

# TALES FROM THE RIVERBANK



MAY/JUNE 2008

## *In memory of Tony Moxham*



*“I suddenly heard this mighty roar... and there was this massive stopper. ...and I thought, PADDLE!!! So I windmilled... and then I had to do a BIG support... and then I thought, roll... but before I knew what had happened, I was sucked out of my boat.”*

As most of you already know, Tony died peacefully on Tuesday the 15th of April this year after a six month illness which took him well before his sell-by date.

He has been an active member of the club for more than thirty years and is one of the elite few to be made an Honorary Life Member.



He began canoeing in the days of fibreglass, pawlata rolls, homemade wet suits (with the emphasis on wet), completely useless cags and Gee's paddles. One of Steve Williams' enduring memories is of Tony in his garage doing the weekly canoe repair: a three bar electric fire blasting away, his hair and beard full of fibreglass and his trousers round his ankles trying to get the resin off with acetone before it set.



He has been a staunch member of the polo team in the past and helped teach many of us to canoe and in my case more importantly to roll. Apparently one of his favourite "moves" was the high telemark. His enthusiasm for the baths sessions was such that when they were at Parr Baths in St Helens he would stick his canoe on Veronica's car, go to work and then cycle to Southport to get a lift with Veronica to Parr.



His friendly, common-sense, humorous and often highly loquacious outlook on life was well known. He would go and talk to anybody anywhere and I can honestly say I have never seen him angry. This stood him in good stead with many brushes with anglers, the press, police and water bailiffs, merely bidding them a good day.

He even made it into the Blackburn Herald when he organized a confrontation with anglers on a Ribble trip and invited the press along to watch.



A really good friend and always helpful and kind. In the words of Laurence McEntegart “that nice man Mr Moxham”.

***Peter Dilworth***

# ***Bingley Slalom***



## ***10/11 May***

We only decided to go a couple of days before the event; it seemed like a good excuse to have a weekend away in our new motor caravan. We thought we would have a paddle in the evening when the event had finished and then sit around enjoying the company of other Ribble members. It was twenty years since we had been to a slalom, and even longer since we had competed.

There was good Ribble turnout – Allan, Leslie & Steph Hacking, Craig & Daniel Davies, Nicky & Holly Marsh, Kevin Singleton, Heather & Tom Clarke, Albert & Kath Risely, Pat & Norman Green, Janet Robinson, Rachel Drew & Will Body.

After the event on Saturday most of us got on the water for a practice run and general play around on the water. I was pleasantly surprised that I could still get the gates – be it painfully slow.



Later in the evening we had a get together with a BBQ and a few drinks. For some of us the excitement of the day was too much and the sight of our bed could not come soon enough. Even the dogs were tired out. Apparently on the Monday after the event Albert & Kath's dog Holly was still asleep at 9.00am. Albert had a struggle to get her out of her bed to go for a walk.



Sunday dawned and time to complete entry forms. Allan managed to talk Kath into competing with him in the Topo. He also talked Rachel into competing in the Topo event with him. Allan had six competitive runs on the Sunday and still managed time to help out with safety – what a hero.

By this time I felt if Kath was competing so should I, so I entered the K1 Div 4 ladies event. I just wanted to prove to myself that I could get down the course without disgracing myself. I managed a clear second run which put me in fourth place, two seconds behind Rachel who was third – well done Rachel, it was only her second competition.

Allan & Albert did a sterling job sat on the water as rescue for those paddlers who capsized.

Kevin Singleton won the judges event on Saturday and Nicky Marsh won it on Sunday. Craig and Will got promoted from Div 4 to Div 3 and Steph won the Div 3 event on both days.

## ***Club Boats For Sale***

Following a review of boats in the Lockup, the club now has a number of surplus boats for sale to club members at a bargain price of £25 each.

There are two Perception “Dancers”, two “Freestyles”, and two “Sunbeams” (which are junior boats). All have been well used but are

In the Topo Duo fun event, Ribble did well in this event; Steph and Craig won the mixed class (jnr/snr) and Allan and Kath won the veterans (old gits) class.

Kath went not wanting to paddle and somehow Allan turned her into a competitive paddler. I thought Allan was good at encouraging paddlers but this was some miracle he performed on Kath.



What a great weekend, it had all the right components – excellent weather, good company, plenty of time for paddling all wrapped up in an event that was well run whilst maintaining a relatively relaxed approach. I think I can safely say that if you were there that weekend and didn't enjoy yourself you will never enjoy slaloms. If that wasn't enough we also had some good competition results from our Ribble paddlers.

***Pat Green***

serviceable, and can be inspected prior to purchase. So if you are interested please give me a call, or catch me at the H&D for a guided tour of our sumptuous showroom of “pre-loved” boats.

***Albert Risely (Quartermaster)***

The first of a new series of articles on river and equipment safety.

# ***Safety First part 1: Throw line observations***



## **Background**

One cold winter day up at Halton, Peter Roscoe and I were deliberating about having a paddle when in the distance we saw the Fire Brigade practicing their river rescues. Intrigued we stood, watched and studied their technique for quite a long time and after much discussion went to practice our own rope rescue techniques. Below I have tried to pass on our observations and findings from the session in the hope that it may be of use to you.

## **A good first throw**

It was interesting to note that when the fire brigade's victim was swimming down the river he was only in range for 5 seconds, this demonstrates the need for a good first throw and also a back-up thrower, as when the thrower missed, the line retrieve and re-throw took 25 seconds for the best attempt that I saw. I have practised this myself and found that I can manage three throws and retrieves in 1 minute, but this won't be of much use to a swimmer on a moving river.

Despite all their regular practicing – throughout the winter month the Fire Brigade

are on Halton almost daily - the Fire Brigade teams only hit their target on average with 1 in 3 throws. I know from experience and practice that this ratio can be improved upon but remember it's likely that when you need to use the throwline you will be cold and tired, so regular practice is essential

### **Just enough**

It was interesting to see how much un-used line was still coming out of throwbags on retrieval, with this in mind Pete and I ran a series of practice throws noting how far we threw. My best throw was around 20 metres, Pete's best throw was around 17 metres. I have a 25m line cut down to 22m so I can leave a couple of meters on the floor but also because I found my throwing distance was lessened if I tried to throw a 25m line.

Also if the victim is nearer than the length of line in the bag you may find it worthwhile emptying some line out before you make the throw, that way there is less trailing line and it's easier and quicker for the victim to get hold of the bag and start to be pulled in.

After the second throw there was on occasions line left close to the thrower ie the full line distance hadn't been achieved, it was better to forget this line for the subsequent throws and only coil the length of line thrown used - as a second or third throw never goes as far as the first. If you find your bag holds more line than you can throw, consider taking out a metre or two before making the throw.

