

# TALES FROM THE RIVERBANK



JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2007



## *Ribble Canoe Club Goes International*

The 2006 youth freestyle series has already been reported previously in the newsletter but a month or so after the series final at Nottingham, we were back at HPP for the 2 day selection event for the 2007 Great Britain team. The successful entrants from this event would be part of a strong team of 37 or so paddlers going out to Canada in April for the

world championships. These are to be held on the Ottawa river on a wave aptly called Buseater.

There were 3 paddlers from Ribble entered in the event, Dominic (Nic) & Ben Brayfield in the junior men category and Joanne (Jo) Hacking in the junior ladies category. It was

good to see the junior paddlers, who had done so well at the youth events, now paddling and chatting to the likes of Deb Pinniger and Richard Chrimes who were aiming for places in the senior team.

## Day 1

Competition for places in the junior men was as fierce as those in the senior categories, in fact it was sometimes difficult to tell the junior men from the seniors as the array of moves and tricks performed got bigger and more amazing as we watched, everything including front loops, back loops and McNasty's were on display. At the end of the 1st day's competition in the inlet wave Nic was in 7th and Ben 11th place, the top 4 would make the team with a further 2 training as squad members, I think both were a little disappointed.



The junior women competition was a lot less competitive, only the under 15 and under 18 youth series winners were lined up against the current and undisputed junior No1, Flic Meares, for the 2 places on the junior ladies team. Day 1 was disappointing for Jo, she felt the pressure of competition and went to pieces in the inlet wave, by early afternoon she just wanted to go home. This, however, is where freestyle is so different than the other competitive kayak disciplines, even your fellow competitors want you to do well and so, after much encouragement, Jo got back on the water and went to practise in the 'Muncher' which was to be the venue for day two.

## Day 2

This was make or break day for our paddlers, all were starting the day outside the team places.

As we walked down the course we noticed that the inlet wave was not formed, what was going on? A senior paddler explained that the inlet gate was wide open to get maximum flow down the course, to make Muncher as BIG as possible, cue look of horror on Jo's face. Was all that practice the night before going to have been in vain?

Not to worry, yes the hole was bigger than before, but it was still the same shape. A couple of practice runs were allowed before the competition started. Each paddler then had 3 x 45 second runs in the hole, with the best 2 runs to count. Jo had a great first run, she even beat Flic, could this settle the nerves? Second run and disaster struck, she got flushed out of the hole and down the course. The third run was going to be important and yes, she got it right.



Nic and Ben were right on form today, Nic threw an amazing move on his first run giving him a score that was to be unequalled by the rest of the juniors all day. He followed it up with 2 more really solid runs. Ben improved with each of his runs recording the 3rd highest score of the day on his final run. On the day, Nic and Ben were 1st and 3rd respectively.

When the final results were posted it was both joy and disappointment in the Brayfield camp. Nic's 1st place on day 2 had pulled him up to joint 1st overall thus gaining him a place on the team, Ben had pulled himself up the leader board to 7th place, unfortunately missing out on the squad by just 1 place. Jo's performance on Day 2 had also taken her up to 2nd and a place on the team.

## Team Training

The GBR team are an organized bunch and meet up for team training events on a regular basis. The 6th and 7th of January saw Jo, myself, Mags and Nic Brayfield off to a place near London for the first such weekend. It was a chance to get to know other team members and for the paddlers to get in some training on the Thames weirs, (now we know why the best playboaters live near London).



On the Saturday they paddled as a group on Shepperton weir, this was more of a team building exercise than serious training. The weekend also gave the paddlers something to think about as they had a Psychology session

to train their minds, and the team Physio was also on hand to deal with any injuries. Sunday involved a talk from the Judges to explain the rules, and then they were split into smaller groups for some serious training at Sunbury weir.



April and Canada is not very long off and the youngsters are training hard, Nic is already up there with the best, Jo has a long way to go, but is working hard to get there.

For those of you who want to get into freestyle paddling watch this space, after the World's in Canada we are hoping to have a couple of weekends away at Teeside or Nottingham when Ribble Canoe Club's very own International competitors will show you how to do those flat spins or tricky woo's.

In the meantime the BCU youth freestyle series 2007 is currently being finalized, we intend to be there, if any juniors out there want more info about the series please contact me.

**Allan Hacking**

# 4\* *Assessment*

Tony Morgan currently has spaces left on a 4 star kayak assessment on February 18th. Please contact Tony directly if you are interested.



*Are you popping out to the AGM?*



*Aye, I think I'll roll up for it.*



*Did you know they've changed the date?*

***Ribble Canoe Club AGM  
Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> February 7:30pm  
Fulwood & Broughton Cricket Club***



# ***AGM 2006***

## ***Agenda***

Notice is hereby given that the Ribble Canoe Club AGM for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2006 will be held on **Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2007** (note the change of date) at **Fulwood & Broughton Cricket Club** at 7:30 for 8:00pm start for the following purposes:

1. To receive the Hon. Secretary's report for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> Dec 2006.
2. To receive the Hon. Treasurer's report and Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> Dec 2006.
3. To receive the Competition Secretary's report for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> Dec 2006
4. To receive the Hon. Chairman's report for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> Dec 2006.
5. To elect Officers and Members to the General Committee.
6. To appoint auditors.
7. To discuss any other business.
8. To present the Club Trophies.

By order of the Committee.

***Martin Stockdale, Secretary***

## ***Proposals***

Under Item 5 the current General Committee members are:

<b>Chairman</b>	<b>Terry Maddock</b>
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Martin Stockdale * (Standing down as Secretary)</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>John Kington * (Standing down as Treasurer)</b>
<b>Competition Secretary</b>	<b>Susan Shaw</b>
<b>Quartermaster</b>	<b>Steve Swarbrick *</b>
<b>General Committee</b>	<b>Tom Byrne *</b>
	<b>Dave Ellison (Standing down)</b>
	<b>Peter Jones *</b>
	<b>Tom Kington (Standing down)</b>
	<b>Tim Langridge (Standing down)</b>
	<b>Mark Loftus</b>
	<b>Clive Robinson</b>
	<b>Brian Woodhouse (Membership) *</b>

Those marked \* are due to retire by rotation (every 2 years) and offer themselves for re-election.

