



# PPCA Newsletter

## November 2018



### Introduction

Welcome to November's Newsletter. After some slim pickings last month, we have one of our bumper editions with contributions from many of our regulars. We also welcome a new contributor in the shape of Debbie Rowlands who eloquently captures that moment we've all been through when we wonder whether we're really quite as ready as we thought we were for a challenge. Maybe this will spark other budding authors to send in their contributions. New blood is always welcome and it gives me someone other than Clive to pick on.

### Editorial

Terry provides an interesting article this month in his role as club historian. The original piece was anonymous, unfortunately, but it captures a view of the club at a pivotal moment in its history when it was on the point of moving to the new sheds at Mountbatten. Its fascinating to compare and contrast what the club did then with what it does now. Some things have remained much the same but some interesting activities have been lost somewhere along the way. Anyone for canoe jousting?

Ivor Jones

Newsletter Editor

## The Committee

Committee Post	Name	Club Email	Phone Number
Club Secretary	Jackie Perry	ppca@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk secretary@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk	07523 965748
Club Leader	Ian Brimacombe	leader@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk	07720 957304
Welfare Officer	Rebekka Stiasny	welfare@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk	07939 328981
Intro Course Coordinator	Jane Hitchings	intro@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk	07837 796192
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	Gavin Bennet	publicity@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk	
Youth Development Officer	George Hamblin	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 Christmas Paddle Sat 22<sup>nd</sup> December by Terry Calcott

Yes folks it's nearly that time of year again, brush off those hats and Santa costumes, and come join your fellow club members for a paddle feast and make merry. The paddle venue will probably start and finish from Mount Batten, but if a good weather window occurs it may be away from MB. The minimum dress requirement for this paddle (in addition to your normal paddling and safety gear) is a festive hat. The preferred costume is fancy dress above the spraydeck. We always have a communal picnic of festive fayre. I will be compiling a list of sweet or savoury, so please let me know what you are bringing along.

Please let me know if you are intending coming along by email [terryc1@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:terryc1@blueyonder.co.uk) or phone 07981489857 or a post on the forum (I will start a forum post nearer the date).

The committee have been informed that the facilities at Mount Batten will be closed on this date, so sorry club members no hot showers or changing rooms available. But this will not stop the joviality and festive merriment.



If you have been living in the Atlas Mountains in deepest Morocco for the last few months, or elsewhere without access to Wi-Fi, you may well have overlooked the event of the year, the PPCA awards for 2018!! But fear not, for below is a few paragraphs to highlight what you have missed!

Traditionally the Club Leader, or maybe a sub-committee, get together in secret to decide who to award the Club's glassware to, who are the deserving individuals. This can actually be a difficult & daunting task given the diverse activities of our members.

So for 2018 we decided to try something different.



First we renamed the category for club awards, we went for six categories (because we had six awards!) and named them:

- 1) White Water Award
- 2) Sea Kayak Award
- 3) Open Boating Award
- 4) The Coaches Award
- 5) The Oscar Award
- 6) The Leadership Award

Still being radical we decided to ask club members to nominate fellow paddlers, allowing each member the opportunity to nominate up to three people in each category. We gave a very wide description on what the nominating criteria was. For example, the criteria for white water was simply:

*“The **White Water Paddling Award** presented to a member who has been outstanding in the field of White Water paddling. This can be the best newcomer to the sport, a paddler who is out there paddling at every opportunity, a paddler who has developed their technical skills over the year, or any other reason why you think this member should be presented the White Water Award 2018.”*

What really took the sub-committee by surprise was the number of club members who made a nomination and the number of nominations made. At the last count 25 members sent in nominations, and in total there was 110 people nominated, an absolutely fantastic response so a huge ‘thank you’ to those members who responded.

So who did the awards go to? Carry on reading and look at the photos below!

*Note: Certificates presented at the ceremony were signed and dated*

## The White Water Award 2018 – Gavin Bennet



Port of Plymouth Canoeing Association



WHITE WATER AWARD

Certificate of Achievement 2018

This certificate is awarded to **Gavin Bennet** in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the club's White Water activities during 2017/2018. Comments from his peers include statements such as "He threw himself into river paddling with such incredible enthusiasm, with of course the occasional swim, but always surfaced with a grin from ear to ear!" "From starting as a novice to completing the Upper Dart in less than four months is an amazing feat!" "I think his courage should be hugely admired and I find his paddling skills truly inspiring"

From the PPCA Club Committee and Club Members we thank you for the outstanding role you have played within the PPCA.

