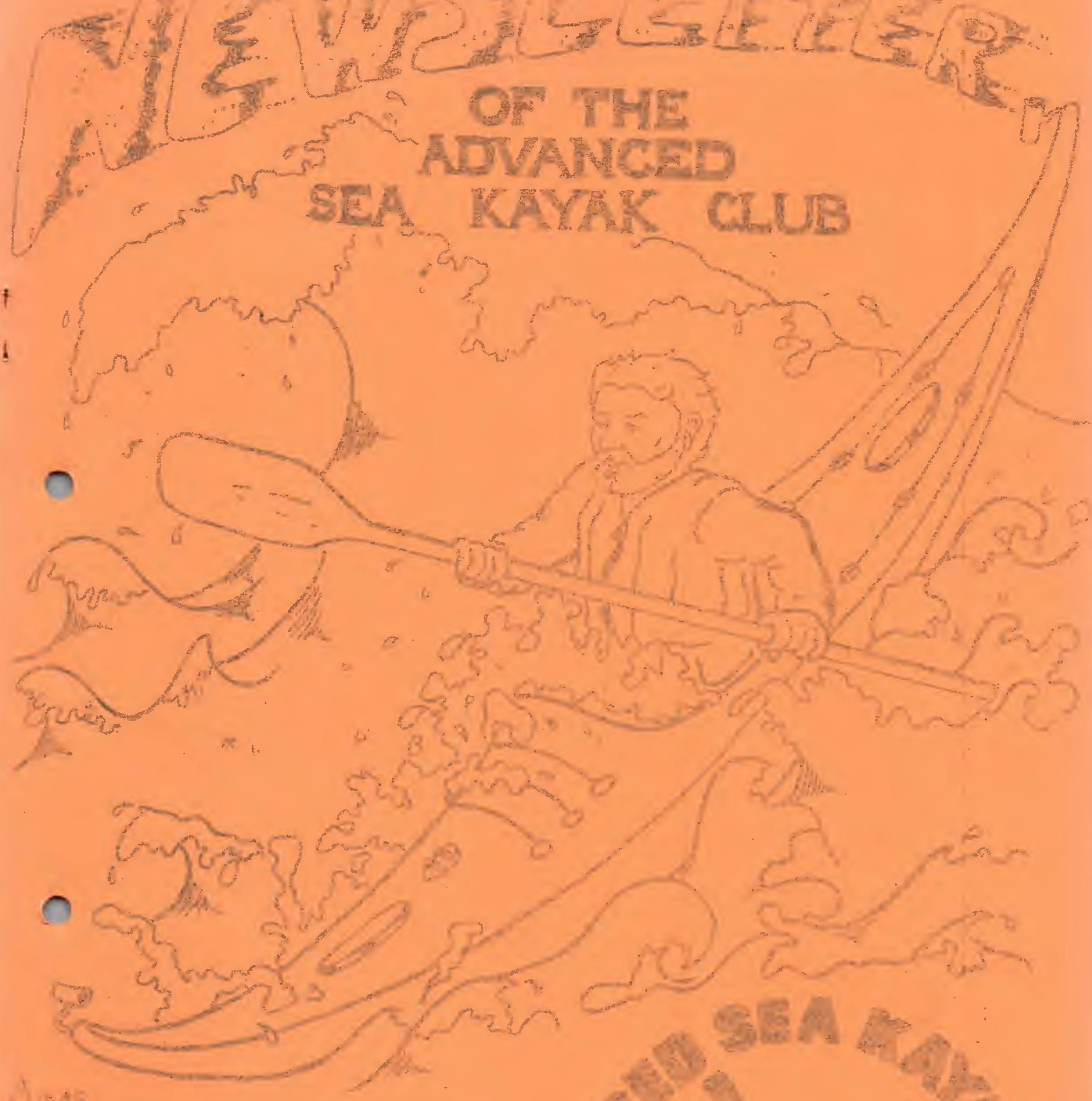
NEWSLETTER OF THE ADVANCED SEA KAYAK CLUB



Aims:

Promotion of sea canoeing

Communication

Organisation of events and conferences

Safety and coaching

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

ADVANCED SEA KAYAK CLUB

NEWSLETTER NO.67

MAY 1988

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EDITORIAL

I recently read "UNGAVA" by R. M. Ballantyne (strongly recommended) and a couple of paragraphs are extracted and repeated here. For me - this is one of the best and most vivid descriptions of the sea and its attractions.

The following is an extract from the book "Ungava" by R. M. Ballantyne

"The sea! How many stout hearts thrill and manly bosoms swell at the sound of that little word, or, rather, at the thought of all that it conveys! How many there are that reverence and love thy power and beauty, thy freedom and majesty, O Sea! Wherein consists the potent charm that draws mankind towards thee with such irresistible affection? Is it in the calm tranquillity of thy waters, when thou liest like a sheet of crystal, with a bright refulgent sky reflected in thy soft bosom and the white ships resting there as if in empty space, and the glad sea-mews rippling thy surface for a brief moment and then sailing from the blue below to the deeper blue above, and the soft song of thy wavelets as they glide upon the shingly shore or lip among the caves and hollows of the rocks? Or is it in the loud roar of thy billows as they dash and fume and lash in fury on the coasts that dare to curb thy might? - that might which, commencing, mayhap, in the torrid zone of the south, has rolled and leaped in majesty across the waste of waters, tossed leviathans, as playthings, in its strength, rushed impetuously over half the globe, and burst at last in helplessness upon a bed of sand! Or does the charm lie in the yet fiercer strife of the tempest and the hurricane, when the elements, let loose, sweep round the shrinking world in fury; or in the ever-changing aspect of thy countenance, now bright and fair, now ruffled with the rising breeze, or darkened by the thunder-cloud that bodes the coming storm?

Ah, yes! methinks not one, but all of these combined do constitute the charm which draws mankind to thee, bright ocean, and fills his soul with sympathy and love. For in the changeful aspects of thy visage there are talismans which touch the varied chords that vibrate in the hearts of men. Perchance, in the bold whistle of thy winds, and the mad rolling of thy waves, an emblem of freedom is recognised by crushed and chafing spirits longing to be free. They cannot wall thee round. They cannot map thee into acres and hedge thee in, and leave us nought but narrow roads between. No ploughshare cleaves thee save the passing keel; no prince or monarch owns they haughty waves. In thy hidden caverns are treasures surpassing those of earth; and those who dwell on thee in ships behold the wonders of the mighty deep. We bow in adoration to thy great Creator; and we bow to thee in love and reverence and sympathy, O Sea!"

Shipping forecast wavelength

The BBC's Radio 4 move their long wave frequency to 198 kHz (1.515 km) on 1st February 1988. This will affect reception of the shipping forecast on long wave.

Safe Journey

The risks of contracting AIDS through drug abuse or sexual contact have been well aired but relatively little has been said about the danger that travellers court when seeking emergency medical treatment abroad The risk of catching AIDS or Hepatitis B through dirty equipment, says the Medical Advisory Service for Travellers Abroad, is 100 times greater than through sexual contact.

TIDE RIPS
UNDERSTANDING THE FORCES AT WORK

By Randel Washburne

Those quirky patches of disturbed water called tide rips usually give the sea kayaker little more than a shot of adrenalin and a few splashes over the deck. But some tide rips are a serious menace to even the most competent paddler. They can occur wherever tidal currents approaching or exceeding two knots are found.

Though the term "tide rip" (or just "rip") is applied to all sorts of sea disturbances, it usually means an area where waves are intensified. (A "rip tide" is an unrelated phenomenon - a current flowing outward from a beach, returning water piled up inshore by surf.) Tide rips vary in scale from spots of tiny dancing wavelets to acres of towering breakers. Most rips have closely spaced and breaking waves, and sometimes crossing wave patterns which one paddler describes as "washing machine waves, with the surface like sun-cups on a spring snowfield". Rips may occur on calm days, but wind waves or even boat wakes generally make them worse.

The surest tide rip condition is a "weather tide", when the tidal current flows against the wind. The bigger the wind waves and the faster the opposing current, the worse the seas. Because waves are slowed or even stalled by a current, they act like waves in shallows - steepening and breaking. Thus an entire waterway can become much rougher during the weather tide condition, and any of the more localized rip conditions described below probably will be aggravated during that time.

