

New Hamburg to Stony Point – 27 long miles!

Morning starts well at Jims beautiful log cabin and we wake for boosted coffee. Jim continues to be the perfect host. We are on a slightly different schedule as tide times are now the ruling factor. We head down to meet Iain and Simon at the local Holiday Inn and grab some breakfast there as well as some admin time for me to continue to update blogs. We depart for some downtime at Jims and to get some interview time with Matt from the BBC. I have managed to get Jim to throw on a wash and consequently will be slightly less smelly.

Soon it is time to head down to White's Marina and we get set for the off. We have a 24 mile paddle ahead of us. Iain King is paddling with me and Glenn has Ned Sullivan of Scenic Hudson. Ned's organisation is responsible for acquiring and protecting land and marine resources and so far have 10% protected for future generations. Their target is much larger and hopefully they will find others with deeper pockets to support their goals. We stop after 5 miles or so at a beach location where Ned is leaving us, and Scott Keller, our good friend is taking to the water. There is a great kayak store and dock at the beach and slip area. We also visit the new arts and education centre which was showing an exquisite collection on the spirit of the River. These are exactly the sort of facilities needed to showcase and maximise these world class natural assets.

A quick paddler swap later and we are on the move with Scott in the Spare Seat enjoying the warm sunshine. Today we get to pass Westpoint and World's End, one of the narrowest points on the Hudson River. It was a major place where the Independence forces used chains across the River to prevent the British ships making headway. We paddle down the waterway towards Westpoint and pass Bannermans Castle which is an interesting location. Originally home to an arms dealer it was reputedly styled on a Scottish Castle but the cement and brick was strengthened with bed springs. Neil Caplan has been responsible for much of the preservation of walls and turrets but despite only being a century old is in much worse condition than many of its Scot's counterparts. We meet Neil on the dock of the Island and explain that with our mileage we don't have time to stop but we will be back.

Westpoint is nestled amongst highest peaks and the River Valley. It is captivating and Iain and I sing Flower of Scotland whilst Scott and Glenn sing the Star Spangled Banner. We paddle on slowly hampered by stronger winds in the channel and a changing current with the tide. After Westpoint we pass the Clearwater sailing boat looking quite the blast from the past. We stop just short of Stony Point, it is now 7pm and make the decision to blast the final 3-4 miles with

Glenn and I in the Spare Seat. We are all exhausted to the extent that I manage to perform the art of falling over slowly having tripped on my flip flops...Doh. Just before Stony Point we pass a nuclear power station. It is slightly surreal and doesn't seem to belong there!

As darkness is approaching we arrive at Stony Point, 2 very tired paddlers. Scott has been a real trooper and picked up the second kayak and Iain and dropped him to the site. Stony Point is a heritage site and historic battleground where the British were defeated. It is now a Parks Service re-enactment site with old tents, a forge and a full camp. Simon has been given the briefing and we have been authorised to camp there which is a real privilege. We opt to camp in the old canvass dining shelter rather than pitch our Vango tents. We head into town briefly and grab some food at the local family run diner. Drifting off to sleep in the camp is one of the highlights of our trip with the stars watching over us. Soon Stony Point descends into different crescendo's of snoring.