



Port of Plymouth Canoeing Association

Wet News 79, May 2013.



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Tel

June edition of Wet News.

Items for inclusion in the June edition of Wet News to reach the editor, Clive Ashford by 21:00hrs on Sat June 8 please.
Publication date Sun June 9

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Post: Please call me for my postal address if required. Tel: 01752 344425

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.

We have just had to replace our washing machine and dishwasher. I don't tell you this in a forlorn attempt at eliciting your sympathy, (although cheques payable to the destitute journalists of Plympton fund would be gratefully received), instead I tell you this to inform you that I installed said gadgets after carefully reading the instruction manual, thus proving (if proof is needed) that I am not the stereotypical male.

Boat storage. (Syd Evans).

If any member would like to store additional general purpose or sit on top boats in the members shed please contact syd.evans@virginmedia.com for further information.

Pool sessions.

Our series of pool sessions at Plympton Pool have now come to an end with a lot of people working hard and getting warm and wet. Well done to all students on your progress and thanks to the helpers who came along to pass on their skills and a special thanks goes to Zoe Boyle for organising these sessions. No doubt there will be more pool sessions in the dark evenings at the end of the year. Watch all relevant information outlets.

Level one coach training.

Congratulations to Alex Williams and Damean Miller on completing their level 1 coach training, the first step on a long but rewarding ladder.

3 star sea kayak assessment.

The club are running 2 x 3 star sea kayak assessments, the dates being Saturday 27 July and Sunday 8 September. Although titled as sea kayak assessments this award can be taken in sea kayak, general purpose kayak or even a sit on top. Places are limited. To book your place please contact Clive, either cliveashford-newsletter@yahoo.co.uk or 01752 344425.

Stephen Pryor's father

Stephen Pryor gave BBC Radio Devon an interview relating to the fascinating story about his father's time as a prisoner of war and the coded letters he wrote.

To hear this interview yourself follow the link from the BBC website. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-22357713> (You may have to cut & paste the URL).

So what's it all about?

Photo by Joy Ashford



This delightful little rock arch cannot be seen from the shore.

You spent precious time and hard earned money taking part in a one star course, decided that you enjoyed the experience and joined the PPCA. You came along to a number of Tuesday evenings and quickly progressed from the one star plus group to the two star group. You look around on a Tuesday evening, marvel the skills displayed by your coaches and helpers and think that you are not very good. You are wrong. If you are in the two star group then you have probably acquired more skills than you realise, you certainly have gained enough skills to enable you to participate in our Saturday recreational paddles, which are the perfect place to use the skills that you have strived so hard to acquire.

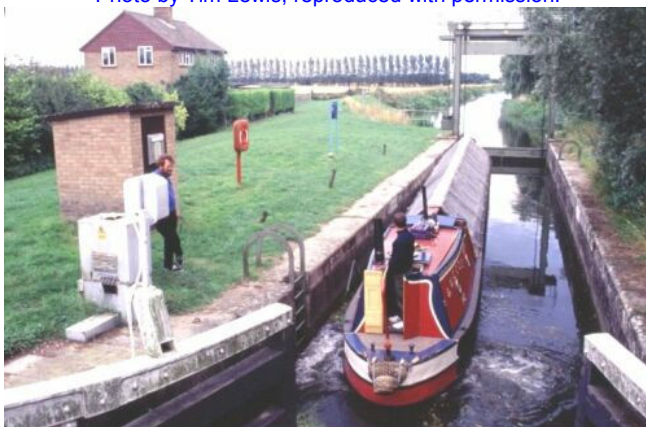
Normal Saturday recreational paddles start and finish at Mount Batten and we are usually off the water by 15:00. You may well be surprised at how different everything looks from water level and as we tend to stick to the coast we often get to places that other craft avoid. There is usually the opportunity for gentle rock hopping, sometimes gentle surfing or, if you prefer, simply keep away from the frothy stuff and have a gentle paddle. Whatever your preference you will be made very welcome and our coaches will make sure the trip caters for your ability. We often see seals and have also been known to encounter dolphins, porpoise and basking sharks, not to mention a myriad of bird life and a huge variety of shoreline creatures. Saturday paddles are rarely dull, how can you possibly stay away?

