

TALES FROM THE RIVERBANK



MAY/JUNE 2009

Easter in Scotland



Tom Kington on the River Garry

As per Ribble Canoe Club tradition, a large group of members headed to Scotland for the Easter Holidays. This time there were 34 of us, all staying at Ardrhu Cottages on the outskirts of Onich, south of Fort William. This is the same place we used last year.

Everyone had been allocated their accommodation in advance so when they arrived it was a simple job to settle-in.

As usual most of us had gone with the intention of doing more than just paddling, so cars were pretty full of walking gear and/or cycling gear as well as paddling kit.

In fact some had gone without planning to paddle at all, no problem when there are so many places to walk or simply visit as a tourist. There is even a tennis court on site which was used a couple of times.

The large solar heated outdoor pool (Loch Linnhe) proved less popular as a swimming venue, but was used for a Sunday paddle.

In general people tended to form into groups depending upon the preferred activity. There was a River Running group co-ordinated by John & Tom Kington, Allan & Jo Hacking and Helen James. There were 2 Touring groups, co-ordinated by Andy Biggs and Steve Swarbrick. There was also a walking group co-ordinated by the James family.

The general routine was that people would discuss options for the following day, taking in to account the weather forecast etc, then come up with a plan (eventually).

Unfortunately the forecast was usually for fairly strong winds, thus limiting choice of venues for the sea paddlers, whilst the abundance of rain meant that most of the rivers were paddleable this year. This is the reverse of previous years when rivers were low and so was the wind strength.

Fortunately this area has a vast amount of lochs, some tidal some not, so if you consult maps it's possible to work out which ones will offer some protection from the prevailing winds (in theory).

The walking group were less affected by wind speed forecasts and were able to plan their activities with less difficulty.

This year we took along our troubadours, Albert & Penny who provided evening entertainment by the way of guitar accompanied vocals.

Unfortunately this year we were unable to do the trip out to the islands off Arisaig due to the high winds. This was a great source of frustration as we sat at the launch point looking out to sea. But at least the drive is much easier and quicker now that they have finished the new road.

On Sunday some of us did a trip on Loch Linnhe & Loch Leven down to the end

(almost). Due to the strong wind we made it a one way trip with a car shuttle back.



In fact when we first launched from the site at Ardrhu, we were a bit taken aback by the size of the waves which only looked small from the comfort of our cottages. Andy Biggs was the trip leader so he advised us to cross to the patch of grass, which he described as a lawn, on the far side of the loch. He said that we would then be sheltered from the prevailing wind.

After a bit of a nervous crossing through 3 foot waves, we arrived about 30 minutes later on the far side to find that the lawn was actually the fairway of the local Golf Course. This showed us how difficult it can be to judge distances. After this early adrenalin rush, the rest of the trip was relatively easy and relaxing by comparison. The wind in our backs and the following tide pushed us along nicely. We had lunch on one of the islands on Loch Leven, just across from Terry's much loved Coffee Shop.



Oldest swinger in town

Despite the weather everyone managed to get out every day and do something. The river paddlers in particular were able to enjoy their trips without being adversely affected by the conditions. They paddled the Etive, The Pattack, Lower Roy and Spean from Roy Bridge to Spean Bridge, Falls of Lora, and Garry.

Touring paddlers managed to paddle on Loch Lochy, Loch Garry, Loch Moidart, Loch Sunart and the sea around Seil Island.

When the weather was bad at least we were able to visit beautiful places, even if at times they had to be viewed from the inside of a car.

On the Friday evening despite the cold conditions Steve had his fire on the beach.

Most of us seemed to have enjoyed the holiday; even it was marred a little by some illness in the camp and troublesome wheel bearings.

Norman Green

Sea photographs Andy Biggs

Chronicles of an Ancient Mariner

Daal Bhat is a Nepali dish. It is made from rice and lentil. And if your stomachs not too strong, its effect is truly mental.

Daal makes its way with deadly skill, your inner organs start to spill. You hope this feeling just won't last, and hold on tight-and then a blast.

Of all the meals that went before, some much longer - some of yore. First a ripple, then a flood, the feeling really is not good.

A moral then - a tale to tell, avoid Daal Bhat - Avoid like HELL!

This tale drags on-it just gets worse. I can't escape this dreadful curse.

In Kathmandu - the Orchard Caff, has service poor, indifferent, naff.

The food arrived at varied space, without much sequence-random pace.

Tibetan Stir fry was my choice. Well tasty said an Aussie voice.

In no time flat, Spices sublime, attacked my stomach - head - my spine.

Back to the Hotel then I sped, collapsed fermenting on the bed.

The hours that followed were a pain. I'll not try Stir-fry, not again.

The walls-the ceiling and the floor, and spots of Yak meat on the door.

That toilet was a sorry state. I sat in there to contemplate.

I sat for long in quiet station, and almost wished for constipation.

The journey home was a great strain, with several moments on the plane.

When distant rumblings were heard, was it the engine-was it a bird?

For forty hours I had no food, weary, weak - the general mood.

Upon the scales, surprised, I found, in body weight, I had lost nine pound.

Kayaks and water- high hills above, in Nepal these things I had loved.

The people stoic, smiling, strong, they work so hard to get along.

I would go back soon, good times to find, but always- always on my mind.

The fears that linger in my head, I will leave spiced food and stick to bread.

Forget your Daal, Stir fry and roast, for my good health, I will stick to TOAST!!

Peter Roscoe

Would You Like Source With That?

