

# CONN YAK

CONNECTICUT SEA KAYAKERS

December 2004

## Future Clinton Canoe & Kayak Launch

By Paul Donoski

The town of Clinton, CT will soon be fortunate enough to have a vacant police station in the center of town. A new police station is almost complete a mile East. The old police station on the South side of the Post Road is along side the Indian River which empties into Clinton Harbor. The town has decided to turn the old station into a community building. Along with this plan is a grant from CT DEP to construct a canoe and kayak launch on the Indian River right behind the building. This new site will have ample public parking, a picnic area and place to unload your boat.

The Indian River passes under the Post Road and past the old station as it winds down thru protected tidal marsh land for 1 mile before meeting the harbor. This area has abundant waterfowl such as egrets and herons. To the Northwest behind Cedar Island is the Hammonasset River which can be paddled upriver as far as I 95. Once out of the harbor you have Hammonasset State Park to the Southwest. The outside of Cedar Isl. is sandy beach and a great place for lunch stops. To the Southeast you can paddle up the Hammock River at high tide. Further Southeast along the shore is Kelsey Point and the Clinton Breakwater which can set up challenging conditions depending on the tide and wind. Beyond is Duck Island and Westbrook Harbor where you have a choice of paddling up the Menunketsuck River thru the Salt Meadow Wildlife Sanctuary or up the Patchogue River past all the Westbrook marinas. This new launch site will offer a lot of paddling opportunities and with DEP funding, it's open to everyone.

Rob Chase, a fellow ConnYaker and owner of Indian River Marina, is the chairman of the Clinton Launch Site Committee. He attended the October ConnYak meeting to collect input on the parameters for a good paddleboat launch. Hopefully this launch will be open during the Summer of 2004.

## PHOTOGRAPHY - KAYAK STYLE

By Timothy Mulherin

As the platinum rays of the remaining sunlight bounced among the tips of the settling waves like fireflies and scattered a perfect palate of warm colors across the sea grass and cattails of the island; the Great Blue Heron tucked it's wings for the final approach to it's roost.

We all had our own reasons for purchasing our first kayak; mine was finding and recording moments like this through photography. After spending countless hours standing in the marshes up to my knees in muck, waiting for some exotic shorebird to find its way to me, and then have the sun in the proper direction also, I decided there had to be a better way. The Kayak!

Photography is a science in it's own right and there are numerous books, courses and web sites dedicated to making great exposures. I will only cover what is currently available in cameras and equipment that are conducive to paddling and a few tips I have learned about "on the water" photography.

Years ago the first lesson I learned about photography and boating was when the Pentax repair center sent back my camera body with a note; (**Not economically feasible to repair.**) Water, especially salt water is not conducive to photography equipment. Fortunately newer technology has provided us with some options. I will start with the least expensive ones.

At the bottom of the scale are the Disposable Cameras; which are actually recycled after use. (Water resistant - not affected by moisture) models are available in the \$12 to \$15 range. You should purchase brand name models for the best results. These cameras are basic point and shoot

and use 35 mm film and are limited to fixed lens without flash. As with all optics, you get what you pay for.

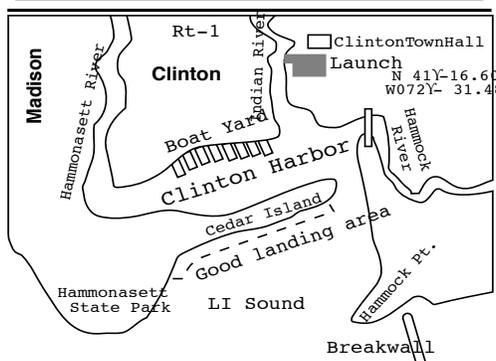
Next would be 35 mm Range Finder cameras; Olympus makes a couple models which are "weather proof"; (these should survive splashes but not submersion). A fixed lens model starts at \$125 up to \$250 for the Stylus model which includes a zoom lens and flash. Pentax WR series are point and shoot models including zoom lens and flash which are good for "brief" immersion. (brief was not by the way defined.) Priced \$175 to \$225. Sealife and Sea&Sea make water proof models good for submersion to 164 feet. These are in the \$250 to \$300 range.

