

WA Sea Kayaker

APRIL 2019



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Front Cover Photo . Sea Kayak Fest 2019 - Geoff Paul



Welcome to this April edition of the WA Sea Kayaker Magazine.

Sandy Robson's 22,000km paddle retracing the epic paddle of Oscar Speck has placed her in an elite group of adventurers. Sandy has been recognised by Australian Geographic, Paddle Australia and now has been inducted into the Paddle WA Hall of Fame. Well deserved recognition for Sandy's achievements

Chris Mawson had a worrying experience when his PLB sent off a request for help. The only problem was, Chris didn't know about it, and it nearly set off a search and rescue operation. Chris has some advice on checking your PLB so this won't happen to you

Geoff Paull took some great photos of the Sea Kayak Fest activities with his drone. Enjoy the photos that capture the fun and comraderie that is the Fest.

Paul Browne had a blast paddling from Rockingham to Rottnest. This is a great paddle with the distance between the northern tip of Garden Island to Rottnest being the same as Fremantle to Rottnest. Paul would have taken more photos but the wind and sail was up and he was having too much fun!

Linda and Royd have written up some of the paddles they participated in at the Fest. There was action aplenty with capsizes and rescues off Bunker Bay and an exciting paddle on the west side of the Cape where the big swells roll in from the Southern ocean

There are plenty of Apps out there but which ones are useful for your kayaking preparations? Some SKCWA members share their favourites.

I am always looking for articles for the magazine, please consider contributing a story. The magazine is only as good as member's contributions.

Thanks to all those who have contributed articles to this months magazine.

Don't forget the club has a facebook page and you can be part of a paddle outside the club program by joining the Viber SKCWA group.

I hope you enjoy the magazine .



Andrew

Sandy Robson Inducted to Paddle WA Hall Of Fame

*The Paddle WA Hall of Fame consists of the highest achieving paddlers in our state .
Sandy joins an elite group of paddlers to be honoured*



Photo Credit : <https://www.paddlewa.asn.au/hall-of-fame/#1543210683847-bea1e07c-d61c>

Congratulations Sandy!

**Australian
GEOGRAPHIC**

Sandy's other accolades include
Australian Geographic's Adventurer
of the Year for 2017
The ABC Life Matters picked up the story here:

Sandy has also received the
2017 **Olegas Truchanas
Canoeing Award** .

The Award celebrates an
active or tour which best
exemplifies the spirit of
Olegas Truchanas, who
shared his passion for the
natural environment through
photography, publishing
environmental issues and
teaching young people how to
face the challenges of life.



Check Your PLB's Condition

Your Life Depends on it

Sea Kayak Fest 2019 – Personal Locator Beacons

This is hopefully an interesting and educational lesson to all.

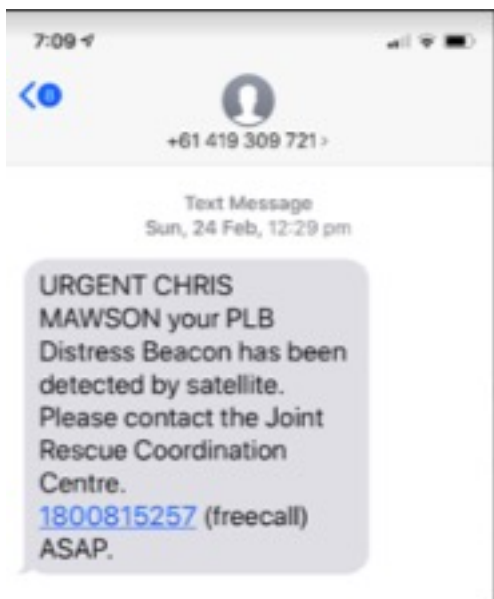
On the Sunday of the 2019 Sea Kayak Fest I participated in the Dunsborough to Meelup Bay and return, paddle, led by Jo Foley.

While enjoyable and mostly un-eventful, I had a new experience at the end of the paddle.

As we returned to the beach at Dunsborough, I decided to do a roll, as you do, for practice.

Then I packed up the gear and kayak on the ute.

Sitting in the car, I checked my mobile phone and found some new missed calls and an urgent text.



Obviously concerned, I rang the 1800 number, which connected to the Joint Rescue Coordination Centre (JRCC) in Canberra.

The person on the other end stated that my beacon had gone off, and was I in need of rescue?

I said I was OK, and not in need of rescue, and that I was not aware that my PLB had gone off. They were happy that they could call off an impending rescue.

They also said they had called one of my sons (the emergency contact) who told them I was kayaking down south, so obviously there was some cause for concern from their point of view. Fortunately, my son was still on the line to someone else at the JRCC, so they told him all was well with his dad.

While still on the phone, I checked my PLB (which was attached to my PFD), and indeed it had activated.

The person at the RCC asked if I could de-activate it. Well, how do you de-activate a PLB? This was a KTI SA2G PLB.

Eventually I discovered that by holding down the "Test" button this seemed to de-activate the beacon, so all good now.

