

TALES FROM THE RIVERBANK



JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2010

Global Warming Confirmed It's Otter at Halton



This sighting of an Otter swimming in the river at Halton was captured on camera recently by Mark Dillon. He was out walking rather than paddling as the river was in flood. The flooded river was obviously no problem to the Otter who swam off downstream at great speed.

Editor

The Rothay Kayak Triathlon`

Paul Binks

This week the Ribble Canoe Club Sports Development sub committee will be presenting to the IOC a proposal for including a new sport in the 2012 Olympics; the Kayak Triathlon.

This is not a new sport as such, but has been developed by kayakers world wide over a number of years. A fine example of this discipline being practiced, was on the Rothay Trip in mid October '09. Well over 30 intrepid kayakers from Ribble and OAG took part, splitting into 3 groups. The 'Improvers' class getting on the water last, consisted of me (possibly the longest running improver the club has ever had), Gary and Adam Fishwick and Rachel, supported by Jo & Allan H and John Roberts. At the start comments like, "I've never seen the Rothay that high and that' fast", didn't help to calm our nerves. The middle of the week following our trip Grasmere was flooded along with most of the rest of The Lakes.

Let me explain the discipline; the kayak triathlon is done in teams of 2. Stage one, 'The Paddle', requires both paddlers to paddle down a river, points awarded by severity of flow, obstacles and overall length paddled. Stage two, "The Swim", happens when one paddler capsizes. The object is then to get the capsized paddler to safety as soon as possible. The person still in their boat, the 'Nudger', has primary responsibility for looking after the one that isn't in the boat. Points are awarded for speed of recovery and self rescue, and points deducted for excessive time in the water. The third stage is the "Recovery and Run" where the "Nudger" has to try and nudge the boat to the side whilst the now rescued paddler has to sprint along the river bank to help retrieve the boat. Points awarded

for shortest distance to recover the boat, speed of run, severity of the flow etc.

First off the mark was Gary. His stage one, the paddle, was measured in inches rather than yards but he made up the distance element by having to walk half a mile to Grasmere it's self. Points deducted for the three fences he had to climb over, but points awarded to Allan and John for team work in rescuing paddler and boat. Next up was Adam, who actually bottled out of taking part in the triathlon by doing two consecutive rolls; his first in moving water (well done Adam). Rachel was determined not to play at all and remained steadfastly upright.

Next it was my turn. Just below the weir on Grasmere I had a short paddle on a very rough piece of water that had actually caught Pat out earlier that day. Followed by an excellent rescue from Allan and Jo. I think the final stage of the triathlon was the best. Allan fought valiantly to nudge my boat to the side but it was taken down stream about 150 yards. I, still hold of my paddle, ran like a mad man along the path with no regard for the wet and bedraggled walkers; they looked miserable, may be they should learn that it rains in the Lakes and it's better to be wet and paddling than wet and walking.

Gary was obviously impressed by my prowess in the sport as he attempted to master this discipline a few times on the way back. All in all I think we spent nearly 4 hours on the water, about twice as long as anyone else – we obviously wanted to get our monies worth out of the coaches! A great day and I wouldn't have wanted to spend a very wet Saturday in October anywhere else.

Paul Binks

Down from the hills

Beverley Saville

To me canoeing is all about places, the places a canoe can take you, unique and special and shared by few. Paddling along the canal, I wasn't really getting it, but the first time I sat in the middle of a lake looking across the water to the shore things began to click into place. Then crossing the sea to the beautiful coral sand beaches of Arisaig I could have, in fact to be honest did, weep with the pure joy and beauty of it. Now I was really starting to understand the privilege afforded by this simple craft, to move through the water so quietly, hands dipping in the waves, to feel the big sky all around and the space of the water. Then to arrive in beautiful places, isolated from roads and even walkers, really special places of such peace and tranquillity, inspiring places that make you want to return again and again.

After a few years of exploring these places something else began to happen, I wanted to capture the feeling they gave me. This is when I came down from the hills. After many years of painting the mountains and hills I began to paint the water. My canoeing had given me something I never sought from it or expected, inspiration. There is a quality of light and space and being in the elements which I wanted to record and communicate to others, so I descended from the hills and began to paint the sea and the sky and the places my canoe has taken me to.

Painting these pictures takes me back to these exceptional places and I hope that some of you who like to paddle will enjoy looking at them.



If you paddle out from Arisaig, around Rhu point you come to this beautiful little beach, looking out across the sea you can see the rain coming.



I had often crossed Rannoch Moor in the car and felt a little tug, sensing it deserved more. A canoeing trip on Loch Ba at last gave me a chance to experience this unique and beautiful place.



There are perfect days for taking to the water when the only thing that ruffles the surface is you as you move through it. This is Loch Gary on such a day. What better way to enjoy a place like this than in a canoe.



Paddling in to the tranquillity of Loch Moidart around the rugged island of Eilean Shona. Here in the tranquil bay by Castle Tiorum it was hard to know where water finished and land began.



The big sky is always changing, and the water reflects these changes. Out on the water you feel part of this dynamic reflective world. This is a painting of Eigg and Rhum, but not really it's a painting of sky and sea and the joy of paddling in the evening light.



All along the coast between Arisaig and Mallaig are beautiful beaches, fabulous places to set shore, watch the sky drift by and listen to the sea. This is Camusdarach bay.

So thanks to my lovely canoe and the lovely canoeists of Ribble club for taking me to such wonderful places and opening up a whole new world to me it truly is an inspiration to get out on the water.