For your first Saturday paddle choose one that is advertised as a recreational paddle and is running from Mount Batten. Check the weather forecast on the Friday evening and the website forum to check there have been no last minute changes of plan and give it a go. You won't be disappointed.

Canoeing the Great Ouse 1970's style (3) (David Pedlow).

The locks on the Ouse were not designed with open boats in mind. They had guillotine upper gates, were of the order of 33 metres long and 3 to 5 metres wide, had been designed for commercial traffic (mainly tugged barges) with a high freeboard, and shifted getting on for 1,000 tonnes of water each time they filled and emptied. Getting ashore above and below the lock on to the landing stages was a job for a contortionist. The lock chambers were at least 3 metres down to the water when empty, and one that sticks in my mind, as much as 7. Fortunately, unlike canal locks, they were designed with a couple of vertical ladders set into the walls on each side of the lock chamber.

Photo by Tim Lewis, reproduced with permission.



Narrow boat entering Isleham Lock

It wasn't so bad at weekends, when there tended to be a steady stream of boats using the locks, and we could just paddle in and ask a friendly cruiser to drop us a line and a fender to hang on to; but during the week we tended to be the only boat using the lock, and we had to devise a procedure.

If the lock was set against us, I would somehow get up on the landing stage and moor up the boat while I set the lock. Then I'd return to the boat, we'd paddle in, and hold on to the ladder. There was quite a bit of turbulence whilst the lock was emptying; a great deal more when it filled by lifting the guillotine gate; so having bent our painters on

to either end of the 20 fathom rope, we would climb up the ladder (Jackie leading, and Abi sort of between my arms - we were our own safety gear!), and then operate the mechanisms, whilst endeavouring to keep the canoe in the centre of the lock, away from the worst of the turbulence. And

then, when the chamber had settled down and we had opened the gates, we would climb back down (and I have to tell you 20 feet down to a small boat is a long way), and paddle on our way.

The main use of the 20 fathom line, as least as far as Abigail was concerned, came in the evening. After we had set up camp, cooked and eaten the meal, and joined in the washing up, Abi and I were banished whilst Jackie set the tent to rights for the coming night. I would tie one end of the line to the mooring ring in the bow, and the other end round my waist. Abigail would climb in the canoe and I would push it out into the river, letting the line run to its very end before pulling her back to shore. It was magic, especially during the half hour between sunset and official night, the canoe almost disappearing in the gloaming, and the ripples and gurgles of the river matched by Abigail's happy cries of "Again! Again!"

And so we worked our way down river, happily without incident - though the time we came round a sharp bend in the shallow West River, to find its whole width taken up by giant pigs, between which we had to steer, was a bit of a shock - until South of Ely we turned up the River Lark; and with Abigail suddenly becoming feverish, set up a hospital camp in the Lock Keeper's garden at Isleham Lock.

Avon Estuary Paddle – April 2013. (Article & photos by Terry Calcott).

We are particularly fortunate living in Devon and Cornwall to have a large number of estuaries on our doorstep. The Avon (or sometimes known as the Aune) rises 460 metres above sea level on the Aune Head mires of south Dartmoor and makes its 23 mile journey to the sea passing through the Avon Reservoir, South Brent, Avonwick, Loddiswell and Aveton Gifford before reaching the estuary mouth at Bantham and Bigbury. The estuary of the Avon is tidal up as far as the weir 4½ miles inland just past Aveton Gifford, the bridging point. As we know Bantham is one of the premier surf beaches on the south coast and with this comes lots of surfers, rip tides, swell and surf. With this in mind we launched from the ferry slipway a short distance up river.

A glorious sunny, still day beckoned and with a later start to the paddle we assembled at midday at the Ferry slipway below the rather lovely thatched boathouse (built in 1937 to commemorate the coronation of George VI). 17 paddlers in total. Mark, Mark and Andy joined us from the sea having arrived early to enjoy the delights of the surf before the gentler estuary trip.



Looking up the Avon Estuary.

