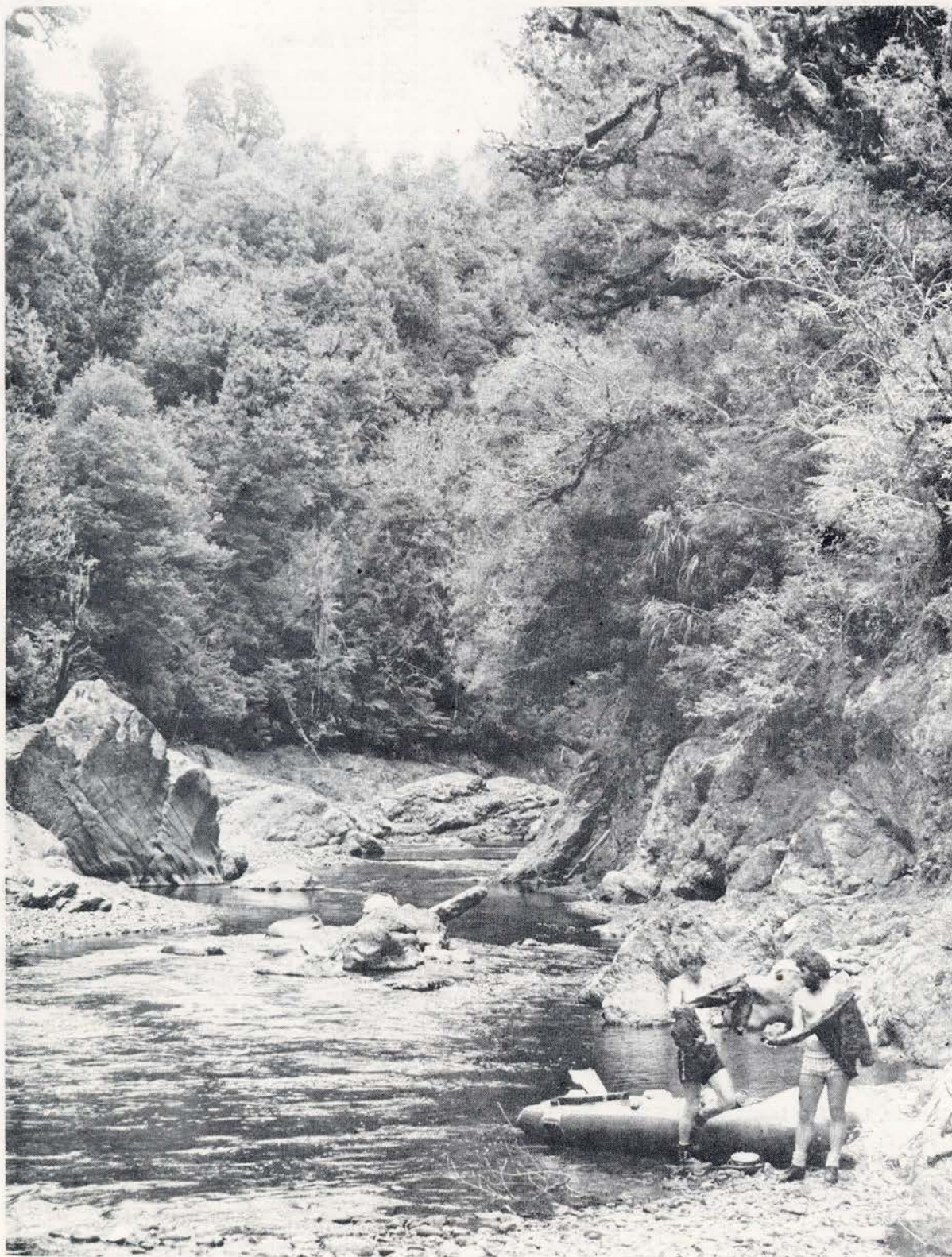


New Zealand

CANOEING



1980 April No. 17

THE NEW ZEALAND CANOEING ASSOCIATION (Inc)

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EDITORIAL

With the summer season now over, perhaps it may be worth looking back over the events of the season, and looking ahead to the near future.

It has been a momentous summer, with the rather wet season we have been given some really exciting canoeing. We began the summer much as usual, working up to a peak when the rivers are at their summer's best just before Christmas, and then expecting the best rapids to start to dry up and get easier — no such luck — they kept on coming up. Mid-January saw the Buller River at its highest in 35 years. This can be seen as one of the reasons for the biggest tragedy canoesport in New Zealand has seen. I refer to the drowning of the two Nelson Canoeists on the Aorere river, and the very next day to another canoeist (not a club member, although that makes no difference) on the Motueka river.

Max Reynolds, whose account of his Stewart Island trip appears later in this issue, must be regarded as one of the country's most experienced canoeists, and the fact that his canoeing companion, John Gray, was drowned in exactly the same rapid in exactly the same way, plus the fact that two other paddlers were lucky to survive, points to the boisterousness of the conditions rather than to human error. Max was particularly well known in the South Island — he paddled with Paul Caffyn around Fiordland — a feat that had been attempted before but never successfully, and has not been done since, despite attempts. Max paddled with Paul around Stewart Island — it is true that this had been done before, but Max and Paul did it in eight days. His trip from the Glen in Nelson to Ruby Bay in a direct line was no holiday either. In terms of rivers he had done Arikī Falls more than once, the Grey, Maruia, Matakītaki, Buller, and other big rivers, and explored many smaller rivers too. In November I paddled with Max the previously uncanaled and flooded Matiri river — the type of canoeing Max was fond of. Max was not only a canoeist, he was a most respected caver (Speleologist) with many first descents to his credit, and like canoeing, a noted explorer of new and potential areas. As president of Nelson Canoe Club, Max was one of those people who believed in putting as much back into the sport as he got out of it, and to ensure that others derived as much benefit from the sport as he had himself. A person we could well have more of. I know all canoeists will support me in saying that our deepest sympathies are extended to the relatives of Max and John, and to their friends and companions.

The summer will also be remembered for the nearly successful attempt on Nevis Bluff rapids by Nelson Canoeist Chris Moody — only the disintegration of his boat ended his fine run through some of the country's most horrific white water. Mick Hopkinson ran Sargood's Weir rapid too.

Petrol problems have probably been the reason behind the less successful slalom season, perhaps it has been more the fact that with the cost of transport and with all the best rivers running at their best, no canoeist has been prepared to spend a week-end at a slalom to get 5 minutes of white water when he could be cruising and getting hours of exciting water. Perhaps with the potential of another world Champs tour, Slalom might perk up a bit next year.

Racing wise, we have had our Nationals and are looking towards the Olympics. At the moment it seems that politics will mar the games, whether they go on or not. The efforts of Ian Fergusson in climbing near to the top of world canoeing in flat water racing has been a notable feat. Flat water racing is still a minor part of the canoeing world here in New Zealand, and the significance of Ian's feat might not be appreciated by all.

And the future? Soon we will have the N.Z.C.A. A.G.M. and no doubt we will see the spectacle of canoeists who will come to criticise but not be prepared to stand up and take on a job of responsibility. The continual search for people to assist in the administration of canoesport is getting a little like looking for a needle in a haystack. While we have reluctant administrators who stand for office '... until you can find someone else who wants the job...' we are not likely to have effective and efficient administration. If it is so difficult to get people to stand for office, perhaps there is no need for the organisation at all?

STOP PRESS!

Paul Caffyn is leaving New Zealand on April 15 to paddle around Great Britain with two Welshmen, beginning in the first week of May from Holly Head. The 2700 mile trip is expected to take five months. Best of luck Paul.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

In February there was an instructors' course on the Rangatata River. This was organised by the Timaru Canoe Club and present as Examiner was Barry Murray. In organising the course Mr Raynor and company were somewhat lax in observing the protocol associated with the holding of such a course.

Two people, neither of whom was a member of an affiliated club, presented themselves at the course. When this was learnt by the organisers, the two were asked to pay a subscription to the Timaru Canoe Club, (just to seem to make things official). The acceptance of these two is not in compliance with the technical committee's precepts for determining a person's eligibility to attend such a course.

Namely: "... the candidate must be recommended by his/her club as being suitable instructor material. Written application by the club secretary to the technical committee will include confirmation of his/her ability to successfully lead trips of a varying nature ...". Mr Raynor seems to have disregarded all these precepts.

Furthermore: neither of the two candidates had sufficient canoeing experience to successfully lead a trip. In fact a month prior to the course a trip organised by these two had to be rescued, one member, a novice, suffering from exposure.

Apart from a certain competence in canoeing, the privilege of canoe instructor is awarded to those who have been of service to canoeing for a number of years. This certainly was not the case with these two characters, one having had only one year of limited experience. Neither was a very competent canoeist; competent enough to pass the test maybe, but then the test is not geared to ascertaining canoeing competency or ability.

The only sure test that can give indication of a person's competence in and devotion to the sport is experience. This is why it is so important for that person to be involved with a club which can vouch for his eligibility to sit such a course.

This example makes one somewhat sceptical as to the standard of Mr Raynor's courses. How many other guys has he let come off the street and attend such a course? and what is the standard of the people going through them? Who was the other examiner who counter-signed the certificates?

Futhermore, what part does Mr Murray play in all this? Is he merely a rubber stamp?

Yours faithfully,
Otago canoeist.

Dear Sir,

I would like to protest against the N.Z.C.A. giving its tacit support to solo canoeing trips as evidenced by its willingness to print articles by individuals about their 'man alone' experiences. The article by a canoeist in the number 15 issue of **New Zealand Canoeing** would, no doubt, send some fool scurrying off to launch their canoes into lakes or the sea to paddle out and away from it all like he did. I only hope that they all manage to return safely.

My club is strongly against solo canoeing. It can only cause trouble. It is a practice which should be stomped on hard in the interests of common sense, safety, and discipline. Two recent events that spring to mind involving solo paddlers which give the sport a bad image are the fellow that the Sumner Life Boat rescued off Whitewash Head in December, and the two army guys who thought that they could handle a flooded Waimakariri Gorge alone. Both should have borne the cost of their rescues for they needlessly put themselves at risk.

Water safety insists that you share your water-based experiences with someone. Not that accidents won't occur in groups, but let us practice minimising risks. Three canoes are a minimum for a group — the N.Z.C.A. should do its bit towards more forcefully selling the insurance of water safety techniques, and give space to such articles rather than these solo experiences.

I personally do not approve of Paul Caffyn's solo circumnavigation either.

Richard Johnson
Secretary, University of Canterbury Canoe Club.

Richard's letter raises a criticism frequently levelled at journalists generally, and particularly at magazines that report upon the activities that contain a certain element of danger — when does a story become a bad example? This is indeed a problem that editors are always grappling with and wherever they draw the line there will always be people who maintain that the magazine ought to be more conservative (as in Richard's case) or at the other end of the scale, that the magazine has a heavy handed censor. Because this criticism is so frequently made, I, as editor, should like to discuss the whole problem, and the more specific issues raised by Richard, in more depth.

The first issue raised by Richard concerns the relationship between the N.Z.C.A. and the 'New Zealand Canoeing' magazine. Implicit in Richard's argument lies the assumption that because the magazine is financed by the N.Z.C.A. therefore the magazine must reflect the philosophies and policies of the N.Z.C.A. Sorry, but the relationship between the Association and the magazine is not that closely tied. This magazine is a completely autonomous entity and opinions, both implied and directly stated, are not necessarily those of the Association — nor for that matter, those of the editor. This point is in fact made on the inside front cover of the magazine in the small print. You may recall that that particular statement first appeared in issue number 13 which was the first issue published after the current editor resumed control of the magazine from the then Public Relations officer of the Association. At that stage the main reason for the statement was that the editor had written the editorial and hardly anything else and did not wish to be taken to task for statements made by others within the magazine, which has, in fact, been done. The present situation is that the editor is not a member of the Association executive as such, and the executive have no say as to the magazine's content. The former Public Relations Officer, who used to edit the magazine, has since changed his name and responsibilities to become the publications officer and is responsible for financing and publishing the various Association publications — he has no control over the contents of the publications. For example, the publications officer may arrange for the printing of the Slalom Competition Rules, the contents of which is completely the responsibility of the Slalom Committee.

