



Eddylines



Port of Plymouth Canoeing Association

Newsletter 12 October 2015

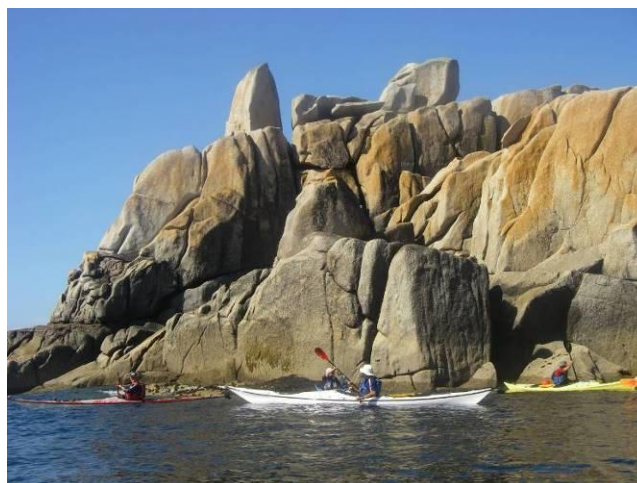
Welcome to the October edition of Eddylines. Many thanks to Clive and Bruce for their article contributions this month. Sorry for the slightly later publication date, it had not slipped my mind honestly. This will be my final edition as Editor. I have enjoyed the experience of producing the monthly newsletter and if I had the time and the editorial content to fill it each month I would of liked to have continued. A year ago I sent out a survey asking members thoughts about having a monthly newsletter and if they read it. The majority were in support and liked the articles and the club diary telling them what was going on. The club has had a monthly newsletter in some form since it was established in 1972. I'm sure there will be something following on from Eddylines in some form. Newsletters form a unique historical record of the club and what it has been doing and what achievements etc have taken place. Forums, Facebook, Twitter are great at passing on information and maybe they will be the only club information source in the future.

Isles of Scilly camp 2016

A couple of photos to give a flavour of next year's club trip to the Isles of Scilly. If you are interested in going along please see the attached application form or contact Joy Ashford who is the organizer.

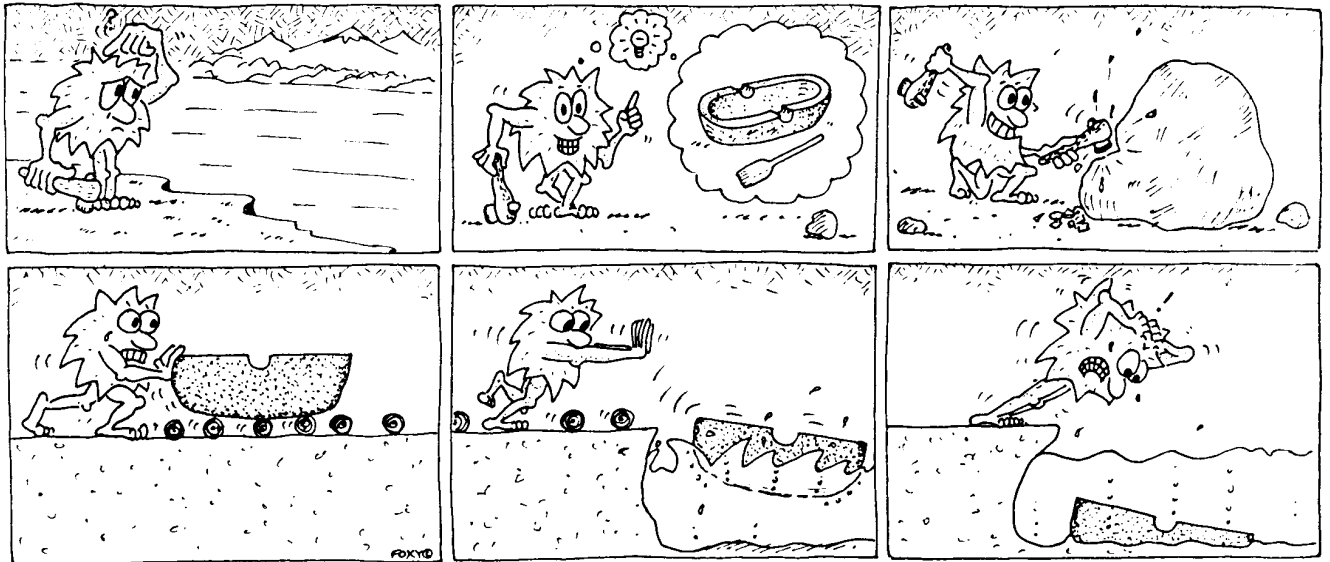


Pelistry Beach (Our local paddling base) photo from Terry Calcott



Stunning rock formations (Photo from Terry Calcott)

