



# PPCA Newsletter

## October 2018



### Introduction

Welcome to October's Newsletter. Not a lot this month but there is a reminder of the AGM and some works at Mountbatten and Clive has an educational piece on lighthouses. Incidentally, only Clive could describe finding easy access to a public slipway as an anticlimax.

### Editorial

It's that time of year again when, after a perfect summer for paddling, small groups of paddlers get together on Saturday evenings to perform furtive rain dances in the hope of there being some water in the rivers on Sunday morning. I have a well known aversion to having bits of my anatomy frozen, dashed against rocks or scraped along a river bed but here's hoping the white water crew have as good a season as we normal people had.

Incidentally, these trips tend to be organised via the Forum rather than Facebook so please look there for details. And, yes, you can do white water in an open boat, I'm reliably informed.

Ivor Jones

Newsletter Editor

## The Committee (at time of going to print)

Committee Post	Name	Club Email	Phone Number
Club Secretary	Bob Grose	ppca@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk secretary@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk	01803 849163
Club Leader	Ian Brimacombe	leader@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk	07720 957304
Welfare Officer			
Intro Course Coordinator	Jane Hitchings	intro@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk	07837 796192
	Rebekka Stiasny		07939 328981
			Both evenings only
Chair	Ken Hamblin	chair@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk	07828 652775
Vice Chair	Mark Perry	vchair@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk	07801 310993
Assistant Club Leader	Mandy Nicholls	acleader@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk	07801 367363
Membership Secretary	Adam Coulson	membership@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk	07834 286461
Treasurer	Tony Sicklemore	treasurer@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk	01752 268295 / 07779 497577
Equipment Officer	Pete Anderson	equipment@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk	07958 694434
Publicity Officer	Jacqueline Perry	publicity@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk	07523 965748
Youth Development Officer	Vacant	youth@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk	
Club President	Joy Ashford		01752 344425

## Next Committee Meeting

Please forward any items you would like considered at the next committee meeting to [secretary@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk](mailto:secretary@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk). They will go to the secretary.

### Club AGM by Bob Grose, Secretary

The club's Annual General Meeting will take place on **Friday 26 October at Mount Batten, starting at 7pm**. Why a Friday, you may ask. Because Mount Batten will give us a free room on that day, AND because the bar will be open. With MB entering its winter opening times, neither of those things can be taken for granted.

The agenda will be issued shortly. It has no surprises -- it contains the same items that it's had for many years. However, if you wish any items to be added to the agenda, please let Ken Hamblin (our chairperson) and me know as soon as possible, so the item can be circulated to members well before the meeting. If you wish to propose changes to the club's constitution, see the excerpt from the constitution at the end of this post.

Please turn up to show your support for the club by taking part in this important democratic process.

What the constitution says about changing the constitution: "Constitutional rules shall not be generally added to or altered except upon a motion for amendment signed by not less than ten members and delivered to the chairman one month prior to the AGM. The Chairman will ensure that such proposed revised versions of the constitution will be supplied to the members no later than one week before the appropriate AGM. A motion for change will be put to the vote at the AGM, and shall be carried only on the basis of a majority in favour of change".

### Pontoon Works at Mountbatten by Adam Coulson, Membership Secretary

A message for PPCA Members from Mountbatten regarding the pontoon repairs. Please address any queries directly with Mountbatten.

To all centre user groups and members

Currently the centre is having significant structural repairs carried out on the pontoon. This means the wooden deck of the pontoon is having to be lifted to gain access to the metal structure. The contractors are carrying out various hot works including angle grinding, cutting and arc welding. This work will also leave sharp metal edges exposed until the collars are refitted and the deck is replaced. The contractors are also using a powerful arc welding set. For your safety do not look directly at the work when passing on the water. For all users safety and that of the contractors please do not walk past the work which will be fenced off from the bridge end of the pontoon. The same applies when mooring boats and dropping people off on the pontoon. Please drop off at the bridge side of the works. The next phase of the works will be carried out around the piles at the base of the bridge. When this is being done the area at the bottom of the bridge may need to be closed for short periods. In order to access the pontoon please contact reception. When possible this work will be done during the week at quiet times but is weather dependent.