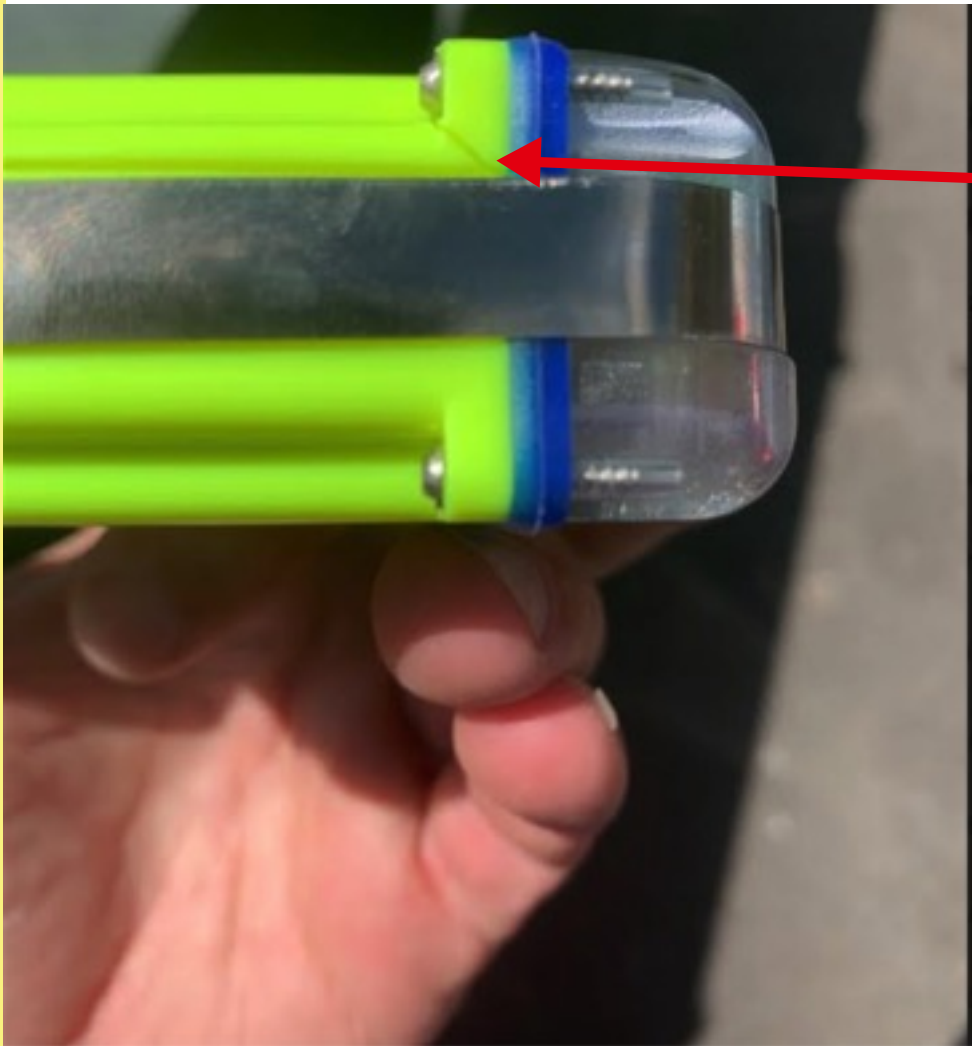
I did ask what would have happened if I hadn't rung back within a certain time period.

I was informed that the JRCC would have contacted the WA Police (who coordinate these things) and most likely a rescue helicopter would have been sent from Bunbury, and I assume some local rescue boats would be out looking as well.

I thanked them for their service, and that it seemed the 'system' worked, and that was the end of the JRCC side of things.

Later on, I checked my PLB and found a crack where one of the screws enter the housing. It also looked like there may have been some water in the housing, so I assume this is what caused the beacon to activate. I am not sure how the crack formed, as I have been quite careful looking after the PLB, always having it in the protective case. It was about 2 years old. So maybe check your PLB for damage.

However, I had thought of doing a roll at lunchtime, at Meelup Bay. This would have been a good 1.5 hours until I might have checked my iPhone, so glad I didn't as we may have encountered a full-scale search and rescue group looking for Chris Mawson's PLB amongst a group of



The Crack in the housing where water had penetrated

a dozen or so kayaks, on our way back to Dunsborough.

Later that day I emailed KTI, explaining what happened. I received the following reply:

"kti <info@kti.com.au>

27 Feb 2019, 05:39

Hi Chris,

We have only ever had one other PLB returned with a crack in the housing so it is unlikely to be a design flaw.

We suggest sending it back to our factory for investigation. We can then determine if the circuit board is salvageable or if there is internal water damage.

We recommend wrapping the PLB in two layers of aluminium foil in case there is moisture inside that could cause re-activation in transit.

Our address is:

KTI

Factory 2, 1 Kembla St

Cheltenham

VIC 3192.

Regards,

KTI SERVICE TEAM"

I have since posted it off and am awaiting a further update. Hopefully they will send it back to me as good as new (but I'm not too hopeful).

I also more recently came across this ABC News article, so another lesson or two for all of us I think.

