



# Newsletter

May  
2016

Although we are well and truly racing through 2016, I hope that all members are enjoying good health and happy paddling! Is it only when we're over 21 that time seems to go so fast! Before catching up with what's happened this year I thought it would be remiss not to include photos from the Christmas paddle, which was a very decorative affair, both for kayaks and paddlers. It was so successful, it will become an annual event. No doubt competition will be fierce this year, as to who is the most creative and adorned.



*A cartoonist was found dead in his home. Details are sketchy*

## Corner Thai Restaurant

Our first Social Function for the year was in February at the Corner Thai Restaurant. 31 members enjoyed delicious tasty food in a convivial atmosphere. As always when the "Over 45ers" congregate, there is an abundance of laughter and chatter, a testament to the good organisation of Pam and Alan.

## Special Safety Report

The Club's Special Safety Day was held on Friday 19 February 2016 at Point Walter Reserve. What a great day it was to practise the Club's rescue techniques. Normally at Point Walter we have little wind and calm waters for our practise day. Not this year! We had very choppy water and a strong easterly wind gusting at times in excess of 30 Km/hr.

The day started with a group paddle in the challenging conditions to the sand spit where we had a couple of capsizes on the edge of the spit, but no real drama as it was shallow water. We dragged our craft over the sand and were suddenly in calm sheltered waters and had a pleasant paddle to Blackwall Reach. An easy paddle back to the spit where we dragged our craft over to the windward side and had a challenging paddle into the wind and rough water to our starting point.

We then divided the group into four lots of three with an observer allocated to each group. Each group paddled upwind and out about 50 metres into deep water, where we practised capsizing, attempts to get back into our crafts, the 'wrap your arms & legs around the bow of the rescuing craft' technique and bailing & towing of capsized craft.

The conditions made the exercise testing and exciting. After lunch all participants, plus others at the sausage sizzle, had the opportunity to comment on their experiences and observations and offered helpful suggestions. A very worthwhile discussion was had.

Some of the matters raised were as follows:

- One must be aware of one's strength when trying to get back into their capsized craft. Also those assisting that person must also assess their own strength and ability. It is obviously a much greater problem if we suddenly have two in the water because of efforts to get a person back in their craft. One can get exhausted very quickly. Exhaustion is deadly. There were only three in each group because this is the minimum number for a club paddle. However, if there is a capsize all paddlers should be prepared to offer assistance.
- Tow ropes need to be checked to ensure that they can be released easily and unfurl properly. It can be very frustrating and time consuming if one cannot release the rope. Also the towing cleat should be large enough to attach to the craft to be towed.
- Be aware that a heavy person being rescued on the bow may lift the rudder of the rescue craft out of the water, making steering difficult.
- Paddles need to be attached to crafts. Trying to save a paddle that is floating away is distracting and also makes it almost impossible to paddle if you then have two paddles aboard.
- Craft with water aboard are very difficult and exhausting to tow. If safe, try to bail out the capsized craft. Sometimes it is easier to tow upside down. Hand bailers are slow, hand pumps are very efficient and electric (battery) pumps are excellent but need to be kept in mint working condition.

Ensure your craft has sufficient flotation built in so that it floats even when full of water. [Flotation bags are available for canoes without built-in flotation.- Ed]

- The wind can be a major factor blowing the capsized craft and rescuers rapidly from the point of capsize. If lucky may blow you to shore but if unlucky further off shore. Remember also the shore may not be a nice quiet, sandy beach but could be rocky, tree lined and/or steep.
- Know how to release the skirt on your craft when capsized.

I would like to thank the brave members who unhesitatingly participated in the safety exercise. Also thanks to Ken, Rick and Blair who were observers. I always learn something from these Safety Days and they enable me to reassess my fitness and capabilities. I got the impression that all participants also found the exercise worthwhile. The only disappointment was the numbers attending. I can assure all members that it is worth trying to attend next time. It is non-threatening, non-judgemental and the lessons learnt could be put to good use one day.

Finally I would like to thank Pam for organising the Sausage Sizzle. What a pleasure to have a delicious, hot sausage roll after being immersed in the Swan.

Neville Garrity

I used to be a banker and then I lost interest

### **Canoe join up**

On Sunday 10 th April, 7 club members, Judy Bain, Mary Harney, Siew Lim, the 3 Griffiths, Anne, Brian, Wendy and Sue Walker congregated on the river, for "Unite On The Swan" along with 320 other paddlers wanting to create a Guinness World Record. The present Guinness record is held by New York, with 3200. Money raised by the event in Perth went to Waroona and districts Fire Appeal.



### **80th Birthday.**

On 15th April we celebrated KAREN FREDRIKSENS 80th birthday after the Friday paddle with not only the planned sausage sizzle, but a vast variety of cakes and slices to commemorate this very special occasion.



## **"Oldies but Goodies". from Red Skelton**

*Twice a week we go to a nice restaurant have a little beverage, good food and companionship. She goes on Tuesdays, I go on Fridays.*

*I take my wife everywhere, but she keeps finding her way back.*

*I haven't spoken to my wife in 18months. I don't like to interrupt her.*

## **Rottnest**

How does one describe this annual pilgrimage to Rottnest? A must do for everyone who enjoys fun, frivolity and the companionship of like minded people, where even the most mundane activities take on a different perspective. 32 like minded souls converged on Rotto on a somewhat cloudy day, which did nothing to dampen our spirits, as the paddle from the settlement to Governors Circle was well orchestrated and without incident. The bakery was raided at lunchtime, with cakes and muffins for dessert under the pretence that we only indulge at Rotto!!!!!!