Martin Stockdale and John Kington are standing down as Secretary and Treasurer respectively, but are offering themselves for re-election onto the General Committee. Dave Ellison, Tom Kington and Tim Langridge are standing down from the Committee. The Committee thank them for their help over the past years.

Martin Stockdale will perform the role of Acting Secretary for a maximum of 6 months until a new Secretary is appointed.

The General Committee propose the following members for election onto the general committee:

<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Kath Risely</b>
<b>General Committee</b>	<b>Grant Dillon</b>
	<b>Mark Dillon</b>
	<b>Adam Fielder</b>
	<b>Allan Hacking</b>
	<b>Nicky Marsh</b>
	<b>Tony Marsh</b>
	<b>Iain Robinson</b>

## ***AGM - Additional Information***

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

Please arrive early (7.30) so that the AGM can start at 8.00pm prompt. Supper will be provided consisting of Hot-Pot (or vegetarian option) + sweet at a subsidised cost of £2.00 per head.



Fulwood & Broughton Cricket Club is conveniently located on Garstang Road in Fulwood, just off the A6/M55 junction.

Heading towards Preston from the M55 it's on the left, just after the 30mph sign, just before the first traffic lights (Lightfoot Lane).

## ***Raffle prizes***

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

# ***For Sale***

### **Pyranha Acrobat 275**

3 years old, good clean boat, normal scratches. Full foot plate and thigh grips. Good all rounder, ideal as an intro boat, up to Grade 2 white water. Could include a nylon deck and paddle  
**£250 ono**  
**Suzanne Thomas**

### **Blue plastic Revenge**

Good condition  
**£100**  
**Malcolm Holmes**

# ***The Greek Islands***

## ***October 13th - November 3rd 2006***

*“What's that huge Island over there?” said the Ancient Mariner peering out into the haze and struggling to remember his geography.*

*“That'll be Turkey, part of the Continent of Asia,” said the knowledgeable Doctor in a manner reserved for addressing those due for the retirement home or some other institution.*

*“Keep it on our right and we should be O K.”*



## ***Milos***

Paddlers – Caroline Pittendreigh, Christopher Packman (Ribble CC); Peter Roscoe (OAG); Simon Renton (I of M).

We flew out to the Greek island of Milos, midway between Athens and Crete, with a view to paddling around it.

We hired 4 Italian made Lazer Rainbow plastic sea kayaks, from Rod, at Sea Kayak Milos (check out [www.seakayakmilos.com](http://www.seakayakmilos.com)), loaded them up with food, fuel water, etc and off we went, despite the forecast that the weather was due to be quite rough over the next few days.

The first day's paddling was on interesting water, but as the kayaks were big and stable, being fully laden, this made an enjoyable introduction to paddling in the Med.

All went well, the first beach camp was set up and the evening meal all but finished when the heavens opened and the wind picked up, sending our band of heroes under the cover of our tents until morning.

Day 2 and the predicted storm conditions were well and truly upon us, as the sea was flat as a pancake but winds were Force 8, the decision was taken to paddle on and see if they might abate, ever optimistic these seagull eaters!!

Well they didn't do anything of the sort, and after several exciting hours of trying to keep hold of a paddle that had suddenly come to life and was trying desperately to escape our grip on it, while trying to remain upright and go forwards rather than backwards, we spotted a small cave in the cliffs and headed in for a rest.

Once inside the cave, and cosy in our survival bags, yes survival bags, we got a brew going and enjoyed the warmth as we waited for conditions to improve, told you they're optimistic. You've guessed it, they did nothing of the sort, and it was all we could do to remind ourselves that we were in Greece, as we struggled to light a fire with wet driftwood.

Conditions got steadily worse so we decided to abandon our mission and Rod recovered us to his place.

The next day blew and blew, but the following one was predicted to be the start of a period of more settled weather, indeed it was heralded as a "second summer". So plans were made to resume our voyage from near the spot we'd been in the cave.

This we did and had a great day of paddling in force 6 winds and big rolling seas, which after force 8 is child's play!

We camped over on Kimolos, one of the smaller islands just off the main landmass and woke up to the most fantastic flat calm, blue skies and hot weather, in fact just as you'd imagine Greece to be like!



So on the final day of our journey we paddled wearing just buoyancy aids and sun cream, and completed 30+ miles of exploring every nook and cranny along the coastline, finally arriving back where it all began in the late afternoon.

My memories are the blue water, big winds, being colder and wetter than I've ever been in that cave, then camp fires on beaches, discovering how great Trangia cookers are, watching the sun set, and waking up and paddling in heavenly conditions on the final day.

Pete and Simon went off to paddle from Rhodes to Kos, but that's their story to tell. Caroline and I remained on Milos for 2 weeks, getting to know the place and people really well.

Would I recommend going to Milos? Absolutely, but be aware it can be rough paddling on the Med. Would I go again? You bet your life I would, if only to see the friends we made again.

***Chris Packman***

## ***Rhodes to Kos***

Paddlers – Peter Roscoe, Simon Renton, Bob Mark.

Mid October on the Greek island of Milos had seen conditions vary from flat calm and enjoyable exploration of caves and cliffs to extremely challenging force eights and furious thunderstorms where time was spent sheltering in the cafes or museums. A forecast for a second summer (due to last a full week) with sunny days and calm seas filled us with high hopes for our intended trip.

### **Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> October**

The ferry from Milos to Rhodes takes a circuitous route via Santorini, Crete and various other islands on its twenty-two hour journey and it was with some relief from boredom when Simon and I arrived at the port of Rhodes to be met by Bob and his Greek friend Emmanuel who helped carry our kayaks to a safe storage area adjacent to the port police station.





Time for a short stroll around the fascinating old town with its huge walls, fortifications and tiny sidestreets and a leisurely drink at a busy cafe before Simon and I made our way to the hotel.

### Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup>

The Hermes Hotel provides an excellent buffet breakfast with a wonderful choice of foods and fruits, the tea and coffee being replenished at regular intervals. Being situated a short distance from the old town we shouldered cameras to take the opportunity to visit this photographers' delight before the tourist rush arrived. Once again Bob and Emmanuel arrived and helped carry the kayaks to a tiny beach just outside the City walls where Simon and I set off along the coast to rendezvous with Bob and his kayak at Kremasti where he had been staying with Emmanuel's family.