"Discarded distress beacon prompts emergency response to Sydney tip (ABC News 04/3/2019)"

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-03-04/distress-beacon-prompts-emergency-response-to-tip/10869214>

Cheers

Chris Mawson

Rocky to Rotto

Paul Browne



Andrew Munyard, Jill Sievenpiper and I decided to get in some long distance paddle training for a possible expedition next year and so we decided to take the long route to Rottnest for the annual sea kayak club weekend.

Leaving from Palm Beach the trip is broken into 2 sections, Palm Beach to Garden Island northern point (about 14km) and then open water crossing from Garden Island to Rottnest (22km), total distance 36km.

The plan was to head up the east coast of Garden Island to the northern point, then after a short stop to stretch the legs, we would head out to sea through challenger passage out to the five fathom

bank and follow the bank across to Rottnest.

The forecast was for a gentle south easterly dropping mid-morning and swinging to a freshening south westerly. We hope to take



Sails Rigged - ready to go

advantage of the SE to make our way up the east coast of Garden Island and use the south westerly for a broad reach across five fathom bank.

All packed up and sails rigged up, we set off after our log-in call to Cockburn Sea Rescue (where they asked if we had a support boat and mobile phones before wishing us good luck on the voyage).

Unfortunately, the south easterly dropped off within 30min so it was sails down. We set a decent



pace up the east coast in beautiful calm conditions. Jill seemed to be in the zone as she lead us up the coast, until at about the 10km mark a playful dolphin broke our reverie, as it breached and swam alongside us.

We could just make out Rottnest island lighthouse on the horizon. Carnac island was clear across the ocean, and Jill remarked that if it had a few sheep running around on it, she could have been in Anglesey where she had recently been paddling.

After 14km (about 2hrs 15min) we rounded Beacon Head on the Northern point of Garden Island and landed on a



beautiful little beach to stretch the legs, have something to eat, drink and plot the course to Rotto.



From the “tea-break” bay we headed west on Challenger Passage on a bearing of 109° out to Challenger Rock.

The passage and the rock itself has an interesting history which I read about in an article in a heritage council of WA publication.

In 1827, when Captain James Stirling undertook his survey expedition, he charted a passage into Cockburn Sound, which was a relatively well protected anchorage. In 1829, the first ships arrived from England to establish the Swan River Colony.

H. M. S. Challenger, under Captain C. H. Fremantle, was the first vessel to make landfall. After spending the night of 25 April anchored off Garden Island, Captain Fremantle sent the master of the Challenger ahead to sound the passage into Cockburn Sound, using Stirling's chart. The master marked the intricate passage with buoys, but reported that Stirling's chart was inaccurate and the passage rocky. Because it was the only passage known, however, the entry was attempted.

The Challenger struck a rock midway between Carnac and Garden Islands but after five minutes she moved off and floated. Captain Fremantle was furious with the master for the way he navigated the passage. *"He placed a buoy on a rock and then steered for the buoy and ran the ship immediately on it. It was a thousand chances [to one] that we escaped being knocked to pieces, which must have been the case had it not been beautiful weather"*. Repairs had later to be made to the bottom of the vessel when she began taking water.

The rock which the Challenger struck was named Challenger Rock and the passage into the Sound became Challenger Passage or Pass.

The water depth drops from garden island to depths of around 20m within 1km before rising steeply at five fathom bank. This feature creates a deep channel between the island and rock chain in the east and five fathom bank to the west and