### **Preparation**

The initial throw with the line in the bag is consistently the best throw but this is dependent upon the line being emptied from the bag between trips ie if you leave your line wet and or never empty it out of the bag it will become weakened, coiled and more tightly compressed in the bag. Always open the bag and pull the line out to dry after paddling and pack the line away in the bag when you go paddling. I find that on returning from a trip it's worthwhile holding the end of the line and throwing the bag at a target ie a marker in the garden as this not only ensures

the line is emptied from the bag for drying but means you also do a practice throw after every trip.

### **Another chuck**

Repeat throws were tested and it was a consistently better throw with regard to distance if the line wasn't left on the floor ie coiling the line into a hand improved the throw. Laying the line over the hand instead of actually coiling it seemed to make only marginal improvement in throw distance. Coiling the line and throwing both it and the bag actually gave a further throw than throwing the bag only and keeping the coil on the other hand.

The bag will be lighter on the second throw as it will be empty of line. To help compensate for this I have a small sponge fastened in the bottom of my bag so that all the water doesn't drain out, other tricks to give the bag weight are blocking the drain holes or placing a stone in the bag to give it more weight or filling the bag with water.

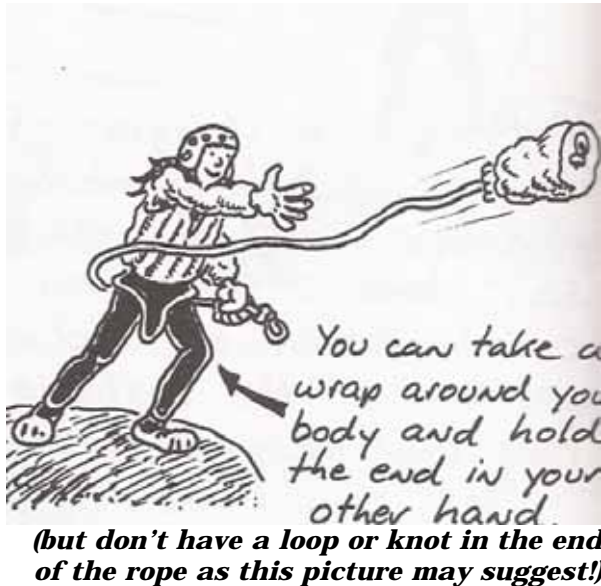
### **Swimming aid**

The swimmer should practice receiving the rope. We noticed that the Fire Brigade swimmers received the rope then place the rope over the far shoulder from the thrower and held the line across their chest, this allowed the swimmer to stay facing down river and ferry glide to the bank. Holding the line over the near bank shoulder forced the swimmer to be turned over so his face was in the water often causing him to let go of the line.

### **Basic position and stance**

Always look for a good safe position from which to make your throw, a flat non-slippery surface is ideal for the thrower but also consider where the victim is going to be brought into, make sure there are no downriver obstacles that they will be swung into and that they can get out of the river at the rescue point. If there's a tree or rock about consider using it as an aid for taking some of

the strain off the line, however you will need to make sure you are ready for an almighty pull so get into a good solid stance and brace yourself. Adam (18stone) was pulled off his feet when practicing rescuing me (11stone) at Burrs under the bridge, the pull of a swimmer is huge when they are in the current.



I find it helps to leave a couple of metres of line on the floor when throwing the line and always stand on the line end, however you must never tie the line to yourself or loop it around your hand or arm, watch also that it isn't twisted around your feet.

### New line check

Even on new lines pull out all the line and check the knots, re-tie the knot to ensure the tag end of the knot is long enough not to pull out as the knot tightens.

Make sure the bag identifies the throwline length especially if you shorten it as there is nothing worse than expecting to be able to reach a victim but finding the line used pulls up short. I bought a 25m line and cut it down because the extra weight made my throw worse. It may seem crazy to shorten the line but the bag is also much easier and quicker to pack now as well as being better for throwing. Make sure there are no places on the bag where a swimmer can trap their hand ie put it through a loop, make the loop at the end of the bag smaller to prevent this.

Mark off the line with tape at say 5m intervals, this will give people an idea of how much line is in use / is out when in use. Seal the holes in the bottom the bag, this helps to keep water in it for the second throw or fasten a small sponge in the bottom of the bag to keep water in it to give it weight.

### Regular maintenance

Now and again check the condition of the bag and line for damage, check also the knots in the bag. Always hang the line out to dry after use and never leave it coiled in the bag for long periods. When packing the line into the bag always leave a few inches sticking out of the bag and put some coloured tape around the end, this will make it easier to see the end.



Enjoy the White Water Safety and Rescue course – if you're booked on it- they are excellent and don't forget to join the Throwline Challenge at the Hand and Dagger on club nights and you could win a more advanced rescue course, either way make sure you know how to use a throwline if you carry one and receive one if you paddle. Ask one of the coaches about Canoe Safety Tests and how to practice your throwline skills, believe me they will be only too willing to help.

Thanks to all coaches for their help in bringing together the observations in this article, but remember this is by no means a full and complete account of throwline skills; preparation, practice and training are required to get the best from it.

**Mark Dillon**



# *Stuck in a hole*



Late March had Burger Boy and I attempting to broaden our paddling base by doing our 2 star in an Open canoe, to say the 'skills' we have in a kayak would be transferable is misleading, believe me if you think we're bad in a kayak you should see us in an Open, poor Tony our eternally patient coach had his work cut out. However persevere with us he did and along with the excellent guidance we received from Pete Roscoe and Flapjack-Magz, Tony did wonders and brought us up to a reasonable level. What a session it was, pain, let me tell you after that day I sat at home with ice packs on my knees and was both physically and mentally shattered, it was a week before I could kneel down again. Thanks must go to that intrepid trio for the work they – and others – put in over that weekend and the commitment to the club and paddling that they have, well done.

The following weekend had me up at crack of sparrow fart as our intrepid team set out for

Teesside one of our favourite venues. The happy band was made up of Burger Boy (looking goooood now he's lost a stone, sorry hadn't you all noticed), Damp Darren, myself and our new safety and training coach Magz – about to be given the silly name of Flapjack. Sadly River God couldn't be with us as he was using the GB Squad training as an excuse to carry out research for his latest book – 40 different routes to Nottingham, this time he was doing the route via Sheffield, I hope he gets Sat Nav soon.

Our journey across the frozen wastes of northern England was interesting as we travelled through blizzards and 9 inch snow drifts. Poor Flapjack sat there panicking and wishing we had come in her 4x4 whilst I was cool with it and took it in my stride – like guys do.

By the time we reached Teesside the weather had perked up no end and it was turning into a

nice day with some good fun ahead as the course was running at a testing level. Like always we had a run down just to get ourselves in the mood, guess what, they had changed the features again for the second time on the bounce that we had been there, and it was a great fun run, with Damp Darren getting a good dunking along with myself before we dragged our soggy selves out of the bottom pool.

There's nothing like an early swim to set the day up nicely. BB managed to keep it together with some awesome rolls after a serious trashing on Cruncher and Valentines whilst Flapjack looked shocked at the fact that she had run the course and found it so much fun, can you believe that in the past she has only really paddled to Happy Eater and played there all day?