Mark Dillon

I had never really considered where the water came from, I was only concerned with getting on it and paddling. However during the dry spell that we have had, my mind started wandering from paddling to other outdoor activities. Being the sort of person who needs a reason to do something, I started looking at maps and the internet to find that reason and realised that I hadn't been to any river sources apart from the obvious lake fed ones. So off I set with map and GPS to track down where some of our often used rivers came from and started with two massively different ones.



The Irwell flows down the Rossendale valley to feed Burrs a popular and well used site that most of us have paddled. I found its source high up on Deerplay Moor north of Bacup.



The scene is really quite tragic and not at all romantic, the water bubbles up from two springs appropriately named 'Irwell Springs' close to a war memorial and ramshackle farm. The bubbling water has formed what can only be described as a scar on the hillside surrounded by coarse grasses. These follow it a short way down the valley before disappearing underground to leave a ditch filled with bottles and other waste. The area has a sadly comical approach from a public house beer garden complete with play-park and a rough path with corrugated iron steppings over muddy areas alongside broken down fencing. Somehow the scene is probably synonymous with the Burrs experience and I shouldn't have been expecting more.



The water then emerges above a village called Weir where it forms a pleasant roadside distraction in its canalised form, and drops down several attractive falls and weirs along its way to the Irwell Inn. It travels under this before emerging yet again alongside the road at Bacup. After several excursions from the roadside that it largely follows, it then moves into more pleasant countryside around the interestingly named Ramsbottom and Nuttall

Park, our normal get in for the river trip. The park area is extremely pleasant and here the river winds through overgrown countryside, so out of keeping with expectations, although the occasional shopping trolley and parking cone help remind you where you are. The gorge section, complete with a thirty foot waterfall, is particularly attractive and its attraction is added to by the accompaniment of an occasional steam train that follows loosely to the Burrs site.



The river then flows through the unattractive settings of Bury and Manchester before joining the Mersey near Irlam.

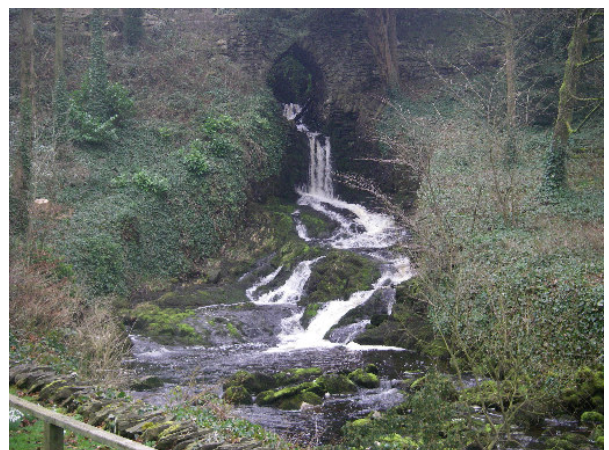
In contrast my second source is that of the River Wenning, one of my favourite rivers for paddling, and a tributary of the Lune. Its source can be found where Clapham Beck and Austwick Beck join to form the Wenning half a mile upstream of Clapham railway Station.



However it added interest and mileage to a day out to find the source of these two Becks. To find the source of Clapham Beck you have to travel high up on the hillside of Ingleborough, where the many small streams join together to disappear down Gaping Gill, before emerging at Ingleborough Cave



close to a charming bridge and picnic spot. From here the Beck trickles down into a rhododendron-lined valley and lake with several attractive falls and drops before passing through the picturesque village of Clapham and on to the Wenning.



The source of Austwick Beck takes a little more finding, however a pleasant ramble brought me to its main tributary, a gaping hole in the hillside near Crummack Dale, where the water trickled from limestone caverns.

Sadly there were obvious signs of man's intervention here in the way of water abstraction, however there was a real electricity about being at the source of a river and the sound of the water, echoing and bubbling forth, was thrilling. The other tributaries of the Beck were all dry, but despite this there was a good flow of peaty water down through the valley and on to the village of Austwick, where just above the Wenning, Clapham Beck was joined by Fen Beck.

This is an attractive and popular walking area, which has been acknowledged for its natural beauty for many years, in 1781 Thomas Dixon wrote in a poem describing the course of the Wenning "The Vale of Wenning I resolved to tread and trace the radiant rambler to its head."

Clapham Station is situated about one mile below Clapham village close to the river and is probably the upper most point from where the Wenning can be paddled. However our normal 'get on' is close to Mewith, a further two miles downstream. The Wenning twists

and turns adding interest to the paddle, with lots of good playspots and several weirs. All set in beautiful countryside, whilst passing close to Bentham, before it reaches Wennington. Here a great wave is formed under the bridge, at the point where paddlers normally get out. However the trip could continue on to the Lune.



Mark Dillon

West Tanfield Camp

26th – 28th June 2008

This is a weekend camp (one or two nights as the fancy takes). The site is Slenningford Water Mill, a well maintained private camp site located adjacent to its own stretch of the River Ure. The River at this point has a grade 3 section suitable for intermediate paddlers and a grade 2 section suitable for improving beginners. There are several family pubs within walking distance. Lightwater Valley amusement park boasting the world's longest roller coaster ride is close by for those not wanting to paddle, and Ripon with its cathedral is about 5 miles away.

The River trip is grade 2 with the exception of Hack Falls which can be portaged. At normal levels the trip takes about 3 hours, but at low levels has taken 5. There is a long walk in (thankfully downhill all the way), but once on the river you pass through pleasant wooded areas and farm land. We normally take lunch and stop on an island just below a weir to eat. The river is restricted access and so we will be making the trip on Saturday 28th June.