But most tide rips are patches of an acre or so. Though the causes are complex, they usually stem from the current being forced to change its direction or speed by constrictions such as shoals, islands or points. Current may speed up because of the venturi effect - a given volume of water must go faster to get through a smaller space. Here waves may even be created. As the water speeds up to pass over a shoal or around a point, energy is absorbed and the surface becomes relatively smooth. But when it slows down again on the downstream side of the constriction, energy is released in the form of waves and turbulence adding to whatever wind waves are already there.

As with the "weather tide" situation, the faster current in many rips also can trap waves from wind or boat wakes. Slowed or stalled in the rip, the waves "stack up" - becoming steeper, more closely spaced and probably breaking. The bigger the waves entering, the worse things get. The classic situation is a submerged reef where the current speeding over the shallows generates waves and also traps others. Another example is waves on an open body of water entering a narrows from which a current is flowing. The waves are unable to advance into the current and a rip forms off the mouth of the narrows.

Converging current also can produce rips as when currents rejoin after coming around two sides of an island. The principles are the same as above: colliding streams constrict each other, producing changes in speed and direction, and creating or trapping waves.

Strong changes in current direction, called eddy lines, can make nasty tide rips. Swirling turbulence along an eddy line generates waves of its own, and waves entering the area are intensified as they near it. Add the crossing pattern of these two wave sources and you have a particularly wicked place to paddle. An example is Cypress Head in Washington's San Juan Islands, where a spring ebb current produces a powerful eddy and adjacent tide rip.

So what can you do to avoid tide rips?

Start by avoiding the weather tide, and paddle when the wind and current are flowing the same way. Since wind directions are far less predictable in advance than currents, note and avoid current conflicts with the directions from which strong winds are most likely, or at least the direction from which the fetch (distance of open water) is greatest and the biggest seas most likely.

Look for likely tide rip spots on your chart - islands, points, shoals and other features that constrict flows. Of course, this is only the setting - current is the actor and winds and wakes are the supporting cast. The overall flow wate and direction in a channel at a given time can be determined from current tables (though keep in mind that local currents in rip areas can be faster). Current charts present a visual picture that may show where eddies and converging currents could produce rips. In the Northwest, the Canadian Hydrographic Service's Current Atlas for The Strait of Juan de Fuca to The Strait of Georgia is particularly useful for that purpose.

Nautical charts may mark tide rip areas (U.S. charts say "tide rips"; Canadian charts use a wavy line symbol), or may include cautionary notes explaining when and where bad rips occur. Coast Pilots may highlight tide rip locations and conditions. But bear in mind that both the charts and pilots are primarily oriented toward commercial traffic and that this sort of information concentrates on major traffic lanes rather than the shallow close-to-shore routes that most kayakers prefer. Hence the rips shown are probably quite serious ones in mid-channel. Others just as dangerous to you but in side channels or near shore may not be mentioned at all.

Since abaility to anticipate rips is limited, keep a sharp eye out for them ahead, especially if you're riding the current and thus have less time to avoid them. Watch for changes in the surface pattern (often appearing darker than the surrounding water and flecked with white from breakers) and listen - rips sound something like river rapids. With the kayaker's low viewing angle, tide rips aren't easy to see at a distance. Rough seas make it harder, as intervening whitecaps camouflage the breakers in a rip and wind obscures its noise.

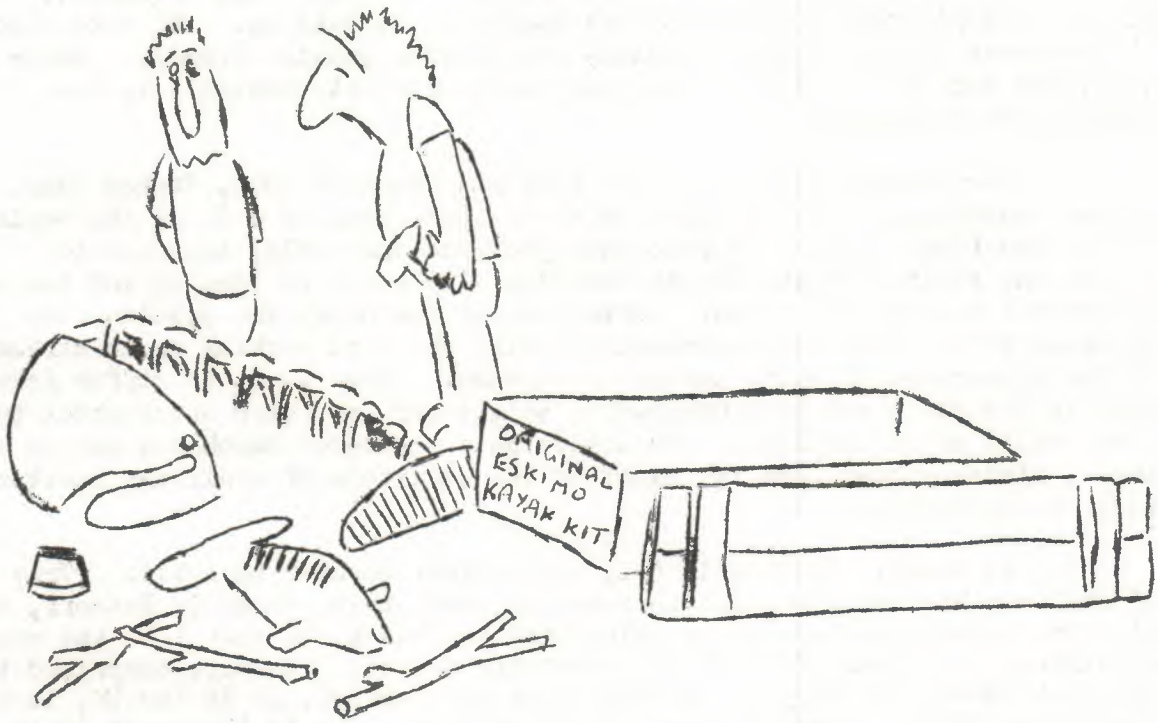
Once you spot is, you'll have to decide if the rip merits taking evasive action. The majority of rips offer juse a little excitement to enliven an otherwise languid paddle for those confident or their boat-handling skills But until you have some experience with assessing turbulence, best be prepared to go around.

For tide rips near shorelines, the safest route may be either offshore or close inshore where there are eddies and slower currents. Go ashore for a better look if you can Even standing up on a beach will give you a much more informative perspective. If the current seems to be carrying you into a mid-channel rip, make some quick observations (using ranges) about which way the current is setting you before you choose an evasive course.

Finally, if it becomes clear that you can't avoid going through a rip, stop trying and start concentrating on getting through it. People sometimes have the most trouble in a tide rip because they're still trying to escape from it, which results in the wrong mental set and boat orientation for dealing with the rough water. Most rips are a limited area, with a current running through it. Concentrate on staying upright, and the current will bring you out the other side.

Use the time you have before entering the rip to check your skirt for tightness and your deck items for security, as you're sure to be splashed. Mentally revitalize your bracing reflexes before you enter the rip, and face the waves. Maintain a rapid, choppy paddle cadence to allow each stroke to become a brace if needed. Be ready for sudden changes in flow direction that could unbalance you.

An who knows, it might even turn out to be fun.



BRITTANY, WHIT 1987
BY CHRIS PENDLEBURY, HERTFORDSHIRE

"You've got better weather than Scotland, it's not any further and, of course, there's all that fantastic sea food ..... and cheap wine." I wouldn't like to say which of these decided our Whit cruising ground, or if it was merely Dave's eloquence. He had repeated these arguments on a number of occasions in that quietly insistent way of his, arguments which reached a peak of rationality after the previous wet, cold and windy Whit spent scurrying among the Small Isles in between squalls and showers. So, Friday night of the Bank Holiday weekend saw Steve and I speeding down to Plymouth, cursing caravans, roadworks and, eventually, persistent rain in a mad dash to meet the rest of the group at the ferry terminal to catch the 2330 boat to Roscoff. We made it with minutes to spare, carrying our canoes onto the ferry past somewhat bemused emigration officials.