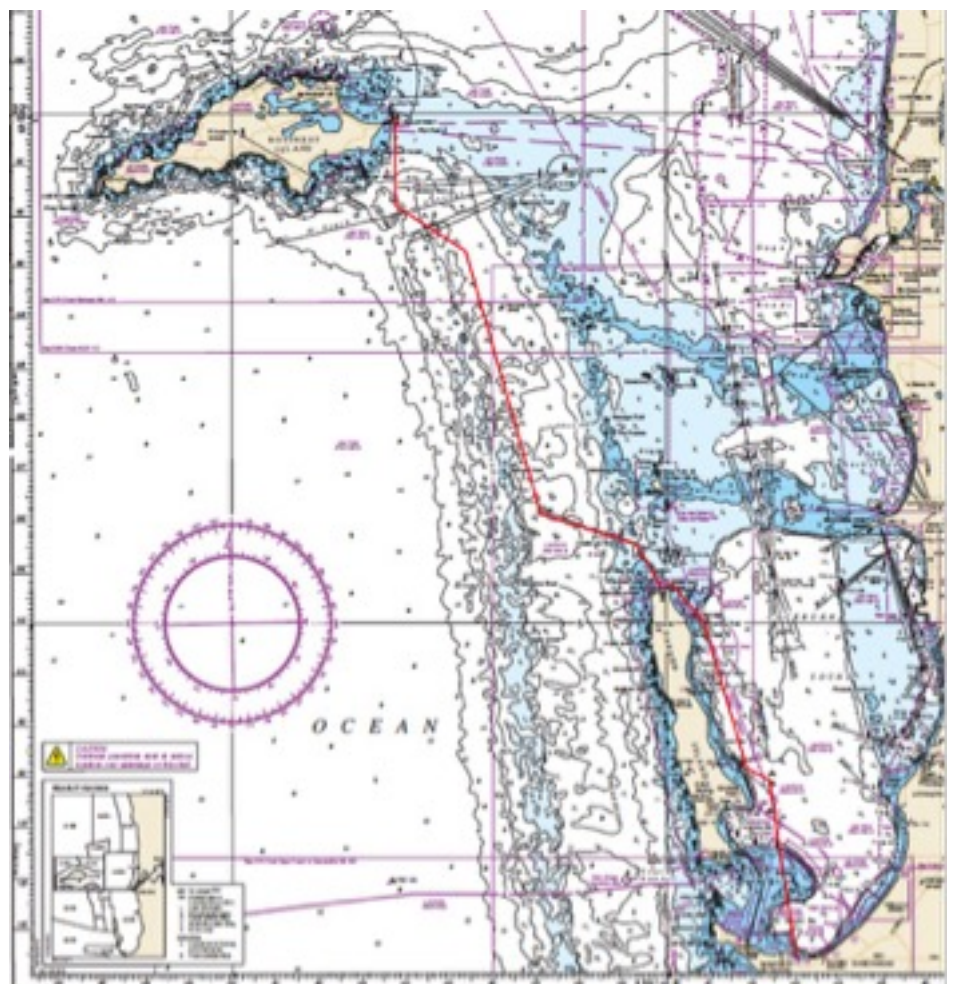


A cool spider keeping the bay free of flies

provides a relatively safe passage between Garden Island to Rottnest Island for small craft, especially when a large swell is running.

A fathom is equivalent to 6 feet, therefore five fathoms is 30ft or about 9m deep, the chart depths of five fathom bank show a range from 7 to 10m ~ to the east the water depth increases quickly from 30m to 7 to 10m.

With a swell of less than 2m and with the sea breeze filling in, we hoisted the sails and had a



magnificent sail along the five Fathom Bank. We maintained a bearing of 330° keeping our noses pointed above the lighthouse to ensure we weren't blown to far east.

In my haste to pack the night before, I had rigged my sail incorrectly, which caused it to fail half way across. A quick radio to Andrew and Jill, a speedy re-rig on the water and we were off again. Even though Andrew and Jill were at least 50m in front of me when my sail failed, the pre-agreed protocol of immediate radio contact in event of assistance meant we wasted no time and it seemed we had already gelled as a team, no fuss and a stress free repair in choppy sea was easy.

The sea breezed filled to steady 10-15knots and the sailing and surfing was sublime....22km of downwind sea kayaking on a bright sunny day. Flying fish leaping from the swells and sound of sea spray all around... it puts a smile on your dial.

A few shots of the sailing at the start....then it was too much fun and I stopped taking pictures



VITAL STATS

Total Distance – 36km

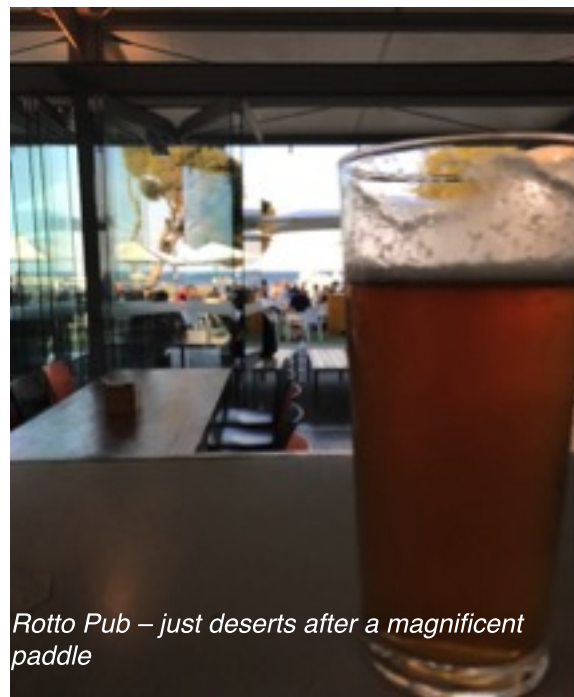
Total paddling time – 4hrs 50min @ average speed 7.4km/hr

Total Time – 5hrs:45min (including stops)