The next run down was much steadier and passed smoothly with the Damp one paddling well and setting his targets at wanting to do a moving water roll. It was a great day with lots of fun and BB managing some great freestyle moves culminating in his first 300 then a 360 spin on Happy Eater, how good is he getting - soon he'll be in the GB over 18 (stone) squad, and Damp Darren was in top form also getting in 2 moving water rolls, brill, under our expert tutelage he will soon be as good as us!



Due to having work - bummer - and a holiday in the Lakes I didn't paddle for the next few weeks but got things going again with an evening session on the Washburn. Ooohh the Washburn, home of some serious bruising

and epic tales in articles past (available in old newsletters or verbally expanded format from either BB or myself and more lately by 'I don't swim' Craig).

The band of incompetents for this trip consisted of Burger Boy, River God (in his foot spa) and me, also there was the Marshes, taking turns to paddle and baby sit. What a great piece of river this is with fast flows and tiny eddies, really testing and entertaining and available when all else is dried up.

The evening started with a very fast run after BB missed the first 96 eddies, I suppose to be fair that's not strictly true as he made the first eddy and knocked me out of it but then missed the following 95!

The second run was more measured and controlled with a bit of surfing and messing about on the way down. As the evening progressed it got better and better as we got used to the pace of the river and paddled accordingly. For those who haven't paddled the Washburn I should explain that it takes some serious commitment in getting the eddies and this was beautifully demonstrated on one of BB's runaway runs, RG and I caught him up only to find his boat up a grassy bank fully to the cockpit, so graceful was he on the water and so awkward when beached - liken this to a walrus and you get the picture.

The final run of the night was all the way to the car park at the bottom reservoir - something we hadn't done before - and saw me need to roll to preserve my dignity after landing too tightly after the 'big drop' and ending up propped up against the bank. A bit of fun on the easy run down had us all ready for home totally knackered but un-damaged and planning our next trip out, which turned out to be an evening paddle at Garstang Weir.

A pleasant evening after rain was in store with the Wyre at a nice level forming a good semi-friendly stopper at the weir and a surf wave just below it. Another full compliment of numpties showed up again with Flapjack to keep any eye on us. We started off with an exhausting up river against the current warm

up before dropping into the eddie behind the weir stopper to listen to Flapjack's advice gleaned over years of paddling at Garstang – that's a nasty stopper and will hold you, its best not to go in it, she said. Good enough for us, so BB went straight into it, got a bit stuck but there isn't a stopper big enough to hold him and out he came. Cool, and that was the signal for us all to get in and practice our 'stuck in a stopper survival skills', great fun and something that is very handy.

After a good few goes Mark Bamber's 'finger of fate' singled me out for a swim, and after a couple of crap attempts at rolling I ran my tally up to 4 for the year and do you know what?, that drew me level with the River God for swims this year and left BB with the least so far out of our intrepid band. The evening passed pleasantly with no more dramatics and a bit of easy surfing before we headed for home.

By the time you read this BB will be a qualified coach, which just goes to show how much he has improved over the years, he really is getting there and is reaping rewards for the effort he has put in. At least with this qualification he can now officially coach freestyle paddlers in his 'fronty-backy, sidey-sidey and mystery moves', he had the Garstang freestyle experts speechless as he demonstrated them, however don't be disappointed if he won't demo them for you as he's keeping them close to his chest until other leading paddlers have sprung them onto

the world stage, good luck Lowrie Davies Ladies Freestyle European Champion who 'met' Adam at Llangollen, lets hope the drug testing permits the use of Prozac and you recover fully.

Shame on you all, our next trip out was a lonely affair with only River God and I traversing the Pennines to Teesside again. It was glorious weather on the way over, so different from my last trip and the paddling was fantastic. My targets for this session had been to improve my roll – as I have lately been missing too many – and practice getting comfortable in stoppers. The session ended with all targets met as I must have done more than 15 rolls and had no swims and had a good 10 sessions in Cruncher getting an absolute mauling before either rolling out or working my way out of it. Both RG and I felt we were on top form and we had a brilliant time.

Next up is the Washburn again, this time with BB in tow; you know there'll be a tale to tell after that trip.

Stop Press: RGs latest route contains a panoramic journey on the M60 – the wrong way round it – the book will soon be released by Phonehome4help Publishing.

***M. Apreader  
Crap but Consistent***

## ***For Sale***

### **'North Bay' Sea Kayak**

For detailed description see  
[www.fyneboatkits.co.uk](http://www.fyneboatkits.co.uk)

Equipment: Yakima adjustable foot rests,  
Valley seat, backrest & hatches, Silva  
compass, Retractable skeg.

Suit intermediate / expert paddler.

For photographs and further info please phone  
or email.

**£750 o.n.o.**

### **Grahame Coles**

### **Enterprise Sailing Dinghy**

Complete with trailer.

New cleats, pulleys and sheets.  
Fibreglass, 14 ft on a road trailer.

**£250 ono**

**Roy Garriock**

# *Holdfast*



## *Sea Kayaking in the Outer Hebrides, Scotland*

### **‘Slope downwards to the depths, O sea’**

The first time I saw the Outer Hebrides they were floating on the horizon, far out to sea. The Norse voyagers who settled there called them the ‘Hav-bred-ey’, the islands on the edge of the sea. Westward from the Isle of Skye I watched them passing in their slow migration. They travelled in a long arc tapering to the south and west. To the north lay the largest island, Lewis and Harris (Eile an Leòdhais, Na Hearad). Scanning south along the horizon I picked up the Uists and Barra (Barraigh), past Eriskay (Eiriosgaigh) and Vatersay (Bhatarsaigh) to the last redoubts, the 600-foot-high cliffs that guard the Atlantic coasts of Mingulay and Berneray (Miughlaigh, Bearnaraigh). Beyond that lay only the land whose summits lay beneath the waves, the whale-road. I stared at the islands for a long time. On a chart they describe a compact archipelago from Butt of Lewis in the north (58° 31’ N, 6° 16’ W) to Barra Head on Berneray in the south (56° 47’ N, 07°

38’ W). Their western seaboard faces the Atlantic frontier and is almost a continuous strand of cliff and sand dune and machair, battered by Atlantic storms. The more sheltered eastern coast is heavily indented, a maze of sea lochs and islands. The whole archipelago is 134 miles long and about as remote as you can get in the British Isles. But you cannot hope to map into abstraction such a place. The islands draw you in their wake, out into the Atlantic, and you have to follow them.

