Canoeist

March 2026

Undercurrents

International sport confusion

The decision by the International Paralympics Committee to lift the ban on Russian and Belarus competitors from competing in the Winter Paralympics under their own flags rather than under a neutral flag has far wider implications than just other nations boycotting the opening ceremony in protest. The ban was imposed in 2022 not because of Russia's invasion of Ukraine but because Paralympic sport was being used to promote the invasion, evidence of which has now ceased.

The issue has been further confused because the international ruling bodies of participating sports have not lifted their bans. This was the situation for the International Ski & Snowboard Federation, who were over ruled by the Court of Arbitration of Sport. The case has been put that those in sport should be able to compete regardless of the behaviour of their politicians and military. On the other hand, it was likely to result in an unpleasant atmosphere in the Paralympic Village. A Ukranian competitor was banned for wearing a helmet bearing pictures of Ukranian competitors killed by the Russians, representative of over 650 Ukranian competitors and sports officials killed by the Russians and over 800 of their sports facilities damaged, hardly likely to result in fair competition.

Where does this leave us for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympic Games? Are the Americans at risk of being banned from their own event, following their unprovoked attack on Iran, an unprecedented situation? Would it be possible for them to host an Olympic Games from which they were barred or would the venue need to be moved elsewhere? By allowing British airbases to be used, do we risk being placed in a similar situation to Belarus? Could de-escalation begin with regime change in Iran or elsewhere or is escalation more likely? China wants Taiwan but has been discouraged from taking it by the past threat of the USA. Unlike the USA, China does not have a deleted weapons stockpile. Even travelling to international sporting events could get even more difficult before it gets better.

Coastal erosion

When Devonport dockyard was being extended a source of aggregate was needed and it was decided to take it from off Beesands and Hallsands in Start Bay. Dredging started in 1897 and 650,000t was removed before protests by the local fishermen at the effects on the seabed managed to stop the work but the damage had already been done. Hallsands, built on a raised beach, began to be affected immediately but a combination of high spring tides and an easterly storm in January 1917 destroyed 29 of the 30 houses in the village, just a few pieces of wall remaining at the foot of the cliffs. The whole of the bay suffers a heavy dump with easterly winds.

The remains of Hallsands.

The A379 in 2018.

The A379 was built in 1856 and has been protected in part by low profile sheet piling defences since 1918. In the winter of 2001 the sea broke through the Slapton Line, which carries the road, and locals fought for the road to be adequately protected, fearing that the council approach of soft defences would result in the closure of the vital road. It suffered major damage in 2018 and again in February this year, also with significant damage to buildings in Torcross. The seawall in Torcross was built in 1980 after previous defences were damaged. Sea defences in front of properties in Torcross have moved recently but the EA say they are sound.

Beesands is named from bay sands. The Skerries Bank offshore provides protection with the sea breaking on it, especially at the southwest end in bad weather. There is an inside passage but there can be broken water all the way to the coast as far as Tinsey Head, between Beesands and Hallsands, with strong easterly winds.

Caroline Voaden (S Devon, LD) has presented a 40,000 signature petition to the Government and has led an Adjournment Debate on the subject. The Government have offered sympathy.

Jenny Riddell-Carpenter (Suffolk Coastal, Lab) has presented a Select Committee statement, *Erosion of trust: the impact of coastal erosion on communities*, on behalf of the EFRA Committee, her constituency including Thorpeness where 11 houses have been lost to the sea this year. As well as losing their homes, residents have each had to pay up to £50,000 to demolish what was left.

Happisburgh, Hemsby, the East Riding and the Isle of Wight are other locations facing serious coastal erosion.

Motor emissions

Munira Wilson (Twickenham, LD) has implied that boat owners on canals and rivers should be generating their own renewable energy power to reduce exhausts. While most canoes are paddled or sailed there are some fitted with motors and the occasional experimental canoe with solar panels, even a steam canoe or two. Defra are considering craft that do not carry AIS transponders rather than small fry at this time.

IDBF incorporated

The IDBF has been incorporated in Hong Kong, the traditional home of dragon boat racing, with 84% of delegates at an extraordinary congress in favour. This protects officials from financial liability in the event of bankruptcy, being sued or facing other such threats. Speeches

at the congress were given by presidents Stephen Fox of the Alliance of Independent Recognised Members of Sport and Raffaele Chiulli of the Association of IOC Recognised International Sports Federations.