.....  
 Ian Brimacombe  
 PPCA Club Leader  
 Date: 26 Oct 2018

.....  
 Ken Hamblin  
 Club Chair  
 Date: 26 Oct 2018

## The Sea Kayak Award 2018 – Clive Ashford



Port of Plymouth Canoeing Association



SEA KAYAKING AWARD

Certificate of Achievement 2018

This certificate is awarded to **CLIVE ASHFORD** in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the club's sea kayaking activities during 2017/2018. Comments from his peers include statements such as "He definitely leads by example!" "Clive looks for new venues away from MB and thinks of new ways to try and engage the club members such as his recent tidal play session" "Clive's sense of humour is unique and his overall style just makes you want to come along on his paddles!"

The PPCA Committee and Club Members thank you for the outstanding role you have played within the PPCA.



.....  
 Ian Brimacombe  
 PPCA Club Leader  
 Date: 26 Oct 2018

.....  
 Ken Hamblin  
 Club Chair  
 Date: 26 Oct 2018

 **Port of Plymouth Canoeing Association** 

**OPEN BOATING AWARD**

**Certificate of Achievement 2018**

This certificate is awarded to **Rachael Bisset-Bullock & Marty Johnston** in recognition of their outstanding contribution to the club's Open Boating activities during 2017/2018. Comments from their peers include words such as "their enthusiasm for the sport comes shining through" "They are a walking advert for the PPCA, always smiling" "They add glamour, charm & fun to open boating as well as paddling beautifully together".

From the PPCA Committee and Club Members we thank you for the outstanding role you have played within the PPCA.



.....  
Ian Brimacombe  
Club Leader  
Date: 26 Oct 2018

.....  
Ken Hamblin  
Club Chair  
Date: 26 Oct 2018

 **Port of Plymouth Canoeing Association** 

**The Coaches Award**

**Certificate of Achievement 2018**

This certificate is awarded to **Marty Johnston** in recognition of his approach to paddling, his ability to quickly assimilate knowledge and for the speed in which he has progressed gaining both in confidence and technical skills whilst out on the water. With a cheerful smile, he is always there to lend a hand and go that extra bit to help others whilst also on the lookout for that next challenge!

From the PPCA Committee and Club Members we thank you for the outstanding role you have played within the PPCA.



.....  
Ian Brimacombe  
Club Leader  
Date: 26 Oct 2018

.....  
Ken Hamblin  
Club Chair  
Date: 26 Oct 2018

The OSCAR Award 2018 – cough, blush Tony Sickelmore



Port of Plymouth Canoeing Association



**THE OSCAR AWARD**  
Certificate of Achievement 2018

This certificate is awarded to **Tony Sickelmore** in recognition for his time, effort and dedication in working for the club during this year. Club Treasurer, organising two Open Days, Paddlefest 2018, a club trip to the Scillies for 25 people, enrolling the club as ambassadors for Plymouth against Plastics and, a first for the PPCA, a “Coastal Clean Up Paddle” which has gained the Club huge publicity and a strong movement within the membership to work harder to help clean Plymouth Sound of marine pollution. And on top of this he gained his 3\* award!

From the PPCA Committee and Members we thank you for the outstanding role you have played within the PPCA.



.....  
Ken Hamblin  
PPCA Chair  
Date: 26 Oct 2018

The Leadership Award 2018 – Ian Brimacombe



Port of Plymouth Canoeing Association



**THE LEADERSHIP AWARD**  
Certificate of Achievement 2018

This certificate is awarded to **Ian Brimacombe** in recognition for his leadership during 2017/2018. Comments from his peers include statements such as “Often teasing, sorry, testing his students in mischievous ways to make sure they are paying attention. He makes learning fun but students must be prepared to get wet, very wet!” “His dedication, unfailing cheerfulness and mischievous sense of fun make him an outstanding coach. He is happy to really push the boundaries for the youngsters from Paddlepower upwards” “for his dedication to the club, plus all the background work that takes place for our training nights to go ahead, Pool Sessions and calendar events, Thank you Brim”.

