

TALES FROM THE RIVERBANK

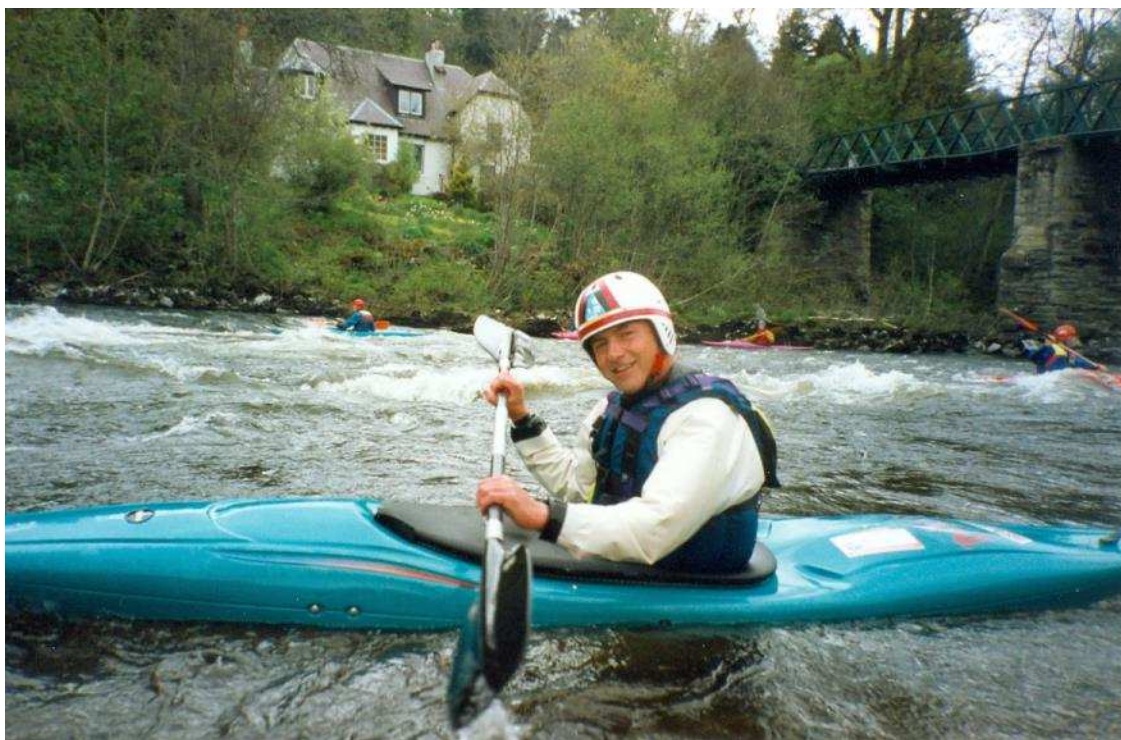


January/February 2014

Steve Swarbrick

(1955 – 2014)

May he rest in peace

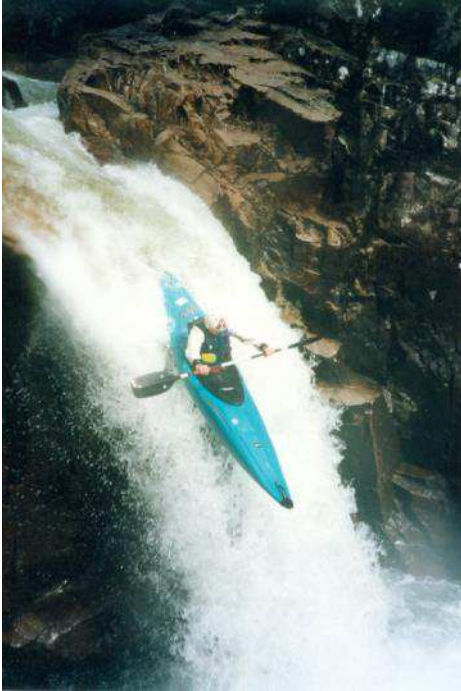


Swarby at Grandtully

Following an illness of five years or so, Steve Swarbrick died on Friday 17 January 2014.

I first knew Steve when he turned up at the Club's Summer Camp in 1991 at West Tanfield near Ripon. A voice tentatively asked if this was Ribble Canoe Club, and the semi-prone figures around the camp fire turned to see a young man with a shy smile. He settled into the club quietly and unobtrusively. Bob Smith asked "How are we going to get this young man out of his shell?" Just over a year later came the epic Anglesey Camp which I won't go into now. Suffice it to say that shortly afterwards someone asked how we could get this man back into his shell. It was at that camp that Steve became "Beer Monster". He always maintained that it was a cold remedy which had caused his unusual behaviour and I have to say that it is a tribute to Steve's character that the name never really stuck. He was fondly referred to as "Swarby"

I remember paddling a few slaloms with Steve. We would set off on a Friday night or, more usually, at the crack of dawn on a Saturday to arrive in time to meet one or two Ribble youngsters to give them the benefit of our own extremely limited knowledge. Marple, Stone, Matlock and Richmond all spring to mind. At Richmond he delivered a long lecture to some young Ribbler who wanted to know if the tea he was being offered was Tetleys. "Old feckers like us", he declared, "could get fussy about what tea they drank but young whippersnappers shouldn't have the time." Expand that to ten minutes plus a bit of arm waving and you have the gist. Steve was never one to suffer fools gladly.



His paddling skills improved rapidly and it wasn't too long before he was making cups of tea and coffee for Andy Rushton in order to get invited onto the Big Boys' October white-water trip to Scotland. He succeeded of course and enjoyed rivers like the Spean, the Roy, the Gary, and the Etive with its famous long drop.

Then he met the lovely Bev, and they became synonymous. Did this meeting of souls curtail his paddling? No way. Bev took up paddling. She christened The Raging Rothay and even wrote an article for the magazine. They bought a double sea kayak and even paddling that together didn't lead to many arguments.



RCC Curry Paddle December 2004 - Maiden voyage for the double sea kayak



2005 Loch Ken October

They paddled together on Loch Ken on our first Club trip there and on the sea at Anglesey.

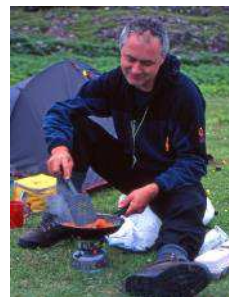
They had holidays on the west coast of Scotland paddling lochs and sea.



Swarby on the River Lever Graveyard section



July 1999 Jura



Aug 1995 LLeyn

Steve continued to paddle white water and more especially sea where he joined and became one of our more experienced and extremely able sea paddlers.

Was there anything Steve enjoyed as much as canoeing and life with Bev? Well yes, there probably was. Everyone who came to Club camps up to five years ago or so, will remember Steve's love of camping and camp fires. Wild camping on sea trips gave rise to epic tales involving camp fires and exploding gas bottles amongst other things. However most camp sites don't allow ground based fires, so Steve became famous at club camps for his barbecue/braziers. Every single camp he came to, and that was most, he would bring a new and improved version, always made from aluminium "off-cuts" from where he worked as a welder.



They were always portable as flat-packs and were erected to work well at first as a barbecue and then, when the food was finished, as a brazier for a roaring fire.

2005 West Tanfield Camp - Allan's Leg, Joanne, and Lesley with Steve and one of his famous fires

This man was a natural engineer. It was on Anglesey that one such brazier was used to burn a railway sleeper that he and Bev had towed from the sea.

The resulting black smoke brought out the fire brigade who were quite happy as they were part time and it meant they got their call-out money. They even let us keep the fire in.



Perhaps Steve reached the pinnacle of his brazier manufacturing career at the New Year we spent at Fell End Barn near Grizebeck. New Year's Eve was wet and windy, testing all of Steve's tarpaulin skills helped by then apprentice Allan Hacking amongst others.

What Steve couldn't do with a tarp wasn't worth knowing about. And then out came the brazier, unfolding and building up to a firebox on legs, with three walls, a roof and a chimney! A good Ribble time was had by all despite the weather.

On another new year we camped on Holm Island on Derwent Water. No-one who was there will forget that epic. The New Year was fine and went well and smoothly. At 7 O'clock the following morning the lake was flat and calm. At 10 am when we set off to return to mainland, the wind was Force 6 and rising with waves such that we disappeared from each other in the peaks and troughs. The lake ferry had waves breaking over its roof and in the gusts it ceased to move forward at all. Steve's daughter Kate will never forget this, her first time on the water, and in an open boat with Martin Russell and being towed by Kevin Singleton until the towline snapped, and then it sank!

Steve's latest brazier was lost to the depths and we all awaited the news that a shiny silver alien space craft had been discovered on the shores of Derwent Water when the water level went down. Steve and Bev were fairly new at that time to their double sea kayak and you can tell Steve's concern by his delight that the cracking sound on their sideways landing in shrubbery was his paddle breaking rather than the boat.

Their concern for their boat didn't diminish. Several years later, on their return home from Loch Ken and taking the boat off their car on the very steep drive, the boat started to slip and Bev threw her leg under it to save it from smashing onto the drive. To Steve's relief the boat was saved and Bev was back at work six months later after the spiral fracture in her leg had healed.

Anglesey figures largely in Steve and Bev's life with Ribble. It was at our Rhosneigr Camp one year that Steve arrived early and, with help, erected a Tepee, 14 foot poles, wind flaps and the lot.

He then put up his and Bev's usual small tent.

Bev arrived to a cup of tea and a chair outside the small tent. She turned the chair around so that she wasn't looking at the lovely new tepee. "You know I've always longed for a tepee", she told Steve. "Well that one's yours", replied Steve, "Happy Birthday". Bev was so pleased



Then Pat came by with a birthday cake and a tepee on it in icing and Indian Head Dresses for everyone to wear.