The 'New Zealand Canoeing Bulletin' as it was then known, was initially begun by Barry Murray in order to inform members of coming events and the results of past events, and was also intended to report official notes from the association executive. The duplicated form of the 'Bulletin' made for somewhat onerous conditions and the 'Bulletin' ceased soon after it started. When the present editor became the Public Relations Officer in 1975, he became interested in reviving the 'Bulletin' as there was improved duplicating facilities (mainly because the secretary had offered to turn the handle of the manual duplicator). The concept at that stage was to give details of events, and the then Touring Commodore, Ian Milne, wished to collect and publish river information along the lines of that started by Barry Murray; we did not, at that time have comprehensive river guides as we do today. My intention, at that time, was to develop the 'Bulletin' into a magazine format along the lines of the old 'White Water' magazine that the N.Z.C.A. had published in 1953 to 1956 under the direction of Jim Mason. After three issues we moved from a duplicated form to a printed form (similar to 'White Water') and along with this improvement came a major disadvantage — namely the time gap between printing and the initial preparation of the copy meant that we could no longer include a calendar of events as it would go largely out of date before canoeists were able to read it. This was of no great concern at the time as the widely circulated newsletters of the North Shore Canoe Club regularly gave details of racing events, and still does. Because racing is so Auckland dominated the N.S.C.C. was quite sufficient. Slalom, under the organisation of Mike O'Donnell and later under Neil Oppatt, had its own newsletter. So 'Bulletin' moved completely into the magazine format and official notices from the association executive have become fewer.

The concept behind the present publication goes something like this: The dissemination of canoeing knowledge, the availability of a forum for discussing matters pertaining to canoesport, as a vehicle for airing complaints and dissatisfactions relating to canoesport that is independent from the administering bodies, and as a medium for gaining access to canoeists and rafters for water safety information; the publication of a magazine is as important to canoeing and the N.Z.C.A. as is slalom competition, flat water competition, or the instructor system, and anything else that the N.Z.C.A. has or does. Consequently the N.Z.C.A. has an obligation to see that a canoeing magazine should exist where local canoeists can discuss and read about matters of concern to them. Just as flatwater racing has a committee to run sprint racing and has a representative of that committee on executive (the Racing Commodore), so too the magazine has an editorial staff and a publications officer to represent it on the executive. Because of a number of production problems, an agreement was made in March 1979 where it was agreed that the total N.Z.C.A. involvement in the magazine would be a financial one only, and that the editors would operate as completely autonomous from the Association. To mark this autonomy we changed the name of the magazine by dropping the word 'Bulletin' from our title, as we no longer issue N.Z.C.A. Bulletins. Naturally, the editor must have 'due regard' for the opinions of the N.Z.C.A. executive when selecting copy for publication.

Now, to get back to the issue raised by Richard; just what is the policy of the N.Z.C.A. regarding solo canoeing? Undoubtedly the official attitude of the N.Z.C.A. must be that solo canoeing contains risks of a greater magnitude than 'normal' canoeing, and because of this the N.Z.C.A. should not encourage solo canoeing. This policy was quite marked at the time that Paul Caffyn and Max Reynolds paddled around Fiordland, and when Paul carried on to complete the circumnavigation of both islands with a good deal of publicity. The executive at that time discussed the trip and decided that the official attitude of the N.Z.C.A. had not changed.

However, the individual members of the executive, to a man, all felt that Paul's trip was a tremendous thing and we all felt inclined to congratulate him publically. However, because the official N.Z.C.A. policy was that we could not be seen to encourage solo canoeing, we could not make a public move that could be misconstrued as being in support of solo canoeing. Hence we said nothing — neither encouraging nor discouraging. A number of sea canoeists, particularly from an Auckland Club, took our non comment as being a sign of individual disapproval of Paul and publically attacked us as being 'spoilt sports' and that a certain amount of 'sour grapes' were involved. These comments hurt us all rather deeply, however, we each remained loyal to our original stance and refused to comment. As far as I am aware the official attitude of the N.Z.C.A. has not changed — 'solo canoeing should not be encouraged'. Why then, have I, as the editor, ceased to remain loyal to the original decision to make no comment? Firstly because I have quite had enough of the rumors of the Auckland group who seem to be intent upon putting down this magazine, myself and the N.Z.C.A. in their caustic comments, and secondly, because I feel that Paul's trip, and Bevan Walker's trips (one of which was reported in N.Z. Canoeing issue 15 — Bevan has since done a similar and longer day trip) are both different from the usual solo canoe trip, and I personally feel that there is nothing inherently dangerous in solo sea canoeing in a properly equipped kayak — I have made a few trips myself and know this from my own observations. However, I also believe that solo river canoeing involves too many risks that are unacceptable.

Another issue that comes to mind when speaking about what we should not, or should print, is that of censorship. A journalist's job is to report the facts; what has happened or not happened, and then to leave the reader to draw his own conclusions and form his own opinions. There have been times when we have been prone to assisting the reader to draw the conclusion we would like him to draw — something we should never do. Bevan's article, because it reported a fact, that the trip had taken place was enough to warrant inclusion in the magazine. It was an important trip as it showed just what sort of distances were possible in a single days paddling on the sea. We believe that Bevan had an interesting story to tell, that it was about canoeing and canoeing people would like to read about it, and so we considered it as being suitable material for 'N.Z. Canoeing'. Is it my duty to censor an article on the grounds that I don't consider that the writer took due regard to the risks he was taking? In this instance the trip took ample safeguards. Should we pretend that people do not go solo canoeing? Surely one can extend this concept into other areas where we feel that the activity is risky. On the same basis perhaps we should out have reported the expedition down the Duhd Kosi, or Max Grant's trip down the upper Rangitikei — both trips being one hell of a lot more dangerous than Bevan's trip. What a dull magazine we would have if we took Richard's suggestion to its logical conclusion. Whether or not Bevan's journey, or Paul's, was wise is beside the point; it happened, so we told it as it happened. However, I will admit that there are some stories where blatant irresponsibility is obvious, and here we will draw the line.

Richard then puts forward the idea that readers are going to go scurrying off to copy Bevan, and consequently come to grief. This is, perhaps, the basis of any censorship. If I were dealing with a medium such as TV, or where the general public were involved, then there would be some basis in Richard's claim, and we would have to make it quite clear in the article what safety precautions were being taken so that should anyone wish to copy the feat, then they would also copy the safety measures being taken too. But 'New Zealand Canoeing' is issued only to members of canoe clubs affiliated to the N.Z.C.A. with a few extra copies going to outside groups where canoeing is participated in. Because of this selected readership, we are almost guaranteed that any reader is a canoeist with some experience, and hence we are able to be much freer in our censorship than would be, TV for example.

The main purpose of a canoe club is to act as a meeting place where canoeists can meet other canoeists and to organise trips together, to compete and to improve our own individual abilities. If your club is working as it should, then there is no need for a canoeist to paddle solo for the sole reason that he does not know of another canoeist to go paddling with. To 'stomp on people in the interests of discipline', as Richard suggests, would be to drive people out of our clubs and the incidence of solo paddling would rise dramatically. Dictatorial attitudes by clubs are far more unwelcome than any solo canoeing!

Lastly, perhaps the reason why we have to print articles on solo canoeing is because that is the only sort of article we are receiving to print!

This now leaves us with the question 'How safe is solo canoeing?'

HOW SAFE IS SOLO SEA CANOEING?

Graham Egarr

One of the most important issues raised by Richard Johnson's letter concerns the degree of safety involved in sea canoeing solo. There have been a number of lengthy sea trips by solo paddlers and every one of them has gone off without a hitch. If we are to read Paul Caffyn's book a little more deeply between the lines, it would appear that by far his major problem was getting through the surf onto the beach, or getting out off the beach. If you are paddling in pairs, would your companion be able to give you much assistance

in the surf, or is he going to be too busy handling his own boat to be looking after you too? Perhaps with the two of you trying to make it through the surf you will be able to send your mate in first to see if the beach is a feasible landing site — but that leaves you out there solo. If you end up swimming in the surf; are you going to be able to be rescued, or will the weight of your body on the end of your companions' canoe prove to be an impossible burden? These are important questions because if you believe, as I believe, that when you get into heavy surf there is little another paddler can do to help, and any other canoe in your vicinity is more likely to be another hazard to you, then you will come to the conclusion that when talking about the single biggest problem to the single sea paddler, solo paddling is, in itself, not as dangerous as some people maintain. I do not think that I need go into the issue about how easy it is to rescue people in the surf from a canoe as anyone who has ever had to try it will know how extremely difficult it is to assist a swimmer in any sort of water except in the sort of water where you are not going to have to rescue anyone anyway.

One of Paul's worst moments came in the surf in Fiordland and there was little that Max could do to help him there, if Paul had been solo the situation would have been essentially the same. Another problem that Paul met with was off the entrance to Westhaven Inlet, when a can-out in the surf and the loss of a hatch cover immobilised his boat. The solution was to swim for it. If Paul had have had a companion (as he would have if he could have gotten through the surf to meet Paul) then it may well have been possible for Paul to buoy up the stern of his boat and pump out the aft compartment, but this would only have been worth it if a spare hatch cover had been available. He would have been able to do it solo, but another boat to raft up with would have made it easier. In another incident off the Taranaki coast a loop almost broke the boat up — another paddler would have been able to do nothing to assist. On the face of it, therefore, we can say that had Paul had another paddler with him he would be no better off, and in fact his progress might have been slower and he may have been faced with deteriorating conditions and be faced with far more dangerous situations. In Fiordland Max and Paul often paddled as much as a mile apart, and this might indicate that when paddling in a group you are really no more than a collection of solo paddlers.

Three canoes are a minimum for a group — why? The obvious answer here is that deep water rescue techniques can be performed with only two, and preferably with a group of three boats. There are a number of techniques that are used and known as deep water rescues. The N.Z.C.A.'s official manual for basic canoeing techniques is 'An Introduction to Canoeing In New Zealand'. On page 36 of that book there is listed the 'H', 'HI', and the 'Rafted T'. The rescue that is described is the H rescue, and photographs are provided. Have you ever tried the H rescue in choppy water? Almost impossible. The upturned boat tries to pierce your boat with its bow or stern, and because the upturned boat tends to lie either stern or bow towards the wind and waves, the rescuing boats will lie beam on to the waves and weather. Now you are left to lift a waterlogged boat in choppy conditions and you will more than likely fall over backwards and need rescuing yourself. Exactly how you are going to empty a waterlogged boat when you are between the crest of two waves and the capsized craft lies within the crest is something the book takes care not to mention. Of course I do the book a disservice as it never claimed to be a manual for canoeists who find themselves in such conditions. The 'TX' method consists of pulling the capsized craft over your deck and rocking the water out. This requires a group of only two, but also that your rescuing paddler has a great deal of strength—hence the rafted T is the better method where the capsized craft is pulled over the decks of two boats rafted up. Again, with a sudden surge provided by a wave, you are likely to get the capsized boats' bow in your face, ribs, through your spray-deck or damage your own boat. In essence, the only method that really works in rough water is the 'HI' method — but not the way most N.Z.C.A. Instructors teach it, if you have ever tried to get back into your cockpit by sliding over the back deck of one of the modern low volume boats you will know what I mean. Chances are that you will smash in the back deck — there is a feet first technique that puts no strain on the deck, is easier, quicker and leaves all boats in a much more stable situation. So there you have it — a deep water rescue that to be effective needs three boats.