From the PPCA Committee and Members we thank you for the outstanding role you have played within the PPCA.

.....  
Ken Hamblin  
PPCA Chair  
Date: 26 Oct 2018



So Finally, a massive ‘Thank You’ to all who took part, to those who took the effort to nominate, and congratulations to those who received an award.



### 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**

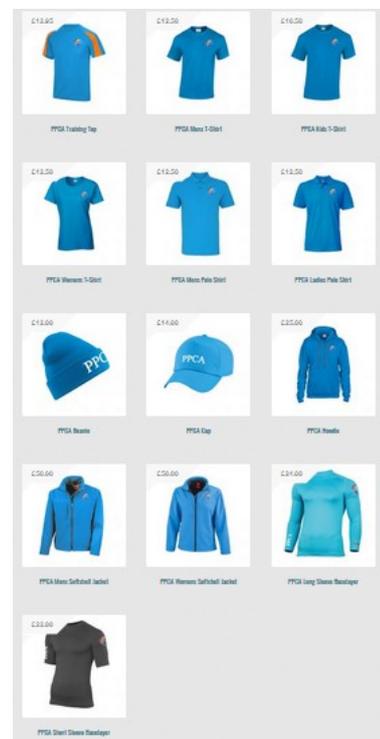
**FAMILY & FRIENDS  
ALL WELCOME**



### 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/>



### PPCA History Update by Terry Calcott

For those club members that do not know I have been compiling the history of the club for several years now. It is still ongoing with the research phase very much active. Pulling together as much information from as many sources covering the past 46 years takes its time. The ultimate aim is to produce a book of the club history and also a presentation for the members to come to. As a taster I will be sending Ivor some snippets to include in Wet News each month.

The article below was written 20 years in 1998 ago and gives a summary of the club and all of its activities. Not much different from what we do today but certainly a lot going on. For interest the club did a beach clean that year but not sure if it was organised by the club.

Feb 1998

The Port of Plymouth Canoeing Association (PPCA) was formed in June 1972 in response to a need for safe and structured canoeing within the Port of Plymouth. The club has developed and changed over the years but still retains some of its early heritage. The club is well established with over 100 memberships (individual and family) with members whose ages vary from seven to seventy. The club is currently based on Commercial Wharf in the historic Barbican area of Plymouth. We have two large rented boathouses that store 40 or more club boats and over 50 members' boats, ranging from double sea kayaks to bats and open canoes. Through an affiliation, PPCA has had the use of facilities of the MSC clubhouse including a lounge, changing facilities and bar.

Last year we celebrated our Silver Jubilee with a range of activities during one weekend. There was a mass paddle starting from Calstock (up the River Tamar) with paddlers joining in along the way ending in Plymouth Sound. There was a highly successful 'Come & Try It' session with a large variety of types of boats available (thanks to our local canoe store). Also arranged was a sea kayak race, a canoe jousting competition, skills demonstrations as well as a formal dinner and dance in the evening.

Being located in Plymouth Sound has led to a very strong tradition in Sea kayaking within the club, and has enabled the club to take advantage of the excellent coastline and surf beaches throughout the South West of England. Kayak surfing is taken seriously within the club with large number of club members taking up the sport. Popular local spots are at Bantham/Bigbury on the South Coast and Widemouth on the North Coast. The club has a number of very good paddlers with several members in the British squad in recent years.

In addition to paddling on the sea, the PPCA is well placed for a range of river paddling. There are a number of outstanding tidal rivers close at hand as well as a few whitewater gems. The rivers Tamar and Dart provide much enjoyment for whitewater addicts through the winter months along with a few steep and rocky local 'spate' runs for those requiring something harder.

The regular activities of the club are many and varied. The annual programme provides coaching in several disciplines at a variety of levels. Through the summer months there are introductory courses (1\*) sessions on Thursday evenings, 'Club Night' on Wednesdays, 2/3\* training on Tuesdays and a recreational paddle on Saturdays. The club runs 4\* training sessions and open boating sessions on demand. High quality coaching is available in Inland, Sea & Surf, for Kayak and for Open Canoe.