We were all very happy. That tepee was later erected in their garden at Appley Bridge and stood for several years in the garden in which Steve did so much innovative work – timber walkways including all around the huge pear tree, a little timber gazebo and the hens' hut, all surrounding the tepee and a pond – and it wasn't a huge garden, but he fit it all in somehow without losing scale.

Getting back to New Year camps, these began at Wrosters Barn on the eastern shore of Coniston Water. I think the first one was Charis's Cocktail Party – Charis being Bev's daughter. She and friend Jenny kept us all topped up with cocktails of all flavours, colours and spirits till the early hours. Having said that, at about half past eight, Steve asked Charis to start me on non-alcoholic cocktails as I needed to pace myself. I still think those Shirley Temples were the best and I never noticed the lack of alcohol.

After that we were at Wrosters Barn every New Year and often in between as well. Steve's wishing all in turn a "Happy New Beer" became the byword for an exciting, entertaining and indeed, happy new year. These events were organised by Steve and Bev so obviously involved a large fire, and I think, introduced Allan Hacking and Joanne amongst others to the Ribblers' favourite form of relaxation.

We held our Millennium celebrations there when Kevin Singleton brought along sea rescue flares that were past their sell-by date and we were able to practise with them. Sadly there were many of us there the year when we were waiting for the Crake paddlers to return so that we could start the festivities. By 7.30pm we were hearing of the unfolding tragedy of Clive Robinson's death on the river. It was a glum New Year that time. But we returned there again to remember Clive and to be happy again with Steve, Bev, Bev's many friends and many happy Ribblers.

Easter paddling in Scotland was first organised by Jane Bentham and later by Tom Byrne. Members spent Easter week up there paddling White Water Rivers, lochs, sea lochs and the open sea. Steve would paddle the big white water but also enjoyed paddling the calmer stuff as well, with Bev and with some of the newer paddlers. He took on the responsibility of organising various trips during the week with less experienced paddlers, often on sheltered sea lochs or, if conditions were suitable on the sea. Loch Hourn springs to mind where several paddlers set a ferocious rate whilst others adopted a more leisurely style, exploring points of interest along the shore and admiring the scenery.



Loch Horne



Loch Lochy



Loch Arkaig Steve lighting the fire

Steve decided his trips should be called “Swan about with Swarby” in an effort to encourage more relaxed paddling.

A favourite of all was the sea at Arisaig where many, new to sea paddling, were introduced by Steve to seals and occasionally otters. There would always be lunch on a low sandy island and if possible it was important to help keep the beach clean by burning as much driftwood, drift plastic and drift anything as would make a big fire.



Paddling out to the skerries from Rhue Point Arisaig



Top left one of the beautiful beaches on the skerries

Top Right Swarby, Clive & Norman just chilling

Swarby built a fire to burn some of the rubbish we found.

For many years we stayed in chalets at Roy Bridge (opposite The Strangled Bassett) before the owner changed tactic and Pat organised cottages for us at Ardruh between Ballachulish and Coran Ferry.

I think we were there for the second year (Easter 2009) when Steve's legs were beginning to go haywire. Too much beer we all laughed. Steve laughed too.



Steve and Bev also paddled single sea kayaks – the picture below was taken on Coniston in March 2009



Steve's condition deteriorated, and theories abounded. We were worried, Steve carried on paddling, needing help himself now, to get in and out of his boat and someone to carry his boat. His sea-paddling friends helped him paddle at Ardnamurchan. Thank goodness they were there to help him for this short time, just as he had helped so many other up and coming paddlers over so many years.



Steve's last sea paddling trip with his friends in RCC – Ardnamurchan September 2009

Steve's condition deteriorated slowly but steadily over several years, but even when all he could do was nod his head to speak through a computer, he somehow maintained a sense of humour. You could see his eyes appreciating a joke or an anecdote from his paddling days. With motor neurone disease, he knew exactly what was happening to him and what the future held, as did Bev. I won't accept that their struggle right up to the end was anything less than a heroic, glorious and wonderful exhibition of all the best qualities of human nature. But I'm sure that at times it didn't seem like that.

Our best wishes for the future must go to his loving partner Bev, his daughters Kate and Laura, Bev's daughters Charis and Abbey, all his many friends and everyone who had the privilege and good fortune to know this lovely man.

Terry Maddock

Photo's courtesy of: Tony Morgan, Chris Porter, Steve Singleton, Bob Smith, Janet Robinson, Allan Hacking, Kath Risely, & The Green's

Photos: There is a section on the club gallery for you to upload photos of Steve – From the forum select “gallery” then click on Steve. Alternatively, click the link on the front page of the website.

Editors Bit

I'll start with a special thanks to Terry for his front page Steve Swarbrick's Obituary; I know it must have been difficult to write because I found it difficult to read without becoming very emotional.

I would like to add my condolences on behalf the Green Family to Bev and family and to Steve's family and friends, who have to bear the loss of a lovely man who epitomised the spirit of RCC. I never knew him in his early days but in later life at the club found him to be someone who was good at leading trips and looking after people on them. He certainly made sure they were warm at lunchtime with his campfires. I can only say that I was fortunate enough to have been present at some of the happy times Terry mentioned in his Obituary.

I would also like to apologise if anyone reading this edition finds it a little "weird" if that is the word. The Newsletter was just about to be circulated when the sad news of Steve Swarbrick's passing was given to us. It was then decided that we should delay its circulation and add his Obituary. The Newsletter started out as a "Happy Edition" but later events changed the tone for Pat and me as editors. It was too late to make wholesale changes so it was decided that we should simply make a few additions and amendments and send out this edition with the original articles. We have therefore ended up with a Newsletter which starts out sad and respectful then becomes humorous (hopefully). Knowing Steve and his zest for life and sense of fun I think he would understand and approve of the situation.

As always thanks to all of you who contributed articles, especially Oliver Patterson who premiered his writing skills. Thanks also to the old stagers Roy Booth and Paul Binks, as well as the less regular contributors like Graham Kingaby and Phil Haworth.

I found it interesting that Phil went to somewhere like Greenland and then waxed lyrical about sunshine. Most people go to Spain or Greece or even Austria for sunshine.

Thanks to Sarah Jones for her reasons to be cheerful, did you notice she never even mentioned the fact that she won us the Paddling Challenge, bet that cheered her up it certainly did for the rest of the club? Hopefully if the prize money is donated to charity it will cheer up some unfortunate child somewhere. But mustn't pre-judge the result of the Poll and get in trouble that seems to be Terry's job.

Speaking of Terry, thanks for your Chairman's Chat, you're the only person I know who can get out of a hole by writing rather than climbing. A skill well-honed over many years as chairman no doubt.

Enjoy reading this edition, because the next one will be filled with the report from the AGM and it will not be filled with tales of epic swims on Alpine Rivers and Sunbathing in Greenland I'll bet.

Dates and Deadlines: The next committee meeting will be on Wednesday 5th March at 7:00pm at the Hand & Dagger. The next newsletter will be published on 19th March. We would appreciate all submissions by Wednesday 12th. Please send submissions to newsletter@ribblecanoecub.co.uk

Norman Green
Newsletter@ribblecanoecub.co.uk

7 Days... 8 Rivers... 3 Countries... 10 Swims and 1 Numb Bum!

Adam Fielder & Gary Fishwick

If you are expecting a tale of extreme white water, bear claws and words like; Awesome, Rad and McNasty I think you're reading the wrong story, ours is more an adventure of a couple of 'Fat n Fifty' blokes, getting up in the middle of the night to pee and complaining of aching backs and who snores the most!

So we ran away from our wives for a one week adventure and invasion of Europe.



Fish basking in the sun
(please ignore the nose of his
boat)

Having previously paddled and swum the River Leven, the Kent, Washburn and the Mighty T we felt confident enough to challenge the July waters of Austria, Germany and Switzerland on what will be forever etched in our memories as the 2013 Toblerone Expedition. Our expedition began with a 26 hour bus ride weaving across several lanes of night traffic, I'm convinced that there were several instances where everyone on the bus was enjoying sleepy 'bobos' times which were only disturbed when the rumble strips were activated as the driver occasionally cat napped whilst veering across the hard shoulder. Anyway, several pee stops and many numb bums later we arrived at our accommodation, it was a chalet come cuckoo clock with fitted sauna in a village called Pfunds, or something like that.



The 'Cuckoo Clock' we lived in,
surviving on Swiss cheese and
Toblerone

So priorities first, beer and pies, but unluckily for us all the foreigners couldn't speak English in the restaurant, but luckily for the expedition team we had Bigfish with us, who announced to all that he was very proficient in the German language... It went something like this...

"Au wiedersein pet, beers and pizza please danka achtung, German's easy see!"

Sir, I am not German, I am Swiss, you are in Switzerland said the slightly perturbed waitress.

"Oh! Sorry senorita, could I also have a bacon sandwich (Fish then began to oink like a pig holding up fingers to imitate horns - I didn't understand this either), you know BLT? A confused, worried waitress immediately relaxed when I intervened and said we'll have a cheese sandwich instead.

Anyway enough of our team interpreter, you get the picture. It got worse later on when Fish discovered that they didn't sell Swiss Roll in Switzerland and they had no idea that a Black Forest Gateaux was a cake! I considered this encounter to be more of a cultural exchange educating the natives, rather than Fish's crap interpretation, but to finish this deviation from the story, I've been assured by Fish that when abroad you're always best speaking in English, as long as you repeat it 3 times, saying it louder each time and if that doesn't work, you can always remind 'em who won the war and the 1966 World Cup!

