

TALES FROM THE RIVERBANK



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BAE SYSTEMS

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2004

The Greta



16th November 2003

It was a bleak day but with some sunlight poking through the clouds when Helen, Tom, John, Steve, Ian and I went to the Greta. We had met at Fulwood leisure centre for 9:00am and were waiting for Steve to show up. When he arrived, he said that he wasn't sure what the level was going to be like. Tom was trying to convince us how much better Teesside would be but we told him it was too far away. In the end we went to the Greta.

We got there about 1½ hrs later. The level wasn't high but it was run-able. Unfortunately, Helen had brought her sister Fiona with her. We had to threaten to drop her in the water to stop her from bothering us (even that didn't work for long).



We got on the water and had a chat with Steve. We were told to find a 'buddy'. I chose Tom, Helen chose Steve, and John chose Ian.

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Under the bridge where we got in was a brilliant spot for tail squirts. Tom and I were there for ages!!

When we eventually set off, we had to paddle on flat water for a while. This was boring but it couldn't be helped because the water level was quite low. There were some great points to practice breaking in and out but that was about it. At last we found some white water. At the bottom of this stretch was a little beach where we had lunch. The drop had been very rocky so we were glad of the rest.

After lunch, Tom and I got back on the water and tried to play in the river while the rest were getting ready. There wasn't anything much so we carried on. Unfortunately, at this point, I lost one of my contact lenses. Luckily I found it and put it back in. This was just before a great drop which had some brilliant play spots.



There was a group behind us. When we were playing on this next drop, I could only half see so failed to notice one of the other canoes. We hit each other but managed to survive. I ended up being knocked off the wave I was trying to play on. Oh well.

We carried on along the river and found a little chute which we had to go down. Unfortunately, the water level was so low that we had to scrape through the chute. Then the stretch below was just a constant struggle to get down because it was so rocky. We eventually all got down and carried on.



Later, we saw the main road way above us. We went under a bridge and ended up playing in a wave below it. This was very enjoyable (even for Tom, who had to roll!) but we had to carry on. Near the end, we found a very friendly weir. It was like the diagonal weir on the Washburn but much friendlier. This was the last drop (if it could have been called a drop) before the get out.

It had been a very enjoyable but tiring trip, and I was glad to get out of my canoe.

Daniel Stockdale

The Greta is a great walker's river (see White Water Walkers later on in this issue). The old disused railway line which runs along the valley has been converted into a very enjoyable – and completely flat! – footpath, which crosses the river on old iron girder bridges at several places and offers almost continuous views of the paddlers on the river below.

The get-out is also excellent from a non-paddler point of view: plenty of parking, a cycle shop to have a nosey around (the sea-kayaking shop is unfortunately closed on a Sunday), and best of all a very cheap jet wash so you can give the car a quick rinse down to get rid of all that nasty muddy river water!

It's a shame the paddlers have to climb up a steep muddy bank to get to the car park, but that's their problem not ours.

Martin Stockdale



***Just Popping Out To The
Ribble Canoe Club
Annual General Meeting***

Thursday 26th February 2004

Fulwood Leisure Centre

7:30pm for 8:00pm start

Hot-Pot or Vegetarian option and sweet £2 each

Annual General Meeting

Agenda

Notice is hereby given that the Ribble Canoe Club AGM for the year ending 31st December 2003 will be held on Thursday 26th February 2004 at Fulwood Leisure Centre, Black Bull Lane, Fulwood at 8.00pm for the following purposes:

1. To receive the Hon. Secretary's report for the year ended 31st Dec 2003.
2. To receive the Hon. Treasurer's report and Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31st Dec 2003.
3. To receive the Hon. Chairman's report for the year ended 31st Dec 2003.
4. To elect Officers and Members to the General Committee.
5. To appoint auditors.
6. To discuss any other business.
7. To present the Club Trophies.

By order of the Committee.

Martin Stockdale, Secretary

Proposals

a) Under Item 4 the current General Committee members are:

Chairman	Terry Maddock *
Secretary	Martin Stockdale
Treasurer	John Kington
Competition Secretary	Vacant
Quartermaster	Steve Swarbrick
General Committee	Tom Byrne
	Peter Jones
	Tim Langridge
	Brian Woodhouse
Co-opted during 2003	Jacky Draper
	Maria Parkes

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

The General Committee propose the following new committee members:

