



PPCA Newsletter



May 2017

Introduction

Welcome to May's Newsletter. This month Clive makes an impressive bid for the "Most Articles in the Newsletter This Year" title with no fewer than two pieces. Please bear in mind that while a few horses may appear to be making all the running in the race for the title, there is still room for late entries who may sneak through and stun the favourites.

We also have news of a commemorative paddle.

Editorial

The summer evening sessions are well and truly up and running. The weather may not always be kind but most of the sessions have run in some form or another even when the gusts of wind were well out of most people's comfort zone. This seems an appropriate point to remind everyone that the committee asked for feedback about the various sessions the club runs. Don't wait until the end of the season when it's too late – make your feelings known now. Is there something that drives you mad and you wish you didn't have to do it? Is there something we don't do and you wish we did? If so, please bombard the inboxes of the committee. They would be delighted to hear from you.

Ivor Jones

Newsletter Editor

The Committee

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Next Committee Meeting

The next committee meeting will be on 14th June 2017. If you have any points you wish to raise, please contact Bob Grose secretary@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk

Ian Ruse Commemorative Paddle by Tracy Jones

Although Ian recently left the club to paddle pastures new, he had been a long term and well respected member for many many years. In his honour, the club is holding a memorial paddle on Sunday 25th June. The paddle will start from Mount Batten, meeting at 10:30 for 11:00 on the water. Although in recent years Ian was best known for his open boating, in the past he paddled many different types of open boat and kayak, so any craft is welcome on the day.

As this is a club trip, club equipment will be available to use. The club have limited open boats, but the Mount Batten Centre have agreed that we can borrow some of theirs.

To get an idea of the number of paddlers who would like to join us in paying their respects to Ian and to ensure that coach / non-coach ratios are adhered to, please e-mail me (chair@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk) if you are interested in attending. Please state if you require club equipment (kayak or canoe). Friends and family who knew Ian are very welcome to attend (subject to numbers).

The paddle will also be opened up to paddlers from outside the club including ex-members, the Tamar Club, Axe Vale and personal paddling friends of Ian's.

The paddle itself will depend on the weather conditions on the day, but at some point it will involve landing somewhere for coffee, storytelling and jelly babies. Kelly Kettles especially welcome, as Ian's Kelly kettle was a feature of many a paddle!

On the day, we will also make a collection for the Marine Conservation Society, the charity chosen by Rachel, Ian's daughter, in honour of her dad.

Mountbatten have kindly agreed to make parking and the use of the changing rooms available to guests and non-affiliates at the rate of £3 per person for the day.

I look forward to seeing as many paddlers on the water as possible to remember and honour Ian, who inspired so many people to take up paddling.

Mountbatten Changing Rooms by Alex King, Centre Director

Over the weekend we appear to have had someone using copious amounts of talcum powder in the disable toilet on the lower floor which indicates that the toilet was used as a changing room by someone.

Please could you ask your members to use the appropriate facilities for changing.

Thanks

(This was sent to all affiliates, not just the PPCA – Ed.)

Those with good memories may remember that the committee called an EGM back in January to discuss changes to our constitution to allow us to be registered as a CASC (Community Amateur Sports Club). The changes were agreed, the application completed and we have just received the piece of paper saying that we have been given CASC status.

Why is this good I hear you cry? It's mostly about money but a quick reminder:

CASC registration means we don't have to pay rates to Plymouth Council. At the moment the council waives our rates – we haven't had to pay them for some years - but they could reverse that waiver at any time. Being a CASC guarantees us that saving.

We will be able to claim Gift Aid whenever anyone gives us money. That's 25p for every £1 we are given. We may not receive cash gifts very often – more's the pity – but let's say some kind benefactor were to give us a couple of hundred pounds. We could increase that by £50 through Gift Aid.

There's a non-financial benefit too: being a CASC shows the world our club meets stringent standards for governance, non-discrimination, looking after club assets and more.

In practice, being a CASC comes with some responsibilities for the club and committee. To keep our CASC status and to not receive a bill for non-paid tax, we need to keep accurate records to show that at least 50% of our members participate in paddlesport on at least 12 days during the year. Participation can include coaching, maintaining equipment, attending committee meetings etc. as well as paddling. Full details available on the CASC pages of the HMRC website for those keen enough to know more.