Anyway, back to these Austrian rivers, when the Austrians were grading rivers I'm sure they followed the following criteria...

If it's Huuuuuge, is as wide as a football field is long and has massive waves, whirlpools, wide eddy lines and boily waters but no rocks, it can't really be anything more than a Class 2

If it's like a giant aquatic pinball machine where we can ricochet middle aged, overweight, Brit swimmers between the rocks and slow them down on their way in our many huuuuge holes, then it's gotta be a Class 3



Me bimbling (or more like bumbling)
down an Austrian Class 2/3 river

Let's take some English grade 4 rapids but make them a mile long, feed them through a stone gorge with unclimbable cliffs either side but make sure we have plenty of bridges between the cliffs so we can laugh and watch the English idiot boaters and swimmers, we'll call those Class 4.

Basically, Austrians don't boat, they just tempt people to their country so that they can sit on the bank, wearing leather shorts, eating sausages and laughing their rocks off!



A typical example of
'Austrian River Rash'

Our boating team consisted of a L4 Coach, a L3 safety Boater, a Cambridge University Researcher, a Nuclear Weld Scientist, a Computer Programmer, me and Bigfish - with the exception of us two, everyone else had been boating 11+ years so you can see that with mine and Fishes 'Ninja paddling skills' we were a useful welcome addition to a well balanced team.

Several people have asked us, why Austria? But our decision to do Austria was based on the simple fact that it was cheap and we were both off work - did we research the rivers, their grades, their seasons and the impact of snowmelt on the river levels? No, but I did know that it's somewhere near Germany, the Terminator was born there, they have big hills, they eat schnitzels and unbeknown to us, the water was very, very high for June.

Our first river was the Brandenberger Ache (all rivers over there either end in 'erger, 'st or 'ache - I don't know why?) a rocky class 4 gorge. We all nailed the first grade 4 drop but unfortunately on the second rapid one of our 'experienced' boaters had an out of boat experience where he bid a farewell to his boat and his Werner crank paddles. This created a problem for the group as the leader went off chasing the boat down the gorge (you can't paddle back up the gorge so that was goodnight Vienna from him) leaving the swimmer stranded on a rock, as there was no climb out due to the 100ft cliff faces either side of the gorge, the swimmer had no other option but to swim the entire length of the gorge. The river was also pool drop, Fish took a swim when he got pinned on a rock but still held his kit to successfully return in his boat whilst in the river. Several hours later, tired, wet and with an amazingly dry mouth we reached the end of the trip, luckily the river leader was there with the swimmers boat but unfortunately the Werner cranks were last seen waltzing down the Danube, never to be seen again.



The Brandenberger Ache



Next day we paddled the Imst, described as a little bouncy Class 2/3 river. Well it's just as well that there are no trading standards officers in Austria cos they could also have described me and Fish as two petit, dainty, young men who wouldn't be able to find a pie in Wigan! Suffice to say, the snow had melted in the sun, the Imst was much wetter and coincidentally my mouth was much drier - it was... guess what? Huuuuuuge! Fish swam, I swam but we kept our kit. I've never seen a river so wide and creamy, did I mention the cold? The riverbed didn't have pebbles, it was lined with the brass testicles of a million monkeys that is why you never see any primate's native in Austria, Germany or Switzerland.



I could now regale you with stories of the beautiful scenery, mountains, paddling triumphs and glory but I know, and you know that the bit most really want to hear about is our swims and near misses, so here goes...

My two frightening Austrian river experiences:-

- 'Against the Wall' Rapid on Schuls Gorge (Class 4 chute between undercut cliff and large stopper/hole) - Instructions were to stay away from the undercut on the river left, avoid the rocks river right and try and scoot around the hole in the centre. If you end up in the stopper, you must hang on in the boat for it to flush you out, under no circumstances bale out. So you get the picture, a lot of instructions for a 12ft wide river. Suffice to say, I missed the undercut, avoided the rocks but managed to slide perfectly into the hole just nicely. Think now! Stick to plan, I'm upside down, lean forward grip the boat and hang on in there.

For anyone who's learnt to roll and is wondering why I didn't, you should try climbing into a tumble dryer at your local laundrette and executing a perfect C to C - it doesn't always have a happy ending.

Well tick followed tock... and I still held on in there... but still everything thundered on... mustn't bale, hold on... Eventually what felt like several days later, I pulled my ejector deck and was immediately sucked out from my boat, spinning like Olga Corbett to emerge triumphant in the sunshine to be greeted and reassured by the laughter of the Fish.

As I slipped up first time, I decided to run it again, this time I had the perfect run, no epics or dramas, I punched the air in victory, let go of my paddle and immediately fell in and swam again on an ickle lickle eddy line, much to everyone's amusement.

- Tosens Gorge on the Inn (high water Class 4+) - Instructions were, "I know the waters like a mill pond here but when you get around the corner it's big, and I mean a lot bigger than the other big stuff we've done, anyway once you're through the gnarly bit, there's a must get eddy under the bridge, river left. When we leave this, you must, I repeat, MUST go river right to avoid the big rocky water and pour overs."

Another understatement, once again I couldn't spit but someone must have been watching over me cos I made it through the maelstrom and into the eddy. "Calm down, calm down", I said to myself, in my pseudo scouse accent... just as I saw the safety boater's kayak flush past me - empty!

I suddenly went into panic, turbo paddling mode as I realised my safety cover had vanished and also just as I realised I was being flushed out of the eddy, backwards down river left.

As I reversed over a boulder I felt relieved as I realised there was a cushion of water allowing me to pass over it, unfortunately as I tipped over the boulder edge I dropped 6ft into a washing machine, type thingy hole. My paddle was ripped from my hands, my boat was sucked off my hips and my knees brushed past my ears, it was deafening, dark and very, very noisy.

The tumbling lasted a while before I saw daylight, gasping a breath I was slammed into another boulder on a repeat spin cycle. This was turning out to be my worse ever swim. I wasn't aware that rapids, holes, boulders and waves could go on for so long, well it turned out to be about a 1km swim, I could have asked my audience for help but nobody was there, if I could have phoned a friend, I'd have asked Norris Mcwhirter if he was measuring this swim. Still roll on, I've not got to the worse bit yet...

I tumbled through the last wave, coughing and spluttering, just in time to see the river flushing into a cliff face directly into an undercut. I took a deep breath and rolled into a ball, luckily I flushed clean through straight into the calmer Class 2 section where I hopped a ride on a kayak to the side and spent 5 minutes hugging and making out with a big rock, heaving up all my swallowed water (amazingly no carrots but quite an interesting collection of flora and fauna was found in my many body cavities and crevices).

It is nice to laugh about it in hindsight but I can assure you that it was a terrible and really frightening swim. When I eventually got moving again my mouth was so dry that I had to pull my tongue from the roof of my mouth with my fingers as it had stuck. The only learning point I can pass on from these two bad experiences is that, at no point did I think about drowning. Your mind is working at a thousand miles an hour, focusing on breathing, swimming and protecting yourself. I realised that the defensive swimming taught on my WWSR course was really useful but sometimes it had to be abandoned so that you could swim backwards through the waves whilst you maintain an air pocket to breathe from.

I could have focused on the fun highlights of the trip but I thought it was important that I mention the bad experiences too because I am 100% certain that I only caught a lucky break because of the previous white water safety training I've completed with friends and coaches - this safety stuff does make you focus on your predicament and also gives you the tools to react and not panic as well. Remember that safety training is always an investment for the future and you never know when it'll come in handy.

That was the scary learning part of the trip for me but the mysterious bit was Fish's dry suit which he wore continuously on the water, even though we had a heat wave for the entire week. He said he wanted to be prepared for his swimming, which funnily enough, rarely happened. He'd usually paddle through some monster waves, then fall in as he was climbing out to have a pee in a nice flat eddy. His 'outa boat' experiences are definitely on the decrease these days but he did get me going when he said, "you think that your swim was scary, let me tell ya about the time I swam on the Upper Burrs."

Anyway, the other good times we had were...

Bigfish nailing amazing rolls on some very big water. Our culinary triumph over the soft southerners, showing them how real fat men cook! Drinking beer on a veranda overlooking the Swiss mountains, trains, chocolate box stuff etc. Laughing dawn until dusk. Nailing some grade 4 rapids. Finding out that Peter Kay thing - that Toblerone does taste exactly the same in Switzerland! Instructing Bigfish on how to use a sauna - "just sit next to me Fish, now lie back, close your eyes, breathe in, breath out, relax and focus on the gentle beat of the meditational music", just as I stroked his thigh - JUMP!!! I had to peel him off the ceiling, I've mentally scarred him for life and I don't think he'll be rushing to use a sauna again.



Dragging Fish's booty box up the side of a mountain

If our trip sounded scary, epic and full of disasters, it pretty much was.

But it was also full of good times and laughter as well - I've not mentioned most of the funny bits cos kids are reading but next year we intend to do it all again, somewhere new and maybe wetter!

Adam n' Fish

RCC Bala Camp August 2013

Oliver Patterson



Arriving and day 1 - Sunny on the way to and from Bala but for kayaking only rain! It was pouring it down almost all weekend. We had our first fire on the first night and there was a lot of laughter. Terry even brought his stove - chimney and all!

On the Saturday the group split into two, with some heading off to do the Tryweryn and other people doing the trip on Lake Bala and up the river. The river that we paddled was called the Afon Lliw. Having struggled to get off the beach at the campsite due the very strong wind and a park ranger (who was only doing his job!!), 16 intrepid explorers set sail hugging the coast for shelter! We stopped and waited a couple of times to regroup and let the open canoes catch up.