Bev Saville

Review “Scottish Sea Kayak Trail”

Andy Biggs

In recent years there has been a noticeable growth in sea kayaking, this may be for several reasons, unreliable river levels, access problems and the desire to “get away” from it all, have all contributed to this rise. As an activity it can now be regularly seen in the media and has encouraged those with other experience of the outdoors to come and try it for themselves. Another reason that is often overlooked, is that UK waters can provide some of the best sea kayaking venues around the world, locations such as Pembrokeshire, Anglesey and Scotland’s west coast offer unequalled pleasure and challenge.

As the numbers of participants have risen, then so have the range of publications, guides and DVD’s. The latest of these is “Scottish Sea Kayak Trail”, published by Pesda Press. This small company based in North Wales has grown considerably over recent years and raised the level of guide book writing and production to new levels.

The “Scottish Sea Kayak Trail” is a guide book that takes the reader from the island of Gigha in the south in four stages to the Summer Islands in the north, off the coast near Ullapool. It aims to give the reader the information and inspiration to complete the journey in one long haul or in a series of stages, perhaps spread out over a number of different holidays. The journey is clearly one of the premier trips in the world, dramatic scenery, headlands, islands, wildlife, culture and even the infamous “Scottish Midge” will make this a memorable trip for those who undertake just one of the sections. The suggested route generally follows the inside safer course, inside of Mull and Skye but does have to take in Ardnamurchan and Rubha Reidh lighthouses, which both mark special headlands that are a challenge for any paddler.

The book is well illustrated through colour photographs, which will get even the most

sedate arm chair reader to hose down that moss covered kayak hiding under the hedge in the back garden. The first half of the guide gives advice about planning, safety and wildlife. Much of this information can be found in other books, but it does put it into a local context, including phone numbers and other useful contacts. In the second half, the book moves onto more detailed information about the trip itself. The description follows a narrative that moves between information to complete the trip, local history and short stories. Each section has a small map of the area and detail tidal flows, which provides enough information to guide you through with the minimum of ease. However, the guide doesn’t provide all the information you’ll need and certainly a series of OS maps and a set of tide tables are the minimum additional requirements, but with these in hand there should be no reason why you shouldn’t safely arrive at the Summer Isles.

Although the book is well written and published some of the layout and design ideas do not work so well. The first is the size of the maps, the text on them and colour scheme, even with excellent eyesight, are just too small and difficult to read. Also the layout of the text is broken by other coloured text boxes, which means the reader’s progress is continually hampered by the need to jump over these. The reader is enticed to read these, this leads to a disjointed and a rather frustrating mixture of information, which then needs to be reorganised in your mind. It’s not until you try and read it does this explanation become clearer. Although the guide does give some suggestions for variations, such as going around the outside of Seil Island in the south, larger challenges such as the outside of Mull and the giant headlands of Skye are avoided. Some of this information could be included at the expense of some of the early advice that can be found in other sources and would make better use of the available space.

In spite of these criticisms, this is a very good book. It's not aimed at the beginner and it is assumed that the reader has a good level of skill in both boat handling and navigation to successfully complete the trip. Along side Pesda's previously published guide to Scotland, the two books open up some of the mysteries behind the tides and navigational problems of the West coast. For the beginner it can provide a true inspiration and motivation to gain the higher level of skill

that such a trip demands. The book is another worthy title in Pesda's increasing catalogue of kayak guides. Club members are fortunate that our library has been swelled by its addition and will mean that we can all thoroughly research any trip to this premier location, before leaving the comfort of our armchair.

Andy Biggs

"A Snug Fit"

Suzanne Thomas

What is it that makes me think,
"Why does my boat appear to shrink?"
It feels so snug this time of year
with all this additional gear.
A fleece here, a fleece there,
it really leaves me in despair.
When all at once I realise,
which really is a great surprise?
Too much pudding and Christmas cheer
is the real reason, I fear.
So, onwards and upwards I must go,
out for a paddle with a Ho Ho Ho !

HALTON DEVELOPMENTS

Pat Green

Norman and I visited the Halton site on Sunday 12 October 2009. It was an open day put on by the new owners of the site Lancaster Cohousing. Our idea was to see what, if anything had changed, and to confirm that all was OK for us to start using access to the river from the site for canoeing from 1 November.

They asked if we had any information about the history of the site and any pictures that date back to when the mill buildings were still standing and being used by Ribble Canoe

Club. Norman has since produced a short DVD presentation that brings together film footage shot by him and Dennis Smith and photographs taken by him and Stephen Singleton. This was well received by Lancaster Cohousing.

Before we left we were asked if we would like to take out a lease on property, or perhaps use changing facilities, showers, toilets, or storage and pay a rent.

I was not sure who to direct this information to, so I decided to use a scatter gun approach, sending information to local canoe clubs, NW Regional Officers and Chris Hawkesworth Planning and Facilities Manager Canoe England (BCU) to canvas views and ideas. To my surprise, Chris Hawkesworth's response was very positive, he suggested amongst other things we should set up a steering group made up of local paddlers and that the scheme may be eligible for a CE Capital Grant.

We had a meeting with Chris Coates (Lancaster Cohousing) in December. We told him what Chris Hawkesworth had suggested and explained that as a minimum we would like the use of toilets, and that other things like changing facilities and showers would be a bonus.