Slow down

Off Center Harbor, organizers of the Worldwide Classic Boat Show, advise 'When friends visit us on the Maine coast, we suggest that they bypass tourists' typical urge to see the entire coastline in one week on their first trip. Instead, we encourage them to slow down, pick one area and get to know it better by "feeling into" the real Maine.

'Downeast Maine starts way "downwind" (on the summer's southwest breeze) and the way "east" of the big beaches and throngs of Bostonians and New Yorkers on quick getaways at Maine's southern shores.

'The area near Acadia National Park is a top draw, of course, but those who are in the know pick quieter areas around the edges of the park and away from T shirt shoppers in Bar Harbor. In these quieter areas you can experience the beauty of the park area with much less people.'

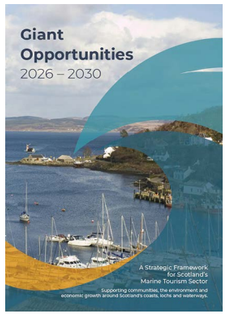
They also mention Northeast Harbor, Southwest Harbor and the Cranberry Isles but OCH members have a large stock of videos available to undertake some preliminary exploration.

Bill Quinn

The Coasties 50 50 Challenge is an endurance event starting on June 19th to celebrate 50 years of the Coastguard Association. The 240km journey will be human powered with kayaks, swimming, running and cycling, visiting all 14 mainland coastguard stations in Area 12, Polzeath to Portishead. No engines will be used. The challenge intends to raise funds for the CGA.

Growth potential in Scottish marine tourism

Produced by British Marine Scotland with funding by the Crown Estate Scotland, Giant Opportunities is the latest iteration of the 2015 Awaking the Giant, looking at the potential for marine sports in Scotland. Paddle sports are seen as a significant growth area for marine tourism. The document identifies shortages in skills and funding for small businesses and for access but the overall picture looks bright for marine tourism.



The guides are back

Last year we removed our back issues from our website because of problems with an AI user. Over the past 43 years we have published over 300 detailed guides to canals, rivers and the coast. Most of these have been updated and used as the basis for books. However, over 40 have not been republished.

Go to Index of guides -> View list of guides to see the full list. This is a comprehensive index. Each entry has the original publication issue date and any book or books in which there are more recent versions, the free books and even a few guides published in *Sailing Today*.

Where there is not a more recent version we will forward the original guide free of charge if you make a request to mail@canoeist.co.uk. This also applies to *More British Navigations*. This should avoid problems with AI abuse.

The Thule Keswick Mountain Festival takes place over May 15-17th this year. The wide range of activities includes a selection of canoeing options:

* Paddle Safer Course - Two hour safety course for all people getting on the water.
* Kids & Family Wet & Wild Session - Family or young individuals to enjoy being on the water in a lighthearted session.
* Kids & Family Quiet Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Sensitive Session - Journeying, sensory challenges and collective non competitive games.
* Solo Your Boat - The standard skill set for controlling an open canoe is to control the vessel from a single side.
* Herberts Island Adventure - A journey to Herbert's Island for a spark lit wood fired kettle heated (yes, you get a go) hot chocolate, explore and adventure around the island.

What's new Eureka!

Malawi Travel Marketing Consortium

In the Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve in Malawi, Tongole Wilderness Retreat have reintroduced guided canoeing on the Bua River, offering a low impact non motorized safari experience led by trained rangers and guides. New guided walking trails were also launched.

The Gotrack Q20 GPS tracker has a waterproof case and a large SOS button connected to a call centre for two way phone communication if rescue is needed. The 1Ah rechargeable battery gives 16 days of standby and uses GPS to give a location. Made in China, it features real time tracking and can detect falls.

Rethinking holidays

Many people are rethinking their holiday plans in the light of current world turmoil, especially visiting lower profile places. Water by Nature suggest that their South Island trip in New Zealand over Feb 20th - Mar 7th 2027 has many suitable ingredients, including sea kayaks on the coast, rafting classic rivers, sailing in the Bay of Islands and hiking alpine valleys.