When we got to the river the first challenge we had was the sheer number of rocks in the river. It was difficult to navigate a route up between the rocks because you did not know they were so high up in the water..... until you'd hit them! But it was worth it because we got to surf in the rapids. We had lunch on the bank and then headed back to the campsite, soggy and cold, but happy. After everybody got dried up we were all kindly invited to the Wicks' tent for a welcome tea and cake, after which, the construction of tarp city began.



Our evening barbecue was warm and dry – well, if you were under the tarps that is!! We had our second fire of the weekend and tried to use up all the wood that some other people staying on the campsite, gave to us. After a few cremated bits of what my dad said! was meat, and following giggles, story's and laughter people drifted off to bed.

Day 2 On Sunday we had breakfast, packed away our tents and did our own thing. Some people went to paddle the Tryweryn and others went home. My dad and I paddled a bit of Lower Tryweryn. It was the first bit of 'Proper River' that I'd paddled in my life. It was exciting but scary at the same time; the speed was incredible even though it was the lower Tryweryn. The hardest part was the getting out of the Eddie and then ferry- gliding across the river to the Eddie on the other side. My dad had to walk and get the car from where we left.

The Coke and the Magnum, that we had at the Tryweryn centre after all the excitement on the river, set us up for the long drive home. And that was Bala trip 2013. Thank you to all those who organise, came and made it such fun!!!!!!

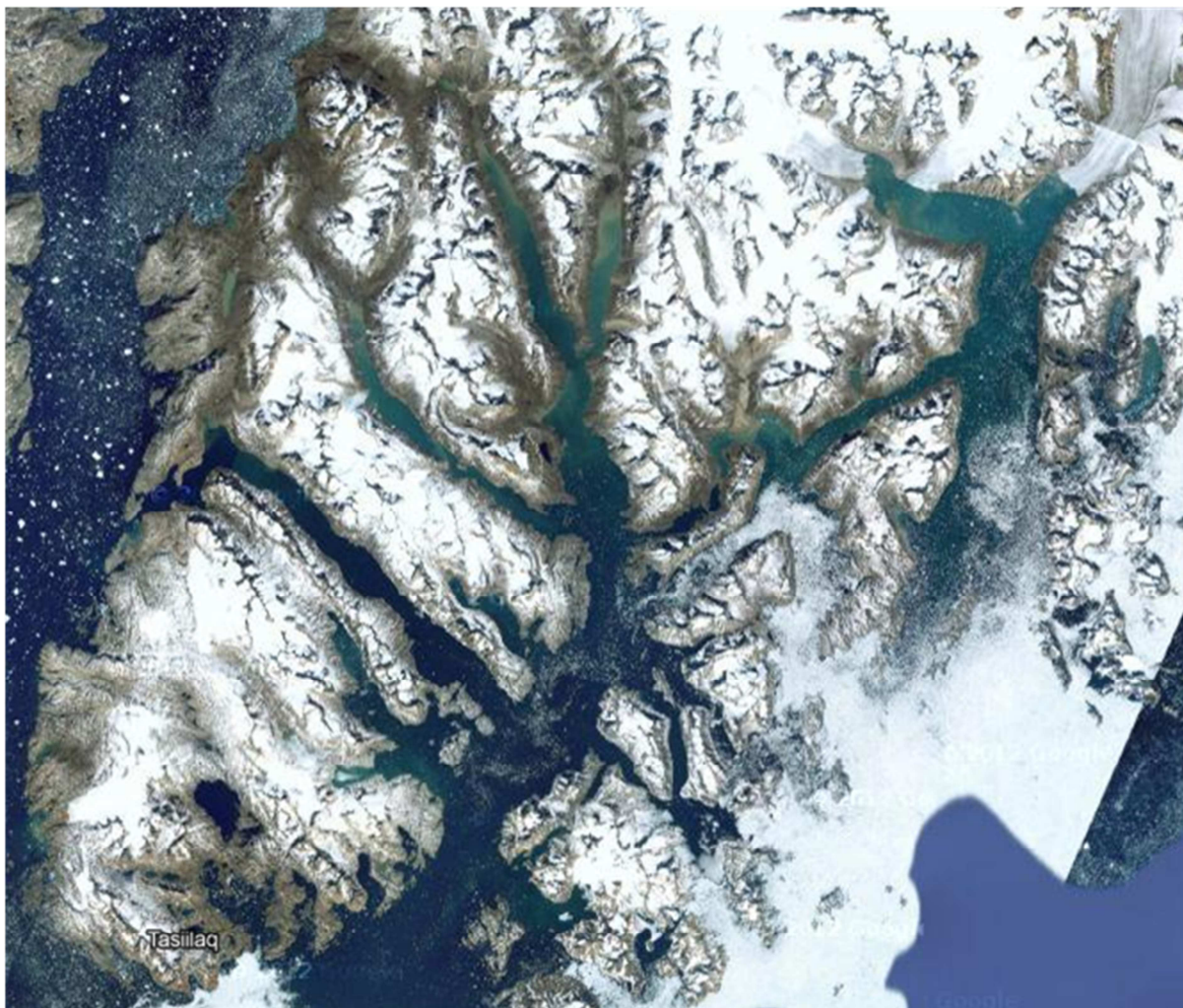
Oliver Patterson ☺

Greenland Revisited – Summer 2012

Phil Haworth

Some of you may recall that I first visited Greenland in 2007 as part of a 50 strong contingent from West Lancashire Scouts to celebrate the centenary of Scouting. Last summer only 6 of us returned, to do a recce trip and investigate the suitability of a different area for a larger sea kayaking/trekking expedition in future years.

On the last Saturday in July we found ourselves in Tasillaq, East Greenland having flown via Iceland and Kulusuk followed by a one hour boat ride across an iceberg littered fjord.



Greenland map of route

We arrived early afternoon and immediately started sorting out the kayaks we'd hired for 2 weeks, by packing our gear and going to buy food for the trip – our intention was to paddle a short distance that evening and at least get away from civilisation! Despite months of planning and preparation, the food buying didn't quite go to plan. We had been in touch with a Danish supermarket which had a store in Tasillaq and after numerous exchanges of email and attempts at translating their stock list, we had pre-ordered over £400 worth of food. The latest email said they were expecting us and gave the name of the person in store to ask for. What we hadn't appreciated was that there are 2 stores in Tasillaq and our food had been ordered at the larger one which had shut an hour earlier! We managed to find most of our shopping list on the shelves of the smaller shop and in the process saved about £100 on the original pre-order.

Kayaks packed and trekking kit put into storage, and we were ready to set off across the large sheltered bay to camp on the other side away from other humans. We found an easy shingle beach to land on and pitched the tents on an elevated plateau, before cooking a late tea. It was at this point that we realised that we were going to have a regular issue with flies almost every time we landed for lunch or camping. Tea was therefore eaten on the hoof, as the flies trailed behind you as you walked rather than swarmed around your face when sitting still! Another lesson that evening was that the dehydrated ration packs we'd bought were called "dobblepacks" for good reason – they were big enough to share.

The next morning we headed out of the sheltered bay and into the main fjord to start our adventure proper. We were heading northwards along the ***** Fjord and planned to stay a couple of nights in a dead end fjord to have a rest day. En route we found some challenging places to camp and had a brief encounter with whales. Unfortunately, the whales were passing in the opposite direction to us and weren't keen to stop and chat!

As we rounded the final corner into Tasillaq Fjord, we were treated to a magical vista – mirror calm water, a classic u-shaped valley, snow topped mountains and a flat area to make our camp for the next 2 nights.

This was a lovely spot for a camp, with good views up and down the glacial valley. Nearby was a terminal moraine from an old glacier, with various interesting stone features built by passing travellers over the years. There was also a large outline of a whale made of stones, which had presumably been created by local hunters. We spent the next day taking a leisurely paddle to the end of the fjord and then wandered for another couple of hours towards the top of the valley in the distance. As in 2007, we were seduced by the apparent nearness of everything and our planned rest day turned into more of an adventure than the normal travelling days!



Tasillaq Fjord & Wendy Hut

This campsite also brought us our first experience of arctic foxes and the perils of leaving things out overnight – in the morning Andy's dish had mysteriously disappeared. We also saw the touristy side of Greenland with a new hunters lodge aimed at trekkers, which looked more like a Wendy house – see photo above!

The next day we continued with our travels and called in for our lunch stop at the village of S***. Here we found fresh filtered coffee for sale in the community building for only 65p a mug. In support of the local inhabitants, we had to have 2 mugs of course. We also visited the local shop and re-stocked with a few provisions, particularly ingredients to make bannock as this was becoming a special treat for us after the evening meal. We also bumped into the guy we'd hired the sea kayaks from as he was running a guided trip for 5 paddlers and was heading in our direction for the rest of the afternoon.

Although we'd struggled against a strong headwind all morning on our way to S****, we were soon into a very narrow and sheltered fjord where there was a possibility of having to line our kayaks if we got the tide wrong. Although we scraped rocks in a couple of places, we just sneaked through the narrows in time! We saw a group of double kayaks in the distance, but passed them without getting close enough to speak to them.



The other group we met at S***** stopped for the night towards the end of the narrows, but we continued for another half an hour to spend the night in one of the hunters huts which are freely available to use – saves putting the tent up at least!

It was very chilly whilst we were cooking tea outside, but at least the small hut was warm with 6 of us sleeping in there – 4 beds and 2 on the floor.

The next morning we had a short paddle to an abandoned WW2 US air force base, which we intended to fully explore. As part of our expedition, we had to undertake some scientific study around the ruins of the airbase in order to satisfy the grant awarding bodies who had helped to subsidise our trip. We completed this exercise over the next 3 hours and then went to explore the remainder of the airbase which was spread over a significant area. It was a fascinating area which had been locked in a time warp of the late 1940s.