The ferry was packed - Dave casually mentioned that this ferry was the most crowded of the year, as we struggled to find an empty table. Noisy school groups and crying babies added to the already chaotic atmosphere. Our noses detected something else added to the air by the small baby nearby, as the ship left Plymouth Sound and began to heave gently to the waters of the Channel. I gulped, and buried my nose in the pint which Steve had heroically retrieved from the bar It was going to be a long night .....

We arrived in Roscoff at 0600 French time. "You are British? O.K." So much for customs and immigration formalities on entering La Belle France The chap did not even appear to notice our canoes. Steve and I staggered around the terminal buildings carrying our two boats and almost fell over a set of luggage trollies. Thinks ..... We have successfully proven that one sea kayak (laden) will slot neatly between two French luggage trolleys and can be easily manoeuvred in such a fashion. The 300 metre walk to the nearby concrete ramp was a doddle.

The first objective was to walk into town and find breakfast. This we accomplished as the place was beginning to wake up. We were also able to stock up on essentials (wine) and various goodies (food). Meanwhile, the sun was up, the air was warm and our first foreign trip was beginning to feel good.

Our canoes finally entered foreign waters at 1050, French time. Heading westwards, we had a light NE to contend with, as well as the beginning of the flood tide. We made good progress initially, though after leaving the shelter of the Ile de Batz the wind began to pick up and the sun disappeared behind some cloud. After nearly two hours the paddling was beginning to verge on the semi-serious, with the wind picking up in strength and the appearance of white horses to seaward. Dave began to suffer from cramp in his hands and this decided us to get off the water after about two hours and 14 km of paddling. We landed on a sheltered beach and set up our bivvis, almost hidden from the sight of the multitude of dwellings scattered along the coastline.

As usual, after we landed, the weather cheered up a bit. Trev and Phil had had the foresight to purchase pork steaks while in Roscoff, so while they cooked we went for a walk along the beach and then into the nearest village in search of a bar and something to eat. We were surprised to find that there were very few people about even though, as in the UK, it was a public holiday Hunger induced us to walk the 5 km to Plouescat (twin town to the Surf City of Braunton), where we were assured that there was food to be had. Sure enough, a very pleasant little place was found and we indulged ourselves in steaks and crepes. The walk back seemed all the shorter for a good meal.

The following day was still a bit grey and we got on the water at 10 after a leisurely breakfast. The wind was still adverse, a N3 with the promise from the shipping forecast of more to come. The coast from this point trended south-westwards, so for a few km we had a pleasantly gentle following sea on which some surfing was possible. We made good time along the beach of Ker Emma, but while crossing the ominous sounding Greve de Goulven, the wind increased in strength and swung to the NE. After rock dodging for a while we pulled in to the sheltered bay of Brignogan Plage. We pitched our bivvis on an arm of the bay overlooking the harbour shortly before 1 o'clock. In the evening we ventured into the town and found a very pleasant creperie which also served cider. A good time was had by all.

Monday morning actually saw us depart which a reasonably fair wind - NE 2-3. We made quite good time pushing onwards to Aberwrach, a very French estuary with a very Welsh name. Our bivvi site took a bit of finding, a lot of the immediate coastline being heavily overgrown with bracken or worse. Elsewhere was obviously hay meadow or house gardens. St Cava was the lucky hamlet to be selected as 'notre repos'. Bivvis were pitched in warm - nay, hot - sunshine. The day was rounded off with a superb meal in a local hostelry: fresh crab, scallops, steak and a variety of magnificent desserts. Finding the way back to amp was .... interesting. This was our best day so far: interesting paddling, good weather and good food. Nature even provided us with an electrical fireworks display during the night, out to sea on the north-western horizon.

We had now paddled westwards for three days and had to be back in Roscoff by Friday evening at the latest. We had no shore party to ferry us about and so we decided that Aberwrach was to be furthest point west. This would give us a day in hand in case of any problems with the weather - which wasn't looking all that good according to the forecasts. Tuesday dawned with an adverse tide Consequently we put off departure for as long as possible, and eventually set off in the late afternoon with the benefit of a light West wind at our backs. With wind and tide in our favour we cruised at a good rate of knots and, in lieu of any better sites presenting themselves, eventually ended up at our old bivvi spot at Brignogan Plage at 2000.

The following day was miserable weatherwise, with rain, mist and a strong breeze from the NW. The prospect of packing up in the dank atmosphere was unappealing and the paddling on such a grey day unappetizing. There was an argument (discussion?) as to if we should go or not and after much vacillation we decided to stay put. We had plenty of time in hand, after all. Certainly for me, retracing a route we had so recently followed was not the most exciting of prospects anyway, and neither was hanging around Roscoff waiting for our ferry. On the other hand, festering in a bivvi while it drizzled and blew wasn't a bundle of fun either. Fortunately there was an abundance of reading matter .....

As penance for such a lazy day and as recompense to those energetic (and illiterate) members of the group who had wanted to be at one with the waves the day before, we had an early start the next morning and were on the water by 0630 (ouch!) With a steady NW3-4 and the help of the tide we covered the 25km or so in good time and decided to push on a further 5km to Isle Callot, arriving at 1230. Callot is only an island at high tide when the island's causeway is covered. It is a pleasant place with an interesting old church and good views across to the town of St Pol de Leon. Our bivvi site on the east of the island was somewhat exposed to the lublic (though not much more so than most of our others), but the high tide in the afternoon would provide a respite from the day visitors. We took the opportunity for a quick walk before the same tide cut us off from our base, and managed to find a bakery still open The rest of the day we strolled round the island and enjoyed the weather, which had at last turned sunny.

Another fine day followed and a short bit of exercise saw us back in Roscoff stocking up on wine and cheese and enjoying the sights of the town. (We can recommend the aquarium.) Our bivvi for the last night was on a grassy slope overlooking the ferry terminal prior to taking the early morning boat to Plymouth. The return crossing was uneventful and the reception by British customs in marked contrast to the laissez faire attitude of their French counterparts. But then, who would want or need to smuggle alcohol into France?

Brittany had come good with some of Davie's promises - the food was excellent and the wine delightful; the paddling was interesting without being spectacular. The main detraction from the coast is the amount of apparently unregulated building development along it. The weather was disappointing, all the more so when the weather reports from western Scotland were describing the kind of blue skies and sunshine we had come south to find!

NEVER IGNORE A FLARE

It was only a small incident, no loss of life, just a few lines in the Coastguard's log book and a brief paragraph on the front of the Sunday Express, but it could have been so different.....

We were lying alongside the old tidal basin at Port Dinorwic which is about halfway up the Menai Straits. Outside, a good stiff breeze was blowing up the Straits, for as with most narrow channels the wind always follows the water and never blows across it. It was approaching high water, and the wind was with the last of the flood, conspiring to produce a deceitfully smooth surface. The other important fact in this little tale was that it was early in the season; the air was raw and the water temperature was not much above freezing.

Just up the Straits a bunch of canoeists left Plas Newydd and began paddling diagonally across into the wind under the guidance of an instructor. Their light craft skimmed across the smooth sleek surface; it was all so easy.

Now the tidal streams in the Straits can run very fast at springs, as it was then, there being very little slack, and by the time our little bunch of innocents (and I include the instructor in that heading) had reached Port Dinorwic, the tide had turned and the ebb was running strongly. The wind, not appreciating this rebellious act, declared war, and the ensuing battle brought six-foot waves piling up the channel; not that six foot waves are particularly dangerous except when short, steep and unexpected.

I was filling my watertanks at the time, and watching quite large cruisers shipping white water as a result of this transformation. Suddenly out of the corner of my eye, I thought I glimpsed a red flare, not out at sea, but just the other side of the dock wall. As I looked up, another went up. A number of people had seen them, but no one seemed bothered; a fellow on the next boat seemed to hink it was someone playing about. Well, it was only about a hundred yards away. They were probably right, but I felt that at least I must investigate. so I started the engine and headed out through the dock entrance.

Someone in the water

Just outside, about fifty yards from the wall, two canoeists were struggling to support a third in the water, whilst down the Straits, an occasional glimpse of orange among the white water was all that could be seen of the others. Our casualty was just about 'all in', and we had the devil's own job to haul her aboard since she was so numb with cold she could do little to help herself. After what seemed an age, we had her aboard and my wife thawed her out whilst I went ashore to contact the Coastguard to tell them what was happening.