The iTagPro is a compact bluetooth tracker in a waterproof case. A CR2032 battery lasts for up to six months and there is no subscription charge.

ACCESS & environment

New bathing sites

Dan Norris (NE Somerset & Hanham, Ind) has asked what steps are being taken to support new bathing sites in the west of England. The response from Emma Hardy is that consultations are being undertaken on 13 new bathing sites nominated in England, none in the southwest. If successful, pollution levels will be measured and if too high a bathing water designation will be removed.

Jim Shannon (Strangford, DUP) asked about reducing agricultural runoff into rivers and waterways. Hardy advised that the EA hope to reduce agricultural nitrogen, phosphorous and sediment by 40% by 2038. Action taken includes doubling of funding for farm inspections

Developments on the bank

A Parliamentary Written Question by Kerry McCarthy (Bristol E, Lab) about waterway access for recreation has brought the usual reply from Hardy about use of licensed larger rivers and about nine new river walks in England, of which the first has been revealed as the Mersey between Stockport and Manchester, seemingly following the line of the M60 around Manchester.

Mary Creagh announced that a competition will be run this year to name others. Baroness Hayman of Ullock said that 3,235km of the King Charles III England Coast Path, the world's longest coastal path, is now open with 895km being established and a further 126km waiting for the Government to decide. £5,500,000 has been spent upgrading the Coast to Coast walk across northern England.

Creagh stated that 22km² of new woodland was planted in 2024/5 with 70% public access, the Government to spend £1,000,000,000 on tree planting during this Parliament.

All of this contrasts with the claims of successive Governments that finding any legislation taking away the public right of navigation on rivers in England and Wales for boat users would not be good use of public money.

Question

Kerry McCarthy
Labour
Bristol East — Commons

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps she is taking to improve the safety and availability of public access to waterways for recreation and wellbeing.

Answer

Emma Hardy
Labour
Kingston upon Hull West and Haltemprice — Commons

Answered on

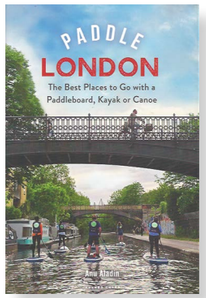
4 March 2026

The Government recognises the importance of providing access to the outdoors for people's health and wellbeing and is working to ensure that this access is safe and appropriate. As part of this, Defra has committed in its new Environmental Improvement Plan to create 9 new National River Walks, one in every region of England. The Mersey Valley Way will be the first of those nine new walks.

Public access onto around 3,400 miles of our regulated inland waterways, including several of the larger rivers, is available through the licensing regimes of the navigation authorities that own or manage them. Defra is considering its approach to improving access onto unregulated inland waterways and is committed to working with stakeholders as this develops.
The Environment Agency has published advice on how to stay safe while visiting waterways.

BOOKS

Paddle London



Anu Aladin
Adlard Coles
978 1 3994 1680 1
2026
230 x 160mm
208 pages, paperback
£18.99

Despite the title, waters covered may be up to an hour out of London by public transport, the author being a paddleboarder with an inflatable paddleboard but not a driver, willing to walk the better part of half an hour or take a quarter hour taxi ride to get from a railway station to her launch point. London guides do not usually feature Hertford, Reading, Basingstoke or Godalming.

The subtitle talks of paddleboards, kayaks and canoes but this is clearly by a paddleboarder for paddleboarders. The book is extensively illustrated yet all but one of the 40 sections produce only three pictures between them including canoes or kayaks, with or without users.

The book is divided into three sections, the River Thames, the canals (which include the Lee Navigation but not the Basingstoke Canal) and the others. A location map would have been helpful as sections of routes are not always consecutive and may be in opposite directions or might be out and back. Section sketch maps do not have scales, which appear to differ from one to another, although the text gives distances, which vary considerably, some being respectably long.

The exception to the sections is the Thames from Battersea to Greenwich. Paddleboarders are heavily restricted on the Thames in central London so this section is done as part of a kayak group in touring double kayaks with the London Kayak Co. It does not fit in well with the rest of the book, is not a good summary of the Port of London Authority's 132 page *Tideway Code*, which suggests sea kayaks are best for this route and should be read before paddling here, and would have been better omitted.

