

## Wind and the Sounds

- Evan - 1 Dec 2004

*Wind and the Sounds* featuring Ron Moore, Phil Alley and Evan Pugh

The three of us travelled from the Waikato, caught the ferry in perfect conditions and stayed at the Linkwater Holiday Park for the night. The plan was to paddle from the Mahakipawa arm of Pelorous around to Anakiwa in Queen Charlotte but as the tide was fully out and miles of mud flats we started from Ohingaroa Bay in the Mahau Sound.

8.00 a.m. and we paddled away from our start point into a strong NW wind and struggled around Putanui Point, turning the corner and heading up Kenepuru Sound to be confronted with waterspouts appearing and attacking from our left with explosions of water nearby.

A couple of times, when hit with the fierce winds in the bay, we would be bulldozed towards shore in a big hurry while bracing frantically. Once past this area we had a good tailwind that shoved us along to Goulter Bay then we about turned and camped the night at the Ferndale Reserve near St Omer after taking a look at the shipwreck around the corner. My new tent stood up to the strong winds during the night and we had covered 28 kilometres for the day. Morning came and away by 7.00 a.m. and paddled into a strong headwind back along Kenepuru and right into the Hikapu Reach, again into headwinds, stopping for a break on the way on a sheltered beach. We had a look at Chance Bay. Phil paddled off down Nydia Bay and met up with Ron and I at Jacobs Bay where we set up camp for the night. It gets dark at 9.45 p.m. but the sun goes down at Jacobs at 4.15 p.m. but a nice camp spot 29 kilometres for the day with NW winds.

It was 7.30 a.m. before we headed off in the morning and was flat calm for the first hour before the headwinds got us for the rest of the day. We paddled around Tawero Point and due east down into Tennyson Inlet. We stayed at Matai Bay, having a wash in the cold stream and washing some gear as we had time to dry it all today. Today covered 25 kilometres and again windy and saw a few penguins on the way.

Sunday the weather forecast was for gale warnings SW winds, but it was flat calm and we were on the water at 6.30 a.m. we paddled down to Worlds End where I presume sailing ships got lost going the wrong way. We went into Ngawhakawhiti Bay where the Nydia Track is. Into the bay for a look then about turned and headed back out of this lovely area for a stop at Elaine Bay. Past the Islands and on to Waiona Bay for the night. We had done 29 kilometres for the day but two of us paddled out and around Maud Island adding another 15 kilometres for a total of 44 kilometres on a fairly settled day with the wind picking up SW. We had a bit of rain in the evening and a weka had munched my sponge while the gale force winds didn't turn up.

Day 5 - listening to the weather forecast, some Wellington houses lost their roofs and it had blown in the camp. Ferries had been cancelled so we decided to stay where we were as our next step was around the capes. We paddled for muscles (to eat) and had a great cook up, 10 kilometres today, winds from the west, sheltered in our bay but windy outside.

Up and away by 6.30 a.m., shock horror a tail wind gave us a great push out to Post Office Point and followed us around the southern end of Forsyth Island through Allen Pass, across to Tawaroa Point and south to Titirangi Bay. A tailwind all the way, it

was great through this more rugged coastline and we landed on the beach to find the camping ground. After heaving our gear and kayaks up the sand dune we pitched our tents on the grassy campsite, paid our \$5 each to the farmer washed all of our gear, showered and enjoyed the afternoon sun, walk and wekas. Today windy and 27 kilometres.

In the morning the weather forecast was again for strong 25 to 30 knot NW turning to SE which was always the forecast but we decided to proceed leaving the bay at 7.00 a.m. Around Alligator Head and across to Cape Lambert stopping on a beach one kilometre into the bay. Carrying on to Cape Jackson across Port Gore, the tide was going out giving us a helping hand but the wind was SE giving us a mixed variety of confused waves in some areas but not as bad as we expected in the morning. Rounding Cape Jackson past the seals on the shore we paddled into calm water and landed on the world's smallest beach a couple of kilometres down into Queen Charlotte Sound.

The beach would not be there with the tide in but a beach is a beach and I landed on the largest of the small waves and was driven straight for the rocks. I put the brakes on big time and stopped short of the rocky cliff. We had to lift our kayaks on to the rocks while we had a break as the waves covered the complete beach. We were sheltered all the way down to Cannibal Cove where we spent the night at this lovely site. SE wind and 33 kilometres for the day.

Our main objective was complete and even though we had been in this Sound before it was sightseeing time and of course in the morning it was windy NW winds but calmed down for an hour before turning SE. We paddled to Motuara Island, walked up the track to the viewing platform that gives you an incredible 360 deg view then back across to Cooks Cove. On leaving Cooks Cove it turned from warm, calm and sunny to a southerly 20 knot wind which we battled against. Steep waves and wind towards Blumine Island. Half way across I realised we were paddling towards Pickersgill Island that looks the same and we changed course. It rained while we set up the tents stopping instantly when we finished so we sat watching the water and the logging ship go past.

The logging ships go past, "Whoops", hadn't realized that, it was only an hour after we landed so probably would have run us over as we probably would not have heard it coming in those conditions and they would have been lucky to see us. They don't use the Tory Channel as they can't manoeuvre enough so will keep an eye out for them next time. It was 16 kilometres for the day and it got cold that night and bad weather was forecast but didn't happen.

Day 9 and guess what? It was windy NW turning to SW later. We paddled north and around Blumine Island then across to Spenser Bay. Heading south we saw a pod of dolphins jumping in the distance and paddled on to Ratimera Bay in Ruakaka Bay to camp. Two Aussies in singles were there and decided to paddle off towards Picton as the weather was settled at this stage but they got half way out of the bay and the sou'wester came back to life.

We could see the white water and waves from 2 kilometres away out in the Sound with boats struggling to make ground. Whatever the wind speed was it was pretty nasty out there and continued for a couple of hours. The Aussies made a good choice and came back to set up camp as none of us wanted to be out there. Today 20

kilometres and we paid our camp fees here in one hit rather than at each DoC campsite.

The last day on the water, 6.50 a.m. (it gets light at 5.00 a.m.) calm as it could be. We paddled the 24 kilometres to Anakiwa, finishing with a slight tail breeze to shoo us off, but the wind did pick up later of course. We had completed the loop and Phil ran back the 3.5 kilometres for the van. We packed up, went back to Linkwater and washed most of our gear as it was only early.

The trip was a ripper with some great camping spots, scenery, wildlife and isolated spots, the climax being getting around the capes which we did with ease in the end. We spent a lot of time paddling into head winds but that was just luck of the draw. It was pretty cold on some of the nights for this time of the year but we hardly had any rain and enjoyed the journey. The wekas, I love animals and the wekas and will hand feed the really friendly ones raisins... But even though we were really careful they stole the soap, some slices of bread, pieces of chocolate, wrecked my sponge. I caught 2 of them in my tent (unattended for 3 minutes). They tried stealing a whole large bar of chocolate and a big bag full of goodies but tripped over. One even snuck up and pecked the back of my leg but they keep all the food scraps down which hopefully reduces wasps and rats so just remember the little buggers can be annoying but do a good job.