Jacky Draper
Mark Loftus
Maria Parkes
Clive Robinson

AGM - Additional Information

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

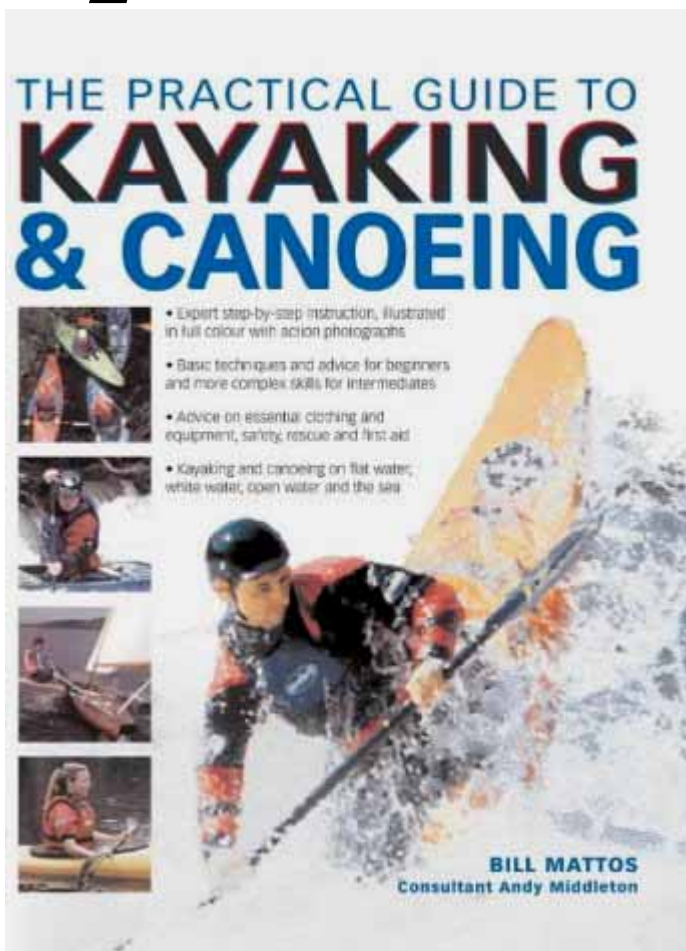
Please arrive early (7.30) so that the AGM can start at 8.00pm prompt. Supper will be provided consisting of Hot-Pot (or vegetarian option) + sweet at a subsidised cost of £2.00 per head.

Orders for Club Sweatshirts and T-shirts etc can be taken on the night, so bring your cheque book. See Steve Wilkinson to take your order.

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!

Special Offer!



We've managed to get hold of a limited number of copies of 'The Practical Guide to Kayaking & Canoeing' at a special price for Ribble Canoe Club members.

This is one of the best general guides to all aspects of canoeing that I have ever read. It was published in July 2002 and so is pretty much state of the art.

The RRP is £16.99. If you visit Amazon, you'll find it at £11.89. In the Book Clearance Centre, you'll find it (in paperback) at £4.99

We've managed to shave a little bit more off that price, so while stocks last it's available through me for only £4.50!

Highly recommended for all our beginners, I suspect these will go fast so please get in touch quickly if you want a copy.

Martin Stockdale

Friends of Andy Nicoll



Many club members will have read with sadness about Captain Andy Nicoll, who was tragically killed in a helicopter crash just before Christmas.

Andy competed for Great Britain in C1 and C2 slalom, and was European C1 freestyle champion in 1998. He was getting ready to depart for Australia to continue his training for the 2004 Olympics, when he and his co-pilot were killed during a routine flight when their helicopter crashed in Londonderry on December 22nd.

As a tribute to Andy's life and love of canoeing, a friend of Andy's, Nicola Barnfather, is hoping to get a group of his friends and colleagues together to take part in the Devizes to Westminster race this Easter. Nicola lives in Preston and is asking Ribble Canoe Club to give her whatever help we can to help her to achieve this goal.

Nicola has very little paddling experience, and fully appreciates the enormity of the task she is setting herself. By the time you read this Nicola will be taking part in our beginner's course: however, this is only just the start of the training she needs.



I'm calling on all members of Ribble Canoe Club to please give Nicola as much help as you possibly can. She is obviously going to need people to give her a 'crash course' in long-distance river paddling. She's also going to need at least some experience on white water. In addition, she is going to have to get in a lot of long distance training, for which she is going to need people to give her company and encouragement. Finally, she would benefit greatly from advice from anybody who has paddled the Devizes to Westminster race (or similar long distance trips) in the past.

So, if you feel you can help Nicola in any way or at any time, please get in touch with me and I will put you in contact with her. If we can get a small group together to work as a team to help her, so much the better. Any help at all will be gratefully received.

Martin Stockdale

Clackamas River



The view when descending into Portland, Oregon - evening sun illuminating snow capped volcanic peaks of Hood, Rainier, St Helens and the rest - has to be the best welcome you can get to a new city. The second best was Rick waiting with a car and a raging thirst that was soon being satisfied on a late night tour of the 21st neighbourhood. Next day was spent driving back up the river gorge that the plane descends to reach PDX airport. Change of light, change of scenery it was no less dramatic, lots to see between the roadside waterfalls and the Bonneville dam, then a hike up Beacon Rock to use some calories generated by the first of many American breakfasts.

This is one of many easy sections of the mighty 'Clack', the hardest rapid is right by the put in, a long white train of steep standing waves with a playhole half way down.

Putting on at the McIvor boat ramp gives you little time to warm up, but with the temperature in the 70's and the sun out it doesn't feel such a big deal. Unless it's your second time in a canoe and your first on moving water, hello Judy.

