



Port of Plymouth Canoeing Association

Wet News 75. January 2013.



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February edition of Wet News.

Items for inclusion in the February edition of Wet News to reach the editor, Clive Ashford by 21:00hrs on Saturday 2 February please. Publication date Sunday 3 February

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The editor (Clive Ashford) reserves the right to edit / reject items submitted.

Disclaimer. Opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of the PPCA.

The prologue.

I am noticing that when I visit the bottle bank I am depositing more jam jars than beer bottles. Is this a sign of some new found sobriety on my part? A New Year's resolution maybe? No, it's a sign that I buy beer in tins, it's cheaper that way. (Old Speckled Hen and Hobgoblin if you were asking.....).

Aquatic first aid. (Dave Fisher).

Terry Calcott, Alan Ede and Tony Blackmore have all passed the Aquatic first aid Level 2 course which is a BCU Lifeguard qualification. This is the first course I have run over some 2 days and includes practical scenarios on the sea. Well done to the group for putting up with me for this long.

Editors footnote. Dave has not long been qualified to run a 2 day First Aid course and this is the first such course that he has run, we can look forward to him running many more. Well done to the students and many thanks to Dave.

Coaching the Mind CPD.

Congratulations to Alan Ede, Andy Kittle, Brian Taylor, Chris Doidge, Damean Miller, Dave Pedlow, Ken Hamblin, Phil Cleave, Tom Clarke, and Zoe Boyle on taking the Coaching the Mind CPD. I will now be more wary of these budding psychiatrists but they had better be prepared for a bit of a shock if they intend playing their mind games with me, the shock being that they will first need to find my mind. Clive Amoeba Ashford indeed.

CPD? Glad you asked, I didn't know either so I bit the bullet and resigned myself to a frustrating search of the BCU / Canoe England web sites. I found a list of CPD modules and discovered that Coaching the Mind is described as a 3 hour Foundation Module. (I was very impressed). However nowhere did I find an explanation as to what CPD actually means. Coaches Personal Development I think and I'm sure that someone far cleverer than me will correct me if I'm wrong, but having spent 20 minutes on the aforementioned websites I find that I no longer care.

White water open boating.

In addition to Ian Ruse's open boat river trips Martin Mills has been given permission to run white water open boat peer paddles. Although Martin is not formally qualified to coach on these trips he is a trainee 5 star open boat paddler, so we can approach these trips with confidence. The first such trip is on Saturday 12 January, then Saturday 9 February & Saturday 9 March. Keep an eye on the forum for details.

3 star white water.

I note from Julie Elworthy's post on the forum that James Mitchell and Bekky Stiansny have become 3 star white water kayak paddlers. I must confess to being a bit surprised about this, not that these good people have passed their 3 star but because there was no assessment advertised in the club diary dates. I wonder how James and Bekky got to hear about it?

For the rest of you budding white water warriors the PPCA is running 2 x 3 star white water assessments, Sun 3 Feb and Sun 10 March. No doubt details will appear on the club forum in due course.

Grannies ahoy.

Congratulations to Linda & Paul Brady and to Helga & Dai Pinn on becoming grandparents. To make this a bit less of a surprise I can reliably inform you that there were two separate babies involved. Quite warms the cockles of your heart doesn't it? What you have to do now is to tilt you head slightly to one side, put on a little grin and say, "Ahhhh." I've been practicing.

PPCA Photo Competition 2013. (Terry Calcott).

The club will be running its annual photo competition, now into its 4th year. The format is changing slightly with the competition running throughout the year and the result being announced in the autumn. Further details and an entry form will be posted in the summer.

The general theme of the competition is kayaking / canoeing but could include landscape, wildlife, people, action, humour. This is a fun amateur competition open to all club members. So dig out your camera and get snapping over the coming months.

Wye Valley weekend, 10 – 12 May 2013. (Repeated from last month).

I am running a trip to the rather beautiful Wye Valley over the weekend 10 – 12 May 2013. We have exclusive use of Kington Youth Hostel, see <http://www.yha.org.uk/hostel/kington> This is a different area to that visited on previous Wye Valley trips so we will be paddling on different parts of the river. (Higher up the valley). The cost of accommodation will be £32 per person. A £10 deposit will secure your place, with the balance being required at the beginning of March. There will be an additional charge for catering. Cheques payable to PPCA please.

Please note that this part of the Wye is not a white water section so please don't come along expecting an adrenalin filled weekend, gentle meandering is the order of the weekend.

Any questions please contact Clive Ashford on 01752 344425 or cliveashford-newsletter@yahoo.co.uk

Drakes Island.

Planning permission to convert the derelict buildings on Drakes Island into a boutique hotel has been turned down by the council planners. The upshot of this is that nothing has changed re Drakes Island and that we are still not allowed to venture there above the high water mark. OK?