Chris Coates told us that initially they had been looking at converting the Luneside Engineering Works into a number of small industrial units and it was within this building that toilets, showers etc could be provided. However since then they have had interest from a business that would like to take over the whole building. If this did happen then toilets, showers etc. would not be provided for our use, as the new leaseholders would then have full control of the building.

Chris then went on to say that they had not decided what to do with the building on the river bank next to the one owned by Luneside Fisheries (the boathouse). This building will need a new roof and work done on the inside of the building. He said this building may be made available to us if the Luneside Engineering Works was not available. This would then mean looking at available grants i.e. CE Capital Grant Scheme.

As an aside he said Lancaster Cohousing was looking into creating a riverside footpath from the bridge at Denny Beck Weir to the Halton Weir. This path would be open to the public and would link up to the current footpath that continues onto Crook-o-Lune.

Another interesting project he told us about was that the Halton Community are planning to build a small Hydro Electric Scheme near Forge Weir (the Weir at the top of the rapids).

Lancaster Cohousing are keen to work with canoeists, but until they know whether they are going to lease the Engineering Works to one business or develop it as separate units there cannot be anything firm offered to us.

Chris Coates said that he thought it would be a good idea for the canoeists to form a steering group and that he would be in touch in the New Year.

The improved access situation at Halton could be enhanced by establishing good relations with the new landowners. This could mean that we would secure direct access onto the rapids without having to paddle up from Denny Beck Weir. By having use of buildings there could be possible opportunities for other water related activities. For example, White Water Rescue, Coaching Courses etc.

NOTE: There is NO change to the river access arrangements, canoeing is only allowed between November and March plus any additional dates that are agreed with the fishing consortium.

If you would like to get involved or have any suggestions please email me newsletter@ribblecanoeclub.co.uk

My view is this looks like one of those opportunities that don't come along very often at such a prime canoeing venue. Opportunities were missed when the fishing rights together with a building were sold in the early 1990's. Let's not let it slip away again!

Pat Green
BCU LRA River Lune

AGM 2009

Agenda

Notice is hereby given that the Ribble Canoe Club AGM for the year ending 31st December 2009 will be held on **Thursday 25th February 2010** at **The Hand & Dagger, Salwick** at 7:30 for 8:00pm start for the following purposes:

1. To receive the Hon. Secretary's report for the year ended 31st Dec 2009.
2. To receive the Hon. Treasurer's report and Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31st Dec 2009.
3. To receive the Competition Secretary's report for the year ended 31st Dec 2009
4. To receive the Hon. Chairman's report for the year ended 31st Dec 2009.
5. To elect Officers and Members to the General Committee.
6. To appoint auditors.
7. To discuss any other business.

To present the Club Trophies

By order of the Committee.

Paul Binks, Secretary

Proposals

Under Item 5 the current General Committee members are:

Chairman	Terry Maddock *
Secretary	Paul Binks (General)
	Brian Woodhouse (Membership)
Treasurer	Kath Risely
Competition Secretary	Rachel Desmond Drew
Quartermaster	Albert Risely
Child Welfare Officer	Alison Nelson
General Committee	Cynthia Conway +
	John Kington
	Ed Lefley
	Peter Nelson (Junior Representative)
	Steve Swarbrick
	Will Body +
	Andy Biggs ⁺

Those marked * are due to retire by rotation (every 2 years) and being eligible offer themselves for re-election. Those marked + have been co-opted onto the committee during the year and now stand for election by the general meeting.

The following Committee Members are standing down at this AGM:

General Committee Junior Representative	Peter Nelson
General Committee	Steve Swarbrick

The following Committee Members resigned during the year:

None

AGM - Additional Information

Membership fees can be paid on the night, but please note that payment on the night can **only** be accepted by cheque – no cash please!

Please arrive early (7.30) so that the AGM can start at 8.00pm prompt. Supper will be provided consisting of Chilli and Chips/Rice or vegetarian option + sweet at a subsidised cost of £3.00 per head.

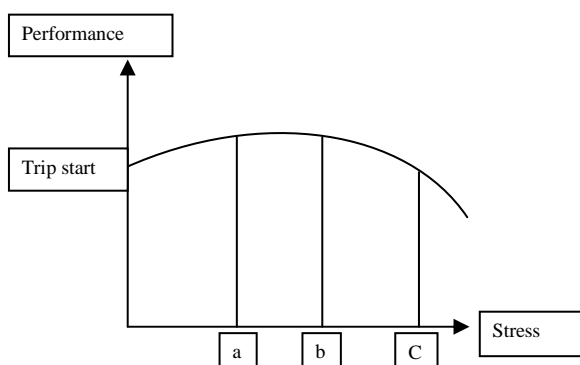
Raffle prizes

As usual there will be a raffle at the AGM, so if you have anything you can donate as a raffle prize please bring it along on the night. It can be something canoeing related, or a bottle of something alcoholic, or some chocolates – anything will go down well!

Dealing with the Catastrophe Curve

Mark Dillon

The more fellow paddlers and I have discussed the Catastrophe Curve the bigger an impact it has had on my paddling and days out. In my mind it is a very important thing to be aware of and can be applied to most situations. The Curve was first brought to my attention on a White Water safety and rescue course, and so often have I discussed and thought about it since that I now feel that it is a vital tool in my paddling armoury in helping keep myself and our group safe.



The catastrophe curve diagram above can be used to help identify where personal performance may start to deteriorate or where the group dynamics change to the point where

the continued course of action takes the group out of its comfort zone and into dangerous situations.