In order to do this, it is important that all club sessions have a completed sign-in sheet. So a plea to coaches and paddlers, please fill in the forms for each and every session, even if it doesn't involve getting wet. For trips and activities from MB these can then be posted in a new shiny box that Adam is going to install. Adam will then scan them and store them appropriately (ask Adam what that means if you like!). For trips away from MB, the sheets can be handed to Adam or e-mailed to him.

Let's keep this important status.

Happy Paddling.

A Cunning Plan by Clive Ashford

I was running the Saturday paddle on 29 April. I announced on the forum that “I have a plan so cunning that even Mr Blackadder would be amazed. It involves the use of a torch so you may like to bring one along. (Failing that eat lots of carrots which, as Steve Denton will tell you, are very smart things).” With the benefit of hindsight I can see that such a boast was perhaps a little misplaced and that Mr Blackadder would have been quite justified in giving his somewhat sardonic response of, “Oh really?” If you have a moment I will relate the sorry tale but I can assure you that you do have better things to do.

The false lure of a cunning plan clearly had an effect on our members as 23 intrepid paddlers turned up on a bright but windy day. So what was my cunning plan I hear you ask. Well, you will be aware that planning permission has been granted for the building of a hotel and luxury spa on Drakes Island so I thought it would be rather a jolly idea to explore the islands tunnels and gun emplacements for what may prove to be a final time. Luckily I had the foresight to approach Drakes Island via a circuitous route that involved rock hopping through Jennycliff Bay followed by a pleasant little open crossing of the Sound, otherwise this would have been a very short story.

Photo by Joy Ashford.



Helga demonstrating a Cheshire Cat smile in the calm of Jennycliff Bay.

I outlined my plan to the assembled 23 and told them that we would meet at the green pole at the end of the slipway. In my world the term “Meet by the green pole” means just that and doesn’t mean drifting aimlessly with the tide towards the water taxi pontoon, so I waited for the drifters to return and then we set off. There’s probably some lesson here about the abuse of power but it made me feel smug. (Did I say Drifters? Cue a song from Banjo).

The forecast was for a force 3 – 4 SSE wind and once we rounded Mount Batten breakwater we could testify to the accuracy of the forecast. Choppy waves crested with white tops initially set the scene but by the time we had reached Jennycliffe Beach we were sheltered under the cliffs and conditions became almost calm.

The tide was fairly high so rock hopping to Cable Beach proved to be a little dull and certainly un-eventful, but at this time people was quite happy because they were excitedly looking forward to the execution of my exceedingly cunning plan. (You can almost feel the tension building can’t you)?

We arrived at Cable Beach 2 hours after spring high tide so we knew that there would be a fair bit of current flowing through the Sound. To avoid the tidal flow through the Eastern Channel, and to demonstrate my caring personality, I led us to the Duke Rock buoy. We left the shelter of the cliffs and very quickly encountered choppy conditions produced by wind against tide. Anyone brave enough to look beyond the next wave would have noticed that the sun was sparkling off a sea that was full of dancing white horses, exhilarating conditions that fair made my heart sing. Everyone was also smiling but I noticed that some of those smiles were in a fashion that would be more accurately described as rictus rather than Cheshire cat. I also observed some big white eyes and equally white knuckles. (Just relax boys and girls, everything will be fine). Good character building stuff I’m sure and just the thing to allow you to discover the limit of your comfort zone!

After what some people would describe as a lifetime of being beaten up by the wind and waves we arrived, upright and maybe a little relieved, at Drakes Island. Gentle readers, we sat around on the rocks and consumed what turned out to be 2 cake lunch. Thanks to Karen & Birgit providing the culinary delights. Yum yum.

And so on to the cunning plan, the exploration of Drakes Island. There are extensive tunnels under the island and the old buildings are well worth a looking around. In case you weren't paying attention earlier planning permission has been granted to turn the island into a luxury hotel and spa. This development will mean that access to Drakes Island will shortly become (at best) restricted, so I thought a final exploration would be timely. What I hadn't counted on is the fact that the owners have repaired (and locked) the gates leading from the beach to the island, thus already making access impractical. So it turned out that my cunning plan was less cunning than a thing that isn't cunning at all, which was particularly disappointing to one Steve Denton who had made a major financial investment with the purchase of 2 brand new torch batteries. (Top quality batteries Steve initially informed me, a fact that changed so often during the ensuing 30 minutes that I am now unsure as to either the source or the quality of said batteries. I now regard all these claims as somewhat dubious).