Rick and Judy were starting their open boat period; Rick had paddled kayak and a bit of tandem and was conveying an air of calm competence on the outside, nobody thought to

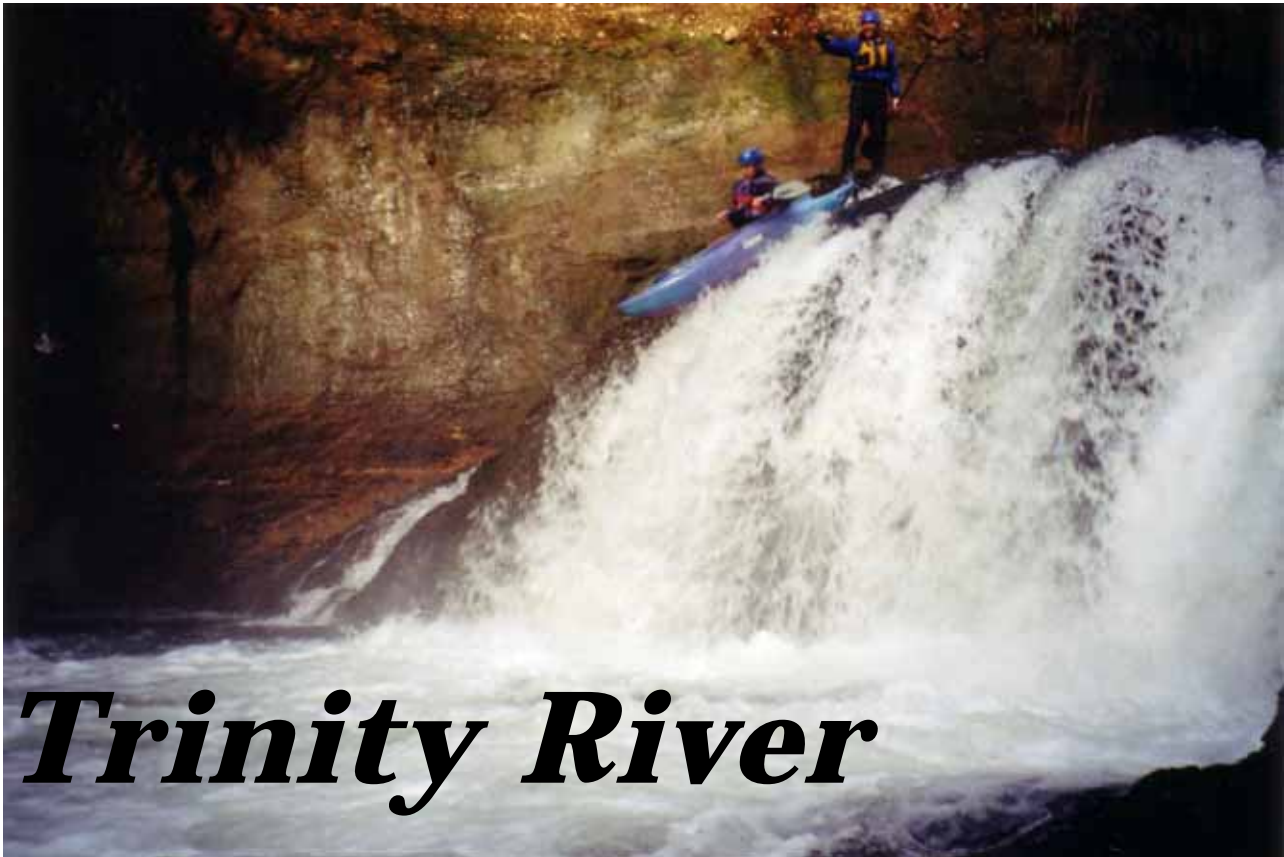
look inside. This then made me the 'expert', and the job description contained the phrase "you go first, and for Christ's sake make it look simple".

So off I paddled, wheeling the big 15ft Coleman canoe into the flow, ready to prove to Judy this rapid was not to be feared, a mere hydraulic optical illusion. Whether it was the sliding side to side, on the seat designed for holding wide American family man bottoms, or the Herculean effort I appeared to need to re navigate the Exxon Valise to the entry, the last I saw of Judy's face it didn't look any more secure. Blundered is the word that probably summed up my descent with a small side serving of wobble, but it didn't stop me eventually arriving in the large eddy at the bottom wondering whether Judy would be having a short term fling with this game or a long and fulfilling relationship. Not to worry. I guess we've all seen it somewhere on a river, that big, half-crazy yabadabadoo grin.

They see-sawed down the rapid, Judy up front, laughing like a demented figurehead.

The rest of the trip was bound to be good, and it was. The river never reaches the zenith of the first rapid, for us 'experts', the rest are merely bubbles in the bath of the man who ate the beans. What is missing in thrills is made up in the views, sweeping bends collapsing conglomerate cliffs into crystal clear water. Eagles compete for airspace with California Turkey Buzzards and I see a small black shark, honest: the shark fin turns out to belong to a sturgeon though. The scenery opens out as the take out at Barton gets nearer: an exit on the right into a busy park filled with foreign accents and barbecue smoke and those big bottoms that Coleman shaped the seat for. I'm reminded that this is a very different country. Home of the free, land of the brave.

Tony Morgan



Trinity River

Northern California

They actually live in the clouds, a bit like angels without the harp wings or the need not to swear. The cloud in question was actually fog, rolling into Arcata from the Pacific Ocean and having a rest on Fickle Hill, home of Eric, Joann, Amy and the dog. Pulling into the drive we are greeted by barking and Eric's now familiar catch phrase, nomoojinono! It was the right house. Food, drink and another new bed followed introductions.

Next day Eric had to work on his well (as in water well) to make sure the household didn't suffer an imminent drought: the operation appeared to involve the use of pick, shovel, rubber boots and a scowling face. Not having had the work ethic for years I happily accepted an offer to play out with Chuck, Jan and assorted Six River paddlers. Three miles later in a shopping mall car park we all did the introductions thing, moved boats around, and headed from the fog to the fun, the Trinity River.

