



PPCA Newsletter
March 2022

Introduction

Welcome to March's Newsletter. This month, by way of a change, we have a bit of a bumper collection. We have several opportunities to broaden your skills skills, we publish a correction and Terry moves on from Breccia to Fylrix.

Editorial

I have to say that it's very welcome to have so many articles for this issue - thanks to those concerned. I would be interested to know how many people manage to read Doug's skill pieces without involuntarily shifting in their chair to edge it into a wave.

At the end of his piece, Terry mentions the SHIPS project. For anyone unfamiliar with them, their website is a mine of useful information about the various wrecks and hulks around the local coast and estuaries but also extends far beyond this into various aspects of maritime archaeology. Their site is well worth a visit - it's amazing how far some of the decaying hulks have travelled and the varied history they have had.

Ivor Jones

Newsletter Editor

Next Committee Meeting

Please forward any items you would like considered at the next committee meeting to secretary@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk. They will go to the secretary.

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

Acknowledgements

As ever, I have plundered Facebook for the cover photos - my thanks to all concerned.

News

PPCA Sea Kayaking 2022 by Clive Ashford - Erratum

A small error crept into Clive's piece last month. The first Sunday session will be on **10th** April, **not** the 20th as advertised. Apologies to anyone who fancied a Wednesday paddle.

Notes from the Committee by Mark Perry, Chair

This will probably be the first of an irregular update of random issues for club members from the Committee via the newsletter.

PPCA 50 year anniversary

Your committee are open to ideas about events that you would be prepared to support (and help organise) to mark this event during the year.

Ideas so far include :-

- 50@50 - getting 50 paddle craft afloat for one of our Saturday sessions culminating in a shared buffet (invites to ex-members and other local clubs)
- Arranging for branded club clothing to be commissioned (polo shirts, hoodies etc) for sale at near cost price to members.
- Getting the local media involved on an Intro Course and other aspects of 50 years of change in kayaking / canoeing.
- Coastal clean-up (to include other clubs affiliated to the Mount Batten Centre eg gig clubs)

What else would club members like to take part in?

Members shed

There are some spaces for members to rent space in this shed. See the website for prices and contact James (Membership Secretary) to check on availability for each type of boat.

Kit for Clubs

AS Watersports in Exeter are offering vouchers to PPCA for every £10 spent. If you are offered these then please feel free to pass them to Pete (Equipment Officer) who may then be able to use them on your behalf.

Introduction to Sea Kayaking by Terry Calcott

Over the past few years (Pre Covid) I have organised some Introduction to Sea Kayaking sessions for the club. I am looking at running another series of sessions to run sometime in March / April. They will probably be on a Saturday but days and dates can be flexible once I know numbers. If you have wanted to try sea kayaks out but never had the opportunity now is your chance. The sessions are aimed at those club members who already have some paddling skills but are novice sea kayakers. The sessions are also suitable for club members who have been in sea kayaks but want to brush up on the basics skills. Due to limited time the sessions are about transferring the paddling skills you already have and using them in sea kayaks. We will cover some theory and a lot of practical aspects of sea paddling, culminating with a sea paddle somewhere in the sound.

If you are interested please contact me so I can see if the interest is there to organise some sessions.



Club sea kayaks are available for use (limited to 4 boats) or bring along your own if you have one, if you would like to book a place and a boat or have any questions please let me know by email terryc1@blueyonder.co.uk or telephone 07828 652775.

Skills Sessions by Doug Sitch

The club is offering a series of skills' sessions to members, to be run by Doug Sitch. These are intended for those paddlers who had gained some experience and skills in the Explorer sessions and wish to develop their personal skills applicable to the Sea Kayak awards, White Water & Surf. The focus is to learn to manage (& cope with) waves to be found in a beach location gaining some proficiency in low & high recovery (brace) skills.

These skills are very useful for all paddlers to avoid mishap when landing at a beach with breaking waves. They also form the core skills in handling any rough-water scenarios, be that waves on a beach, rough water between rocks on a Coastal trip, surfing a kayak and of course, white water paddling. Proficiency in the recovery strokes is the mainstay of avoiding a mishap on the water, whether that be from a sudden gust of wind, snagging a sub-surface object, or a simple collision. They also provide the foundations for learning to 'Eskimo Roll'.

The sessions at Bigbury will entail handling and coping with waves and may lead to kayak surf skills as required (waves permitting). Each session will be limited in numbers and must be booked in advance on the Forum with Doug Sitch 07966740025 as it is announced.

The session dates are:

- Tues 5th April at Mount Batten (usual session times)
- Tues 19th April at Mount Batten
- Tues 10th May at Mount Batten
- Tues 24th May at Mount Batten
- Sun 8th May at Bigbury at 10am
- Sun 22nd May at Bigbury - time TBD
- Sun 5th June at Bigbury - time TBD

more maybe.....

The sessions at Bigbury meet 'changed' at the time stated in Forum, in front of the Cafe (lower car park) and don't forget to pay for parking!!!

