

Southern Maine Sea Kayaking Network Newsletter

Volume 1, Number 3
January 1993



Happy New Year! Memberships are still rolling in, currently at 58. Winter activities have been focused indoors with a holiday potluck in December and an Open House /Pool Session in January. Some of us are still hoping for a sunny day after a snow storm to strap our skinny skills on deck and paddle out to an island for some x-c sking. Call the newslne if you are so inclined!

Thanks to **Mike Detscher** for having the holiday potluck at his house on a snowy night in December. Despite icy conditions, about fifteen of us turned out with scrumptious offerings. Mike, who is a baker extraordinaire, offered a gingerbread house which we decorated, complete with gingerbread kayak and kayaker donned in pink iced PFD.

Thanks to **Michael Morrison** and **Amy Tchao** for organizing the very successful Open House/Pool Session at the YWCA. About 20 people came, sharing knowledge and practicing in both river and sea kayaks. All were enthusiastic about scheduling more pool time. (See more under Pool Sessions.) Most of us gathered at The Great Lost Bear afterwards for lunch. A good time was had by all.



April Newsletter Deadline for entries will be April 1.

Please send kayak related stories, articles, book reviews, jokes, cartoons, artwork, and classifieds to: **B. Carter, 7 Gilbert Lane, Portland, ME 04101**

What's Happening ? (Call the Newslne for updates)

***** 874-2640 *****

Thursday, January 28, 7:00 PM

Planning Meeting at B.Carter's in Portland / RSVP 772-7750

We will be beginning the incorporation process and will appreciate input from anyone familiar with that experience.

Sundays, February 21 and March 21, 10AM to Noon

Pool Sessions at the YWCA in Portland

Registration required in advance. (See more under Pool Sessions.)

Sunday, February 28, 6:00 PM (A discussion with Joe Payne, Casco Bay Keeper.)

Network Meeting at *Norumbega Outfitters, 127 Marginal Way

Call Jeff, 773-0910 if you can bring finger foods to share.

(* Previously Saco River Outfitters, now owned by Network member, Jeff Wescott and Steve Gent)

Saturday and Sunday, January 30 and 31

Open House at Norumbega Outfitters

Steve and Jeff are offering SMSKN members, at all times, a 5% discount on boats and a 10% discount on accessories and rentals. They are currently open 9-7 Tues.- Fri., 9-4 on Saturdays and 12-5 Sundays.

Boston Sea Kayak Club's monthly trips -- Saturdays, 11AM launchings

We are welcome. Call Jim Duff for detail/details -- (617) 224-0032.

PADDLING TALES

New Zealand Sea Kayaking

Lee Bumsted

When the air and sea temperatures have dropped below 45 degrees Fahrenheit in Maine, why not head south to sea kayak? That's what I did this past November, when I headed very far south, to New Zealand. I spent four days kayaking in some great locations while travelling around down there on a three week vacation.

While I believe we may have the best kayaking in the world right here near home, there is something to be said for sitting on a warm island beach a few days before Thanksgiving and admiring a spectacular sub-tropical view. New Zealand certainly has amazing scenery: steep mountain peaks adjacent to the turquoise Tasman Sea; dense rainforests full of parrots and other improbable looking birds; forms of plantlife you've only seen in National Geographic up until now. You sometimes half expect to see a baby dinosaur down along the shore nibbling a bit of lunch from one of the very tall fern trees; the surroundings are so different from anything you've experienced before.

Not only is New Zealand a beautiful place, it is also accessible, once you pass the big test: 36 hours of flights and stale airline terminals (bring a few good books!). There is good mass transit in New Zealand and there are plenty of helpful travel information centers. Kayaks can be rented from several outfitters, and you can take guided trips of one to several days.

I started out paddling a two day trip following the coastline of the Abel Tasman National Park. Abel Tasman provides a series of golden sand pocket beaches below steep forested mountains. The area is noted for its fur seals and small penguins. It also has (fortunately or unfortunately, depending on your perspective) two kayak outfitters with about thirty rental doubles each. I borrowed a single wooden kayak and paddled with a fellow from the Canterbury Sea Kayak Network of Christchurch, New Zealand. (Sea Kayaker magazine lists international as well as U.S. paddling clubs in its "Resources" page; that's how I learned of a club like ours in New Zealand.)

A couple of days later we paddled up a wonderful fjord in the Pelorus Sounds. This provided more of a wilderness experience, as we only saw one other boat all day, and the area is sparsely populated. There are many small gravel beaches available to the public along the shorelines for lunch stops or camping. There is an outfitter based in nearby Havelock who guides small groups or rents kayaks for exploring the Sounds.

If you want to kayak someplace really far south, you can do as I did and fly to Stewart Island, at the southern tip of New Zealand. Here at 47 degrees of latitude south is most likely the world's southernmost place to rent a kayak. The only town on the island, a fishing community called Halfmoon Bay, has a population of less than 600, one pub, a couple of motels and restaurants, and a few places providing homestays. (Much of the island is a national park and you could camp on the shore or in shoreline huts if you wanted to paddle for a few days.) I rented a plastic single and joined a Swiss chef and a German hydrology student who paddled a big double. We spent a day kayaking in some beautiful bays and fishing coves that look a bit like home from the water. It's when you get closer to shore that you realize those parrots and peculiar ground birds and flowering trees you're viewing wouldn't last through a single Maine winter.