There are occasional references to canoes and kayaks such as using the boat rollers on the River Ember, referencing clubs that are providers and pointing out the Lee Valley and Dorney Olympic courses. Some useful information not usually seen are the heights of carpark barriers, toilet locations and where duckweed, wind, runners or anglers are likely to make progress difficult.

Interestingly, 'The engineered channel of the Ember is private, but Paddle UK members have an agreement that allows them to use this stretch.' Some years ago I received an anonymous leak from BCU HQ of a policy document that said access agreements should not be made unless they gave members an advantage over non members, ie disadvantaging non members was more important than improving things for all canoeists, an attitude I do not know of any other governing body adopting. This brought a response that the policy had been discontinued but that appears not to be the case.

Each section gives its difficulty, water type, portages, licences, parking and a brief history. Start and finish points are given as What3Words but the text explains where these are. A sample of wildlife, positive or negative, is introduced for each section. Places to obtain food and drink are located without their menus being detailed. Generally, this book reads better than some other recent guidebooks and canoeists can learn from it.

However, following on from King's Meads Nature Reserve on the Lee Navigation at Hertford, we are told 'you might spot a sign inviting you to explore a naturist spot. Newcomers are warmly welcome.' Is that a typo somewhere or a misunderstanding?

A sense of place - Teignmouth

Coastwatch

The National Coastwatch Institution viewpoint at Teignmouth, formerly the Coastguard lookout point, is easily accessible, entered directly off the road leading from the front to the public viewpoint east towards Dawlish. In warm weather the team leave the door open and they are usually pleased to have visitors showing interest in their work. It is informative to take a look through their telescope to see how much detail they can see of those on the sea and how far away they can view activity usefully.

The pier

A view that has changed in February is the end of the pier, lost during a winter storm. Dawlish has also suffered seawall damage this winter, not the section which was rebuilt following major damage to the railway line in 2014 although the railway turns away from the sea as it reaches Teignmouth.

Sauna

Teignmouth shares with Exmouth a mobile sauna in a community trailer parked on the front near the pier. A schedule is posted in advance and use needs to be booked online. Cost is what you can afford to pay, free for those facing hardship. Even on a winter's day the sea is near enough for a sauna followed by a dip in the waves. A coastal paddle could end up at the rivermouth carpark with a short walk along the front to the pier and the sauna. Catch the tides right with mid ebb on spring tides and you will be able to get a quick run down the River Teign estuary and some of the fastest water in the area on which to play at the rivermouth before taking out.

How naturism denigrated Polynesian canoes

Based on the second of two papers delivered by James Wharram at the Early Man &the Ocean conference held at the Norwegian Maritime Museum & Kontiki Museum, Oslo in September 2010.

In 2008 the Kontiki Museum organized the first Early Man & the Ocean Film Festival & Conference on maritime experimental archaeology. At this first conference my design partner, Hanneke Boon, and I gave a paper on our proposed Lapita Voyage in which we would be following the Lapita migration route into the Pacific on two traditional Pacific double canoes.

I was pleased to report that between Nov 2008 and March 2009 we successfully completed this 4,000 Nm voyage.

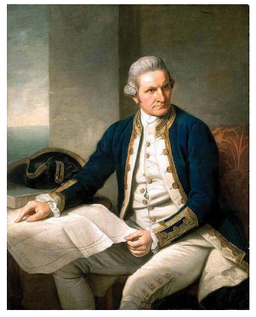
In Oct 2009 I should have been giving a presentation about the Lapita Voyage at ISBSA12 in Istanbul; unfortunately, on that day I was being operated on for bowel cancer.

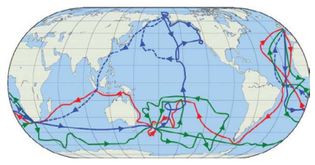
In haste we assembled our ideas, photos and film shot on the voyage onto a DVD which was shown at the ISBSA conference in Turkey; since then it has been through some further editing and it would be shown at this film festival.

It was from our experience of the Lapita Voyage and from other of our earlier experimental voyages that I would try to answer some of the many interesting issues raised by the organizers of this 2010 conference.

They wrote 'This conference is dedicated to how historical or experimental voyages influenced the society they were a part of, or the society with which they came in contact'.

