I find that remarkable. But you put people into a situation that they have'nt dealt with before and sometimes they're able to cope and other times perfectly ordinary people find they can't cope with it. Sea kayaking puts people into situations that they have'nt met in perhaps 20 or 30 years of life. Generally it makes for good effect - people become more self-reliant. They can't blame anyone else. The self awareness is a good thing.

IS BOREDOM THE ONLY MENTAL HURDLE IN SEA KAYAKING?

No, a very good friend of mine on the Cape Horn trip found the long-term apprehension very difficult. He was used to very big water - river kayaking - and to getting the adrenaline going for a quick burst down a huge rapid. The constant nagging apprehension of, say, the weather over a period of several hours, was difficult for him to deal with.

There's the fear of committing yourself to several hours of paddling when you know if the weather deteriorates seriously within that time you would have serious problems in actually making the shore. Whereas tackling a big rapid is usually a question of a very short term jab of adrenaline compared with this long term apprehension.

This stops a lot of people. If they get frightened a little bit more than they bargained for, they usually give up the sport. I've seen it happen many times.

IN YOUR REPORT, YOU MENTIONED EIGHT-FOOT WAVES. IS THAT NORMAL FOR THE IRISH SEA?

I was probably a bit nervous at the time so they were probably only six foot. Certainly the waves were big enough that we could'nt see the lights on the compasses (on the other boats in the party). They started disappearing for quite lengthy periods of time. At night, if you've got any kind of sea running at all, you start losing track of one another. It's pitch black.

WHAT'S YOUR REACTION TO INCREASED REGULATION, PARTICULARLY WITH SELF PROPELLED TRAVEL AT SEA, AND THE IDEA OF PROTECTING PEOPLE FROM THEMSELVES?

I don't believe in legislation being the answer. Education is. But because it's not 100 per cent (you can't educate everybody), you've got to fall back on legislation. It's a necessary evil.

But it's also very easy for safety regulations to remove responsibility. There's a danger as well that safety becomes a self perpetuating machine; people within safety movements find reasons for giving themselves jobs, telling everybody else how to be safe and with the best intentions in the world. The worst sort of do-gooding means that you are becoming over protective. You take away responsibility. You've got to educate first and say, "Right, here's a situation. Where are the potential danger spots? What have you got to do? How much do you know about the weather? The tidal movements? The equipment you're using? Yourselves? Can you face all these things?

These are self-awareness questions. Questions about knowledge, about rational judgements. And the individual ought to be able to make sensible decisions about them. Then the safety problem takes care of itself. The fact that you're wearing a lifejacket with 15 pounds of buoyancy does'nt make you a safe person.

FRANK, YOU STARTED OUT PADDLING RIVERS. IS THERE A CROSSOVER OF SKILLS TO SEA KAYAKING?

Oh, yes. I'm a big believer in getting your basic skills organised, and the quickest way is to put up a couple of slalom gates over a bit of reasonably fast water and practice getting through them.

Whether you compete or not, it's still quite amazing. You can paddle white water and think you're quite well in control. But when you hang up a gate over the water, you suddenly find that the water is doing all the work and you were doing very little. When you actually have to put the boat through a four foot gate, then you really begin to learn control.

BEFORE SEA KAYAKING, WERE YOU ACTIVE IN ANY OTHER "RISK" SPORTS?

The jazz business can be pretty risky, depending on how good you are!!!

TRUE, YOU CAN CATCH A GOOD BEATING.....

Actually, the question is wrong. I've never considered sea kayaking any riskier than driving a car. Probably the riskiest thing I'll do in my life is to drive my car.

I realise there are things to avoid. But it is'nt the risk that's the thing, it's the fun of seeing if you can control yourself in situations where the forces need to be handled carefully or else they'll overwhelm you. You might mitigate the risk down to an acceptable level, just as you do with cars. Nature's also passing you a whole series of messages which you must observe. Or, if you ignore them, you do so at your peril.

There's a certain amount of ego in thinking you can pit yourself against the

elements. You know you can't win there's always a big enough rapid, or a strong enough storm, or a wide enough expanse to wipe you out.

IF NOT RISK, THEN WHAT DOES THE SEA OFFER YOU?

Unless there is some bigger purpose, I would find it boring. Sea kayaking offers a tremendous range of subjects. It has taken me into maths, meteorology, geology, hydrology, astronomy - a range that I don't have to be very involved in, but just enough for my own fun.

ARE YOU AN EXPERT?

People often want a hero, and I find it particularly difficult when people come after a lecture and want to turn you into some sort of superman. They're asking questions that are pushing you to say, "I'm not like you. I'm somebody special and I've got special gifts. And I'm not of this world." I find this almost nauseating but I try to make it reasonable.

I really don't like being considered an expert. I don't have anything special except that I've probably done a fair amount for my own enjoyment. I'd hate to get into a situation where you become convinced of your own righteousness. I've seen people who actually start to believe what a few people in the audience want them to believe. And then they become pompous and foolish.

WHAT ABOUT CAPE HORN, FRANK? HERE WAS TRIP THAT MANY VIEWED AS INVITING CATASTROPHE, EVEN FOR THE MOST 'EXPERT'.

Yes, there were things about Cape Horn that made us feel we were stepping off into the unknown because the information about it was so scarce. But our real problems were solved six months before we went, insomuch as there was an element of fear that we had to work out because so many people told us that we were going to our certain deaths. We had to come to terms with that.

So, actually, all the business of horrendous waves smashing you into relentless cliffs we'd sort of solved that in our minds before we went.

Doreen Goodman adds: When he left for Cape Horn, I had to face the fact that I might never see him again. There was no doubt. I knew they were all level headed people, but there were also risks that they had no control of. It's something you have to face. I don't think anybody has the right to cramp somebody else.

If you love them, you don't want to cramp them.