Thank you

Richard Lerigo  
Bosun  
Mountbatten Centre

**PPCA**

**QUIZ  
& CURRY  
NIGHT**

**MOUNTBATTEN  
WATERSPORTS CENTRE**

**7<sup>th</sup> December 2018 7pm**

To book your place and  
make payment, contact  
Mountbatten Centre  
Reception

☎ 01752 404567

**BOOKING DEADLINE – 30<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2018**

**CHOICE OF CURRY  
WITH NAAN,  
POPADOMS, MANGO  
CHUTNEY & MINT &  
CUCUMBER RAITA**

**£9.95 PER PERSON**

**QUIZ MASTER  
PAUL HEWSON**













**FAMILY & FRIENDS  
ALL WELCOME**



## PPCA Club Clothing by Jackie Perry, Publicity Officer

A full range of customised kit in either blue or black is available to order direct from Tailored Branding via the link below

<https://hsclothing.co.uk/ppca-3/>

 £12.85 PPCA Training Top	 £12.00 PPCA Men's T-Shirt	 £10.00 PPCA Kids T-Shirt
 £12.00 PPCA Women's T-Shirt	 £12.00 PPCA Men's Polo Shirt	 £12.00 PPCA Ladies Polo Shirt
 £12.00 PPCA Beanie	 £14.00 PPCA Cap	 £25.00 PPCA Hoodie
 £50.00 PPCA Men's Softshell Jacket	 £50.00 PPCA Women's Softshell Jacket	 £34.00 PPCA Long Sleeve Running Top
 £22.00 PPCA Short Sleeve Running Top		

### A Lighthouse Weekend by Clive Ashford

The club ran a sea kayaking weekend at Penzance in May 2018 but Joy and I were unable to attend. Being the jealous type I sulked and stamped my feet and said, "I want to paddle around Penzance," so we set about gathering a few like minded people together and booked places in the Penzance Youth Hostel.

As Britain is a sea faring nation lighthouses have a special place in our national psyche. I'm pretty sure that every Plymothian has at some time stood beside Smeaton's Tower on the Hoe and gazed out to the Douglass' Tower that has stood guard on the treacherous Eddystone reef since 1822. Beacons of hope, sentinels of the deep, guardians of the reefs. Just some of the phrases used to describe these marvels of civil engineering. We didn't plan it this way but our weekend in Penzance turned into a mini lighthouse tour. I've kept a diary.

Friday 20 July 2018, Tater Du.

Tater Du is Cornwall's most recently constructed lighthouse. Being built of white concrete blocks it was opened as an automated light in 1965.

*According to the South West coast path website 'Tater Du' comes from the Cornish 'torthel du', meaning 'black loaf.'*

Just after lunch myself, Joy, Bob & Ian met at the Werry Town car park on the Penzance sea front. We paid a king's ransom to park our vehicles and launched into the western end of Mounts Bay. Cornwall boasts some marvellous coastal scenery but the stretch from Werry Town to Mousehole must count as the duller two miles of sea paddling that the county has to offer. If I was divulging this information solely with the benefit of hindsight I wouldn't mind, but having been to Werry Town on previous occasions I know exactly how expensive it is to park there and I know precisely how tedious the paddling is. A fine example of how the ageing process dulls the memory.

To save you the tedium of paddling to Mousehole with us I will instead point out some items of interest along the way. Firstly we paddled past Cartographer's Heaven, otherwise known as Newlyn. Newlyn is the home of both chart datum and ordinance datum. Let me explain. Chart datum is the lowest theoretical tidal level due to astronomical effects. (Sun and moon etc.) Nautical publications measure sea depths, drying heights and tidal ranges relative to chart datum. Ordinance datum is the average sea level and is the point from which all heights on our ordinance survey maps are measured. The National Tidal and Sea Level Facility (NTSLF) website has the following note. *The height of the benchmark (Ordinance Datum) was established over a six year period from 1915 to 1921, when visual observations of water level on a tide staff were made every 15*

Photo by Joy.