Following their suggestion, we took the social significance of Captain Cook's voyages in the Pacific as a starting point. This led us on an interesting journey to the Western women's sexual liberation movement of the 20th century and why the Pacific canoe form craft were denigrated in the 19th century by the missionaries and in the 20th century by the New Zealander Andrew Sharp.





Left: Captain Cook
Above: Captain Cook's voyages.

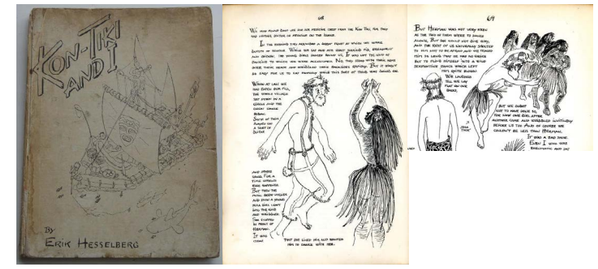
An important social aspect of Captain Cook's voyages was that he and his crews were Christians. As Christians, their social relationships and moral code were guided by 'the book', ie the *Bible*, including the *Old Testament*.

A prominent moral issue in the *Old Testament* (as well as in the Jewish *Torah* and the Muslim *Koran*) is that a woman's sexuality and sight of her body is in total control of her nearest male relative.

With this moral attitude accepted as the norm, on arrival in Tahiti, Cook and his crew were overwhelmed at finding a happy society where women were in control of their sexuality and bodies. In this society female nakedness was not a sin. When reports about this reached Europe this concept worked like yeast in our Western society.

The French Captain Bougainville, voyaging the Pacific at around the same time as Cook, not only commented on the freedom of women but on having discovered natural man living in a golden age. These ideas fed directly into the ideas of freedom at the time of the French Revolution, into French art, Gauguin and, later, into the green philosophy of present day Westerners. Nearly 200 years later, when Thor Heyerdahl sailed his *Kon-Tiki* voyage across the Pacific, the aspect of sexual freedom in Polynesian society still had a social impact. After the voyage, two of the crew members of the *Kon-Tiki* again drew attention to the freedom of Pacific island women.

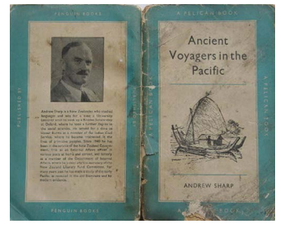
Eric Hesselberg, in his book of drawings, *Kon-Tiki & I*, published in 1950, showed bare breasted women taking the initiative in dance.



Bengt Danielson's widely read book *Love in the South Seas*, published in 1956, gave impetus to the women's liberation movement of that time. It described attitudes to female freedom, as previously reported by Captain Cook. These women's freedoms are now an accepted part of life for modern Western women.

In 1840 the London Missionary society, concerned over the nakedness and sex habits of the people of the Pacific, went out to the Pacific to convert the natives to Godly ways. They found the canoe culture of the Polynesians was at the centre of the 'ungodly ways'. To destroy the root of the immoral society, they had to denigrate and destroy their boats.

It was through the missionaries that the concept that canoe craft were not seaworthy began.



This attitude to the unseaworthiness of the Pacific canoe form craft was still upheld 100 years later by Andrew Sharp, a retired New Zealand civil servant, who, in the mid 1950s, wrote the book *Ancient Voyagers in the Pacific*.

In this book he wrote that the Pacific canoe craft could not sail to windward, waves would wash over the decks and the craft would break up in storm conditions. He also denied there was any evidence they could navigate over long distances. His opinion was that all migrations in the Pacific had been drift voyages.

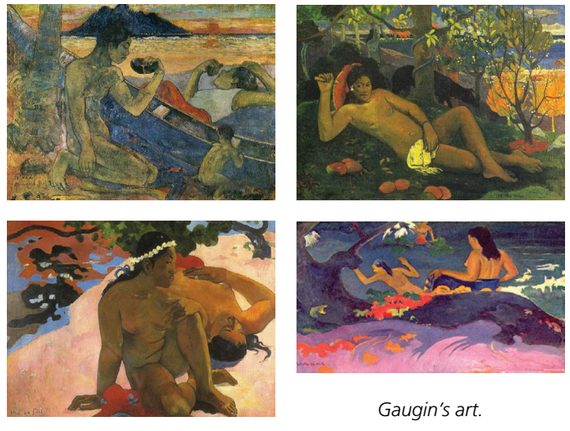
In the same book he also denigrated the Viking voyages to Iceland and Greenland, claiming they could have been no more than accidental and that the Vinland voyage was a myth.