Thursday nights see the Rainbow Scheme in operation. This scheme is targeted for the 8-11 year olds and has been very successful. The scheme focuses on having 'fun' within a structured and safe environment. The children learn basic kayak skills, learn to work as a team and get a great deal of enjoyment. The club makes special provision for young people, both in terms of equipment (including smaller boats and paddles) and development.

In the winter, recreational trips on Saturdays continue with whitewater and surf trips arranged for every Sunday. Also, there is a Club Night in the Mayflower Sailing Club on Wednesday evenings, with arranged talks, training courses and of course, access to the bar! For those wanting to learn to roll or improve their recovery strokes in the warm, a series of pool sessions are organised in the start of winter. These are highly popular with many club members learning to roll in a few short weeks.

Club members encompass a wide spectrum of interest and pursue their sport in a variety of destinations. Members have paddled the coastlines of Scotland, the Scillies and even Alaska, as well as the whole length and breadth of the South West peninsula. It was a PPCA member, Andy Stamp who completed the record-breaking solo crossing of the English Channel from Start Point to Guernsey. Club members have paddled whitewater around the world, in Scotland, Wales, the Alps, California, Nepal and Ecuador and still come back to paddle the local rivers.

Some of the paddling activities enjoyed over the last year by the club include the Exe Descent, a Beach Clean Up, canoe orienteering, Sea Kayak Races and safety support to the Dart Raft Race and Torbay Swim. The PPCA has also enjoyed an active participation in canoe polo in the Southwest region over many years with some success in the league. On the social calendar, the club has held children's parties, dinner dances, quizzes and even boat trips (including disco and bar!).

The PPCA is fortunate to have a large number of (volunteer) qualified coaches within its membership. The coaching members are well motivated and enthusiastic and provide a high quality of teaching. The club is very supportive of its coaching members and provides a great deal of formal and informal training and development. Aspirant instructors (coaches) are given support and supervision, each provided with an experienced 'mentor'. In this way, they are given the support and direction required leading them smoothly through their development. The club always welcomes new coaching members and has provided coaching assistance to the University of Plymouth and Marjon's College and to the Plymouth Coaching Panel.

The future looks exciting for the PPCA. Together with 17 other organisations, we made a bid for lottery support to convert the former RAF Mount Batten site into the Mount Batten Sailing and Watersports Centre. In October last we were informed that our bid was successful and have been awarded £2.6 million lottery money (with other charitable grants and funding, amounting to over £3 million). The new location would provide two new clubhouses for storage, as well as showers and changing facilities and the use of a bar and meeting rooms. With any major change there are always uncertainties. These are being worked through and the decision will be made during the summer.

The club welcomes all comers and has a pricing policy to help families and younger members. There is a monthly newsheet sent out to all members providing details of club news, forthcoming events, dates and other items. A bimonthly colour newsletter includes articles, trip reports, educational and training pieces including photographs of club members.

In his editorial for the last edition Ivor made reference to “furtive rain dances” on Saturday evenings. They may be “furtive” but not very “effective” of late and thus Jane H suggested a trip to Cardiff in order to hone her white water skills. She has an assessment coming up and wanted to practice. “Does it rain more in Cardiff” I hear you ask? (well actually it was just the cat snoring). “No” is the answer, but the city is home to Cardiff International White Water (CIWW), where water flow is guaranteed.

It’s been a couple of years since I penned my first impressions of White Water paddling and thus I thought it time to subject our readers to some more stories of moving fresh water antics. Fact or fiction? I’ll leave you to decide. Jane had two positive replies to her social media posting and thus it was that Steve H and the author met up at Jane’s house early on a cold Sunday morning and loaded our boats and kit in her van for an adventure. Cardiff is not so many miles away and so after some lively conversation, with Jane at the wheel and Steve at the Google Maps (even though he claims to have attended Cardiff University) we soon found ourselves sat outside a shed like building on the docks. Kayak racks were a feature of the car park, so we knew we’d come to the right place. The system on a Sunday is aptly described as “Park and Play”. To be more factual, in the first stages it is “Park and Pay” but a very reasonable £12.50 allows you to play all day, which is more than long enough for most of us. We had a look, unloaded and got changed ready for the play bit. Steve is an old hand having been a couple of times, me once making Jane today’s novice. The prospect of getting wet and cold is very real with a wintery chill in the (dry) air and a wind blowing off the dock. This is a greater concern for me due to the double bicycle inner tube repair to the neck seal of my dry suit, which I donned with fingers crossed (thus also making it easier to pull the wrist seals over hands). As it turns out, the repair lasted the day and tore open as I was making an exit from the suit at the end of the day. This was an old suit, on death row, and the convenience zip jamming no more than half way open proved to be mildly, ..... err ..... not convenient!