Now here is the hitch! Both Paul Caffyn and Bevan Walker use Nordkapp Kayaks and at 5½ metres in length they are big boats to throw around on your cockpit trying to do a 'TX' or 'Rafted T' or even the 'HI' rescue. If you have ever happened to capsize a Nordkapp and tried to empty out the water, one important disadvantage of their shape is immediately obvious — those nice high ends now lie deep in the water, and any water that is in the boat will be right in the ends. Consequently, to lift the end of a Nordkapp out of the water is not easy when you are sitting in a finely balanced kayak yourself. Assuming that you do get a capsized Nordkapp into the 'HI' rescue position, you will find that to get the water out of the ends you need to get a great deal more angle on the boat — you need to lift the cockpit clear of the cross paddles by at least a foot, meanwhile the wind and waves that capsized you in the first place are playing merry hell with the end that is up in the air. The moral of the story is that conventional deep water rescues do not easily work for Nordkapps.

So how do we get around that problem? We stop water getting into the ends in the first place by use of water-tight bulkheads, this will also need a well designed hatch. But the boat is still too long and heavy to empty the water from the cockpit area, so we fit a pump. Now let us assume that you have capsized and failed to roll up — you get a breath of air, turn your boat on its side, fit your feet back in the cockpit and do a half-roll back up. Your body will displace some of the water in the cockpit area so you need only pump out a few gallons. Fit your spraydeck before you pump out so as to avoid another wave filling you up again. So, you can rescue yourself without the need for another boat, provided your boat is fully fitted out with bulkheads, hatches that work, and a pump.

It is for these very reasons that Grahame Sisson, who builds the Nordkapp in New Zealand, is very reluctant to sell a Nordkapp that does not have bulkheads and pumps fitted — Grahame feels that by selling a basic shell he is selling a boat that could prove to be unsafe, hence his price-lists list only fully furnished boats. I, in my capacity as Safety Officer for the Association, full support this concept.

Another reason for advocating that three paddlers is a minimum for sea canoeing is based on the idea that should something happen to one of the paddlers, a second paddler can raft up with him while the third goes for help. But what is going to happen to cause one paddler to get into difficulties while the others are ok? Well, you could suffer from heat exhaustion (hyperthermia), or exposure (hypothermia), or suffer a hypoglycaemic collapse (low blood glucose levels). If you have done much paddling at all you will be well aware of these problems and keep close to shore when the risk is high, if you even dare to go out when there is the possibility of such problems. Should you actually collapse, then you will need help within a few hours and having companions will only marginally increase your chances of survival. To get help along any part of the New Zealand coastline within a few hours is not an easy thing to do. If you take all sensible precautions then you are not likely to get into such a position. When solo paddling you are less likely to try your luck, you have no other paddlers to demonstrate your egotistical powers to, and consequently solo paddlers are just not so likely to need a rescue.

If you take normal river boats on the sea, then the minimum is three.

If you take a fully equipped sea boat to sea and know what you are doing, then solo is OK.

If you are river canoeing then three is a minimum no matter what sort of boat you have because the current and rapids add a whole new dimension to the game.

Now that is only my opinion, not that of the N.Z.C.A. How do you feel about it?

THE INTERNATIONAL NILE CANOE EXPEDITION

A recent visitor to New Zealand was English canoeist, Dave Shell. Dave, who we mentioned in the last issue of 'New Zealand Canoeing' as being involved in a proposed expedition in the North Andes, to the Cauca and Magdalena Rivers, was out in New Zealand trying to earn a spot of cash to finance his trip to South America. Fortunately, the Editors of 'New Zealand Canoeing' were able to talk with Dave about his trip down the Nile, and the report that follows was prised out of him over a period of a month — (Dave is a very modest bloke and never told us much at any one time for fear of boring us.)

The expedition was the idea of Peter Vickers and Richard May and they were joined by Tony Laxton (expedition doctor), Dave Shell, Marcus Ballie, Tetley Lee, Bruce Towers and Mick Higginson. The aim was to paddle the Nile, or the White Nile as it is known until it is joined by the Blue Nile, (from Ethiopia and known from the expeditions of Chris Bonnington and Mike Jones) from the town of Nimule on the Ugandan border, through the Sudan and Egypt to Rosetta on the Mediterranean Coast, a distance of some 3000 miles.

Planning the expedition took a total of 18 months, during which time a great deal of research was needed. Very little information was available on the canoeability of the upper river and most of the information came from Alan Moorhead's book "The White Nile". How long was it going to take? "A good question," said Dave. "We looked at our scant maps and reckoned that we could cover maybe an eighth of an inch per day — roughly equal to the width of a match on our map, so we laid out matches until we had the whole length of the river covered — it came to 118 matches, which proved a good guess, — we spent 117 days on the river"

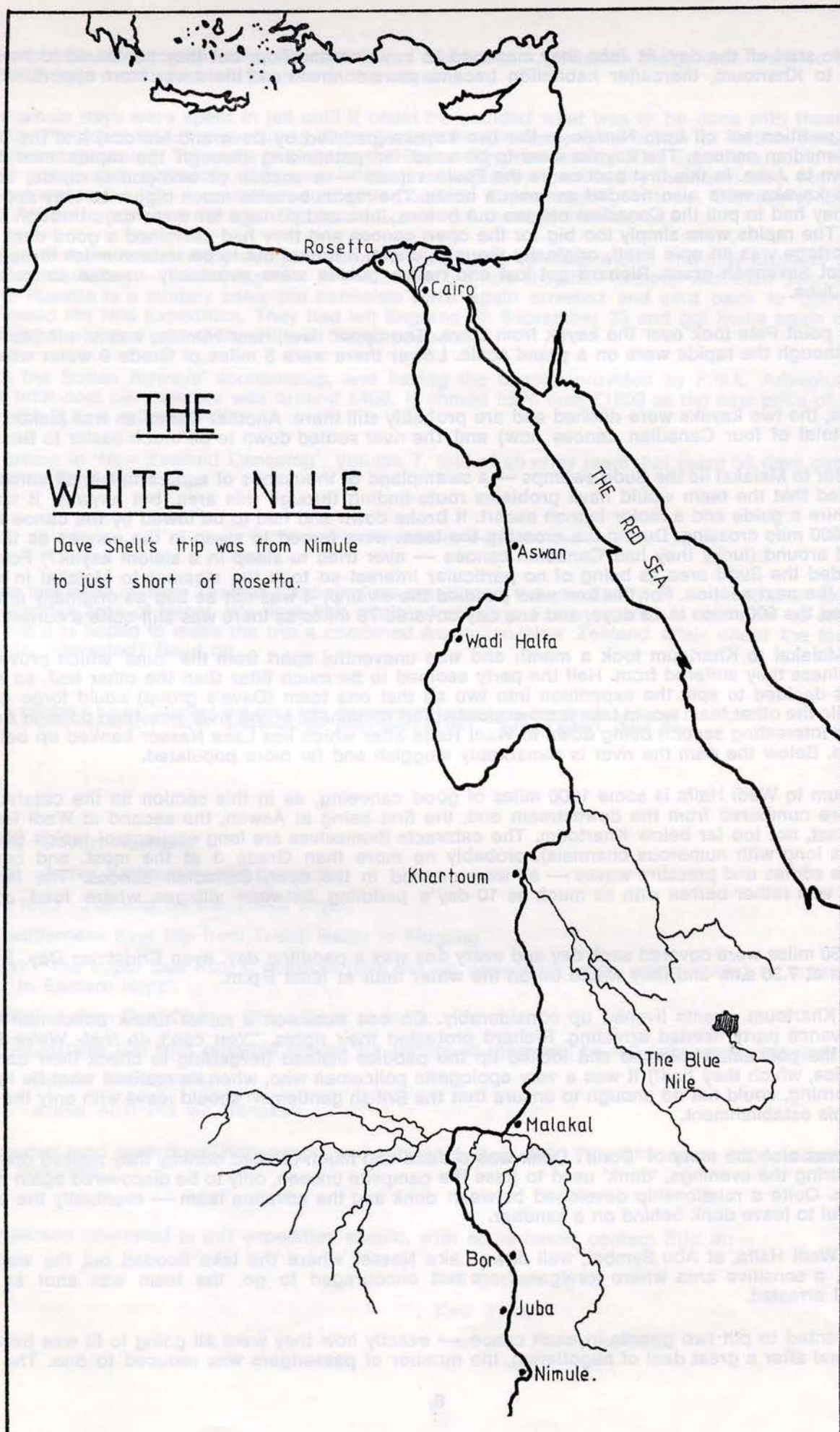
The expedition flew from the U.K. out to Khartoum and then on to Juba — all care of the Sudan Airways who provided them with free transport and put the expedition members up at hotels at the end of the trip. Air fares would have been in the region of £650 per person — in the end air fares cost them £100 each with the Sudan Airways giving freight costs free. The Sudan Airways treated them like kings, which was fortunate as the Airline has a habit of selling tickets regardless of the number of seats available and you need either influence or more cash to secure a seat. (The expedition had influence!)

From Juba the gear was trucked to Nimule — not that there was much gear — two kayaks and three 16 foot Canadian canoes formed the bulk of the equipment, plus an extensive medical kit and the 75 tubes of suntan lotion given by a British firm (Dave was still using it in N.Z.!)

Little in the way of food was shipped out from England — mostly dehydrated meat and meat substitutes as it was considered that protein would be in short supply. They hoped to live off local foods for most of the trip — rice and dates. Unfortunately, there was little food available at Nimule and down to Juba they were rationed to as little as a biscuit each for breakfast. "Rather ridiculous, really," commented Dave, who loves a

THE WHITE NILE

Dave Shell's trip was from Nimule
to just short of Rosetta.



good meal to start off the day. At Juba they managed to buy rice and flour but they continued to be short of food down to Khartoum, thereafter habitation became more common and there was more opportunity to buy supplies.

The expedition set off from Nimule in the two kayaks (paddled by Dave and Marcus) and the others in the three Canadian canoes. The kayaks were to be used for pathfinding through the rapids over the first section down to Juba. In this first section lie the Foula rapids — a section of whirlpools, rapids, boils and eddies. The kayaks were also needed as rescue boats. The rapids became much bigger as they approached Juba and they had to pull the Canadian canoes out before Juba and portage for three days through the bush and scrub. The rapids were simply too big for the open canoes and they had sustained a good deal of damage. The portage was an epic itself, originally thought jungle, it turned out to be sixteen miles through scrub and nine-foot Savannah grass. Richard got lost and native guides were eventually needed to guide them through to Juba.

At this point Pete took over the kayak from Dave. The upper river, near Nimule, was of around Grade 3 difficulty although the rapids were on a grand scale. Lower there were 5 miles of Grade 6 water which were portaged.

At Juba, the two kayaks were ditched and are probably still there. Another Canadian was picked up here (making a total of four Canadian canoes now) and the river settled down to be much easier to Bor.

From Bor to Malakal lie the Sudd swamps — a swampland of thousands of square miles, all unmapped. It was expected that the team would have problems route-finding through this area, but anyway, it was compulsory to hire a guide and a motor launch escort. It broke down and had to be towed by the canoe team for half of the 600 mile crossing. During the crossing the team were forced to sleep in the canoes as there was no dry land around (lucky they had Canadian canoes — ever tried to sleep in a slalom kayak?) Four of the team regarded the Sudd area as being of no particular interest so took the steamer to Malakal in order to prepare for the next section. For the four who paddled the swamp, it was not as bad as originally envisaged. They covered the 600 miles in 13 days, and one day covered 70 miles as there was still quite a current.