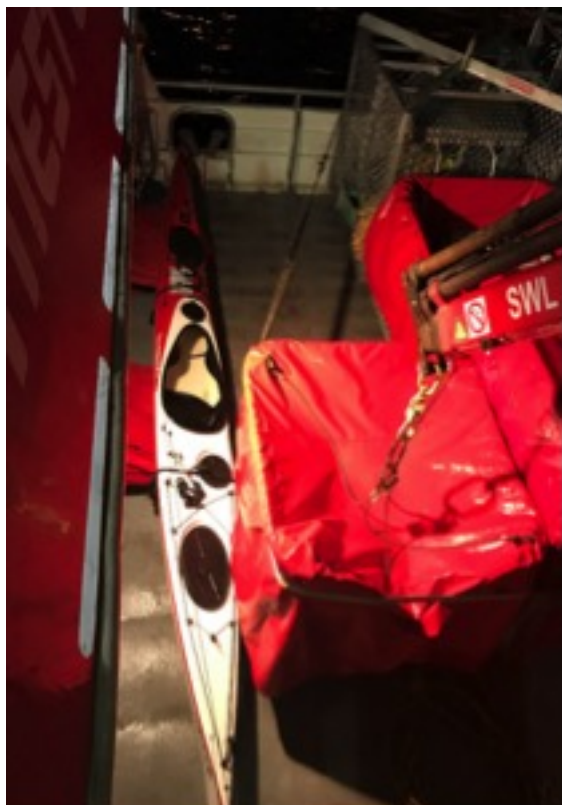
I had to pack up and head back to the mainland on the ferry, while Jill and Andrew got to enjoy another 2 days on the island with the other Sea Kayak Club members.

Editors Note: Due to this article being incorrectly filed on receiving, I apologise to Paul Browne for its delay in being included in the magazine.

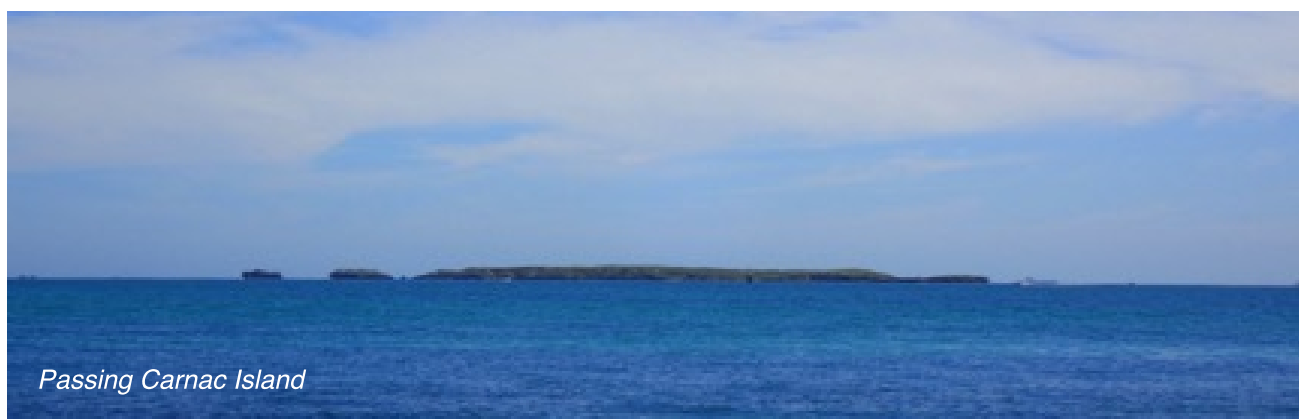
Rotto Ahoy !



Rotto Pub – just deserts after a magnificent paddle



All packed and loaded onto the Ferry and home to East Freo the fast way.



Passing Carnac Island



*Left - The Fest provided all types of paddling events from snorkeling around Busselton jetty to paddles on the west side amongst the swells
Above - Beau Miles kept the crowd entertained with his 'Secret Life of a Seakayaker*



Aerial shot of on water activities from Geoff Paull's drone

Kayak Fest 2019

All photos by Geoff Paull



Left - The flare demonstration put on by Busselton Sea Rescue was a blaze of orange light. Many people took the opportunity to have a go and contemplate the consequences of letting off a very hot flare from a kayak!



Rolling demonstrations by Ian and Jackie Hollick proved popular



Right - Evening talks were well recieved. Dave Winkworth kept everyone on the edge of their seat with croc stories from northern Australia



Below - The Fest provided a chance to practice capsiz and recovery skills



Right - Ian Hollick demonstrates a sculling roll. Just to remind you that there is no end to the skills you can acquire in rolling a kayak

Right - Time to relax at Fest 2019!

Below - Andrew Maffett recounts his amazing expedition circumnavigating South Georgia Island in the sub Antarctic



Above - an aerial view of Camp Grace

Left - Smiles all round from attendees at Fest 2019!



2019 WA Sea Kayak Fest

Royd Bussell & Linda
Glover

Two Trips around Cape
Naturaliste:



Cape Naturaliste map showing start points for Day 1 (blue star) and Day 2 (black star) paddles

what a difference a day
makes!

