

# SOUTHERN MAINE

## SEA KAYAKING NETWORK

### NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 4794 · Portland, Maine 04112 · November 1998

#### MISSION STATEMENT

The Southern Maine Sea Kayaking Network is an association of paddlers interested in connecting with others who enjoy the sport of sea kayaking. Our purpose is to promote safe and responsible practices and, at the same time, have fun.

EXPAND  
YOUR  
KAYAKING  
HORIZONS

## Jewell Island & the Fearless Four

by Gregg Bolton

**Dates:** Saturday/Sunday ,  
Sept. 19&20,1998.

**Weather Forecast:**

**Temp:** Mid 60's to 70's.

**Wind:** 10-20 Knots from the southeast.

**Seas:** 2-4 ft.

**Launch Point:** The east side of Cousins Island, just beyond the bridge on the left.

**Launch Time:** 10 AM.

**Participants:** Bob Murray, Ron Goodwin, Bill (I don't know his last name, but he was from Mass.), and myself, Gregg Bolton.

### Day 1

I arrived at the launch site early enough to get my boat ready and make sure everything I wanted to take was going to fit. As it happened, my wife, who was supposed to come with me and help carry some of the luxuries, resolved to stay home with our son, who with his usual perfect timing, decided to come down with a cold the night before. I was putting the finishing touches on my pre-trip loading (more like cramming and jamming, really) when Bill Ridlon, our intended fearless leader for this trip,

walked down the hill and began informing me that due to a malady of his own, he and Debra would not be going. Well, I had a brief thought that the Kayak gods might be trying to send me a message that I was not really supposed to go to Jewell Island this day. Being who I am however, that moment passed quickly and I finished packing, as Bill and Ron showed up and began unloading and packing their boats.

Bob arrived via water as the planned launch time came close at hand - it seems he lives on Cousins Island and driving to the put-in made no sense. It was at this point that we decided that the current amount of beer on hand was wholly insufficient for the group that it now seemed would be making this trip. A short beer run later, we launched for the day's glorious adventure.

We paddled south along the east side of Cousins Island past Bob's house and the power generation facility. The winds were present and there

was a slight chop, but nothing "to write home about." So far the most amazing part of the trip was that everything, including most of the beer, fit into my boat - they don't call it a Sker-ray "XL" for nothin'!

From the southern tip of Cousins Island, we headed towards the northern tip of Little Chebeague where we had a relaxing lunch. As we ate, we noticed a slight increase in the prevailing wind. Soon after after lunch I noticed something in the channel ahead, the channel that we would have to cross if this trip was to continue as

planned. From over a mile away, I could see breaking waves! As we got closer to the north end of Long Island, the rest of the group noticed the same thing but stayed mum. A quick look around

told me that our little band of kayakers recognized what they were looking at. After a brief conversation about the situation and what was ahead, the decision was made to at least

*"I knew then that the Kayak gods were pleased with me as I was, at that moment, having more fun than the law allows in some states!"*

(Continued on page 3)

**A Note From Ms. Ed**

by Debra Nichols

Ah, fall! What a beautiful time of year. It's a great time to visit "Someday Isle". You all know where that is, it's the place you'll go when you have a "little more time."

Well, here is another long winter just around the corner. What will you do during this time some refer to as off season? This issue has a complete list of the SMSKN library (bunches of books just waiting for you to enjoy), there's a book review to help you decide where to start, and a motivating article from Paddlewise to work on outfitting your boat this winter.

Still have time on your hands? Write up your favorite paddle recipe, a trip report or pick out a picture you'd like to share with the network and send them along to me!

*Debra*



Summer Remembered:  
Flotilla Leaving Monhegan Island

**Southern Maine  
Sea Kayaking  
Network  
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The newsline is available  
24 hours a day.  
Call for updates on events.

Deadline for  
next newsletter:  
January 7, 1999

*Jewell Island (Continued from page 1)*

make the attempt. "Heck, it's only a little more than a mile between islands, and we can always turn around," was the comment heard from some corner of the group and a consensus was formed - though looking back, it might have been a weak one.

What I had seen, and thought noteworthy from a distance, was truly awe-inspiring from on top (or bottom, depending on whether we were in the trough or peak) of the wave. An informal estimation of the wave height put them between 4-6 feet, many of them with foamy white crests. I knew then that the Kayak gods were pleased with me as I was, at that moment, having more fun than the law allows in some states! This was not necessarily the case for all of my paddling partners. As it turned out, Ron too was having the time of his life but it wasn't obvious that the same could be said for Bob and Bill, the remainder of our intrepid group.