For example when you start the days trip it may be assumed that a pre-determined level of stress is present and a small increase in this can improve that performance. Relate this to the anticipation of paddling, the inspection of the river and then the getting ready and setting out. As you get under way and warm up, a small increase in stress improves your paddling edge taking you from 'trip start' to point 'a'. At point 'a' you and the group are paddling well and getting to grips with the conditions.

However, supposing the situation changes, perhaps due to an unexpected early swim or a hazard in the river such as a tree which you narrowly avoid. Or the river is much faster further down than at the start. Maybe later in the trip you are getting too cold to perform properly. Such changes could take you to point 'b' where the demand of the situation is getting greater than your ability and the increased stress levels are affecting your paddling skills. This is the point you need to recognise, a point where you need to

reconsider the situation and make some judgement call before point 'C' is reached. Here things are getting out of hand and the downward trend of the catastrophe curve has started. For once anxiety and nerves take over, confidence is lost and with it performance, all of which is extremely hard to recover.

It could be that at this point someone else may be able to step in, such as the trip leader or a fellow paddler, or perhaps you will be aware of it yourself and be able to break the curve and stop the situation. Maybe you can walk a rapid or have a short break and leg stretch, warm drink and pep talk to try and take you and the group or person back to point 'a'.

However the fear of losing face, peer pressure or ruining everyone's day can be a powerful lever for forcing you into a place you may not want to be and the group may not want to have to deal with. I personally feel that although one action or event can start you on the downward slope of the curve there are always several more events that progress you downward into a catastrophic situation and once you recognise these it is usually possible to break the trend and bring yourself back to a safe situation.

To help clarify this let me relate some situations which I and my fellow paddlers have found ourselves in and explain our actions.

One Sunday a small group of us set out to paddle the Roeburn, it had been raining overnight and was raining heavily as we inspected the river from the 'get out', the river was rising and at a good level so we left one car at the 'get out' and loaded the other to travel to the 'put in'. A quick chat about possible tree hazards and other aspects of the river that we may encounter had us anticipating a testing trip on a river new to two of us but also possibly started us from point 'a' towards point 'b'. Once on the water the speed of the river was faster than expected – something a good bit faster than the Washburn. Although it was similar in width to the Washburn it was more heavily

tree lined and very snag laden. At this point perhaps part of the group could be said to be moving steadily towards point 'b' on the curve, but we were all good paddlers and had plenty of white water experience. Soon after getting underway the first obstacle was encountered, a river left bank side tree fallen well out into the main flow on a ninety degree right hand bend. With all the current pushing through the tree, one of us got pinned on it. The situation was quickly recovered with pinned person getting out of his boat and using the tree for support to make it to the bank whilst the rest of us provided cover. A quick portage and we were on our way until we came across the next all across river strainer and so another portage was necessary. Two more portages due to similar hazards had then to be made before we came to a rope footbridge crossing the river at water level strung out with branches and debris.



Below the rope bridge was a pair of river right trees in the water, and an almost all across the river tree from left to right. This left only a one metre gap over rocks before a small island, which we had to get behind, or we would be swept left and into another strainer. The ferry glide into a tiny eddie could be described as a 'do or die' one. It was a small target in fast bouncy water with an awkward approach. As we inspected the river lower down, the rope bridge snapped and all the debris off it was released down stream and the ferry from river right now was masked by trailing rope whilst on the left more trailing rope and the slats from the bridge masked the

mini eddie. It was a no brainer, and a huge portage was necessary up the gorge side to cut out the entire section. So off we set dragging kayaks behind us.



Let me tell you it was tough, really tough and it wasn't long before the fun went out of it, but sweating and safe we ended up looking at the river below. Guess what, another all across tree would mean a tough ferry to the far bank before we could duck under a tree close to the far bank.

Throughout the trip I had been thinking about the curve and at this point it was time for it to be broken. Thankfully the previously pinned paddler, who in his opinion wasn't paddling well, (due in no small part to an early pinning setting his nerves on edge) was out of his depth in his opinion. So he decided a walk out was the safest option for him.



Luckily earlier on local paths had been displayed on boards at a footbridge and so a route out to the road was known. The remainder of the group who were paddling well decided to carry on and made the ferry, slipped nicely under the tree, bounced through some massive wave trains only to find the two islands below blocked totally by trees from bank to bank.



Look closely and the rope bridge can be seen partially submerged and trailing debris

The only option was a portage and carry back up the river to a safe place to ferry to the islands where we beached the kayaks and dragged ourselves through. This done we came across another strainer in the main flow on the next island. It was getting silly and now time to get off the river as the next section was a tight gorge which once committed to offered no way out. The walk out was serious, 2.7miles for the first person to walk out and 1.6miles for the rest. This was over some fairly demanding hills and gorge sections in pouring rain, gale force winds, full paddling kit and dragging a boat. You want to try it sometime. But we were safe and the slope of the catastrophe curve had been turned before an awkward situation had got worse.

Fortunately the keys to the car at the 'get out' had been left in a 'key safe' so the first paddlers back were able to get changed and go looking for the one still walking. This left one person at the 'get out' in case paths weren't crossed. Whilst waiting at the 'get

out' for the shuttle, another two paddlers turned up. They were from a group of four had lost two boats and two paddles when three of them swam at the grade 5 section of the Hindburn. Perhaps next time they may think of running such sections one at a time with bank side cover. Imagine how far they were along the curve when three out of four were swimming.