Bob had stocked up with a mass of provisions for the trip and after re-arranging gear we said our farewells to Emmanuel and family and headed along the coast towards a distinctive but smoky power station. Continuing, we camped just yards from the sea a short distance before the headland of Ak Minas.

Loads of driftwood provided us with the chance to cook with the aid of a small fire and suitably refreshed Bob and Simon adjourned to a nearby taverna for a nightcap or two.

### Monday 23<sup>rd</sup>

Rounding Ak Minas we looked out to the ruins of what must have been a magnificent Crusader castle at Ak Kopria, the steep and shattered cliffs presenting a daunting challenge to any potential invader. Along this section of the coast there is a profusion of greenhouses, taking a break at a sheltered cove we found some to have been left with plants rotting away and an air of abandonment. A possible E.U. scheme gone amiss?

Leaving Rhodes behind us we crossed to Makri and made a slight detour to investigate a fish farm, our arrival coincided with feeding time with fish turning the enclosed areas into a frenzy of activity.

By contrast, as we made our way towards Alimia on calm water, flying fish leapt in front of our route the light making them look like large dragonflies.

Arriving at Chalki harbour we left the kayaks at a convenient slipway and wandered through narrow streets before taking time out for a welcome drink in order to watch the world go by. Chalki is a lovely spot and worthy of exploration but needing somewhere to camp we returned to the kayaks and continued to the south of the island finding an extremely stony campsite near the remains of an ancient settlement shortly before darkness set in. With a dramatic sunset to close a busy day even the chorus and bells of the resident herd of goats did little to disturb our sleep.

## Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup>

The choice of campsite had been most fortunate as the south coast of Chalki has steep cliffs rising high from the water, the only break a tiny slot in cliffs where we paused for a wee while before the 16km crossing to Andi-tilos. Approaching the northern tip of Kavkha we were met by a surprisingly strong current which made the last kilometres hard work. Another short crossing and we were below the steep headlands of Tilos. The sheltered bay of Zakhariou beckoned with a superb beach but the lure of the tavernas at Livadia attracted us even more. A lack of camping areas was a disappointment and a foray to a cafe with a "rooms to let" sign ensued. Within moments of agreeing to the cost of €30 for the three of us we were installed and with clothes draped every where the balcony was soon resembling a car boot sale.

Showered and refreshed we wandered around the tiny harbour and found an "Italian" restaurant where Simon and I decided on meat based dishes whilst Bob enjoyed a seafood spaghetti.

## Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup>

Away at 9.00am on a mirror like sea and along the North-east coast passing many possibilities for camping to have a short break for refreshments and photo opportunities at Ak Spano, around the island of Gaidharos and an 11km crossing to Nisiros. Navigation was

a simple matter of heading towards a huge patch of white quartz which on approach turned out to be the whitewashed houses of the village of Avlaki. Many of the Greek islands present a barren spectacle when approached from the sea with goats existing on stunted growth. Nisiros was pleasantly green, its valleys filled with trees and an abundance of grass, it took a minute or two to realise that the animals grazing below the trees were cows.

Tiny Palon had little to offer in the way of camping facilities so we retraced our route to camp on the headland of Katsoumi just below the leading light. This location with its blacksand beach was an excellent viewpoint out to the surrounding islands and with plenty of driftwood available Simon soon had a small fire under way and a kettle boiling for numerous brews.

## Thursday 26<sup>th</sup>

Nisiros has the magnificent attraction of a large volcanic crater which is still bubbling and smoking and a visit was to be one of the highlights of the trip, sadly, the effects of the seafood meal on Bob's interior were causing similar upheavals and a visit to the nearest pharmacy became a priority. A check on the weather forecast indicated deteriorating conditions and the approach of high winds, our timescale had no allowance for being storm bound and the need to reach Kos prevailed over a trip to the crater.

The small town of Mandraki was quite unattractive when viewed from the sea but once onshore the narrow streets, cafes and cakeshops were a real delight, While Bob checked out the chemists and other facilities, Simon and myself enjoyed glorious chocolate and strawberry cakes. It should be noted that two crossings had yet to be undertaken and the need to have a reservoir of calories was a high priority. Other "highly trained athletes" will understand and no doubt commend our attention to such detail.

The 5km crossing to the glaring white island of Yialli revealed the ravages of the mining industry in this area, the extraction of Pumice no doubt producing wealth and employment but leaving an unattractive spectacle in its wake.

Rounding Yialli the pleasure of seeing Kos less than 10km away was tempered by an increase in wind speed and wave height, a reminder that the easy conditions we had so far enjoyed could quickly change.

Landing on Kos at the sandy beach at Khelona we soon had tents installed and a celebratory fire burning while the Trangias hissed and bubbled over the evening meal. Replete, Simon and Bob wandered to the nearby deluxe hotel complex and whilst visiting the bar were mistaken for all-inclusive guests! The free beers and access to the Internet for a weather forecast added to the pleasures of the trip. Their protests at not being allowed to pay were barely audible.

## **Friday 27<sup>th</sup>**

There was little indication of the high winds forecast on the Internet as we launched and made our way along the increasingly built-up coast. Huge concrete holiday complexes were in various stages of construction and a hideous contrast to the quieter islands we had previously visited. Bravely we ignored a sign for English Breakfasts at the holiday town of Kardamena and pulled in for a bar of chocolate near a Hotel which was the size of a small village.

From here the cliffs became steeper and increasingly spectacular, occasional winds and downdraughts reminding us that the last section of the trip would maintain our interest. Lunch break was taken at a small stony beach and a check of the chart showed that it was only ten kilometres to the harbour at Kos town.

Rounding the most easterly point of Kos at Pt Fokas the wind freshened and we sought a moment's respite behind a small jetty before

heading towards Pt Louras. There the shingle bar and strong winds combined to produce a confusing pattern of surf which made direction and control quite difficult, Bob and Simon took advantage of a lull in the waves to land for a moment's relief.