After spending most of the day at the airbase, we travelled further north along the coastline looking for somewhere suitable to camp for the night. The first opportunity to land appeared about tea time, but was already occupied by the guy we'd hired the kayaks off but as the next known landing was over an hour away we decided to share the camp site. There was an extended bay so we were able to camp a reasonable distance away from the other group and feel as though we were on our own.

In the morning we were sorted and ready to go well ahead of the other group (just to show them how organised we were) when we realised that one of the buoyancy aids was missing. One of our group couldn't remember exactly where he'd put it the night before but now it couldn't be found anywhere. We spent 90 minutes searching all around the bay before giving up, although the "local expert" had suggested that the arctic foxes had probably dragged it away and hidden it in the rock formations. As it was one of our less experienced paddlers that had mislaid the BA, I volunteered to paddle the rest of the trip without one.

Today would see us reach the furthest point of our kayaking travels from Tasillaq, when we stopped for lunch on a beach in ***** Fjord.

Whilst sat eating lunch there was a loud crash on the other side of the fjord and a massive lump of ice fell off the glacier on the other side. We didn't give it much thought initially but as we were getting on the water about 15 minutes later, we were suddenly hit by 3ft breakers which managed to knock Kev off his feet and swamp his sea kayak. The breakers calmed down and the rest of us managed to launch onto the water, so we paddled further up the fjord for a little while before turning round to continue to our next camp site. All of a sudden we were faced with small pack ice which seemed to stretch completely across the full width of the fjord. It was a little disconcerting at first but we soon found that we could paddle through the "slush puppy" effect without too much hindrance. There were three separate bands of pack ice about 400m across and we can only assume that they were created from the debris of the massive lump falling off the glacier on the other side of the fjord.



A couple of hours later we were back in the main fjord and ready to land for another night's camp. The rocks were very slippery where we landed and Ash, our resident mountaineer, warned us to be very careful. So who was it that slipped and badly cut his hand 5 minutes later – yep, Ash! He managed to get quite a deep cut on his hand but first aid was administered along with some medical consultation via the satellite phone. We spied another arctic fox whilst having tea, so Stuart left his ruined sandals out for the night as a sacrifice. Unfortunately they must have smelt too much, as they were still there the next morning!

We were on the water again for 9am and had a misty start, which soon cleared away. The sea was like a mirror so we decided to do a long crossing in the good conditions and gain a bit of extra distance. Lunch was taken on a sandy beach with a huge ice ball sat in the middle of golden sand, gently steaming in the bright sunshine! We made good distance in the afternoon and landed in a very wide but sheltered bay for our overnight camp. As it was reasonably early, we pitched the tents and then did a bit of exploring and wood gathering for a camp fire later on.

Ash returned very excited and asked us to follow him along the shore – he'd found the skeletal head of a whale and it was huge! Next to it was the wreck of a battered small boat – perhaps there was a story to tell?



Another misty morning saw us leaving the sheltered bay and heading down the exposed east coast. After about an hour the mist burnt away and we were treated to another glorious day. Again we made good time in perfect conditions and decided to stop for lunch by a relatively new hunter's hut, as we had to do a short portage when a shortcut between islands didn't quite work out! It was great relaxing on the rocks and I think we all nodded off for a while whilst lying back in the warm sunshine.

The warm sun continued to bless us during the afternoon's paddle, but by 4pm the wind started to pick up and the clouds moved in. By the time we were within sight of the camp site in what we assumed to be a sheltered bay, the wind was strong enough to make the last few miles a serious battle against constant white horses. We landed and pitched the tents and managed to find shelter from the wind in a natural rock outcrop which we altered into a very credible camp kitchen.

Tomorrow was supposed to be a rest day with plans of walking up onto a nearby glacier and doing some inland fishing and swimming, but in the end it rained and blew all day so we just hid in the tents all day instead. I did a lot of reading that day, but one of the other tents seemed to be snoring most of the time!



Although the wind had dropped by the following morning, visibility was down to about 100m due to very low cloud. It wasn't much fun paddling without a view, but we needed to make progress back to Tasillaq as the weather forecast the night before suggested that we only had a couple of days to get back to base before gale force winds would arrive. We paddled most of the morning in poor visibility, but as we landed on a sandy beach for lunch the sun suddenly came out and it was quite pleasant again. Strangely enough after lunch the fog closed in again and we had a 5km crossing guided by our gps rather than by sight.

This was a little un-nerving for the less experienced in the group, but we managed to make light of it by getting everyone to guess when we'd reached each 500m.

Our plan was to land at the camp site that we'd used on our second night out, as we could use the gps co-ordinates to locate it. This wasn't quite as straight forward as we expected due to the map stored in the gps not being as accurate as we would have liked. To everyone's relief we managed to find the camp site tucked away behind a rocky outcrop and we landed for a cold damp evening in a drafty gulley! We cheered ourselves up by eating fried spam butties using some bannock as bread! We were now only a day's paddle away from Tasillaq provided the weather would hold for us.

The following morning was foggy again, so we had another cold and damp start to the day. We decided that the best route would be to follow the coastline closely as the gps wasn't 100% accurate. At one point we thought we were paddling past a 200ft high cliff, when we got a little closer only to find that it was a colossal ice berg! It proved to be quite a nerve wracking last day as the sea was very lumpy and we had to skirt quite a few icebergs and offshore breakers in order to make progress towards the shelter of Tasillaq Bay.

At one point it didn't look as though we'd be able to reach the safety of the bay, as we could see several large icebergs blocking the entrance to the bay. However, as we got nearer the angle opened up and we could see a safe albeit gripping route through to the quieter waters of the bay.

We finally landed back at Tasillaq village in glorious sunshine and were able to unpack the kayaks in warm sunshine. We returned the kayaks to the storage container and recovered our trekking gear in readiness for 4 days of trekking into the mountains around Tasillaq. However, as we'd returned a day early we decided to have another rest day in the village and treat ourselves to a much needed shower and some clothes washing!



The trekking turned into a bit of an endurance test for me, particularly as the weather wasn't too good for the first three days. However, the last day finished in glorious sunshine and we managed to have our long awaited dip in an ice-melt pond which was very refreshing.

I

All too soon the trip was over and we were heading back to the UK via Iceland. We were taken back to Kulusuk 12 hours early as a precaution against sudden bad weather and had a very pleasant final camp and camp fire within sight of the airport. Greenland is a fantastic place to visit and I hope to return again in the years to come.



Phil Haworth

Two Crazy Ladies and a ***Handsome Young Man***

(well he likes to think so)

Roy Booth



Caribbean Queen



Lindisfarne



Floppy hat (AKA handsome young man)

It all started around the time the clocks went back when an old grey haired gentleman king story teller Roald Dahl said to me “Eee Lad when I was younger we used to paddle all winter in the dark, no head torches then you know just candles and a canary in a cage”!!! I know the canal smells a bit but that’s a bit much me thinks, but undeterred I went out and tried it and survived. On return the said gentleman introduced me to some crazy ladies who had just joined the club and were wondering what they could do to get out paddling.

So, after a bit of a chat we decided to get the safety and deck releases done so they could go out on the Halloween paddle at the end of October, I think only one of the ladies made it on the night.

Now I thought that that was it, but no, these ladies must have sussed that I was a soft touch and with a bit of fluttering of the eyelashes and sweet talking they got me to agree to take them out the following Tuesday. You have been warned these ladies can sweet talk the birds out of the trees.



Lindisfarne getting her kit out

Tuesday arrived dark and damp but not cold, it was as we were getting the gear out that I decided it would be best in big long boats easier for me to keep track of in the dark. Now this can take an age in daylight to sort out so you can imagine how long it was taking us and I was getting a little frustrated to say the least. It was just then that a tall slim figure with large floppy hat came striding out of the dark and said by ‘eck what’s going on ere’. ‘Paddling hopefully’ was my reply, ‘does thee need a hand?’ he said. So meet my saviour Floppy hat.



This first trip was strange, to hear screams of terror and shouts in fear but not be able to see them or react with actions and only being able to coach or encourage in voice was definitely different!!

What with the Caribbean Queen screaming and shouting every time her boat started to spin and trying to tell me no one would be able to see her if she fell in (her words not mine). I reassured her it would be easy as it would be the only time she was quiet!!

Lindisfarne on the other hand, is very quiet and shy and if it was not for the splash of her blades and head torch you could forget she was there. Floppy hat was pure calm and serenity and helped to calm everyone down and we managed to get to the Motorway Bridge and back.

These ladies have never paddled in the daylight so progress has been slow but progress has been made to such an extent that they are comfortable to be coached in the dark not just led from A to B. So if you see my van in the car park and I am not in the pub I will be out on the canal in big long sea boats with the RCC Crazy Ladies oh and Dave of the floppy hat.

These are the thoughts and words of the author and have no connection to the club or its committee
All names have been changed to save any embarrassment

Stupid old Goat

My Journey to the Dark Side

Graham Kingaby



This tale starts long, long, ago when I was a young man well three or four years ago at least, I was quite happy paddling a kayak until some bright spark said you have to paddle a canoe as well for the Canoe England Two Star award. So it comes to the time when I have to get in one, well that was fraught with dangers no one had mentioned. As I put my first foot into the great big horrible thing it started to move away from the bank, I'm sure we have all seen the clips on you've been framed of the Muppet doing the splits and ending up in the water well this was my turn. Or so the big camera in the sky thought fortunately for me we were paddling tandem and just as it reached the point of no return my partner for that Tuesday night grabbed hold of the canoe and pulled it back to the bank. The result was a rather large wobble of the boat and me going AOT and landing flat on my back in the canoe, from that moment on I knew I hated the darn things.