The helicopter arrived from RAF Valley in a creditably short time and one by one the remainder of the bunch were accounted for, except for one, who several hours later was still missing. Most of the afternoon small groups of people stood grimly watching the helicopter hovering close over the sea assisted by the inshore lifeboat which had turned up as well.

At last, as hope was fading, we heard the news that the last canoe had been discovered up ended on the beach and its occupant found inside someone's house drinking tea and watching the football on television.

Well, this time it ended happily, but how different it could have been - which leads to several obvious morals.

The first is that wind-against-tide conditions should never be underestimated, particularly in narrow channels or off headlands. It's so easy to fall into the trap of thinking that inshore water must be safe. The transformation on the turn of the tide can be almost instantaneous, and to small craft, a short, steep sea can be far more dangerous than much larger waves in the open ocean.

Another obvious moral is that a red flare should never be ignored however unlikely it appears to be. Remember the Titanic?

One must never forget that it's cold that kills, and cold water is cold water whether offshore or thirty yards off the beach. It must also be remembered that wearing a lifejacket won't save your life, it merely keeps you afloat. It's not much consolation to be a buoyant corpse.

Lastly, those fortunate or unfortunate enough to be rescued (depending how you look at it!) must let the authorities know straight away, as people may be risking their own lives still searching for them.

The postscript to all this was that we rescued two more canoeists last year under almost identical conditions, but this time we managed it without even leaving our mooring. That was the first time I have ever wished I had a VHF radio, something I have tended to scorn before, as we had to communicate with the searching helicopter by sign language, something which is much harder than it sounds.

Now we have the added problem of windsurfers, who seem to think they are immune from weather conditions and sea state. I shall have to buy a VHF and pray ....

The following extracts are from SAM HALL'S marvellous book "THE FOURTH WORLD"; a book about the heritage of the Arctic.

Hunting at sea would not have been possible were it not for the kayak or BAIDAR as it was called in Eurasia Nansen described it as the best one-man boat in existence The narrow craft, which is still used widely in Greenland, is tailor-made to the measurements of the owner and fits so snugly that the Greenlanders refer to it as an extra pair of trousers, and speak of 'wearing' it. The total length, normally between 15 feet and 17 feet, is exactly three times the height of the kayaker. Depending on the size, five or six waterproofed seal skins, carefully stitched, are stretched over the long, narrow frame, which is usually less than two feet wide, the kayaker sitting in a space as little as eight inches deep from keel to deck.

Drawing the hood of his sealskin anorak tightly round his face, the kayaker buttons the bottom of the anorak onto the cockpit coaming, which fits closely round his waist ensuring that the kayak is completely water-tight. Waves hitting the kayaker head-on could break his back, so the sea-going Inuk must be able to overturn the small craft, and right it again when the wave has passed. In heavy seas, this can be an exhausting and dangerous process. A testimonial to the seaworthiness of such craft and the dexterity of the kayaker himself can be found in the Scottish Statistical Accounts, in which the vicar of Orkney, the Rev. James Wallace, wrote that in 1682, and again two years later, men in unsinkable and presumably storm-driven boats were seen off the coasts of Eda and Westra. The churchman added:

> ..... they have this advantage, that the seas never so boisterous, their boats being made of Fish Skins, are so contrived that he can never sink, but is like a seagull swimming on the top of the water. His shirt he has is so fastened to the boat that no water can come into his boat to do him damage, except when he pleases to untie it, which he never does but to ease nature, or when he comes ashore.

Clearly, kayaking called for a strong bladder as well as endurance. The Orcadians were so intrigued by the strange seafarers that one of the kayaks was sent from Orkney to Edinburgh to be displayed in the Physicians Hall, together with the 'oar and the dart he makes use of for killing fish'. The Kayak, and 'ye shirt of ye barbarous man yt ws in ye boat', was later presented to the Anthropological Museum of Marischal College at Aberdeen University It was rumoured that one of the unfortunate occupants was captured, killed, and after a visit to the local taxidermist, put on display until the Victorians decided that it was not the most tasteful of exhibits. This rumour, however, remains unconfirmed. According to the Rev. Wallace's account, the kayakers were 'Finnmen'. This seems to indicate that they came from northern Scandanavia, which was then called 'Finnmark'. Certainly the Sami fishermen there made boats of skin but these were stubbier and wider, and it is more likely that the stray kayakers were storm-driven Inuit hunters from Greenland.

Once the hunter took his seat in the kayak, his legs outstretched in front of him, he placed a pike and a six-foot harpoon with a detachable shaft along the deck. The point of the harpoon, which was also used for inland fishing, was attached to a line which was coiled neatly on a small circular tray in front of him. The other end of the line was tied to an inflatable sealskin buoy. In later years, after the traders came, the hunter would also position a small square of white canvas on the bow to dupe his quarry into believing the kayak was a harmless piece of floating ice.

Once the seal was harpooned, the shaft separated and floated away. If the stricken creature dived, the line was paid out and the inflatable buoy was thrown into the water to tire the seal and indicate its position. After a few minutes, the exhausted mammal would surface and hunter moved in for the kill with his pike, retrieving the harpoon shaft later on. The heavy carcass was then secured to the kayak and towed back to shore.

For the kayaker, the walrus presented a daunting opponent. It was essential that the harpoon struck the head or the nape of the neck. If the hunter missed, the maddened beast was liable to charge the kayak, flipping it out of the water, bringing instant death to the hunter

No Inuk hunted walrus alone The kayaker paddled, then drifted silently to within a few feet of the enormous creature, followed closely by the community's UMIAK, a large sealskin boat seating 10 or 12 men armed with pikes. Once within range, the kayaker hurled his harpoon and back-paddled furiously, the harpoon line uncoiling as he did so. The infuriated beast dived immediately but was soon weakened by the trailing, inflated buoy attached to the line. When the wounded animal finally surfaced, the other hunters in the umiak ended his life with their pikes.

The massive carcass was lashed to the wides of the umiak and tubes inserted into the beast's stomach so that it could be inflated and the body towed more easily to the shore. Here, the waiting community helped to drag the carcass onto the beach. Knives were sharpened and the walrus meat was divided up according to strict custom. The harpooner took the choicest joint, known as the 'first harpoon'. Afterwards, the other hunters cut out the second, third and fourth harpoons, and collected the spurting blood for soup.

Death was the daily companion of an Inuk hunter. Each time he lowered himself into his kayak, he masked his anxiety, aware that if he should succumb to fear, disaster would follow. He knew only too well the infinite possibilities with which nature could test him. If his reactions were slow during a sudden storm, wavelets whipped into heavy walls of water could crush him. He only had to misjudge by one second the moment at which to flip over his kayak, and the full weight of a breaking wave might snap the frail craft apart, or break his back and drown him. Or he might be driven far out to sea and lose his bearings. If the wind was cold, the spray could freeze and numb his body. At such times, knowing that he would not be able to reach shore, he would flip over his kayak for the last time.

Even inshore, the kayaker was not safe. The weather could change without warning and the sea might dash a hunter onto the low ice-smooth islands of the fjords, or the needle-sharp rocks at the base of the cliffs. From such a catastrophe there was seldom a safe return. Sometimes, the overlapping tongue of the inner icecap would break away from a clifftop without warning, showering the inshore kayaker with a deadly cascade of ice and small rocks However alert he might be in the fjords and the open sea, he knew that there was always the danger of an iceberg splitting apart and toppling onto him. The modern kayaker, of course, faces the same risks.

Once the waterproof skin of his kayak was punctured, the kayaker was given little hope; a sealskin suit was not sufficient protection against the cold, black waters. If the hunter managed to drag himself onto an icefloe, it might be more than 20 minutes before relief came. Hypothermia might set in during the long journey home. So common were kayaking accidents, that death by drowning was considered to be the same as death by natural causes. Whenever the Inuit paddled off on a hunting expedition, their wives would gather on the hillsides each evening as they still do in Greenland, and gaze out to sea, waiting for them to return, just as the wives of miners wait for news at the colliery after a pit disaster.

Another hazard was the mirror-like stillness of the water when there was no wind. The Inuk expecting to harpoon a suspicious seal might sit motionless in his kayak for hours, knowing that the slightest shift in position would frighten the seal away. He could move only his eyes. The glare of the sun was reflected in waters as still as a sheet of glass, inducing a semi-hypnotic state. Sometimes, a kayaker was unable to suppress his fear of this, and could no longer hunt, bringing humiliation on himself and great hardship for his dependants.