Clive, Ian and Bob approach Tater Du Lighthouse.

Photo by Ian



Joy.



minutes, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. According to NTSLF chart datum is 3.05 meters lower than ordinance datum at Newlyn. Fascinating isn't it?

We passed a disused quarry on our way to the next point of interest which was the fishing village of Mousehole, home of the Penlee Lifeboat. On Saturday 19 December 1981 the Solomon Browne, (the Penlee Lifeboat of the time), was launched to go to the aid of the MV Union Star that had suffered engine failure. Eventually both vessels were wrecked losing all hands. In total 16 people lost their lives including 8 volunteer lifeboat crew. A sombre reminder that our chosen playground can be a dangerous place and one that needs to be treated with care and respect.

The village of Mousehole is pretty enough and soon the scenery improved further as we approached the dramatic Lamorna Cove. In bygone times this valley bustled to the sound of tin streaming, two mills and a quarry, making this now sleepy little tourist harbour a one-time hive of industry.

The modern Lamorna Cove boasts a car park with easy access to a slipway. I mention this simply to remind myself how foolish we had been to launch at Werry Town.

We didn't stop at Lamorna cove; instead we rushed on to the Tater Du lighthouse. Up until now we had been

paddling in calm conditions sheltered from the force 3 NW wind, but the further we paddled the more swell we encountered. At Tater Du we put on helmets and had a little play amongst the rocks. Nothing spectacular but we were nicely entertained all the same.

We saw seals. This is Cornwall, of course we saw seals. I only mention them for the benefit of any non-paddling readers.

We paddled as far as St Loy's Cove and then retraced our paddle strokes. Once again I will help you to pass the time while we relive every dip of the paddle blade between Mousehole and Penzance. There is a plaque at Newlyn that reads:

*To the memory of Bill Best Harris 1914 – 1987  
Historian and son of Plymouth whose*

*researches indicated that the MAYFLOWER 16 – 8 – 1620 docked at the Old Quay Newlyn for water and supplies making it the last port of call in England. The water supply at Plymouth being the cause of fever and cholera in the city. Let debate begin'.*

Well, that was all very informative wasn't it? In total we paddled some 13 miles, 9 of which were enjoyable, and we saw a lighthouse, which is always good.

During the ensuing evening we were joined by Jane, Adam and Karen, making us a truly magnificent seven.

Photo by Joy.



Cave near Boscawen Point.

The present Longships Lighthouse is the second to be constructed on Carn Bras, which at 39 feet is the highest of the Longships islets. The lantern was first lit in 1873 and was automated in 1988. The tower was built by Sir James Douglass, the same engineer who built the present Eddystone Light.

To paddle around Cape Cornwall was on my sea kayaking “to do” list and Land’s End is a must for any salty paddler. With a favourable weather forecast and convenient tide times we made a plan, which was to launch at Sennen Cove, paddle around Cape Cornwall as far as Porth Ledden, make an open crossing to the Longships Lighthouse and then paddle back to the mainland at Land’s End before returning along the coast to Sennen Cove.

Our route was far more interesting, exposed and committing than yesterday’s affair, so much so that we encountered no dull moments. At Cape Cornwall there is a disused coastguard lookout that is now operated by the National Coastwatch Institution. (NCI). I copy the next sentence directly from the NCI web site. *The National Coastwatch Institution is a voluntary organisation set up in 1994 to restore a visual watch along UK shores after many small Coastguard stations closed. NCI is a registered charity managed by a board of Trustees with a Constitution agreed by the Charities Commission.* As we rounded Cape Cornwall the NCI watchman came out of his lookout and used a megaphone to ask us where we were going. Not owning a megaphone we were unable to make ourselves heard and at

the time we were unaware that the NCI use VHF channel 65 as their dedicated communications channel. We shrugged our shoulders and paddled into Porth Ledden where we had hoped to stop for lunch, but landing there wasn’t practical so we retraced our route to land on the south side of Cape Cornwall at Priest’s Cove instead. We wandered up to the NCI lookout where the watchman seemed delighted that we had taken the trouble to visit him. I was expecting to encounter an old salty dog and to hear tales of daring do and exciting adventures on the high seas, but that wasn’t what we got. The term old salty dog definitely wouldn’t apply to this particular watchman, but as he complimented us on our organisation and on our standard of equipment I decided that he was a jolly nice chap.