It's a drive of about 100 miles from the cool coast to the hot valley gaining and losing height on the way, which plays havoc with the

airbags as the pressure changes. At the put in it was hot, very hot. This was one of the few trips I contemplated not wearing my wetsuit; everyone else wore shorts and tee shirts. I didn't need the wetsuit but it had become a comfort blanket over the years and I wasn't about to abandon my talisman in the name of common sense and comfort. The temperature outside the suit reached 104 degrees: I was a little warm inside.

At the biggest rapid, Hell Hole, a professional photographer makes a living recording the carnage, developing the picture and having it ready when you get off the river.

Someone else making a living here was the ranger: from a distance he looked like just another dreadlocked, goatee bearded kayaker pulling off cartwheels and squirts in between chatting with rafters. Closer inspection revealed a tee shirt with the immortal words "River Ranger". His job was to check that commercial outfitters had the required paperwork to be on the river. Now before you start tormenting yourself thinking he's got it made, ask yourself this: is it a proper

profession he can always rely on, does he have regular lunch breaks, does he have a pension scheme, will he ever appear on the office wall with the words 'employee of the month', has he... Yeah right, torment yourself.

A post paddle visit to the photo booth on the way home showed a number of other, similarly narcissistic people, ooh-ing and aah-ing over pictures of themselves in various stages of submersion. The pictures cleverly omitted anything other than a torrent of hydraulic mayhem: the camera may never lie but it certainly can bullshit. The deal is that you order and buy a print from their original slides which is posted to you. Each print has a description of the boat: mine simply said "Strange Dagger??" But I wanted those slides for my collection: much haggling left me with small pile of slides and an embarrassingly large hole in my wallet. A fool and his money are easily parted.

That night back at the mall we all got together for a Mexican meal, which is a really popular way to abuse your digestive system in America. It also has another function: the major reason for these restaurants appears to be as a way of disposing of hens that are so old they have the texture of string. Some enterprising person south of the border has managed to convince Americans that after a chicken has laid eggs for 10 years it can still be the basis for a nutritious and exotic meal. Not true. The good news was that Eric was smiling and the water was once more flowing on Fickle Hill, so the next day we could all return to the Trinity for seconds.

After the now compulsory American breakfast and a session watching the hummingbirds feed outside the kitchen window we loaded up for a repeat of yesterdays road trip. I travelled with Eric and had a great time listening to his tales of driving from England to Africa in a Land

Rover, milking herrings in Alaska, dodging the draft and eating moose pie.

On the road a certain traffic pattern I noticed yesterday was being repeated. All the people who lived in the hot valley would drive to the coast for a cool day and all the cool coasters would head for the heat. Today's section would be slightly easier than the section upstream but had plenty of interest, and even a turtle. It also had gold miners, they had small floating pontoons mounted with Honda-engined pumps to dredge the gravel and sluice it down a tray and hopefully collect the gold. Apparently the Trinity valley had been the home of a previous gold rush back in the days when toothless men said "Howdy pardner". Maybe I was feeling lucky, or it was the fact that my buttocks had almost combusted in the wetsuit yesterday, but today I was 'sans rubber'. This trip shared the great scenery of yesterday but the rapids were more spaced out and a little easier, but it was still hot, must be because the sun was shining.

On the way home we had 'smoothies', a large cup of fruit and ice cream that had been pulverised into a thick liquid which you then sucked through a large bore straw. Wow! The drive home follows a winding road high above Burnt Ranch Gorge: next destination of the Trinity river after our take-out. With steep, often sheer sides and grade V rapids this is the place of legends, epic rescues and broken bones, even the smoothy fails to cool your sweaty palms as you glimpse tails of white rushing between a maze of boulders, hundreds of feet below.

Evening meal was another freebie, compliments of Chuck and Jan, and scene of the previously mentioned Ravensdrool episode. Monday morning sees Eric in his work shirt and more waving goodbye. Next paddling? Back to the Umpqua.

Tony Morgan

So what are you doing...

on February 26th?

This may sound a strange question, but I hope your answer will be “going to the Ribble Canoe Club AGM.”

Many people in the club don't seem to realise that the AGM is anything very important. Indeed, I suspect a lot of people think it's something that the Committee do which has nothing to do with them.

Well, that's a long way from the truth! The AGM of this, or indeed any club, is intended to be an annual meeting of ALL the club members. It's the time when the Committee of the club tell the members what's been happening in the last year, what things they would like to have happen in the next year, and how much money the club has (or hasn't!) got.

In addition, it's the time when you, the club, vote for the members of the Committee. The Committee may propose (or even bully!) club members to join the Committee, but only you, the club members, have the right to formally approve the members of the Committee.

There are certain decisions which can only be made by an AGM, not by the committee alone – for example the raising of membership fees.

It's also important to realise that an AGM cannot take place unless it is quorate. This isn't anything to do with Austin Allegro steering wheels, but means that there must be at least a certain number of members of the club present before the AGM can take place.

Last year's AGM was only just quorate: that means that out of a membership of 250, only 30 people turned up to the AGM.

Once the formal business of the AGM is complete, the club trophies are presented, including the highly sought after d'Ribbler trophy for unplanned departure of paddler from craft (swims). The recipient of this trophy is a closely guarded secret until the night!