Frank again: There was no doubt we all felt it was a very committing trip. And we all had a sense of commitment not unlike the exposure index in mountaineering: if you're standing on a six inch wide ledge three feet above the bottom of a climb, it's pretty tame stuff. If you're standing on a six inch ledge with a thousand feet below you and a strong wind to boot, it's a highly committing thing. The exposure is a very committing part, so we went down there very carefully indeed.

DID THE REST OF THE GROUP CARRY THE SAME CONFIDENCE AND COMMITMENT?

The four of us were excellent friends. And we developed such a fantastic rapport that when we did foolish things, which we did, it all worked out. This confirmed to me that all the equipment in the world and all the careful planning is for naught if you don't know your companions.

The big problem in big seas is that you often can't see each other. We were always fearful of separation. At one point, Jim Hargreaves and I did separate from the other two through our own stupidity. It was only then that we realised, in spite of a years talk about what we'd do in that situation, we had never written down a procedure. This was incredible. What do you do? It's a frightening thing to be separated from companions.

We just knew the other two so well that we said, "Alright, we're separated. We've done the stupid thing. They will stay put and call up on the radio ." We paddled back, put the radio on and the first thing we heard was Barry calling to us. And he'd been sitting there for two hours!

There is a tremendous companionship to be had. To me, these things make life very simple too. People talk about freedom, or the freedom of the kayaks, to paddle and

so on. I don't there is a 'freedom'. What there is is so many constraints that only one or two choices are left open to you.

Modern living particularly causes a tremendous amount of neurosis simply because the choices are so vast. There are so many life styles you can adopt; so many different ways of spending your leisure, that, what is it, 10 per cent of the adult population finds itself in a mental hospital at some time or another. I've got a nasty suspicion that the reason for that is the number of choices, the freedom is too great.

When you put yourself into an adventure situation, you find in fact that these freedoms are reduced until you only have one or two things to think about on the whole journey. And the only thing we had to think about (on the Cape Horn trip) was the weather. It was a simple yes/no. A binary system. Yes, you could paddle, no, you could'nt, and that was all there was to it.

WHAT DID YOU FIND IN BAFFIN?

I found a lot of sad people. It's the common story of disrupting a culture for the best reasons in the world, and perhaps not always the best reasons Young Eskimos very confused and old Eskimos saddened because they don't want to go back to the old ways of severe starvation but they can't see how they can get the reasonable things - like not being frozen to death and food that lasts the year round - without taking on a lot of highly undesirable things.

They feel that their own culture is not of any value. But if you're taught that and then suddenly discover that the white man's culture is not valuable either, you become bored and disillusioned. And you take to drink and drugs.

This is what we wanted to look at and unfortunately, due to ongoing struggles and unease over oil and mining, we didn't really get to grips with it.

WHY DID YOU GO TO BAFFIN OF ALL PLACES?

The idea was to try and reintroduce the kayak. But it seemed foolish to do it in the traditional manner entirely, because there is no way people are going to spend six months building a kayak. So the obvious thing was to build them in glassfibre, which is a simple technique.

But we didn't want to teach them just how to do glassfibre. We wanted to introduce them to the idea that their artifacts were worth having.

YOU INVESTED A LOT OF MONEY IN KAYAK BUILDING EQUIPMENT, NOT COUNTING THE GROUP'S PERSONAL EXPENSES. WAS IT WORTH IT?

Well, yes, because it was so interesting to actually meet the people. Lootie was by far the most interesting person. He was living in Ellsmere Island (the most northerly permanent settlement in the world) above the North Magnetic Pole. He'd only seen trees a fortnight so his outlook on the world was very different from ours.

These trips are never perfect, you know. The fact we could'nt do the sociological study because of the problems with oil. But these were the debits; the credit side was that we saw a new slant on the world.

DID'NT IT STRIKE YOU AS ODD TO BE COMING FROM ANOTHER CONTINENT TO TEACH THEM ABOUT SOMETHING THAT WAS PART OF THEIR HERITAGE? HOW DID THEY REACT TO A STRANGER COMING IN.....?

They were curious. And Peter (the journalist who informed him years earlier of the native kayak's plight there) had taken one or two tupperware boats up there for his own use. They called them boats that had not yet reached puberty. And when they saw the Nordkapps, which were much more akin to their traditional kayaks, they began to talk about the old days.

They were very shy and they said we would'nt make the trip (a 23 day, 260 mile loop through the Frobisher Bay area). They wanted us to take a big freighter canoe with all our gear on and paddle light. I just could'nt stomach the idea of an outboard engine following us along. I've got a thing against safety boats anyway, because if you're taking a safety boat along on any trip, you're saying the

kayak is'nt safe to start with They were delighted when we'd done it (the Frohisher Bay trip).

HOW DID THE BAFFIN EXPERIENCE COMPARE TO CAPE HORN TWO YEARS LATER?

There was a total contrast. One was purely to do with four fellows on an expedition, trying to cope and to do what we set out to do. In Baffin, the kayaking was much simpler and easier, and we had the ice to contend with. It was more of a cultural thing, since we were looking at the people and trying to understand some of their problems.

BESIDES THE COLD, THE 40 FOOT TIDES, AND THE ICE FLOES, YOU MENTION SWIMMING POLAR BEARS IN YOUR TRIP REPORT. WHAT'S IT LIKE TO PADDLE AROUND BEARS?

We were a little bit nervous, and we travelled with rifles because of them. When we left one of the summer camps to paddle off, unknown to us, this polar bear had decided that we were worth following. They swim a long way off shore, as much as 15 miles. And by late summer they're fairly hungry, since the young seals along the shoreline age and swim farther out where they're harder to catch. So they (the bears) are walking along the shoreline ready to jump anything sitting on an ice floe. They're quite a hazard. So this polar bear swam out after us, but we outpaced it. It turned back eventually and the Eskimos shot it when it became a nuisance in their camp.