From Malakal to Khartoum took a month and was uneventful apart from the 'runs' which proved to be the worst illness they suffered from. Half the party seemed to be much fitter than the other half, so at Khartoum it was decided to split the expedition into two so that one team (Dave's group) could forge ahead to Rosetta while the other team would take it more slowly. The remainder of the river was then done in one push — the more interesting section being down to Wadi Halfa after which lies Lake Nasser banked up behind the Aswan Dam. Below the dam the river is remarkably sluggish and far more populated.

Khartoum to Wadi Halfa is some 1000 miles of good canoeing, as in this section lie the cataracts. The cataracts are numbered from the downstream end, the first being at Aswan, the second at Wadi Halfa, the sixth, and last, not too far below Khartoum. The cataracts themselves are long sections of rapids (the fourth is 150 miles long with numerous channels), probably no more than Grade 3 at the most, and containing mostly large eddies and pressure waves — all were canoed in the open Canadian canoes. The landscape hereabouts was rather barren with as much as 10 day's paddling between villages where food could be bought.

About 30 miles were covered each day and every day was a paddling day, even Christmas Day. Each day would begin at 7.30 a.m. and they would be on the water until at least 5 p.m.

Below Khartoum, events livened up considerably. On one occasion a rather drunk policeman decided that the advance party needed arresting. Richard protested their rights. "You can't do that- We're British!" Apparently the policeman relented and locked up the paddles instead (forgetting to check their canoes for spare paddles, which they had!) It was a very apologetic policeman who, when he realised what he had done the next morning, could not do enough to ensure that the British gentlemen should leave with only the highest opinion of his establishment.

There was also the story of 'Donk'. Donk was a dead and much-bloated donkey they passed one day on the river. During the evenings, 'donk' used to pass the campsite unseen, only to be discovered again next day downstream. Quite a relationship developed between donk and the advance team — eventually the paddlers were thankful to leave donk behind on a sandbar.

Below Wadi Halfa, at Abu Symbol, well down Lake Nasser where the lake flooded out the well-known monuments, a sensitive area where foreigners are not encouraged to go, the team was shot at by the military and arrested.

They wanted to put two guards in each canoe — exactly how they were all going to fit was beyond the canoeists, and after a great deal of negotiating, the number of passengers was reduced to one. The guards

came complete with automatic rifle, not that it was much use to them as the guards were so scared they held on with both hands and left the rifle in the bilge!

Five whole days were spent in jail until it could be decided what was to be done with these canoeists. Apparently, President Sadat was visiting the area and the presence of a bunch of British canoeists might have been embarrassing. This area is close to the Sudan-Egyptian border. The Egyptians could not afford to feed their guests and, eventually, they were allowed to pop down town to buy their own food. Many a pleasant hour was spent in the jail — or, rather, sunbathing outside it, or shopping in town. Eventually, the team was taken to Aswan to continue the trip. The second party got through unhindered.

Aswan to Rosetta was fairly straightforward — averaging 40 miles a day. The only problem on this section was with stealing — something rare in the Sudan but now they had to sleep with their gear. As the delta area near Rosetta is a military zone, the canoeists were again arrested and sent back to Cairo by truck, and so ended the Nile Expedition. They had left England on September 23 and got home again on February 15 canoeing the upper part of the Nile in the wet season.

With the Sudan Airways' sponsorship, and having the canoes provided by P.G.L. Adventure Holidays Ltd., the total cost per member was around £400. It should have cost £1500 as the new price of a Canadian canoe in the U.K. is at least £400.

An article in 'New Zealand Canoeing', Volume 7, told of an army team that spent 53 days canoeing from Khartoum to Wadi Halfa.

In the last issue of 'New Zealand Canoeing' we mentioned the possibility of an Australian expedition to the Kali-Gandak area of Nepal. We have had a letter from Eric Farrance who is the tour co-ordinator. He reports that it is hoped to make the trip a combined Australian/New Zealand affair under the leadership of John Wilde. Interested? Read on . . .

JOINT AUSTRALIAN/NEW ZEALAND EXPEDITION: EASTERN NEPAL

ITINARY

20.12.1980 Depart Australia.

21.12.1980 Arrive Kathmandu via Bangkok.

24 - 28.12.1980 Training on the Trisuli River.

A 5 day wilderness river trip from Trisuli Bazar to Mugling.

1 - 8.1.1981 The upper Sun Kosi if possible (this will be dependant upon water levels) or another suitable river in Eastern Nepal.

9 - 18.1.1981 Lower Sun Kosi — China Road to India.

A 9 day wilderness trip with possible places for rafters as there will be raft support on this river trip.

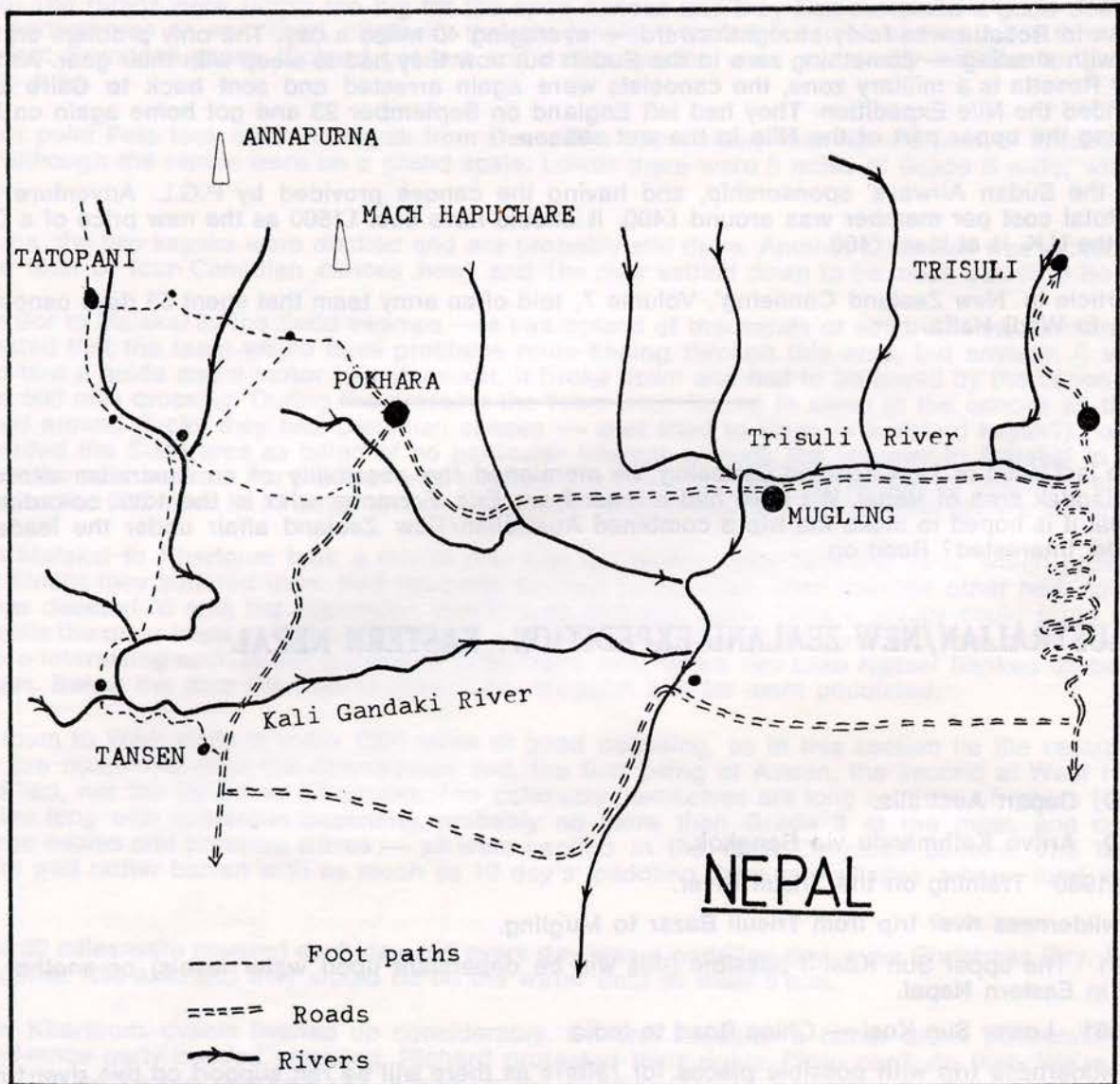
21.1.1981 Depart Kathmandu.

23.1.1981 Arrive Australia via Bangkok.

Estimated land cost (from Kathmandu and return) \$ Aus 600. This will cover food, accommodation, transport and rafts.

Any person interested in this expedition should, with some haste, contact Eric at:—

140 Cotham Road,
Kew 3102,
Australia. Phone 80-6030



BRITISH KAYAK EXPEDITION TO NEPAL

October/November 1980 is to see a British team of paddlers on the Khali Gandaki River. This is the same area where the joint Australian/New Zealand expedition will be. Initially it was hoped that the Australians would be joining with this British team, but it now seems that this will not be likely.

In 1977 Chris Hawkesworth went along with a medical expedition to this area with the intention of reconnoitering some of the local rivers on foot. Deputy leader, Allan Barber has also been in this area and seen the rivers that are proposed. The expedition will commence with 80 miles of the westward flowing Trisuli River from Trisuli to Mugling and Naray Angarh at the confluence of the Kali Gandaki. This will be followed by the eastward flowing leg of the Kali Gandaki from Tansen.

The southern flowing leg of the Kali Gandaki from Tatopani has not been canoed before. Above Tatopani the river is impassable with huge mountains such as Annapurna and Dhaulagiri so close together that waterfalls and huge boulders squeeze the river into a deep gorge. From Tatopani the river is passable, although a difficult grade V. Tatopani is a three day walk from Pokhara. It is proposed to canoe along this river, south to the road near Tansen. Another river is the Madikola flowing southward from the Annapurna Sanctuary, again, a difficult grade V river. After 25 miles this river joins the Kali Gandaki at the village of Kusma.

In addition to the above rivers, there are several rivers which join the Trisuli between Kathmandu and Mugling. Foot bridges cross these rivers and it would be possible to walk up these tributaries and canoe back to the Trisuli.

Any person interested in this expedition may obtain more details from:—

Chris Hawkesworth
Glasshouses Mill
Harrogate, England.