So influential were the negative writings of Sharp that the book Polynesian Seafarers by Edward Dodd, published in 1972, has nine references to Andrew Sharp's theories, which some people were still taking seriously.

In 1979 Ben Finney, in his book *Hokule'a, the Way to Tahiti*, describes how, in the late 1950s, Andrew Sharp's theories spurred him on to try to prove him wrong.

What Dodd and Finney either did not realize or failed to mention is that the theories of Sharp in relation to seagoing canoe craft had already been refuted, before they were even written!

In 1937-39 a Frenchman, Eric de Bisschop, built a 38 ft double canoe

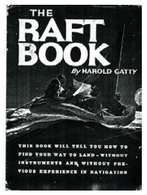


Gaugin's art.

on Waikiki beach in Hawaii with hull lines based on a Tuamotuan voyaging canoe and sailed her successfully across the Pacific, Indian and Atlantic oceans back to France, an incredible voyage of experimental archaeology, proving the seaworthiness and sailing abilities of the Polynesian double canoe. His book *The Voyage of the Kaimiloa* was published in England in 1940.

Eric de Bisschop's double canoe Kaimiloa.

In 1943 the US Hydrographic Department published the widely distributed *Raft Book* by Harold Gatty for downed wartime airmen in the Pacific. In this book he explains clearly how Polynesians navigated without instruments and how airmen afloat on a raft could trust this method to guide them to safety. He gained this information from Pacific islanders who still had this knowledge. Indeed, this navigational knowledge is still there as can be seen in the Lapita Voyage film.



The Raft Book *by Harold Gatty.*

These two books, published more than 10 years before Sharp, refuted all his negative claims.

To many it is known that I was inspired by the voyages of Eric de Bisschop and Thor Heyerdahl and, myself, made two experimental Atlantic voyages on double canoes from 1955 to 1959 to show to Western sailors that the Pacific canoe form craft was safe and seaworthy and could become a suitable cruising craft for modern sailors. My voyages also refuted Andrew Sharp's theories.

My pioneering work in the offshore sailing capabilities of the Pacific double canoe contributed to the development of the now widely accepted modern sailing craft, the catamaran.

The organizers of this conference asked 'Could experimental voyages have influenced the technological choices for the future?' The development of the modern catamaran is proof that they have.

As a result of my pioneering Atlantic voyages on canoe craft I became a designer of such craft for Western people. Where I was unique from the other upcoming catamaran designers was that I recognized the importance of the Stone Age design principles that made the Pacific canoe form craft so seaworthy, ie hull shapes that had innate windward ability without using keels or centreboards, flexibility in hull connections and low, flexible but windward rigs. The Lapita Voyage boats showed how these principles actually worked.

Thousands of my designs have been self built all over the world and many have made long ocean voyages, again and again proving the seaworthy design features of the canoe form craft of the Pacific.

The 14m Wharram Oro Kiskadee *at the end of her round the world voyage (1977-1982).*

These voyages also showed the innate wish of some of mankind to lead a nomadic lifestyle on the sea. These modern sea nomads and the voyages they achieved are an indication of how the early migration voyages in the Pacific could have been achieved by small family groups on moderate size boats. By the mid 1970s half a dozen had sailed across the Pacific and many more across the Atlantic.

While these first Western sea nomads were crossing oceans on their Polynesian double canoes, a separate revival of Polynesian ships began in Hawaii in 1974.

The Polynesian Voyaging Society was formed to give the Polynesian people of Hawaii a cultural heritage.

On the big island group of Hawaii the destructive influence of the missionaries and American Western culture had been the greatest and by the 1970s the original Polynesian population was a small minority and very little remained of their Polynesian culture.

The ships that had been there in Cook's days were gone; so was the knowledge of how they worked and sailed. The only canoes remaining were those used for paddling competitions and tourists.