ARE THEY COMPARABLE TO GRIZZLY IN DISPOSITION?

Oh, yes! They walk past pretending they have'nt seen you and then suddenly turn and charge. And they travel at speed. It's no good shooting them in the head because the bullets tend to glance off. So you've got to shoot them in the shoulder and drop them. And they're charging from 50 yards away, covering the distance in perhaps five seconds. So you have'nt got long.

WHAT PROBLEMS DID YOU HAVE WITH ICE FLOES?

We were trapped and held up for at least two days just by the ice coming in. In fact, one time a piece of ice the size of this room just suddenly comes along, travelling at perhaps two miles per hour. The gap narrows as Mick's going through and it just touches the back of his kayak - just nips him for a second. He slides through the gap as this piece comes up against the shore. Mick said that he was'nt frightened but he could'nt stop his knees from shaking. A lot of people would have been left a gibbering idiot, really, because if he'd been two seconds slower he would have been killed. There's no doubt about it. Ice floes are terrifically noisy - groaning, creaking with sharp shocks as pieces break off. It's sort of fearful when you first hear it - like a living force surrounding you.

ABOUT YOUR EQUIPMENT, FRANK, AND SPECIFICALLY ABOUT THE BOATSYOU'VE SEEN THE U.S. MARKET NOW, HAVING BEEN A GUEST LECTURER AT SEA KAYAKING SYMPOSIUM '82. ANY OBSERVATIONS?

I'm impressed with the vacuum-bagging system over here. I don't think anybody in England is doing that process with canoes, and you're obviously far more advanced over here.

There is nothing wrong with the American boats. They tend to be much lighter weight, much flimsier construction. People seem to want a lightweight boat, and my guess is that's because of easier conditions, or the fact that people over here are using the boats much more as a recreational craft. There is a tremendous amount of that in England as well, with lighter boats with rudders - where people are going to less exposed landing places and they're able to get to shore easily without damaging their boats. You can't rely on that with an expedition boat. My boats have tended to be at the extreme end of the scale in England. So my boats have this bias.

Over here, there tends to be a greater emphasis on comfort. I was certainly interested in some of the very neat arrangements of rudder control.

The difference has a lot to do with the conditions in England, with the colder water, the more exposed coastline and the rougher seas. We tend to be paddling in conditions that are more severe. If you've got a grading system as you have on rivers and you're paddling on the sea at Grade Two, then we're paddling at Grade Three level. And the expedition end is probably higher.

The thing is, the sea offers a complete spectrum just as different rivers offers complete spectrums. The sea in itself can offer everything from flat calm, the easiest possible conditions, up to impossible conditions when wind and tide are all wrong and there's a gale blowing.

So you take what people say about boats and what you need, and that this boat is better than that one it's not really true. Any boat is good on the sea if the conditions are perfect. You can take an inflatable air bed and paddle around on the sea and be perfectly safe in the summer, in warm water with no wind and tide. Great!

HOW DO YOU VIEW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WHAT'S CALLED "AMERICAN STYLE" SEA TOURING AND "BRITISH STYLE" OR THE BEAMY VERSUS NARROW BOAT?

There was a time when people tended to paddle beamy boats, and John Dowd's book (Sea Kayaking) has taken the obvious advantages of the very beamy boat. Anything over 24 inches I consider to be wide. And if you get up to over 28 inches then this affects your paddling efficiency. So you're not going to have, in fact, a very manageable boat. But it has got the advantage that you can carry a lot of gear; you can get down in the boat and sleep, or at least rest, as long as you hold your boat into the sea. You can rest up over night if necessary. So, yeh, if you want to do big water trips, where you're really doing big distances away from land, obviously the limiting factor in a narrow boat is your own fatigue. Whereas John's method will mean you can do multi-day trips. That's perfectly valid, but it's not my style of sea kayaking, because I find long trips away from land rather boring. But it's a perfectly reasonable mode of travel.

AT 52, DO YOU SEE YOURSELF AS A LITTLE UNUSUAL TO BE UNDERTAKING THE TYPES OF ADVENTURES YOU DO?

When you're young and in your 20's, your life stretches ahead into infinity. And when I was young, I was prepared to wait for all sorts of things. I always thought, "Well, when I get the house sorted, and when I've saved up enough money, and when I've managed to do this....." and suddenly you find you're in your 40's and you're saying, "Where's the waiting time gone? It should be happening now, or else I'm going to be too old to enjoy it."

In a sense, I have a certain amount of urgency, insomuch that I don't want to find that I'm physically incapable of things that I still want to do. So when the opportunities come for travel and going to interesting places, I'll do my damndest to go, even if I can't really afford it.

IMPORTANT NOTICE PRICE INCREASE IMPORTANT NOTICE PRICE INCREASE

The price of the woollen sweaters as knitted for club members by Sharon Rowe have to go up in price from £11 to £16 each, price inclusive of post and packing. To order write, stating size required, to Mrs. S. Rowe, Siabod Cottage, Plas y Brenin, Capel Curig, N. Wales, LL24 0ET. Please don't write to ASKC for these.

THE FIFTH INTERNATIONAL SEA KAYAKING SYMPOSIUM 12/13th. NOVEMBER 1983.

I have acquired some excellent guest speakers for this event, the theme of which is EXPEDITIONS. I am taking firm bookings now and you are well advised to send me your £10 deposit and reserve your place NOW. The total cost will be £25 which considering the speakers, the venue and the accommodation, is really excellent value.

The venue is Ullswater Outward Bound School, Nr. Penrith, Cumbria. Send to me for application form. Closing date is 1st. October, 1983.