STEWART ISLAND CIRCUMNAVIGATION

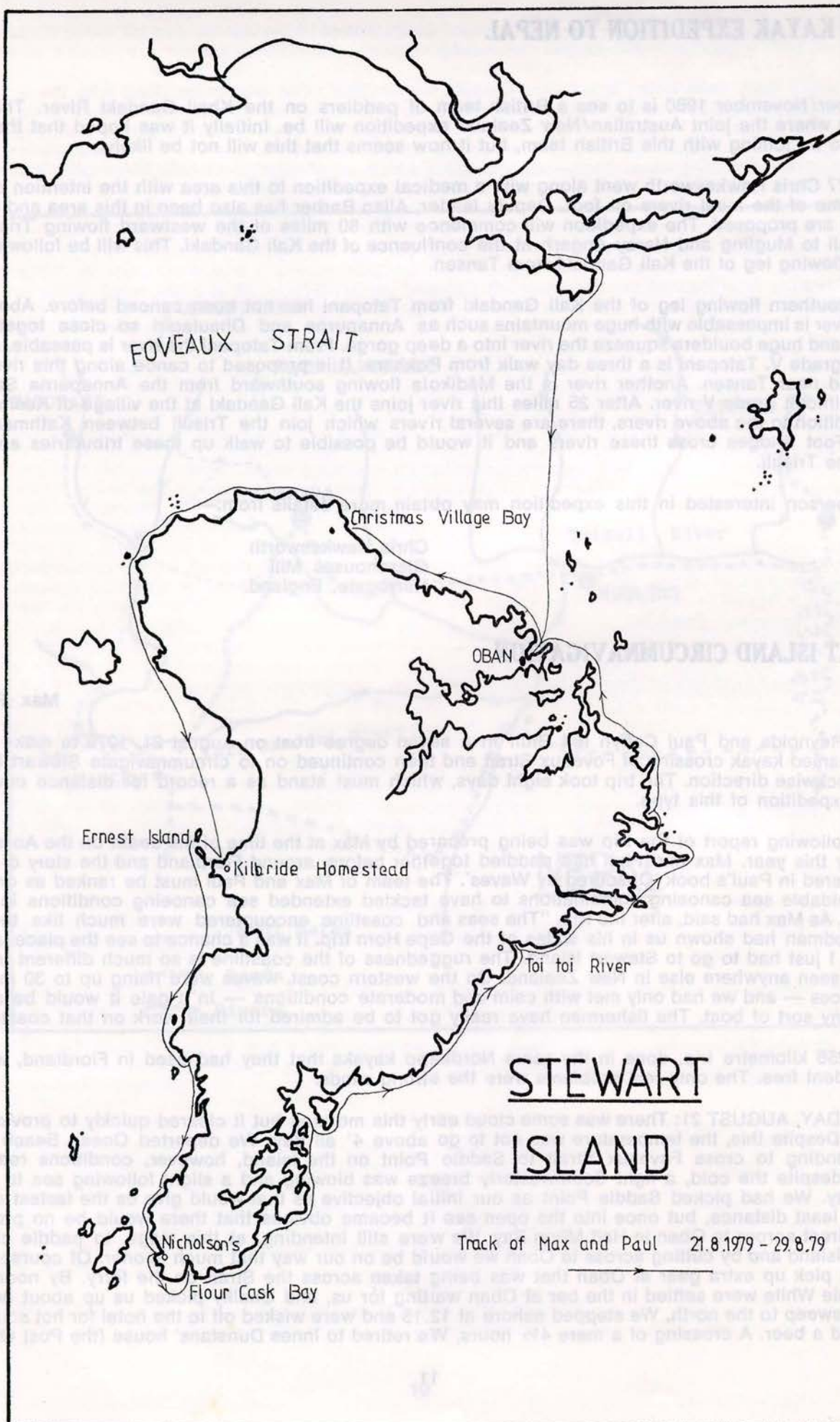
Max Reynolds

Max Reynolds and Paul Caffyn left Bluff in a seven degree frost on August 21, 1979 to make the first unaccompanied kayak crossing of Foveaux Strait and then continued on to circumnavigate Stewart Island in an anti-clockwise direction. The trip took eight days, which must stand as a record for distance covered on any sea expedition of this type.

The following report of the trip was being prepared by Max at the time of his death on the Aorere River in January this year. Max and Paul had paddled together before, around Fiordland and the story of that trip is recounted in Paul's book 'Obscured by Waves'. The team of Max and Paul must be ranked as one of the more formidable sea canoeing combinations to have tackled extended sea canoeing conditions in any remote area. As Max had said, after the trip, "The seas and coastline encountered were much like those that Frank Goodman had shown us in his slides of the Cape Horn trip. It was a chance to see the place, and after Fiordland, I just had to go to Stewart Island. The ruggedness of the coastline is so much different from anything I've seen anywhere else in New Zealand. On the western coast, waves were rising up to 30 metres up the cliff faces — and we had only met with calm and moderate conditions — in a gale it would be no place to be in any sort of boat. The fishermen have really got to be admired for their work on that coastline."

The 256 kilometre trip, done in the same Nordkapp kayaks that they had used in Fiordland, was relatively incident free. The only real problems were the strong winds.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 21: There was some cloud early this morning but it cleared quickly to provide bright sunshine. Despite this, the temperature was not to go above 4° all day. We departed Ocean Beach at 0745 hours intending to cross Foveaux Strait to Saddle Point on the Island, however, conditions really were excellent despite the cold, a light Southwesterly breeze was blowing and a slight following sea to push us on our way. We had picked Saddle Point as our initial objective as that would give us the fastest crossing, being the least distance, but once into the open sea it became obvious that there would be no problem in heading direct across to Oban in Half Moon Bay. We were still intending, at this stage, to paddle clockwise about the island and by cutting across to Oban we would be on our way that much sooner. Of course we also needed to pick up extra gear at Oban that was being taken across the Strait on the ferry. By noon Chalky and Jeannie White were settled in the bar at Oban waiting for us, and Chalky picked us up about noon in a binocular sweep to the north. We stepped ashore at 12.15 and were whisked off to the hotel for hot soup, sandwiches and a beer. A crossing of a mere 4½ hours. We retired to Innes Dunstons' house (the Post Office) for



FOVEAUX STRAIT

Christmas Village Bay

OBAN

Ernest Island

Kilbride Homestead

Toi toi River

STEWART ISLAND

Track of Max and Paul 21.8.1979 - 29.8.79

Nicholson's

Flour Cask Bay

hot baths and to spread the maps and talk over the next few days' intentions with the local people whose knowledge of the coastline would prove to be our best guide.

Assisted by Richard Squires, a fisherman we had met in Fiordland, we changed our initial plan of paddling clockwise around the Island. Richard was of the opinion that the current weather would hold a while and we would be best to push on down the more difficult west coast while we had the chance. Our ground support party, who were going to put in a food dump on the west coast were due to arrive by ferry the next day and there was little point in pushing on until they had arrived with some of the extra gear we needed. The fishing boat 'Kiwi' would set off for Port Pegasus with another food dump for us.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 22: It rained last night and the morning arrived with a cloudy sky that lasted all day, the wind was from the southwest and became quite blustery. The ferry arrived at 10 with the support party plus our food and gear (including the repair kit I had left behind). We soon had all the gear packed and were away by 11.30. Paul getting quite anxious to get away while conditions remained suitable. We made a whole four miles north to Mamaku Point where we sheltered for three hours from the wind. The wind dropped and we were away again at 4 in a slight sloop from the southwest and made our objective — Christmas Village Bay by 5.40. Spent the night in the Forest Service Hut there and made radio contact with our support party who had made Freshwater Hut on their way to Kilbridie Homestead with our food dump.

So far it had been easy going, relatively, and was to remain so down to as far as Ruggedy Passage when the seas were to become considerably rougher.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 23: Left Christmas Village around 8 in the morning with calm conditions, the paddling was very pleasant with the bush clad hills coming right down to sea level. The scenery was much like this to Saddle Point and beyond. We made a brief stop before Cave Point where we were chucked around considerably by a rough sea. We were now heading south after having rounded the northern most part of the Island, Black Rock point. In the far corner of Long Harry Bay we noted the position of the hut in case the sea became too boisterous beyond Cave Point and we may have had to turn back. However, although the sea did get rougher, we made it to East Ruggedy beach at around noon for a spot of lunch and to visit the trapper's hut. Here we met the Aussie Jacko. We had met this character before on the Fiordland trip — he reckoned that we would never make it on that trip, and he was making the same assertions again!

Got away again at 1315 hours through the inner passage, it was very rough going and the passage rather psyched us out a bit, the scenery really was rugged — much like the Cape Horn area. We were now faced with a long drag down to the southern end of Mason Bay where the Kilbridie Homestead is situated. Although the sea was calm there was a huge ground swell rolling in that gave a seven metre surf along the coast that made any thought of landing quite unreasonable, despite our concern regarding the likelihood of losing daylight before landing. We just made it; landed at 6.20 to find the ground support party had arrived with our food dump and were well established at the Homestead.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 24: Today was delegated a rest day as yesterday was quite a push. We clambered over to look at 'the Gutter', a narrow gap between the mainland and a large rock island where waves break and wash the cliffs more than 20 metres up from the sea level. Quite some sight. We saw the support party off in the afternoon — they were to return back to Oban via Freshwater River.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 25: Conditions seemed very calm as we paddled out through the gap and down as far as the Gutter, we gave away any thought of going through as it seemed more than a little rough and opted for a camp in the bothie on Ernst Island as a more comfortable project for the day. Lloyd, of the fishing boat 'Emerald Isles' was of the impression that we could have made it through, but I tend to think that we made the right decision.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 26: Another 8 a.m. start off towards Doughboy Bay. The swell had decreased considerably as what little wind we did have came from the South East and had knocked the Southwesterly swell down considerably. Conditions remained good past Doughboy Bay. The scenery hereabouts really is spectacular with the cliffs rising unbroken from the sea, parted only occasionally by the numerous waterfalls and the sea caves. We were beginning to feel very tired as we rounded South Red Head Point so landed at Three legged Wood Hen Bay for lunch and a rest at around noon. Got away again at one to paddle the landward side of Rat Island making for Easy Harbour and beyond.

As we rounded the point before Easy Harbour, we caught sight of Gog and Magog shining silver in the sun and peeking from the drizzle that hung about the lower slopes. Owing to a strong southeasterly coming over the islands in the area, we had to really fight our way past Easy Harbour and thence easier going inside Big South Cape Island to Nicholson's Harbour where we planned to spend the night. The campsite proved to be very sheltered so spent the night under the bushes rather than pitch the tent.

MONDAY, AUGUST 27: Today we are going to attempt to round South West Cape — the crux of the trip as after this we will be on the way home, paddling north. Got away at 8 again intending to head for Broad Bay. However, we didn't make it as we were forced back by a strong southeasterly wind and a tide race. We spent most of the day aboard Gary Neaves' boat 'Toanui' cray fishing. Made another attempt to round the cape for Flour Cask Bay at 5 p.m. The winds had died but the backlash off the cliffs made for exciting paddling. Paul was all keyed up and flew along, I didn't even try staying with him. The beach gave an easy landing.

We noticed a series of paths, or tracks on the hillock at the back of the flat tussocky area where we had pitched the tent. There was a rustling noise on the pebble beach that night; we thought it might be deer. All was explained in the morning — a very large sea elephant was making his way uphill and into the scrub. This also explained the strange marks we had seen; the sea elephants climb the hillock for a spot of sun and when they have had enough they slide down to the sea. As we had pitched our tent right across one of these tracks, it was a good thing they decided not to try this trick during the night. You can imagine the fun we would have had sharing the tent with a sea elephant!

TUESDAY, AUGUST 28: Another 8 a.m. departure, encouraged by the presence of the sea elephant. This time I was in fine paddling form and was enjoying a truly fantastic trip along to South Cape with a good Southwest wind and the flood tide with us; the odd surf ride gave us a push. It took $\frac{3}{4}$ hour to reach and round the cape and immediately reached calmer waters. Fantastic; we had turned our kayaks towards home at last and from here, we had been told, we were practically home and hosed. The scenery also changed, from tall cliffs and the land horizon above us, now we could see four or five miles inland over the gently angled hills to where Gog and Magog dwelt in their perpetual mists.

Arrived at Port Pegasus and our food dump placed by the 'Kiwi'. As we had ample supplies of food aboard still, we had to decide whether to abandon the dump or get it collected. Fortunately our friendly fisherman turned up at that moment and offered to take it back to Oban for us.

Left Port Pegasus at 1315 hours with a strong following wind and swell which provided a good time up to the Toi Toi Bay. Arrived at 6 p.m. giving us a distance of around 35 miles for the day. Toi Toi had a very sheltered campsite up off the river. The radio sched included the remark that we might beat the shore party back to Oban!

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 29: The usual rush of packing and breakfast, then off into a choppy sea heading for Port Adventure, East Cape and home. My right arm was sore and giving a bit of trouble. Met one fishing boat just before Lords River and another at the Lords River itself. Both boats stopped to encourage us, telling us that once we were through the gap between the Shelter Islands, the sea would smooth out — they were right! Calm conditions allowed us to move more rapidly up past Port Adventure around Starling Head where we fought a strong head wind into Sinbads Mistake for a welcome lunch break. Paul was so cold that he ate while running on the spot for $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour.