Some weeks later we were out paddling a nicely high Ingleton Greta, when another good example of a potentially disastrous day out was encountered. Our group of fairly experienced paddlers had said hello to a group of kayakers and canoeists at the put in and, whilst we got under way they were busy sorting out the group dynamics and warming up. At the first section of rapids on a right hand bend we were busy surfing when the first swimmer came through holding onto the front of a canoe bouncing down the rapid! (How dangerous is that!). We quickly set about helping him but no sooner had we started than the second swimmer came into sight, holding onto his own canoe, then the third and fourth were bobbing boatlessly down the rapid. All in all we rescued four swimmers, one canoe, two kayaks, a paddle and a throwline. This was out of a group of six on a stretch of rapid that is nowhere near as technical as the rest of the river. On checking the swimmers were okay they stated several of them had run the river before several times and they were going to carry on with the trip. This was despite the fact the swimmers were badly shaken up and already cold and wet. I also noticed that one of the kayaks I chased didn't have front buoyancy or rescue lines attached, which makes it even harder to catch a lost boat. At this stage their catastrophe curve was broken when they were told by senior members of our group in no

certain terms that they needed to get off the river and walk out, luckily they heeded that advice. But imagine the situation if we hadn't been there to assist them and recover their gear. Clearly it was a day when they had miscalculated the groups' ability as well as the river conditions. Also a day when walking out may ruin some peoples day out, but not as much as to carry on could do.

It's not always necessary to take such drastic action as walking off the river to prevent a possible disaster. When I was on the Safety and Rescue course mentioned earlier I took the safe option of walking a part of the Tryweryn graveyard, this was because I just felt a little 'off the mark' with my paddling and had clipped a rock at the section start necessitating an early roll.

No problems with the roll for a change, but something just didn't feel right and I got back on the river to continue a short distance later no worse for the experience. I later found that all my boats kit had slipped right down into the tail of the kayak possibly making an already tail happy Dagger Juice even more unstable.

I have other examples but hopefully the situations highlighted above are enough to add some real life paddling examples to my interpretation of the catastrophe curve, and therefore get you thinking about your days out and maybe make them a little safer. Since the walkout of the Roeburn I have printed off and laminated map sections of local rivers, because when reflecting on the day, I realised that I often do not know where paths and roads are alongside the rivers I paddle, you never know when they could be needed. Take care

Mark Dillon

A trip down Swan River

otherwise known as the River Wye

Sarah Wicks

Members of the group:

Alan Hacking, Lesley Hacking, Jo Hacking, Mick Balshaw, Beth Balshaw, Paul Wicks, Jackie Wicks, Sarah Wicks, Naomi Wicks, Hannah Wicks.

Saturday August 15th the excitement was rising as the Wicks family Hannah (9), Naomi (11) Sarah (14), mum and dad as they met up with Alan, Lesley and Jo Hacking and Mick and Beth Balshaw at a caravan camping site just outside Mordiford near Hereford.

After the usual messing about sorting the kit into boats, trying to balance the weight and making sure that four Wicks' would fit into the open Old Town. Jo and I were partnered together, with Alan and Lesley in the third open. Beth and Mick were paddling their inflatable canoe. Shuttle completed, Alan had left his car at Monmouth (I knew the Welsh plate would come in handy one day) and the other cars were parked on the caravan site.

This was my first ever canoe expedition and was to cover 40 miles over three days.

Day 1 Mordiford to Hoarwithy

We launched at 1:00 pm, using a specially prepared slipway for the open boats. No carrying, just let it slide down the slope, no effort, the day seemed so promising. Only 9 miles for the first day, I have to admit for most people this is an OK distance not too challenging maybe a bit boring even (which is exactly how Joanne felt) me on the other hand being a complete novice to canoeing this was a little daunting so I was totally focused on following every instruction given to me.

To be honest I think it was the best way to learn. The weather was gorgeous, the sun was shining - sun block was even applied!

Beth and Mick got to grips with the inflatable canoe, compared with the canoes, keeping it going in a straight line seemed much harder work. They both managed to fit their kit into the boat, which was amazing as there wasn't much storage space.

On the whole the 9 miles was tiring on the arms but generally very pleasant. At first we were apprehensive of the swans we met along the river but they seemed to accept canoes as part of the natural environment rather than a threat but it took navigating through 40 swans on a short stretch to finally convince us! No scary rapids just a steady dip and splash of the paddle.

We came to first campsite at Hoarwithy it was a pleasant field and the river was refreshing for an evening swim. We even bought firewood, so Alan was really happy that night!

Day Two Hoarwithy to Welsh Bicknor

On the second day we had 19 mile to complete, I definitely was not looking forward to this. It was draining and the wind brought an extra challenge but we managed to get to Ross for a late lunch (approx 2:30) by which time I struggled to walk but lunch gave me a bit of an energy boost to complete the afternoon. Ross is an interesting market town with a little jetty you can stop at, toilets close by

The river meanders through open countryside. I'm sure at least once it would have been quicker to have climbed out of the boat and carry our stuff to the river on the other side at

the end of a long loop, but there were lots of signs warning you not to land. Maybe someone else had thought of it first?

The hard work was made worthwhile by the glimpse of a kingfisher, as well as the wonderful scenery. It was nearly 7pm before we reached the youth hostel at Welsh Bicknor. No not a camp this time but comfy beds!