GENERAL SAFETY QUIZ FOR SEA CANOEISTS by LES QUILTY

The quiz is set out in three sections (A, B, & C).
Section A should be within the capabilities of any sea paddler.
Section B is aimed at those taking responsibility for others at sea.
Finally, Section C is designed to test the more experienced sea paddler, particularly those aiming for higher sea awards within the coaching scheme.

Can you achieve 70% plus in the section or sections relevant to you?
Have a try and see!

(There are 100 answers - score 1 point for each answer: Section A - 25,
Section B - 25 and Section C - 50)

SECTION A

1. Shipping forecasts are broadcast four times each day. Can you give these times
i).....ii).....iii).....iv).....
2. Regarding gale warnings, what is the significance of the following terms:
i) imminent ii) soon iii) later
3. What pyrotechnic signals are used by H.M.Coastguards to answer a visual distress signal?
i) by day ii)by night
4. How often do Spring Tides occur?
5. Why is Chart No. 5011 useful?
6. What do the following abbreviations signify?
i) CD ii) MHWS iii) ETA iv) BST
7. What are the characteristics of a Port Hand Buoy?
i) Colour ii) shape iii) colour of light iv) frequency of light.
8. What fog signal would you expect to hear from a coaster underway?
i) sound ii) frequency.
9. What number would you dial in a seaside telephone box in order to contact H.M.Coastguards in an emergency?
10. List three internationally recognised distress signals
i)..... ii) iii).....

FULL MARKS 25 TARGET 17

HOW SAFE ARE YOU?

SECTION B

1. H.M.Coastguard is responsible for co-ordinating search and rescue operations around our coast. In connection with this service what is an MRCC?
and what is an MRSC?
Give an example of each in the coastal area you are most familiar with.
2. Interpret the following abbreviations
i) MLHW ii) MHLW iii) LAT iv) MSL

3. What is secondary drowning?
4. What do you understand by this chart symbol? * 2.4
5. What is an isophase light?
6. What is a LANBY?
7. Give the characteristics of a West Cardinal Mark
 - i) Colour
 - ii) Top mark
 - iii) Colour of light
 - iv) Frequency of light.
8. You see a coaster displaying three black balls. What does this indicate?
9. What is 1/10th of a nautical mile called?
10. Name SEVEN internationally recognised distress signals in addition to those you listed at question 10 Section A

FULL MARKS 25 TARGET 17 HOW SAFE ARE YOU WITH OTHERS?

SECTION C

1. A buoy is marked on the chart as follows:- Mo(K)15secs. What does this mean?
2. Identify these abbreviations:
 - i) Np
 - ii) HAT
 - iii) dmr
3. What is the difference between a DR and an EP? How are these marked on the chart?
4. What is the official definition of CIVIL TWILIGHT?
5. A fishing vessel is flying Interco Letter P at sea. What does this indicate?
6. VARIATION $6^{\circ}W$: DEVIATION $3^{\circ}E$ - What is the compass error?
7. The wind changes from NE through to E to SE. Is it backing or veering?
8. How often are Notices to Mariners promulgated? How much do they cost to purchase?
9. What is the shelf life of an Orange Smoke Canister?
10. You might see the following at sea:
 - i) VLCC
 - ii) RoRo
 - iii) LASH
 - iv) LPG Carrier. What are they?
11. What is an ISOGONIC LINE?
12. What are the characteristics of an ISOLATED DANGER MARK?
 - i) Colour
 - ii) Top mark
 - iii) Colour of light
 - iv) Frequency of light.
13. What is the formulae for finding the HEIGHT OF LOW WATER when the only information given is the mean tide level and the times and heights of high water?
14. Identify these chart abbreviations:
 - i) Sd
 - ii) Est
 - iii) Rds
 - iv) Hn
 - v) Cr
15. In the International Code of Signals what do the following flags signify?
 - i) S
 - ii) U
 - iii) V
 - iv) W
 - v) O

- 2-
16. You are familiar with the loom of a paddle but what is the loom of a light?
 17. Identify these cloud types:
 - i) Ci ii) Cu iii) Ac iv) Cb
 18. Identify the following Astro-navigational terms:
 - i) GHA ii) DEC iii) LHA iv) TZD v) UT
 19. Above what datum are the heights of buildings, hills, lighthouses, etc. measured?
 20. There are fourteen distress signals listed in the Regulations for the Prevention Of Collisions at Sea. You have already given ten of them in Section A and B; Can you supply the remaining four?

FULL MARKS 50 TARGET 35

HOW DID YOU DO OVERALL? OVER 70% ? Then now apply for a place on Mastermind.

Ed's note: I'm afraid you're going to have to wait till the next edition for the answers. Frustrating isn't it!

CORRESPONDENCE

From Paul Caffyn, New Zealand. Paul has recently completed his marathon epic
CANOEING ROUND AUSTRALIA

Dear John,

.....I flew home on the 4th. January and started work the next day. I am fortunate to have the job waiting for me!

I think the last news was from Adelaide.

The trip came to a successful conclusion on the 23rd, December, at 3.45 pm at Queenscliff. 9,405 miles in 360 days, an all up average of 26.1 miles per day. (I originally estimated 26 miles per day). As for the last month from Adelaide..... the Loosong - a 120 mile long beach with a huge heavy surf. I tried to tackle it continuously but struck a strong westerly at the end of 40 miles and was forced to work it through the surf. Some 6 to 7 lines of breakers. I got in okay, but the swell lifted overnight and I made four unsuccessful attempts to break out. I lost a lot of skin off both hands and arms and broke the rudder. 'Twas four days before I made a successful break out.

The coast of western Victoria provided gripping paddling on big seas with some tricky landings into dog-leg entrances through reefs. Several days in marginal condition. I relied on the compass for I could glimpse the shore only infrequently - from the top of big sets - and I was only less than a mile off shore!