Launching in the conditions was not easy and it seemed to take ages before we were joined as a group and making our way into a headwind towards our destination. Increasing winds with spray streaming from the wave tops affected visibility, direction and communication and made our progress very difficult to establish. On occasion and in spite of determined paddling we felt that we were being blown backwards. Slowly counting off the lights on the seawall we rounded the breakwater to land at a tiny beach near the Marina. A small group had gathered to observe our efforts and greeted us with cries of bravo and a round of applause.

Bob sought out accommodation for the night and leaving the kayaks at the marina compound we walked into Kos town and ate at a restaurant that I knew from a previous trip. The waiter greeted me like an old friend and recalled my last visit. My claim to international fame was dispelled when he greeted everyone else in the same manner.

## **Saturday 28<sup>th</sup>**

We arrived at the marina to find several units of the Greek army waiting for us, fortunately they were there to take part in a Public Holiday parade, the drama of the occasion somewhat spoiled as they photographed each other brandishing rocket launchers and weaponry on their mobile phones. Not wanting to be mistaken for raiding commandos we left the kayaks out of sight and postponed our departure for the ferry terminal until the parade had moved on. The return to Rhodes, on the expensive High Speed ferry took us along the coast of Turkey and also to the island of Symi (splendid cliffs, great beaches and a future venue?) in less than three hours, where Emmanuel, complete

with beaming smile, was there to greet us and help move gear around.

Bob made his way to the airport for a direct flight to the U.K. whilst Simon and I took the kayaks onto the ferry and the long return to Milos. Our timing for the trip had been fortunate, winds of force 9 and thunderstorms were imminent, with ferries and planes cancelled for the following two days. The bad weather resulted in pre-season snow and bad flooding in normally moderate regions of Greece.

On our journey from Rhodes to Kos we covered some 200 kilometres in six days,

visited seven major islands and a host of smaller islets. In late October the changeover from summer to winter ferry schedules reduced the time available, an earlier visit and extra days would have enabled us to enjoy further exploration of this fascinating chain of islands.

Sincere Thanks to: - Emmanuel and family, Rod Feldtman of "Seakayak Milos" and all who contributed to a memorable experience.

***Peter Roscoe***

# ***Petitions, petitions***

Two petitions which club members may be interested in:

## **River Access**

Roger L. Revell has set up a petition at <http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/Canoeists/> calling for the Government to pass legislation to give canoeists and all other users of un-powered craft the free right to navigate all rivers and canals in England and Wales (similar to the right already enjoyed by cyclists to use bridleways, cycle tracks and roads).

Please have a look at it and consider adding your name as a signatory.

The more names it can receive will show the Government once again how important access is to a large part of the population. People want to enjoy their natural heritage for many reasons. In this day and age the restrictive situation in England and Wales is very archaic and needs changing.

Remember that after signing the petition, you will receive an email from the Government website. Your name will not be added to the petition unless you respond to the Government website's email.

What we are calling for is the type of legislation that is a version of the Scottish Land Reform Act 2003. This Act is applicable to manually powered craft. The Act codifies responsible access to land and water it protects the environment and activities of all canoeists, anglers, other users, and landowners who are all required to adhere to the Scottish Outdoor Access Code. This Act gives rights but also responsibilities and covers all users of the outdoors. The Act has been successfully implemented in Scotland so why not else where.

***Tamsin Phipps***  
***www.riversaccess.org***

## **British Waterways**

The British Waterways are reducing the funding of Inland Waterways ie canals and because of this a petition has been raised on email at Downing Street. I know the BCU are supporting it, if you fancy supporting it, please visit [www.saveourwaterways.org.uk](http://www.saveourwaterways.org.uk).