According to the Danish explorer, Peter Freuchen, who lived with the Polar Inuit at Thule for many years, an old Inuk, before he became too infirm, would call for a feast of prime MATTAK for his family and friends in order that they might laugh and talk, and share once more the stories from times past The sharing over, he would walk quietly with them to the shoreline or to the edge of the ice, and taking leave of his family and friends, he would ask his wife or his eldest son to help him into his kayak. This done, he would paddle proudly out to sea until he was quite certain that he was alone and unseen, and with a determined thrust of his paddle, capsize his kayak for the last time.

Extract from The Daily Telegraph - 10 February 1988

AIR-SEA RESCUE 'WILL NOT BE PRIVATISED'
by George Jones, Political Correspondent

Privatisation of air-sea rescue operations carried out by the RAF and the Navy is to be rejected by the Government.

Defence ministers are expected to announce in a Commons debate on the RAF tomorrow that the Government does not intend to hand over responsibility for the £100 million a year search and rescue operations to a private company, Bristow Helicopters Limited.

Bristow recently approached the Government offering to run air-sea rescue operations on a commercial basis.

The approach brought protests from yachtsmen and mountaineering groups who feared that privatisation of the rescue services could ultimately lead to people being charged for being saved.

An all-party group of MPs has tabled a Commons motion calling on the Government to reject the Bristow proposal saying it fails to take into account the need of the services to train helicopter crews.

The MPs also said there was no guarantee that the company's operations might not be subject to a strike or industrial action.

Last year RAF and Royal Navy helicopters based in the United Kingdom flew 1,494 search and rescue sorties and rescued 903 civilians. During the same period they rescued 54 military personnel.

THE WESTERN ISLES

This years sea canoeing week organised by Calshot Activities Centre was a trip around the small isles of the west coast of Scotland. Most of us met up at Calshot for the journey which was to be made by minibus, a daunting prospect. It did not turn out that bad as it was possible to sleep in the back of the minibus on specially designed boards which linked the seats together. We arrived at Portnaluchaig after 20 hours of travelling on Saturday afternoon and made camp. We then regrouped in a local hostelry and watched a late dramatic sunset on our walk back to camp; was it to be a good omen for things to come?

On Sunday morning we packed the boats with our food and camping equipment. We were carrying our food and equipment in pairs though we were effectively self-contained it allowed heavy items to be split and some of the less experienced to gain some help from a more practical camper. By eleven we were all ready to go and thirteen boats were put on the water. Most people were in the Calshot Fleet of Islanders, there was also a North Shore, a Nordkapp and a Voyager. We set compasses for Eigg and paddled out of the small bay watched by most of the campsite. The sky was blue and the sea crystal clear. It was a new experience to paddle over many different types of wrack, kelp and red algae and be able to see them so clearly. It was already quite warm and it felt more like the meditteranean than the north western coast of Scotland.

The crossing to Eigg was about 15 miles and takes about four hours. The journey is strange because the island looks much closer due to the 1000 ft high hills on its eastern side. You paddle for three or more hours and the island appears to get no closer then suddenly it is growing upwards and upwards and you are at the foot of tall cliffs. There appeared to be no place to land so we turned south and headed for the harbour inside Rubha na Crannaig The sea picked up so we surfed down much of the eastern coast of Eigg As we approached the harbour a motionless figure beckoned us from the shore directing us with an outstretched arm. After we landed we approached the figure to find a statue that was dressed like a monk pointing to the small island of Chathastail; we never did discover the origins of the figure.

After lunch we left the harbour accompanied by some curious seals who appeared virtually everytime we entered or left any of the small bays found all around the islands. We paddled around to the west coast of Eigg looking for a campsite. We found a flat area of land above a very small bay which made an ideal campsite, one of many we found that week. The only negative aspect of this one was a bank of rotting seaweed that had to be negotiated in order to reach the shore. After making camp and having a meal we climbed to the top of An Sgurr and watched another perfect sunset over Rhum.

The next day we set off early for Rhum, the crossing from Eigg was about eight miles. The sea was flat with very little wind and the sun shining. We soon arrived at Rhum and paddled up the west coast towards Glen Harris. On many of the rocks along the coast we found sleeping grey seals who could be approached surprisingly close before they dived into the sea for safety. They would then follow you as you paddled away from "their" bay to the next, usually leaving you when they were satisfied you would not return.

We stopped for lunch at Glen Harris and went to look at the mausoleum. There we found three large tombs of the Borough family situated in a most incongruous building looking very out of place next door to the crofters cottages. Alongside the mausoleum was a strange half buried tiled

wall with what looked like a family crest on it. This we decided was the original building which had housed the tombs but it had caved in and been replaced by the present building. This looked like a small version of the Parthenon in red sandstone or similar. We were soon back on the water and heading for Canna. As we crossed the Sound of Canna we saw the ferry going into and shortly after leaving the harbour. The ferry was the main means of contact with the mainland for the permanent residents on the islands. It called twice a week and also on Saturdays, though these times were less reliable in the winter.

We had a quiet crossing to Canna, though we were to later find that a pilot whale had swum under us after first passing the ferry. We had not noticed it. We found an excellent sandy bay on Canna and after asking at a nearby cottage were given permission to use a field on the headland to camp. The water in the bay was again crystal clear, the evening was warm and one by one we took the plunge and went for a swim or in my case a very quick dip - the water was still bloody cold! After food we went exploring and found the road. It was about a mile long and skirted the southern tip of the harbour. Along it we found the island's only car, a Ford Fiesta which was owned by the retired doctor (82 years old). He used it to pick up his visitors from the ferry and drive them the half mile to his home.

We met up with a local crofter who farms on the island, mainly sheep. He was mowing his lawn using an electric Flymo driven off a diesel generator. His wife was the island's school teacher and their home contained the classroom though not the island's only pupil! On the walk back to the campsite we could see the church on Sanday but decided to leave its exploration until the next day. That night John Kuyser and Morag went fishing but caught nothing. The rest of us sat on the beach waiting for it to get dark, which it never really did until well past eleven showing how far north we were.

On Tuesday we planned to circumnavigate Canna. Four people opted for a rest day so nine of us launched into a flat calm sea. There was a mist over the water that obscured the horizon creating an imperceptable division between the sea and sky. We paddled around a small headland on the edge of the bay on top of which was the old prison built from local stone several hundred years ago. Around the eastern corner of Canna and along the northern coast we found a series of bird colonies marked by several seasons worth of guano. There were Puffins, Shags, Razor-bills, Common Guillemots and Black Guillemots. They mesmerised us with the flights back and forth from sea to cliff nests. The Guillemots were particularly abundant and watching them as they attempted to fly was fascinating. They are closely related to the flightless Penguins though they still retain the ability to fly successfully if they first reach a critical cruising speed. This is usually accomplished by launching themselves off a high cliff. At first they plunge straight down, gliding on their stubby wings, then once the speed is high enough they start to rapidly beat their wings. This may be successful and they can then fly off to sea to feed. If this fails they have two options. The first is to keep flapping their wings and use their feet to "run" over the surface of the water until they take off. This resulted in one bird running over the front end of my boat while using this method. The second option is to give up and dive into the water and fly below the surface.

At a break in the cliffs we found an area where large numbers of birds were leaving and returning to the cliffs. Several of us spent about 20 minutes watching the birds as they flew past, over, under and through us. One of those magical moments where you can only wonder at the beauty of another living thing. We all agreed later that had been the highlight of the week. An experience which would have been difficult to reach by any

other method than the seak kayak. Is this an example of that "special kind of freedom"?

We continued along the northern side of the island overawed by the numbers of sea birds we found The sea was now as flat as I have ever seen it and produced a mirror like reflection of the boats as they glided across the water. At Garrisdale Point we stopped for lunch among the kelp beds and managed to find a perfectly shaped seat that had been carved out of the rocks by the sea. The southern side of the island was dotted with caves which we explored as we paddled back to camp that afternoon. We paddled through the channel that separates the small island of Sanday from Canna and pulled out by the church. A short walk past a disused crofter's cottage and we were outside the church. It was locked at the front but the door to the bell tower was half off its hinges and open. The building was empty except for a smashed up old organ and a few religious statues that had their arms missing. The building appeared to be quite recent, probably less than a hundred years old but it had obviously not been used for some time. We decided that, in line with the rest of the country, people had stopped going to church on Sunday!