At Cape Otway, the western entrance to Bass Strait, the sea relented. The last two days I covered 59 and 54 miles respectively. The last day saw a 3.00 am start in order to catch the rip into Port Phillip Bay. Made it just after slack water and worked the flood tide up to Queenscliff where Lesley and a dozen or so people waited. A bottle of Asti Spumati and it was all over.

At present I'm flat out working as a coal geologist, trying to recoup some of the 14,000 dollars which the trip cost. We ended up with just the one sponsor Fairydown sleeping bags who put up 1,000 dollars. Andy and Lesley did an amazing job as support crew. I could've not done the trip without them. My kayak has a few scratches on the hull, otherwise looks like she's done only 500 miles. The wildwater paddle has finally been retired after 12,000 miles.

Cheers for now. Paul Caffyn

SKINS, STICKS AND BONE.

From the raw materials of their culture, ancient Arctic hunters fashioned a tool for survival. SO WAS BORN THE KAYAK



THE COLD GREENLAND WATER of Davis Strait swells like the rib cage of a slumbering whale, hiding the hunter from his prey. Windmilling his paddle, the hunter darts to the top of the next swell, stops, and deftly draws a harpoon from the thongs holding it to his kayak's deck. He fits it to his throwing stick, cocks his arm, and waits in silence.

The wave subsides, dropping him within yards of an unsuspecting bladder-nose. Instantly, the hunter hurls the harpoon with all his strength, and its barb lodges deep. Just as quickly, the shrieking animal dives, but its descent is slowed by trailing coils of line tied fast to the harpoon's head. An inflated sealskin bladder bobs behind, marking the creature's course. Patiently, the hunter follows.

A half hour later, the exhausted and bloody seal resurfaces for the moment of truth. The beast senses he must either kill his tormentor or die. Jaws gaping, he attacks, but the hunter evades the first rush with a quick spin of his kayak. The seal's second desperate charge ends definitively on the tip of the hunter's lance.

From this death came life. The hunter's family could feast, while his dogs could grow sleek and fat. From this ancient death and others like it came the chance for survival itself. Without the hunter's kayak, that chance would simply not exist. For the Arctic Eskimos, there was no other way.

MISTY ORIGINS

Today's kayakers, touring coastal islands or twisting down mountain rapids, owe a tremendous debt to the Stone Age people who made it possible by designing what is simply the world's most seaworthy displacement boats. They had to be. The men who paddled them were predators, trusting their lives to their sealskin kayaks along one of the coldest, most wind swept and unforgiving coastlines on earth.

Nowadays, fibreglass, polythene, epoxy and a host of arcane petroleum products have supplanted sealskin. The resulting plastic hulls are so tough that internal frames, once fashioned painstakingly from driftwood floating across the top of the world from Siberian forests to the Eskimo's treeless land, are no longer needed. But the needle shape of the decked boat and its remarkable capacity for speed and maneuverability remain.

The renowned arctic explorer Fridtjof Nansen, postulated that the kayak was an adaption from the bark canoe used further south by the Indians, and that decks were

added when the Eskimo reached the edge of the continent and found it necessary to make a living from the sea. This, of course, is conjecture, and there are reasons to dispute it. First, the Eskimo also had the undecked UMIAK, or 'women-boat' which comes closer to the bark canoe in form. If anything, the umiak would have been the immediate descendant of the bark canoe.

But even that is unlikely. Both umiak and kayak are built using techniques that are almost the reverse of those used in constructing bark canoes. They both start with a frame and wrap skin around it. Native canoe builders, on the other hand, started with a skin and stuffed it with a frame.

Nor is it possible to date which came first. Both bark canoes and kayaks are constructed from native materials that decay or disintegrate quickly; few survived to any considerable age. Archaeologists cannot date them as they would stone axes or pottery shards. But Eskimos have proven highly receptive to influences from the outside that raised their quality of life, so it is conceivable that they might have adapted the bark canoe to the slim materials they had to hand.

We cannot say for sure, as Nansen did, that one boat is ancestral to the other.... or even that they are related. The origins and evolution of both are simply lost in the mists of time. What we do know is that by the time the Norse adventurers encountered the fierce Skraelings of Greenland and the North Americas in the 10th. century, the kayak was already a highly sophisticated craft, an incredibly developed hunting machine.

PRECIOUS DRIFTWOOD

From Eastern Siberia across the top of North America to eastern Greenland, kayaks roamed the coastlines, travelling and hunting. No record whatsoever has been discovered of them elsewhere.

Specific designs varied according to tribe, local conditions and intended use. But the kayaks essential skin-over-frame construction sets it apart from all other watercraft. With impressive ingenuity, generations of Eskimo hunters developed and refined their boats utilizing the only raw materials they knew: sticks, skin and bone.

Precious driftwood served for the internal frames. Driftwood ribs were usually tenoned into the wood gunwales, then fastened together with bone pegs. Some times, long bones formed graceful upswept stems. Sinew cords lashed together the frames, longitudinal stringers and gunwales. This 'tied-together' construction sounds like a strange way to build a sea worthy boat, but actually it resulted in a surprisingly strong but slightly flexible hull that worked with the sea rather than against it. This rigid -but-yielding frame was the heart of the kayaks success.

Women sewed the skins of sea animals over the frames. The hides, stretched and wet, would then shrink to form a drum-tight hull. In various areas of Alaska, the skins of the bearded seal and sea lion were most popular. To the east, the Netsilik and Caribou Eskimos were known to substitute caribou skins occasionally when seal skins were in short supply. Nansen describes the skins.

"The framework is covered....as a rule with the skin of the saddleback seal
.... or of the bladder-nose or hood seal.
.... The latter is not so durable or so watertight as the former; but the skin of a young bladder-nose, in which the pores are not yet very large, is considered good enough. Those who can afford it use the skin of the bearded seal, which is reckoned the best and the strongest..... The skin of the great ringed seal is also used, but not so frequently."