Some Digital cameras are currently available. From Sealife, the DC100 model is submergible with 3 megs of memory and Olympus also features a 3 meg weather resistant unit. Both of these units can be removed from their weather housing for normal shooting and are in the \$400 range.

Underwater housings are available from Cannon for their "A series" in the \$150 to \$200 range and unlike old models all functions can be manipulated when the camera is in its housing.

This is by no means a complete list of manufacturers, models or options but should provide good specimens of what is available. I want to thank Jesse Thompson of Milford Photo who spent time going through the above information with me and who is a great resource who is always willing to help.

If like myself you already have a small fortune tied up in ordinary bodies, optics and other toys there is still hope. On the lower end; what else? Ziplock's. They work great for small cameras, electronics and accessories. I figured that out after my third cell phone in one season. They do not however withstand much abuse and should be doubled up and checked regularly for integrity. Next up is a "Dry Bag" style which I consider to be "weatherproof". These are available in many sizes up to and above fifty liters. They start at about \$14 and up. I use a "waterproof" bag which incorporates a drysuit style zipper, interior padding surrounded by an inflatable exterior bladder with secure tie down rings. It



New Clinton Launch Site

Continued

could second for a paddle float in a mess. Mine was produced by Voyageur and I remember paying a little over \$100. I also have a, yet to be tested, "waterproof" Hard case for those multi stop/multi roll trips. This "carry-on" size case cost about \$80. Of course these choices are only good for transporting to your subjects. Once on location, out it comes and you'll have to be careful.

Totally waterproof housings are also now available for almost all cameras and often cost as much as the camera. These are the rigid plastic types. They will allow you to shoot in any conditions and get totally soaked or submerged. You'll have to keep something to wipe water off the outer housing lens on occasion or keep it covered. If you want to shoot kayak action shots, this is the way to go.

Great pictures require a sturdy tripod and low speed, high-resolution film. When in a kayak neither of these are very feasible. In place of a tripod try touching your elbows together in front of you then bring them down to your chest, focus, hold your breath and shoot. This technique will produce much better results than holding your elbows to the side. You can breath now. I usually shoot with 400 speed film when on the water during the day. With the birds and boat constantly moving I have found that any slower speed produces very few crisp exposures. The best time for taking pictures is sunrise and sunset due to the low angle of the sun's rays and wildlife's habits. I usually shoot with 800 speed film during these low light situation. Albeit if you plan on enlarging your great shots the higher speed film will show a more grainy result but from experience you will get very few great shots with slow film.

Another very useful item for water photography is an UV Filter if your camera will accommodate one. This will reduce or eliminate the glare and "washout" you see in many water shots. I buy the adjustable kind so I can catch "the remaining sunlight bouncing off the tips of the settling waves" if I prefer.

Paddles straps or a paddle park are essential as you need both hands on the camera. A camera strap is also well worth the money. I prefer the neck style over the wrist style as you can paddle to adjust your view or prevent a capsized from a wave or wake. I prefer the strap over the paddle park for the same reason.

For my first boat I bought a 12 foot Wilderness Systems with a 27 inch beam. The Huge cockpit was excellent as I could stow my equipment below with out having to get into a compartment. I also purchased a zippered spray skirt which allowed easy access to my equipment although it does drip through in the surf. Once my camera was out of the waterproof bag I could protect it from spray during short

maneuvers. However, I often shoot from my regular kayak as well.

As you are out there enjoying the beautiful scenery and while the fall migration is underway take your camera so you get some pics to last you through the snow storms. Enjoy!

## '93' Another Great Year

by Wayne Smith - ConnYak President

It's the end of another club season and our last scheduled paddle was the Saturday after thanksgiving at the Thimbles. Pool sessions will be starting soon, and the drysuit crowd will continue to paddle unless the shore freezes like last winter. We'll start scheduling paddles again in April, when the weather gets a little warmer. To those of you who take the winter off, I'll see you in the spring. And to those who keep on paddlin', I'll see you on the water!

So, I'd like to take a moment to thank everyone who made this year so good for ConnYak. Firstly, to the club officers: Vice President Phil Warner, Secretary Jay Babina, Treasurer Dick Gamble, Librarian Claudine Smith, and Web Master Bobby Curtis, Thanks! You guys are still the best! Especial thanks go to Claudine, who volunteered to take over the librarian position from Jon Sweeton in the middle of the election.