The Avon is a truly beautiful estuary. It is relatively shallow which keeps the majority of powered craft from venturing to far except on a high flood tide. I was somewhat surprised by the number of other non-powered craft on the water enjoying the same delights as us. Lots of other kayakers, enclosed and sitting on top we passed enroute. Once around the first meander the trees sweep down to the water's edge and the sight of an Egret roost came into view. Along we paddled Shellduck and Sandpipers flying by. Squadrons of Swans flying elegantly overhead crisscrossing the river for most of the day.

With a neap tide running we paddled with it but had to constantly find the main channel to enjoy a depth of water where the blade could submerge fully. Past salt marshes we paddled, the sand giving way to estuary mud and the sight of Aveton Gifford came into view. The correct pronunciation of the name is a source of debate, some of the alternatives are 'Awton Jifford', 'Averton Gifford' or simply 'AG'.

The plan was to have lunch at the weir and on we went paddling against a slight flow from the river. Under the ancient road bridge, believed to have been completed in around 1440 and then widened by a third in 1817. This can be clearly seen when you paddle under it. A remarkable structure when you think it is a major road link and has stood for over 600 years relatively untouched.

Suddenly the river narrows, the trees over hang and the weir comes into view. Our lunch spot was already occupied by a couple enjoying the quiet and solitude of the secluded spot. We landed and joined them for lunch! With nutrition on our mind and being honed athletes Paul produced a rather nice chocolate cake to finish the meal off nicely.

With perfect timing we were now on slack water and launched for the paddle back. The river flow and ebb tide taking us along at a much faster pace than the paddle up. A brief stop on one of the salt marshes to do some plant spotting. The sea purslane was in abundance but alas far too early for the marsh samphire and its succulent stems.

Before long the boathouse came into view and the end of a glorious afternoon out in the fresh air and sunshine with such wonderful company.

I would encourage club members to come along on these paddles and enjoy our local estuaries. It takes a bit more effort to arrange and plan but the results are always a cracking day out. If you are interested in joining in please check Wet News or the forum for details.



Paul and the chocolate cake, and a grin that your favourite editor would be proud of.

Communication Breakdown...

... will be remembered by certain elite club members as a classic Led Zeppelin track recorded way back in 1968. The rest of you will probably be thinking, "What are you on about? I wasn't even born in 1968."

At the end of last Tuesdays three star session Banjo Mark decided he would round off the evening by taking part in an Eskimo rescue, Mark being the person who needed rescuing. There was a slight flaw in this plan in that Marks' partner was unaware of the role that he was expected to play and had already got off the water, resulting in a rather soggy banjo. Gentle readers, if you have stayed with me thus far, (and I'm not sure that I would have done), all of this is a very convoluted way of informing you that Communication Breakdown can be adapted for the banjo.

Old Nosey, our roaming reporter...

... noted last month that turning up for an appointment 24 hours early is a bit excessive, however turning up 24 hours early does at least give the errant party a chance to turn up again on the right day, which wouldn't be the case should you turn up 24 hours late. Old Nosey would ask that your favourite editor be duly informed.

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.

Picture Bazaar
Photo by Terry Calcott.



Bob left his boat for so long that it took root.