To make the boats watertight, the women rubbed layers of melted fat into the hulls. This meant that every few days the kayaks had to be allowed to dry out, since wet skin rejects fat.

Despite the limited materials, there were numerous kayak designs - some with rocker, some without, some with upswept bow and stern, others needle-shaped, some with arched decks and others flat. Frame design varied, with different numbers of longerons (lengthwise members) and different weights of keelsons. These designs produced

considerable variations in performance. Some kayaks tracked well and were fast. Others were better on the pivot. When drifting, some turned bow to the wind, others stern. Anyone who has bought a modern kayak and done some comparison shopping is familiar with round-bottom, V-bottom and perhaps square-bottom designs. The Eskimo used them all.

STALKING AND SLAYING

Nansen refers to the kayaks as the "Eskimo hunting boat", and indeed it was. But many Eskimos also used it to transport family and belongings upriver into the interior when the tribe made its spring migration away from the sea. The Caribou Eskimos even ran rapids with their kayaks, although this was done with a purpose and not for recreation as we do today.

The anthropologist Ansen Balikei offers a vivid description of a caribou hunt among the river-dwelling Netsilik of northern Canada:

"The hunters gathered in front of the campsite, concealing themselves and watching the movement of the herds on the other side of the lake. As soon as a herd began entering the water, the eldest hunter gave the signal for the hunt to start. The men carefully crawled to their kayaks lying on the shore, pushed them into the water, jumped inside, and paddled out for the chase.

Every man hunted for himself.....

The few fast kayakers were quick in reaching the frightened herd and began spearing the swimming animals one after the other. The slow kayakers followed behind, trying to reach the caribou that had gone astray. The spears aimed primarily at the buttocks or kidney region. Some caribou were killed, some wounded, while still others managed to reach the shore and tried to escape(On shore) the women and children started howling and screaming, imitating the cry of the wolf and waving skins high in their hands. When menaced by wolves, the instinctual reaction of the caribou is to take to the water, and so the frightened caribou turned back from the shore - only to face the kayakers once again At the end of the hunt, each man collected the animals he had killed, tying them together by the antlers with his thong and slowly dragging them to shore. If there were too many, they were left in the water for favourable winds to push them towards campIt was not uncommon for a fast kayaker to kill up to ten caribou during a single hunt."

The Netsilik never took their kayaks to sea, but the Eskimos of Alaska did, and sea hunting also was a way of life in the eastern Canadian Arctic and Greenland.

In Greenland, the kayak reached a near unmatched degree of excellence as a hunting craft. Today's kayakers avoid projections from their hulls that could snag on rocks or branches. They would be shocked at the array of weaponry carried on the deck of a Greenland canoe. Riding abaft (behind) the cockpit was the inflated sealskin float attached to the harpoon line. In front of the paddler stood the kayak stand, supporting the sinew coils of the harpoon line. In easy reach of the hunter's throwing arm lay the harpoon itself, while on the afterdeck rested a lance and long-handled knife. The front deck held two other throwing weapons - a bladder dart and a four pronged bird dart. Next to them, the hunter kept his throwing stick. All these projectiles were held fast under thongs that stretched across the decks.

With his weapons, the Eskimo set forth to gather fish and flesh, blubber, bone and skins - which along with stone, snow and a few chunks of driftwood constituted the raw materials of his culture. It was a brutal battle for survival, fought with desperate beasts that often fought back. A maneuverable kayak was critical. Think, for example, of the hunter suddenly attacked from the right rear quarter, unable to thrust his harpoon unless he could first pivot the boat; Nansen relates the story of a strong hunter attacked by a wounded walrus:

"At Kangamiut some years ago, a kayak was attacked from below, and a long walrus tusk was suddenly thrust through its bottom, through the man's thigh, and right up through the deck. His comrades at once rushed to his

assistance, and the man was rescued and helped ashore."

In addition to dangerous prey such as the walrus, the Eskimo also attacked whales from the kayak, including the vicious grampus (killer whale or orca) with its awesome teeth.

Obviously, hunting from a kayak requires the utmost agility. Unlike today's paddlers, the Eskimo had to master dozens of capsize recovery techniques. Since his craft was often exceedingly narrow, capsizing was commonplace. Sometimes it was even intentional, and paddlers capsized deliberately to let wave crest over them and prevent the force of the water from breaking their backs. In the old days, the hunters held rolling contests. It was considered meritorious to right oneself with a paddle, better using the arm with an open hand; better still using an arm with a clenched fist; and best not to need an arm at all.

Despite their expertise, the Eskimos suffered mishaps. Nansen offers a snap-shot of the price paid by these Arctic hunters to eke out their survival:

"Many Eskimos find their death every year in this manner. For example, I may state that in Danish SouthGreenland in 1888, out of 162 deaths (of which 90 were males), 24 or about 15% (that is to say, more than a fourth part of the male mortality), were caused by drowning in kayaks."

But the majority of hunters came home, windmilling out of the sea fog to the cheers of their mates, towing heavy carcasses behind their kayaks, shouting the joy of the successful hunt. As they climbed from their cockpits in the surf, the women flensed the animals on the shore and divided the flesh and organs according to carefully prescribed ritual. And when the hunt was good, stomachs were full and the people rejoiced.

What Eskimo, feasting on liver and seal meat, would have dreamed that the hunting craft to which he owed his life would in another time and strangely balmy place, become a plaything for 'civilized' entertainment?

ANGLESEY DIVING AND WATERSPORTS CENTRE

This Centre is situated at Soldiers Point, Holyhead, Anglesey, set in its own grounds running down to the safe water of Holyhead Harbour giving access to the Irish Sea.