After a tasty tea, that night I had the best and longest sleep I had all summer. I enjoyed having beds and showers. This was the hardest day and most people reading this will think I'm a total wimp but that day was officially the most tiring day so far in my life.

Day Three Welsh Bicknor to Monmouth

The last day started a little easier than the others but I was still sore from the day before. I set my chin however ready for the day ahead. Heading down the river around a bend and the view opened up to see Goodrich Castle standing tall over the river with fantastic walls, surrounded by beautiful countryside.

A little later and the viewpoint at Symonds Yat was above our heads with the birds of prey flying around. (I've no idea what they were, so ask Alan) Then we came to the rapids. It was just as well we had practiced dodging swans, now we had to dodge boats; loads of them, canoes, kayaks, and pleasure steamers and finally the foot ferry!

We went straight through the rapids carrying all the kit without any mishaps, it felt exciting

just over too quick. Lunch was eaten on the beach below Symonds Yat rapids.

Then we had time to play, they were only Grade Two rapids but for a beginner it was fun and not too furious. On the Yat Alan and Paul (Dad) were the first to capsize and go swimming, a few strokes later Joanna and I were following them.

Unfortunately my younger sister Naomi, who had never been on any rapids before, had gone with Alan and Dad because it would be 'safer'! We picked her up just in time for her to practise capsize drill again. So she was in both boats when they capsized and ended up very wet. The river seemed just right for messing about in boats and we had a great time.

Playtime over and it was off down the river again for the final five miles. We went past Biblins Youth Campsite where I have often camped and is great for youth groups to camp at and has plenty of firewood (never mind Alan it being for young people only and all that wood...)

We finished the trip at Monmouth Rowing Club around 3:00pm and just as we started to unload an ice-cream van came and pulled up. For me it was the perfect ending to round the trip off, a great big ice cream.

On the whole it was a successful trip. The weather was beautiful, the water was cool it was a great experience. I was so glad I achieved it. Although sore, stiff and had a few swims I made it down all the forty miles of the river Wye.

Sarah Wicks

Training

Allan Hacking

In 2010 the majority of the club coaching of newcomers and improvers will take place at our weekly social gatherings on a Tuesday night at the Hand & Dagger public house on the Lancaster canal. There will be other pool sessions and moving water sessions at other venues according to the requirements of the course syllabi.

Beginners are welcome at any of the paddle skill pool sessions held each month (booking is essential), and coaches can also be available each week at the Hand & Dagger during the summer for informal outdoor sessions.

Paddle Skills Pool Sessions; these sessions take place each month (currently on the 2nd Friday) at Fulwood swimming pool, coaches attend these sessions to assist any club members who feel any aspect of their paddling requires a bit of attention. Pre booking is needed for these sessions to prevent overcrowding. Contact Allan Hacking at the Hand & Dagger on a Tuesday night or post a message on the club forum. Normal pool fees apply to these sessions.

1, 2 & 3 Star Coaching will take the form of a 10 week course in early summer, this should allow people to gain the skills they need prior to the club weekend camps.

Provisional 2010 dates for star courses:

Pool sessions;

Fridays 23rd April, 14th May & 11th June.

Outdoor sessions at Hand & Dagger;

Tuesdays from 20th April to 15th June with a break at spring bank, (this is 8 sessions)

Outdoor session

Probably in the lakes; Training/trip Sat 12th June.

The 3 star course will also have some additional moving water sessions at weekends to be arranged with those on the course.

1 & 2 star assessment possibly Tues 22nd or sat 26th June.

3 star assessment Sat 26th June. Either in the lakes or possibly at West Tanfield during the first of the summer camps.

Contact Allan Hacking at the Hand & Dagger on a Tuesday night or post a message on the club forum, for more details.

The 2009 costs for the courses were £25 for junior members and £35 for adult members, plus any additional pool fees and BCU assessment fees, 2010 fees have still to be agreed.

Allan Hacking

Chairman's Chill

Well, we haven't had weather like this for many a winter. The water's all gone hard, there's not much of it and consequently not much paddling going on – a bit of biking, loads of walking and some hill stuff involving spiky boots and ice axes. Debra has been ice paddling at Burrs with pictures to prove it – hang on though, she doesn't appear in the pictures so did it really happen? According to the met office we've more winter to come; so that'll be nice.

There's things afoot at Halton with some interesting possibilities all being gone into by Pat as BCU Access Officer and Norman as our Club Representative. I suspect that there may be an item by Pat elsewhere in this erudite edition so I'll say no more except to mention that an ancient saga has raised its head yet again. The "Halton Fund" chronicled by sages in past eras and thought to have been put to bed many years ago is refusing to lie down. Just when I thought it had passed into legend it seems to have regenerated itself like Dr Who.

Something else that seems to have been regenerated, thank goodness, is the proposed ceilidh. There's now a distinct possibility that it may happen next autumn as the nights draw in. I feel responsible for squashing enthusiasm in early December with a rather pedantic e-mail. There are times when an e-mail or text message just can't replace a natter on the phone. Sorry!

Our AGM is on Thursday 25 February as you'll see in the notice elsewhere in this enviable organ. Do try to come along to the Hand & Dagger by 7.30 for a prompt start at 8.00pm. As well as the formal stuff which is over pretty quickly there's the awards to be presented for various feats throughout the year. And by 9.00pm as a reward for our attendance we get chilli rice & chips followed by apple crumble and custard, all for £3, as it's subsidised by the Club. Oh, and there's a raffle. See you there, if not before.