***At long last, by popular demand, a Ribble CC newsletter exclusive, we proudly present...***

# ***Mags' Flapjack***



*Picture (not Mags' Flapjack!) © Jaydot at Flickr.com*

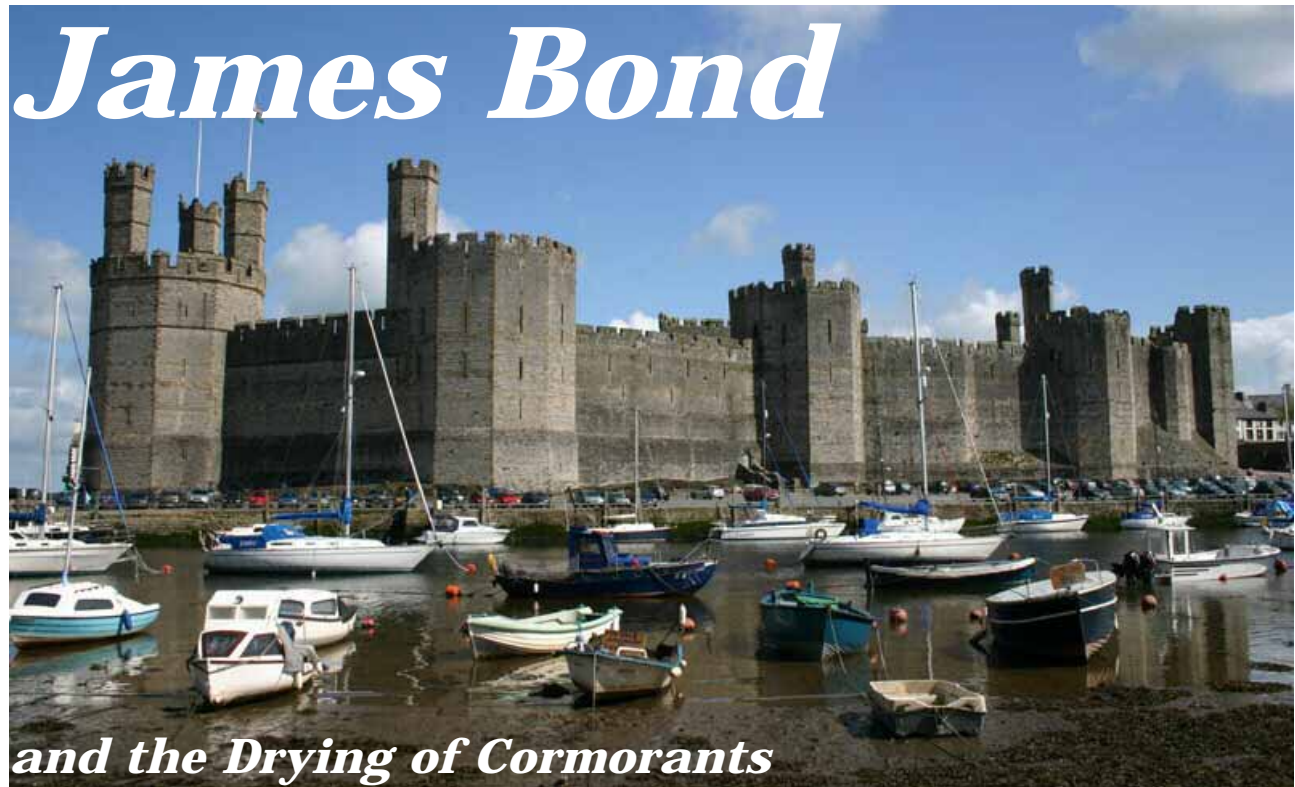
## **Ingredients**

- 12oz margarine
- 8oz Demerara sugar
- 2 heaped tablespoons syrup
- 1lb oats
- A handful of each of the following:
  - Seedless raisins
  - Dried apricots [chopped]
  - Dried dates [chopped]
  - Dried cranberries
  - Banana chips [crunched up]
  - Pumpkin seeds
  - Sunflower seeds
- Grease baking tray [13" x 9"]
- Melt the margarine, sugar and the syrup together in a large saucepan.
- If making fruit flapjack, add the fruit etc. Stir the mixture well.
- Add the oats and stir until the mixture is really mixed up.
- Tip onto the greased tray, place on shelf in the middle of the oven and bake for 20 mins or until it is golden brown.
- Remove from the oven, score into pieces after 5 mins. Cut into 12 pieces.
- When cool remove from tray, and hide from other members of household.
- Enjoy at leisure.

## **Instructions**

- Preheat oven 190 deg C, gas mk 5

***Mags Brayfield***



This is the place where I cut my teeth (and I'm still teething by the way) on the sea with my kayak. Most weekends from March until November I spend my time in a chalet situated just outside Caernarfon. It's my Shangri-La, a place where I can escape from the rat race. Caernarfon is a World Heritage site; the only problem being it's full of... well, lets not go there shall we.

I went into the local harbour master office one afternoon asking about the protocol of using the harbour for I wanted to paddle up the River Seiont, which is not very far since it runs out of water 500 yards or so after entering the harbour.

*"Never been asked that before Boyo,"* (not sure if he really said Boyo, but stay with me on this).

I explain that I wanted to go upstream at high tide just to see how far I could go before I was out of water.

*"We've had jet skis coming in, so I suppose you can canoe,"* he said.

"Kayak," I replied.

*"You won't be stopping the night then, will you?"*

"No," I said, "all the berths on my kayak are taken."

Slight pause followed by a tumbleweed moment... no sense of humour these natives.

*"Oh that's fine then, just be careful of the mooring ropes."*

With that I was off. My plan was to start at the harbour with the castle in the background and paddle towards Fort Belan into Foryd Bay. (Foryd pronounced Vorid). The Foryd at low water is a bird reserve with Redshanks, Oystercatchers, Cormorants etc etc.

For all the aficionados out there, it was one hour before high tide at Caernarfon, being 1 hour 18 minutes behind Liverpool, although add 1 hour for BST. Force 2 wind - Light Breeze - registering 4-5 mph on my anemometer with a tidal current of 2 knots. Visibility very good. Sea state, Calm.

Right. Risk assessment out of the way.



Fort Belan here we come. History time now, and a little bit about this place.

During the Napoleonic wars with the increasing threat of invasion, especially to the North Wales coast, Thomas Wynn, later to become the first Lord Newborough, undertook a bold military strategy and finally built the fort in 1775, thereby fortifying the narrow stretch of the Menai Straits between the mainland and the Isle of Anglesey.

It is believed to be the only Fort in Europe the construction of which was linked to the American war of Independence.

The Fort was initially garrisoned by Lord Newborough's own troops and still remains today very much as originally built. Belan was drawn back into the fray during the Second World War when it was occupied by all three services with the Royal Air Force especially dominating the scene by its use of what is now called Caernarfon Airport, which lies some mile and a half away.

The dock remains today largely as it was when originally constructed. There are several yachts and motorboats moored here during the summer months.

From here I turned into the sheltered bay, being mindful that the water here is only 4 to 5 feet deep at high tide and I didn't want to run out of water on the out going tide. It's quite surreal paddling over this stretch since it's like paddling over a flooded field. But there again that's what it is I suppose. Many beginners use this stretch since you have the

shelter and relatively safe environment of the bay.

Some of the locals I have spoken to recall the days in the late 50's, of Lord Snowdon, then Anthony Armstrong-Jones courting Princess Margaret along this strip of the coast line. It is well out of the way and very few people use the roads. The local church visible from the water's edge is the resting-place for Lord Snowdon's father.

The tide was starting to turn at this point and I wanted to see Caernarfon's answer to the Corryvreckan whirlpool. It's not really a whirlpool, more of a cauldron of what appears to be boiling water.

At the point of Fort Belan and Newborough on Anglesey the channel is very narrow, so when the tide is on the turn, water coming in from the Irish Sea collides with the water turning back from the Menai Straights. For a brief period the sea performs magical tricks with dancing horses and whirlpools.

Alright, don't all go out there and say "Is that it?" - it sure gave me a white knuckle ride and got the adrenaline flowing and I'm still teething, remember?

The tide had now turned and in an hour the water will have receded leaving only marshes with small estuaries that can be carefully navigated back into the Menai Straights. I turned around at the end of the bay where a wreck of an old fishing boat lies. This is the furthest point that can be reached and where there is a good spot for a picnic.



During a spot of lunch I was eagle-eyed by a group of Cormorants. They were standing with their wings outstretched similar to washing hanging on a line. (*I wonder if there is a collective noun for Cormorants, i.e., a Parliament of Crows or a Labour of Moles. I think I'll invent one - a Drying of Cormorants. There! Done it.*) Anyway I digress; it was time to be heading back along shore to Caernarfon.