Besides the one outfitter I rented from, I met three other outfitters on the South Island of New Zealand. I'd be happy to provide anyone thinking of a trip to New Zealand with the outfitters' names and addresses, and detailed recommendations of places to kayak. I had a wonderful time in New Zealand, not only kayaking but also hiking and touring around, and would recommend a trip there to anyone who loves outdoor adventure travel.

In This Newsletter -- *please note !*

* A new membership form which includes an Acknowledgement of Self- Responsibility and Release and an additional release form to be duplicated and used on Network trips and events .

* A new and regular (*we hope*) feature in the Newsletter -- ***Favorite Paddling Trips.***

Over time we aim to provide Network members with a collection of useful information about kayaking trips that fellow members have found worth taking. The continuation of this feature depends on your contributions. A form has been provided for this purpose. Feel free to be more creative and "formless" if you desire.

Classifieds **Classified ads are free to members.**

FOR SALE: Klepper - Aerius II folding sea kayak. Skirt, rudder, sails and paddles. Excellent condition. List \$4,800. --- Asking \$2,200. Dee Kimball, H:865-6837 W:781-3988

SWK (single, white, kayaker) looking for an intermediate or expert down-hill skier for Saturday, Sunday or occasional mid-week ski trips to Maine ski areas. Interested? Call Bill at 799-5161.

Pool Sessions

Because of the enthusiasm generated by the Open House at the Y on January 10th, we have reserved two more dates for pool sessions, both Sundays from 10AM to Noon --**February 21** and **March 21**. This time we ask that you sign up and pay in advance. A session will be considered full when 8 people have registered. The cost will be \$6. per person for two hours of pool time. There will be no instructors, so those of you who sign up are on your own to work together in sharing your knowledge and skills.

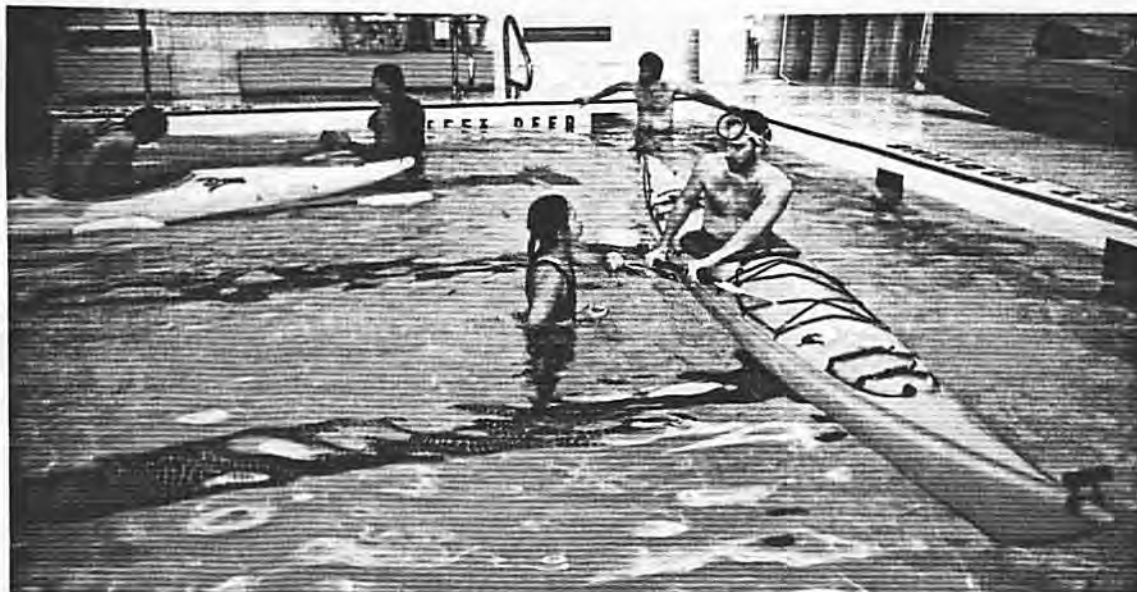
Please use the form below to register.

Tom Dougherty, Director of Recreation at the YWCA, is enthusiastic about kayakers using the pool. The pool is easily accessible; a car can pull right up to the door into the pool area. There is room for 3 or 4 sea kayaks and 2 or 3 river kayaks in the pool at one time. Feel free to call Tom directly and set up pool time yourself.

Availability: Weeknights 8:30-10:30 PM or Sunday mornings 10AM-Noon.

Cost: \$40./hr or \$50. for 2 hours (This is for the pool, NOT per person)

Reservations: Call Tom one week before the date desired -- 874-1130.



-----Tear-off Pool Session Registration-----

Please send check for **\$6. per session** to **Southern Maine Sea Kayaking Network**.