Brian Woodhouse

Rhosneigr Surf Camp

10th – 12th July

Have you ever tried surfing in your canoe? Sitting down, not standing up – though you'd get extra marks for style if you did stand up successfully. If you have then you may know about our annual Anglesey Surf Weekend. If not, read on.

One of the few things that you can do in a kayak that beats surfing a glassy green wave on a fast river is surfing down the face of a glassy green wave on the sea – especially if the sun's shining. Every year we have a weekend camp at Rhosneigr on Anglesey.



The idea is to pack in as much surfing as possible and have a generally sociable weekend. We don't always get brilliant surf, but there are other attractions – play-boating at the Stanley Embankment wave, seal spotting around some of the offshore islands (using sea kayaks or river boats), beach games, kite flying, beer and barbecues – whatever suits.



Last year Bev had an enormous tepee – who knows what will materialise this time?

If you've not surfed before this is a good opportunity to learn. As long as you have a reasonable control of your boat and are prepared to swim a bit you should have fun. Most modern river boats with planing hulls work well – most of the club's newer boats fit the bill in this respect. Ultra-short play boats do surf, but can be a bit too slow to catch the waves.

Rhosneigr is on the North West corner of Anglesey. If you've been before you'll know where the campsite is, if not get in touch with me and I'll direct you. The site is fairly basic – no water park or cabaret, but it has hot showers and is not normally crowded. We usually travel to Anglesey on Friday night, but you can always come up on Saturday.

Please let me know if you're coming. The site is fairly relaxed about numbers, but if we're going to have a lot more than expected I'd like to let them know.

John Kington

The Crap Paddler's A to Z of Damp

Adam Fielder

I read Canoe and Kayak Magazine and saw Tom Parker's A to Z of Kayaking, he's a Level 5 Coach, Expedition Paddler and a well of knowledge regarding everything to do with paddling – Basically he's seen it, done it and got loads of T shirts. Whilst I'm quite the opposite – a Crap Paddler, who's seen nowt, done nowt and struggles to get any T shirt to fit. So I thought I'd have a go (all the gear and no idea!)

A Is for Ardeche or Acid Drop, one is crystal clear, clean, warm, ambling water bathed in the warmth of the sun, filled with semi-naked young ladies having fun, the other is black, dirty, cold and smelly, filled with idiots freezing their nuts off!

Anyway I know where I'd like to be and I know where I'll most probably end up. Aint life a Bummer!

Ps: If you want to end up in the Ardeche this Summer with Ribble see Ed Lefly. If you want to end up wallowing in some filthy, stinking water thinking of monkeys and brass, come paddling with me instead!

B Is for Buoyancy Aid or PFD's (Personal Floatation Devices) as the yanks call them. It's not a life jacket, the clues in the name, it'll help you float if you end up swimming. But it also has other functions such as thermal insulation from the cold and an added layer of protection against impact from rocks, other boaters and paddles.

To test if yours is still buoyant, find some water, take your BA and attach a weight to it

(5Kg for a 50 Newton BA or 7.5Kg for a 75 Newton BA), lower it in the water and if it sinks completely it's time to buy a new one.

A good BA should easily float the above weights. If buying a new one make sure it has a kite mark and is BS Approved and finally go for buoyancy and visibility first – save sexy for when you're buying a cardigan!

C Is for Crazy. God created the paradise of Eden, created kayaking and said life was good! Then woman came along stole the apples and started moaning about Adam wanting to Kayak every weekend.

God said Enough! And as punishment he banished kayaks to the frozen lands of Norman of the North.

As a final punishment he took the only remaining kayak and ripped the roof off it stating, "from this day forward you will have cold, wet legs and when it rains your boat will fill up with water". He took the kayak and stretched it out in all directions. Try manoeuvring that one down a river!

He then took the only paddle and snapped it in two, then ripped the seat out of the kayak stating, "from this day forward you can only use ½ a paddle and will have to kneel on the hard plastic, in pain as a punishment. When you try and climb back into the boat following capsize, the design will be such that it'll crush and scrape your bits off as you climb in!"

He then made a final commandment that you could only use paddle strokes named after

anyone daft enough to paddle such a craft and thus the 'Goon' stroke was born.

Thus God created the 'canoeist' – 'Canoe' being the Inuit word for Crazy and 'ist' being short for sadist, masochist...you get the picture.

(Not once were the words beardy or weirdy or leather elbow patches mentioned in this definition!). Each to their own!

D Is for Dam Releases – Tryweryn and Washburn.

Being a crap paddler my eventual long-term goal was to be able to paddle both dam releases with no stomach butterflies and still have the ability to spit.

I've paddled Tryweryn graveyard about 4 times and the Washburn ½ a dozen times, the results at the moment are; one slashed and cut black eye, countless bruises and a broken £229 Werner paddle. My colleague, the Stig has also had similar experiences.

So if anyone is contemplating running the above rivers think of the old saying; How do you eat an Elephant? The answer, one bite at a time!

To avoid painful and costly mistakes, paddle these rivers only when you're skilled and confident enough. Start off with experiencing the easy sections first, between the chipper and above the graveyard on the Tryweryn and below the big drop at Washburn to the car park get out.

It goes without saying that on both these releases you need to be paddling with a team of experienced paddlers, be aware of the safety issues and progress carefully at your own level.

If you ever feel that you are being rushed or taken out of your comfort zone – Tell somebody, Stop and Get Out – the rivers aren't going anywhere, they'll still be there at

a later date when your skills have improved and you feel more confident.