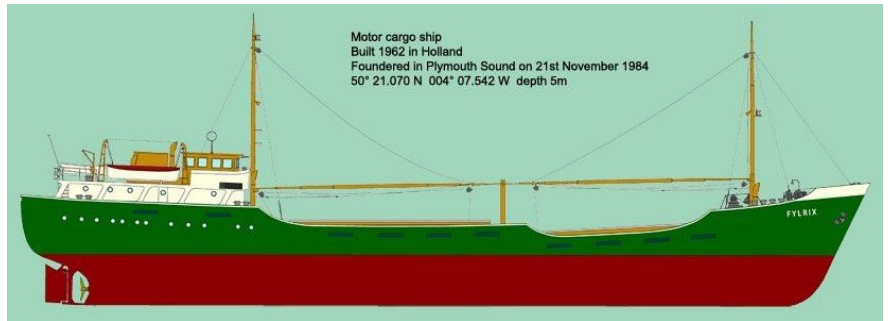
Features

Plymouth Sound Snippets No.2, The Wreck of the Fylrix by Terry Calcott

Have ever paddled around Jennycliff Bay and wondered why there is a green marker buoy a few hundred yards from Jennycliff beach? Well let me enlighten you. The green buoy is named Fylrix, after the MV Fylrix a cargo ship of 637 gross tons built in 1962.

On 21st November 1984, the Fylrix had picked up a cargo of granite chippings from the quarry at Porthoustock on the Lizard, Cornwall and was on her way to London. The Fylrix was near the Eddystone lighthouse with a gale blowing when the ship started to list to starboard.

With the list increasing the captain decided to head for safety at Plymouth. A warship escorted the Fylrix into the Sound and to anchor in Jennycliff Bay. The starboard list continued to increase so the vessel was abandoned just before it capsized.



The Fylrix on her side in Jennycliff Bay

Over the years the wreck has been used for diver and explosives training with the hull slowly being damaged and spread around the sea bed. The Fylrix has remained a hazard to navigation ever since, you can see why in the photos of what remains today. In the past a motor boat has hit the wreck and on another occasion a yacht was left high and dry when the tide went out.

The wreck initially lay on her starboard side in 5 metres of water with her port side exposed at half tide. With easy access the wreck was quickly stripped of objects and fittings by divers. The large bronze propeller was also removed.



The Fylrix a few weeks ago



The Wreck and the Fylrix Bouy in the Distance



The ideal time to see the remains of the Fylrix are on a calm day with a big spring tide of 0.5 metres or less, 30 minutes either side of low water. If you paddle just past the green buoy towards Jennycliff beach you should easily see the remains.

For more detailed information about the Fylrix and other local wrecks visit the www.shipsproject.org website.



Fylrix Wreck During a Low Spring Tide

Waves (and How to Avoid a Capsize) by Doug Sitch

As a club based in Plymouth Sound, much of our paddling is sea-based. It will have not escaped your attention that the sea can be rough sometimes, but even when it is relatively calm it can present waves unexpectedly. If these waves are of sufficient size/shallow water then they will break and the foaming wave can present problems to the unwary kayaker. When I say problems, I mean capsize!

The most obvious place to find breaking waves is a sandy beach and I will make that my focus. Obviously, the easiest way to cope with breaking waves is to paddle through them (out to sea). That is fine as long as there is time to spot them coming, turn and get paddling, before they arrive. This is not always possible or practical – only being able to paddle out to sea is not good!

The first piece of advice when presented with a wave from the side is to NOT lean away from it. This instinct works well on land for most situations, but has to be unlearnt for waves! In fact, you need to lean INTO the wave.

Low Brace: A low-brace is sufficient for small broken waves with the paddler shifting their weight a little towards the oncoming wave with a low brace support on the wave and (most importantly) lifting the opposite edge (beach side) of their kayak.

The wave will hit and push the kayak (and paddler) towards the beach – but most importantly – with the paddler easily managing to stay upright. Lifting the

edge of the kayak (on the beach side) allows the boat to be pushed sideways towards the beach without ‘catching’ the edge. The low-brace position allows the paddler to ‘fall’ a little in to the wave as it hits and the kayak is then pushed towards the beach (under them).

Note that the paddle is held back-face down on the wave, with the elbows up – pushing down. Whilst moving sideways, the water under the paddle is lifting up and away (relative to the paddler) so that there is plenty of lift available under the blade. When the kayak is no longer being pushed sideways then the lift disappears and the paddler need to sit upright again. If the wave is unbroken (no white frothy bits) then the kayak is unlikely to be pushed sideways, the risk of capsize is greatly reduced and a low brace is often not needed. A shift of weight to the wave-side can often be a good technique if there is any uncertainty. If feeling anxious too, then having the paddle in the water on that wave-side (ready) can be reassuring.

High Brace: An alternative is to use a high-brace position instead of the low-brace. The high-brace is useful for all sizes of waves but more especially for larger ones.



Again, the paddler shifts their weight towards the oncoming wave and (most importantly) lifting the opposite edge (beach side) of their kayak. The wave will hit and push the kayak (and paddler) towards the beach with the paddler staying upright. Lifting the edge of the kayak is essential to allow the boat to be pushed sideways without ‘catching’ the edge. The brace position allows the paddler to ‘fall’ into the wave hits and then the kayak is pushed towards the beach. The picture above shows the paddler with their paddle on top of the ‘pile’ – it is far better to have the



paddle 'inside' the wave where it can reach the 'green' water – keeping the paddle lower (and safer).