5pm on the main deck, with house 108 providing the necessary snacks to accompany the drinks for what is always a very happy hour. Plans were already being made for the quadrathon to take place on Thursday, with much discussion as to who would be best to coerce into what team until Rosemary used her presidential powers to take control, to organise the teams and the routes for the different disciplines of kayaking, swimming, cycling and walking. Although it was supposed to be a communal dinner some withdrew to their individual houses which was possibly a good move as it rained non stop all night. 108 s house played a rather competitive game of cards, especially when a newcomer to the game, who shall remain anonymous, won hands down.

Tuesday morning dawned with a picture perfect blue sky, which the polar bears , Pam, Iris, Bob, Michael, Annemarie, Rosemary and Kanani and yours truly, took full advantage of the wonderful warm water. It was well noted by all present that Annmarie and Michael were already in training for the swim on Thursday. Their competitive spirit being duly noted by all present.

The paddle of the day was decided by Blair due to the prevailing winds, to be around past the lighthouse to Geordie Bay, with those not paddling planning to join them for coffee. Apparently paddling was a little bit tricky for some, who paddled to shore at various different beaches and joined everyone for coffee at Geordie Bay. The return trip went well. Michael and Mitch had been on one of their fishing expeditions the night before with Mitch providing fish lunch for the main house and Michael for 101, plus a platter of fish for me, which was very much appreciated, as I was leaving on Wednesday, to be replaced by Linda. The afternoon was spent at leisure with a number of people taking to the tennis courts to show off their skills.

Drinks accompanied by the most elaborate feast of canapés of smoked salmon with capers, and a vast array of other delicacies wanting to outdo the delicious smoked oysters of the previous evening meant it was game on. Followed by a raucous discussion on who was going to be in which team for Thursday. This provoked more discussion and planning by all concerned. It created much excitement.

The weather gods were extremely favourable for the week. in fact with a mild southerly wind, we were able to kayak all the way around for a halfway coffee stop at Geordie Bay on two occasions. This is the furthest we have been able to paddle the North side of the island since the Rottnest Camp commenced. The wind swung more to a North East on Friday and the group was able to paddle the South of the island to Parker Point and back.

Several keen ones also paddled out to the surf break at "Transits" and tested their abilities on the gentle sand bar break. A few waves were caught and all in all it was an even contest between the surf and kayakers.

I don't think the Rottnest camp has been the same since Rosemary introduced the "Quadrathon", a non-competitive race (ha ha) consisting of 4 legs – swimming, kayaking, biking and walking. This year there were 5 teams all of which took on a name such as "Punch & Judy", "Thorn & Roses" etc. The competitive nature of the Over 45's never ceases to amaze me. There were arguments at each happy hour before the event on every aspect of the coming event. It always creates a fun atmosphere.

On Thursday the big race commenced in the morning with the swimmers taking the first leg. We all found out that 170 metres was a long way to swim. The Punch & Judy team lead them out of the water, and then the kayakers were off. There appeared to be a new team leading at just about every leg but the final hoorah was "Team Ken" cutting the finish ribbon first. However after careful analysis by the judges there were several yellow & red cards handed out to various competitors. Pam & Iris were yellow carded for a dubious walking style and Warren for having 300psi pressure in his tyres in the cycling leg (rules state 50psi max). There was also several complaints about illegal sheparding in some of the legs and competitors cutting people off in the kayak leg.

As usual a fabulous week thanks to the organisation of Pam, Blair, Alan and of course Rosemary's quadrathon.



## **NZ Kayaking Experience - Rosemary Mero**

I set off from Auckland by bus to a little town in the north of the North Island called Pahia to have the kayaking adventure of my life! a Seven day kayaking trip around the Bay of islands with NZ Kayaking Adventures run by a bohemian 'ex pat' American from Hawaii.

On arrival I met with the owner and the only other participants, a Danish couple roughly my age. We were greeted with the news that a storm had hit the Islands and would last for at least two days! Fortunately our illustrious leader made good and he and his offside took us on amazing paddles wending our way through the mangrove swamps in the Waitangi River.

Each night ended up with dinner back at our leader's home where he had invited the odd backpacker to join us which was fun.

Finally we drove and caught a ferry to the place where we put in our kayaks and paddled across to one of the islands where we pitched our tents. Picturesque island rolling green downs with a pretty beach frequented by various birds looking out onto some of the Bay of Islands.

Each day we were greeted with a delicious breakfast and freshly ground coffee produced by our expert Danish coffeemaker. Off we set for about 4 hours paddling each day visiting a different island. The piece de resistance was our venture into the open ocean outside the Bay of Islands where invariably there was a 1 1/2 metre swell which provided some magnificent rides on the waves.

Our kayaks were Puffins with an internal pod which were more water sealed than the traditional bulkheads. We practised water rescues with each other under professional guidance including using a stirrup arrangement which was a strap wrapped securely around one kayak and over the second kayak belonging to the rescuer. This enabled easier access into your kayak where it is difficult to practise other straddling methods.

A picnic lunch would be had on a different island on the beach and then we would laze around snoozing snorkelling or fishing.

Dinner was always cozy gathering around in the catering tent in the evening watching the sunsets and the dark of night closing in on us while we chatted and laughed the night away over a cask of red wine or so.

Very congenial company and would do it again in a heartbeat. This kayaking company offers a variety of guided kayaking trips around the Bay of Islands some on islands where they have special permission to stay on and no other tourists can access.

### **Club Tow Ropes**

I now have new stock! \$11.50 - 5 m Polypropylene [floating] chain knot shortened with Stainless Steel Spring Clip. Alan