The Menai Straights had become quite a busy place with pleasure boats and wind surfers by mid afternoon. On my return one guy came along side me on his sailboard, came to a stop and quickly sank in the water. Sitting there, bobbing up and down in the water, looking very nonchalant, and clinging to his sailboard. He started to chat about kayaks, saying he had a P & H Capella, but he preferred the Island Expedition for performance and that his 'playboat' was a Pyranha. He used that over at Trearddur Bay.

Oh oh! I sensed danger signals here; I'm stuck in the middle of nowhere, with someone belonging to some Canoe club in Yorkshire that has done this, done that, been there Blah, Blah, Blah. He also probably took part in the Iranian Embassy Siege. "What have you got one of those for, you don't need that, you need so & so. Have you done this and..." "Why me, God?" I thought, all I wanted was some piece and quiet.

My eyes had started to glaze over when he asked "WHAT'S THAT?" pointing to my trail. "Are you fishing?"

"It's a trail - a piece of string 4 metres long with a luminous floating ball attached to it. Being on my own, should I go for a swim, at least I've some chance of recovering my boat," I explained.

"Never seen one of those," he replied.

"Ah. Trick of the trade," I proudly bounced back. (I allowed myself a smug moment and under my breath thanked Bob Smith for sharing with me one of his gold nuggets.)

After 5 minutes or so of telling me he had sailed every river and sea on planet earth, he climbed back on his board, said his goodbyes and promptly sailed off. All that was needed was for him to say, "The names Bond, James Bond." I'm sure I could hear the Bond theme tune in the background. Din, din din der, der, (not translating very well is it).

Bizarre or what!



The only snag of the day was that my sat-nav batteries had passed their sell-by date and were deceased. As dead as Monty Python's parrot, so total time paddling with distance covered was lost. Who cares though, this is one trip I never tire of doing.

In the words of Arnie Schwarzenegger: "I'LL BE BACK."

**David Roughley**

PS. If James Bond is reading this, then actually my name is 'Blofeld.'





## Would you like to learn to canoe?

Ribble Canoe Club is running a beginners' course in March which will teach the basic skills necessary to paddle a kayak.

The course includes a classroom session to look at the theory of canoeing, three pool sessions to gain practical experience, and three outdoor sessions, at the end of which students will be able to take (and hopefully pass) the BCU 1 star award! No previous experience is necessary.

The pool sessions will take place on Friday nights in the swimming pool at Fulwood Leisure Centre, Black Bull Lane, Preston. The club has all the equipment necessary including kayaks and paddles, so all you need to bring is yourself - and your swimming costume, of course! (Flip-flops or water shoes and an old t-shirt would also be a good idea.)

The outdoor sessions will take place on Saturdays at one or more locations near Preston, details will be confirmed on the course. Again, the club will provide all the equipment, but you will need to wear warm clothing and a cagoule (but they may get dirty or wet so don't wear your best gear!), and bring a change of clothes.

The course dates are as follows:

Date	Location	Time
Mar 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Pool	7:45pm – 10pm
Mar 9 <sup>th</sup>	Pool	8:45pm – 10pm
Mar 10 <sup>th</sup>	Outdoor	TBC
Mar 16 <sup>th</sup>	Pool	8:45pm – 10pm
Mar 17 <sup>th</sup>	Outdoor	TBC
Mar 24 <sup>th</sup>	Outdoor	TBC

The course will cost £30 per person, which includes the cost of the instruction and pool hire. In addition you will need to be a member of Ribble Canoe Club, maximum cost £16 per person.

For further details, or to book a place please telephone:

Tom Byrne

# *Carry on Swimming*

As the weather has got worse and the rivers become more paddler friendly the opportunities to get paddling have become more frequent, culminating in me and other incompetents attaining the previously unattainable dizzy heights of being labelled 'a rubbish paddler' rather than 'an absolutely rubbish paddler'. No, seriously, I have put some consistent effort into getting out on average once a week and the benefits I think are now coming. I'm not swimming with the usual frequency and the swims that do come are on much more difficult rivers at higher water levels.

However, the previous rubbish above should not detract from two splendid swims I took on the Keswick Greta where 'magnetic rock' proved its name by drawing me into the edge of the stopper behind it, and a second swim being due to the sheer turbulence of the water eventually getting the better of me after I had manfully battled for what seemed like ages in mountainous waves. Both of these swims saw water borne acrobatics of a hundred plus yards taken through rapids of impressive proportions with paddler and equipment parting company. Thanks again to all my rescuers.

Sadly there have also been two less impressive recent swims on the Wharfe where, after battling through crashing waves and dodging boulders, I popped over in eddies. Isn't it incredible how you can feel full of confidence and like you're mastering the rough stuff and then get caught out in the 'safe zone'. The power of eddies on the edge of fast water continually amazes me and I'm

sure will be good for a few more swims yet before I understand the currents.

Another swim on the lower Rawthey was similarly disappointing when I messed up the line through the grade 4 rapid, stayed the right way up then plopped off the last drop into the stopper only to tumble over within feet of easy water. If only I had tried to roll up.

Ah the roll, that unattainable golden fleece. I know that one day I'll manage it, and so, full of misguided hope and expectation, I have attended a couple of pool sessions and a trip to Teesside with the sole purpose of attaining what I would dearly love (not Claudia Schiffer this time, see I'm not a pervert – only kidding, I am really). The pool sessions helped – thanks again to willing RCC members, and as for Teesside, five swims tell a story. But I did roll up once in the rough stuff and set up every time for the roll even if I didn't come up which is a big improvement in my mind, please back me up on this.

My New Year resolution is to master the roll, and my first target of this resolution is to attempt it every time before I reach for the release. I will succeed in the end, but alas for the moment, 24 swims on 10 different stretches of river in 2006 tell a tale of crap paddling and inability to roll as well as some level of determination and doggedness.

If anyone wants instruction on capsize drill then I'm your man.

***Dek Release (The Stig)***

# *Paddle or Peddle...*



# *Peddle or Paddle*

## ***The Paddle that Never Was - 7th January 2007***

Peddlers; John & Tom Fuller, Mark & Oliver Bamber.