To the people that joined the Polynesian Voyaging Society the double canoe was the heroic symbol of their cultural heritage. Ben Finney has called this sailing development Cultural Identity Voyaging.

However, the Pacific Ocean is not only inhabited by the Polynesians, who suffered the worst destruction of culture; there are the huge areas inhabited by Filipinos, Indonesians, Melanesians and Micronesians. Most of these people are still using canoe form craft for fishing or local transport and still carry the memories of their fathers' or grandfathers' sailing days.

Measuring a canoe in the Maskelyne islands in Vanuatu.

We experienced this when we sailed through the Melanesian islands of Vanuatu on our 63 ft double canoe *Spirit of Gaia* in 1996. We had many discussions with canoe using people. We would sit under a sun shelter and discuss sail design, windward ability etc with groups of old men, scratching drawings in the sand.

We would sit under a sun shelter with the old men, discussing design.

Wharram designed Melanesia outrigger canoe, built from 2 sheets of ply.

This voyage led to two things. First, a paper on our studies of the canoe form craft of the Stone Age sailors of the Indo Pacific Ocean continuum, published in 1997. It also led to a practical project, the design of a small and simple 16 ft outrigger canoe (Melanesia) that could be built from two sheets of plywood, the first of a new range of ethnic designs.

We designed it for one particular island in the Maskelynes, where the elders approached us with their dilemma that good sized canoe trees were getting scarce and they would have to consider building in plywood.

We sent them the design and for 10 years heard no more. However, hundreds of Western sailors worldwide started building it.

Then we were approached by a New Zealander who was helping people in Vanuatu to set up a boatbuilding school. It turned out this was on the island where we had discussed the plywood boatbuilding issue. The sending of the outrigger design had acted as a catalyst.

To help them, we donated one of our existing 28 ft double canoe designs; they built it in just 6 weeks from a kit of materials prepared in New Zealand and, immediately after launching, set off with 20 people aboard!

20 people aboard our donated double canoe design in Vanuatu.

Aboard Lapita Anuta *during the Lapita Voyage.*

Lapita Tikopia *sailing into Raboul, New Guinea.*

In 2008, on our Lapita Voyage through the Philippines, Indonesia, New Guinea and the Solomons, the people we met easily identified with the Lapita Voyage expedition canoes. They saw canoes without engines, with simple rigging, a simple lifestyle, ie we cooked on deck on kerosene stoves as used by the locals and, above all, we had no accompanying Western escort yacht to supply Western comforts and goodies and/or towing facilities.

This simplicity of the Lapita Voyage canoes always led to instant communication with people we met on the way, to discuss canoes and canoe sailing.

For example, on arrival in the small Mono Island in the Solomons, in a discussion with a man called Roy (it turned out he had been a former Governor of the Western Province), he asked the question could we help them with the design of an offshore sailing double canoe, smaller than the Lapita boats, to carry smoked tuna, for sale, across the 70 Nm open sea to Bougainville?

It had to be bigger than their traditional 18 ft open single outrigger paddling canoes and, of course, be able to sail. The people were well aware of the rising cost of oil and the problems associated with outboard motors.

James Wharram meets Roy in Mono Island

5.5m traditional canoe built by Roy in Mono island.

We offered to develop such a design, adapting the simple house building materials and techniques we saw them using on the island. Importing Western boatbuilding materials is too costly for people living in remote islands unless they are offered outside financial assistance.

In November 2009 the English yacht magazine *Classic Boat*, who, under my urging, had begun to feature Scandinavian boats, including the Seastallion, announced a design competition for an eco fishing boat, under 10m length, no engine, so it would not fall under complex European rules for fishing craft.

Mindful of the promise to Roy of Mono Island, we designed a 27 ft double canoe which we call the Amatasi. In July of 2010 *Classic Boat* published the winner of their design competition, describing the winning boat, based on Stone Age design principles, as 'surprisingly radical'. They had chosen our Amatasi design.

Model of eco fishing boat Amatasi

We would build the prototype in Cornwall. The building materials for this craft would cost around £3,500 to £4,000. The

James Wharram and Hanneke Boon photographs

Model of eco fishing boat Amatasi.

Cornwall Marine Network was supporting the project and *Classic Boat* would report its building progress.