Which is how I came to be on the CalMac ferry out of Uig on the west-coast of Skye, crossing the Sea of the Hebrides, bound for North Uist. It was a bright and sunny day in August as a group of friends and I slipped between the twin rocks of Madadh Mór (pronounced maddy moor, meaning “big dogs”) and Madadh Beag (“little dogs”) that guard the entrance to Loch Maddy (Loch nam Madadh). We were met by our friend Niall Johnston who runs the North Uist Outdoor Centre and whisked off in his Land Rover for

tea and an afternoon's paddle. The landscape here is almost unique in the British Isles, a land made up almost entirely of water. Large parts of the Uists are blanket bog, scarcely above sea level and riddled with lochans, a type of muskeg landscape but with no trees. The wind roars in off the Atlantic, flattening the new growth. It has taken 2000 million years to plane these crystalline rocks to such a barren remnant. A few bare knuckles of Archaean gneiss remain on the east coast of the Uists, rising at their highest to just over 2,000 feet above sea level but the overwhelming impression is of a primeval landscape resolving slowly back into the sea.

### **'Swim away from me, do ye?'**

As we put onto the water in a sheltered sea loch that day the wind was about Force 6 and rising. We didn't care. It was great to be outside, blown all over the place like tipsy nymphs on the surface of a pond. We paddled with our noses nearly on the foredeck, taking plenty of opportunity to shelter in the kelp beds, wrapping our boats in their fronds, anchoring ourselves to the seabed with their tenacious holdfasts. We listened to the wind singing in amongst the skerries, puckering the grey surface of the lagoon. Loch Maddy is the best example of a complex fjardic sea loch in Europe. As sea levels rose after the last ice age the coast was flooded, forming an intricate series of obs (lagoons) and lochs. This drowned land of brackish obs is superabundant in wildlife due to the range of habitats it exhibits, from fully marine to freshwater in the space of a few miles. And as the tide ebbs these obs drain back to sea down marine waterfalls and rapids. As we hurtled down the rapids between Loch Voiskinish and Loch Blashaval we were surrounded by inquisitive gray seals. We had startled them when we launched and they took to the water with their pups and shadowed us down the ob. Just as I was reaching warp speed a large seal surfaced in front of the prow of my boat. It turned in time to fix me with its big brown eye and dived with such an explosive thrash of its tail flippers that it sent me skittering sideways. Regaining my balance I whispered my apologies. In the Hebrides, Orkneys and

Shetland they tell stories about the seal folk, the selkies. They can shed their skins at will and assume human forms and walk among us, stealing hearts and exacting terrible tributes. Best not to prod them with the sharp end of a kayak. We paddled on, leaving them to their remote, untroubled lagoon.



The next day we towed the boats down to the very southern tip of South Uist (Uibhist a Deas) and camped on the beach at Pollachar. The wind was brisk but easing and as we lazed around in the sunshine we laid our plans. First we had to cross the Sound of Barra (An Caolas Barrach) to reach the island of Barra. Then, depending on the weather, we had two choices. If the weather was fair we would head down the western Atlantic coast and make for Vatersay 16 miles away. We would then be well placed to strike for Berneray, the very southern tip of the Hebrides. Beyond Vatersay we would need a good two- or three-day weather window to complete the round trip out to Berneray. If the winds were too strong we would work down the sheltered eastern coast. As the sun continued to shine I spent the day sat in the shadow of a prehistoric standing stone, reading Moby Dick. It was not the best choice of book to read for someone with an overactive imagination about to go sea kayaking, and it had a profound effect on me. I flicked through the pages and viewed the scenery around me. Looking south the sand flats of Tràigh Mhòr on Barra shone in the sun. A mail plane took off from the beach, rising abruptly, the only sound of human interference. It seemed to me that these islands, gemstones of gneiss and maerl and

sand, shared many characteristics with the great white whale. They have always attracted dreamers and mystics, saints and fools. And whether they stayed or whether they left again, there was always a price to pay. For those that visited often found themselves driven mad. The islands surfaced in their dreams and burned themselves upon the memory, an unintended topography, constantly receding. Those that lived there built a dignified culture that understood every filament of meaning that comprises the word "loss," their history a painful scrimshaw etched on the bone.

### **'I look deep down and do believe'**

The next morning, August 11, 1999, the 5:35 A.M. shipping forecast indicated light westerlies. After a short discussion we decided to go down the Atlantic coast. After all the planning there is no feeling quite like setting off. The spray deck snaps home and you shove off from the shore. Both hands grip the paddle shaft. You plant the blade for the first paddle stroke and there is that satisfying little tug of recognition from the water that shivers through your whole body, that lets you know you have left all the dross behind. You are moving to a new rhythm now, synchronizing with the great pulsing engine of the sea. The Sound of Barra is a shallow stretch of sea, only about five miles at its greatest extent, fringed by wide sandy beaches and dotted with islands. It is mostly not much more than 30 feet in depth and as we paddled along we could see the sandy bottom and submarine rocks illuminated by slanting shafts of sunlight. We crossed over the Temple Channel and past the small island of Fiaray (Fiaraidh), laughing and chatting. Niall, our guide and a native Hebridean, seemed just as astounded as the rest of us by the benign conditions. It was his first time down this coastline, which is usually guarded by Atlantic breakers smacking into the cliffs. Then, just after 11:00 A.M. British Summer Time, as we sat rafted up off Gob Sgùrabhal, the northwesterly tip of Barra, we felt the sky darken. The seabirds on the cliffs began to scatter restlessly from perch to perch. There were no clouds in the sky as the sun began to

fade. As a vantage point to watch a solar eclipse it was second to none. Slowly the great nictitating membrane began to close over the sun. As it did the seals along the shoreline began to sing long, mournful keening wails. While well north of the track of the totality we saw a 75% eclipse and felt the penumbral cold begin to seep into us. Just east of where we sat the air temperature was measured as having dipped to 3.5°C just after the maximum eclipse. We shared with all the other creatures on the sea that day the uneasy feeling of withdrawal. The whole thing didn't last long, the chill lifted and we paddled on, having snuck a look at some unfathomed future cosmic winter.

Saying "no" to entropy we kept up a steady pace, heading southwest, past the World War II U-boat lookout on Aird Ghreìn and exploring the caves and arches at Rubha na Doirlinn. We crossed the Sound of Vatersay (Caolas Bhatarsaigh) and struck south down the coast. Toward evening, with the sun beginning to lower in the west, we crept through the channel between Bioruaslum and Vatersay and rounded into the Bàgh Siar. This half-mile-wide bay is open to the west and backed by a sandy beach. The beach is just a narrow shank of land, a sand spit joining the two hills that make up Vatersay. If the weather kicked up during the night we could easily walk the boats over to the eastern bay and paddle in the lee of the island. There are few houses on the island and before the causeway was built over from Barra it used to boast the shortest road in Scotland. We camped on dunes covered with rich machair, the wildflower carpets that typify the west coasts of these islands. We rigged up a drying line on paddle tripods and dried our paddling kit in the fresh breeze. Nestling among the dancing campion and thrift we dined on smoked salmon we had brought with us from the smokehouse on Benbecula. As the sun sank on the horizon we put on down jackets and nestled in amongst the dunes, drinking wine, talking over the day's paddle, spinning small prose poems of contentment and praise for the beauty of remote places. Weary voyagers, having found our Elysian shore, we

lay in our tents cradled by the sounds of the seashore and went to sleep.