So that was my introduction to the canoe I had to paddle them to get my two star and that was that I would never paddle one again well that's what I told myself.

Some ten months later the club was having a family fun day so I brought along a relatively new member (Paul, Chris and smudge) with his family and some of my family. There were two of my girls, Elizabeth, and her daughter and grandson which in total made nine of us, eight of which had not been in a canoe. I had been in a canoe but didn't like it and it was a while since. So I'm sure you can imagine the absolute disarray of trying to get all these absolute beginners into a canoe and paddle across Coniston. We had three in each canoe all waving sticks around like they were trying to stir tea. The path across the lake was a long meandering path reminiscent of that a new golfer would take. But with the help of Terry and a couple of other coaches we finally managed to make some progress and as with all new paddlers the line slowly started to straighten up and the pace managed to become more than that of a sea snail.

I did start to look up old newsletters at this point to try and find some pictures but alas I failed. I do recall that it was a bit of a damp day and there was about 40 or so people there with a BBQ after. Well this trip had sealed my fate, my kids actually liked being in the canoe although my body didn't.

I could hardly walk for two days after that paddle which let me tell you it is no fun at all. Any way numerous lake trips later all resulting in the same agony for me afterwards I then decided it would be a good idea to become a coach, little did I know what I was getting myself into. I booked to do my level 1 coaching award with Sean McGrath not realizing at the time that you have to be able to paddle kayak and canoe to two star standard now that to me wasn't a problem I'd done my two star. However for those who don't know Sean's reputation he is what you could call a task master and makes you work hard for your supper. So after having to paddle a canoe for two days on the run two weekends on the run I thought I was never going to walk again. My feedback included that I needed to improve my canoe skills, oh joy more canoeing to be done.

Over the period of the next few months I spent occasions out in a canoe with Freya on various lakes and eventually decided to have a try at running a river. The first attempt was at the Brathay pool how difficult it was trying to get the spangle right to be able to break out even on the very small amount of flow but we did manage it and then spent some time playing on the flow.

We then moved on to running the rapids first time down was exciting and we stayed the right way up, then someone shouted it was just good look you have to do it again to prove it wasn't. After a very short conversation we are carrying the canoe back up the road to put it back on the river. The second time we are lining up as before all was looking good until we caught an edge on the rock and despite our best efforts we took a swim and Freya actually said she enjoyed the swim.

My next river adventure was on the Rothay we had a good trip with only one minor incident, as we came down the rapid there was another member of our party stuck on a rock, in an effort to assist we decided to give them a little nudge that got them off the rock, but unfortunately that had us stuck on said rock. After some considerable effort we still found ourselves wedged at the bow so I moved further back and Freya moved to the back which raised the bow and freed it we continued down the river.

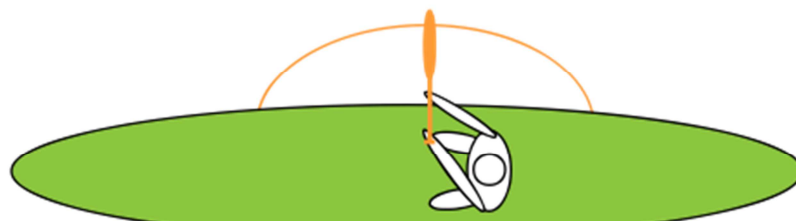


When it came round to me doing my Level 2 coaching award I looked at the prerequisites I noticed that you had to have a Three Star award, which I had in WW Kayaking and thought I could just do a CPD module to cover the prerequisites. After some more investigation I found I would still need to be paddling at three star in a canoe as well. With that little bomb shell I was resound to having to do three star canoe, oh joy of joy's more time in the killer canoe.

I thought to myself how am I going to be able to paddle a canoe to three star standard without it crippling me, little did I know the answer was just around the corner. On the first day of my level two I was given the answer it's all about body posture, and yes it works, I won't say it was an instant fix but it was an instant start to fixing the problem. The light bulb moment was whilst watching Sean demonstrating a move in the canoe as a large part of level two coaching is about identifying areas that need improving, well I was self analysing while watching his paddling technique. Now I can hear all those who paddle a canoe in agony as I did saying what is the answer, well I have given you a clue in that it's all about posture. I know what you are saying how can posture fix your broken knees ankles and back the answer is that it does, check out the diagrams below and I will try and explain.



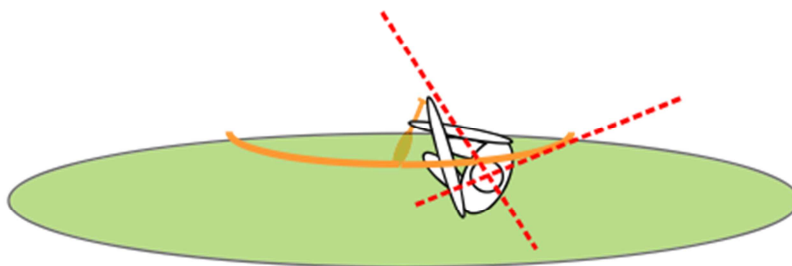
Half the paddle in the water



A sweeping stroke with little or no body rotation so all the work is done by the arms



All the paddle in the water



By shifting your body position and angleing it you are in a better position to get your top hand outside the gunwall which allows the paddle to be used more efficiently and allows you to use the core muscles by using body rotation

As you can see in the bottom diagram your body position allows for better paddle position and by rotating in the canoe to sit on an angle it allows you to put more body rotation into your paddle stroke. By having the top hand outside the gun wall it allows the paddle to travel under the hull of the canoe this reduces the need for the control part of the stroke to an absolute minimum thus providing more power stroke. I would suggest that combining all these factors increases the efficiency by 200% and this is a massive reduction in the stress on your body.

So after the magic that was Sean had been cast it was time to start learning how to paddle a canoe I won't say it was easy to get to grips with the big heavy thing but it does come as with all things if you practice. By now it was getting round to time for me to take my three star and I thought I was looking pretty darn good. So I packed the car borrowed Allan's canoe and off I went up to the lakes for a two days of training and assessment full of confidence and ready for anything. Day one on Ullswater was going great I was holding my own and looking good after dinner we moved across the lake to a different bay to work on reverse paddling, no problem there I had done some work with Allan and Rick T so I'd be right. I was doing fine accelerate up to the buoy brake and return at speed, then I heard Sean's dulcet Irish tones "well done excellent Mr Kingaby now try it on your left hand side". Then the sudden realisation I had to do this on both sides there was a sudden waning in enthusiasm I'm not sure if it was that or the fact I had almost run out of liquid which for those who can remember the 24th August was very hot weekend. It could just have been fatigue whatever it was I had been pushed close to my limit I had loved the day and learnt loads. On the drive home all I could think of was ... how the hell am I going to do all the stuff on the left hand side tomorrow.





Day two starts with me packing five litres of liquid in to my kit bag. The three litres yesterday weren't enough and thinking to myself just how little pain I was in but how tired I was from the previous days canoeing.

So off we go, it's the assessment day today let's hope I can get my left hand side working properly. It's another wonderful sunny day as we get on Derwent water and warm up, well that didn't take long, we set off across the lake round the corner into a sheltered bay.

This was where we set up for the day, things were going well, I was working hard on getting my left hand side up to speed and thought I was getting there. The assessment started everything was fine on my right hand side but I was struggling with the left I could do it, but not consistently, the requirement is to do it 2 out of 3 times and I was struggling with the combination of hanging draw followed by running pry to navigate through three buoys placed in a line two boat lengths apart whilst maintaining speed and heading.

After some time trying I thought I had managed it and was getting tiered feeling good I stopped for a drink to get my breath back. It then came down to the big one, reverse figure of eight, yes I could do this, I had been practicing it well, I could on my right hand side, the left was a disaster. Yes I could get around the buoys but as far as it being a figure of eight, your imagination would be hard stretched to see it.

The rest of the day went fine no problems, with anything else polling rescues all was good. The run down the river to do the moving water element was all good. But I hadn't made the grade, I knew it, but I had spent two great days in a canoe and learnt so much it made me feel good and the aches and pains I once had after a day's paddling in a canoe had more or less gone, obviously there is an amount of fatigue but that's normal. This meant I had to do more time in a canoe, practicing on my left hand side to make the grade, this time I didn't actually mind and was starting to enjoy paddling a canoe.

Three evenings on the canal, two trips out on the lake, and one on the river and I thought, I'm ready. This time I passed, I'm feeling good, I have been out canoeing on the river Rothay, the Ingleton Greta and the Lune at Halton which has only increased my desire to do more canoeing. I was looking to do my 4 star and MWE in a kayak I have now turned to the dark side, I'm determined to do my 4 star canoe and MWE. So if anyone fancies some time in a canoe and wants me to give them some pointers then just ask.

Graham Kingaby

10 Reasons to be cheerful (sea) kayaking!

Sarah Jones

In response to Suzanne & Jill's articles in previous newsletters, here are my reasons why I love (sea) kayaking.

1. You can forget all about the housework for a day or weekend!
2. Seeing places from a different perspective, going into caves and under bridges, seeing castles and mountains from the water.
3. Feeling you have achieved something at the end of a challenging paddle.
4. Enjoying some beautiful places around the UK, Plymouth to Inverness, Anglesey to the Farne islands.
5. Being cozy in a van when others are getting cold and wet in tents!
6. Enjoying the company of the Ribble family and meeting new people with a common interest.
7. Eating lovely homemade flapjack and not feeling guilty about it!
8. Seeing all the wildlife, kingfishers, seals, puffins, porpoises and not forgetting the Loch Ness monster!
9. Having a good reason to wear a onesie!
10. Realizing that I am quite competitive, Fleetwood Seaquest, Coquet Island, York and Hilbre Island all within a year!