At the end of the day, you don't even have to paddle rivers, everyone has their own goals and if that is to paddle down the canal or across Coniston, good luck to you.

Remember wherever you're paddling the above rules still apply – Eat that Elephant but do it Safely!



The Stig who paddled the Dam released Tryweryn by using the 'seat of his pants' technique – not recommended!

E Is for Eddy. An eddy is caused by an obstruction to the current in moving water. It usually forms behind this obstruction to create an area of sheltered water. The obstruction could be a rocky outcrop into the river or a boulder in the middle of the flow. Depending on the obstruction, flow of the water and riverbed, the eddy can range from a calm area, where a paddler can rest and plan the next section of river, to a swirling, whirlpool, boily type eddy where a paddler is constantly moving.

The eddy is caused by the water flowing around the obstruction and causing a reverse current behind it, this is because the water doesn't immediately come together behind the obstruction. The power of the eddy increases with the flow rate of the river and when the lateral angle of the eddy changes it can sometimes become a hydraulic (hole) in the river – these holes can either be really good fun to play in or quite deadly (So either know what you're doing or make sure you're with people who do!)

My experience of Eddies, entering them and leaving them, could be limited and difficult to describe – so I won't, I'll leave it to my observations of different paddlers.

No names so no offence) at different stages of their 'Eddyucation' on the river:-

Stage 1 – The Beginner – Who's this Eddie guy, he must be real good cos everyone keeps talking about him!

Stage 2 – Moving water intro' – Paddle! Paddle! Paddle! I'm in the Eddy! What do you mean Eddy Li.....blubadubbalub bubble?

Stage 3 – Slowly getting it – Eddy! Paddle! Paddle! Paddle! Yes, Yees, Yessss, Yeeesssssss I'm in! (in the style of Harry met Sally).

Stage 4 – Thought you'd got it until Washburn – Eddy? What bloody Eddy!

Stage 5 – Iain level on Raging water – Ahhh an eddy, paddle, paddle, boof, splash! Sweep, swerve, brace and stop, ahhh time for a buttie!

F Is for Freestyle, basically you buy the shortest kayak you can, then take it to a plastics specialist, cut it in half and shorten it by a further 12 inches. You then remove your shoes and socks, break your legs and use a crow bar to lever yourself into the boat.

Once this is accomplished you strap yourself into the boat using little creative devices called 'suicide straps' and any space that is left, you can fill with foam, beach balls or space hoppers.

Now you do the same with your paddle, removing 12 inches from the middle until it resembles 2 wooden spoons taped together.

This is followed by the purchase of the baggiest and loudest fluorescent lime green shorts that money can buy.

Nearly finished, you just need to slightly alter your use of the English language using words such as Awesome! Radical! and Huge!.... Now you are ready for the water.

Find a rapid with a huge wave, paddle onto it and proceed to have what looks like a fit (No offence to people with epilepsy), ensure you spend equal time below and above the water.

Finally if you get absolutely splattered whilst twirling your paddle above your head, make sure you pretend that you planned to do that move all the time. I think that's all the Freestyle bases covered.

Adam Fielder



"Right about here, they've got a town or something marked 'Portage.'"

Ticks and Lyme Disease

Kath Risely

From this:



To this:



I have heard from a reliable source that Lyme disease contracted from ticks is becoming more common and it is a disease that some people may not really know about.

A tick is a small, blood-sucking mite. Normally it lives on blood from larger animals, like deer, but it may also attach itself to humans. The tick sits on tall grass and trees, waiting for a possible 'host' to walk by. We have noticed them in large numbers in areas covered with bracken where they can be picked up as you brush through the foliage. If a tick attaches itself to someone, it will typically find its way to a warm, moist and dark place on the body, although we have found them crawling up our arms and even behind our ears. The tick will then insert a probe into the skin and begin sucking blood. In most cases the tick will leave once it has become engorged with your blood, or the host will get rid of it without any harm having been done. But, occasionally, the tick carries small bacteria, which is what causes Lyme Disease. The further under the skin it gets, the greater the risk of catching the disease.

A tick on the body doesn't usually cause any pain, but it is still important to get rid of it because of the risk of Lyme disease. Every year about 300-500 cases are reported. The tick presses its head into the skin so it is important to try and remove all of it: remnants in the skin could cause infection. You can either buy a tick remover or try to seize the tick with a pair of tweezers as close to the head as possible. Take care not to pull it apart. Pull slowly and consistently until it lets go. Smothering or burning the tick to remove it is not a good idea as this causes it to regurgitate into your bloodstream and make infection

more likely. If the tick is accidentally pulled apart and the head stays in the skin, there is a risk of being infected with other microscopic organisms. This kind of infection has nothing to do with Lyme disease, but can still be dangerous and unpleasant so it is advisable to see a doctor if infection occurs. If you have been bitten by a tick and have removed it, the risk of getting Lyme disease is so small that there is no reason to use an antibiotic. It is, however, important to watch out for symptoms that may indicate Lyme disease, especially a red spot close to the tick bite, which will turn into a spreading rash one to four weeks after being bitten. Sufferers also have fatigue, chills, headache and fever and joints may also be affected.

Obviously this is a potentially nasty disease with people who enjoy the outdoors – such as walkers and canoeists (particularly touring and sea paddling as we tend to sit and eat sandwiches in nice places) - being most at risk. It may therefore be good practice to carry a small tick remover as standard first aid equipment. If you have pets you should be able to buy a tick remover from your vets or alternatively I can get them through work. We sell them for £3.60 for a set of two – a large and a small depending on the size of tick. I am happy to bring them to the Hand & Dagger on a Tuesday night if anybody wants one but I would need to know by the previous Wednesday evening due to work patterns.