### **‘Bivouacks on the deep’**

The next morning the sky was gray and hard, the wind Force 5, the sea churning up the mouth of the bay as we watched from the beach. I walked north along the beach to get a better view out to sea and within a few hundred yards came upon a granite finger of rock with the following inscription:

On the 20th Sepr. 1853  
The ship ‘Annie Jane’  
with emigrants  
from Liverpool to Quebec  
was totally wrecked  
in this bay  
and three-fourths  
of the crew and passengers  
numbering about 350  
men women & children were drowned  
and their bodies interred here  
and the sea gave up the dead  
which were in it       REV. XX 13

On that September night, as I learned later, the villagers had kindled a fire on the beach so they could see to carry the bodies up the beach. Mistaking this for a distress flare, another ship came to investigate and was lost with all hands save one. There, in that beautiful place, over 350 souls are buried in the dunes, on which we had slept so contentedly, never reaching their destination.

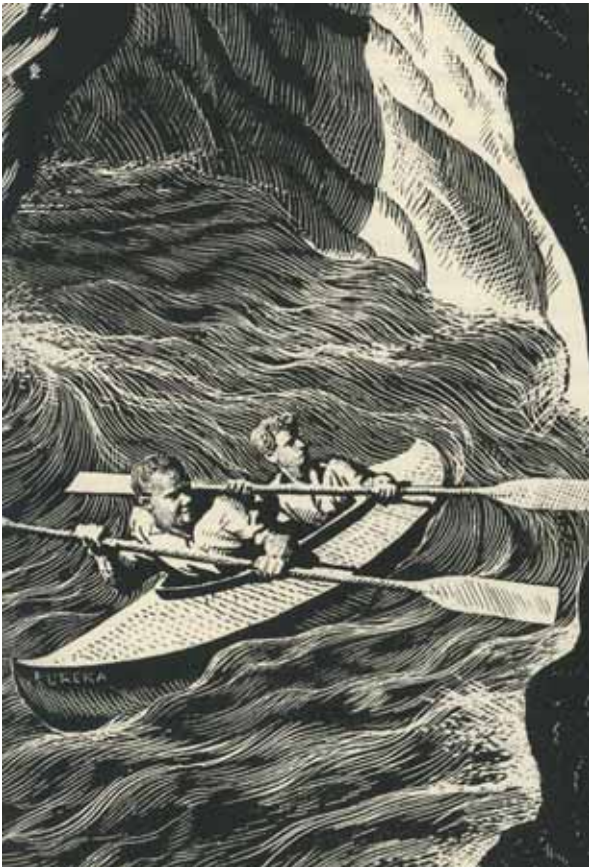
As we packed up and paddled off all our plans began to evaporate before the cruel lash of a

vigorous Atlantic low-pressure system. As we rounded Rubha Thuilis the southern islands stretched out across the horizon. Across a few miles of water the nearest island, Sandray (Sanndraigh), was ringed with surf. Armored divisions of waves were advancing from the southwest up the Sound of Sandray (Caolas Shandraigh). From Sandray it was 10 miles farther down to Berneray. We would have to make four open crossings and each island offered little protection from the wind and was mostly ringed with cliffs. There are few places to land and the waters hereabouts can turn nasty very quickly. It was not a place to get caught out. They say that after a large storm fish are deposited around the lighthouse at Skate Point (Rubha Sgait) on Berneray. The lighthouse is on a cliff, 630 feet above the sea. And in May 1897, the island of Pabbay (Pabaigh) just to our south, lost the entire able-bodied male population in a storm while they were out fishing. Best to be off these waters when the wind blows hard. Best to run before the southwesterly wind. Better to bend and not break. The southern islands were off limits and we knew it. We struggled round the southern coast of Vatersay, a fairground ride of clapotis at the base of the cliffs and ran ashore at Bàgh a’ Deas in driving cold rain. We had paddled three miles and we were under a mile as the crow flies from our morning campsite. We had got precisely nowhere and seen our plans thrown back in our faces. We stood on the beach shivering, then pitched the tents and took to our beds all afternoon.

### **‘hell is an idea first born on an undigested apple-dumpling’**

Niall came round the tents at 5:00 P.M. with a bottle of whisky, asking for volunteers to cook dinner. Thus began the long dark teatime of the soul. In freezing rain we huddled around five camp stoves, trying to conjure up an inspirational meal for eight, swigging from a whisky bottle and cursing. All that could be heard was the drumming of rain on tents and the hissing of the stoves. The gulls, eyeing our stores, would ride a wind-ridge above the dunes and hang there for a moment, before the wind unpacked them and

sent them tumbling backward. The only advantage to all the wind and rain was that it kept the midges down. These diminutive beasts live in the grass and eat you alive if the wind speed drops below two miles per hour, rising in a cloud around your ankles, attacking any exposed flesh. The midge net I had brought turned out to be completely useless and seemed to let them in and keep them confined in close proximity to my face. I had already spent one particularly still evening hopping from rock to rock while eating dinner in an attempt to generate a breeze and escape their attentions. But the midges were now all safely grounded by the horizontal rain. As so often in the Hebrides, the weather was the opposite of the day before. We eventually cobbled together a meal of curried fish, boiled egg and rice and spent the rest of the evening in our tents, regretting dinner. I went to sleep reading *Moby Dick*, being chased through my dreams by white whales.



The next morning we paddled north to Castlebay (Bàgh a Chaisteil), the main port on Barra, the kayaks weathercocking badly in the stiff westerlies. We sat in the café by the harbor and had fish and chips, leaving little

puddles on the floor as we left. We circumnavigated Kissimul Castle which sits in the bay. Perched on a small rocky island, Kissimul is rented out by the clan chieftain of the MacNeils of Barra for the princely sum of one pound and a bottle of Talisker whisky. The current clan chieftain is an American law professor at Northwestern University who obviously has no need of a damp medieval castle with poor road access. Most of the afternoon was spent paddling up the east coast of Barra, long miles that afforded plenty of time to study the action of rain on the surface of the sea. We camped on a little heathery eyelet on the shores of Bàgh Shiarabagh and fought the midges over dinner until we could bear it no longer, decamping to the pub to self-medicate our midge bites with the local malt whisky.