As we approached the southwestern tip of Cliff Island we decided to take a break on a small beach. As we were about to exit our crafts someone asked with some enthusiasm, "Can we go back and do that again?" When I told him we didn't need to go back to do it again, we had another mile or so of the same stuff in front of us to get to Jewell, the reply (with much less animation I might add) was, "What! Another mile? I was only kidding." At this we all laughed, because by now we were all having a blast in the tall foaminess.

After our next wave-tossed crossing from Cliff Island to the west side of Jewell, and an entertaining time surfing the swells to the northern tip of the island, we arrived safely, at Cocktail Cove. We decided to by pass this possible camping area to get away from the dozen or so sail and powerboats moored there, and set up camp above the beach just north of the "Punchbowl" on the northeast side of the island.

According to my GPS we traveled 8½ miles in 2½ hours of paddling (this

doesn't count breaks), not bad for a bunch of old guys playing in the waves. The winds were still blowing - reports say that some gusts were up to 20 knots - and the site was a little exposed, but it was otherwise a great site and we decided we could live with the wind since it would probably die down as evening came on.

Supper was hot and delicious, and thanks to Bob bringing an entire box of spaghetti, and full jar of sauce, it was also ample. Dark came early - as it does this time of year - but that didn't stop us boys from exploring the island and climbing the embattlements for a view...we just saw it through the beam of our flashlights instead of sunlight. It was a GREAT first day, and a good night too, with all of us snug in our tents and sleeping bags.

#### Day 2

After an unhurried breakfast of pancakes and cereal we broke camp and were on the water by 9:30 AM headed for Eagle Island, home of the Admiral Peary Museum. It was a 2½-mile paddle in basically flat water - a distinct change, and somewhat of an anti-climax from the first day of our adventure. We spent some time exploring the summer home of Admiral Peary (who explored the North Pole, if you recall) and headed out for our lunch spot on Whaleboat Island, another 2 miles northeast, up Broad Sound. From Whaleboat, we again crossed Broad Sound to the northern tip of Great Chebeague Island and then on to Littlejohn Island. Between Littlejohn and Cousins Island there is an interesting housing choice for an osprey. There is a scuttled boat in one of the coves, and on top of this "ship wreck's" wheelhouse is an osprey condo. It is not often that we mere mortals are able to see this type of nest at this very close range - my only concern is that too many people may take an interest in the inhabitants of the nest during the critical breeding and young-raising times and it

might have a negative impact on the inhabitants. At the time of our visit the nest was empty, but there were a couple birds flying over the bay and in the trees.

Day 2, while much less exciting in an adrenaline-pumping, heart-pounding sort of way, was a good one. We put 10½ miles under our boats, visited a museum, had a relaxing day on the water and still got back to the take-out by 2 PM. If you ask me, this is how life SHOULD be! Great trip guys! (And just so you, the reader, know, at the end of day 2 each member of the group said that while they were indeed apprehensive about the waves on day 1, each would choose to do it again!)

#### Important Lessons Learned:

Ron - When you make espresso for a morning wake-up, put water in the espresso maker, as well as the coffee grounds; it'll brew better.

Bob - If you relax you FACE in big waves, and perhaps even smile a little, it helps relax your CHEEKS (the ones you sit on).

Gregg - Even if you know there are "toilet facilities" on the island, bring your own "paper."

Bill - If you bring shoes to wear "in camp, "and you should, bring a right shoe AND a left shoe, not two left shoes.

Everyone - Just because it's September, and there were no mosquitoes during the evening meal, is no sign that the same will be true of breakfast. Further, if there are none at night, and there ARE mosquitoes with you for breakfast, they will be HUNGRY!



## Catch From the 'Net

John Lull <wavestalker@coastside.net

## Membership Tidbits

In order to paddle efficiently and maintain good boat control, you have to be one with the boat. This means you have good firm contact at the hips, thighs, feet, and lower back (your upper back needs to be free to rotate). This is achieved by gluing in foam pads at these contact points (except your feet which are supported with footbraces), then shaping them to fit your body. In other words, the boat will only fit you or someone your size.