The facility comprises a large lagoon from which a kayak elevator rises to the top of the course. The course itself is like a large concrete chute with drops along the way and barrels arranged to create eddies. Through this, the essential ingredient is pumped at varying rates. The day starts at 4 cumecs, rises to 6 late morning and finishes at 8 after a small re-arrangement of the course for the afternoon. That is 4 to 8 cubic meters per second, or 240 to 480 tonnes of water poured down the chute every minute, for those who like impressive numbers.



It's not one of us!

So what’s it like to paddle down? First things first, this is no river.

There are no muddy banks to rest against, autumn colours to admire or the flash of a kingfisher to spot. This is quite intimidating initially and not a great place for the unconfident. There are quite a few other paddlers to bash into and kayakers are actively preyed by white water rafts, crewed by cheering kids or pre-matrimonial parties. The eddy lines are sharp and unforgiving and at the higher flow rates there is nowhere to rest as the eddies do their level best to spit you back out into the flow, preferably backwards and inverted. On the upside, you are guaranteed to be reunited with your boat & paddle at the bottom and there are nice people stationed around the course with throw lines to pull you out should it all go not according to plan. Should you find yourself looking for fish (I can state categorically that there are none) it is possible



Heroes at Lunch

to roll up although the water may be less than a foot deep over the concrete bottom of a feature. My nice new orange helmet is slightly less orange now as a result.

How did we get on? I can't remember if I promised not to mention Jane's numerous swims and Steve and my valiant efforts to rescue her each time, with total disregard for our own safety and well being. Ah yes, I did, so not wishing to cause humiliation, forget the above. Was I going to mention the swim that Steve and I took each whilst pushing the boundaries of what can be done in a kayak, as if to defy the laws of physics? Nay, I am but too modest.

Alternatively you might believe that we had a jolly good time and were completely exhausted by the time we got off the water some time after three. Jane hardly put a paddle wrong, although this did require a great deal of tongue out concentration. Steve made it look easy bar one slip up resulting in his boat finishing before him. I did a lot of rolling practice, my best effort to a round of applause from the occupants of a raft under which I completed the last two features of the course! I am told that if you get hit by a raft it is best to grab hold of the rope that runs around it – a bit like rocks being your friend in the river. I was much cheered by an experienced paddler there with a friend, who voiced that 8 cumecks is a lot more “gnarly” than 10. Who am I to argue, intrepid paddlers?



Some impressive playboat acrobatics



Retiring Heroes

One thing that you won't find on the riverside is a dry, mud free changing facility with hot showers and a cafe the services of which we availed ourselves during and at the end of the day. One word of warning – the cafe closes at 3:30 pm. There is a good little shop with lots of paddling gear for sale in the foyer of the centre, if you are unable to find what you need at K & P. There are no photos of us paddling for a very good reason, but thanks go to Steve for sharing a few images from his phone.

The journey home took a bit longer. Nothing to do with my driving, I assure you, and everything to do with not being the only weekend visitors to Wales heading home on a Sunday evening. However accounts of events of the day and some lively singing soon saw us back outside Jane's house in Ivybridge and bidding our farewells. You will have to believe what you will from my account – you could always ask Steve or Jane for confirmation. At this point it is only fair to include part of an e-mail from Jane, just for completeness sake:

*Right boys, you'd better tell the story as it really was. You can tell them that when I came off the conveyor belt the first time, past the roaring pumps and saw the course, I really did say that I wished I'd chosen knitting as a hobby instead of kayaking. I didn't bite my tongue off, I didn't swear out loud and I DIDN'T SWIM! ha ha ha! That could have been because I wasn't trying but I did get lots of eddies at 4 and 6 cumecks and only three or four at 8 because I was too busy surviving. I did keep my line apart from once when I was squashed into the side by a raft and ended up on the barrels flanking the drop and once when a loose boat spat out of an eddy as I was at the top of a drop. I think I did swear then, suggesting that it was a good for nothing, born out of wedlock, son of a bitch!*

*I was completely wrung out when we finished and didn't join Adam for "one last run" because my arms were like jelly and my torso sore and my nervous energy used up. The tank was empty. A huge latté and a cream chocolate éclair partially fixed that situation. Great day in great company and a huge challenge. I will try to play in the waves more next time but the half term crowds, serious play-boaters glued to the bottom of each drop and horrid rafts put me off.*

And as for Steve? Well he's one of the boys! Actually Steve's input should also be reiterated:

*The only thing I would like to add is concerning the 10 unsuccessful minutes spent trying to fish for bits of foam, previously constituting my footrest, circuiting a particularly annoying eddy and the entertainment it seemed to provide to some rather bemused onlookers.*

However, if you ask all of us if we'd do it again you will receive a unanimous and enthusiastic response! "Didn't we have a lovely time ....."



### Pool Sessions – A Big Thank You by Debbie Rowlands

I would just like to thank Ian Brimacombe for organising the pool sessions during October and November and especially so for turning out on these cold and dark evenings. Thank you for bringing kayaks and equipment for those of us who don't own our own yet. Thank you to all the coaches and helpers that have attended too.

For me as a novice, it has been invaluable to have the chance to practise skills in a very safe environment. Not only is the water warm, it is clear and so it's possible to see what is going on underwater. These sessions help to build confidence.

Thank you to you all for your patience with coaching – it is much appreciated. Thank you too, to the staff at Ivybridge Leisure Centre.



## The Kayaking Orangutan by Debbie Rowlands

(Rec Paddle – 20<sup>th</sup> October 2018)

The day was full of promise. I was full of apprehension. Was I really 'Rec (Recreational) Paddle' ready?

I joined PPCA in June but after 3 months of training every Tuesday night I still struggled to perfect the paddling techniques that seemed to come so naturally to the rest of my 2 Star Group. They paddled effortlessly in straight lines. From the back of the group, I watched them in frustration as my kayak spun yet again in a different direction. I yearned to join the Saturday Recreational Paddles to go further out and explore Plymouth Sound but I sometimes had trouble just paddling across to the Barbican.



Photo:Joy

Perhaps now you can understand my apprehension. Was I really Rec Paddle ready?



Photo:Debbie

Luckily for me, my first Recreational Paddle was on a day with clear blue skies. There was very little wind, so the sea was calm. Joy and Clive Ashford were leading the Rec Paddle. The furthest I had paddled previously was to Bovisand during a PPCA Beach Clean. However, with a Beach Clean, you can at least stop at regular intervals to get out, stretch your legs, have a drink/eat cake and of course, clean a beach. A proper and longer Rec Paddle seemed a little more daunting.

During the pre-paddle briefing, one member asked, as it was such a nice day, if we were going from Mount Batten to Rame Head. I think Joy must have seen the look of fear in my eyes. She explained to the group of experienced and well travelled paddlers that this was my first Rec Paddle and that distance might be a bit ambitious for my first trip. Thank you, Joy!

We headed off towards Drake's Island. Joy reminded me just to paddle at my own pace. The others would slow down and wait for me. Thank you again, Joy.

While the others paddled along chatting, I concentrated hard trying to stay in a straight line and most importantly to stay upright! Everybody was very patient, offering advice and friendly encouragement along the way.

One of the reasons I took up kayaking was to get up close to Nature without disturbing it and enjoying memorable moments. Drake's Island provided me with my first encounter with a curious young seal. It played around for some time, popping up right next to some of the kayaks. For those lucky to be so close, they could count the whiskers on its nose. My attempts to photograph it failed miserably. I pointed my camera towards the seal and my kayak spun the other way. I did a head spin like the child in *The Exorcist* as I tried to turn around in one direction while my kayak went in the other. We could have spent a lot longer with the seal but the plan was to lunch at Cawsand. Reluctantly, we left our new playmate and carried on.