Lunch, a swim for some and then we re-launched. You may like to ask Bob what time it was when we got back on the water, but he won’t be able to tell you because he lost his watch sometime between going for a swim and getting

back into his boat. I believe he felt a bit ticked off. (I just know that you are now quietly imagining a quantity of truly awful time related puns but I’ve got you clocked. Thank you.)

We then amended our route to include the rocks called The Brisons, just over half a mile off shore, where we encountered the first swell of the day. Our adventurous paddlers explored between the rocks while the more sedate among us felt that keeping a bit of distance was more in keeping with our (my) ambitions for a gentle and incident free paddle. Re-united our adventurous paddlers casually informed us that they had seen

Photo by Joy.



Karen and Ian rounding Longships Lighthouse.

Photo by Joy.



Karen and Jane at The Brisons.

a sun fish. My Mum has taught me to always be gracious and never to swear, so I have to tell you that I was jolly pleased for them.

We then set off on our open crossing to the Longships Lighthouse. As we approached Longships we once again encountered swell, this time coming from more than one direction and with a few breaking waves, making for some confused waters. I decided to hide away in the relative calm inside the reef while my braver colleagues paddled around the seaward side of the lighthouse. From my stable vantage point, and in the company of a heard of seals, I was able to feel quite relaxed as I watched the others quietly encounter some rather more testing conditions. I wish to detract nothing from my companion's unquestionable expertise but I will point out that the word quietly isn't always associated with the words peaceful and calm.

Our next waypoint was Land's End. As we left Longships the sea became less confused but instead we were now subject to a south flowing tide. While there were crowds of tourists swarming around the Land's End tourist shops at the bottom of the cliffs we were very much alone, however after so much open water it was quite nice to once again find ourselves close to the land. We turned left and approached Dr Syntax's Head. The hardy explorers among us paddled through the passage that pierces the headland while the less adventurous paddled between the headland and a rock called The Peel. Both sets of paddlers had to dig in in order to make headway against the current.

Once past Dr Syntax's Head it was a gentle paddle back to Sennen Cove and a well earned ice cream.

Another 13 miles and another lighthouse.

#### Sunday 22 July 2018, The Lizard.

*The present twin tower building was first lit on August 22 1751, each tower being lit by a coal fire and bellows arrangement. In 1771 Trinity House assumed responsibility for the lights and oil superseded the coal burners in 1811. An engine room was added 1874 allowing a fog horn and electric lights to be installed. In 1903 a rotating optic with a high-powered carbon arc light was installed in the eastern tower and the western tower's lantern was removed. Eventually the carbon arc light was replaced with an electric filament lamp in 1936.*

The Lizard Lighthouse was automated in 1998.

The Lizard is the most southerly point of the British Isles and

depending

on the tide there can be strong currents running off the end. As with our Land's End trip we spent some time planning this adventure. (Time spent planning is never time wasted.) The weather forecast was favourable so we checked and then re-checked the predicted tidal currents. We agreed that a one way trip from Mullion Cove to Kennack Sands was a very realistic option so we set up our transport logistics, got ready and eventually launched into Mullion Cove.

Joy and I had paddled this route in 2016 but on that occasion the swell had forced us to keep away from the cliffs. Today the sea

Photo by Gordon McKinlay



The twin towers of The Lizard Lighthouse.

Photo by Joy.



Bob makes a splash launching through surf with Adam close by.



was nearly calm meaning that we could get in close to the shore, and what a shore it turned out to be. We nosed into caves, swished through gullies, squeezed through gaps and threaded needles in rock arches. To add to the entertainment Adam used all his veterinary training to do a very realistic impression of a swimming seal. Smiles, grins and happy faces were the order of the day but such frivolity did make for slow progress. We got as far as Pentreath Beach where we made a surf landing for lunch and a swim. (Some of us made a better job of the surf landing than others.)