The First Canoe



Recycled from a 1990's club newsletter

Photo Snippet



12. Getting in the canoe safely (1).



14. Getting in the canoe safely (3).



13. Getting in the canoe safely (2).



15. How to hold the paddle.

A photo from a 1958 book, it made me smile (Terry Calcott)

Club meal Saturday 5th December (Paula Jones)

Let's have a drink or curry at Mountbatten on Saturday, 5th December at 6.30pm. I am in receipt of a booking form but need some numbers for a curry. £5 to me please.

I will need to let Mountbatten know. Everyone welcome.

Contact Paula Jones phone 01364 72548 or email paula@beara.eclipse.co.uk

Congratulations

Well done to Paul Hewson on passing the 3 Star Sea award.

Winter Pool Sessions

As we have done over previous years we will be running a series of sessions where with one to one help you can practice wet skills, be it support strokes to build up confidence or learning to roll etc in a nice warm environment.

All sessions will be in Plympton Swimming Pool on Saturdays 4pm until 5pm. Club boats are available but need to be booked through the equipment officer. Any boat being used in the pool will need to be clean, this means letting the air bags down and removing them, rinsing thoroughly and then replacing air bags. They must be free from all mud, grit sand etc. As always with club rules under 18s must wear helmets but Buoyancy aids are optional. The cost has gone up slightly this year to us so it will now cost £11 per space, per session. We are limited to a maximum of 10 places per session. Kayaks over 3.0 up to 5.2meters (day touring and sea kayaks) are permitted but you will need to pay for 2 places so £22.

Session Dates to come

- 31st October,
- 28th November,
- 12th December.
- January, February and March are also planned but not yet confirmed.

All bookings will be taken via our website. Sessions are open to members first but if spaces are available they will be offered to non-members from the Thursday evening before the session. To book please follow the link on the PPCA website home page, (look for the pool picture top right).

Annual General Meeting

It's that time of year again, our club AGM is coming. This is an important event and all club members are invited to attend. It is your chance to listen to the various club officers round up the past year with their reports. The various club awards will also be presented to those deserving members.

The room is booked for Monday 19th October 7pm. We will be in the room beside the bar upstairs.

All committee posts are up for renewal. If you wish to be nominated please send your details (name of post with proposer and seconder) to ppca@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk . Any questions please ask one of the committee.

Please support this important occasion, it is a chance to meet your fellow members and have a chat and socialise,

Old Father Thames Weekend (Clive Ashford)

Having run several successful paddling trips to the beautiful Wye and Severn rivers I decided to try something new for 2015. After a morning tippy tapping away on the internet I had found a canoeist's guide to the river Thames and bunk house style accommodation near Oxford. I love it when a plan comes together and this plan was beginning to look good.

With the accommodation booked I advertised the weekend in the excellent but soon to be defunct Eddylines, and also on the PPCA website. I sat back and waited to be inundated by applications but in the end I was completely underwhelmed. With just 8 people signed up for the trip it became obvious that club members didn't share my enthusiasm for paddling on Old Father Thames, so with a tinge of sadness I cancelled our bunk house booking and resigned myself to a weekend at home. That was until Merryl mentioned that she has a sister in law (Claire) who lives near Lechlade, (right in the heart of Thames country), and that Claire had suggested we could stay with her. Claire's bluff was quickly called and quicker than a quick thing our little adventure was back on track. I was once again a happy man.



Misty morning on the Thames (Photo Joy Ashford)

We descended on Claire's house during the afternoon of Friday 18 September having first spent some time stationary on what I will refer to as the M5 car park. All frustrations were quickly dispelled because Claire turned out to be the perfect hostess, so much so that in a very short time we were relaxed and feeling at home. Then it was beer o'clock followed by a wonderful PPCA style meal, which on this occasion was a most excellent Merryl produced vegan friendly stew with dumplings followed by an equally excellent Clive produced blackberry crumble. Yum yum, there were no leftovers.