Photo:Joy

The journey from Fort Picklecombe to Cawsand felt further than it looked. By this time, it was getting much warmer and some paddlers were jettisoning items of clothing along the way. I was so looking forward to lunch on the beach at Cawsand.



Photo:Joy

As hard as I paddled the beach never seemed to get much closer. Eventually I could make out the tiny matchstick like figures having fun on Cawsand beach and wishing I was there with them. Over the hot summer, I had often looked out enviously from the shore at kayakers enjoying themselves on a calm sea. Now I wished I was back on shore looking out to sea at the kayakers. My arms and legs were beginning to ache. My body was saying “Are we there yet”?

My tummy rumbled telling me it was lunchtime and my weary body longed for a rest. Not far to go now I reassured myself. Then I heard Joy calling out, “Turn left everybody. We’re going over this way”. Noooo, I thought. The beach was so

near, yet so far.

We turned and carried on paddling until we reached the disused torpedo launch site at Pier Cove. I had no idea of the history of this area. Sometimes detours are worth it. You never know what you will learn.

We weaved our way back to Cawsand beach via all the interesting little coves, finally arriving at the same time as the Cawsand ferry. It was reassuring to see Clive waiting on the beach to help us



Photo:Debbie

with the boats as we landed. I was last to land (surprise, surprise). Having spent the last few hours with my legs in the same position, my stiff knees and numb legs almost gave way beneath me as I got out of my kayak.

In my orange cagoule, with bent legs and what felt like elongated arms, I imagined I looked like an orangutan waddling up the beach.

The lunch break was bliss. Joy had brought along a delicious cake which was much appreciated.

While watching the ferry passengers I wondered, could I stow away unnoticed onboard for the return journey?

I was slightly disappointed that there were no open boats on this Rec Paddle. One trick I have learnt from coach Brim is to surreptitiously untie the painter from an open boat while the oblivious paddler goes along giving you a free tow! No such luck today.



Photo:Debbie



Photo:Joy

On the journey back, I soon realised why Jane is called Mad Jane. Jane is an experienced kayaker, so I followed her lead as she negotiated the rocks around the shoreline looking for white water to play in. At first it was fun, while the waves were gentle. Then the waves suddenly turned rougher and unpredictable. Rocks and waves can be a nasty combination if like me; you don’t know what you are doing. I decided to leave Jane to play in the waves and watched from a safe distance.

We returned safely to Mount Batten around 3.15pm.

My first Rec Paddle had been tiring but such an enjoyable and memorable one. To answer my initial question, “Was I Rec Paddle ready?” Well, not quite but with everyone’s encouragement, I had a great day. However, my body still hasn’t forgiven me.

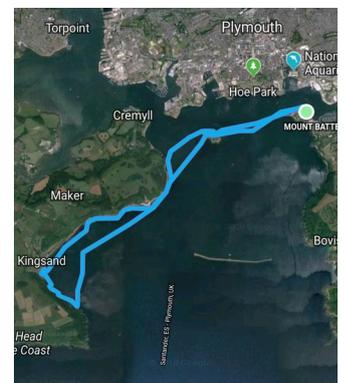


Photo:Joy

Thank you to Joy for the use of some of her photographs.

## Plymouth Surf Life Saving Club – Forwarded by Adam Coulson

The Mountbatten Centre has applied for some funding to set up Plymouth's first ever surf life saving club. If successful we will training local people to become lifeguards recognised by the national governing body. Initially it would be targeted at people within certain areas but we are already looking at how we can expand on this and also develop a graduate school after the first year.

This is a great project to get more people involved and knowledgeable about the water. It is an extremely quick registration process to cast your votes. I realise not everyone will want to do this but if there is a way you could please make your club aware of this it would be greatly appreciated.

I have attached a poster about it and for anyone who does want to cast a vote the link is [here](#)

Many thanks for whatever support you and your club can provide.