The position of the complex offers both the inexperienced and experienced canoeist access to the type of water required, whether teaching or organising a sea canoeing expedition, we can cater for your needs.

For the experienced canoeist the Skerries has proved a challenging journey, trips around North Stack and South Stacks are strictly for the experienced.

There are many locations around Anglesey, and Holyhead is the gateway to most. Once at the Centre, cars and trailers need not be used again, the water is only a short walk away. For groups and individuals our facilities include access to the sea, dormitory and family accommodation, self catering and meals provided. For instructors our lecture room is equipped with O.H.P., 16 mm, Super 8 and slide projectors are available with room for 25 students, larger room for seating up to 150 for large functions is also available.

There is limited room for trailers to be left over a period of time. Our main sport is biased towards Scuba Diving in which we provide tuition, holidays, equipment hire, etc.; we had several canoe groups stay here in 1982 with several people enjoying one of the other pastimes we have to offer; i.e. windsurfing, waterskiing.

We do not provide tuition in canoeing; for anyone requiring this we arrange with a nearby school. We do, however, have canoes for hire to people having experience or groups with their own instructor.

So, for a weekend or holiday we can recommend the day starting with a good breakfast, packed lunch, and a good days canoeing - at the end of the day a good home cooked meal followed by a beer or two in the bar to discuss the days events.

For further details contact: Anglesey Diving and Watersports Centre, Soldiers Point, Holyhead, Anglesey. Telephone 0407 50440.

FORM FOLLOWED FUNCTION And the function was hunting

by David Zimmerly.

Kayaks were the most important item of technology for many ancient Arctic dwellers. Among some groups, a boy wasn't considered a man until he had his own kayak. Only then could he hunt the sea mammals that were his culture's mainstay. Only then could he take a wife and support a family.

The climate and topographic conditions under which kayaks evolved varied widely. In southern Greenland of Alaska, the waters stayed open virtually year-round. The high Arctic offered only a 90-day respite from the ever-present ice. As the conditions varied, so did the kayaks. Currently, evidence of some 40 different native kayak designs has been catalogued.

Sea mammal hunting boats depended on stealth rather than outright speed for success, because a frightened seal will dive and be gone in an instant. The boats had to be seaworthy, too; the windswept Arctic coasts demanded no less. Finally, such boats had to be able to carry home captured game, sometimes over considerable distances. These seagoing kayaks came in four basic forms, though slight changes in response to local conditions were common.

The Greenland Eskimos designed low-profile, low-volume sea kayaks with a needle shape and upswept ends. Typically 17 to 18 feet long, these narrow (about 19 ins) hard chined boats with their V-bottom cross sections demanded the utmost skill from a paddler. The Greenlander responded with over 25 capsize recovery techniques, both self and team rescue techniques. With his watertight sealskin parka sealed tightly around the cockpit rim, wrists and head, the kayaker faced capsizing with relatively little trepidation.

These boats required that their paddler continually balance with either paddle or body movements. For those who couldn't make the grade, the consequence was death or that malady peculiar to Greenland Eskimo paddlers known as "kayak angst" or fear. Victims became totally disorientated (usually under overcast or snowy conditions), and couldn't tell up from down or sideways. Dizziness set in, which usually led to a capsize from which the paddler could not recover or reach shore without help from a comrade. Once contracted, kayak angst prevented its victims from ever hunting by kayak again.

The boats' ultra-low profile shed the Arctic gales well and was difficult to spot from a seal's-eye view. But the low, flat decks offered little carrying capacity for captured game. Instead, the Greenland hunters usually towed their quarry home using elaborate toggle systems.

The Baffin Islanders, who also hunted sea mammals, solved the seaworthiness/carrying capacity in a second, far different manner. They built wide, flat-bottomed kayaks that were so stable capsize recovery techniques weren't needed or at least, not learned. These most stable of all Eskimo kayaks had flared sides and high cockpit coamings, nearly eliminating the need for a spray deck. They had great game-carrying capacity atop their broad, flat afterdecks - up to 1,000 pounds.

From the Bering Strait south to the Aleutians, native kayaks exhibited a third solution to the general problem. Short (15 - 16 feet), with generous beam (up to 29 ins), these boats had flat bottoms, multiple chines and moderate flare to the topsides. This fairly stable cross-section combined with raised (peaked) decks to efficiently shed water in a rough sea.

But carrying game on deck raised the centre of gravity too high for good stability. The solution: the Bering hunters butchered their game on a nearby iceflow, then stuffed it into the kayak ends with special gaffs and hooked implements. These boats' other unusual feature came in the form of a single-bladed paddle; a limited number of single-bladed capsize recovery techniques were known and used. (C-boaters take note - Ed.?)

The Aleut and Koryak peoples developed a fourth solution. Though their respective

kayaks were very dissimilar-looking, both types used rock ballast carried low in the hull to improve stability. Evidently, the ballast worked; neither group relied on capsize recovery techniques.

The Koryaks of Siberia used very short(9 to 10 feet), beamy (28 ins) V-bottomed craft and simply did not use them in difficult conditions.

The Aleuts ranged the cold, rainy Aleutian Islands in far more capable boats. They were renowned for paddling 10 miles or more out to sea, often for over 12 hours. They usually travelled in pairs and could 'catamaran' together for stability in heavy weather. They carried water in bladder containers that could also double as float bags!

The sleek and fast Aleut kayaks were a match for any others in the Arctic. Hulls were around 17 - 19 feet long, with a narrow beam of 17 - 19 inches, multichined with a moderate V-bottom. They also featured raised, wave-shedding decks.

Of these four solutions to the sea kayak design problems, many Europeans chose to emulate the Greenland model, not because it was necessarily better, but through simple historical accident. Greenland Eskimos and their kayaks were first met by the early explorers because Greenland was nearer to Europe than was Alaska. Greenland kayaks were brought back to Holland and England by whalers, especially in the 16th. and 17th. centuries, and were often hung in churches and town halls for all to see (in one place complete with a stuffed dead Greenlander!) They became the Eskimo kayak stereotype.