Photo by Joy Ashford



Bob Grose put a positive spin on events by informing us that carrying torches made our boats lighter. (Choose from either "Not even I would have written such an awful pun" or "I'm jealous and wish I had thought of that").

With my Cunning plan abandoned we paddled around Drakes Island, did some more dancing with white horses as we crossed the channel to the Hoe and then returned to Mount Batten via Spiky Buoy, thus educating some of our paddlers to the location of my favourite waymark.

Despite the disappointment of Drakes Island I had a most splendid day

out. We should do it more often.

And that's the end of my tale. I did warn you that you had better things to do.

Crossing the Sound. Some paddlers don't appear to have boats!

The Roseland Weekend had been a regular fixture in the PPCA calendar ever since 2006. We based ourselves at the Cornwall County Council Roseland Adventure Centre at St Just in Roseland, and had spent 11 consecutive years collecting many happy memories and stories as we sea kayaked around the somewhat beautiful Roseland Peninsular. This all came to a rather abrupt end after our 2016 adventure because the council decided to close the centre, leaving us to ponder the end of an era.

Linda Brady thought the adventure should continue and suggested that a weekend in the Penzance Youth Hostel may allow us to carry on with the jollities. Linda obviously wasn't alone because on 5 May 2017 18 club members turned up at Penzance keenly anticipating a weekend of sea kayaking.

After consulting with Terry we decided to run 2 separate paddling trips each day. I would lead the roughie toughies somewhere foolish whilst Terry was going to lead a slightly more genteel adventure for those lacking the buccaneering attitude demonstrated by the aforementioned roughie toughies. It was never planned this way but the roughie toughies congregated in the nearest pub, (The Pirate Inn), while the genteels held sway in the youth hostel lounge, with a few ditherers hedging their bets by spending time in both camps.

This is an account of the roughie toughies weekend; I will leave the account the genteels antics up to someone, well, more genteel.

The forecast for Saturday promised a stiff easterly breeze with a bit of rain added into the mix. After a bit of indecision I decided that paddling out of Mullion Cove would shelter us from the worst of the wind and would allow us to safely explore the eastern end of Mounts Bay, all of which explains why 11 roughie toughies congregated in the

damp and grey harbour at Mullion Cove all ready and eager for a little watery adventure. We set off around Mullion Island and then headed west (young man). Having led us through a gentle gap I was somewhat surprised to hear a commotion behind me. I turned around and to my amazement there was a whale, a yellow and black thrasher if my knowledge of cetaceans serves me correctly. This creature was obviously in difficulty so I put in a call to Greenpeace only to discover that said cetacean was in fact Joy, who had mis-timed her passage through the gap and had ended up taking what I assume was a less than refreshing swim. The wildlife was restored to her boat and we resumed our westerly course until we reached Halzephron Cove, where we consumed a far from leisurely lunch on a beach that was fast being covered by the incoming tide.

Photo by Joy Ashford.



Me with plenty of character, thank you.

Photo by Joy Ashford.



Just outside Mullion Cove Harbour.

Our resident cetacean was by now harbouring the ambition to be warm and dry so we made a bee line back to Mullion Harbour. Once Joy (and Banjo) were off the water the rest of us explored the coast beyond Mullion Cove as far as Pedn Crifton, a distance of just about a mile in each direction but a mile that was packed with excitement. Sea stacks, deep gullies and caves made for spectacular paddling and Bob Grose ably demonstrated how to turn a sea kayak in a tight cave using a combination of paddle strokes and Braille. (I won't tell the equipment officer but Bob was using a club boat).

Photo by Bob Grose.



The group passing the Armed Knight near Land's End.

After a total of 12 miles we arrived back at Mullion Cove, got off the water and got changed in the rain, which was a far from pleasant experience but no doubt character building stuff, although I do hold the opinion that I already have plenty of character, thank you very much.

Back at the Youth Hostel we cleanup and entered into a bit of social interaction until it was time to head off for our evening meal. Joy had booked us all into the Tolcarne Inn at Newlyn, a pub run by one Ben Tunncliffe who, by all accounts, is a chef. What followed was an evening of fine dining (without a chip in sight according to a rather peckish Banjo), followed by the roughie toughies retiring to the Pirate Inn (we like the Pirate Inn), whilst the Genteels returned to the youth hostel by a less than direct route. Rumour has it that the genteels walked further than they paddled, but I can't verify this.