Departed the lunch spot at one, heading for East Cape, fighting the head winds all the way as they were from the west and we were now paddling due east. It seemed like hours (and it was) before we sighted Bullers Point. The 'Kiwi' with a party of tourists came and took a look at us and advised us to move inshore more to avoid most of the wind. Struggling into that wind I felt like tossing it in and camping for the night; to heck with making Oban that night. Just as I had those thoughts on my mind, the wind stopped. It was amazing, I couldn't work out why paddling was so easy all of a sudden. The wind's stopping had removed a lot of weight off the paddles and I automatically had picked up on my paddling rate.

Not long after, we rounded Ackers Point and once more saw Oban before us. Another half hour and it was all over, we stepped ashore to a round of applause from the locals and a bottle of beer left for us by Chalky and Jeannie!

AN ALPINE SAFARI

Do you go canoeing on those cold frosty mornings? Of course you don't and why should you — you don't have to any more, or soon you will not have to as Stuart Eyes of Alpine Safari Tours in Canterbury is giving a bit of thought to taking people Hot Air Ballooning.

Alpine Safaris have been operating for some time now in the South Island. They have an amazing variety of services available for outdoor people, and many of those services are available for canoeists who could really make good use of them. For example: Alpine Safaris have canoes for hire. This is, however, no ordinary hire firm that is simply going to give you some worn out canoe and leave you to it — they will also hire a full camping kit if you want it, or any gear you should need for a trip down any river in the South Island. They do not specify very much in their advertising, as they expect you to tell them exactly what you want to do, and they will get together a package to suit. If you are new to canoeing then they can offer a guide and instruc-

tion. If you want to do some really hairy trips, and you are an experienced canoeist, but the river you wish to canoe is likely to damage their equipment — rather than say no, they will sell you the gear and agree to buy it back at the end of the trip at, I might add, very reasonable rates. If you have the gear but need the transport, then they will drop you off and arrange to pick you up at the bottom of your river.

If there is a demand, then rafts may also be available. If you think that this firm can help you, then write and ask. With transport costs across Cook Strait being what they are, you can save money by using these people.

Discuss your needs with Stuart:

Phone Christchurch 797-755,
Alpine Safari Tours Ltd,
P.O. Box 868,
Christchurch.

Alpine Safari Adventure Club. Membership is available to all those who wish to explore off the beaten track, areas in New Zealand and overseas not normally visited by scheduled tour companies. In short, a wide range of unusual holidays will gradually be made available to members to choose from.

TAKE A BIT OF CARE!

By far the greatest majority of paddlers — canoeists, kayakers and rafters, fall under the heading of 'River camping'. Today more and more families, fishermen, paddlers and general explorers are discovering the fun of camping along New Zealand's rivers and lakes.

What many of these people do not realise is that river frontage and lakesides are among our most fragile environments. They serve as wilderness areas, wildlife habitats, living space for endangered plants and animals (including insects), and perhaps most importantly, a place where man can visit and feel that he has really escaped his urban environment, a place where he can feel that he has stepped back in time, a place where he is only welcome to stay a short while. Unfortunately, while many canoeists have been expending a great deal of effort in getting government to recognise that such areas should be protected and kept in their natural state — you, you whose interests we do these things for, are actually stuffing it all up. These delicate areas, when abused by campers are quickly scarred, which not only spoils a trip for others, it leads to erosion, water pollution and a general degradation of our waterways. I recently paddled the Motu River — and what an unholy mess! While rafters were the main culprit, canoeists are not entirely blameless either.

In order to protect our waterways and the adjacent lands it must be the responsibility of every canoeist camper to learn how to camp without leaving a sign that they were ever there — this is a skill known as MINIMUM IMPACT CAMPING.

1. Select canoe camping equipment that will help to preserve nature's ground cover. Select tents which have their own poles and support systems and eliminate the cutting of poles. Bring a foam pad and forget the Boy Scout and the Survival Guide technique of cutting fern as a mattress. Pick a campsite where you will not need to clear vegetation. A bivvy built along the lines illustrated in B. Hildreth's book 'How to Survive in the bush, on the Coast, in the Mountains of New Zealand' is not only unwarranted, but is a fast way of destroying our last areas of wilderness. Gold diggers burrowing into stream banks are also little short of vandals. Take a stove (gas or white-spirit). Most popular rivers do not have enough dead wood for every camper to have a fire. If you do have a fire — burn only dead wood, and gather it without leaving saw or axe marks. If your fire is on grass, or moss, carefully remove the sod from the fire site and set it aside to be replaced upon departure. Keep the fire small. When you leave make sure the fire is out and scatter all signs of charcoal.

2. Treat all living trees as though they were untouchable. Do not hammer nails, cut initials, or otherwise damage trees. Do not hang out lanterns next to trees where the heat will kill the bark.

3. The litter you take in; take out. Also take out any litter of other thoughtless visitors which you might come across. Do not bury litter as animals will dig it up, and high water levels will wash it to the surface. If you carried it in, then you must carry it out.

4. You must have a toilet kit — even for a single day trip. A kit will consist of a garden trowel and a roll of toilet paper stored in a waterproof plastic bag. When you need a bog, select a suitable spot at least 20 metres from open water or the campsite. Dig a hole 20 cm to 25 cm across and no deeper than 15 cm to 20 cm. In the top 20 cm or so of soil nature has a system of biological disposers that will decompose organic material in a few days. Keep the sod intact and fill the hole after use, replacing the sod on top.

5. Keep water supplies clean. Wash dishes and yourself away from, and downstream of drinking water supplies. Use biodegradable soap. Dispose of waste water away from lakes, streams, and rivers — pour the water out so that it will be absorbed into the ground and not into the stream. I recently came across a campsite on the Pelorus River that had soap, food scraps and cooking fat smeared all over the river bank rocks — it was no nice spot!

If you wish to continue to enjoy your canoesport, then it is your responsibility to leave no trace of your brief visit. If you are leading a group of others on an outdoor pursuits course then you have to be even more careful — avoid excess trampling of vegetation, turning tracks into muddy bogs and denuding the area of firewood. In short — take a bit of care!

THE WHAKAPAPA AND TONGARIRO RIVERS

We recently had a letter from Northland canoeist, Grant Stevens. Grant is one of the country's more adventurous exploring canoeists with a number of first descents to his credit. Many years ago Grant suggested that I should have a look at the Whakapapa River as he felt that, with water, it would be a great trip. Unfortunately, I never seemed to be in the area with a canoe when it has been running high. It looks like Grant has beaten me to it. The following report should amend the report in the Taranaki volume of River Guides — (6.34 Whakapapa River). Anyway, to let Grant tell the story —

"We spent the Auckland Anniversary weekend at Tokaanu and did the upper Tongariro. We read the river guide (East Cape Volume 6.82) once we got home as we never had it with us, and we were surprised to find that more is made of the section from Waikato Falls down. The Moawhango diversion has changed this and the upper section, as you probably know, is now a real winner. There is probably some of New Zealand's best canoeing water in this upper part now. (Refer to John Mackay's article in 'New Zealand Canoeing' Vol. II where he talks about bonus flows on the Tongariro. You should note that the river guides were written before the Moawhango tunnel began adding water to the river).

Since Lake Taupo was the highest ever (they had had a storm the week preceeding) they were not diverting the Whakapapa River into the Rangipo scheme and we arrived at the Whakapapa intake to find the river hurtling off around the corner. Since we had left the map and the river guide at home we were somewhat hesitant about canoeing it, but with four sausages and a 100 foot rope (to climb out of the gorge if need be) Mark Webby, Jim Bamber and I decided to take the opportunity and we gingerly picked our way down the first few rapids before gaining confidence and barrelling down everything we could see at least half way down. The rapids were either very steep or very long, or both, but there is nothing more than a grade 3+. It was a fantastic eight hours of canoeing. Since Mark and Jim were in extreme low volume boats, Prijons I think, their boats took a bit of a hiding and we all managed a few rolls. I also managed about 3 or 4 minutes surfing — stuck in a hole in the rapid immediately upstream of the drop below the bridge at Owango. (The river guide warns you about that rapid Grant!) I was most relieved to be spat out eventually since it was by this time 8 p.m. and we were rather tired."

The following information should be added to the river guide on the Whakapapa.

Details of water levels are available from the information centre at Turangi. A minimum of 20 cumecs are needed for enjoyable canoeing. While it may be possible to canoe at around 12 to 15 cumecs, I suspect that the trip would be an extended rock dodge. The river guide information refers to the river with a 12 to 15 cumec flow, hence the suggestion that you should enter the river at the Owango Reserve.

The most likely time that canoeing is possible is as the river drops after a flood. I would not advise canoeing the river in flood as some nasty boils and back-eddy washine machine type affairs would form in places (exactly the sort that the Nelson canoeists found on the Aorere!) Some rapids would be difficult to portage.

I suspect that it would be an outstanding whitewater trip and still be 'safe' at about 40 cumecs. The river doesn't get much narrower than its width at the intake so there is plenty of width to use the extra water — we did it at 22 cumecs.

As shown on the inch to the mile topo. maps (N.Z.M.S. 1 N111) there is a pull out place about one Kilometer down from the intake if you decide that it is more than you can chew. The intake is 14.5 km above the Piopotea stream that is mentioned as a possible put in point in the river guide.

All rapids can be inspected and portaged at 22 cumecs flow and I suspect that this would hold good up to 40 cumecs.

It is approximately 7 km to the first exit (the road at Masons Siding) and another 20 km to the Owhango Reserve. Since some boat damage is likely canoeing should be started early — and take plenty of tape — a full roll of reliable tape such as 'Sleek' will be needed.

The rapid below the bridge is very difficult in that the boulder part above is steep and there is no clear water channel — it is really a filter situation and there is some danger of getting your canoe jammed.

THE GREY RIVER

Paul Moseley

Pete and I often have to travel from Christchurch to Reefton every 3 or 4 weeks, so rather than drive yet again over the Rahu Saddle, we decided it was about time that we canoed there, via the Upper Grey. Hence, our Toyota was to be seen with canoes on top heading westwards one Monday morning. From Springs Junction, one of our mates drove us down Palmer Road, along the very upper reaches of the Upper Grey to the N.Z.F.S. hut. The obvious spot on the map from which to set off from, where the river is hard against the road (NZMS 1 Sheet S46 grid ref. 472868) proved to involve a 15 metre verticle cliff, so we pushed on along a farm track and, when the track ended, across the paddocks to the Robinson River. It would have been much easier and quicker to start at Hospital Flat, and would have avoided driving across paddocks full of \$3000 per-head deer about which the landowner gets a little twitchy.

Our planned early start turned out to be 12.30 but progress down the fast flowing gravel-bedded Grey was extremely fast; by 2.15 we were stopping for a sandwich at the top of the Gentle Annie Gorge. This first ten miles is easy canoeing — fast flowing flat water with frequent riffles and a few braided channels to pick your way through. Even at normal flows the noise of fibreglass grinding over rocks will be frequently heard through this section.

The Gentle Annie Gorge proved to be by no means gentle, but about the best canoeing I have done since the Mohaka in '76. The vistas of the upper section — bush clad slopes, tussock tops, lupin and manuka covered flats are replaced by a narrow forested gorge where you can only see as far as the next bend, and the river is also completely changed. It seemed to be one long rock garden, needing constant dodging around granite boulders — a powerful draw is a must, but don't jam your paddle between two boulders like I did, or you will be in for a long swim. In two or three places the water drops one or two metres down a chute adorned with boulders: bearing in mind the long walk out, we walked around one, and stopped to give the others a good looking over.