Rental boats and class boats won't fit like this, unfortunately. This is yet another reason to have your own kayak. To get an idea of how it should fit, picture someone lifting you up under the armpits while you sit in your kayak. The boat should lift right off the floor with you and there should be no movement between you and the boat. You have to find the fine line between being jammed in and being too loose.

I've noticed that many sea kayakers do not outfit their boats. If they had any idea how much energy they were

wasting sloshing around in the boat, they would immediately take care of the problem. Also keep in mind seats can be changed or modified to suit the individual. One common problem is seat backs that are too high; cut 'em down or replace with a backband.

Every now and then I try out a new kayak that has not been outfitted. I'm always amazed at how much more difficult it is to control and paddle a loosely-fitting boat; it is also very uncomfortable. Paddling a kayak without outfitting is exactly like hiking in loosely-laced boots.

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>PaddleWise Paddling Mailing List  
 >Submissions: paddleswise@lists.intelenet.net  
 >Subscriptions: paddleswise-request@lists.intelenet.net  
 >Website: http://www.gasp-seakayak.org/paddleswise/  
 \*\*\*\*\*

SMSKN began in 1992. Do you remember when you first joined? Do you wonder how many other members joined in that year and are still members? Well, here's just the "scoop" you've been looking for.

Start Year:	# of Members Remaining:
1992	10
1993	5
1994	11
1995	13
1996	19
1997	14
1998	69
<b>Total:</b>	<b>141</b>



## Kabloona in the Yellow Kayak

a book review by Bill Ridlon

"Kabloona" is about a kayaking trip taken over a number of summers from Churchill, Manitoba, in the Southwest corner of Hudson Bay, to Kakisa in the Northwest Territories of Canada. The trip spans the breadth of the Northwest Territories above the Arctic Circle and the time period of 1991 to 1994. It's the story of Victoria Jason's dream come true.

Jason started the trip by joining Don Starkell on a trip north through Hudson Bay. They were joined by a third paddler during the first year but, before the summer was out, were once again just two paddlers. Jason and Starkell paddled together for both 1991 and part of 1992. For the final two years, Jason paddled alone. Reading about those first two years, I continually wondered why she paddled with Starkell. The best description I can think for him would be "the paddling partner from hell". I alternated between amazement at the wonders they found along their trip, and anger towards Starkell for the way he treated Jason. I also found myself questioning, again and again, why Jason was willing to put up with such offish behavior for so long.

If you're looking for a good paddling book for those long winter nights ahead, this is it. It contains all the excitement and wonder that you'd expect in the Arctic: huge icebergs, whales, wolves, walruses, grizzly bears, polar bears, incredible storms, memorable characters, and a very quick death in the event of a capsized. Get your name on the list with Lee Burnsted as fast as you can for this book at the SMSKN library.

## SOUTHERN MAINE SEA KAYAKING NETWORK

### Southern Maine Sea Kayaking Network Library

*Items may be checked out at meetings, or by contacting Lee Bumsted. Loan period is two months, with a 3 item limit per member, so that materials will be available to other members. Contact Lee with suggestions of reading/viewing materials you'd like the Network to acquire.*