### **‘eternal blue noon’**

We launched the following morning, slithering over the knotted wrack that lines the shore, out into Bàgh Shiarabagh. The wind was northwesterly now and blowing a fresh breeze, a wind known in the Hebrides as a “Kaver,” a word probably derived from the Old Norse word for bustling. We crossed the Sound of Hellisay (Caolas Theiliseigh) paddling northeastward to the Prince’s Beach on Eriskay with the wind abeam. After all the rain and strong winds, it was one of those days where we had everything right. The water laughed around the boat and the breeze parted the bristles on my beard. The sun was kind and the shallow waters of the Outer Oitir Mhor imitated the sky. We passed the islands of Hellisay (Theiliseigh) and Gighay (Gioghaigh), one island really, split in two like a broken toy, hiding a secret anchorage in the depths of its heart. The warmth of the sun flowed in our veins as we surged up the coast of Eriskay and drifted to a halt among the skerries at Rubha Ban, drifting lazily among the pools, not wanting to get out of the boats and stop paddling. That evening was spent in Am Politician, the only pub on Eriskay. The pub is named after perhaps the most famous shipwreck in the British Isles, that of the SS Politician. Heading for New York in February 1941 and attempting to dodge German U-



boats in the Atlantic approaches, the SS Politician foundered in the shallow waters in the Sound of Eriskay (Caolas Eiriosgaigh), near the island of Calvey (Calbhaigh). The islanders rescued the crew and in the process liberated 264,000 bottles of whisky (stamped “No resale without Federal approval”) from the ship, part of Britain’s lend-lease commitment to the USA. For weeks, every living thing on the island was blind drunk until Customs and Excise officers appeared on the scene and tried to impound the whisky. These goings-on were turned into a novel by Sir Compton Mackenzie and subsequently a much-loved British film of the 1940s, *Whisky Galore!* Judging by the age and state of the bar regulars the night we were in, they had just finished bottle number 264,000 and were dolefully contemplating where their next drink was coming from.

### **‘Push not off from that isle, thou canst never return!’**

On the morning of August 15, 1999, our last day’s paddling, the air was fizzing and the grass and flag iris around our tents rattled like Zulu spears. The wind had picked up again and was forecast to get much stronger. We packed quickly and rode across to Ludag on South Uist, the wind catching the paddles, telegraphing danger signals down through the paddle loom and into our muscles. We landed at midday and milled around disconsolately. We could have called for the bus from there and driven off for a hot shower and a warm bed. But none of us wanted to stop. Our faces were painted with salt, our hands crooked and our bodies bent to the sea. Not ready to go on perhaps, so much as unable to stop pulling. There, in the lee of the island, it was sheltered from the brewing nor’wester. We decided to carry on a further 12 miles around the coast to Lochboisdale (Loch Baghasdail), figuring that as we were going up the east coast of the island we would be sheltered from the coming storm. Perhaps we should have given it a second thought. Perhaps we were just too tired to discern the difference between our own sound reasoning and the siren sounds of the sea. It was a bad decision, one that I have never regretted taking.

We surfed out toward Rubha Mealabhaig, falling down the waves, herding the water eastward toward our destination. We very soon turned north, working our way up the coast. Though we had a weak flood tide to assist us the work became much more difficult. At Rubha na h-Ordaig we began to turn northwest and very soon began to realize the folly of our decision. We had six miles to paddle up Lochboisdale and far from getting any shelter, the loch sides were funnelling the wind into our faces. What we had not taken into account was that Lochboisdale cuts deep into South Uist, nearly reaching the western Atlantic coast. All that separates the Atlantic from the loch is two miles of low, boggy, sandy ground, never higher than 40 feet above sea level. The island offers no shelter to the loch if the winds are from the northwest quarter. And the wind was steadily rising. We prospected our way up the coast in short bursts, sheltering behind rocks, waiting for brief lulls that never really came. There was nowhere to put in along the rocky coastline and by now we had reached well beyond the point of no return. As Herman Melville might have said, there are many ways to get to this point, none of them marked. It has a name and co-ordinates but I could not tell you how to get there. If I took you there, you would not experience it as I experienced it. Trying to shrink the distance between my experience and my understanding I wrote it all down soon afterwards, in a kind of breathless homage to the sea. In Gaelic the point we reached is called Meall an Iasgaich (57° 7’ N, 7° 14’ W), which means “Fishermen’s Point” or “Fish Point.” But who or what was caught there that day, I leave it for you, gentle reader, to judge.

### **‘Seeks all the lashed sea’s landlessness again’**

Resting, we covered our decks with kelp and clung there, anchored by their stipes, enfolded in the heart of the storm. But we could not stay there. The cliffs above were streaming with indifference and iridescent life. A few yards beyond our keels the last headland, Meall an Iasgaich. Beyond that, headwinds,

rising Force 6 or 7 now, gray waves setting in abeam and building to a tormented mountain beneath the cliffs.

Up to this point we had been blessed in this archipelago of life. We had sat in the Atlantic swell off Barra and heard the seals moan as the sun went black. We had watched the pulsing knots of clouds forming and reforming like dreams across the sandscapes of Eriskay and sat downwind a paddle's length from the otter, laying on his back, crunching eels, laughing in the windy blue. Up to this point, but no further.

We turned that corner low to the deck like famished hunters. We could not afford to lose, to have the paddle snatched from our hands, to go under. We all pulled alone and the sea made a white gash in us, cut us up like chum and scattered us upon the water. Reflected waves at the base of the cliff formed a wall of water that span us like tops, threatened to tangle us upon the rocks, to break us with one flick of the wave-flukes. In difficulty we heaved on the blades through the gray sets and the flying scurf, unobserved, unobserving, part of it now, breathing salt, full body thinking "yaw and pitch and roll," anticipating, a world reduced to pulsating and rotating, to bending and not breaking.

And then when I could not stop, I stopped, pulled up as if by a storm anchor. In the middle of the storm something very still. Something calm beneath the storm. Maybe nothing. But I could not turn the kayak to see and I could not stop. Hand over hand we hauled across a mile of water to the next headland and the garden pools of oarweed, rafted up like Technicolor scoter and watched as the last of us struggled in.

"Did you see it?" she said as she pulled in. "Did you see it! It came...right alongside me, all the way down the boat. I couldn't turn and was paddling backward, just lost it completely and I turned into the waves and one fin slid by and then the other fin followed it...one great big fish, up one side and down

the other, about four, maybe five feet between the dorsal and the tail and the trailing edge was...ragged like it was...unravelling..."

Sure, some of us had felt it and some of us had seen it but it was gone and we had no time to heed it. We filtered gales through gritted teeth and bled sea water a few more hours, skerry hopping, trawling the last few glaucous miles in silence. We beached and stood in the shallows by the Lochboisdale Hotel drinking whisky, then migrated to the bar and shed successive layers, dissolved in warmth. A basking shark most probably and we named the headland "Shark Point" and joked "You're going to need a bigger boat." The color of its dorsal fin, the height, its exact relation to the tail became our conversation. Whether the substantial dimensions of it were in the head or not and the size, four, maybe five feet between tail and ragged dorsal led to endless speculation. An islander said he had counted seven of them off the Monach Islands earlier that month, vacuuming up the plankton in lazy strips like some silent, interplanetary voyager from the Palaeozoic, trawling the living waters for three hundred million years, harvesting and swimming, outliving Geddes and Maxwell, returning, going.