On Saturday morning Claire watched bemused as we prepared for our little adventure. She said something along the lines of, "There does seem to be an awful lot of faffing going on." Gentle readers, included in our small but select band of explorers were Joy and Merryl, both of whom are honorary members of the all England faffing club. Of course there was faffing going on. Joy steadfastly denies any of this, instead describing her actions as "essential preparation." I have now seen the error of Claire's ways and agree with Joy's essential preparation description; I don't want any more bruises. (It was faffing).

In spite of all this essential preparation our flotilla of 4 open boats and 1 kayak took to the river just below St John's Lock whilst there was still mist was rising off the water, making for quite an eerie scene. To my surprise there was hardly any flow on the river so although we were travelling downstream we had to paddle all the way, which kept us busy and once the sun had burned off the mist it also kept us warm. It wasn't all hard work though; in order to paddle on the Thames you need a licence, I was delighted to find that our licence allowed us to use all the locks on the river meaning that we could have a rest while the lockkeeper ran around operating the sluices and gates for us. Spoilt or what? Then just to add a bit of spice to proceedings one lock had a canoe pass built alongside it. This canoe pass consisted of a narrow channel cut in a loop that bypassed the lock and its associated weir, allowing us to paddle around the lock. Running this channel certainly spoilt an otherwise peaceful day as there were several whoops of excitement and one scream of terror. Joy took a video and the sound track went, "Smile Helga." "Arrrhg!"

Unlike the steep sided valleys of the Wye and Severn the topography surrounding the Thames is far gentler, meaning that the Thames is not closely followed by any roads. The result is very peaceful with no traffic noise and a feeling of remoteness. The peaceful atmosphere was further enhanced because

autumn was painting a kaleidoscope. 50 shades of green plus reds, yellows and golds, all topped by the occasional iridescent flash of a kingfisher. You had to be there.

The river bank was varied, sometimes lined with mature willows and alders and other times being covered in scrub. On many occasions juicy blackberries, dusty ripe sloes and giant damsons were in easy reach. Linda and Paul stopped to harvest these once but didn't repeat the exercise because it took them so long to catch us up again.

We eventually reached our get out at New Bridge (15 miles from our start point) and by the time we had sorted ourselves out and returned to Claire's house it was not only beer o'clock but also time to order the Indian takeaway that was going to be our evening meal. It was a tired but happy bunch that swapped tales around the dining room table that evening.

Although she is not a paddler Claire joined us for this paddle, fitting in like a glove. Not only did Claire become a competent paddler but she also provided banana muffins at lunch time, and as we all know cake is better than paddling. By the end of our 15 mile journey Claire admitted that her shoulders were a little stiff and she decided not to join us on Sunday, but as this was Claire's first open boat trip she was probably entitled to feel a little fatigued.

So Sunday morning saw more "essential preparation" going on until we eventually launched into the Thames at Cricklade, rising mist once again in evidence. As Claire wasn't with us I decided to join Joy in the open boat. I would just like you to note that I made this decision all by myself and under no duress at all. I like open boating. I sat in the front leaving the expert Joy to steer in the back. Joy complained that I spoiled the view, which was rather odd as she was looking at my best side.

The guide says that the first few miles of river downstream from Cricklade are shallow and weedy, a fairly accurate description that left us wondering if we were paddling on the Thames or the Amazon. What the guide doesn't say is that the navigation here is not maintained and that in many places the river is choked with fallen trees. We did manage to negotiate most of these blockages by virtue of lying flat in the boats and pulling ourselves through, but on one occasion Dai had to adopt a more pioneering spirit in order to clear a passage. This did slow us down, the first mile and a half taking an hour and a half to complete. (I must confess that my sense of humour was in danger of being mislaid).



River Thames or Amazon (Photo joy Ashford)

On the plus side the water here was fairly clear so we were able to see a good number of quite large fish and shoals of baby fish. We didn't try to catch any of these because Joy isn't keen on fresh water fish. The channel gradually cleared (the term is relative) and our progress improved until a few miles upstream from Lechlade where, what joy, we once again found ourselves in the maintained navigation. Once the river widened we started to encounter anglers, a group of people who seemed totally unable to raise a smile between them. I didn't realise that angling was spelt glum.

We made passage through St John's Lock, the only lock of the day, and very shortly after clambered off the river. After what I should probably describe as more essential preparations we were eventually ready to say our fond farewells and to wend our weary way back to Devon. The journey home was far easier than the journey up and we didn't use the M5 as a car park, not even once.