Kind Regards

Andy Mossford

Operations Manager  
Mount Batten Group of Companies  
Mount Batten Watersports & Activities Centre  
Charity Number 1,159,633  
VAT Number 202124674

## Lighthouse News by The Editor

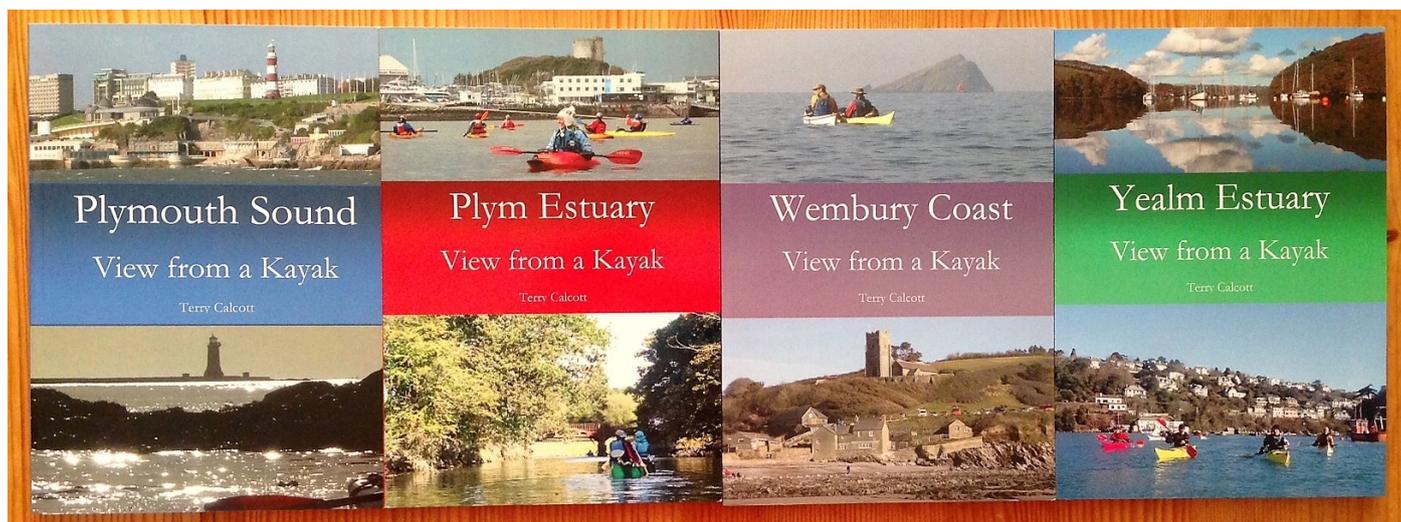
Those who share Clive's interest in lighthouses (see last issue) might like to know that the illustrator Ben Langworthy has embarked on a project to draw and describe all of the 300+ lighthouses around the UK coast. So far he's done 9 so it's fair to say it's a long-term project. His work so far is [here](#). No prizes for guessing which was lighthouse number one.



View From a Kayak Series by Terry Calcott

For those club members who missed out on the earlier print runs the following books are now available to purchase.

'View from a Kayak' Plymouth Sound, Plym Estuary, Wembury Coast and Yealm estuary. The books are a mix of local history, nature, with plenty of maps and photos to accompany the text covering everything that you can see from a kayak in the local area. A must for anyone who paddles regularly around our fantastic local coastline. Price £6 a copy, or a special of £20 for all 4 books (all profits going to St Luke's Hospice). If you would like any of the books please email me at [terryc1@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:terryc1@blueyonder.co.uk) or have a look at Facebook 'viewfromakayak'



## 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.

### Friday, 2 November

Pool Session

### 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

### Saturday, 1 December

Sea Paddle Terry Calcott

### Sunday, 2 December

White Water Pete Anderson

### Friday, 7 December

Pool Session

19:00 PPCA Quiz Night

### Saturday, 8 December

Rec Paddle Joy Ashford

Sunday, 9 December

White Water Ken Hamblin

Saturday, 15 December

Rec Paddle Ian Brim

Sunday, 16 December

Open Canoe River Trip Ian Brim

White Water Doug Sitch

Saturday, 22 December

Rec Paddle Terry Calcott

Sunday, 23 December

White Water Clive Ashford

Saturday, 29 December

Rec Paddle Pete Anderson

Sunday, 30 December

White Water Chris Doidge