Murder in Plymouth Sound, 16 February.

The Mount Batten Centre is hosting a murder mystery evening entitled "Murder in Plymouth Sound" on Sat 16 February. Sounds like it may be fun; I have attached a copy of their advertising poster for those interested. (E-mail version of Wet News only).

PPCA space project.

I was hoping to fill this space with an article from Terry describing the annual Christmas Paddle, but that eagerly anticipated event was cancelled due to the weather, which pretty well sums up the whole of 2012. So, how to fill the resultant acres of space? I have 3 strategies for just such a situation. 1) Write something original. 2) Cut and paste some item of local interest from the internet. 3) Recycle some old article(s). Obviously options 2 & 3 are fairly lazy and as I unashamedly used option 2 last month to bring you those fascinating facts about Derry's Clock I feel the need to be original this month, hence the article below titled "Scotch Rum" about our little sojourn to Scotland way back in 2010. (So, new writing, old story).

Other space consuming strategies I use are to insert

Photo by Joy Ashford.



2011 Christmas paddle.

pictures into the text or to write long, rambling sentences with no real purpose, structure or meaning, a bit like this one maybe.

It will have dawned on the astute among you that I now need 218 less words to fill those acres of space than I did at the start of this item. On the other hand the intelligent ones among you will have stopped reading this item about 180 words ago.

Scotch Rum.

Photo by Joy Ashford.



Sea kayaks on the ferry.

If you had been standing on the quayside at the Scottish port of Malaig on 14 June 2010 you would have been able to witness Joy and I packing our sea kayaks with enough gear and provisions for a 4 night camping expedition. Had you waited around a bit longer then you would have also witnessed our very heavy boats being loaded onto a Caledonian MacBrayne ferry. The sea kayaking purists that were reading this have now gone off huffing and puffing and banging on about not doing it properly, but in the previous September Joy and I had paddled from Mount Batten to the Eddystone and back so we felt that we knew about paddling in a vast expanse of open sea. We had driven 1,000 kilometres in order to see the Scottish islands from a far more

intimate perspective, hence starting with a ferry trip.

The West coast of Scotland is regarded as a sea kayaker's paradise and as our plan was to circumnavigate the islands of Rum and Canna, just off the West coast of Scotland, we did indeed regard ourselves as being in paradise. It was hard to argue with this assertion and equally hard to pick out the highlights of a very enjoyable trip without this story turning into a book, but I will try. (Suffering for my art again, oh what a tortured soul I am).

So, imagine paddling around a headland and seeing a rugged coast with no landing places stretching out before you. The low cliffs are backed by steep Scottish hills rising to an impressive 800 metres. Now look out to sea and observe a huge blue sky merging with the distant mainland in a haze of purple, then turning blue again as your eyes are drawn back towards you over a calm, azure sea. Now imagine a

Photo by Clive Ashford.



I just never get bored at looking at this photo.

basking shark gently meandering through the scene, mouth gaping open gathering plankton. The shark is an adult of maybe 8 metres in length and although you know it's completely harmless you just can't help hearing the Jaws theme as it turns toward you

with its dorsal fin scything through the water. It passes between us and gives me the opportunity of taking one of my favourite photographs.

Imagine now standing at the foot of a glen. A small river is cascading and bubbling beside you and the surrounding hills tower above. You turn to look out to sea just in time to observe a pod of perhaps 6 dolphins swim by. I shout to Joy to get out of the tent and have a look but she is less than impressed to gaze out over a seascape completely devoid of cetaceans, that is until they suddenly re surface causing Joy's demeanour to become somewhat lighter. Imagine now the anti climax as the dolphins disappear around a headland and we find ourselves providing breakfast for a hoard of midges.

It's another day and the scene is grey and foggy. Hugging the South coast of Canna and I am very careful to make sure we navigate through the reef at the western end so that we don't end up losing sight of land. We successfully round the western end of Canna and during a break in the fog we see a fin in the distance. Assuming another basking shark we close the distance, only to realise that this creature wasn't behaving like a basking shark but was rather diving and re-surfacing in a circular motion. We both have different versions of what we saw and as Joy was taking still photos of her spray deck when she thought she was taking a video, photographic evidence is vague. We don't know what this creature was but it was big and we were too close. We back paddled out of the way very quickly and whatever the big beastie was it didn't hang around. Once our pulse rates had calmed down a bit we resumed our paddling.

It's still foggy as we paddle for some 6 kilometres under huge cliffs that are pierced with inlets, caves and arches. All this provided a very atmospheric approach to the tiny village of A'Chill, where we treated ourselves to the twin luxuries of a meal in the cafe and the use of proper sit down loos. Oh what simple pleasures.