After lunch we re-launched through the surf. The trouble with launching through surf is that at some stage you get to the point where the waves are just about to break. I can inform you that this is a very wet place to be but please don't be concerned. Oh, you weren't.

Photo by Joy.



Bob threading a needle through a rock arch.

Once safely afloat I suggested that we did a lot more paddling and much less exploring. I had a desire to be off the water before it got dark, and the way things were going I feared that we may still be on the water not only after it had got dark but after it had got light again as well!

Hopefully you will have formed the opinion that the morning's paddling had been brilliant, but rounding the Lizard was a bit of an anti climax. The spectacular cliffs gave way to gently sloping ground and at the point there is easy pedestrian access to a slipway and a beach. Although the Lizard is one of Britain's major headlands it just doesn't have the majesty of some of its counterparts.

But then there was the lighthouse complex with its two towers and cluster of cottages, all brightly whitewashed. Oh we do like a nice lighthouse.

During the afternoon we once again found ourselves paddling beside high cliffs but with time running out we couldn't go and explore. I suppose that means that we will just have to return sometime.

We landed at Kennack Sands and treated ourselves to the obligatory ice cream before re-uniting ourselves with our cars and saying our fond farewells. All in all I consider that our mini lighthouse tour had been a great success and look forward

to our next salty adventure.

Another 11 miles and our third lighthouse in three days. Not bad at all.

#### *Sources.*

All the lighthouse information has been gleaned from a combination of the Trinity House website and Wikipedia.

*The photo of the Lizard Lighthouse was taken by Gordon McKinlay and licensed for reuse under this **Creative Commons Licence** <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/>*

## Exchange & Mart

### Discount Available at Millets, 38/[40 New George St, Plymouth PL1 1RW](#)

One of our new members of the PPCA works in the Millets store (Big 'Thank you' to Lee McKenzie!) on New George Street, Plymouth and has negotiated with his Manager a great discount of 15% on production of your PPCA club membership card. Usual T's & C's apply, e.g. goods already discounted/sales items might be excluded.

### Discount Available at Kayaks and Paddles

Kayaks and paddles offer discount to local kayak and canoe clubs. The PPCA and Tamar Canoe club can get a discount up to 15%. This is an offer not a right for the person that is making a purchase, so please do not go upsetting Kayaks and Paddles employees as this discount might be taken away.

## Next Edition

There is no specific deadline as such for contributions but please bear in mind my general sloth and indolence and let me have anything time-sensitive well in advance.

## Contributions

Please send any contributions to [newsletter@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk)

## Club Calendar

As ever, please remember that the definitive calendar is on the [website](#) and what's printed below, while correct at the time of going to press is subject to change at a moment's notice. Syncing your Google calendar with the club calendar via the website is a good way of ensuring you stay up to date.

### Saturday, 6 October

10:00 Sea paddle Joy Ashford

### Sunday, 7 October

White Water, Ken Hamblin

### Saturday, 13 October

10:00 Rec Ian Brim

### Sunday, 14 October

White Water Doug Sitch

### Saturday, 20 October

10:00 Rec Alan Ede

### Sunday, 21 October

Open Canoe River Trip Ian Brim

White Water Clive Ashford

### Saturday, 27 October

10:00 Rec Andy Kittle

### Sunday, 28 October

British Summer Time Ends Back 1 HR

White Water Chris Doidge

### Friday, 2 November

Pool Session

### Saturday, 3 November

Sea Paddle Ian Brim

Sunday, 4 November

White Water Ken Hamblin

Saturday, 10 November

Rec Paddle Terry Calcott

Sunday, 11 November

Open Canoe River Trip Ian Brim

White Water Doug Sitch

Saturday, 17 November

Rec Paddle Terry Calcott

Sunday, 18 November

White Water Pete Anderson

Saturday, 24 November

Rec Paddle Andy Kittle

Sunday, 25 November

White Water Chris Doidge