In order to satisfy my better half's lust for, what she considers, bargain shopping, it was agreed that we were to be home and showered, ready for an ETD at 12.00; destination Harrogate. Deep joy.

Nothing for it then except a first paddle of the year to Halton, could have been Burrs but it wasn't. Resplendent in our paddling regalia we departed Preston at an early 08.00 and having got to Halton it was quite obvious with the ingress awash with a million litres/minute (+/- 2 litres) that we wouldn't be putting in at the usual place. We walked up to see if there was anything left to play on/with - ermm, no. We could have dashed up to the Rothay but as we were trying to reduce our carbon footprint we were in one car, could we get to Burrs and still get back for our 12.00 rendezvous? Most unlikely.

Right then, dash back to Preston, pick up another car and have a short blast down the Ribble with a ¾ hour play on the small, but handy golf course weir. Stuff the carbon

footprint. It looked to be in prime condition too. Game on.

So, as we careered down an empty London Road hill passing the new BMX Park, an adult, who frankly should know better, and without wishing to reveal the true identity but it wasn't me, said; "I've always fancied a bash on that" to which the response from the adolescents in the back was, rather obviously; "yeah, let's do that instead". Instantly recognising his grave mistake a tremendous amount of back peddling/paddling ensued to right the wrong. Alas, too late was the cry and the lads were very determined to stay both dry and warm on terra firma than ex ante aqua (no I don't want lessons in Latin). Only one crash to report, that perhaps won't go toward the D'Ribbler, is that when you are going up a steep incline you have to pedal, Oliver.

So, we are now in the second week of the New Year and the nearest I have been to the water is a Caledonian MacBrayne ferry across the Clyde, still one lives in hope. The only saving grace is that the fat chap in the red suit never brought me any new paddling kit, tight g\*t!

***Mark Bamber***

# *Chairman's Chunter*

Can there ever have been, in the history of this Club, a greater number of active paddlers than there are now? It's even got to the stage that Sundays just aren't enough - paddling trips are being arranged on Saturdays and mid-week (for shift workers and the shiftless). It's just as well there's more water about now than we've had for a year or two or we'd be fighting for river space as well as river days.

**If you want to paddle Saturdays or mid-week just let me know and I'll direct you to others of a like mind.**

I hope everyone's filled in and submitted the Rivers Access Petition that seems to be coming at us from all directions at once. Access is becoming the global warming of the canoeing world and I have a feeling that something good may come of the current moves (eventually). Allan Hacking is quietly forging links with anglers on our namesake river but it's very early days. Wouldn't it be marvellous if canoeists and anglers could get together to fight for cleaner rivers and more access for all? OK, but you gotta have dreams!

It strikes me that there may be a lot of misunderstanding between fishermen and canoeists. Perhaps we need meetings of both sides to clarify the issues. The only thing I know about anglers' grievances is that we disturb them when they're fishing and that we could damage spawning areas (gravel redds) in certain circumstances. So I need to learn more for a start! **Let me know if you'd be**

**interested in going to a meeting to learn more about fish and their habits.** We should be able to set something up. Do anglers know that we can glide quietly by them when they're fishing and only do the larking about thing when we're out of sight and earshot? If they've witnessed youngsters rafting up and playing games, maybe they think that's what we do. Of the many fishermen I've passed on rivers over the years, I have to say that well over half have been pleasant and courteous, although I have to admit there have been one or two who were abusive and verbally violent. I suppose you get that in any sport.

I hope to see you all at the AGM on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> February at Fulwood & Broughton Cricket Club where we've been the past two years (or is it three). There's subsidised hot pot and pudds plus our annual awards and a raffle. The formalities are over pretty quickly and then it's on with the important things, like talking 'n that.

Oh, and a Happy New Year to you all. (Seems ages ago already).

(If you've any swims from 2006 to report to Tom, you've probably just got time before the final D'Ribbler positions are certified).

See you at the AGM if not before,

***Terry Maddock***

# Ribble CC Library

To borrow a book or video, ring Clive Robinson or see him 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  
 Anglesey Sea Paddling  
 Rowing it Alone  
 The Handbook of Survival at Sea  
 BCU Coaching Handbook  
 Sea Safety: The Complete Guide

## Guidebooks:

English White Water  
 Scottish White Water  
 White Water Lake District  
 An Atlas of the English Lakes  
 Canal Companion: Cheshire Ring  
 🌞 Welsh Sea Kayaking  
*by Jim Krawiecki and Andy Biggs*  
*(Donated by the author, Andy Biggs)*

## General:

The Rough Guide to Weather  
*Robert Henson*  
 The Liquid Locomotive  
*John Long (ed)*  
 Many Rivers to Run  
*Dave Manby*  
 Norwegian rivers  
 Canoe Focus  
 🌞 Working out of Doors with  
 Young People  
*Alan Smith*  
*(Donated by Jane Bentham)*

## 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  
*Westgarth.TV*

## DVDs:

Tony Morgan in the Grand Canyon  
 LVM Lunch Video Magazine  
 Ribble Newsletters (CD)  
 Doublyouess  
 Without a Paddle (13)  
 Whitewater Kayaking  
 The Cockleshell Heroes (U)  
 Mags Brayfield in Nepal  
 EJ's Advanced Playboating  
 The Chaos Theory  
 Jackson Kayak Promo  
 It's Different Every Time  
*Norman Green*  
 EJ's Playboating Basics  
*Eric Jackson and Chris Emerick*  
 Wavesport: Sessions  
 Fort William 2005/06 Trip  
*Tom Kington*  
 🌞 The 7 Rivers Expedition  
*A John Grace Film*  
*(Donated by Iain Robinson)*  
 🌞 Locks and Quays  
*Featuring Ribble Canoe Club*