Sunday dawned bright and fair, what a delightful place Cornwall is in the sunshine. Once again I can only report on the roughie toughies paddle but I can assure you that it was a good one. A mixture of the Pirate Inn and transport arrangements conspired to reduce our numbers to a rather select 5. It would be rude (and totally inaccurate) at this juncture to even suggest anything on the lines of quality rather than quantity, so I won't. My plan for today was to run a one way paddle from Lamorna Cove to Sennen Cove, a trip that would involve paddling around the formidable Land's End. After what seemed like an age we had the shuttle in place, had changed and were ready to launch. The scenery and the paddling were nothing short of marvellous as we passed Tater-Du Lighthouse, Penberth Cove and the Minack Theatre before landing on a raft of seaweed for lunch at Porthgwarra, where we would make a final decision about either paddling on to Sennen or to retreat back to Lamorna. We had spent the morning paddling under clear blue sky with 2 – 3 foot of swell gently lifting our boats so the decision to carry on was an easy one to make. As we rounded Gwennap Head the swell picked up to maybe 3 – 4 feet causing us not to venture too close to the shore, however we still had a few moments of interest as we negotiated channels that were subject to swells meeting from more than one direction. (Of course, being roughie toughies we survived by pretending that there was simply nothing to worry about).

Photo by Bob Grose.



Joy with Land's End in the distance.

If you have ever been to Land's End on a sunny day you will have been treated to a stunning seascape from a vantage point some 200 feet above the water. With cliffs towering above you the view from sea level is even more dramatic, those cliffs being peppered with fantastic rock formations and the most brilliant tunnel that extends right through Doctor Syntax's Head. We were there and we were well pleased with ourselves.

From Lamorna Cove to Sennen Cove is 12 miles as the kayak paddles, so by the time we had hauled our boats up from the harbour to the car park at Sennen Cove it was a happy but tired bunch of paddlers who set about changing. With very few places to get out this is a committing paddle that is also subject to strong tidal flows, so it needs to be

approached with a fair bit of care and respect, but the rewards are well worth the effort. If you like your water to be of a salty nature then Land's End should be on your list of places to paddle.

And so it was that we retrieved our cars from Lamorna Cove, loaded up the boats, consumed ice cream and set off home after what had proved to be a very enjoyable weekend. My thanks to my fellow roughie toughies for their company on the water but most importantly special thanks to Linda for having such a splendid idea in the first place. Hopefully we can do something similar next year.

P.S. On a slightly different subject can anyone explain how, when launching from a beach, it doesn't matter how big or small the surf is, there is always one wave that will find its way down the inside of your cag? Irksome isn't it?

Seeking a Room for a Combined RNLI Safety Briefing and Quiz by Bob Grose

We have a kind offer from Chris Turner, volunteer community safety officer with the RNLI, to give us a safety briefing. Your committee thought this would be a good idea as it builds the club's relationship with a crucial local organisation and – who knows – we could learn some valuable things or pick up some useful goodies like reflective tape or waterproof mobile-phone bags.

We thought it would be even better if we combined it with a quiz. Paul Hewson, who did such a brilliant job with the last quiz, has kindly agreed to sort this out. What could be better – a combination of fun and something useful, all in one spectacular evening?

Ah, but there's a hitch (there often is...). Our usual free meeting spaces at Mount Batten and the Morley Arms are no longer available. Places we've looked at so far cost about £70 for the evening, which obviously is not on. So, dear readers, this is an appeal for any leads you might have for an affordable venue.

This, broadly, is what we're looking for: a space large enough for up to about 70 people; preferably a bar attached or nearby; and free or low cost – we could probably afford £30-40 or so, but whatever we pay means less for our chosen charity. We're looking at an evening before the summer holidays really kick in. Given the club's calendar and Chris' commitments, that means preferably in the first two-three weeks of July. Failing that, we'll be looking at early autumn.

If you have any ideas for rooms, preferably a free one, please let me or any of the other committee members know. Thanks!

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

Club Calendar

I'm afraid this isn't yet available for a number of reasons. Rather than sending out yet another special edition, could everyone please check the [website](#) for updates?