Visibility was down to 100 metres as we started the crossing of Canna Sound, perhaps only 3 kilometres but seeming a whole lot longer. On the way across we encountered a yacht using its motor and moving very slowly with a lookout standing at the bow like some old fashioned figurehead, except that this specimen was both male and (thankfully) fully clothed.

The fog lifts as we reach the coast of Rum. We are once again drifting along in bright sunshine watching a couple of basking sharks when Joy spots a pair of sea eagles on the adjacent cliff. Poor Joy didn't know where to look or which set of animals to watch and try to photograph. It's tough this sea kayaking lark.

Photo by Joy Ashford.



Atmospheric coastline.

Due to someone being none too bright when it comes to reading a ferry timetable we had a spare day on Rum. We spent an afternoon playing at being tourists by taking a guided tour of the impressive Kinloch Castle, having coffee and cake in the cafe and drinking a few beers in the local bar. At the castle we were given the opportunity of playing a genuine Steinway piano, but somehow chop-sticks seemed so inappropriate that the chance went begging. The next morning we went for a walk in the hills on a clear but cool day. After spending so long in the boats it was a bit novel looking at the scenery from a platform that wasn't constantly bobbing about. In between these activities we once again provided breakfast to hordes of midges. An information board gleefully advised us that a square metre of bog can produce a

Photo by Joy Ashford.



Puffins.

huge number of these marauding monsters, numbers measuring in the millions. I have no idea how you would count them, or even why, but I am certainly not going to volunteer.

Finally imagine that you rather like puffins and that you are slowly drifting towards a huge raft of these comical little birds. I will now inform you that it is Joy who rather likes puffins and will leave you to imagine just how happy she was.

Back on the ferry to Malaig we were able to reflect on a brilliant little adventure, which was nicely rounded off with fish and chips on the quayside before driving home through

the night, but while on the subject of the ferry I have to remark on how friendly and helpful everyone was at Caledonian MacBrayne. Our kayaks, which were transported free of charge, were treated with care and we were given assistance in taking them on and off the ferry at each end of our journey by staff who clearly knew what they were doing and who wanted us to enjoy ourselves. All very impressive.

This story makes up just a part of our 2 week trip to the small islands of Scotland. We can recommend it. It's also my first ever story told using wholly metric measurements.

Happy New Year.

This would seem like an appropriate moment to wish all readers a happy New Year, so happy New Year everyone. If nothing else I hope that 2013 bring us better weather than 2012.

Old Nosey, our roaming reporter...

... would let it be known that if you ladies want to wipe your delicate parts after "going" al fresco then you would be well advised to remember that bramble leaves have spines on the underside. Jane, our esteemed assistant club leader, is making a full recovery and thanks you for your concern. The bramble leaf on the other hand was completely traumatised and had to be destroyed.

The observant among you will have noticed the word "esteemed" in the previous paragraph. That's this publications acknowledgment of assistant club leader Sane Jane's lofty office.



And there you were thinking that the Dartmoor Pixie is a mythical creature. Apparently this particular specimen is banjo phobic.

Discounts.

The following traders have been known to give PPCA members discount. If you know of any more, or find any of this information to be incorrect, please let your editor know.

AS watersports, Exeter. 5% or 10% dependant on what you are buying and on production of your PPCA membership card,

Camel Canoe & Kayaks, Wadebridge. 10% on production of PPCA card.

Cotswold Outdoor. (Plymouth branch only). 15% on production of your PPCA membership card.

Kayaks & Paddles, Plymouth. 15% on production of PPCA membership card.

Marine Bazaar, Sutton Road. "What he feels like" for mentioning PPCA.

Mount Batten Bar. 5% on production of current Mount Batten membership card.

**That's all folk; see you somewhere cold and wet.
Good paddling, Clive.**

Diary dates.

These diary dates are correct at time of going to print, please check the website forum or speak to the session leader for any changes nearer to the event.