Before we returned to the boats we were entertained by a couple of yachts coming into the harbour and trying to moor in the same place as another yacht that was already there. We returned for an evening meal at the camp and Brett and I decided to go for a night paddle later than evening. We waited until about eleven when it seemed at last to be getting dark and headed for a small group of rocks just outside the harbour where we had spotted a group of seals on the way in the previous day. We found a couple of shy seals but not as many as we had hoped. We left the rock and entered a small bay looking for more seals. Instead we noticed two sea otters who were in the process of eating a good sized crab. We were able to drift to within a few feet of them before they noticed us, dropped the crab and slid into the kelp filled waters soon vanishing in the moonlight. The crab then hobbled down into the sea minus a couple of legs no doubt. The otters would be back for the rest later.

We floated around in the twilight hoping the seals would come closer but they kept at a safe distance. We gave up and paddled back to a sleeping camp at about twelve thirty. Our boats and paddles leaving a trail of phosphorescent "sparks" in the water as we disturbed the zoo planktons unexplained light show. That night the wind picked up to a Force 5 and we were nearly blown off the campsite and into the bay. We broke camp and headed off into the strong north-east wind. As we approached the northern tip of Rhum the wind dropped and by midday we had sunshine again. We arrived at Kilmory and were met by a few of the red deer of the island who were introduced in the 1950s. Around the headland was another perfect sandy bay so we pulled in for morning coffee. At this point we saw a land rover heading out on the road to Kinloch. A figure could be seen purposefully towards us. Most of the deer had ignored us some others had been scared away by the land rover a fact that eluded our visitor. She was Fiona Guinness who using her most patronising voice asked us to stand perfectly still so that we didn't disturb the deer! We politely told her that we had no intention of disturbing the deer and would be having a quick drink and then going. Although she didn't actually say so to our faces she made it clear that we were not welcome on "her" beach but we made it equally clear we were not going until we were ready. She retreated and sent a man across to have a word with us. He was equally pompous and soon left us to our coffee when he realised we weren't impressed with his green wellies and Berbour jacket. It seems that the problem of access is not only restricted to rivers. The National Trust seems to be trying to "save from the nation" as much land as it can and then for what are misguided reasons limit access as we found here and as is also occurring around Anglesey.

After an entertaining break we paddled around the eastern side of Rhum towards Kinloch stopping just north of the harbour for lunch. Yet again the sun shone on us and our paddle into Loch Scresort became extremely painful for the end of my nose. A quickly improvised sun visor made from a Twix wrapper helped I had never expected an already tanned nose to have suffered sunburn in Scotland in May.

Kinloch had a post office so several people headed for it and the beer it sold. Then we went around to the castle in search of the tea rooms only to find they were closed as was the castle. It was a magnificent building made of red stone with towers and castellations which blended in perfectly with the surrounding hills and woodland. It was full of superb furniture some of which we could see through the windows of the south wing, well worth a return visit. We went back to the harbour and set off to find a campsite on the southern side of Rhum. The official campsite was rejected due to its resemblance to a rubbish tip with very little flat land and being close to the shore an over abundance of midges. We found a promising bay but on closer inspection it was found to also contain far too many midges. The surrounding coast was mainly cliffs so we decided to cook a quick meal and then paddle across to Eigg. Most people cooked very quickly as the swarm of midges got larger and more inquisitive. At about 2000 hours we set off across a flat sea towards Eigg. On our way across groups of passing Manx Shearwaters demonstrated how they get their name as they glided and skimmed over the water their wings almost shearing the wave tops.

The northern end of the Bay of Laig seemed an ideal campsite with a sandy beach and a flat grassy area for the tents. In the morning a waterfall by the campsite looked worth investigating. At the base of the waterfall was a three foot crack in the rocks through which the water poured. This formed a perfect shower room and several of us availed ourselves of the facilities enjoying a refreshing, to say the least, wash. The water was freezing cold and hit you with the force of a fireman's hose, a perfect start to the day.

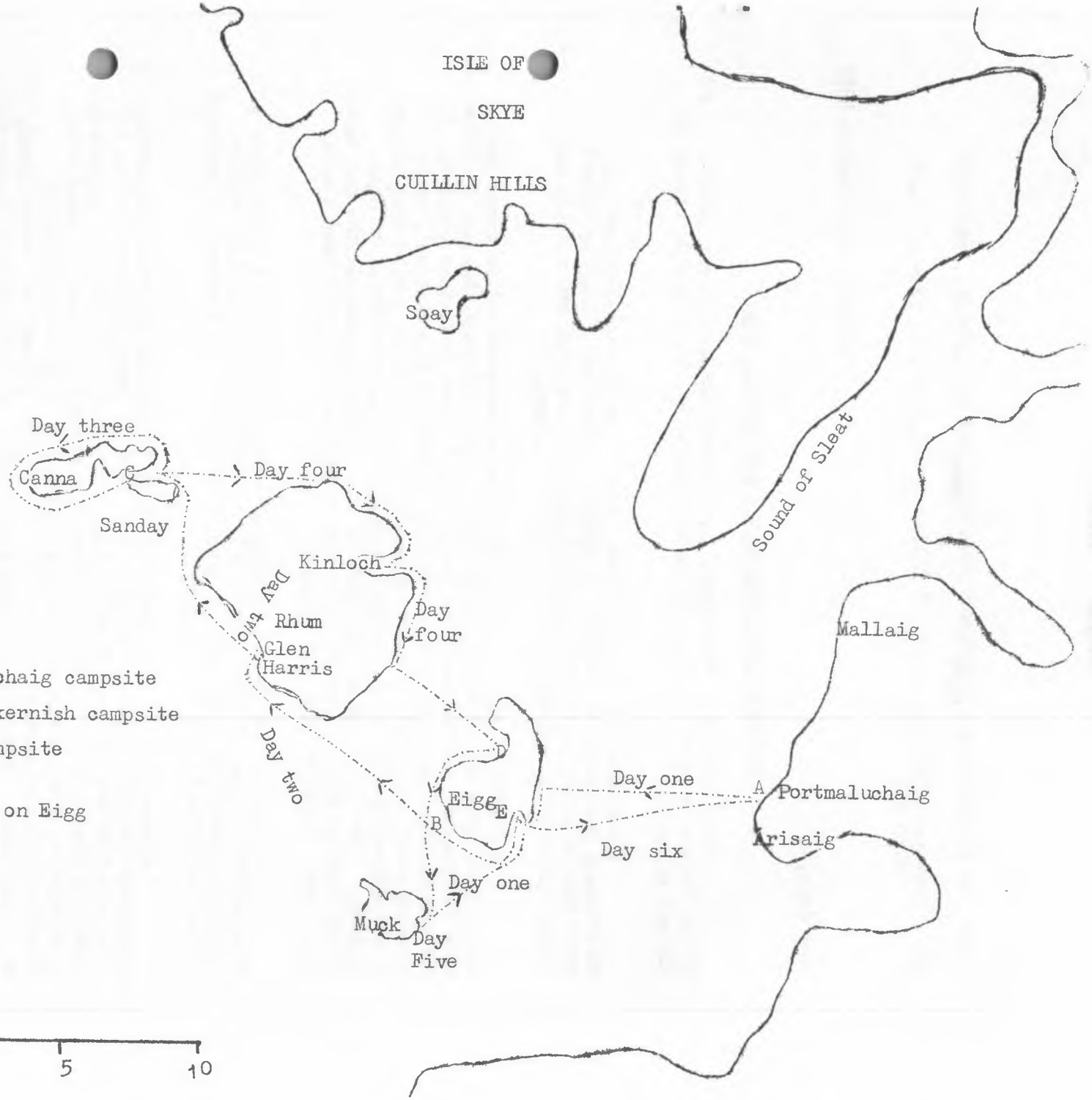
Our plan was to set off for Muck at about midday. The sea was a bit lumpy with a three foot swell and the winds NE 4 to £. We arrived at Port Mor with its sheltered bay and typical crofter cottages. Lined up on the jetty were lobster pots and fishermen's nets next to diesel drums, assorted empty crates and boxes. The crofters cottages often looked empty but these had people outside them doing their gardening or walking their dogs. A golden eagle landed in a nearby field then flew to one of the many drystone walls on the island. We walked along the road which traversed the island but saw only sheep; the wind was cold and when we returned to the boat many people got out warm clothing for the first time all week.