It's a pity that other, equally fine native sea kayaks have'nt yet inspired recreational models, but that may be changing. Kayak builders from Greenland, Canada and Alaska all adapted different designs to meet their particular needs for stealth, seaworthiness and carrying capacity. Today's ocean paddlers can do the same.

With modern materials and ancient knowledge, a sea kayaker can choose the design ideally suited to his or her needs, a design to carry the desired gear over the desired seas. Then, as always, the paddler can travel there in silence.

The following is taken from "The Lifeboat", the Winter 1982/3 edition.

CANOEISTS CAPSIZE

A group of youths aged about 14 or 15 from an outdoor pussuits centre, together with an instructor, set out from Garth Point on Sunday, November 1st. 1981, with the intention of canoeing off Port Penrhyn in the Menia Straits. The tide was half ebb with a south-south-westerly gusting up to force 7 to 8 and light rain. The sea was rough in the Straits and very rough, short and steep over the shoal areas. The strong ebb tide and the wind soon carried the canoes clear of the comparative shelter of the shore and at about 1430 a particularly strong gust of wind capsized several of them. throwing their occupants into the water. They were seen by a motorist who called to Robert Chamberlin, working on his own boat in the harbour, telling him what had happened and asking for directions to the nearest telephone. While the motorist went to the telephone to contact Bangor Police, Mr. Chamberlin ran to the offshore side of the harbour wall and saw two of the canoeists in the water; they were apparantly hanging on to their boats.

As soon as a Police patrol car arrived Mr Chamberlin asked that one of the police men should go out with him in his boat, a 29ft ex fleet auxiliary launch now used for fishing. P.C.Reg. Ham volunteered to go, and the two men boarded the boat. They left the harbour at full speed and once clear of the harbour entrance saw the two casualties. One was some four cables north of the jetty being rapidly carried further seaward by wind and tide. The other was closer inshore. Robert Chamberlin decided to make for the more distant canoeist as his plight appeared to be urgent. As the fishing boat approached it could be seen that the canoe was still upright with one canoeist aboard and another clinging on to the bow. The man on board, who was found to be the instructor, was obviously exhausted and was making no headway against wind and tide.

Going straight across Bangor Flats, Robert Chamberlin rounded up head to wind and

kept station alongside the canoe while P.C. Ham grabbed the youth clinging to the bow; between them the two men pulled first the boy and then the instructor aboard. Both survivors were completely exhausted and extremely cold, and as the youth was showing signs of exposure, Mr. Chamberlin made back for Port Penrhyn at full speed. The youth was taken immediately to hospital. By this time the other casualties had managed to gain shore, and two more of the boys were also taken to hospital for treatment. For this service, framed letters of thanks, signed by the Chairman of the Institution, were sent to Robert Chamberlin and P.C. Reginald Ham.

CORRESPONDENCE

From Kenneth Fink, Maine, United States of America.

Dear Mr. Ramwell,

.....Now for some sea canoeing news. We held our first sea kayaking symposium in the U.S. here in Walpole, Maine. Our newsletter, AnorAK, sponsored the event along with CANOE magazine and L.L.Bean's (the largest outdoor retailer in the U.S. - in the world?). The magazine gave us not only publicity but an amazing amount of hard work from the editors and staff. The editors were pounding the stakes in for the directional signs the morning of the event, after they had spent a good bit of the night painting them. Frank Goodman gave a total of two presentations and managed to charm everyone in attendance. It's too bad that you can't bottle him up as a regular export on demand. His wife, Doreen, was the perfect compliment - I don't think the symposium would have been nearly the success it was without them. I want to add that Mike Bridgewood was also here, and as you might expect, also made a big hit with everyone. We could not have had three better representatives of the British sea kayaking crowd here to help. The symposium was a colossal success with more than 250 (at best count) attending and paddling and talking and asking questions and! They came from Florida, the west coast, and Canada. I am still receiving letters from those who attended, lauding our efforts and from those who did not attend, wanting to know if we are planning another. And we are, even if it might be a 'let down' from last year's happening. I think we can safely say that sea kayaking is coming to life here in the United States of America. We emphasised education and information at the symposium, despite the fact that every sea kayak manufacturer in the U.S. was here with trial boats. Most participants did not know that Frank and I were selling the Nordkapps here in the U.S. The boats were at the shore (only 2 and 1 anas), but we left them unattended for the most part.

Before the symposium, I went to Labrador with Bruce Kitney, in July, to paddle 330 miles of the coast from Hopedale to Cartwright. Labrador has all of the wilderness aspects that anyone could desire and a potential for as severe weather as anywhere. We were lucky and were always within easy reach of the shore when the wind machine was switched on. I did have one difficult time when I had piled some gear on the foredeck and almost took a side trip to Scotland one afternoon. During our trip we talked to two Labrador fishermen who noticed my B.D.H. safepak on the foredeck and said that they had found one just like it either earlier that summer or the summer before. I recalled a story that Peter Salisbury mentioned about Colin ? who had had an epic trip in 1981 between Labrador and Baffin Island. They said that the safepak contained first aid and fishing gear as I recall. I wonder to whom it belonged?

I'll write more at a later time about our trip with more details, etc.

I want you to know that the ASKC newsletter is very much appreciated over here - keep up the good work.

Sincerely,
Kenneth Fink.

P.S. Offer is always open for paddlers needing a base of operation out of which to tour the Maine coast. Frank can tell you what a paradise our coast is.

Editors note.

Unless I'm mistaken it must have been Nigel Foster who completed the epic trip mentioned above by Ken. How about it Nigel?.