Finally, there is a hotpot and apple pie supper provided at the end to help you recover your strength. There is a nominal charge of £2 per person for this gastronomic delight, but the price is heavily subsidised by the club.

So mark Thursday 26th February in your diary right now and make every effort to attend. You know it makes sense!

Martin Stockdale

***Sweatshirts, polo shirts, rugby shirts,
T shirts and other items of clothing with
the new embroidered
Club logo can be
obtained from :***



155 Shakespeare Street, Southport, PR8 5AN
Tel / Fax: 01704 501818



Reindeer Ahoy!

*Sunday
14th December
2003*

Paddlers: Chris, Janet, Tim, Clive, Janet, Ian, Nick, Sam, Nick, Eileen, Helen, Alan, Lesley, Joanne and Stephanie – not forgetting Becky.

(Joined later, for the easy bit, by Tom, Robert, Steve, Bev, Mark, Barbara and Fiona).



As the last of us arrived in the car park at the Top Lock pub at Wheelton a couple of

fishermen turned up and, overwhelmed by our superior numbers, volunteered to fish below the locks to keep out of our way; very gracious of them and quite wise.

The get in was by the top lock in a flight of seven. Luckily someone had left the lock gates open offering us a longish stretch of fairly easy access. Even with this extra space it took a while before we were all under way, partly because of the large numbers but also because of the usual problems associated with cold fingers and spray decks.

A few of us had chosen to adopt seasonal headgear (and in one case, a red nose) which gave our party a festive look and caused some amusement to folk using the tow path. One of those Christmas accidents, which seldom gets

a mention and to my knowledge has never featured large in an episode of Casualty, is that Rudolf is likely to get his antlers tangled in low branches if he fails to pay sufficient attention! Of course, it would have helped if the Santa sitting in the back of the boat had said something sooner.



At one point Nick and Sam had to turn their boat round to go in search of Becky who had been happily trotting along the towpath until she lost sight of them; they called to her but, being deaf in one ear, she only heard the echo and headed off in the wrong direction.

Mallards are amazingly well camouflaged at this time of year, we discovered. As we neared one embankment all the stones among the trees suddenly grew two orange legs and waddled off quacking. We also came across a surprisingly large number of geese of various makes, none of which was aggressive but all of which were noisy but, disappointingly, not a-laying.

We paddled as far as the M65 bridge where we rested for a little while before setting off back towards our curry. Some of us sang a few choruses of Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer as we paddled – well, it passed the time.

For the first time we actually saw a fisherman who had caught something. Four chaps were standing on the edge of the canal photographing a largish pike with a mobile phone. (Well I know what I mean but Chris suggested it must be one of those new, underwater, phones).

Someone had obviously taken a narrowboat down through the locks while we had been paddling as the top lock was now closed. This restricted the space for us all to get out though people tend to help each other and we were soon all on dry land once more.



Once we were in the car park and getting changed and packed up Tom and Robert arrived. Robert soon began complaining about feeling cold; no sympathy from any of us I can assure you, after all we were the ones standing in our underwear suffering the icy blast. Steve and Bev arrived soon after and it wasn't long before we were all inside and thinking about ordering curries. The landlord had reserved the upstairs room for us, which was really nice as it offered some degree of comfort while we ate even if the tables were all different heights. No smoke either which is always a bonus in a pub. The food was a while coming but there were over twenty of us and only one chef and we all felt fairly well stuffed afterwards – of course my curry wasn't quite as big as everyone else's on account of some of it ending up down Ian's trouser leg thanks to a rather shaky handed waiter. Never mind it was quite a mild curry – not too hot. I wonder what reindeer balti would taste like?

Janet Porter

Ribble CC Library

The book and video library is open to all club members, young or old, new or long-standing. I take the library to the Hand & Dagger most Wednesday nights, and if you can't get there and want a book just give me a ring or email me. Donations of books or videos are always welcome.

If you read a book and liked (or loathed) it let me know and I'll print your comments.

Technique books:

General technique

BCU Canoe and Kayak Handbook

Franco Ferrero

The Practical Guide to Kayaking and Canoeing

Bill Mattos, Andy Middleton

See our special offer elsewhere in the newsletter!

Canoeing & Kayaking

Marcus Bailie

Kayak

William (not Bill) Nealy

Kayaking and Playboating

The Playboater's Handbook

Ken Whiting

Open Canoeing

Path of the Paddle: An Illustrated Guide to the Art of Canoeing

Bill Mason, Paul Mason

Canoeing

Laurie Gullion

Open Canoe Technique

Nigel Foster

Sea Kayaking

Sea Kayak Navigation

Franco Ferrero

Rolling

The Bombproof Roll and Beyond!

Paul Dutky

Safety

White Water Safety & Rescue

Franco Ferrero

Guidebooks:

English White Water

Franco Ferrero

Are there any of this guy's books we haven't got?

Scottish White Water

Andy Jackson

White Water Lake District

Stuart Miller

An Atlas of the English Lakes

John Parker

Expeditions:

Blazing Paddles: A Scottish Coastal Oddysey

Brian Wilson

Dancing with Waves: Around Ireland by Kayak

Brian Wilson

Paddling to Jerusalem

David Aaronovitch

The Last River

Todd Balf

Paddle to the Arctic

Don Starkey

Canoeing across Canada

Gary & Joanie McGuffin

General:

The Rough Guide to Weather

Robert Henson

The Liquid Locomotive

John Long (ed)

Many Rivers to Run

Dave Manby, donated by Andy Dowe

Signed by Dave Manby so might be worth something!