If you want to know more the National Trust have a leaflet on their website which can be downloaded (www.nationaltrust.org.uk then search for 'ticks'). Amazingly there is a website www.tickpicture.com should you wish to know more about this creature!

Kath Risely

The otherwise useless tweezers from a Swiss Army knife are also very good at removing ticks - they're thin & flexi and slip under the little blighters really neatly **John Kington**

What's wrong with Safety?

Mark Dillon

Probably the most important aspect of our lives is keeping us safe from harm and despite many safety campaigns from all manner of sources we still take little heed of safety.

For example the Government is pushing the railway crossing safety now as well as mobile phone use whilst driving campaigns. But obviously many people take little notice. In the past how many drink drive and seat belt campaigns has it taken to get us to 'belt up.' Or was it just the law change that did it and what cost before drink driving has become socially unacceptable. Even now around 40 years after the introduction of compulsory crash helmet wearing for motorcyclist, many would still chose to not wear them if they had a choice as do cyclists. Is it a streak of rebellious nature in us all that makes us so, or is it just that we don't like to be told what to do? I don't know but I guess I'm as bad as anyone because I have been known to flout the law on the odd occasion.

At first it may seem that kayaking is a little different, possibly because we were brought into a sport as beginners. Everyone wore helmets and buoyancy aids as they are widely accepted as necessary. Not only that but they do keep us warm and I'm sure that helps the cause.

However in kayaking I have still noticed some worrying situations and circumstances that suggest we do not accept safety as a necessary part of our sport.

I know of extremely experienced paddlers who haven't had safety updates in years and yet have plenty of paddle skill updates. I wrote last autumn about Adam and my experiences at the Tryweryn Pyranha fest

where the only courses that were full were the paddling courses and the safety courses were poorly attended with only 3 of us on our course. Again this lack of interest was demonstrated with the cancellation of this years River Rescue Symposium through – quote: “a lack of interest”. The actual number of people who had put their names down for the two day event was 18, and this for a course backed by sessions by Franco Ferrero, Peter Knowles, Bob Timms, Doug Ammon, and many more notable paddlers, in fact the training providers outnumbered the attendees when it was cancelled.

Ribble Canoe Club members are no different in their lack of interest in safety. Did I get a response with that statement? I should have – shouldn't I? You tell me, but before you get upset and on your high horse let me give you the quote that got me thinking about this article, a quote lifted directly from the AGM report and printed in the last Newsletter “The open pool sessions have been extremely well attended throughout the year, although Safety sessions have been under subscribed” now tell me I'm wrong and prove it.

Hands up all those people who have in the last 3 years spent £500 on a boat, £150 on a paddle, £40 on a BA , £30 on a helmet, £25 on Safety training, bought the cheapest throwline and first aid kit you can buy - if you actually have one, I'm sure there are a few hands up unless you are exempt because you haven't spent £25 on safety training. Note also how the price scale reduces as we move from nice to necessary things.

It doesn't matter how new to paddling you are for you to learn some safety skills, believe me I'm not picky about who's going to save me.

I was witness to a very interesting discussion at the Ribble AGM when a top slalom paddler was in my mind belittling skills of river running and in particular running the bigger drops. Although the slalomist in question was pressing his claim to be good enough to run anything that the creeker could run he was immediately stopped in his tracks when told 'no-one in the creeking groups would paddle with you because you haven't done any safety training and so would be a liability to any group'. Touché, and a bloodied metaphorical nose to you.

Everyone swims it's just that the gaps between swims gets bigger, and it doesn't always have to be a tasty river that can catch a paddler out.

A good example of this was when a top open boater joined a few of us to mess about at Burrs in the summer, the river was very low, and so no obvious real hazards existed. However a problem arose when the open boater flipped messing about in a small stopper and because of the shallow depth couldn't set up for the role and so pushed off the bottom but missed coming up and flipped again. At this point there still seemed to be no problem except that the guy had now tried to bail out and because the boat was on its side got his leg trapped – this even happens in kayaks when you don't go upside down- and was struggling to get clear and starting to panic. He turned the air blue calling for help before he was rescued and was badly shaken and seriously panicked.

Just going back to the Tryweryn course I attended if you search your memory banks or look up the back issue of the Newsletter you will remember the catalogue of errors and near disaster that occurred to our course provider a hugely experience level 5 coach, disaster can strike at any time especially when you least expect it.

I witnessed another rather poor example of a paddler demonstrating his carefree attitude to safety at Halton when a coach – not from Ribble- was demonstrating and coaching beginners near me and I noticed his helmet strap wasn't fastened, I pointed this out to him only to be told 'that it wasn't fastened because he wasn't doing anything yet' a super example to his group, and all this when I had earlier taken a fall on the slippery bank at the put in, a fall which could easily have lead to a banged head. Is it worth taking the risk? Christopher Reeve aka Superman thought so when asked about riding a horse without a helmet, he replied 'some risks are worth taking' that was just before he fell off, broke his back and spent the remainder of his life in a wheel chair, nice one Superman who started to believe he was Superman, he's dead now aged 52.

I've been guilty of joking about swimming in the past, I still do, but understand that to stigmatise swimming is also dangerous and can put fear into people either through embarrassment or actually of submersion dangers. However I would say that despite joking about swimming I do take it very seriously and have done some safety training and hopefully am more able to assist now.