And we all owe Jon Sweeton a big thank-you for creating the library. And on the topic of the library, our deepest gratitude to Mark Bodian and Outdoor Sports in Wilton for their generous donation of a number of print and video titles.

To our guests this year: Al Johnson from the US Coast Guard, Eleanor Mariani, Allen Ames, and John Annino from the DEP, Jerry and Susan Wylie, Peter Casson, Nick Dyslin from Kokatat, and Barry Gorfain from the ACA. And thanks to the people who get the newsletters out every month.

To Kate Powers, who took over running the classifieds section of the club website.

To Mark Starr of Mystic Seaport and QajaqUSA for putting together the Arctic Boat weekend at Mystic Seaport in September, which was a big success, and a lot of fun. Have any of you who attended learned how to handroll with a brick in your hand yet?

To all who assisted with the annual rescue clinic - you helped us raise our stature with the DEP considerably with your display of know-how.

To the American Canoe Association for helping us in our efforts to defeat mandatory kayak registration. And also to

everyone who helped with our presentation to the legislature.

To Don Margiano, Anita Berson, Sheldon Penn, and Susie Hackel who arranged paddles in western Connecticut and in eastern New York. We needed involvement in that area, and they stepped up.

To Dean Bertoldi for securing the Sheehan High School pool and Wallingford Park & Rec for club functions. And to Dick Gamble for securing the Essex Town Hall.

To everyone who brought something to the picnic to share, and make it yet another fun time. And to Collinsville Canoe & Kayak for their donation of goods and a gift certificate to the raffle.

To everyone who attended a club meeting or function, arranged a scheduled or hook-up paddle, and everyone who showed up for them --- you're why we exist!

## Notes from the meeting

At the November meeting, several items of club business were decided after Nick Dyslin's fantastic drysuit gasket replacing demo.

First, ConnYak accepted Kokatat's donation of a drysuit gasket replacement jig kit complete with directions. It will kept as part of the club library. If you use the kit, we ask that you buy the gaskets from a local dealer. Jay Babina video taped the seal replacement demonstration, so that will be available in the library as well.

Second, ConnYak will donate \$200 to the Friends of Outer Island. They have made access to the island a reality for paddlers, and we should support their good efforts.

Third, ConnYak will sponsor Cheri Perry's entry into the Greenland National Championships in Qaqortaq, Greenland in 2004. We are donating \$250 up front and \$250 when she goes, and waiving her pool session fees for the entire winter. Go Cheri!

Fourth, ConnYak will again make its annual donation of \$200 to the Soundkeeper fund. Since we use the sound a lot, and have a vested interest in it's health, this is a no-brainer.

Fifth, Doug Downey is putting together a VHF radio class for late winter/early spring with Adam Bolonsky. If you're interested, contact him via the bulletin board. We will post more information as the time gets closer. He needs a minimum of 10 people in the class.

We also discussed the issue of how to better coordinate large groups. We have a



new set of paddle planning guidelines (Downloadable on the website) which we will use as a reference with larger groups, and we will continue on with our current format. The main change will be that we will emphasize group cohesion and coordination. A pre-paddle "huddle" to discuss the itinerary and conditions will also be standard practice.

The consensus opinion is that most people like our current format, and agree that we should be more safety conscious and at the same time not become so strict that it ruins the fun of paddling. **ConnYak is officially a group of friends that go**

## Drysuit Seals

Seals are available at some kayak stores (Collinsville always has them in stock) and hopefully other stores will start carrying them as well and keep them in stock.

There are two size seals - small and large in neck, wrist and ankles. All small and medium suits have small seals and all

**paddling, not a guide service, not a corporation, and not an instructional service.** We will mail out an annual warning to our members about the dangers of sea kayaking, and continue to encourage them to seek accredited instruction, learn about the sport, and develop their skills.

The idea was also proposed that we have a "New Paddlers Day" in April. It would be a Friday night meeting followed by a novice paddle on Saturday. Several ideas about the format were also discussed. If you have any good ideas for this, email me at [connyak@connyak.org](mailto:connyak@connyak.org), or call (860) 423-3600. - *Wayne Smith*

women't suits have small seals. Mens large and ex-large suits have the large seals.