Tree choked Thames below Cricklade (Photo Joy Ashford)

We did have a most marvellous adventure. I was very pleasantly surprised by the Thames. Being a maintained navigation with locks etc I was expecting the waterway to be busy, but we hardly saw any river traffic as we paddled peacefully through beautiful countryside. All the people we met were friendly and helpful, (with the exception of the anglers), the lock keepers being a particularly affable bunch. Prior to the weekend Meryll had made my life easy by volunteering to do all the shopping and Claire was an absolute star by inviting 7 complete strangers to stay at her house. Finally all the paddlers were a joy to be with, which does leave me wondering where the other 120 club members were.

Paddling Under the Golden Gate Bridge (Bruce & Susann Burton)

Recently I fulfilled a long ambition and went for a sea kayak trip out from San Francisco Bay, under the famous Golden Gate Bridge and along a length of the Pacific Coast.

Susann and I had arranged to go on the trip organized by a local kayaking company, SeaTrek. We arrived promptly at 8.30 in the morning at a Horseshoe Bay harbor near Sausalito, just inside the Golden Gate entrance to San Francisco Bay. Our guide turned out to be a very crusty, long term and very experienced kayaking dude called Mark.



His first action was to suggest we gate-crashed the toilets of a rather expensive restaurant nearby as a better alternative to the local portaloos. This turned out to be a good choice, although we did have to get past a receptionist who was expecting us to order an expensive breakfast. Essentials dealt with, we kitted up and checked out the double kayak that we had arranged. It was a bit beaten up and had obviously seen a good many seasons, but was perfectly serviceable. We were joined by a couple of others, another Bruce and a guy called Richard. Both were fairly inexperienced kayakers and were in singles.

We set off on a glorious sunny, clear morning, with very little wind. Almost perfect kayaking conditions. Soon we were heading well out into the Bay entrance to catch the ebbing tide and then right under the Golden Gate Bridge.



Once we got out of the Bay and into the Pacific Ocean, we encountered a quite large swell. The previous evening had been fairly windy and had built up the waves. However, there were no breaking seas and the paddling was pretty easy.

We paddled more or less in a straight line to Point Diablo, seeing a few harbor porpoises on the way, together with many pelicans (not a common sight in Plymouth Sound) and then across Bonita Bay to Bonita Point. Until then we had been relatively sheltered. As we turned the point the water became more turbulent and the Pacific swells were crashing into the rocks. Unfortunately this meant that we couldn't get into some of the caves or do much in the way of rock hopping. The double kayak was also a bit difficult to manoeuvre and hard to make quick turns. We did a couple of slots between rocks, however and got a feeling for the power in these big waves. Finally, after passing Bird Rock (white and rather smelly) we pulled into Rodeo Beach, landing in some modest, but interesting surf.

The guys in the single kayaks played in the surf for a while, with more or less success.



Susann and I stayed dry!



After lunch we set off back along the same route that we had arrived. By then the tide had dropped a little, but the wind had freshened as well, so still not much opportunity to rock hop. We hugged the coast more on the way back and saw a good number of harbour seals.



Just before the Golden Gate Bridge we pulled out onto a small beach with a wonderful view of the Bridge and San Francisco behind.



Finally we paddled under the Bridge, catching the flooding tide and surfing downwind to our starting point. A great trip.

News Flash

You may have noticed recently that club member David Pedlow has been in the local and national media. TV, radio and newspaper and now Eddyline. I won't go into the details but it involved his bicycle a channel ferry and lots of coffee. Well done David a great adventure.

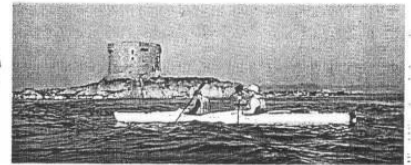


The Old Boys (Photo Joy Ashford)



Ready to go

HITTING WHITE BALLS INTO LITTLE HOLES



Andy and Nigel off Jersey.

So there we were, 02.00 hrs Wednesday 20th May 1992, Lannacombe Beach, 1.5 miles west of Start Point, with a canoe venture to Guernsey, 60 n miles of open waters in a double sea kayak, crossing one of the busiest shipping channels in the world.

Countless hours had been spent in preparation, letters by the dozen and phone calls by the score. Andy Stamp and I had dedicated long hours training, enduring rough and at times cold weather in preparation.

By 02.15 hrs we were underway, a clear night, a bright moon, a slight swell and a light northeasterly wind on our port quarter. The magic of the night was with us, perfect.