On the day that we did it the gorge would be grade 3, but because of the number of different sized boulders in the river, a change in discharge would substantially change the river — less flow would expose more and make manoeuvring even more demanding, while more flow would drown the boulders out but increase the speed of the current. In any case, a bash hat is imperative.

After the Gentle Annie, the river changed again, sections across flats where the river was gravel bedded with regular riffles to drop down, alternated with magnificent gorges. Here, the water was deep and placid, flowing between verticle rock walls covered with moss up to the normal high water line, then a band of ferns and scrub, all surmounted by virgin bush. It was very reminiscent of the North Island's Wanganui River, only the water was clear and clean, and the scene much more intimate. Superb!

At the Waipuna Road end (a possible pick up point), the grubby hand of man was apparent, with bulldozers noisily engaged in land clearing, but we pushed on to the MWD gauging site (NZMS 1 S45 255999) where we had arranged to be picked up. The extra 4½ miles was well worth it — easy canoeing through bush clad gorges with massive white granite outcrops for contrast. We arrived dead on 5 p.m. after 25 miles of superb canoeing in 4½ hours on the water.

Here, unfortunately, our troubles started. A word of advice — take the NZMS 1 S45 Ahaura map so that you know which way to walk if you have to, but do not trust it! The map shows Waipuna Road as being right alongside the river at our pick-up point, but only when we saw our Toyota go flying past about ½ a mile away up on the terrace did we realise that a new road cuts off a loop of the old road that is shown on the map. A brisk 3 mile run down the Waipuna Station (in a neoprene suit!) gained us the information that our vehicle had driven up and down several times looking for us, our mate apparently having forgotten how to read a map and realise that a few changes had occurred. So a friendly Mr Fergusson gave us a beer and collected our boats, which we left on the road side as a subtle signal to our driver. He finally arrived in a cloud of dust on his way to the nearest phone box to call the police, civil defence, or whatever.

Finally, a few comments for prospective paddlers on this river. The Upper Grey is a magnificent river, both scenically and for its canoeing, and in combination with the Ahaura, constitutes a fine weekend trip. The best place to start is at the lower end of Hospital Flat, or on the Robinson River at grid ref. 452865 — but get permission before driving through the deer paddock.

The section down to the Grey-Robinson confluence may be shallow. The best place to get out is by a farm track at grid ref. 243006 — that way you see all the gorge sections but miss seven miles of easy canoeing across developed flats. Exit at Waipuna Road end at 304981 is an alternative but misses some worthwhile river. The trip length would be slightly less than 30 miles but much of this is fast and easy. The rough stuff in the Gentle Annie Gorge could be walked by novices, although there might be a lot of walking to do.

The trip would be best done by a small group of reasonably experienced folk.

THE LANDSBOROUGH RIVER

Les Coxhead (reprinted from O.C. & K.C.)

On the 26 December, with a kayak tied under each wing of a small plane the shuttle from Makarora to the Landsborough began. After another plane trip and a lot of to-ing and fro-ing in a Hughes Chopper, we were reunited at Hinds flat in the Landsborough. This was where the rapids looked like grade 6, and we were above them! At this flat the altimeter read 1400 feet and the cars were 30 miles away at 500 feet. The river which was just dropping after a major flood that had washed away the Haast road, was ice cold, dirty, and doing a good speed with high standing waves.

Base camp was set up in the beech forest with plenty of firewood and a friendly kea who took an interest in a pair underpants which we had left drying in a tree following the somewhat frightening plane trip.

Next day we explored on foot upstream to Zoro Canyon and two of us pressed on above the bush line to look at the Mueller pass. The next day we crossed the river and climbed through bush and out onto the tops with magnificent views of the main divide and across the valley to Mount Hooker and Dechen where glaciers and ice-falls avalanced increasingly as the day wore on. There must be few parties as privileged as us to have good weather in the Landsborough, but contrary to the reputation of the valley, the first day was fine with occasional drops of rain falling, even when the sun was shining, and thereafter cloudless weather ensued for the remainder of the trip.

On the third day the big struggle began — to fit all the gear into the limited capacity of the kayaks and still have room for bodies and a little bouyancy left for the rapids. What an effort. On the river at last — we followed the philosophy that it is safe to paddle any rapid that can be swum down, so with this yardstick in mind we looked, and mentally swam over rocks and through stoppers and finally, steeped in adrenalin, we paddled down the river.

In the first major rapid, in the time it took Les to roll up, his helmet was cracked, glasses smashed, and he received facial cuts and a black eye — nothing, however, that couldn't be fixed by Dave. By the end of the days canoeing we had travelled about four miles and had dropped 300 feet.

Next day was a little easier and we covered about nine miles. The rapids were almost continuous and most of them needed inspection before running. Large rocks and their stoppers were mainly in midstream, and the best route often lay along the edges where there was less violence, but also contained the shallower water making rolling hazardous.

Marvellous camp sites each night — always, however, with a tricky rapid or rock downstream to be negotiated next morning — something to dream on.

On the final day the river levelled out noticeably and towards late afternoon we emerged from the gorge on to the level flats where the Clarke and Landsborough join the Haast. Even here, the standing waves were head-high and some of the party took the opportunity to rave a last involuntary roll or swim.

SOUTH ISLAND SLALOM COMPETITIONS

The National South Island Slalom Championships were held at the end of December on the Matakaitaki River — a tributary of the Buller River near Murchison. The course took around one week to construct, combined with a fair bit of paddling on the local rivers, and was organised by Graeme Roxburgh (an Independent N.Z.C.A. member) and was assisted by a number of members of Christchurch Canoe Club.

The course certainly showed the thought gone into its construction — a very demanding course set on grade 3 water, well up to international standards. There was a good balance of gates — upstream and downstream, right-hand cut-ins, left-hand cut-ins, and cut outs and such, reverse gates and a horrible gate that took you through two stopper waves, one of which you were obliged to turn in. The water was fast and cold — leading to a number of rolls, although every competitor managed to do a run without a roll, so while it was a demanding course, it was certainly not beyond the ability of most paddlers.

An interesting departure for National Slaloms was the matter of course practice runs. In this slalom the course was open for practice runs until one hour before the timed runs were due to begin. It is normally the tradition in national Slaloms, and in some of the larger club slaloms, that only one practice run per competitor is allowed. Graeme's philosophy, however, is that we need slaloms to develop skills as much as we need them to test skills and that people come from many miles away to compete and by allowing as many runs as possible you make full use of the effort made in building the course, you use the river more and you thereby allow standards to improve. After all, slalom courses are not always available for training. This was also the suggestion of the one time world slalom champion, Norbet Sattler when he was out here, and we certainly think is a good idea that could be used in all but the one National Championships. After the slalom the course was left up for a further week for use.

Not a great selection of clubs were represented — one Arawa member, three C.C.C., three from Kupe, two from Nelson, and two independent members. Perhaps petrol problems accounted for the absence of paddlers from Southland/Otago. Arawa Canoe Club had another event organised not too far away from the slalom site and the Slalom Commodore, a South Islander for once, was also absent and many paddlers thought that this was a great pity.

RESULTS: A. Martin (Kupe) 1st.

G. Quinn (Christchurch) 2nd.

J. McClatchy (Nelson) 3rd.

G. Roxburgh (Independent) 4th.

B. Anink (Arawa) 5th.

C. Moody (Nelson) 6th.

AN APOLOGY

In recent issues of New Zealand Canoeing (Volume 13 and 15) comments were made concerning the attitudes of well known outdoor sportsman Mr Graeme Dingle. An explanation for those comments is obviously in order.

The first comment concerned the supposed flippant attitude of Graeme as shown on a TV programme regarding a canoe and raft trip down the Holyford River. The incident that concerned a number of canoeists, including the editor, relates to a short discussion shown on the programme, regarding the non-swimming ability of one of the trip members. To many canoeists the rather lighthearted nature of the comments were felt to be in rather bad taste. Also, concern was expressed that the canoeists were not wearing crash helmets. Despite these incidents, the expedition ran the river without accident. Because Graeme Dingle is such a well known personality, he has been considered to be in some manner responsible for the actions shown in the programme. Of course, as a person on the trip being filmed, Graeme was in no way responsible for what events were actually filmed, nor for the decision of the film editor for including this incident in the final screening.

The second comment relates to the showing on TV of the film "From the Ocean to the Sky" in which Graeme Dingle was seen to be bow-riding on a jet-boat. Many people involved in Water Safety, and Small Boat Safety had been involved in attempting to educate the boating public into a realisation that bow-riding was a particularly hazardous action. When a film showing such an action was shown on TV, and with such a well known personality involved, many people felt that their work in attempting to educate the boating public, was being negated. Eventually it seemed that education policies were not working and that legislation would need to be introduced, which was subsequently done. Those people who have encouraged a philosophy in education rather than legislation to ensure safety felt let down by this incident. Many outdoor people, including Graeme Dingle, and the editor, believe that individuals must ultimately be responsible for their own actions concerning their own safety. The Editor felt that the scene showing Graeme bow-riding allowed the pro-legislation lobby to gain the upper hand. As with the earlier incident, the responsibility for this scene being shown, was not that of Graeme Dingle and as such he should not be held responsible for the scene.

In both comments the wish was expressed that the forthcoming expedition of Graeme's would not also result in a film incident like those mentioned above. The Editors' use of the word 'bafoonary' in describing Graeme's actions is regrettable, and should not have been used. 'New Zealand Canoeing' magazine wishes to apologise for these comments and wishes to point out that the Holyford trip, the Ganges trip, and the subsequent expedition were all completed without incident. We acknowledge the work of Graeme in the Outdoor Pursuits Centre's canoeing course and that the supposed flippant attitude we accused Graeme of displaying, is not borne out by his work at the centre.

We would also like to point out to canoeists, that the canoeing course run by Stu Allen at the Outdoor Pursuits Centre is responsibly run and contains principles of safety subscribed to by all experienced canoeists. Any dissatisfaction expressed over the TV films mentioned does not extend to the Outdoor Pursuits Centre.

Graham Egarr,
Editor

FREE ADVERTISEMENTS?

Readers and clubs are advised that space is to be provided in each issue of 'New Zealand Canoeing' for NON-TRADE adverts. They will be free! All you need do is to jot down your advert on a scrap of paper (I suggest a \$10.00 note — it really is surprising what you can get on the margin!) and bung it in the post to us here in the top of the south. We will do our best to publish your advert as we use them to fill 'dead' space on our pages, but if three zillion ads turn up, then we will have to be selective, naturally. Maximum of 30 words.

CONSUMERS' GUIDE

In the next issue of 'New Zealand Canoeing' we hope to feature a detailed consumers guide to canoe, kayak, and rafting manufacturers and paddling accessories. To do this we will need details of all the local builders around the country. Can you supply us with details. Because of the development of custom made gear — built to customer needs, we will not list prices. All we wish to print is who makes what and where you can get what, from whom, where. As this guide is intended to help you, it can only work if you help us first, if everybody invests in sending us just one letter, then imagine the information that we can supply you with?

WANTED!

Details of canoe clubs, paddling groups no matter how informal, that are not affiliated to the New Zealand Canoeing Association. Why? We must start a connection, a communication that will gradually draw them into the fold to our mutual benefit. Even if such groups do not ever join our association, we should at least be aware of their existence and be able to communicate with them. If you are aware of such groups, please let us know here at 'New Zealand Canoeing Magazine'.

CANOEING WITH THE OUTDOOR PURSUITS CENTRE OF NEW ZEALAND

The editors of 'New Zealand Canoeing' became interested in the courses on canoeing being run by the Outdoor Pursuits Centre and arranged for an interview with the Director, Stu Allan. The report below consists of some of the more interesting answers to our questions and we reprint them here as we believe that it is time that more canoeists became aware of the facilities offered by the O.P.C.

N.Z.C. O.P.S. has been established now for eight years but few canoeists understand what you actually do, or why.

