

**WA Trip Report**  
**Georgian Bay Sea Kayaking – Snug Harbour to Franklin Island**  
**August 21-23, 2015**

**Participants:** Karen, Ross, Brent, Sherri, Anita, Monique, Peter, Anne

Excitement and nerves were in the air as our group set out from Snug Harbour under a brilliant blue sky. It was another chance for the four veterans with us to test their mettle against the wind and waves of Georgian Bay. The four newbies wondered whether the trip would whet their appetite or simply their soak their gear. Undeterred by strong winds and small craft warnings, we headed toward our destination on Franklin Island, blissfully unaware of what lay ahead.



After a three hour paddle, we found our weekend home on the west side of Franklin Island – a gorgeous spot overlooking a quiet bay. Before long, the appetizers were out and the weekend was in full swing.

Friday's wind continued through the night, so on Saturday morning we opted to explore some of the sheltered bays and inlets that line the island. After a break for lunch, we put on our brave faces and headed out to practice kayak rescue skills. Although several of us claimed nerves, (and I secretly harboured fears I would be ill) everyone soon relaxed and Ross and Karen guided us through our manoeuvres with good humour and skill. We returned to camp tired and happy. Several of us remarked that we'd had more fun than we'd ever imagined. We newbies were content to know that we were now actually equipped to paddle on Georgian Bay in gale force winds.



Dinner was another hearty meal of endless appetizers and delicious pasta with organic vegetable sauce, topped off with that Canadian classic – S’mores! The wind had shifted and the waxing moon lit the night sky as we headed off to bed, ready for a good night’s sleep.

Unfortunately, nobody got one. At 3 a.m., we were awakened by the sound of our food bag being ripped from its tree. A black bear had walked right into our camp and it seemed he was hungry. As locals later explained, a late frost had killed all the blueberries and the bears had been behaving badly this year. Fortunately, black bears scare easily and after much yelling and banging of pots, Ross, Brent, Karen and Peter managed to chase him away. But within two hours, he was back again. This time he ripped the hatch covers off most of our kayaks before anyone realized that he was there. Again, Ross, Brent, Karen and Peter scared him off, this time for good.



We were all awake by sunrise, bleary-eyed and anxious to set out before the wind picked up again. To avoid predicted meter high waves, we followed a sheltered inlet to the end of the island. We carried our boats over a 50 meter portage and emerged at the tip of Franklin Island with Snug Harbour in our sights. It was a short paddle under a brilliant blue sky to the take-out. We were on our way home by midday, full of stories and glad for the time we had spent on yet another excellent wilderness adventure.

-Anita-