Safety skills and equipment are only needed when you or a friend is in trouble, it's your job to make sure you are sufficiently trained and in a position to help a friend by taking the initiative and learning safety skills then practicing them on a regular basis. As a club we should make being well trained and qualified in Safety as high in importance as being well trained and qualified in coaching. Do your bit.

I am sorry if this article has upset anyone, it wasn't my intention, but if it has upset you please don't direct your anger towards me as it would be better focused on your conscience.

Mark Dillon

Doggy Paddle

Zack Risely

After exhibiting much style and skill at the back end of last year when I wowed everyone with my prowess in a Canadian canoe, I vowed to get back on the water as soon as possible. I felt Halton was a bit too ruff for my first attempt in a kayak although my brief stint in Iain's Rocker had given me the incentive I needed. Seeing other people paddling double kayaks gave me a lead and a nice sunny day saw me loading the club's Kiwi onto the car roof for the drive up to Ambleside.



The spray deck proved a little too uncomfortable, so whilst 'Paddler no. 1' in the front could wear hers and keep nice and dry, myself and 'Paddler no. 2' in the rear couldn't. Not a problem I had thought as my buoyancy aid would keep me snug and warm. What I hadn't counted on, and I guess this is the big difference from a canoe, is the water dripping off the double bladed kayak paddle and completely ruining my hairdo. What almost makes it worse is that I overheard talk of kitting me out in future with a plastic 'RainMate' – yes really! – those of the type elderly ladies normally keep in their handbags for emergency use. I can see this becoming a real bone of contention as I definitely wouldn't want Charley Maddock dog to see me in one of those – it would be the end of

what could be a beautiful relationship. I would look a real basket case.

My family had collared a back up crew so we had company on the water and off we set around the top end of the lake entertained by jokes from the local wag. All was going swimmingly and with a bit of instruction from me Paddler no.1 was only hit over the head with Paddler no. 2s paddle once, and they managed to keep their strokes pretty much synchronised.

Heading south we were having a ball until I realised that a comfort break was desperately needed. As the wind was picking up my crew pulled in at a nice beach which was well equipped with a selection of trees to give me a welcome paws from the exertions of paddling. The others paddled on a little way before surfing back with the stiff tail wind.

Back at the top of the lake the waves were really picking up and I have to confess to a moment of panic.

As reassurance for both of us that all was well I insisted on sitting on Paddler no. 2s knee and trying to give him a very big kiss. Unfortunately as he was trying to steer the boat – the paddler in the front having been under strict instruction NOT to steer – this saw us having a close encounter with some rocks and I learnt some new vocabulary from the paddler in the front.

We all landed safely back at Waterhead although I now feel that maybe I am barking up the wrong tree with my choice of boat.

With the Scotland trip looming a decision had to be made. I really fancied paddling in the sunshine, through calm blue waters, to the islands off Arisaig and enjoying a run on their coral beaches.



This would be followed by one of Steve's nice fires and a snooze at lunchtime, with a spot of seal watching to round things off nicely. It was generally felt that the Canadian wouldn't be an ideal choice of craft and due to transport problems it looked like my dream wouldn't be realised. At the last minute Terry was a real pedigree chum and offered to transport the Kiwi for us in the hope that we would have some lovely calm weather for me to take to the water. However it was not to be. The weather gods were against us and all I could manage was to chase and kill the seaweed at Rhu Point whilst being battered by the wind.



We did decide to vet the river Garry, as there was a dam release on the Friday. I was really impressed with the way the river paddlers amongst us performed and have decided that this is what I will aspire to. Next year I will try rafting if I can get a pal to come along with me.

My next outing with Ribble Canoe Club was Terry's beginner's trip, again from Waterhead, but this time up to the Brathay Pool. I wasn't paddling on this occasion but I was in a position to offer advice from the bridge as the paddlers tried to impress me with their ferry gliding and other moving water skills. I have to confess however that I fell asleep during the polo match and missed seeing that aggressive competitive streak that emerged from the normally placid people that I know so well. I count ball catching amongst my many talents and if I had been awake then I could have shown them how it should be done. Although I prefer being in a canoe I don't think I would have enjoyed being in the Canadian with Frankie – I always thought the idea was to stay the right way up!



Anyway hopefully Wagon Lane Slalom will be our next outing followed by the Ardeche trip - for which I'm planning to be as fit as a flea - although I suspect that I may only be participating in an advisory capacity once more. I may enjoy a bit of poodle spotting though.

Zack Risely

Season Ends On a High Note

Pat Green

We were fortunate to get two additional Halton dates this year 19th April and 9th May. The April date was not particularly well supported, the water was very low and the date clashed with a Washburn release. We had the reverse for the May date, the water was an excellent level below and between the islands for those doing their 3 star training. For the more experienced paddlers there was plenty of testing water from the groin to the top weir. There were 60 plus paddlers on the water and there seemed plenty of room for everyone. Car parking got a bit tight, parking on both the North and South banks being rather full.



The fishermen accommodated us and one even caught a fish while a canoeist was around

Photographs courtesy of Claire Grundy Lancaster CC

It was wonderful paddling in warm weather on clean moving water. One paddler said it felt really strange paddling at Halton and not being freezing cold. He said he thought about putting an ice pack inside his buoyancy aid so it would feel like a normal day at Halton.