The crossing to Eigg was less rough and we soon made the harbour inside Eilean Chathastail. Here we found some people from the local sailing school heading off for an evening sail. We made camp and after our meal gathered around our last driftwood fire. Morag had brought some along for just this occasion and we watched the darkness encroach around us as we put the world to rights. One by one people drifted off to their warm sleeping bags and we left the fire to watch itself.

The next morning brought another clear sky with only a short paddle across to the mainland left. Packing the boats had become easier and easier as the food was consumed but everyone seemed to take a long time on this their last morning, savouring the last remnants of isolation and solitude. The crossing to Arisaig and our campsite at Portnaluchaig was uneventful except for the sighting of a couple of distant dolphins. We landed and quickly loaded our boats onto the trailer. As we were putting the last few things in the minibus it started to rain and by the time we drove out of the campsite it was pouring. This was the first rain we had seen all week and it made the leaving a little easier. We drove back to Calshot as we had come and another sea trip was over but then there's next year .....

JON NICHOLLS

THE WESTERN ISLES



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WATCH OUT FOR A SEA KAYAKING COURSE AT THE COURTLANDS CENTRE, KINGSBRIDGE, SOUTH DEVON. (Phone 0548 550227. IT WILL BE AN ADVANCED SEA TRAINING COURSE OVER THE WEEKEND OF THE 1st to 3rd JULY.

COST WILL BE ABOUT £15.00 PER NIGHT. I HOPE TO RUNNING THIS COURSE, SO IF YOU'RE INTERESTED, CONTACT THE NUMBER AS GIVEN HERE FOR FURTHER DETAILS.

From: D. R. Winning, 22 Brisbane Glen Road, Largs, Ayrshire, KA30 8QX

To: Advanced Sea Kayak Club, 7 Miller Close, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5PS

Tuesday, 18th August 1987

Dear John,

Marine Nature Reserves - Marinecall, etc.

There have been references in past newsletters to the setting up of Marine Nature Reserves in United Kingdom waters and the possible effect on the sea canoeist.

While most of us support the protection of wild life and the environment necessary to support it there is sometimes a nagging doubts about the possible restrictions officialdom, of one kind or another, may impose without due consideration of all the factors.

A number of years ago the Scottish Canoe Association faced just such a case when an island was made into a bird sanctuary, through a statutory instrument. Unfortunately the legislation was less than perfect, it cut across Scots law, upset the Scottish Landowners Association!, upset canoeists and also failed in its objective in protecting a rare species due to the forced change in the natural balance, i.e., the removal of Homo Sapiens. The S.C.A. paid the fines of some teenage canoeists who had dared to set foot on this island which is not remote but lies less than a mile from a port complete with oil terminal

Even although it was generally agreed that this was a bad piece of legislation nothing was done to rectify the situation as all the "experts" agreed it would take thousands of pounds and years to fix even with goodwill and co-operation from all concerned.

I have related this piece of history because of a very disturbing occurrence related to me recently. This time it concerns an area dear to canoeists from the north-east of England - The Farne Islands. A responsible canoeists (known to me personally) from the Borders was seeking permission, by telephone, for a party of young, accompanied, canoeists to land at a recognised landing spot on the Farnes to rest and partake of their lunch, not to explore. Not only was permission denied in an unpleasant manner but my friend was advised that "When we get our Marine Nature Reserve no canoeists will be allowed near the Farnes". This does not bode well for such reserves and if I can get this information in writing I will be taking it further.

Strange to say my friend was told that the currents would disturb the birds but it would have been alright if they belonged to a certain Nature organisation! Perhaps the birds are trained to recognise fully paid up members? If it was not so sad it would be hilarious.

My second complaint at "officialdom" concerns the "Marinecall" weather forecast system. As far as I can work out the new system has no advantage over the older "Marineline" system, in my area at least, it just costs a lot more, up to ten times as much! I took the matter up with a local paper (copies enclosed) and in telephone conversation to the reporter following up my letter it transpired that the Met Office used an advertising agency to handle the press release and had been embarrassed by the "inaccuracies" it contained. I used to recommend use of the "Marineline"

to my "sea proficiency" students but I am not encouraged to use its costly replacement, especially when the same information can be got locally at reasonable cost. It has to be remembered that I live in an area of high unemployment and getting youngsters afloat is hard enough without changes like this one.

I see that Alan Byde and Frank Goodman have contributed their summing up letters on their recent disagreement. I sincerely hope that that will be the end of the matter as both men have made a considerable contribution to the development of modern canoeing in the U.K. and should be remembered and respected for that and not for the acrimony of their discord. One thing I have learned in my 30 plus years of sea canoeing, or kayaking if you prefer, is that there is very little new except materials, e.g., I first used bulkheads in my sea canoes in 1961 but they were using bulkheads and deck hatches on touring sea canoes in Scotland and elsewhere a century ago and the Inuit used pumps (suction bailers) and self rescue inflatable bladders. Even consider the modern cranked single blades of the racing open canoeist and relate them to the eskimo cranked blades described by John Brond. I could go on and on but I think I have gone on enough!

Yours sincerely,

Duncan R. Winning

WHALES STILL THREATENED

The moratorium on commercial whaling was due to come into effect this year. Japan objected to this moratorium, but, as from May 1 1987 the objection has been withdrawn. However, Japan has decided to join those countries like Iceland and Norway who are continuing whaling under the guise of "scientific research". Japan plans to continue whaling in the Antarctic region during 1987/88 using this "scientific" loophole. But a resolution adopted at the 1986 International Whaling Commission was that whalemeat obtained under permit should be used primarily for local consumption. Japan will probably argue that "local" refers to the place where the whales are processed not where they are caught - there are not many local populations in Antarctica!

Recently the Iceland Government had to admit that its whaling industry had been exporting whalemeat to Japan in contravention of the local consumption regulation. Port authorities in Hamburg seized 140 tonnes of whalemeat that had been labelled as "frozen seafood". The incident is embarrassing as the whaling company concerned is contracted to the country's Marine Research Institute! There is another pointer to the dubious "scientific" reasons behind Iceland's "research whaling".

In Canada the World Wildlife Fund has just released a report "Whales Beneath the Ice" which WWF called a "blueprint for action" in saving Arctic whales. The report has relied much on the help of native Inuit peoples with members of the local Hunters and Trappers Association participating in the project. The local community has been kept informed of the results and plans of the project and an education programme about the history of whaling in the eastern Arctic and the biology and conservation of the bowhead whale was presented to local schoolchildren.

The co-operation achieved in producing such a report probably did as much for conserving whales as the report itself. Recommendations include: training local communities to carry out research and monitoring; the protection of Beluga whales in eastern Hudson Bay: development proposals in rivers and estuaries should prove they will not threaten whales; further population studies are needed on Belugas, Narwhals and Bowheads.

DEFINITION OF KAYAK .....
as defined by Eugene Y. Arima in his book
"Contextual Study of the Caribou Eskimo Kayak"

A general definition or characterisation of kayaks may be given at this point.

Kayaks are completely decked normally single-man skin-covered water craft intended principally for hunting sea mammals, water fowl and caribou and known historically among Eskimos, Aleuts, Chukchis and Koryaks.

Form, variable as it is, may be described as typically narrow and proportionally long, sharp-ended in top outline and low sided, with the manhole just off of amidships.

Craft with two, and even three, manholes were sometime made in the Aleutian Islands, Pacific Alaska, and the Belcher Islands in southeast Hudson Bay. The hull bottom may be round (actually multi-chine), flat or slightly V in cross section, while the deck may be flat or ridged.

The cockpit coaming or hoop can be level or tilted up at the front attached outside the cover in "floating" fashion or inside it End conformation is highly variable with pronounced to no rake or lean out height that is level or rising or falling from the main body and often handholds in the form of projections, notches or holes.

Framework construction is of wood, sometimes supplemented with bone, pegged and lashed together.