Paddle 1 – Sat. 23rd Feb: Eagle Bay to Sugarloaf Rock return

Distance: 23.3 km;

Wind: NW 10 kn;

Swell: SW 1.5m

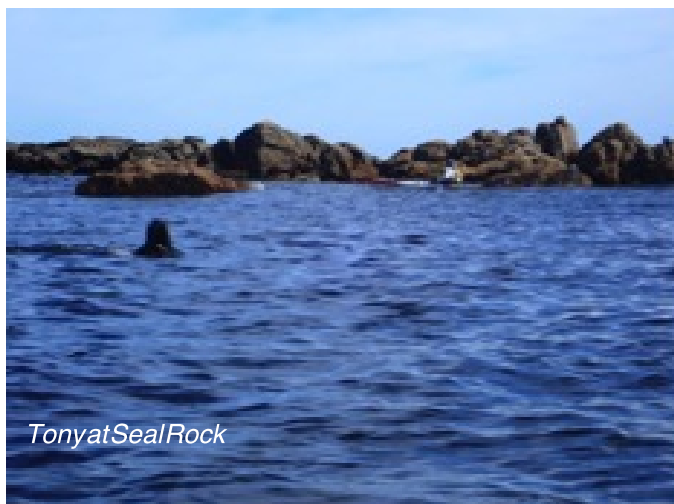
Leaders: Callan Gault supported by Steve Haddon & Sandy Robson

Participants: 17



Tony Hubbard passes the limestone grottos

The boat ramp at the northern Eagle Bay provided a good launch site for 16 kayaks, including one double. Upon launching, Paul Cooper discovered he had packed the wrong spray skirt for his chosen kayak. Fortunately



Tony at Seal Rock

there was a spare one available that fitted his rim. A light north-westerly provided ideal conditions to paddle into as we headed out of Eagle Bay and followed the orange, granitic, rocky coastline around to Rocky Point at the eastern side of Bunker Bay. The low swell produced only a small surge onto the rocks.

We made good time across Bunker Bay, taking a wide berth at the western point where large swell sets can sometimes rear up over the reef from way offshore. We had planned to take a break before rounding the point, at Shelly Beach, but due to the pleasant conditions, we decided to carry on to Cape Naturaliste and



Approaching a pod of seals

Sugarloaf Rock.

We bypassed the limestone grottos that presented a magnificent backdrop and headed to Seal Rock. There were three pods of seals resting in the water with their flippers aloft,



Approaching Sugarloaf Rock



Returning to Cape Naturaliste from south



Linda rounds the Cape

and more on the rock itself. They scattered and jumped around as we approached. Some paddlers passed through the rock garden, keeping an eye out for the small breaking waves coming through at times.

We continued on to Cape Naturaliste where the conditions remained ideal for continuing around and beyond. The wind had not increased, so we only had swell to deal with, which produced minor rebound at the Cape. On the southern side, the surf was crashing into the beaches, even in the low swell conditions.

The breeze assisted our paddle southward to Sugarloaf Rock. The fractured granite



Callan on north side of the Cape

behemoth rose before us as we approached. Discussion took place on the viability of paddling in behind the rock; however, as no-one in the group had actually done this previously, Callan wisely suggested it should not be attempted that day.



Royd sails past grottos

We paddled the return transit to the Cape in ongoing light winds and low swell. A few braver paddlers cut between the rocks on the headland while the main group erred on the side of caution and stayed further out.

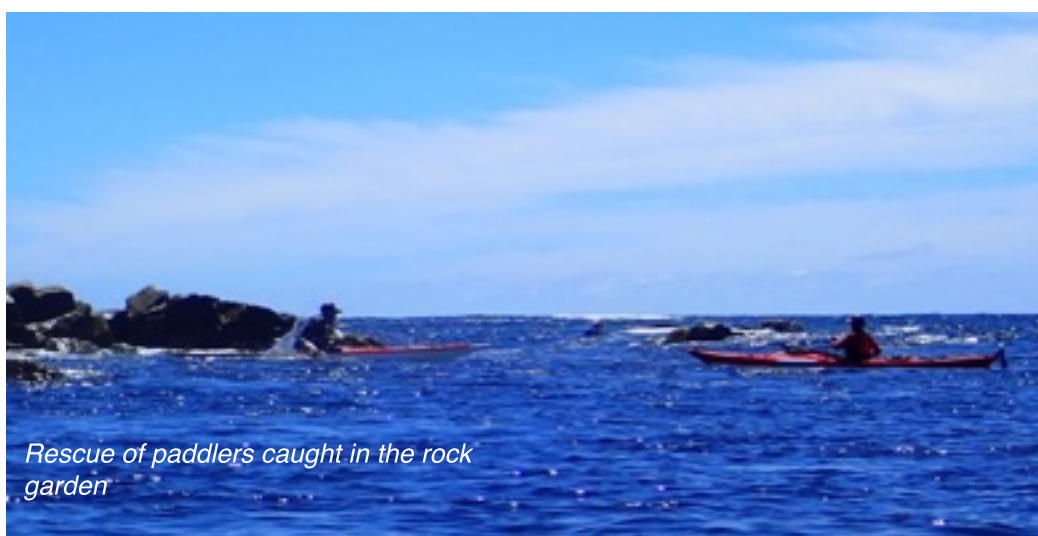
We explored the coast as we returned east-southeast with a moderate tail wind building. Royd was the only kayak-sailor. On rounding the point into Bunker Bay, several paddlers were keen to stretch their legs, after a few hours paddling. The conditions appeared benign; however, a larger swell set came through and produced some breaking waves which tipped Martin and Damon out of their boats amongst the rock gardens they had been happily exploring. Paul Cooper and others

sprang to the rescue. Once Martin and Damon were back in their kayaks unscathed, we paddled into the northwest end of the beach and landed for lunch.