Videos / DVDs

LVM Lunch Video Magazine (DVD)

Donated by Tom Kington

Liffey Descent (V)

Donated by Tony Moxham

Deliverance (V)

BBFC rated 18.

Extreme Sports Canoeing (V)

Donated by Terry Maddock

A Taste of White Water (V)

Donated by Brian Woodhouse

Tewitfield



Sunday 16th November, 2003

Paddlers: - Tom, Hazel, Chris, Janet, Tony, Alan, Lesley, Joanne and Stephanie.

Following several days of stormy weather the previous week the nine of us set off this morning, from alongside the lock-keeper's cottage, in the most unexpected calm and sunny weather. We were accompanied all day by clear blue skies, the low November sunshine casting a golden glow through the autumn colours. The reflections on the unruffled water of the canal were truly wonderful and at times we caught sight of the mountains of the southern Lakes.

Partly due to the recent rain, the water at Tewitfield was crystal clear but even so an extremely large fish had managed to die there. I hadn't noticed it at first until Chris pointed out that I had backed over it with my boat whilst attempting something clever on the photography front. It began to smell a bit after that – the pong doesn't half carry! The canal at this point is very shallow in places and it is necessary to stick to the middle of the channel to avoid paddles hitting the bottom. At times it was a bit uncomfortable heading directly into the sun but no one complained – we flat water paddlers have learned never to comment on the weather until the end of a

trip; especially if that weather happens to be good.



We set off this morning with no very clear idea of where we were going to stop for our lunch. Tony had decided he didn't want to go much further than the motorway and the rest of us weren't quite sure which side of Carnforth we would take our break. Tom had suggested the slipway in the town but there were a few chaps fishing there and it would have meant eating our dinner overlooking a pub car park. We finally found a spot just beyond the marina but before the main road begins its run alongside the canal. Getting out here and finding somewhere cleanish to sit was a bit of a challenge thanks to the local dog population but somehow we managed.

We'd only been out of the kayaks for a few minutes when Tony turned up. (Either he's getting faster or we were all a bit slow – probably a bit of each).



There were lots of cyclists and dog walkers out on the towpath today and a border collie spent a happy half hour trying to round us all

up as we began our paddle homewards. We had some of our best views on the journey north and feel we must express our heartfelt thanks to those fine people who cut back the hedges and tidy up the reeds and rushes annually as without them we would only have had each other to look at. The views over the mountains prompted some to talk of climbing Ben Nevis next Easter – they even made it sound like fun.

We tend to find that fewer people come on our canal trips than on the lakes and while it's true that excitement seldom happens on these excursions (and thankfully today was no exception) I can't help feeling that folk have missed a real treat this time.

Janet Porter

White Water Walkers

Following the success of the flat water (sorry, touring) group within the club, and the resurgence of interest in white-water paddling over the winter, I'm pleased to announce the formation of a new group: the White-Water Walkers.

The founder members of this group are me, Mark James and Fiona James. Barbara James is also a part-time member, and a number of other members have expressed an interest.

The purpose of this group is to develop white-water paddling as a spectator sport.

A typical trip for the white-water walkers (the WWWs) consists of:

- Driving to the beginning (the chuck-in, in WWW speak) of a white-water river trip.
- Chucking the poor, foolish, misguided canoeists into the water.
- Alternately driving in our nice warm cars along the side of the river, and taking a gentle stroll along the river bank (as conditions allow).
- Upon reaching the end of the trip (the drag-out, in WWW speak), dragging the poor, foolish, misguided, and by now very

cold, wet and miserable canoeist from the water.

- Standing around discussing the weather, the views and each other's cars while the canoeists extricate themselves from their unpleasantly wet and dirty clothing and attempt to transform themselves back into human beings.
- Driving the canoeists back home again.

During the course of the trip, the WWWs partake in a variety of enjoyable activities, such as:

- Taking photographs of the poor, foolish... (etc) canoeists when they are at their most wet and miserable.
- Unfortunately missing the photograph of the canoeist who's just managed to perform a perfect triple cart-wheel with pas-de-deux (sorry, I was just looking at that bird in the tree over there).
- Always knowing exactly what the canoeist has done wrong to cause his current predicament, and being able to advise exactly how it should have been done.
- Being ready with a throw-line at exactly the wrong place, so as to be able to stand

and watch the carnage without actually having to help in any way.

The WWWs are always willing to welcome new members into our group. So, if you have a relative or friend who is deranged enough to

want to spoil a nice walk along the river by actually get into the water in a boat, why not come and join us!

Martin Stockdale

Chairman's Chat

So the season of goodwill has passed. Even so, let me wish all Club Members a happy and fulfilling New Year.