The principal members are a pair of sturdy gunwale planks or rails of rectangular section, joined at the ends directly or with an intervening piece and spread in between with cross beams over which is usually a single longitudinal batten. In the bottom edges of the gunwale pieces are inserted bent ribs, down which are fastened a central "keelson", as it is commonly termed to avoid the connotation of external projection of "keel" and one to five pairs of stringers. Construction is generally light although weights range commonly from 35 to 120 lbs.

Dimensions vary widely as well going from about 9 feet to over 28 feet for length and 15 to 38 inches for width, but most kayaks fall between 15 to 26 feet in length and 17 to 29 inches in width.

The easy and swift propulsion is typically by a double-bladed paddle, but the single paddle is also used, notably in Alaska.

Designed primarily for hunting with harpoons, darts and lances, most kayaks are built narrow for speed to overtake game.

The consequent limited stability and carrying capacity make use as travelling transportation secondary, although not negligible. Tippiness is countered by rafting together two or more craft for ferrying and rough conditions, capsize rescue techniques, and, above all, mastery of kayaking, including rolling in certain areas.

In conjunction with Industrial Pharmaceutical Service, MA for TA has produced a sterile equipment pack for use in medical emergencies. The small pack contains the essential items, including syringes, needles and swabs, all enclosed in individual sterile packaging and costs £9.80. It is available from I.P.S., Bridgewater Road, Broadheath, Altringham, Cheshire, WA14 1NA.

The AGM of the BCU Sea Touring Committee is always a popular event and this year should be no exception.

Provisional dates are 1st/2nd October and this time we are going to give the east coast the benefit of our company The venue will be the HARWICH 1912 CENTRE. This is an old 1912 Fire Station, restored and modernised in 1983 to become the HARWICH RESIDENTIAL CENTRE. It is situated 50 yards from the waterfront and is very well equipped.

Of course all are welcome to the AGM but the full weekend is restricted to those prepared to pay for their share of food and accommodation. As yet I don't know what this will be - but probably £10 for full weekend. Make a note in your diary now.

Alan Offer of 5 Glenair Avenue, Lower Parkstone, Poole, Dorset, is searching for an inflatable kayak, new or secondhand. Please contact Alan direct.

Ian Cammish of 10 Norman Crescent, Filey, North Yorkshire (Tel. 0723 514 569) is selling up - or so it seems - he has the following for sale:-

(1) SEATIGER KAYAK, NEW MODEL WITH 2 V.C.P. HATCHES, POD, RETRACTABLE SKEG, DECKLINES, ETC. IN RED/WHITE, IMMACULATE CONDITION, HARDLY EVER USED, £325.

(2) NEW W.W. TWINSEAL SPRAYDECK TO FIT ABOVE £15

(3) NORDKAPP WOOD BLADED PADDLES IN IMMACULATE CONDITION £25

(4) SESTRAL JUNIOR COMPASS NEVER USED £20

(5) BLACKS VENTILE TUNNEL TENT, FLYSHEET, HOOPS AND RIDGE POLES, SNOW ENTRANCE AND VALANCE £130, NEVER USED.

Julia Hobday and Gary Parkinson of WYVERN HOUSE Guest House, 7 Downs View, Bude, Cornwall, EX23 8RF (Tel 0288 2205) are offering special rates to ASKC members.

NEW BOOK

"CRESTING THE RESTLESS WAVES" by Paul Caffyn

North Island Kayak Odyssey

The seas off the west coast of the North Island of New Zealand are always restless. An endless succession of waves dash their might into the

reefs, cliffs and beaches of this rugged coast. A similar restlessness in Paul Caffyn set him to match his skills and wits in a 1700 mile odyssey around the coast of the North Island.

Paul began his odyssey in late December 1978 from Makara, near Wellington, in an 18 foot long fibreglass sea kayak named Isadora. In the South Taranaki Bight the trip nearly ended in disaster when his kayak 'end over ended' in a storm surf onto a boulder beach. Gripping struggles with the west coast surf continued until Paul rounded Cape Reinga and began the downhill leg back to Makara. Encounters with sharks, killer whales and a tourist launch in the Hole in the Rock near Cape Brett are but a few of the daily highlights. History of the early ports and lighthouses, the pranks perpetrated by the lighthouse keepers and stories of courageous rescues by the Cape Reinga crayfishermen add depth and colour to the narrative.

THE AUTHOR

When not canoeing, Paul Caffyn lives on the West Coast of the South Island and works as a coal exploration geologist. As well as being an experienced mountaineering instructor, his interests include caving, listening to grand opera, drinking port and building sea walls. CRESTING THE RESTLESS WAVES is Paul's third book in the New Zealand kayak odyssey trilogy, the first being OBSCURED BY WAVES which describes the South Island circumnavigation, and the second is DARK SIDE OF THE WAVE which tells the story of the Stewart Island trip.

Since completing his paddle around New Zealand, the author has gone on to complete the first kayak circumnavigation of Great Britain, Australis and Japan.

Available at $24.50 from Publication Division, New Zealand Canoeing Association, P.O. Box 3768, WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND.

A.S.K.C. SHOP

Ties @ £6 each
ASKC stickers @ 35 pence each
ASKC letter headed notepaper @ 50 pence per 10 sheets
4TH National Sea Kayaking Symposium Report @ 50 pence each
5TH International Sea Kayaking Symposium Report @ £1 each
T-shirts - Small/Medium/Large/X Large @ £4.50 each (in yellow or black)
Sweat Shirts - Small/Medium/Large/X Large @ £8 each (in yellow or black)
Information Sheets on Tides and Buoyancy @ 50 pence each
H.M. Coastguard Paper on Safety @ 75 pence
ASKC Ski Hats @ £3 50 each
Ernie's Check List in return for large S.A.E.
* New. 1989 ASKC Sea Kayaking Calendar @ £6.00

A THREE DAY COURSE - PLANNING A SEA KAYAKING EXPEDITION

INTRODUCTION
The practice and theory of planning an expedition by sea kayak, be it a one day trip or a sustained expedition into the wilderness, is of apparent interest to many proficient sea paddlers
Consequently I am arranging a three day course to cover as much of this subject as possible Participants should be competent sea kayakers up to BCU Sea Proficiency standard.

DATE
27th/28th/29th/30th May 1988

VENUE
Miller Close, Isle of Wight. Access is gained by getting to Cowes (either by paddling over and leaving your kayak at CLUB U.K. (what was the Sports Council Sailing Centre) or by using public ferry system). There is a regular bus service from Cowes to Newport. Alight at Parkhurst Prison. Miller Close is across the road to the right of the Prison.

ACCOMMODATION
Will be available at Miller Close. Bring a sleeping bag.

MEALS
Supper on Friday evening, all meals on Saturday and breakfast Sunday morning (you must provide your own food for up to and including Monday lunch) and high tea on Monday will be provided.

COST
£15.00

EQUIPMENT
If you are stuck for any equipment, let me know, otherwise .....
bring your kayak and gear to undertake an overnight expedition off the Isle of Wight, together with food for lunch and evening meal on Sunday and breakfast and lunch for Monday.

PROGRAMME
Friday, 27th May - Arrive and registration, supper and allocation of accommodation.
Saturday, 28th May - A day on the theory aspect of expedition planning to cover such subjects as Critical Path Planning/Reference Sources/Leadership and Choosing your Team/Budgeting and Fund Raising/Health and Hygiene/Mapping and Navigation/Report Writing.
Saturday evening - a grand barbeque - bring your own appetite!
Sunday, 29th May - Set off after breakfast in kayaks from Cowes Camp overnight and return Monday lunch time
Monday, 30th May - After packed lunch and a beer in Cowes we will return to Miller Close for de-brief and high tea.

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - tear off and return to **J. J.** Ramwell, - - - - - - - - - - - - - -
7 Miller Close, Newport, Isle of
Wight, PO30 5PS before April 30th

NAME ..... DATE ..... SIGNATURE .....

ADDRESS .....

..... POST CODE .....

I wish to attend the three day course on Expedition Planning in May 1988. I enclose £15.00 made out to the Advanced Sea Kayak Club.
Let me know if you have any special dietary requirements.
Please note that the organiser and his colleagues cannot accept responsibility for equipment.