O.P.C. Yes, that is not an uncommon problem in Britain or the U.S. either where the keen canoeists and climbers move in a world that does not necessarily include the instructional centres that appear to operate aside from them.

N.Z.C. Yes I know that there has been criticism of centres such as your own, many canoeists know of the well known slalom and racing competitors and few have heard of your own staff members, they are inclined to think that your staff operate beyond the normal canoeing activities and question whether they are competent to instruct. I shall return to that issue later, but why is it that canoeists think this way?

O.P.C. I see a couple of reasons for this. Firstly our aims are wider than most people imagine and secondly, it is rare that the most fanatical exponents of a sport can slow down enough to instruct, or that those who can instruct can build up the single-mindedness to reach the top of the sport that they work in.

N.Z.C. We have noticed, within the N.Z.C.A. Instructor system that it is not necessarily the best canoeists who make the best instructors, in fact some of the best canoeists are hopeless as instructors. That certainly raises some questions — let's start with your aims, exactly what are you trying to do at O.P.C?

O.P.C. We are a charitable trust with twin aims. One relates to peoples' perceptions of themselves and others; the other relates to people in the outdoors. It is the first of these aims that is often imperfectly understood. By exposing people (usually secondary school children) to the challenges of canoeing, rafting, snow and rockclimbing, camping, caving and skiing, we attempt to build confidence and engender a spirit of giving things a go, not just in the outdoors, but in life in general. Also, by doing these activities as a group, and in a supportive atmosphere, we hope that people will learn a little about living and working together. Our other major aim involves teaching a basis of technique in each of these activities and, more generally, encouraging an appreciation of the outdoor environment and its basic conservation principles.

N.Z.C. And what part does canoeing play in all this?

O.P.C. Our standard course involves a secondary school sampling a wide range of outdoor activities over 5 days. In summer this course will involve a half day of canoeing, usually on flat water, and also a half day of rafting. Sometimes the students have canoed before and thus can be taken onto the river, but usually we are merely introducing people to the sport. Some of our other courses go further. We regularly run teacher training courses for the Education Department and these have a strong canoeing component. Also, this year we have five different canoe courses for those who simply wish to canoe better. These courses are often booked by teachers and also by N.Z.C.A. Club members.

N.Z.C. That is interesting. How do you explain this situation of people paying for instruction when they can get it free through their club?

O.P.C. Canoeing and mountaineering have a number of parallels in New Zealand. Two strong common denominators in the past have been their amateur and club traditions. Clubs have been the big thing in the New Zealand outdoors and within their limitations, are the heart of the New Zealand outdoor scene. But they do have limitations. Anyone who has organised a club instruction programme will tell you how difficult it is to keep asking the experienced members to give up their time for the new members. Also, few club instructors will be able to tell you what, or how the other instructors teach. To provide an instructional service is asking a lot of a club and people are now also looking elsewhere. They know it will cost them to come on a course at O.P.C., but, hopefully, they know that they will receive a professional return.

N.Z.C. Yes, we have realised that demands upon clubs have been increasing and that often clubs simply cannot cope. In particular clubs are receiving numerous requests from schools for help, perhaps O.P.C. will relieve the pressure here with your teachers' courses. Your mention of clubs being the heart of outdoor activities is interesting. Canoe clubs have not been around as long as climbing and tramping clubs and, in fact, the canoeing club scene is vastly different from the tramping club scene — canoe club instruction systems are far more involved and organised than most tramping club schemes, and this is why I am a little surprised that club people are actually coming to you. Of course clubs only represent a small fraction of the total number of canoeists, and again, this makes it all the more surprising. I feel that the common denominator you speak of may not be as real as is imagined —but perhaps I am wrong there.

Getting back to your instructors, what are their backgrounds?

O.P.C. Obviously they vary, but we need people who can relate to the students and introduce them to a variety of outdoor activities with an acceptable measure of safety. Because O.P.C. and Outward Bound are the only centres in New Zealand carrying a number of permanent staff, there are few highly qualified New Zealanders to draw from. Consequently, many instructors have come from Britain, although this pattern is gradually changing.

N.Z.C. This is where some of us have been critical in the past, believing that organisations such as yourselves and Outward Bound have not really opened yourself to local people. By that I mean that many local people do not know that there is the opportunity there and go overseas for experience so that they are more acceptable to yourselves where as they may well have been qualified enough before they went overseas. Perhaps you could make it known more generally what you regard as 'qualified' and let local people know when you are looking for staff. I presume that your staff are all full-time?

O.P.C. Yes the majority are because I believe this is the only way that ensures some measure of control over procedure and standards of instruction and safety. We sometimes augment this core of staff with extra temporary instructors. Barry Anderson who is well known to most canoeists is such an example. We first invited Barry to O.P.C. to instruct on our staff-training programme and now he comes in our specialised canoe courses.

N.Z.C. Just what responsibility do you take for staff training?

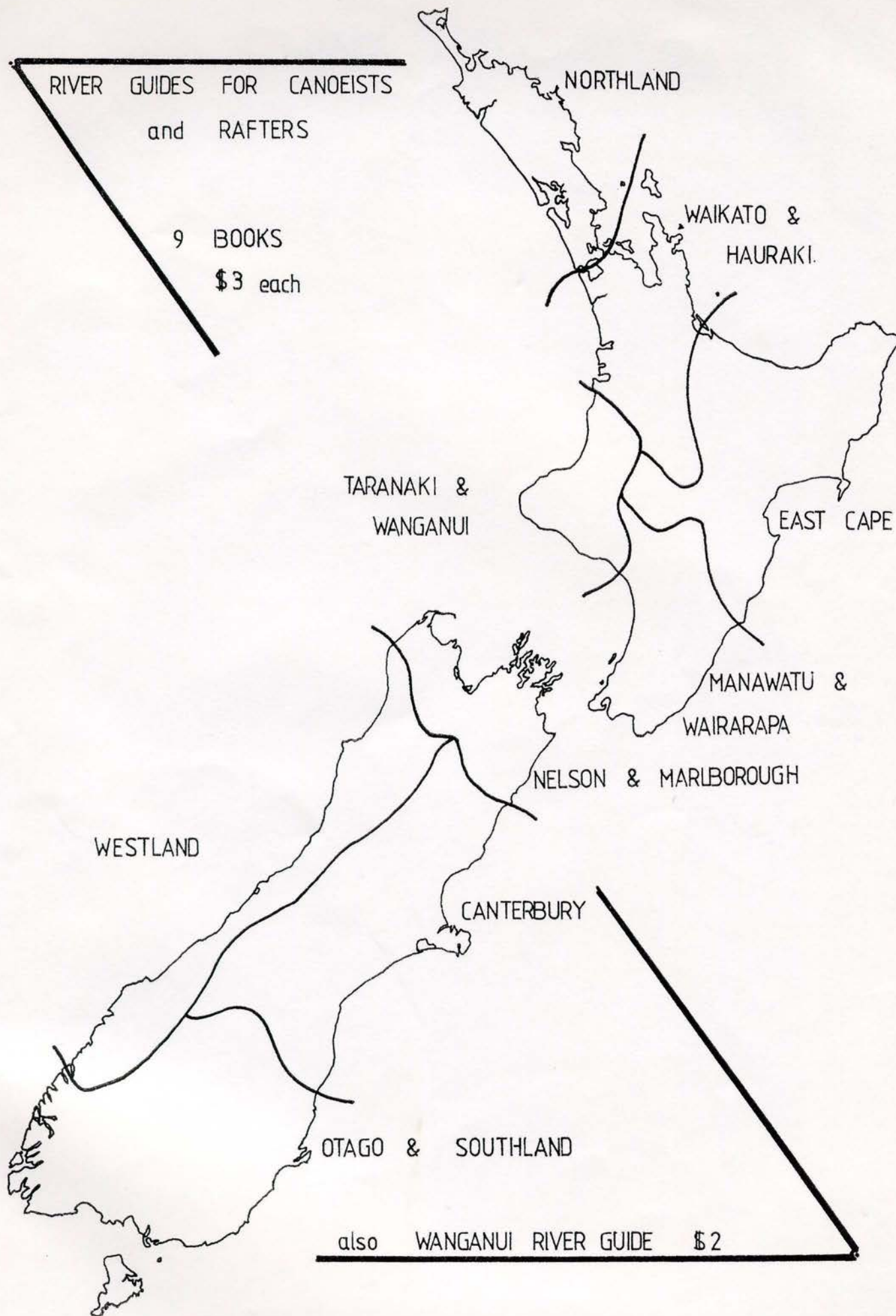
O.P.S. Well, firstly I should say that my greatest responsibility is to employ people who are capable of taking responsibility for their own training. We do allocate a week each year to training though — all staff are involved — not just skills development you understand, but also consideration of teaching resource, but we do bring people in as well. Barry Anderson I mentioned earlier. Also we have had help from the Mountain Safety Council, the Council for Recreation and Sport, the Industrial Training Service of the Labour Department. Provision exists, too, for staff to go on suitable courses — the Mountain Guides courses at Mount Cook being an example. We would keenly support any N.Z.C.A. efforts along the same lines, Mangakino in 1978 being the last course that has come to my notice. We are also working on staff exchanges both within New Zealand and overseas. These can only broaden instructional experience.

N.Z.C. The N.Z.C.A. has, unfortunately, been more concerned with its internal Instructor system and has kept all but its basic levels to members of its own clubs. We here at N.Z. Canoeing would like to see the N.Z.C.A. Instructor system stretched to include people such as yourselves. The Mangakino course was a step in that direction, however the policy has not been carried through. I hope that the N.Z.C.A. can become more flexible in the future in this respect — naturally the N.Z.C.A. loyalties must be to its members first, but I cannot see why its expertise should be denied to your organisation. Do you feel that your approach, as you have just outlined it, ensures competency? I would think that with people such as Barry Anderson, and perhaps if you invited other N.Z.C.A. people to attend, you are drawing upon our more experienced people.

O.P.C. No, not at all, I don't think that our approach will guarantee competency. In a way, I feel that of greatest importance is people's own learning experiences in their own time. Traditionally, we have had at O.P.C. a strong interest in mountaineering and rockclimbing, and now there is the same interest in canoeing. Quite honestly this sort of interest is worth any number of structured courses, but of course we must build in more than one direction.

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The oldest and best method of resuscitation — the use of a rescuer's breath to revive a victim unable to breath for himself.



1
In an unconscious person with head slumped, the tongue blocks the throat and little or no air can get into the lungs.



TILT

2

Tilt head right back.



3
Hold the head fully tilted with chin pulled forward. Take a deep breath, open your mouth wide.

Begin At Once — Delay May Be Fatal



BLOW

4

Seal your lips on the cheeks, round mouth or nose. Then blow until you see chest rise. If you are rescue breathing through the mouth, seal your lips round opened mouth, blocking nostrils with your cheek — or pinching them with your fingers — to prevent air leakage. Through nose — press lips together with your thumb — to prevent air leakage.

Make the first 4 to 5 breaths deep and rapid. Then continue with 12 to 15 breaths a minute. When the victim starts trying to breathe, keep your breath in time with his or her efforts.



WATCH

5

Remove your mouth and, whilst turning your head to watch the chest fall, listen to the victim breath out.



Rescue breathing for children

Keep the head tilted back, seal your mouth around the child's mouth and nose and blow gently, fig. (a). Use only puffs from your cheeks for infants. Stop blowing as soon as the chest starts to rise. Repeat breaths at least 20 times a minute.



B

Shows a practical alternative position for supporting victims during rescue breathing.

WHEN SHOULD YOU APPLY RESCUE BREATHING

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POISONING



For further information please contact your nearest Surf Club, Royal Life Saving Society, Red Cross, St John's Centre or Water Safety Committee.