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
May. Tues 7, 18:00	1* plus 2* kayak 3* sea 3* plus	Mount Batten	Andy & Jenny Nicholls Jane Hitchings & Chris Doidge Clive Ashford Ken Hamblin & Dave Fisher
10-12	Wye weekend <i>Booking essential, see Jan / March Wet News for details.</i>	Kington youth hostel	Clive Ashford 01752 344425
Fri 10, 18:00	Open boat	Mount Batten	Ian Ruse 07980 355019.
Sat 11, 09:00	1 star course	Mount Batten	Phil Cleave / Tom Clarke.
Sat 11, 10:00	Recreational paddle	Mount Batten	Neville Cannon 07773 342787
Tues 14, 18:00	1* plus 2* kayak Open boat 3* sea 3* plus	Mount Batten	Dave Fisher / Ken Hamblin Terry Calcott / Mary McArdle Ted Fearon Doug Sitch Clive Ashford
Fri 17, 18:00	Open boat	Mount Batten	Ian Ruse 07980 355019.
Sat 18, 10:15	Estuary paddle <i>Meet at the car park on the Saltash side of the Tamar (just up river of the bridges) (GR433590), ready to paddle for 10:15. We will launch from the slipway then have a leisurely paddle up with the tide to explore Kingsmill creek.</i> <i>If you require any club equipment meet at Mountbatten at 09:00. I will confirm that the trip is running on the club forum nearer the date. Terry Calcott 07828652775</i>	Kingsmill Creek	Terry Calcott 07828 652775.
Sun 19, 09:00	Go Canoeing	Mount Batten	Mark Cox / Phil Cleave
Tues 21, 18:00	1* plus 2* kayak Open boat 3* sea 3* plus	Mount Batten	Dave Fisher / Ken Hamblin Terry Calcott / Mary McArdle Ted Fearon Doug Sitch Clive Ashford
Fri 24, 18:00	Open boat	Mount Batten	Ian Ruse 07980 355019.
Sat 25, 10:00	Recreational paddle	Mount Batten	Ian Brimacombe 07720 957304. / Linda Brady 07847 065804
Sun 26, 09:00	Go Canoeing	Mount Batten	Jenny & Andy Nicholls
Tues 28, 18:00	1* plus 2* kayak Open boat 3* sea 3* plus	Mount Batten	Dave Fisher / Ken Hamblin Terry Calcott / Mary McArdle Ted Fearon Doug Sitch Clive Ashford
Fri 31, 18:00	Open boat	Mount Batten	Ian Ruse 07980 355019.
June. Sat 1, 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 1, 10:30	Intro Rec Paddle	Mount Batten	John Mitchell 01752 219246.

June (continued).

Sun 2, 09:00	1 Star course	Mount Batten	Joy Ashford / John Mitchell
Tues 4, 18:00	1* plus 2* kayak Open boat 3* sea 3* plus	Mount Batten	Dave Fisher / Ken Hamblin Terry Calcott / Mary McArdle Ted Fearon Ian Brimacombe Clive Ashford
Wed 5, 18:00	Paddlepower	Mount Batten	Andy & Jenny Nicholls
Fri 7, 18:00	Sportivate one star (1) / Youth session	Mount Batten	Zoe Boyle 07814 131654. / Ian Brimacombe.
Fri 7, 18:00	Open boat	Mount Batten	Ian Ruse 07980 355019.
Sat 8, 10:00	Recreational Paddle	Mount Batten	Neville Cannon 07773 342787.
Sun 9, 09:00	1 star course	Mount Batten	Joy Ashford / John Mitchell
Tues 11, 18:00	1* plus 2* star Open boats 3* sea 3* plus	Mount Batten	Julie Elworthy / Andy Kittle Justin Frost / Mark Porter Martin Mills Chris Doidge /Jane Hitchings John Elworthy
Wed 12, 18:00	Paddlepower	Mount Batten	Andy & Jenny Nicholls
Fri 14, 18:00	Sportivate one star (1) / Youth session	Mount Batten	Zoe Boyle 07814 131654. / Ian Brimacombe.
Fri 14, 18:00	Open boat	Mount Batten	Ian Ruse 07980 355019.
15 – 16	Midsummer(ish) camp <i>See March Wet News and watch the website forum for details.</i>	TBA	Clive Ashford 01752 344425.
Sat 15, 09:00	Go Canoeing	Mount Batten	Jenny & Andy Nicholls
Sat 15, 10:00	Recreational Paddle	Mount Batten	Tony Blackmore 07773 237680.
Tues 18, 18:00	1* plus 2* star Open boats 3* sea 3* plus	Mount Batten	Julie Elworthy / Andy Kittle Justin Frost / Mark Porter Martin Mills Chris Doidge /Jane Hitchings John Elworthy
Wed 19, 18:00	Paddlepower	Mount Batten	Andy & Jenny Nicholls
Thurs 20, 18:00	1 star course	Mount Batten	Terry Calcott / Linda Brady
Fri 21, 18:00	Sportivate one star (1) / Youth session	Mount Batten	Zoe Boyle 07814 131654. / Ian Brimacombe.
Advanced notice			
12 – 14 July	Roseland Weekend <i>See March Wet News for details.</i>	Roseland Centre	
Sat 27 July	3 star sea kayak assessment		Clive Ashford 01752 344425
Sat 27 July	Breakwater Swim	Breakwater	TBA
Sun 8 Sept	3 star sea kayak assessment		Clive Ashford 01752 344425