- The Aleutian Kayak: origins, construction, and use of the traditional seagoing baidarka; by Wolfgang Binck.
- Atlantic Coastal Kayaker - back issues.
- The Basic Essentials of Sea Kayaking; by Mike Wyatt.
- Beach Cruising: An illustrated guide to boats, gear, navigation techniques, cuisine and comforts of small boat cruising; by Douglas Alvord.
- Boston Sea Kayaking Club newsletter.
- Building Your Kevlar Canoe: a foolproof method and three foolproof designs; by James Moran.
- Canoes and Kayaks for the Backyard Builder; by Skip Snaith.
- Common Sense Outdoor Medicine; by Newell D. Breyfogle.
- Complete Folding Kayaker; by Ralph Diaz.
- Complete Guide to Kayak Touring magazine
- The Complete Inflatable Kayaker; by Jeff Bennett.
- Derek C. Hutchinson's Guide to Sea Kayaking; by Derek Hutchinson.
- Eskimo Rolling; by Derek Hutchinson.
- The Essential Outdoor Gear Manual: equipment care and repair for outdoorspeople; by Annie Getchell.
- The Essential Sea Kayaker: a complete course for the open water paddler; by David Seidman.
- The Essential Wilderness Navigator: How to Find Your Way in the Great Outdoors; by David Seidman.
- Fundamentals of Kayak Navigation; by David Burch.
- Hot Showers! Maine Coast Lodgings for Kayakers and Sailors; by Lee Bumsted.
- The Intercoastal Waterway Chartbook: Norfolk, VA to Miami, FL; John and Leslie Kettlewell, editors.
- Kabloona in the Yellow Kayak: One Woman's Journey Through the Northwest Passage; by Victoria Jason.
- The Kayak Shop: three elegant wooden kayaks anyone can build; by Chris Kulczycki.
- Knots & Splices; by Cyrus L. Day.
- The Lightweight Gourmet: drying and cooking food for the outdoor life; by Alan S. Kesselheim.
- The Magnificent Peninsula: the only absolutely essential guide to Mexico's Baja California; by Jack Williams.
- MASK newsletters and Launch Site Guide.
- My Old Man and the Sea; David Hays and Daniel Hays.
- The One Pan Gourmet: fresh food on the trail; by Don Jacobson.
- The Outboard Boaters Handbook: advanced seamanship and practice skills; David R. Getchell, editor.
- Paddling My Own Canoe; by Audrey Sutherland.
- Performance Sea Kayaking: The Basics and Beyond. *Video.*
- Ragged Mountain Portable Wilderness Anthology: views of the natural world from Thoreau, Melville, Muir, Dickinson, Sandburg, Lewis and Clark, and others.
- Sea Kayaker magazine - back issues.
- Sea Kayaker's Deep Trouble; by Matt Broze and George Gronseth.
- The Sea Kayaker's Guide to Mount Desert Island; Jennifer Alisa Paigen.
- Sea Kayaking along the New England Coast; by Tamsin Venn.
- Sea Kayaking: A Manual for Long-Distance Touring; by John Dowd. (2 copies)
- Sea Paddler magazine - premier issue.
- Sea Sense: the handbook of offshore seamanship; by Richard Henderson.
- Walking the Yukon: a solo trek through the land of beyond; by Chris Townsend.
- What Now? Sea kayak rescue techniques and aided rescue techniques. *Video.*
- Whitewater Rescue Manual: New Techniques for Canoeists, Kayakers, and Rafters; by Charles Walbridge and Wayne A. Sundmacher Sr.
- The Whole Paddler's Catalog; by Zip Kellogg. (2 copies)
- Wood and Canvas Kayak Building; by George Putz.

## My Friends And I Make a Splash...conclusion

by Todd

*Surrounded by a band of cut-throat seals, Todd and his friends are at a loss as to what will happen next! The final chapter in the entertaining adventures of Todd and his friends.*

Just as I was about to give in to these critters, and allow them to have their way with us, I heard a loud noise: sirens, coming from the distance. The seals were looking every which way, they seemed to sense they were in some kind of trouble. The sirens drew near, and suddenly a coast guard boat appeared from around the far side of the island; the seals made for the water.

Golly! I'd never been happier to see a man in uniform before. The Coast Guard boat came by, firing machine guns at the beach; and at the same time, a Coast Guard helicopter made a pass overhead, dropping incendiary devices onto the beach. By the time the third helicopter was on the scene, the seals had all made good their escape.

After everything calmed down, and we were sitting with the Coast Guard personnel, sipping hot chocolate, they began filling us in on what brought them here. The Coast Guard people told us they had been watching the seals for a while now, as one of their outposts in the Arctic had informed them of a group of seals who had managed to hop a steamer south.

This group had a reputation for causing trouble, and the local seal population had grown tired of them, and were just about to take measures to punish them. The renegades needed new territory, where they weren't known.

So Tiff (Tiffany), Buffy, and I (Brad was unconscious) sat back looking over our day's experience. This sport has potential, and there were moments when we were actually enjoying the experience, after the rather sedate lives we'd become accustomed to. We plan on returning to giving parachute instruction

again; something we've always been good at, and have agreed was much more relaxing. If I knew any kayakers I'd certainly congratulate them on their sticking to a very intense activity. With the possible exception of Brad (now fully alert), I don't think there's one person whom I know with strong enough a constitution to handle this sport.

We are looking forward to returning to being a normal group of macho intellectuals. After much discussion, we decided to join a book group.