Note that the paddle is held face down onto the wave, with the elbows down – pulling down. Whilst moving sideways, the water under the paddle is lifting up and away (relative to the paddler) so that there is lift available under the blade. When the kayak is no longer being pushed sideways then the lift disappears and the paddler must sit upright again.

The skills described here are very easy to master – and valuable to protect you from a capsize. I urge all paddlers to practise these skills when you are at a beach in safe conditions with small waves. Try paddling along the beach left & right (both sides) and give it a go! It is really easy – trust me 😊

The skills gained will also be useful on those days when the recreational/coastal trip gets a bit 'interesting', that easy passage between rocks is suddenly much more exciting than planned when a large wave appears unexpectedly, or simply being able to make a beach landing without mishap.

I am planning some sessions this summer, specifically targeted at these skills. Doug Sitch

Surfing by Doug Sitch

One way to have some fun on the water – and gain skills – is to go surfing in your kayak. We have the sea on our doorstep – waves - and beaches where we can have fun surfing those waves.

We all know how our kayaks don't like to go in a straight line given half a chance. This is because the centre of resistance moves more forward the faster we go, but the centre of mass stays the same (in the middle). This is like throwing a dart backwards – which will always want to turn around. When surfing a wave, most kayakers will desperately want to turn too. This can be either left or right – you don't know which way until it happens! It happens very fast too. Then after turning sideways, the wave then pushes the kayak along – sideways. We want to stay upright, so we must brace on the wave, edge up on beach side – and do this quickly and instinctively.

So now we can try some surfing .. Waiting for a wave large enough to pick you up, small enough to not make you anxious – wait until it is a couple of boat lengths behind you and then paddle towards the beach. As the wave comes underneath you and the back of the kayak rises, paddle hard and lean forward. As soon as you feel the boat pick up speed and come down the wave, stop the paddling. If it is too steep you may want to lean back at this point to avoid 'pearling' where the bow of the kayak dives under water. Hopefully you are now 'on' the wave with a grin on your face! But what next?

The beginnings of surf involve trying to run 'straight' towards the beach. The kayak will want to turn left or right and you need to stop it doing so. If you are unable to control the kayak then you will end up sideways to the wave using one of the brace strokes described above to stay upright.



You may have gathered that kayakers don't have a good sense of keeping direction – as described above – especially when going quickly. So that means that we have to control their direction. The principal method of control in surf is a 'stern rudder'. It involves placing the blade alongside the kayak – with control face behind you, facing in towards the boat. It can be used at any time on the water to keep you running straight proving you are moving forwards. Controlling the blade position can be used to adjust the line or turn towards that side by pushing it out.

As said before, the kayak will want to turn to left or right. The slightest beginning of a turn gets amplified by your speed and the turning accelerates rapidly. The 'straight' run requires the use of the rudder stroke on left & right to try and keep the kayak running straight. You will probably need to alternate sides as the kayak turns a little each way. If the kayak turns left a little then use the rudder on the right to make correction and on the left to correct a right turn. It is not so much a stern rudder, but more of a stern 'push'.

The more that the kayak is allowed to turn away from 'straight' then the more technique & force is required to bring it back. The steeper the wave then the harder it is too! The 'push' required ideally comes from the 'core'. There will be plenty of times when the paddler will have to give in and accept the fact that the kayak has to go sideways!

Consideration to others is paramount if you try surfing. That starts by making sure you are not going to 'run over' a swimmer or other surfer by your intended (and unintended) actions. You need to remember that you are very buoyant in a kayak and so the default mishap involves being swept in by a wave (either upright or upside down) not being able to stop, running over anyone in your path 😞

I am hoping to run some surf skills sessions this year. Meanwhile look out for more on Surfing next month.

Exchange and Mart

Discount Available at Millets, 38/40 New George St, Plymouth PL1 1RW

One of our members 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 10%. 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.



Raise free donations for us every time you shop online with easyfundraising!



<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/ppca/>

The Committee

Chair

Mark Perry
chair@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk
07801 310 993

Vice-Chair

Kevin Jones
vchair@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk

Club Leader

Ken Hamblin
leader@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk
07790 293 952

Assistant Club Leader

Vacant
acleader@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk

Club Secretary

Jackie Perry
secretary@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk
07523 965 748

Membership Secretary

James Hubbard
membership@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk
07752 125 012

Welfare Officer

Alan Ede
welfare@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk
07799 556 876

Intro Course Coordinator

Colin Wilding
intro@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk
07928 578 144

Treasurer

Sharne Dodds
treasurer@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk
07964 912 837

Equipment Officer

Pete Anderson
equipment@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk
07958 694 434

Publicity Officer

Vacant
publicity@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk

Youth Development Officer

George Hamblin
youth@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk
07805 085 499

Health and Safety Officer

Damean Miller
safety@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk

Club President

Adam Coulson
president@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk
07834 286 461