It didn't start too well weather wise – the Coniston New Year barn party was a little subdued compared to past events. This may have been due to the steady sleet or perhaps we were missing Charis and Jenny's cocktails of past New Years. It was good to have new faces there for the New Year and I hope that the promise of wilder parties in future will bring Alan Hacking and his daughters Joanne and Stephanie back next year. All eight of us braving the weather give heartfelt thanks to Trevor Bayliss for inventing the wind-up radio which performed so well to keep spirits high after Steve and Bev's disc player didn't want to interface (it wouldn't plug in!) with the car battery. Even the free firework displays over Coniston Water which usually herald the New Year were muted, many having been cancelled due to the weather. The walk on New Years Day didn't go to plan either. The party was split by 15cm (6") slushy snow, a blocked road and a confused car park. Some of us enjoyed a circuit of Tarn Howes whilst the others had a walk alongside Coniston Water, although both parties seem to have found pubs/cafes before or after. No, look, we did enjoy it and thanks to Steve and Bev for organising it – just arrange better weather next year.

The Christmas Do at Ferrari's seems a long time ago now, but it went so well that before he left, Ian McCrerie booked the same venue for next year. Many thanks to Ian and Anne for organising things so well again. Mark your new calendars for the Club's next Christmas Do on Saturday 11 December 2004

and see if we can get even more than the 32 members who came this year.

We seem to be getting lots of paddlers on our trips, which is what it's all about – so that must be good. We are approaching the time of year when access to rivers starts to reduce as the fishermen get their turn (now didn't I put that politely). Halton closes to us at the end of this month (January) and the Crake, Leven and Ure close at the end of March with limited access returning on the Ure in June. So the calendar will start to depend more on dam releases, slalom, canoeing centres and of course the sea (including estuaries). They haven't yet found a way of keeping us off the sea and it has the advantage of the water level being unaffected by rainfall (but watch out for global warming, melting ice caps etc).

Canoeing is a seasonal activity (not a lot of people know that). Whilst canoeing as a generic sport takes place the year round, its different disciplines have well defined seasons. There has to be an exception to the rule of course which in this case is Tom's Flat Water Canoeing which does indeed paddle throughout the year. White water touring is a winter sport when access to rivers is available and water levels tend to be higher. White water is also available throughout the year at water-controlled sites such as Teesside, Tryweryn, Washburn and Holme Pierpoint. Non-controlled sites such as Burrs are available when water levels are high enough. Sea canoeing tends to be a summer sport when weather is (supposedly) better, slightly warmer and there aren't as many other options. Lack of rain isn't a problem but excess wind can be (especially when sharing a tent). Competition canoeing is split into Canoe Polo in winter (mostly in a heated

pool) and Canoe Slalom in summer. Whilst slalom is held on rivers, it is usually at a recognised site and at set times avoiding clashes with fishermen. The problem of low water levels is alleviated by choice of site and sometimes by sculpting of the site to suit low flows. Gosh! Wasn't that educational? School's out!

Check the calendar for slalom dates – the Stafford & Stone Mini Slalom will be a really good introduction to slalom canoeing for juniors and adults alike. There should be

loads of novices there and coaches to advise them. If you are interested ask Jacky or myself or anyone else about it. It could make this summer a milestone in your life. (That's milestone – not millstone). I intend to go along and judge so if you see me in the Hand and Dagger on a Wednesday night, a chat and buying me a drink could stand you in good stead!

Terry Maddock
chairman@ribblecanooclub.co.uk

For Sale

No 'For Sale' adverts this month: if you've got anything to sell please let me know and I'll put an advert in here: even better, bring it

along to the AGM on February 26th and see if you can sell it there and then!

Editor's bit

Dates and deadlines

The next committee meeting will be on March 2nd at 7:30 at the Hand & Dagger. The next newsletter will be published on March 16th. All submissions to me by Saturday March 13th at the latest please.

phantasmogorical jiggery-pokery which means that emails sent to these rather impressive addresses will automatically be forwarded to our real email address.

If you already know and use our real email addresses that's fine, just carry on using it as before.

Email address

The observant amongst you will have noticed new email addresses for me and Terry. Our web-master Chris has done some

Martin Stockdale
secretary@ribblecanooclub.co.uk

And Finally

Driving alongside the river you realise that there must be a special tendon connecting your head to your steering wheel hand,

because each time you crane your neck to steal a peek at a rapid the car almost veers off the road.

Tony Morgan, about the Umpqua River – Oregon

Pool sessions

The following lists the pool sessions booked at Fulwood Leisure Centre, the contact for the courses and the lifeguard on duty for each session. All sessions are Friday 9:00pm – 10:00pm.

Special Event: Touring & Sea boat rescue, safety and rolling

The special event on February 27th is aimed at our increasingly large and enthusiastic touring and sea kayaking sections. Flat water is often seen as safe water but many people have come to realise only too late that it can be every bit as treacherous as the moving stuff – or more so!

Steve Swarbrick will be arranging this session with the support of our more experienced touring and sea paddlers. The purpose will be to give you a chance to learn about and try out the sort of rescue and safety techniques which are specifically relevant to touring.

Paddlers of any sort of touring boat are welcome: sea or touring kayak or canoe. The only rule is that no short boats are allowed!

Special Event: Slalom Training

Jacky Draper has volunteered to pull together some proper Slalom training sessions in the early part of the new year so that our competitors are raring to go at the start of the season! If you've not tried slalom before, why not come along and give it a try – it's one of the best ways of learning boat control there is! Please could all our experienced slalom competitors give Jacky as much help as possible at these sessions.