Terry Maddock
Chairman@ribblecanoecub.co.uk

Booking Equipment

A reminder to any members wanting to borrow club equipment

Please remember to follow the standard booking procedure, which is:

- **Ring me on a Monday evening (contact details in Newsletter)**
- **Collect and return kit at H&D on a Tuesday evening.**

Easy!

Happy Paddling
Albert

Pool Sessions

The following lists the pool sessions booked at Fulwood Leisure Centre, the contact for the courses and the Supervisor and Committee member on duty.

Date	Session	Contact	Supervisor	Committee
Jan 22	Rolling	Simon Stammers	Albert Risely	Kath Risely
Jan 29	Rolling	Simon Stammers	Mark Dillon	Brian Woodhouse
Feb 5	Rolling	Simon Stammers	Gary Fishwick	Paul Binks
Feb 12	Paddle Clinic	Allan Hacking	Mark Buttle	Rachel Drew
Feb 19	Open	n/a	Tony Morgan	Will Body
Feb 26	Coaching Standardisation	Terry Maddock	Terry Maddock	Rachel Drew
March 5	Open	n/a	Albert Risely	Kath Risely
March 12	Paddle Clinic	Allan Hacking	David Nelson	Alison Nelson
March 19	Sea/Touring Safety	Allan Hacking	Mark Dillon	Paul Binks
March 26	Open	n/a	Mark Buttle	Brian Woodhouse

Please note prices for pool sessions: Rolling Course £20 plus club membership. Freestyle £5. All other sessions £4. Please book in advance for the Rolling Course & Paddle Skills Sessions by phoning the named contact. Telephone numbers can be found on the contact list page in the newsletter

Editors Bit

As the first edition of 2010, the editors would like to wish you a happy new year. Let's hope paddling conditions get better soon.

No sooner had the floods subsided we were hit by a lot of snow. The extremely low temperatures turned the snow to ice and made road travel almost impossible on many minor roads. What's more there was very little water in the rivers and some lakes were frozen over. Apart from the swimming pool there were very few paddling options available.

Given these weather conditions, we were expecting a shortage of articles for this edition. Our fears were completely unfounded as articles arrived on cue after a little email prompting. Thank you to our new contributors whose articles have provided a bit of variety from the regular ones.

Unable to paddle we managed a brief walk around the Ambleside area over the Christmas & New Year period. Even this was slow & difficult over ice covered surfaces.

During a walk along the River Rothay we noticed that the recent floods had dumped a

lot of shingle just behind the Hotel Weir on river left. It will be interesting to see how this will affect the play wave which has provided much entertainment in the past. I suspect that we will find changed features on many other Cumbrian Rivers once we manage to get back out paddling again. This seems a pity as some of our members seemed to have carried out an extensive underwater survey of the Rothay back in October.

Dates and Deadlines the next committee meeting will be on Wednesday 3rd March at 7:00pm at the Hand & Dagger. The next newsletter will be published on 17th March. We would appreciate all submissions by Wednesday 10th.

Please send your submissions by email, to newsletter@ribblecanoecub.co.uk. When we receive them we will send you an email acknowledgment. If you don't receive one you will know it hasn't been received

Pat & Norman Green
newsletter@ribblecanoecub.co.uk

Ribble CC Library

To borrow a book or video, contact Cynthia Conway or see her at the Hand & Dagger. Donations of books or videos are always welcome.

Technique:

BCU Handbook
The Practical Guide to Kayaking
Canoeing & Kayaking
William Nealy's "Kayak"
Bombproof Roll and Beyond!
Eskimo Rolling for Survival
White Water Safety & Rescue
Weir Wisdom Rapids
Canoe & Kayak Games
The Playboater's Handbook
Complete Book of Sea Kayaking
Sea Kayak Navigation
Path of the Paddle
Canoeing
Open Canoe Technique
Rowing it Alone
The Handbook of Survival at Sea
BCU Coaching Handbook
Sea Safety: The Complete Guide
White Water Kayaking
The Art of Freestyle

Guidebooks:

English White Water
Scottish White Water
White Water Lake District
An Atlas of the English Lakes
Canal Companion: Cheshire Ring
Anglesey Sea Paddling
Welsh Sea Kayaking
Touring 100 Paddles in England
Scottish Sea Kayak Trail

General:

The Rough Guide to Weather
The Liquid Locomotive
Many Rivers to Run
Norwegian rivers
Canoe Focus
Working out of Doors with Young People

Expeditions:

Travels with a Kayak
Whit Descher
On Celtic Tides
Chris Duff
Blazing Paddles
Brian Wilson
Dancing with Waves
Brian Wilson
Paddling to Jerusalem
David Aaronovitch
The Last River
Todd Balf
Paddle to the Arctic
Don Starkey
Canoeing across Canada
Gary & Joanie McGuffin
The Canoe Boys
Sir Alastair Dunnnett
Odyssey among the Inuit
Jonathan Waterman
Barbed Wire & Babushkas
Paul Grogan

Videos:

Liffey Descent
Deliverance (18)
Extreme Sports Canoeing
A Taste of White Water
Wicked Water 2
Drill Time
Destination Nowhere

Path of the Paddle: Whitewater

DVDs:

Tony Morgan - Grand Canyon
LVM Lunch Video Magazine
Ribble Newsletters (CD)
The Martin Years RCC Newsletters 2002-2009
Without a Paddle (13)
Whitewater Kayaking
The Cockleshell Heroes (U)
Mags Brayfield in Nepal
Tatshenshini/Alsek 2007
Mountain River Movie
By Michael Allender
Jackson Kayak Promo
It's Different Every Time
Halton Rapids
Norman Green
Fort William 2005/06 Trip
My Tartan Adventure (VCD)
Ribble Canoe Club, Scotland 2007
Thistle Float Your Boat
RCC, Scotland 2007 & 2008
Norman Green
Locks and Quays
Featuring Ribble Canoe Club
The Politics Show
Featuring Ribble Canoe Club
Open Canoeing
Reg Blomfield
EJ's Rolling and Bracing
This is the Sea - 1st ever action sea kayak video
Janet Robinson
The Call of the River - 100 years of Whitewater Adventure (USA)
Sea Kayak with Gordon Brown
Instructional Journey along Skye Coast

CALENDAR

NOTE: Last minute trips are often arranged on the forum on the website (www.ribblecanoeclub.co.uk), at the Hand & Dagger on Tuesdays or at Fulwood on Friday (RCC pool nights) . If you have any dates for the calendar please contact **Terry Maddock**

River information:

Burrs 0161 764 9649
www.burrs.org.uk

Canolfan Tryweryn 01678 520826
www.welsh-canoeing.org.uk

Tees Barrage 01642 678000
www.4seasons.co.uk

Washburn/Wharfe 0845 833 8654
<http://www.yorcie.org.uk>

JANUARY

Friday, 22 January 21:00
Pool Session - Rolling Course -
Booking Required - Simon Stammers
Sunday, 24 January All day
Coaches' Open Boat Lune Trip - 8
boat Limit

Tuesday, 26 January 19:00
Club Social Meeting - Hand & Dagger

Friday, 29 January 21:00
Pool Session - Rolling Course -
Booking Required - Simon Stammers
Saturday, 30 January All day
Trip - Sat or Sun - See Forum
Sunday, 31 January All day
Trip - Sat or Sun - See Forum

FEBRUARY

Tuesday, 2 February 19:00
Club Social Meeting - Hand & Dagger
Friday, 5 February 21:00
Pool Session - Rolling Course -
Booking Required - Simon Stammers
Sunday, 7 February All day
Charity Fun Day at Burrs in aid of
Cumbria Flood Appeal
All day
development trip-rigmaden bridge-
Kirkby Lonsdale-contact Allan
Hacking-8 boat limit.

Tuesday, 9 February 19:00
Club Social Meeting - Hand & Dagger

Friday, 12 February 21:00

Pool - Paddle Clinic - Booking
required - Allan Hacking
Saturday, 13 February 19:30
Banff Mountain Film Festival
Sunday, 14 February All day
Flat Water Trip - see Forum

Tuesday, 16 February 19:00
Club Social Meeting - Hand & Dagger

Friday, 19 February 21:00
Pool - Open Session for all Members
to do their own thing (within reason)
Saturday, 20 February All day
Beginners trip - see Forum - Sat or
Sun
Sunday, 21 February All day
Beginners trip - see Forum - Sat or
Sun

Tuesday, 23 February 19:00
Club Social Meeting - Hand & Dagger

Thursday, 25 February 20:00
AGM at Hand & Dagger, Treales
Road, nr Kirkham 7.30 pm for 8.00

Friday, 26 February 21:00
Pool - Coaching Standardisation
Course
Sunday, 28 February All day
White Water Recreational trip - R
Eden - Lazonby Brdg to Armathwaite
Weir - Terry Maddock

MARCH

Tuesday, 2 March 19:00
Club Social Meeting - Hand & Dagger

Friday, 5 March 21:00
Pool - Open Session for all Members
to do their own thing (within reason)
Saturday, 6 March All day
Development Trip - see Forum - Sat
or Sun
Sunday, 7 March All day
Development Trip - see Forum - Sat
or Sun

Tuesday, 9 March 19:00
Club Social Meeting - Hand & Dagger

Friday, 12 March 21:00
Pool - Paddle Clinic - Booking
required - Allan Hacking

Saturday, 13 March
Flat Water Trip - see Forum - Sat or
Sun
Sunday, 14 March All day
Flat Water Trip - see Forum - Sat or
Sun

Tuesday, 16 March 19:00
Club Social Meeting - Hand & Dagger

Friday, 19 March 20:00
Pool - Sea/Touring Safety/Rescue
Course - Tony Morgan
Saturday, 20 March All day
Beginners trip - see Forum - Sat or
Sun
Sunday, 21 March All day
Beginners trip - see Forum - Sat or
Sun

Tuesday, 23 March 19:00
Club Social Meeting - Hand & Dagger

Friday, 26 March 21:00
Pool - Open Session for all Members
to do their own thing (within reason)
Saturday, 27 March All day
Recreational Trip - see Forum - Sat or
Sun
Sunday, 28 March All day
Recreational Trip - see Forum - Sat or
Sun

APRIL

Friday, 2 April All day
Good Friday Sunday, 4 April All day
Easter Sunday Saturday, 17 April All
day
Beginners trip - see Forum - Sat or
Sun
Sunday, 18 April All day
Beginners trip - see Forum - Sat or
Sun

This data is extracted from the Google calendar on the RCC website. Google Calendar amendments may be made after this one has been printed. Trips may be changed or cancelled at short notice. Always get in touch with the trip organiser the day before to check! If you don't, and you have a wasted trip, don't blame us.