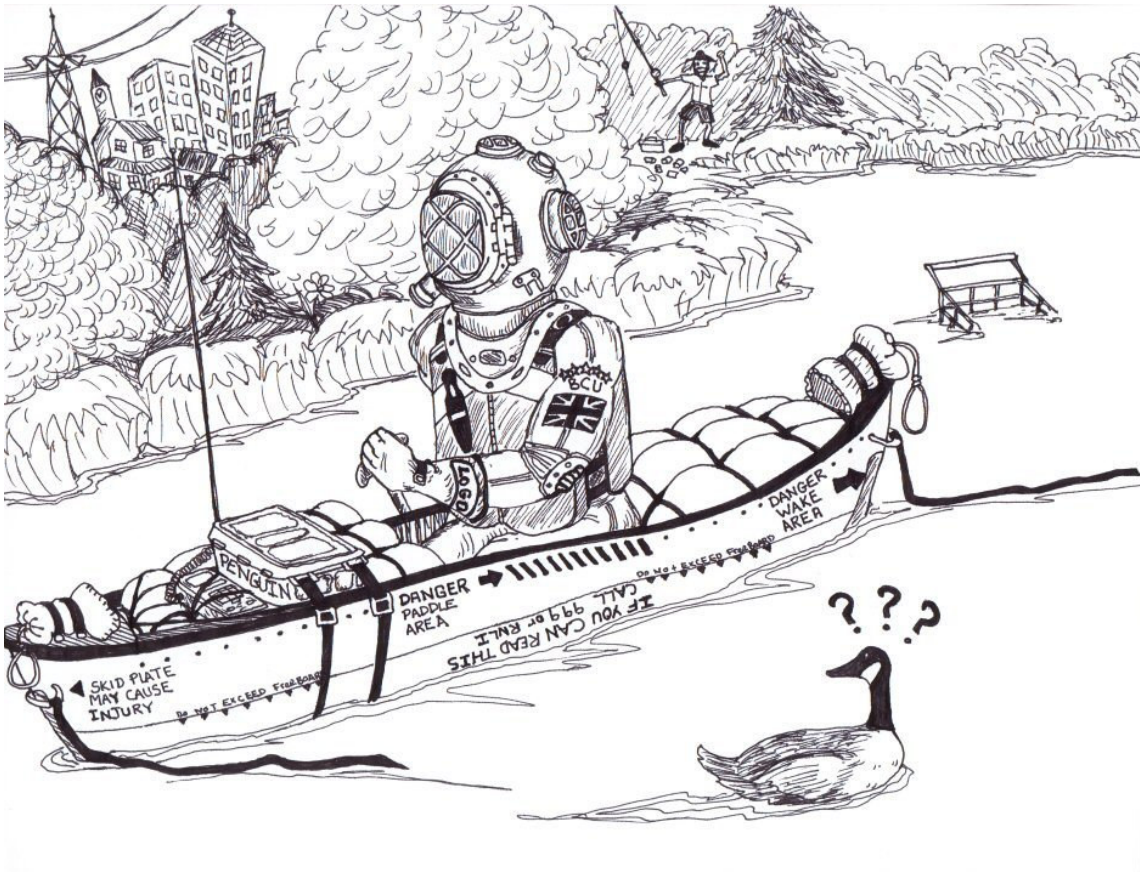
Those of us who parked on the North bank got to meet the new land owners, who were enjoying a site visit. There were about 20+ of them walking up and down the bank assessing the site and its potential. The new owners were as interested in us, as we were in them. The land has been purchased by Lancashire Cohousing Company Limited who plan to build private homes, community facilities, workshop/office space and shared outdoor space. For more information about the project visit www.lancastercohousing.org.uk

The new owners wanted to know how often we paddled on the rapids, and said they looked forward to watching us paddling on the river from either the comfort of their homes or stood on the river bank. They also asked if there would be much interest in a coffee shop offering views over the river.

It all sounds very interesting but they don't expect to be moving in for at least a couple of years. They have said that they will contact us when there are any public meetings regarding the development of the site.

I will be keeping club members updated via the Newsletter and the Forum on the club website.

Pat Green



'Following advice from the BCU, Allan was ready to canoe the Washburn'



'Hello Roy', said the fish, is this your first time at Washburn

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
29 May	Open	n/a	Adam Fielder	Ed Lefley
5 June	Open	n/a	Albert Risely	Kath Risely
12 June	Star Course	Allan Hacking	Mark Dillon	Brian Woodhouse
19 June	Fun Night	Will & Rachel	Mark Buttle	Will & Rachel
26 June	Open	n/a	Mark Loftus	John Kington

Please note prices for pool sessions:

Rolling Course £20 plus club membership. Freestyle £5. All other sessions £4.

Please book in advance for the Paddle Skills Sessions and Rolling Course by phoning the named contact.

Ahoy there mi Hearties

~~Pirates of the Caribbean~~ *Ribble*

The Hunt for Dunbongo

'the Pool' - 19th June -
Pirate Themed fun night
Four teams of up to 6.
See forum early June
Contact Paul, Rachel or Will
@ Hand &







Chairman's Chat

Say "No" to crossing the road misery. Use our new access path down to the canal towpath and know true happiness.

What a delight it was the other Tuesday to traipse down our woodland walk, the scent of pine from the forest bark assailing the nostrils, and to leap from the retaining wall at the bottom onto the canal towpath with its own distinctive ambience of doggy mess. The initial and wonderful flowering of enthusiasm for the construction project has borne fruit. Now we just need to tidy up the loose ends (literally) with attention to the container threshold and the step down at the bottom and the adjacent towpath. Many thanks to all those members who worked so hard to make the path a success.