Sarah Jones

2014 Membership Fees

You renewal forms have been emailed out to members, if you haven't received yours then please email: membership@ribblecanooclub.co.uk

Please print off the form make any necessary amendments (including adding any family members) sign it and either:

send it with your cheque to the address at the bottom of the form
pay at the AGM by cheque (no cash taken at AGM)
pay at the H&D on a Tuesday evening cash or cheque

Please Note: The fees are subject to membership approval at the AGM on 13th February 2014. Membership Fees should be paid no later than 30th April 2014.

If you joined the club after 1st November 2013 the fee you paid includes your 2014 fees.

All hail [on] Ribble Canoe Club Rothay mini Christmas picnic

Paul Binks

Sunday 22nd December had us down for a grand picnic, as previous years, at White Moss Common on route from Grasmere on the Rothay. Saturday 21st December, and previous days that week the levels would make Noah proud, and no way could we paddle it at those heights.

As an avid Environment Agency River Level website viewer I knew the Rothay could rise and fall almost at a whim and I couldn't predict what it'd be at. Wind was also forecast which made contingency of a flat lake bumble not an option. Saturday afternoon I bombarded folk with texts and they bombarded me back all with different opinions of options for safe level to run the Rothay and alternative paddles. Oh the trials of being a trip organiser, I shan't be doing it again. One wise sage though passed on these pearls of insight, *"The levels might change, stick to plan 'A' and meet at Halton at 9 and decide"*.

A number of folks decided the day wasn't for them, but 15 paddlers met at Halton with sausage rolls, homemade quiche and other Christmas fare. With just over 1m on the gauge and falling;



Rothay trip was on.

At the get in everyone was full of Christmas cheer despite the cold and grey skys. Usually paddling through the village we get waves from sightseers but it was very quiet and the only hello I got was from a hotel chef having a crafty fag between shifts. It always lifts my spirits paddling on to Grasmere and being able to see all the hills around, particularly when there is a dusting of snow.



A bit of playing on the weir.
before the run down.

Jude was the newest paddler and managed very admirably (blue helmet) as there was plenty of old hands to provide advice.

Roz, who wasn't paddling, volunteered to take some of the food that was meant to go in the open boats if the levels had been lower; thank you Roz. As Alan, Jude and I were bringing the food from the van when Jude spotted a mother Roe deer and two young just off the path. We watched them for a good 5 minutes before they wandered off.



It was a bit chilly at White Moss but the food certainly kept us going.



We packed up just in time as seconds later malteaser sized hail stones were bouncing off the water, us and our boats. Never mind, we're made of hardy stuff us Ribble paddlers.

With the levels being high the stepping stones weren't visible and I thought Hotel Weir would be washed out but it was only 0.9m as we passed the gauge and we did quite a bit of playing on the weir.



Playing on the Hotel Weir



Paddling back across Windermere to Waterhead

Not quite the grand sociable, inclusive paddle I'd intended but a grand day out none the less.

Paul Binks

*****VERY IMPORTANT CLUB ANNOUNCEMENT*****

Here is what you've all been waiting for! Don't miss this fantastic opportunity to have some fun – with fabulous company thrown in as well!

We are proud to announce the

Ribble Canoe Club Ceilidh

To be held on Saturday 8th February 2014
At Northumbria Hall, St Cuthbert's Church Centre
Lytham Road, Fulwood
Preston PR2 3AR
Doors open 7pm

Dancing 7.30pm to 11pm will be to the excellent Millstone Ceilidh Band

Tickets cost £10 which includes Hotpot supper and fruit pie and cream dessert.

They can be bought from Norman or Pat Green or Albert or Kath Risely (all usually at Hand & Dagger on Tuesdays) or post a cheque payable to Ribble Canoe Club to our Membership Secretary (please include SAE). Numbers are limited so if you don't want to miss out then get yours sorted soon.

There is no bar at the venue so bring your own drink as you will get hot & thirsty – if you don't then you're not dancing enough!



Be there or be square!

Chairman's Chat

I'm up to my ears in it; and so are the rest of the Committee. Not water this time but sorting things out for the AGM. We didn't get nominations for our trophies from many members this year – so nothing new there. I understand the difficulties though. Our club is so diverse these days that most of our members and many of our coaches aren't in close contact with everything going on and every paddler in all the different disciplines of canoeing. We have never had so much interest in sea canoeing and open boating within the club. Gone are the days when these were fringe activities practised by the odd member (even odder than the rest). So it's understandable that members are a little reticent to put forward nominations for awards when they feel that they don't know the full picture. Either that or most club members are so friendly, helpful and good natured that it seems unfair to single anyone out! It would be easier to have nominations like "Awkward Blighter of the Year", "Crappest Paddler who Started Crap and Got Worse", "Never Written an Article for the Newsletter Ever" the mind boggles! All suggestions for the None-Awards can be placed in the Chat section of the Forum, but please don't nominate anybody – it could start a war.

And now to the rumour that Threads are disappearing from the Forum like wool from a jumper caught on a nail. Now I'm showing my age – fleeces don't do that do they. To the best of my knowledge, only one thread has been removed from the Forum in the past year. It was beginning to get contentious and personal and was best dealt with away from the open arena of the Forum. Whilst many of us are as thick-skinned as elephants and rhinos, we have a lot of members more akin to shy woodland creatures who scatter and hide at the distant trumpeting and trampling of their more heavy footed friends. The jungle that is this club depends on all its diversity of characters. Now stop it! Stop trying to work out whether you're a Rhinoceros or a Thompson's Gazelle. Most of us are monkeys anyway.

The HUGE news at the moment is that Ribble has won the Canoe England Places Paddled Challenge and also came 5th in the Miles Paddled Challenge. Our very own Debbie Dowe came 9th in the Best Female Miles Paddled and Peter Roscoe came 4th in the Best Male Miles Paddled. Gareth's posted all the results on the Forum, Trips & Events, "RIBBLE LOG BOOK for Canoe England Winter Club Challenge (we're winners)". Well done to all who paddled, but a really big thank you to Sarah who started this, off her own bat, and then carried on with it, chasing up everyone who paddled and finally sent it all in to Canoe England. What a boost it is to Club morale. I just have to say though that I never knew there was that much water round Chelmsford – they must have been paddling away from the floods (sorry for that rhino moment).

The prize for winning is £250 and to vote on how we spend this go onto the Forum as above where there is a poll open till 30 Jan.

David Sutton's moonlight paddles seem to have struck a chord (Moonlight Sonata?) and may be leading to a resurgence of paddling in the dark on Tuesday nights. Roy Booth has been taking some women out on a Tuesday night (could I have put that better) and Chris Jackson is proposing some paddling workshops (Coaching the Core), so if there's still room, book on with Chris, Roy or Dave on the Forum (Trips & events or Coaching & Training), fit your head torch and get down to the canal.

All the awards for presentation at the AGM have now been decided apart from the Pic of the Year which is won by the photograph(er) with the highest total rating on the From.

To vote go the Forum, select “Gallery”, then “2013 Photo Competition”. To rate any of the pictures there just click on that picture and click on the rating of 1 to 5 (little red canoeists) then click “Rate”. If you can, rate all of the pictures (unless you think any are worth 0) as this gives a better overall result to be read out at the AGM. You can post ratings up until 31 January.

Don't forget to put Thurs 13 Feb 2014 in your diary in big letters **A G M**. It's at 7.30pm for a prompt start at 8.00pm at the Fulwood & Broughton Cricket Club, Garstang Road, Fulwood, Preston PR3 5JE. The entrance is at the traffic lights on the A6 immediately opposite Lightfoot Lane. The formal notice is elsewhere in this Newsletter but the programme is more or less; Arrive at 7.30pm; Prompt start of formal AGM at 8.00pm; Presentation of Club Awards at 8.30pm; Nosh at nine. The likelihood of free nosh is receding as I write and the poll for spending our above-mentioned prize money trends towards a charitable donation. Put a smile on a child's face and wipe the gravy off mine. In which case it'll be £2 per head for hot pot and fruit pie, at a rate still highly subsidised by the Club to try and entice as many members as possible to attend. It's not as formal or dry as it sounds – there are usually enough cock-ups to make it amusing. We do our best!

Looking back, there's been a lot of paddling activity recently with many experiencing new rivers such as the Eden and Upper Lune and many new paddlers taking on some long tours in the first two legs of the Lancaster Canal Paddle. Well done to all – and no wonder we won that prize.

The Presentation of BCU Star Awards last November by Sean McGrath of Wild River appeared to go well as did the NW BCU ACM at Halton. Quite a few Ribblers were there including Tony Morgan who was presented with Canoe England's Volunteer Award for Contribution to the Sport. It was good as well to see the new premises with all the changing facilities and toilets thanks to all the effort put in by Pat & Norman. Our Xmas Meal at the H&D in December was attended by 70 Members with no apparent complaints from diners or Martin.

(My spell checker's just thrown a wobbler at Rinosor.....No sense of humour obviously)Pat & Norman will no doubt have corrected it before the final edition is published

See you at the AGM if not before.