05.00 hrs. My body was screaming for shut eye, starved of sleep bar one short hour before we had departed. The previous 19 hours of waking were starting to take their toll. Continuous yawning, difficulty in concentrating the mind and a fuzziness made me question why two normal family men would undertake such an exposed crossing.

'For the same reason that people hit white balls into little holes,' was Andy's stock reply. It summed up our situation pretty well.

05.50 hrs. In the middle of nowhere, the singing of *Rule Britannia*, *Greensleeves* and *Scotland the Brave*, to name but a few, could be heard emanating from our small craft, the introduction music to Radio 4, the prelude to the Shipping Forecast, a stop, a well earned rest, food and drink. Our spirits were high again, the outlook good.

10.00 hrs. 8 hours into our crossing, about 28 n miles under our belts, no problems. Half an hour later it was to be a different story. All the seemingly tall tales you may of heard from mariners about crossing the main shipping traffic separation zone in a small boat are true. Imagine trying to cross a motorway on foot and all the oncoming vehicles are without steering or brakes; there you have a comparison with the shipping lane and our predicament. The first of what can only be described as mammoth office blocks appeared out of the haze; by now visibility was down to 5 - 6 n miles. It passed harmlessly astern some 1.5 n miles distant. A feeling of intimidation came over us; we were in the lap of the gods. Several more vessels came by, fleeting glimpses through the mist, the constant thumping of engines pushing thousands of tons of steel through the water, large office blocks some 300 ft long, 100 ft high, moving at speeds of between 20 and 30 knots.

We estimate at best 10 minutes before an office block would cross our path, 5 minutes to determine its shape, course and direction and 5 minutes to take any necessary evasive action.

A grey object began to materialize

from the haze. We sat like rabbits frozen on a road of doom, transfixed by a pair of oncoming anchors. We debated whether to go forwards or backwards, our paddles making token movements. The shape bore no resemblance to any ship we had seen before, a square rectangular block with a foaming bow wave increasing in size as the minutes ticked by. Our 5 minutes were up; decision time, a brief exchange and the founder members of the Devout Cowards Club were turning their kayak and heading for Start Point. A bulk container ship passed within 300 metres of our new position.

The inshore zone revealed changes in boat sizes and types. The haze still restricted our visibility to about 5 n miles. With a combination of atmospheric and tiredness, our attempts to sight the island were frustrated. We paddled on blissfully unaware how close we were.

At 18.00 hrs I called a halt; we had been paddling for nearly sixteen hours. A combination of compass error, windage, approximate navigation and dodging big boats had caused us to miss our objective.

Logic and dead reckoning told me we had drifted to the west of Guernsey. By my estimation, if we paddled for 2 or 3 hours due east the island would come into view. Andy agreed although a hint in his voice indicated a slight doubt but as final confirmation he suggested using my small radio to confirm Guernsey's position. He reasoned that the VHF transmissions worked by line of sight and any object in between would block its reception. I tuned in to Radio Guernsey with the radio held close to my body. In the meantime Andy started to turn the kayak through a full circle whilst keeping his eye on the forward compass. At about 280 degrees the reception faded slightly. A reciprocal course of 100 degrees would put us on line with the island. We called up Peter Port Control on our marine radio and advised on our estimated time of arrival at Hanois Light.

We agreed, if necessary, to wait until darkness in order to use the navigation lights that warn of the islands.

An hour later (19.10) we made another call to Peter Port Control to confirm all

was well. The duty officer had locked onto our transmitter and, by use of a radio direction finder, confirmed we were on a bearing of 283 degrees from Guernsey. Andy's theory had worked; the electronics wizard had worked wonders. By 19.30 hrs the unmistakable faint outline of land was visible. One and a half hours later Hanois Light glided by on our port side.

At 21.45 hrs, with darkness just beginning to fall, the Voyager's bow touched the slip at Fort Gray. After nineteen and a half hours we had made it. In our twenty odd years of association on other demanding expeditions I had seen the same expression on Andy's face. It showed no weariness, no aching, just a warm smiling feeling of achievement. His expressions mirrored my thoughts.

We would stay for one day on Guernsey as guests of Brian and Marie Aplin, then go on to Jersey, our arrival coinciding with the Jersey Sea Symposium. Our trip had been planned well before we knew of this event. As luck would dictate, being able to attend such a well organized, prestigious event on the sea kayaking calendar proved the icing on the cake.