Mail to : B.Carter, 7 Gilbert Lane, Portland, ME 04101. Given the expressed interest at the first session it is likely these will fill quickly. If you are registering after **February 1** it is recommended that you call the newsline to check if there is still space. The first 8 to register for each session will be notified and given the names of others in their session to enable them to plan as a group. Those over and above the first 8 will be notified, and attempts will be made to reserve additional dates or money will be refunded.

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Please indicate which session(s) you are interested in.

February 21 March 21 Either Both

Indicate skill level.

Can do wet exit, self rescue, assisted re-entry, group rescue, Eskimo roll

Comments:

Favorite Paddling Trips

Help keep this new feature alive by describing a favorite trip for a future newsletter.

Title of article: _____

Your Name: _____

Special features: _____

Distances covered: _____

Cautions and special conditions to note:

Directions to launch sites:

Please send to: B. Carter, 7 Gilbert Lane, Portland, ME 04101

Favorite Paddling Trips

Portland Harbor

David Sanford

Exploring Portland Harbor can be an easy, interesting paddle, within the ability of beginning to intermediate kayakers. The Harbor offers a variety of pleasures for paddlers who like poking about. On the Portland side one can explore commercial and residential piers and the Bath Iron Works dry dock. On the South Portland side is a yacht basin. Kayakers can also paddle under the Million Dollar Bridge, connecting Portland and South Portland, and continue up the Fore River for a considerable distance, especially at high tide.

One caution — the Harbor is usually well-traveled by other boats, both commercial and recreational. Keep in mind that kayaks are nearly invisible to some larger vessels. Groups of kayaks should stay close together when crossing the harbor in order not to interfere with boat traffic and for higher visibility.

Portland Harbor can be approached from either the Portland or South Portland sides. Inexperienced paddlers wanting a calm paddle on a windy day are advised to launch from the South Portland public boat ramp.

Directions:

Entering the harbor from East End Beach in Portland — drive east on Congress St. to the end at the Eastern Promenade. Turn right and enter the park via the access road to the left. Kayaks can put in at the boat launch to the left of the parking lot or from the beach to the right. Once launched, turn right into the harbor.

Entering the harbor from the South Portland side — there are three possible launch sites:

To reach the public boat launch from Portland, which is the most protected site and the one deepest in the harbor, — cross the Million Dollar Bridge. Continue to T section and turn left onto Broadway. Drive to the end. Turn left on Pickett St. Turn right on Madison. Follow the signs to the boat ramp, where there is a large parking lot.

Kayaks can also launch from Southern Maine Technical College. To reach the SMTC site from the public boat ramp just described, drive back to Pickett St. Drive on Pickett and turn left on Fort St. on the SMTC campus. Continue on Fort St. up and down a small hill. Half way down the hill bear left at the fork (with the SMTC dock straight ahead). Then immediately left again on a narrow road directly opposite an orange fire hydrant. Follow the road to the right, and you'll soon come to a small parking lot. The boat launch is to the left of the parking lot. It is marked "not public" but seems to be widely used.

The third launching sight is from Willard Beach. To reach Willard Beach from the SMTC campus, turn right on Fort St. and left on Preble St. Then left again on Willow St. near Willard Square. At the end of Willow St. is a parking area and Willard Beach. The beach is not to be used for boat launches during the summer but seems okay off-season.

Southern Maine Sea Kayaking Network Acknowledgement of Self-Responsibility and Release

I, _____(printed name) understand that the sea kayaking trip or event I am about to undertake involves significant potential risks to my health and equipment, in part due to cold and/or turbulent water. I agree to assume these risks in their entirety. I also understand that while others may have skills and/or knowledge greater than mine, they are not responsible for my well being. I agree to inform my fellow paddlers of any significant aspects of my physical condition or medical history that might increase the risk to myself or others. I give the participants on this trip/event my permission to seek emergency medical treatment for me should I require it. I agree to exercise all necessary caution during every part of this trip/event and to exercise my personal judgement in a manner consistent with my skill level, knowledge and experience.

Network Trip Paddling Guidelines

- *Self rescue skills are essential. Do not count on being saved by someone else.**
- *Consider tide and weather information before launching.**
- *Discuss a float plan among the group before launching.
(Plan your paddle and paddle your plan.)**

Advised equipment for each paddler:

PFD	pump
sprayskirt	compass/chart
paddle float	flares
proper flotation	whistle
wetsuit or drysuit	spare paddle
water-proof light	water/food/matches
complete change of clothes	reflective tape on boat, paddle and PFD

Advised equipment per every 6 paddlers:

first aid kit	weather/VHF radio
strobe light	tow line

I have read this statement and fully understand its content. I am aware that I am releasing certain rights on behalf of myself and my family in return for being permitted to participate in this trip/event. I totally and completely release and absolve SOUTHERN MAINE SEA KAYAKING NETWORK, all its members or officers, and all trip/event participants from liability of any sort relating to bodily injury or damaged equipment.

Printed Name _____ Date _____

Signature _____

Witness Signature _____

In case of emergency notify _____