With its wide deck area, shallow draft and simplicity, this design is also suitable for youth groups to build and go exploring with or as a low cost family cruiser. Back in the Pacific the Tongan government department for fishing in Va'vau, on viewing the design, were interested in its use for fishing expeditions of around three days.

From Micronesia we received an impassioned plea for the design in these words:

'We are interested in the Amatasi 27 as a starter project to reintroduce sailing into much of the outer islands of the Federal States of Micronesia. The inter island transportation system is almost non existent and we are losing people due to many, many reasons but, basically, lack of transport; *help* by responding.'

I hoped, with the Lapita Voyage film being shown and this presentation, we had contributed to the wishes of the organizers of this conference 'for the discussion on the social significance of experimental ocean voyages' and could experimental voyages have influenced technological choices for the future?

James Wharram (died 2021) and **Hanneke Boon**

Further Reading

• *Recreating the migration route of the proto Polynesians.*

The first of two papers, delivered by James Wharram at the Early Man & the Ocean conference, at the Norwegian Maritime Museum & Kontiki Museum, Oslo. As a young man, dreaming of sea adventure, I was inspired by Thor Heyerdahl and his 1947 Kon-Tiki voyage. With this voyage he established the basic premises of experimental marine archaeology, which continue to this day. Heyerdahl had addressed himself to this problem: 'How had Pacific Ocean man arrived across 1,000s of miles of ocean in the central Pacific islands?'

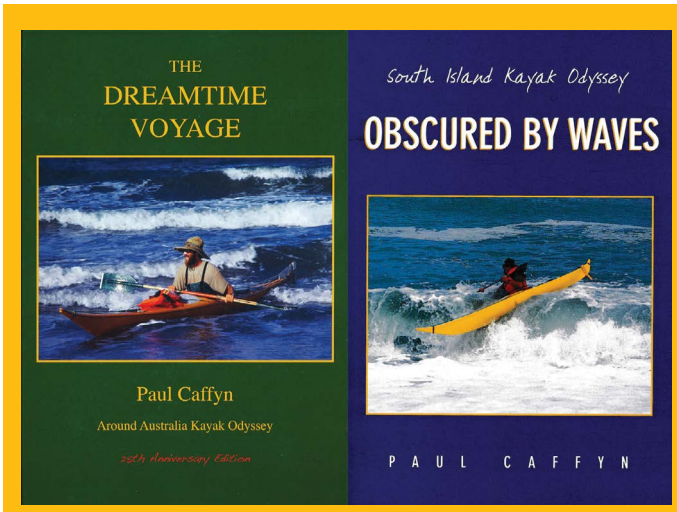
• *Lapita Voyage.*

Read more about the Lapita Voyage expedition, including crew logs and many pictures. This expedition began in the first week of November 2008 when two 38 ft double canoes, designed by James Wharram Designs, based on an ancient Polynesian canoe hull form and built in the Philippines, set out on a 4,000 Nm voyage along the island chains of the Philippines, Indonesia, New Guinea and the Solomons.

The Lapita Voyage was our April 2009 lead story. Other aspects of this story were noted in last month's On Show.

Hanneke's drawing of the Melanesia.

Spirit of Gaia *wintering in Scilly in 2023.*



Paul Caffyn Klassic Kayaking Books

Now available in England, both the Australian and South Island books.
Sadly, the exorbitant cost of overseas postage has killed off mailing these A4 size books from NZ.
However, an old work colleague, Mick, loads up his hand luggage after he visits NZ annually. He has already sold out of the recent 2nd edition of the Stewart Island book but the two classics are available in England from:
paulskayakbooksuk@gmail.com

INCIDENT FILE

Report losses

Reporting on a day's finds in the Clyde, George Parsonage of Glasgow Humane Society included a damaged canoe. 'I contacted the Canoe Association re the canoe that I had found. The description matched one lost two weeks ago in Lanarkshire. It was unplifted. I explained that whenever someone loses a canoe, it should be reported to Police, Humane Society, Weirman and Port Authority as anyone seeing an upturned canoe could think there had been an accident and a time consuming, expensive, unnecessary search be started. Unnecessary as the person who had come out of the canoe was safe and well at home and of course the emergency services involved in any search could have been required elsewhere.'

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