We're well on with our summer courses for 1, 2 and 3 Star (White Water) awards. They seem to be going well and everyone appears to be coping with the new syllabuses. Several 3 Star (White Water) sessions have been held at Burrs Country Park, R. Brathay and Halton-on-Lune as well as the regular Tuesday night sessions at the Hand & Dagger.

And we had a dry throw line session for all 3 Stars last Tuesday where we all learnt new techniques. Coaching is a two way street!

The 2 Stars have been getting into canoeing as well as kayaking, thanks to open boats brought along by Mark Buttle.

I think Green Publishing is settling into magazine production with this, their second edition of the erudite enterprise.

I hope that you've all booked with Slenningford Mill if you're going to West Tanfield (26-28 June) and that you've all told John Kington via the Forum on the Website if you're going to Rhosneigr (10-12 July).

We've not finalised the third summer camp yet (21-23 August), but it looks like being either Westwater or Dodgson Wood on the east side of Coniston Water. Follow these links (ctrl + mouse click) to find out more about each site :-

http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/main/w-global/w-localtoyou/w-northwest/w-lakedistrict-feature/w-northwest-lakedistrict_camping/w-northwest-lakedistrict_camping-wasdale.htm

<http://www.discoverthelakes.co.uk/dodgson-wood-group-campsite-i812.html>

If you have a definite preference please make it known on the Item "Third Summer Camp" under "Trips and Courses" on the Website Forum. Alternatively ring me and leave a message (I'm on holiday for two weeks – Yipeeee!).

Terry Maddock

NOTE: These links do not work as the file you receive is in PDF Format . If you want to visit the websites you will need to manually type the address into your Web Browser. Editor

Editors Bit

Apologies for stealing the headline story slot with one of our own articles, but at the time of going to press we had no article about the Scottish Easter Club Trip. As this is one of the main events of the year attended by a lot of club members, we felt that it warranted more than a passing mention.

At the last minute we received an article from John Kington (minus pictures). To do it justice, the article needs photographic evidence of the daring deeds carried out on the Scottish Rivers, so we will acquire these and produce the article in the next issue.

The cartoons in this issue were supplied by Adam Fielder.

We have tried to create a nice balance of articles, informative, amusing, controversial, and in desperation, articles written by “Dogs.”

So keep the articles coming we accept them from anyone as long as they are club members. Must ask Brian Woodhouse if Zack Risely has paid his membership fees.

Please remember when you are out paddling, to take pictures and make a mental note of events, so that you can write an article for the newsletter. This especially applies to our newer members who may be a bit shy at putting pen to paper (actually fingers to keyboard). In general there is a regular group of contributors to the newsletter, and we are grateful for their articles, but there is a danger of the newsletter representing only their views expressed in their way. Whilst we do not want

to deter anyone from submitting articles, it would be nice if there was more competition for space from a wider readership. Therefore it would be good to hear from new members especially.

All we ask is that you email us your article as a word document; we will do the necessary editing. If you have pictures to accompany the article, just send them as .jpg files and we will insert them into the text. No need to edit the pictures either, just send them as they come off your camera.

Disclaimer

Please note that the opinions expressed in this and every other Ribble CC newsletter are those of the author of the article. They do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the newsletter editor or the committee, or the policies of Ribble Canoe Club

Dates and deadlines

The next committee meeting will be on Wednesday 1 July at 7:00pm at the Hand & Dagger. The next newsletter will be published on 15 July. We would appreciate all submissions by Wednesday 8th and earlier if possible please.

Please send your submissions by email, to newsletter@ribblecanoeclub.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@ribblecanoeclub.co.uk

Ribble CC Library

To borrow a book or video, contact Janet Robinson 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

Olli Gru

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

Canoe Touring 100 Paddles in England

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

Last minute trips organised on the website, at the Hand & Dagger (Weds, 6:30pm onwards) or Fulwood Leisure Centre (Fri, 9:00pm). If you have any dates for the calendar please contact Terry Maddock

Ribble CC development trips are in **bold**

Ribble CC recreational events (assumed risk) are in ***bold italic***.

Other Ribble CC events are in *italic*.

Events in normal type are external events listed for information only.

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/>

Trips / Events

May

22 Pool Session
2 Star course session
Allan Hacking

23/24 Slalom Div 3 & 4
Stone, Staffs.

27 Dam Release R. Washburn
t'other side o' Blubberhouses

29 Pool Session
Open night for Members

June

5 Pool Session
Open night for Members

6 Star Awards
Coaching Day
Waterhead, nr Ambleside

6/7 Slalom Div 3 & 4
Sowerby Bridge, nr Halifax

6 & 7 Dam Release R. Washburn
t'other side o' Blubberhouses

12 Pool Session
3 Star course session
Allan Hacking

13 Flat Water Derwent Water
Norman & Pat

17 Dam Release R. Washburn
t'other side o' Blubberhouses

19 Pool Session
FUN NIGHT
See Magazine and
Website Forum

26 Pool Session
Open night for Members

27/28 Family Camp R. Ure
Slenningford Mill,
West Tanfield
Brian

July

4/5 Sea Paddle
3 Star level of competence
Wales (probably)
Andy Dowe

11/12 Family Camp Surf, Tide Race,
Sea Rhosneigr, Anglesey
John Kington

18/01 Family Camp Grade 1/2 River
Ardeche, France
Ed Lefley & Forum

Aug

22/23 Family Camp
to be arranged

Sep

18/20 Open Canoe Symposium
Glenmore Lodge

NOTE: 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.