Why did we do it? I wanted show by using techniques and designs from other disciplines an efficient and safe crossing could be made. Marathon racing came first and foremost to mind. In particular, three items of equipment performed admirably.

Firstly, the Voyager's sleek bow and fore section is more akin to a K2 than the traditional lines of a sea kayak; as a result it is possible to maintain the same speed as a comparable sea kayak double with less effort. Secondly, our paddles were matched Lendal Powermasters, carbon 1F shafts and blades. Their construction combined strength with lightness and gave us a far greater advantage than our more traditional wooden asymmetric blades. Finally, the Nookie Marathon Cags were ideal for the conditions we encountered. Their lightweight construction and compactness made them ideal as water/windproofs which could withstand the continual and infuriating splash that is encountered on a trip of this nature.

Our thanks are extended to the following for without their assistance and support a trip of this nature would be so much harder, if not impossible:

Kirton Kayaks, Lendal Products Ltd, Nookie, British Channel Island Ferries, Brian and Marie Aplin, Kevin and Nicky Mansell, Gary Ford and, most importantly, our patient wives, Michelle and San.

Lastly, to my long time friend, fellow partner and conspirator in crime, mobile computer and one with the ears in front, Andy, thank you.

Nigel Hingston



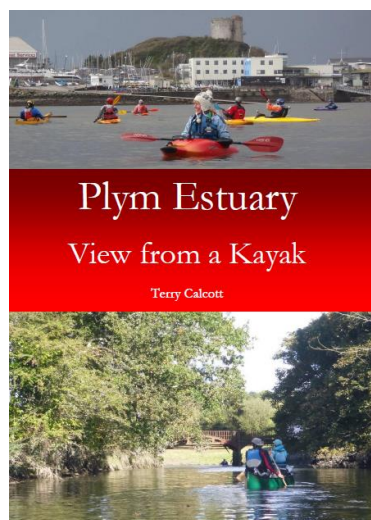
Crossing the busy shipping lanes.

A reprint of an article from 1992 about Andy Stamp & Nigel Hingstons crossing of the channel

The Plym Estuary View from a Kayak (Terry Calcott)

'The Plym Estuary' is a follow on from the previous book about Plymouth Sound (still available) but exploring that sleepy backwater of the Plym and all its hidden gems.

Price £6 a copy with all profits going to the Plymouth RNLI. If you would like a copy please email me at terryc1@blueyonder.co.uk



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% 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.

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

Wild Things, Redruth, 10% to club members.

Club Officers

President	Terry Calcott	07828652775
Chair	Mike Scott	01752 295478
Vice Chair	Jenny Nicholls	01752 952628
Club Leader	Andy Nicholls	07801367363
Asst Club Leader	Jane Hitchings	01752 691274
Secretary	Bob Grose	01548 821018
Membership Sec	Paul Hewson	07870276748
Treasurer	John Elworthy	01752 823381
Equipment Officer	Alan Ede	07799556876
Publicity Officer	Pete Anderson	07958694434
Welfare Officer	Joy Ashford	01752 344425 07891221781
Introductory co-ordinator	Tracy Jones	01752 510653
Youth Development	Damean Miller	01752 492761 07736033316

Club e-mail: PPCA@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk (e-mails to this address goes to the club secretary).

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
October			
Sat 3, 10:00	Sea Kayak paddle	TBA	Joy Ashford 01752 344425
<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>			
16:00	Swimming Pool Session	Plympton Pool	
Sun 4, 09:00	Beginners River Trip	TBA	Ken Hamblin 01751 365404
Sat 10, 10:00	Rec Paddle	Mount Batten	Terry Calcott 07828652775
Sun 11, 09:00	Beginners River Trip	TBA	Clive Ashford 01752 344425
Sat 17, 10:00	Rec Paddle	Mount Batten	Ian Brimacombe 07720957304
Sun 18, 09:00	Beginners River Trip	TBA	John / Julie Elworthy 01752 823381
Mon 19, 19:00	AGM AGM AGM AGM AGM AGM AGM AGM AGM	Mount Batten	
Sat 24, 10:00	Rec Paddle	Mount Batten	John Mitchell 01752 219246
Sun 25, 09:00	Intermediate River Trip	TBA	Doug Sitch 07966740025
Sat 31, 10:00	Rec Paddle (Halloween Paddle)	TBA	Terry Calcott 07828652775
16:00	Swimming Pool Session	Plympton Pool	

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



It takes a lot of planning to find a soft landing spot for the group (photo Terry Calcott)