The most important thing you can do is always rinse salt water from the suit. The enemy of the seals is sunlight, cosmetics, sunscreen etc. A regular spray of 3003 (water based unlike Armoral and others) is good to preserve the seals. Store the suit away from sunlight and excessive heat.

## Bombproofing your roll

*by Jay Babina*

I remember years back when 3 other paddlers and myself learned to roll. One day we decided to be brave and try rolling in some rough water. We spotted each other and to our amazement, we all did it easily. No problem - what were we worried about?

Capsizing on your face, with your feathered paddle totally out of position is what you have to worry about. Practicing that exact thing is how you will prepare yourself for rolling in a real capsize situation. Doing rolls in rough water from your set-up position won't bombproof your roll, although it has its benefits.

In a real capsize, there's the fear and anxiety that the unexpected situation creates which can also cause a bit of panic leading to a sloppy execution and a failed roll. By being used to strange positions underwater and learning to get to your roll-up side of the boat and executing your roll, you will gain unbelievable confidence.

You can actually bombproof your roll in a quiet pond or pool. Wear a dive mask for these exercises until you are comfortable with them. They are easier than you think. Having a few spotters on each side or working with a partner in the pool is great.

Practice capsizing into the water on each side holding the paddle in your paddling position across the spray skirt area. Practice it dry several times first. Paddle position to set-up. Then enter the water in your paddling position and execute that exact

same movement. Paddling position to set-up - and roll up. Try capsizing this way on both sides.

Once you get confident with that, get in your normal set-up position and push your arms out as you enter the water slowly causing a stall. (in other words, you'll be left floating there face down on the wrong side of the boat) Now use your body to twist the boat over you - sinking your body under it to get to your roll-up side of the boat. This is a common and very scary position that often occurs on a capsize into the wind, a strong current or with a drysuit full of air.

Graduation Day: Hold the paddle over your head, twist it around a few times in your hand and fall in on your back. Then do the same thing but fall in forward.

These are positions and situations that commonly occur during an actual capsize, especially in rough water. They're easier to recover from than you might think. If you go through the progression, you will reach and pass Graduation Day with no problem - maybe in one pool session.

It goes without saying that the feathered paddle is the hardest to re-orient underwater if you lose your grip. Large blade paddles are also just harder to move under water to begin with especially when one end is slicing and the other is giving resistance. Many times I used to run my hand down the shaft to feel the blade on my feathered paddle to make sure it was in the right position before trying to execute the final roll. You have to remember, in most cases, you won't be able to see the blades even with your eyes open. So a lot of real capsize



**CONNYPAC MEETING - DEC 19**

**"PADDLING IN NEWFOUNDLAND"**

**SLIDE SHOW BY WAYNE SMITH**

*Friday, Dec 19, 7:00 pm*

*Essex Town Hall*

**DIRECTIONS:** Approaching from the North on Route 9, take Exit 3. At the end of the exit ramp, turn left and go under the Route 9 bridge to the light. Turn left at this light on to West Avenue.

Approaching from the South on Route 9, take Exit 3. At the end of the exit ramp turn left and go to the light. Turn right at this light on to West Avenue.

The Town Hall is about a third of a mile up the hill on the left at the corner of West Avenue and Grove Street. Turn left on Grove Street - parking is in the back of the building.



rolling is done by feel and memory. You can practice this by closing your eyes in the mask when your ready.

Being unused to capsizing in different positions is why so many paddlers who seem to have a good roll sometimes wet exit on an actual capsize. As you become a more experienced paddler, you will know when you're going to be overwhelmed by a wave, beyond any possibility of bracing through it - as in surfing or white water paddling. In these cases, experienced paddlers will tuck into their rolling set up position before entering the water allowing for an easy transition into a roll.

Anyone can be forced to wet exit, even good paddlers. A mouth full of water, a gag underwater, cold water in the ears or just plain freaking out can happen to anyone. It's nothing to be ashamed of - it's all part of learning.

Practicing your regular roll from a normal set-up is also very necessary because it will streamline your body movements making it effortless. You want that final rolling movement to just happen perfectly without thinking. Hopefully, you'll even enjoy rolling your kayak.