Terry Maddock
Chairman@ribblecanoecub.co.uk

AGM 2013

For the year ending 31st December 2013 Fulwood & Broughton Cricket Club
Thursday 13th February 2014 8:00pm start

Agenda

1. To receive the Hon. Secretary's report for the year ended 31st Dec 2013.
2. To receive the Hon. Treasurer's report and Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31st Dec 2013.
3. To receive the Competition Secretary's report for the year ended 31st Dec 2013.
4. To receive the Hon. Chairman's report for the year ended 31st Dec 2013.
5. To elect Officers and Members to the General Committee.
6. Discuss the increase in membership fees.
7. To appoint auditors.
8. To discuss any other business.
9. To present the Club Trophies

Proposals

Under Item 5 the current General Committee members are:

Chairman	Terry Maddock *
Treasurer	John Kington >
Secretary	Gareth Jones (General)
Membership Secretary	Pat Green
Competition Secretary	Mark Shaw *
Quartermaster	Graham Kingaby >
Club Welfare Officer	Suzanne Thomas \$
Youth Representative	
General Committee	John Hooper * Allan Hacking * Brian Woodhouse Graham Eccles + Paula Sharples

Those marked '*' are due to retire by rotation (every 2 years) and being eligible offer themselves for re-election. Those marked '+' are standing for election to an office by the general meeting. Those marked '>' are standing down from their post but not from the committee. Those marked '\$' are standing down from their post and from the committee.

The following Committee Members resigned during the year:

- Will Body
- Paul Binks
- Jane Eccles (was also youth representative)

The following Committee Members are standing for re-election:

- Terry Maddock
- Mark Shaw
- John Hooper
- Allan Hacking

The following Club Members are standing for election to the Committee:

- Lucy Bailey (as youth representative)
- Stuart Bailey
- Jude Smith

The following Officers are standing for re-election:

- Chairman Terry Maddock

The following are standing for election to Office:

- Treasurer Jude Smith
- Quartermaster Graham Eccles
- Webmaster Graham Kingaby

There is currently a vacancy for the 'Club Welfare Officer'.

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
17 Jan	Rolling	Allan Hacking	Rick Turner	Allan Hacking
24 Jan	Rolling	Allan Hacking	Tony Morgan	Allan Hacking
31 Jan	Open	N/A	Albert Risely	Suzanne Thomas
7 Feb	Open	N/A	Brian Petherwick	John Hooper
14 Feb	Paddle Skills	Allan Hacking	Paul Smith	Allan Hacking
21 Feb	Open	N/A	Brian Petherwick	Terry Maddock
28 Feb	Sea Skills	Paula Sharples	Bruce Carter	Paula Sharples
7 Mar	Open	N/A	Bill Turner	John Kington
14 Mar	Paddle Skills	Allan Hacking	Sarah Jones	Allan Hacking
21 Mar	Open	N/A	Debra Bookbinder	Graham Kingaby
28 Mar	Sea Skills	Paula Sharples	Terry Maddock	Paula Sharples
04 Apr	Open	N/A	Paul Binks	Graham Eccles
11 Apr	Paddle Skills	Allan Hacking	John Kington	Allan Hacking
18 Apr	GOOD FRIDAY	N/A	N/A	N/A
25 Apr	Open	N/A	Graham Kingaby	John Hooper

Prices for pool sessions: Rolling Course £20 plus club membership. **All other sessions £5**

Pool Session Protocol: Open sessions are open access, with no need to book. Please book in advance for ALL other sessions by phoning the named contact or via the forum.

If using club equipment it is up to the individual to collect it from the pool store before 9.00pm, after which time the store will be locked. A club member will be on hand to assist. (best to arrive at 8.45)

If using your own equipment please ensure it is clean before entering the pool area.

If you use a boat at a pool session it is your responsibility to return it to where it came from (your car or the pool store) IMMEDIATELY at the end of the session and BEFORE getting showered and changed.

The pool sessions run from 21.15 to 22.15. We are not to enter the pool area before 21.05 - this to avoid risk of injury to swimming club members who have to clear the pool area by 21.05.

Ribble CC Library

See Albert or Kath Risely to borrow a book or DVD.

General

BCU Handbook (2 copies)
The Practical Guide to Kayaking
Canoeing & Kayaking
BCU Coaching Handbook
The Rough Guide to Weather
Canoe & Kayak Games
Working out of Doors with Young People
More Than Activities
The Knot Book - NEW

DVD - BCU 'Go Paddling' 2012

Touring & Sea Kayaking

An Atlas of the English Lakes
Canal Companion: Cheshire Ring
Touring 100 Paddles in England
Welsh Sea Kayaking Guidebook
Northern England & IOM Sea Kayaking
Scottish Sea Kayak Trail
Scottish Canoe Touring
Great Glen Canoe Trail
Anglesey Info Pack
Scottish Sea Kayaking Guidebook
The Outer Hebrides Sea Kayaking Guidebook

Sea Kayak Navigation

Complete Book of Sea Kayaking
Sea Kayaker Deep Trouble

DVD - Sea Kayak Rescues
DVD - Sea Kayak with Gordon Brown -
Instructional Journey along Skye Coast
DVD - This is the Sea 1
DVD - This is the Sea 2
DVD - This is the sea 3
DVD - This is the Sea 4
DVD - Performance Sea Kayaking-
Skills, rolling & rescue techniques
DVD - BCU 3 & 4 Star Leaders Sea Kayaking
DVD Sea Kayaking in Wales (conservation) - **NEW**
DVD Sea Kayak Essentials Volumes 1 & 2 **NEW**
Intermediate & Adv. Boat Handling Skills
Safety & Rescue Skills

Canoeing/Open Boating

Open Canoe Technique
Path of the Paddle
Canoeing Safety & Rescue
Canoeing

DVD - This is Canoeing (ww & wilderness)
DVD - Open Canoeing -
Reg Blomfield (amazing moves!) (2 copies)

Whitewater

Canoe & Kayak Guide to North West England
English White Water
Scottish White Water
White Water Lake District (2 COPIES)
White Water Kayaking
White Water Safety & Rescue (2 copies)
Weir Wisdom
Many Rivers to Run
The Playboater's Handbook 2
Whitewater Paddling (Strokes & Concepts) – **NEW**
L'Eau Vive - **NEW**

DVD -Moving on to Moving Water
DVD - EJ's Advanced River Running
DVD - The Call of the River -
100 years of WW Adventure
DVD - Whitewater Kayaking

Rolling

Bombproof Roll and Beyond!
Eskimo Rolling for Survival


DVD - This is the Roll
DVD - EJ's Rolling and Bracing

Club or Club Members Trips

DVD - Mags Brayfield in Nepal
DVD - It's Different Every Time - Halton Rapids
DVD - Fort William 2005/06 Easter Trip
DVD - RCC Scotland trip 2007 & 2008
DVD - Tay Descent 2011
DVD – Ladies Day at Washburn August 2013

Expeditions/Adventure/Action

On Celtic Tides
Dancing with Waves
The Canoe Boys
Three Men in a Boat
DVD - Revenge of the Fat Cats (Greenland)
DVD - The Cockleshell Heroes (wartime adventure)
DVD - Tatshenshini/Alsek 2007
DVD - Mountain River Movie (Canada)
DVD - Liffey Descent 1992

	Ribble CC Contact List	Committee	General Information	Access	Courses	Instructor	Hand & Dagger Key holder	Touring Trips	Beginners River Trips	Intermediate River Trips	Advanced River Trips	Sea Trips	Open Canoes	Surfing	Beginners' Slalom	Advanced Slalom	Polo	Freestyle	Other
Albert & Kath Risely							☺	☺											Library
Allan Hacking		☺			☺	☺	☺		☺	☺		☺	☺						
Brian Woodhouse		☺	☺	☺				☺	☺	☺									
Elizabeth Kingaby																			Webmistress
Gareth Jones		Secretary																	
Graham Eccles		☺					☺												Quartermaster
Graham Kingaby		☺			☺	☺	☺						☺						
John Hooper		☺					☺												
John Kington		Treasurer								☺				☺					Treasurer
Jude Smith		☺																	
Mark Shaw		☺													☺	☺	☺	☺	Competition Secretary
Norman & Pat Green		☺						☺											Newsletter
Pat Green		Membership																	Membership Secretary
Paula Sharples		☺																	
Stuart Bailey		☺																	
Suzanne Thomas		☺																	Club Welfare Officer
Terry Maddock		Chairman	☺		☺	☺	☺	☺											Chairman

Additional Key Holders: Andy Dowe, Rick Turner, Roy Booth, Tony Morgan

Last minute trips organised on the website, at the Hand & Dagger (Tues, 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.

JANUARY

Sat 18 Jan
Beginners Trip
Lancaster Canal from H & D
See forum for details
Contact: Paul Binks

Sun 19 Jan
Return to River Eden
Contact: Graham Kingaby
Assumed risk trip - see forum

Tue 28 Jan
Knots & Ropework
Hand & Dagger
Contact: Allan Hacking & Tony Marsh

FEBRUARY

Sun 2 Feb
Development trip
Contact: Rick Patterson

Wed 5 Feb
Coaching forum

Sat 8 Feb
Club Ceilidh
Tickets can be bought from
Albert & Kath Risely or
Norman & Pat Green

Thu 13 Feb
AGM Ribble Canoe Club
Fulwood & Broughton Cricket
Club 7.30 for 8.00 pm

Sat 15 or Sun 16 Feb
Beginners trip
Contact: Allan Hacking

Tue 18 Feb
Boat outfitting ideas - Hand & Dagger
19:30 start
Contact: William Body

MARCH

Sun 2 Mar
Development Trip
Contact: Rick Turner

Sun 16 Mar
Beginners Trip
Contact: Roy B

APRIL

Sun 13 Apr
London Kayakathon
Some club members
participating
Contact: Alan Blackburn

MAY

Sat 24 – Sat 31 May
Beginners Sea Kayaking Trip
Island of Mull
Contact: Roy Booth

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.