Date	Type of paddle	Location	Session leader
January.			
Sat 12, 08:15	Open boat peer paddle. Baby Dart <i>Meet 08:15 at Mount Batten for those wanting to use club boats, otherwise 09:15 at the lay by on the A384 about 700yds past The Dartbridge Inn.</i>		Martin Mills 07530 004070.
Sat 12, 10:00	Recreational Paddle	Mount Batten	Neville Cannon 07773 342787
Sun 13, 08:30	Intermediate river trip	TBA <i>Meet at Plympton B&Q ready to leave at 08:30.</i>	Ken Hamblin 01752 365404.
Sat 19, 08:45	Intermediate river trip	TBA <i>Meet at Plympton B&Q ready to leave at 08:45.</i>	Clive Ashford 01752 344425.
Sat 19, 10:00	Recreational paddle	Mount Batten	Terry Calcott 07828 652775.
Sun 20, 08:30	Intermediate river trip	TBA <i>Meet at Plympton B&Q ready to leave at 08:30.</i>	John Elworthy 01752 823381
Mon 21, 19:30	Pool session	Plympton Pool <i>This session needs to be paid for in advance. Please see December Wet News for details.</i>	Zoe Boyle 07814 131654.
Sat 26, 10:00	Recreational Paddle	Mount Batten	Neville Cannon 07773 342787.
Sun 27, 08:30	Intermediate river trip	TBA <i>Meet at Plympton B&Q ready to leave at 08:30.</i>	Chris Doidge 07973 285969.
Sun 27, 08:00	Open boat river trip	TBA <i>Meet at Mount Batten at 08:00 to collect boats etc.</i>	Ian Ruse 07980 355019.
February.			
Sat 2, TBA	Sea kayak paddle	TBA	Terry Calcott 07828 652775.
<i>Times and venue will appear on the club forum a few days ahead of this trip.</i>			
<i>The club sea kayaks can be booked with the Club Equipment Officer, Alan Ede, by a text to 07799 556876 or an e-mail to alancede@hotmail.co.uk</i>			
Sat 2, 08:30	Beginners river trip	TBA <i>Meet at Plympton B&Q ready to leave at 08:30.</i>	Ken Hamblin 01752 365404.
Sun 3, 09:00	Intermediate river trip	TBA <i>Meet at Plympton B&Q ready to leave at 09:00.</i>	Doug Sitch 07966 740025.

February (continued).

Sun 3, TBA	White water 3* assessment	TBA
Sat 9, 08:15	Open boat peer paddle. Baby Dart <i>Meet 08:15 at Mount Batten for those wanting to use club boats, otherwise 09:15 at the lay by on the A384 about 700yds past The Dartbridge Inn.</i>	Martin Mills 07530 004070.
Sat 9, 10:00	Recreational paddle Mount Batten	Neville Cannon 07773 342787.
Sun 10, 08:30	Intermediate river trip TBA <i>Meet at Plympton B&Q ready to leave at 08:30.</i>	John Elworthy 01752 823381.
Sat 16, 10:00	Recreational paddle Mount Batten	Terry Calcott 07828 652775.
Sun 17, 08:30	Intermediate river trip TBA <i>Meet at Plympton B&Q ready to leave at 08:30.</i>	Julie Elworthy 01752 823381.
Mon 18, 19:30	Pool session Plympton Pool <i>This session needs to be paid for in advance. Please see December Wet News for details.</i>	Zoe Boyle 07814 131654.
Sat 23, 10:00	Recreational paddle Mount Batten	Neville Cannon 07773 342787.
Sun 24, 08:30	Intermediate river trip TBA <i>Meet at Plympton B&Q ready to leave at 08:30.</i>	Ken Hamblin 01752 365404.
Sun 24, 08:00	Open boat river trip TBA <i>Meet at Mount Batten at 08:00 to collect boats etc.</i>	Ian Ruse 07980 355019.

March.

Sat 2, TBA	Sea kayak paddle TBA <i>Times and venue will appear on the club forum a few days ahead of this trip. The club sea kayaks can be booked with the Club Equipment Officer, Alan Ede, by a text to 07799 556876 or an e-mail to alancede@hotmail.co.uk</i>	Terry Calcott 07828 652775
Sat 2, 08:30	Novice river trip TBA <i>Meet at Plympton B&Q ready to leave at 08:30.</i>	John Elworthy 01752 823381.
Sun 3, 09:00	Intermediate river trip TBA <i>Meet at Plympton B&Q ready to leave at 09:00.</i>	Doug Sitch 07966 740025.
Sat 9, 08:15	Open boat peer paddle. Baby Dart <i>Meet 08:15 at Mount Batten for those wanting to use club boats, otherwise 09:15 at the lay by on the A384 about 700yds past The Dartbridge Inn.</i>	Martin Mills 07530 004070.
Sat 9, 10:00	Recreational paddle Mount Batten	Neville Cannon 07773 342787.
Sun 10, 08:30	Intermediate river trip TBA <i>Meet at Plympton B&Q ready to leave at 08:30.</i>	Julie Elworthy 01752 823381.
Sun 10, TBA	White water kayak 3* assessment	TBA
Sat 16, 10:00	Recreational paddle Mount Batten	Terry Calcott 07828 652775.
Mon 18, 19:30	Pool session Plympton Pool <i>This session needs to be paid for in advance. Please see December Wet News for details.</i>	Zoe Boyle 07814 131654.
Sat 23, 10:00	Recreational paddle Mount Batten	Joy Ashford 01752 344425.
Sat 30, 10:00	Easter paddle Mount Batten	Neville Cannon 07773 342787

Advanced notice.

May 10 – 12	Wye weekend Kington youth hostel <i>Booking essential, see Jan Wet News for details.</i>	Clive Ashford 01752 344425
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