# ***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. All sessions are Friday 9:00pm – 10:00pm.

Date	Session	Contact	Supervisor	Committee
Jan 26 <sup>th</sup>	Beginners	Tom Byrne	Grahame Coles	Martin Stockdale
Feb 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Rolling	Bob Smith	Allan Hacking	Adam Fielder
Feb 9 <sup>th</sup>	Rolling	Bob Smith	Mark Loftus	Kath Risely
Feb 16 <sup>th</sup>	Open (Half Term)	N/A	Mark Green	Mark Loftus
Feb 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Rolling	Bob Smith	John Kington	Mark Dillon
Mar 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Beginners	Tom Byrne	Clive Robinson	Terry Maddock
Mar 9 <sup>th</sup>	Beginners	Tom Byrne	Grahame Coles	Tony Marsh
Mar 16 <sup>th</sup>	Beginners	Tom Byrne	Allan Hacking	Nicky Marsh
Mar 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Open	N/A	Mark Loftus	Brian Woodhouse
Mar 30 <sup>th</sup>	Open	N/A	Mark Green	Allan Hacking
Apr 6 <sup>th</sup>	No session (Easter)			

Prices:

Beginners Course £30, Rolling Course £15 (both plus club membership). All other sessions £3. Please book in advance for the Beginners and Rolling Courses by phoning the named contact.

## ***Editor's bit***

### **Pedant alert**

Just for the benefit of any pedantic readers who think I have been slacking at my job: both Mark Bamber and I realise that what you do on a bike is 'pedal' not 'peddle' – we though the pun was too good to miss.

### **Trophies**

Have you got a club trophy from last year? If you have, please get in touch with Peter Jones and arrange to pass it over to him ready to award to this year's worth recipient.

### **Secretary? Newsletter?**

There has been some confusion about my announcement that I will be standing down as Secretary at the AGM.

Just to clarify, I will still be on the committee, I just won't take quite as active a role. I will also still carry on editing the newsletter.

The only job I am giving up is the actual Secretary role, which involves handling all the formal communication for the club, being the point of contact for membership enquiries, taking minutes at committee meetings and so on.

The job is still vacant if we have any volunteers!

### **Dates and deadlines**

The next committee meeting will be on March 6<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm at the Hand & Dagger. The next newsletter will be published on March 20<sup>th</sup>. All submissions to me by Saturday March 17<sup>th</sup> at the latest please.

***Martin Stockdale***  
[secretary@ribblecanoecub.co.uk](mailto:secretary@ribblecanoecub.co.uk)



Other	Junior Polo	Ladies Polo	Mens Polo	Advanced Slalom	Beginners Slalom	Canoe Surfing	Open Canoeing	Sea Trips	Advanced River Trips	Intermediate River Trips	Beginners River Trips	Lake Trips	Fiat Water & Lake Trips	Social Events	Hand & Dagger Keyholder	Lifeguard	Instructor or Coach	Canoe Courses	Agreements	General Information Access	Committee	Area of Interest					
																						Contact	Telephone				
								✓							✓			✓					Andy & Debbie Dowe				
																		✓						Bob Smith			
										✓	✓	✓								✓	Memb. Secretary			Brian Woodhouse			
												✓										✓		Chris & Janet Porter			
																						✓		Clive Robinson			
									✓	✓								✓	✓			✓		Dave Ellison			
			✓											✓										Ian McCrie			
	✓				✓																			Jacky Draper			
													✓			✓						✓	Hon. Treasurer		John Kington		
																						✓		Mark Loftus			
															✓							✓	Hon. Secretary, Newsletter		Martin Stockdale		
			✓	✓																				Mick Huddleston			
		✓															✓							Nicky Marsh			
				✓	✓											✓				✓		✓		Peter Jones			
	✓				✓																		Competition Secretary		Susan Shaw		
									✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓				✓		Quartermaster		Steve Swarbrick	
								✓		✓												✓			Steve Wilkinson		
					✓						✓	✓				✓	✓	✓				✓		Hon. Chairman, Calendar		Terry Maddock	
										✓	✓	✓			✓			✓				✓			Tim Langridge		
d'Ribbler's Award (swim reports)												✓										✓			Tom Byrne		

# CALENDAR

Last minute trips organised at 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](http://www.burrs.org.uk)

Canolfan Tryweryn 01678 520826

[www.welsh-canoeing.org.uk](http://www.welsh-canoeing.org.uk)

Tees Barrage 01642 678000

[www.4seasons.co.uk](http://www.4seasons.co.uk)

Washburn/Wharfe 0845 833 8654

<http://www.yorcie.org.uk/>

## Trips / Events

### January

27 Tees Barrage

28 **Moving & White Water**  
**R Lune**  
**Halton, Lancaster**  
**Clive Robinson**

### February

4 **Beginners' Trip**  
**R Ribble**  
**Clitheroe to Ribchester**  
**Terry Maddock**

4 White Water  
R Leven  
Newby Bridge to Backbarrow

10/11 Tees Barrage

11 **White Water**  
**R Kent**  
**Kendal to A590**  
**Iain Robinson**

11 White Water  
R Leven  
Windermere to Backbarrow

18 **Flat Water Trip**  
**Rufford Canal**  
**Tom Byrne**

21 *(Wed) Annual General Meeting*  
*Fulwood and Broughton*  
*Cricket Club 7.30pm*  
*Subsidised hot pot!!! Yum yum.*

24/25 Tees Barrage

25 **White Water**  
**R Crake**  
**Brown Howe to Greenodd**  
**John Kington**

25 White Water  
R Leven  
Windermere to Backbarrow

### March

4 **Beginners' Trip**  
**R. Rothay**  
**Grasmere-Windermere**  
**Terry Maddock**

4 White Water  
R Leven  
Newby Bridge to Backbarrow

11 **White Water**  
**R Greta**  
**Threlkeld Bridge to Keswick**  
**Steve Swarbrick**

18 **Flat Water Trip**  
**Windermere**  
**Tom Byrne**

25 White Water  
R Leven  
Newby Bridge to Backbarrow

25 **White Water**  
**Upper Lune**  
**Sedbergh**  
**Andy Rushton**

### April

1 **Beginners' Trip**  
**R Wenning**  
**High Bentham, W Yorks**  
**Terry Maddock**

7-14 **Easter Scottish Activity Week**  
**Roy Bridge, nr Spean Bridge**  
**Tom Byrne**

22 **Flat Water Trip**  
**Macclesfield Canal**  
**Tom Byrne**

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.