We talked and talked and lost all sense of time until at last this thing we could not with certainty know or name became our tutelary animal, our hope, the charm we carry with us. You cannot capture it in your laboratories of light. I cannot convey the pull of this dark matter, slid beneath our keels unbidden, the wanderer at the bottom of the western dark. The colors fade, the coned dimensions. In his wake a void full of complete unknowing, unfathomed soundings, wonderment which you cannot give to me, you are not God enough. Only the words of the Yankee prophet remain, saying "Dissect him how I may, then, I but go skin deep: I know him not, and never will."

***Jonathan Westaway***  
***First published in "Sea Kayaker",***  
***December 2003***

# *Chairman's Chat*

I'm speechless! Can't think of anything to say. So many important things are probably happening to the club, but just at the moment I can't think of one of them. The irony is that as I sit here with a blank memory and a blank screen, there pops up a message on the screen saying my computer's short of memory. Not just me then.

Errr um.....it's turned a bit cooler again hasn't it. Gosh, I'm tired. .... Just thought of something – Jo Hacking applied for a grant for equipment for our Junior Section. She only went and got it, didn't she! £5,000 to spend on boats and stuff. She's told her Dad what our younger Members want and he's off to order it – all in PINK! Hearty WELL DONE to Jo. Now the committee's tied up trying to decide what to do with all the old equipment we need to chuck out to fit the new stuff in the container. There may be more on this elsewhere in this erudite edition.

Talking of the container, moves are afoot to see if we can build an alternative route to the canal from the container – over the bank and down the slope through the trees to the tow path. This would remove the risky road crossing and the difficult negotiation of the steps down to the tow path on the far side of the bridge with the inevitable moored narrow boat right at the bottom of the steps. Things are at a very early stage – there has been a preliminary site meeting with British Waterways, Gary (pub landlord), our Rick Patterson and myself. General possibilities only were discussed. What struck me was a large branch on the back of the head half way down that slope to the tow path. No, but really, this possible re-route can be tied into a repositioning of the existing container and the possible addition of another. Gary is quite willing to consider alternative locations which may be better for all. Of course the possible need for planning permission may slow things down. I see this as a medium term project which may just possibly go ahead on the ground within the next year or two. So don't

hold your breath. (Oh and by the way, especially for Danielle and Heather, British Waterways are considering the possibility of a little quayside along the edge of the canal to make getting in a bit easier!)

And now a word of thanks to another Hacking! What a lot of work Allan has put into the Paddlepower Courses this year. Well, it's certainly paid off from what I've seen. We've had crowds down on the canal on the courses every Wednesday and now Tuesday. They've all been beavering away at the strokes and generally getting to grips with paddling. I know Allan would want me to thank Ed Lefley for bringing open canoes to the courses. These have been particularly useful to those on the DOE Scheme (otherwise known as the stripy socks brigade).

Concern was expressed that our social nights weren't the same with all these courses and paddling going on and maybe the crowds had something to do with it as well. Well, I don't see how we, as an active canoe club, can argue against the paddling now being done on our social night. 'Twas ever thus as the nights get lighter, more members paddle on our social/training night. Maybe it was the early quietness till nearly nine o'clock and then the influx of hearty paddlers off the canal that was a bit upsetting or unnerving. That brings us to the change of our social night from Wednesday to Tuesday. I think the few weeks since the change have shown that this is working very well. The great numbers can now expand over the whole pub rather than be crowded into the dining room and we don't have to compete with the Quiz Night with its own crowds and noise. Don't forget we NOW MEET ON TUESDAY NIGHTS, not Wednesday.

**IF YOU HAVE ANY OPINIONS ON OUR CLUB'S SOCIAL/TRAINING NIGHT PLEASE LET ME AND/OR ANOTHER COMMITTEE MEMBER KNOW. It's**

important that all members' views are represented on our Committee.

website but I can't remember which heading it's under.

Lastly, an apology from me for how the change of social night was rushed through with very little notice to most Members. Sorry! An explanation is on the Forum of our

**Terry Maddock**  
*chairman@ribblecanooclub.co.uk*

## ***West Tanfield Camp***

### ***27th - 29th June***

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

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

**Brian Woodhouse**

## ***Freestyle Weekend***

### ***5th - 6th July***

I am arranging a freestyle / paddling weekend at Teesside White Water Course. Open to everyone. Note: there will be no specific coaching arranged for the weekend, it's a come and do it session. Course running time is:- 9:15 – 15:15hrs on Saturday and 10:00 – 16:00hrs on Sunday.

Tide height is 0.5 & 0.6m respectively. Please note that this means 'Acid Drop' will be formed and the course will be of a 'technical' level below 'Happy Eater'. Cost to paddle each day is Adults £8.50, Concessions £6.50, Juniors £5.00.

Accommodation is available and I have booked a log cabin for Saturday Night which will hold up to 8 people, the cost for the cabin is around £15 per person and is first come

first served, however I may be able to book another cabin if numbers warrant it. Alternative accommodation is available on the camp site next to the course, this would need to be booked directly with the site:- White Water Caravan Club site 01642 634880 – they do take tents & non-members.

Note: paddlers should be of 3 star ability and able to roll and juniors must be signed in by a responsible adult.

Please contact me if you want cabin accommodation, no need to get in touch if you are only coming for a day or camping.

**Mark Dillon**

# ***Rhosneigr Surf Camp***

## ***1st – 3rd August***

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

One of the few things that you can do in a kayak that beats surfing a glassy green wave on a fast river is surfing down the face of a glassy green wave on the sea – especially if the sun's shining. Every year we have a weekend camp at Rhosneigr on Anglesey. The idea is to pack in as much surfing as possible and have a generally sociable weekend. We don't always get brilliant surf, but there are other attractions – seal spotting around some of the offshore islands, beach games, kite flying, beer and barbecues - whatever.

If you've not surfed before this is a good opportunity to learn. As long as you have reasonable control of your boat and are prepared to swim a bit you should have fun – the D'ribbler award was won one year on the basis of an afternoon at Rhosneigr – stand up Michael Moul. A playboat with a planing hull is ideal, but the club's Rotobats work very well too.

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

# ***Lake District Camp Update***

## ***15th – 17th August***

The Lakes summer camp on the weekend 16/17th August was planned to be at Low Wray on Windermere, however a lack of interest and a possibility of better facilities at Coniston means we are now planning to go to Coniston for the weekend instead.

What better facilities I hear you cry. It has still to be confirmed but it seems likely that a local youth group will have an area of the site

reserved for them, complete with mess tents and a trailer load of open canoes. They are not there at weekends and there is the possibility that we will be able to use the canoes and the mess tents for our group. For any further info please contact me.

***Allan Hacking***

# PADDLE ROUND THE FYLDE COAST

A circumnavigation of the Fylde Coast of 7 trips during 2008.