We completed the final leg back to Eagle Bay without further mishap, completing 23.3 km for the day. Thank-you to Callan for leading the trip and for the support provided by the other experienced paddlers present.



Landing at Bunker Bay for lunch



Rescue of paddlers caught in the rock garden

Paddle 2 – Sun. 24th Feb: Canal Rocks to Bunker Bay

Distance: 25 km;

Wind: S-SW, 5kn building to 18 kn;

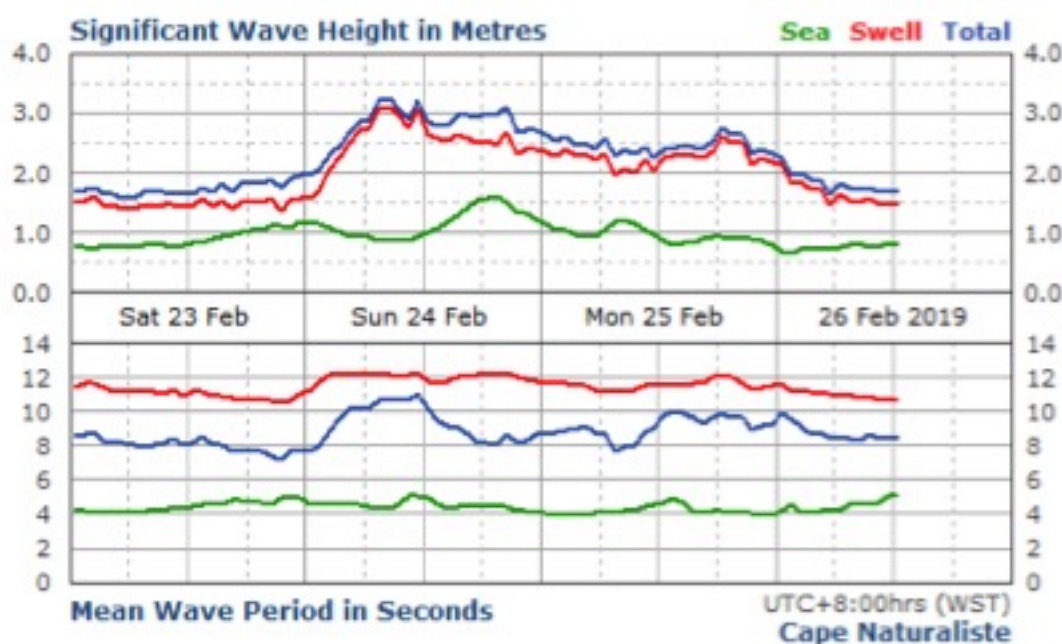
Swell: WSW 2.5m building to 3m

Leaders: Andrew Munyard & Dave Oakley supported by Andrew Maffett

Participants: 10

The swell was noticeably rising as some anxious paddlers waited for drivers to eventually return to Canal Rocks. The waiting paddlers walked over to Canal Rocks to check out the scene of the paddlers' antics on the previous day. The idea of paddling through there again that day was quickly vetoed.

Around 10am we launched through a small beach wave for a non-stop paddle around to Bunker Bay. The sea was almost glossy to begin with but the waves crashing in at Smiths Beach and Yallingup were intimidating as we



Cape Naturaliste Tide and Wave Data Source:
Department of Transport WA

After checking in with leader Dave Oakley, we signed up for the paddle from Canal Rocks to Bunker Bay - the last leg of the multi-day "Cape-to-Cape" paddle. The forecast swell was for up to 2.5m, "only a bit more than yesterday" I re-assured Linda. Winds had turned to the south and were forecast to be low in the morning, but building to 20 kn by late afternoon.

The start was somewhat delayed as logistics of boat transport and car swapping were sorted out for the ten participant paddlers, which included three Andrews (Munyard, Maffett and Burkhill). After dropping kayaks and gear at the Canal Rocks boat ramp, we drove the vehicles to Bunker Bay. Tony Beswick kindly transported the drivers back to the start point.

passed by. Dave Oakley paddled close in to the break zone, whilst most of us remained further out. We kept a cautious eye out for any rogue breaking swell, but initially at least, the deep water and moderate wind meant the swells passed harmlessly below our boats.

As we turned the corner northward, the wind was already increasing and waves were building, in addition to the swell which was now partly beam-on. Andrew Burkhill had a surprise dip in the water but rolled back up no problem, much to the relief of Linda who was paddling alongside.

The swells became larger than we had anticipated as they rose to 3m, racing on through to pound into the granite and sand coast. Together with the rising wind, it resulted in a few breaking crests which put us

on alert. We had a rest stop on the water some 400m short of Sugarloaf Rock to allow for some food intake.

We headed a fair way out to sea to avoid the rebound before rounding Sugarloaf Rock. It was a huge contrast from the previous day when we kayaked quite close in, alongside the rock. The seas were so much rougher and intimidating but at least it was a following sea now which provided for a quick paddle towards Cape Naturaliste.