Tiffany (Tiff) had belonged to a book group at one time. Having found the debates very intense, she ended up quitting the group. She needed to see a shrink for several years after quitting the group as a result of the stress these debates put on her. We all well remember her time in the book group; and we think it was the subject of the books which are responsible for her being overwhelmed.

Fortunately the book group didn't put as much strain on her as it had potential to. Much of her time in the group coincided with the time she spent deep sea diving, as her part in spying on the Soviet submarine detection system. It involved walking on the ocean floor in the deepest parts of the Atlantic. The President gave her a commendation for being one of the individuals most responsible for bringing the cold war to an end.

The idea of a book group struck Buffy as a good one, she immediately reached into her dry bag, pulled out her cell phone, and began calling around to book stores, to learn more about getting into one of these fabulously exciting sounding groups. When Buffy pulled out her phone one of the Coast Guard men looked over, and with an expression of surprise on his face, asked, "If you had those cell phones along all this time, why didn't you just call us when he

seals first attacked?"

"We did attempt to contact you. Unfortunately the manufacturer of our VHF radios neglected to properly inform us, batteries were not included with the purchase price of the radios." The Coast Guard man continued, "But with the cell phones, you didn't need the radios."

I looked at Tiff (Tiffany), she looked at me, Brad fainted and Buffy interrupted her exciting phone conversation with the book store, and we all said in unison, "But anything other than radios wouldn't be nautical."

Whenever we do anything, we always try and immerse ourselves in whatever it is, hence the reason for going through all that effort to learn the nomenclature for this sport.

As an example, the time we tried a more mellow activity and rode with the Hell's Angels for a year. In order to blend in, we needed to purchase Harley Davidson motorcycles and refer to them as "Hogs," then we were expected to ride them at speeds far in excess of the posted speed limit.

Perhaps the most distressing part of that particular adventure though, was our being expected to address Tiffany (Tiff) and Buffy as our "Babes" and use some of the most offensive language.

Aside from the need to use language of a nature not common to us, and the sanitary standards lower than what we're accustomed to, the time we spent "on the road" was an enjoyable and relaxing change from our normal routine.

The day ended well after all, the Coast Guard allowed Brad to take over the controls of one of the helicopters for the trip home, and Buffy took over one of the other helicopters, "for old time's sake" (they're both well known in military circles). It was sensa-

(Continued on page 11)

SOUTHERN MAINE SEA KAYAKING NETWORK

Membership Application

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (printed name) understand that sea kayaking 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 when participating in Network events. 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 my permission to participants to seek emergency medical treatment for me should I require it during a Network event. I agree to exercise all necessary caution during Network events and to exercise my personal judgment in a manner consistent with my skill level, knowledge and experience.

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 Network events. I totally and completely release and absolve the Southern Maine Sea Kayaking Network, its members, its officers, and all trip/events participants from liability of any sort relating to bodily injury or damaged equipment.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (home): \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (work): \_\_\_\_\_  
Town: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
Emergency contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Experience level: \_\_\_\_\_  
Comfortable paddling distance for day trip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Type of boat: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks for \$15.00 payable to : *Southern Maine Sea Kayaking Network*  
and mail to: *Southern Maine Sea Kayaking Network P.O. Box 4794 Portland, ME 04112-4794.*

*...Make a Splash...(Continued from page 9)*  
in military circles). It was sensational to see the two of them do victory rolls over Casco Bay in these two orange striped machines.

Our kayaks were loaded onto a CH-53 (cargo helicopter) they had brought along, and I was allowed to take the controls of this one. It turns out the pilot was somebody I had instructed when I was in the military, and he was anxious to see me behind the stick again.

While we were on our way home, I gave him a few pointers; something he appreciated, as it had been several years since I had instructed him.

And now, here I am, sitting in my cottage with my good friends Buffy, Brad and Tiffany (Tiff) sipping iced cappuccino and reading poetry (aloud), and recounting our recent adventure, the adventure I have just spent several newsletters describing to you and we're looking for something new.

We're tired now, and are heading for our respective beds; perhaps we'll fill you in on our next adventure the next time I have an opportunity to sit down in front of my trusty typewriter for a couple of hours.

In the meanwhile, please remember what I've learned from a good friend:  
"Life's too short to drink a bad wine."



*The real "Todd" is Michael Detscher. He is a resident of Freeport, a paddler and a story writer.*