Date	Location	Dist (km)	Details
Sat 7 <sup>th</sup> June	Fleetwood to Glasson Dock	19	Sea kayaks preferred but use GP if weather and experience allows
Sun 15 <sup>th</sup> June	Glasson Dock to Garstang	17	Portages for first part, suitable for all
Sat 28 <sup>th</sup> June	Garstang to Billsborrow	8 (x2 if return)	Pubs at start and finish. Suitable for all
Sat 5 <sup>th</sup> July	Billsborrow to Preston	15	Suitable for all
TBA	Preston to Lytham	18	Millennium Link followed by Ribble Estuary. Suitable for all
TBA	Lytham to Starr Gate	10	Sea kayaks preferred but use GP if weather and experience allows
TBA	Starr Gate to Fleetwood	20	Definitely Sea Kayaks only
<b>Total Distance</b>		<b>107</b>	

This challenge is open to all members of OAG and Ribble Canoe Club. The journey takes us past both clubs' meeting places and is an ideal event for two local clubs to do some paddling together.

Consent forms and details of each trip will be sent out by email prior to each leg. Consent will be required for all under 18's.

If interested, contact Mark Jackson preferably by email

# ***Ribble CC Library***

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

## ***Technique:***

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

## ***Guidebooks:***

English White Water  
 Scottish White Water  
 White Water Lake District  
 An Atlas of the English Lakes  
 Canal Companion: Cheshire Ring  
 Anglesey Sea Paddling

Welsh Sea Kayaking

## ***General:***

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

## ***Expeditions:***

Travels with a Kayak  
*Whit Descher*  
 On Celtic Tides  
*Chris Duff*  
 Blazing Paddles  
*Brian Wilson*  
 Dancing with Waves  
*Brian Wilson*  
 Paddling to Jerusalem  
*David Aaronovitch*  
 The Last River  
*Todd Balf*  
 Paddle to the Arctic  
*Don Starkey*  
 Canoeing across Canada  
*Gary & Joanie McGuffin*  
 The Canoe Boys  
*Sir Alastair Dunnett*  
 Odyssey among the Inuit  
*Jonathan Waterman*  
 Barbed Wire & Babushkas  
*Paul Grogan*  
  
**Videos:**  
 Liffey Descent  
 Deliverance (18)  
 Extreme Sports Canoeing

A Taste of White Water

Wicked Water 2

Drill Time

Destination Nowhere

Path of the Paddle: Doubles Whitewater

## ***DVDs:***

Tony Morgan in the Grand Canyon  
 LVM Lunch Video Magazine  
 Ribble Newsletters (CD)  
 Doubleyouess  
 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  
 My Tartan Adventure (VCD)  
*Ribble Canoe Club, Scotland 2007*  
 The 7 Rivers Expedition  
 Locks and Quays  
*Featuring Ribble Canoe Club*  
 The Politics Show  
*Featuring Ribble Canoe Club*  
 🌞 Open Canoeing  
*Reg Blomfield*  
 🌞 EJ's Rolling and Bracing

# ***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
May 30 <sup>th</sup>	Paddle Power	Tom Byrne	Mark Bamber	Peter Jones
June 6 <sup>th</sup>	Rolling Course	Bob Smith	Grahame Coles	Alison Nelson
June 13 <sup>th</sup>	Rolling Course	Bob Smith	Mark Loftus	Brian Woodhouse
June 20 <sup>th</sup>	Rolling Course	Bob Smith	Mark Green	Martin Stockdale
June 27 <sup>th</sup>	Paddle Power	Tom Byrne	John Kington	Adam Fielder

**Please note new prices for pool sessions:**

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

Please book in advance for the Paddle Power sessions and Rolling Course by phoning the named contact.

## ***New Quartermaster***

As the newly appointed Quartermaster for the club, I would like to take this opportunity to ask for any club boats or kit that members have in their possession to be returned to the H&D so that a full stocktake and re-marking exercise can be completed as soon as possible.

The system for booking out kit for trips will remain roughly the same as before, in that members must ring me between 6pm and 9pm on a Monday. Arrangements for collection

and return of boats/kit can then be made. Boats can be used at the H&D on a Tuesday on a “first come first served” basis as before, but if you want to reserve a particular boat for a Tuesday paddle, then please ring me as above and I will ensure it is available for you.

Many thanks for your co-operation.

***Albert Risely***

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

### **Apologies**

Sorry this newsletter is late, I'd like to blame it on external influences or even on Terry for being late with his contributions (as usual), but I'm afraid it was all my fault. Back to normal next issue!

### **Dates and deadlines**

The next committee meeting will be on July 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00pm at the Hand & Dagger. The next newsletter will be published on July 16<sup>th</sup>. All submissions to me by Saturday July 14<sup>th</sup> at the latest please.

***Martin Stockdale***





# CALENDAR

NOTE: Last minute trips are often arranged on the forum on the website ([www.ribblecanoeclub.co.uk](http://www.ribblecanoeclub.co.uk)), at the Hand & Dagger on Wednesdays or at Fulwood on Fridays. 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

### June

7/8 *Youth Freestyle*  
*Teesside W W Centre*  
*Stockton on Tees*  
*Allan Hacking*

7/8 BCU NW Paddle w/e, incl.  
Coaching Updates  
Anderton Centre, Horwich  
[www.bacunw.co.uk](http://www.bacunw.co.uk)

7/8 Dam Release  
R. Washburn

7/8 Slalom Div 3/4  
Sowerby Bridge

14/15 Slalom Div 3/4  
R. Trent  
Stone, Staffordshire

15 **Paddlepower**  
**Coniston**  
**for those on Paddlepower course**  
**Allan Hacking**

15 *Flat Water*  
*Llangollen Canal (incl. aqueduct)*  
*Tom Byrne*

18 Dam Release  
R. Washburn

28/29 **Family Camp**  
**R. Ure**  
**Slenningford Mill, West Tanfield**  
**Brian Woodhouse**

28/29 *Sea Paddle*  
*3 Star level of competence*  
*Wales (probably)*  
*Andy Dowe*

### July

5/6 *Freestyle W/E*  
*Teesside W W Centre*  
*Stockton on Tees*  
*Mark Dillon*

6 **Beginners' Trip**  
**Rothay/Brathay/W'mere**  
**Waterhead, Ambleside**  
**Terry Maddock**

6 Demo Day  
Brookbank  
Stockport Water Centre  
[www.brookbankcanoes.co.uk](http://www.brookbankcanoes.co.uk)

20 *Flat Water*  
*Derwent Water*  
*Tom Byrne*

### Aug

2/3 **Family Camp**  
**Surf, Tide Race, Sea**  
**Rhosneigr, Anglesey**  
**John Kington**

9/10 *Sea Paddle*  
*3 Star level of competence*  
*Wales (probably)*  
*Andy Dowe*

15/17 **Family Camp**  
**Coniston (note change)**  
**Coniston Hall Park**  
**Allan Hacking**

17 *Flat Water*  
*Trent Mersey Canal*  
*(incl. Anderton Lift)*  
*Tom Byrne*

14-17 River Festival  
Llandysul, Carmathernshire  
incl. Training, Div 3/4 slalom, Fun  
Day  
[www.llandysul-paddlers.org.uk](http://www.llandysul-paddlers.org.uk)

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.