We were concerned that rounding Cape Naturaliste would provide the most challenging conditions of the day, but fortunately there was no significant rebound like the previous day, probably due to the higher tide. We easily passed around the northern side and then noticed the wind on our starboard side. We were relieved to be around the Cape and looked forward to a relaxing paddle for the homeward leg to Bunker Bay. A few kayak-sails even appeared as we passed by the limestone cliffs and grottos.

On approaching the seal colony, we suddenly noticed a large breaking wave a few hundred metres from our port side. This was the large swell swinging around the Cape and leading on to the western point of Bunker Bay. We ignored the seals as we focussed on the vista of large breaking swell and surf in front of us,



Approaching Cape Naturaliste (photo – A. Munyard)

no longer in relaxed mode as the adrenalin suddenly spiked!

Andrew Maffett suggested two options for navigating the breaking swell; taking the trickier inside passage close to the rocks or the chicken-run route comprising a 200m



Royd with Sugarloaf Rock in distance (photo – A. Munyard)

dash across the swell assisted by (hopefully) good timing. Dave chose the inside passage while the remainder of us followed Andrew through the chicken-run route. As a few of us were making a dash for it, Andrew Munyard suddenly yelled “there’s a big wave coming”. Fortunately, it petered out and we all got through safely.

On rounding the point into Bunker Bay, we were struck with the full force of an 18 knot headwind. Dave safely re-joined us after rounding the point nearer to the rocks for an even bigger adrenalin rush! It was a grunt paddling in towards the beach but thoughts of a nice pie and coffee spurred us on. We landed in a small wave, avoiding the bathers on the beach. It was a long kayak portage to the cars but it felt good to be back on land after ~25 km in the boats.

We headed into Dunsborough for the post-paddle review over pies and coffees. Thanks to Dave Oakley and Andrew Munyard for leading the trip and Andrew Maffett for providing support.

SKCWA Members

Favourite Apps

Click on an Icon to go to the website

SKCWA members were invited to share with other members what are their favourite web apps to get the information they need to go paddling safely.

Here are the responses from those who



gave feedback.



Tony Blake said his favourites were Google Earth and



Navionics,



Sandy Robson agreed that Navionics is a great app "which has sea charts, great tide info and works offline" Another offline app is Ovitalmap - " [it] Allows me to download parts of the earth satellite imagery into my phone which is then accessible when out of service areas."



Windfinder Pro - "[is] Great for scoping out wind and weather in places that you are unfamiliar with, but unfortunately doesn't have an off-line function"



Paul Browne also likes the Navionics app, he uses



Garmin connect to talk to his Garmin wrist device and thought Willy weather and Sea breeze were good weather sites.

Paul is a river guardian and tracks dolphin sightings with the Dolphin Watch app. He uses Track My Phone to let his partner know where he is on the water and uses Viber and Whats App to keep in contact with other paddlers in case an opportunity arises to go for a paddle. Paul uses Google maps and Google earth for trip planning.



Steve Foreman loves Oziexplorer. " I have been using this software for planning bushwalks, paddles, driving (on and off road) holidays for over 15 years. It can interface to many quality recreational GPS receivers, simplifying and speeding up GPS data set up and sharing. The Dept. of Transport occasionally publish digital versions of their marine charts that are compatible with OziExplorer, making trip planning in the Perth coastal area very easy. The down side to using OziExplorer is the need to have thorough general understanding of the GPS system. Without this background knowledge, the OziExplorer learning curve is dauntingly steep. The other software I have used for GPS data sharing is GPS Babel which translates GPS data from just about any format, to any other format. Having said that, I have not used it since GPX became the defacto universal GPS data format. If anyone is interested to learn more on these two programs Steve is happy to talk with you about them."



Anthony Mee" I use memory map with Quickcharts on his laptop and mobile. Quickcharts had raster (electronic) copies of all official Federal and State hydrographic charts and were very inexpensive compared to the charts from the Hydrographers Office (HO)." (Eds note: it appears that Quickcharts for Australian waters is no longer available. Apparently Raster charts are no longer being made by the HO . You can get GEOTIFF images but these are VERY expensive).



Jenni Harrison uses Windyty she loves it for planning paddles according to wind direction. It can also zoom in to give you a Google Earth type view of the coast.



Royd and Linda love Navionics for tracking and navigation when in cellphone range, Navionics offers different apps for hike&bike, water sports etc. They like Willy weather, they feel it has the best maps of wind prediction and long term rainfall.



Judy Blight, as an Android users likes Wind Alert and reckons it is an excellent app for weather. For practising knots and having a reference on getting the best out of a piece of rope, Judy finds Best Knots is the simplest and easiest.



Paul Dawkins loves his to use a Garmin Vivo Active watch. "Great watch that reads heart rate and plots course and gives all stats to do with stroke rate and distance per stroke etc. The app that connects to the watch is Garmin Connect. " (Eds note:, there are a couple of people in the Hillarys group who have these devices, catch up with them or Clive to see this Dick Tracy device in action)