If you practice these exercises in a comfortable environment, you will make enormous progress, gain great confidence and have a tremendous advantage in rolling up from an actual capsize in any conditions. You will have an "almost" bombproof roll ... and, you will be much more skillful in bracing as well.

# CLASSIFIED

NORDKAPP HM good condition. Day hatch, rear oval hatch, canvas storage bag, compass. Orang / white \$1600 860-633 7254

FOR SALE - Janautica "ANADYR" Sea Kayak 17.5'X 21.25" See Mfg. webpage for complete specs. www.splashdance.com \$1845- free delivery in CT. E-mail ritey@lycos.com or call 917 567 9430

Necky Tormae 15' Kevlar w/rudder, carbon paddle, spray skirt, Yakama rack and saddles \$1300. all. Must sell - Moving 203-458-2362

Skin on Frame - Baidarka- brand new- (back problems) Willow Kayaks, only 29 pounds, 18'x 21", 8" depth to shear, skeg, very fast, Rye NY, \$1950 or best offer. 914 698 8354 or sd.a@att.net

North Shore Freewater Trek. Fiberglass, Fast, light. 16 ft 22 in, 45 lbs. Great for small to medium sized paddler. \$990 - 203 853 2909

O2 Current Designs Solstice GT- High Volume, Kevar, 17'8" Blue/white, Ex. Cond. little use. Rudder, \$2800. Excellent for camping. 860-875-7052.

Impex Montauk, fiberglass, ex cond. incl. spray skirt and compass, \$1700. 860-535-4473

Perception Pirouette with float bags, \$325 B/O, Call Bob 860-716-5993

P&H Sirius HF w/ skeg- Yellow over white, \$1,000 B/O, Call Bob 860-716-5993

Kokatat Gortex Dura drysuit. Size XL w/32" inseam and booties. Never used. Paid list \$809.00. Asking \$650.00. Will pay shipping. Contact Stuart Grant, West Cornwall, CT at 860 672-0039, email treecats@att.net

Please contact the Newsletter when classified items are sold.  
Also check the classified section on our web site.

Daggar Satitude - Kevlar, white on white w/black trim. 17'4" x 21.5", Intergal rudder w/toe central pedals, no los of bracing while steering. \$2200. 860-450-1026

Walden Experience 10', 35 lbs, 3 yrs old, paddles and cockpit cover incl. Good for fishing, children etc. \$365. 860-875-7052.

Roof Rack, Q Towers, Q26 Clips, 48" Cross bar and Hully Rollers for sale. Got a new car and no longer fits. Purchased new in 1998 and used only 3 times. \$290 new Asking \$75. Located in Stamford, CT. Call 203-325-4688 or email for more information.

Kokatat Gortex dry suit- Size large, front entry, 16 1/2" neck gasket, absolute new condition. \$ 475.00 Paddle- 22oz carbon Greg Barton Epic one piece 225- 65 % . offer. 401-596-4482 patcosma@juno.com

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December is the annual flushing of Classified ads. If your listing is still active, email jbabina@snet.net to keep it active. Please refer to the item and phone number in the ad. Title your email "ConnYak classifieds".

Unfortunately we have to do this because some ads are long outdated.

## TO JOIN CONNYAK...

ConnYak is a non profit club that is open to all paddlers interested in sea kayaking from any location. ConnYak annual membership fee is \$15.

Membership includes monthly newsletter, paddles, functions, etc. Send check to:

**ConnYak c/o Wayne Smith**

**680 Browns Road, Storrs, CT 06268-2717**

**E-MAIL: CONNYAK@CONNYAK.ORG**

**WEBSITE / BULLETIN BOARD: WWW.CONNYAK.ORG**

### T-shirts for Articles

Authors of articles for the newsletter get a free T-shirt.

### ConnYak Over-Dues

On the newsletter you receive, your due-date is on your label. If you fall behind with your dues, you get two months of newsletters which are stamped "over due" and then get cut off the list of active members.

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Send newsletter articles or classifieds to:  
Jay Babina e-mail: jbabina@snet.net  
7 Jeffrey Lane, Branford, CT 06405  
203-481-3221 Fax 203-481-1136



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