DATE	SESSION	CONTACT	LIFEGUARD
23 rd January	Beginners Course	Tom Byrne	Sara Withall
30 th January	Beginners Course	Tom Byrne	Andy Rushton
6 th February	Beginners Course	Tom Byrne	Peter Benett
13th February	Slalom training	Jacky Draper	John Kington
20 th February	Open	N/A	Steve Wilkinson
27th February	Sea/Touring Rescue	Steve Swarbrick	Terry Maddock
5th March	Slalom training	Jacky Draper	Sara Withall
12 th March	Rolling Course	Bob Smith	Andy Rushton
19 th March	Rolling Course	Bob Smith	Peter Benett
26 th March	Rolling Course	Bob Smith	John Kington
2 nd April	Open	N/A	Steve Wilkinson

Prices: Beginners Course £20 (plus club membership)

Rolling Course £15 (plus club membership)

All other sessions (Open, polo, special) £3

Please book in advance for the Beginners and Rolling Courses by phoning the named contact.



Area of Interest	Ribble Canoe Club	
	Contact	Telephone Number
Committee		
General Information		
Access Agreements		
Canoe Courses		
Instructor or Coach	✓	
Lifeguard		
Hand & Dagger Keyholder	✓	
Social Events		
Flat Water & Lake Trips		
Beginners River Trips		✓
Intermediate River Trips		✓
Advanced River Trips		✓
Sea Trips	✓	
Open Canoeing		
Canoe Surfing		
Beginners Slalom		
Advanced Slalom		
Mens Polo		
Ladies Polo		
Junior Polo		
Other		
		Andy Dowe
Rolling Course		Bob Smith
		Brian Woodhouse
Website		Chris & Janet Porter
	✓	Dave Ellison
Christmas Party		Ian McCrie
	✓	Jacky Draper
		Treasurer John Kington
Library		Secretary, Newsletter Martin Stockdale
Paddles Up competition	✓	Mick Huddleston
		Nick Pope & Sam Turner
		Peter Jones
		Phil Haworth
		Simon Cole
		Quartermaster Steve Swarbrick
	✓	Steve Wilkinson
		Chairman Terry Maddock
Training Coordinator		Calendar 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 organised trips are in **bold**.
Other Ribble CC events are in *italic*.

River information:

Burrs 0161 764 9649

www.activity-centre.freeserve.co.uk

Canolfan Tryweryn 01678 520826

www.welsh-canoeing.org.uk

Teeside Barrage 01642 678000

www.4seasons.co.uk

Washburn 07626 978654

yorkshire.bcu.org.uk/washburn.htm

Wharfe

yorkshire.bcu.org.uk/wharfe.htm

Trips / Events

January

25 **Moving Water Practice**
R. Lune, Halton, Lancaster
Tim Langridge

25 Leven Open White Water
Newby Bridge, Cumbria (£2.00)
Sten Sture (to book) 01229 582257

31 Last Day of Access
R. Lune, Halton, Lancaster

February

1 **Beginners' Trip**
R. Wenning, Bentham, N.Yorks
Terry Maddock

1 Leven Open White Water
Newby Bridge, Cumbria (£2.00)
Sten Sture (to book) 01229 582257

8 **Upper Lune White Water**
R. Lune, Tebay to R. Rawthey
Tony Morgan

15 **Flat Water Tour**
R. Derwent, York
Tom Byrne

15 **Eden White Water**
R. Eden, Lazonby, Cumbria
Steve Swarbrick

22 **Leven White Water**
Newby Bridge, Cumbria (£2.00)
Tim Langridge

26 *Annual General Meeting*
Fulwood Leisure Centre
Martin Stockdale

29 **Calder Moving Water**
R. Calder, Great Harwood
Brian Woodhouse

March

2 *Committee Meeting*
Hand & Dagger
Martin Stockdale

7 **Beginners' Trip**
R. Rothay, Rydal, Cumbria
Terry Maddock

7 Leven Open White Water
Newby Bridge, Cumbria (£2.00)
Sten Sture (to book) 01229 582257

13 *Newsletter deadline*
Martin Stockdale

14 **Crake White Water**
R. Crake, Cumbria
Steve Wilkinson

21 **Flat Water Tour**
Bassenthwaite, Cumbria
Tom Byrne

28 **Leven White Water**
Newby Bridge, Cumbria (£2.00)
Grahame Coles

28 Washburn White Water
Dam Release, nr Blubberhouses
Green Star CC

31 Last Day of Access
Rivers Crake, Ure and Leven

April

4 **Beginners' Trip**
Burrs Activity Centre, Bury
Terry Maddock

7 Washburn White Water
4.00-7.00pm, nr Blubberhouses
Norman Taylor

10-17 **Scotland Tour**
Roy Bridge, Nr Fort William
Tom Byrne

Slalom

All slalom details are taken from the calendar published at the beginning of the year: please see www.canoeslalom.co.uk for event details and to confirm dates.

January

25 Stafford & Stone Mini Slalom

February

8 **Stafford & Stone Mini Slalom**
Jacky Draper

29 Stafford & Stone Mini Slalom

March

6/7 Fairnilee Division 2 / 3 X Double
Edinburgh Canoe Club

14 Stone 3 / 4
Stafford & Stone Canoe Club
Sunday Only - No Teams

27/28 Sowerby Bridge 2 / 3 X Double
Halifax Canoe Club

April

3 / 4 Marple 3 / 4 X Double
Manchester Canoe Club

17/18 Oughtibridge 3 / 4 X Double
Sheffield Canoe Club

24/25 Matlock 2 / 3/ Open
Matlock Canoe Club