

CANEWS

AUTUMN 93

RIVER HAMBLE EVENING PADDLE

After work on Tuesday 18th of May, eight paddlers met at Bursledon on the river Hamble for a leisurely trip and a beer or two at the Horse & Jockey. The upper reaches of the estuary provide a short but very scenic stretch of water which, once you leave the motorway crossing behind, is quiet and surprisingly unspoilt.

There was still plenty of mud exposed as we left Bursledon so we saw a number of wading birds on the way up: several oystercatchers, which are very common there; and a whimbrel, which is not so, and had us confused for a while. Several people commented that the water looked murky, and so it always seems to be in the Hamble. I think it is mainly due to the very fine mud in the estuary, but in summer is added to by the huge number of yachts discharging their waste. Hopefully a change in our laws in that respect will be one of the more sensible results of European persuasion.

At its head, the estuary divides into two very narrow and shallow creeks, one leads to Botley and the other to the Horse & Jockey's garden! We made a small detour up the first while waiting for the tide to reach the latter, and timed it perfectly to reach the pub with about three inches of water under the canoes.

A few pints and baskets of chips later we seal-launched from the garden into the dark, not quite sure how far down the water was. The tide was high though, and the launch very tame by Mundeford Quay standards. For some it was the first experience of paddling at night, but there was still some light from the sunset and quite a lot from the lights of civilisation all around, so there wasn't the feeling of paddling through space which you get on a moonless night in more remote places.

Half-way back to Bursledon we realised that the water was shimmering with more than just reflected light, and we were paddling through phosphorescence. This is an experience not to be missed and gives quite a thrill as every disturbance of the water by the boat, paddle or hands makes the water sparkle as if it is full of glitter. In my experience, paddling through it is second only to swimming in it, when your body seems to be covered in lights. Unfortunately it wasn't quite dark enough to see it at its best, except under the bridges at Bursledon, from which I thought we would have to tow Liz who was going round in enchanted circles.

The light is emitted by millions of tiny zooplankton which occur in the plankton blooms that are quite common at this time of year, and were apparently contributing to the murk we saw in the water earlier that evening. Perhaps we shouldn't always assume that brown water is polluted water.

We didn't get home until midnight but it was well worth it.

Barry

MEGALOTHIC SUCCESS

The South of England Canoe Exhibition, held back in June, had quite a reasonable number of trade exhibitors and proved well worth the journey (Pewsey being considerably closer than Harrogate!).

This exhibition is likely to continue to grow, due in no small part to the efforts of its dynamic organisers, Stonehenge Canoe Club. Worth watching out for - this may come to represent the best source of the latest in canoeing equipment for those of us in this part of the country.

DEVON CAMPING WEEKEND

July 9th to 11th

The complete, unexpurgated saga

Although not the huge turn-out that at one stage seemed likely, we had a good cross-section of club members for this trip: Steve, Paul, Barry, Bev, Richard, Steve, Cheri and Dave, and Nick (who only came on the strict understanding that it definitely wouldn't rain).

After meeting on the quayside at Kingsbridge at 7.30, we spent half an hour pondering the logistics of stowing two days' provisions and all the camping gear in seven canoes. Luckily, Barry and Paul had both brought their sea kayaks, which have capacious holds. Leaving the others to sort out car shuffling (a complex manoeuvre that involved leaving Steve's and Barry's cars at Yealmton, Richard's somewhere near Bantham and Dave and Cheri's back in Kingsbridge), Paul, Bev and Nick paddled off down the estuary to reconnoitre a suitable campsite for the night.

Just outside Salcombe harbour, having failed to find any mid-channel signposts to five-star campsites, we were lucky enough to encounter a helpful local canoeist making his way home to Kingsbridge. He recommended a particular spot up an inlet, and then, because we couldn't see it in the fading light (a combination of impending dusk and gathering storm clouds) accompanied us all the way. The site was superb - a small grassy knoll just above high tide level, flanked by small trees and shrubs. Having got the tents up (Nick has invested in the latest technology and now boasts a 'two-minute erection') and a fire going, Paul paddled off in search of the others because he thought that the fire might not be visible from a distance. This turned out to be true, though they'd probably have seen the steam.

Don't mention the BDH

As soon as everyone else arrived, the catering corps pulled out the stops - funny what you eat on camping trips - and we were soon sitting down (well crouching actually, due to the rain) to a meal. Everyone except Richard that is, who had mislaid his BDH and was stumbling around the campsite muttering dark oaths in the dark. After dissuading him from paddling back to Kingsbridge to interrogate all the thieves that obviously lurked on the quay, we turned in for the night, ready to be lulled to sleep/kept awake all night by the sound of rain on canvas. After waiting for everyone to make themselves comfortable, Paul made us all get up again so that we could watch the moon rise above East Portlemouth.

Morning dawned bright and clear. Well, that's what Paul said, anyway. By the time the rest of us got up it was raining again. However, all was not gloom and doom - Richard discovered his BDH in Paul's kayak (where he'd stowed it for safe-keeping in the first place), and Steve said he felt thoroughly rested after at least two hours' sleep. Following a leisurely breakfast we broke camp and paddled on down the estuary to Salcombe.

A swell trip to Bantham

Although by now it was quite sunny, frequent squalls meant that the paddle round to Bantham looked likely to be fairly hard going, so Dave and Cheri decided to head back up the estuary to Kingsbridge and drive round to meet us in the evening. The rest of us ventured as far as the mouth of the estuary and deliberated for about half an hour on whether or not to continue: a stiff breeze and a swell of about 5 feet (actually, it was probably nearer 50 feet, but one doesn't like to exaggerate) made things look a bit daunting. The first three miles - from Bolt Head to Bolt Tail - are characterised by high sea cliffs that offer no

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chance of going ashore. We decided to press on. It turned out to be an exhilarating, if exhausting, paddle, but the bird life more than compensated for any muscle-ache. We saw buzzards, curlews, herons, peregrines, fulmar, cormorants and kestrels. The flora wasn't bad either, with lots of wild flowers on the cliffs, including white mayweed and carrot.

After stopping for lunch in a cave at Hope Cove (yes, you guessed right - it was raining again!) we paddled on across Bigbury Bay to Bantham.

Finding the mouth of the river proved tricky because of the curious way the river flows across the width of the bay; in fact if we hadn't had Barry to guide us, I suspect some of us would still be sitting on sand bars. After paddling up-river on a falling tide we beached at Bantham Sailing Club. Barry and Paul then went back downstream to play in the surf, while the rest of us left our kit and canoes on the shore, and went in search of Dave, Cheri and the pub. The waves may have been good, but I suspect the beer was better. The surfers eventually returned and said they'd go and start setting up camp for the night opposite the sailing club. The rest of us then made our way back to the canoes, where Richard was aghast to discover that his BDH *really* had been stolen this time. After dissuading him from interrogating all the thieves ... etc ... we paddled over to join the others; the missing property turned up in Barry's kayak this time. To this day, we don't know what Richard carries around in his BDH, but hiding it from him could become a new sport.

After we'd all pitched our tents, we helped Steve take his down again. Paul had

spotted a lone pyramid orchid poking out from under the flysheet. Steve's protestations that he wouldn't know a ☉●□❄️ pyramid orchid even if he slept on one were to no avail, so it was all hands to the guy ropes to move him to a flora-free patch. Although windy, we soon had a good fire going and enjoyed an excellent meal; food always tastes so much better cooked in the open air (though I suspect the real secret lies in the pyramid orchids we strewed on the fire). Beer and wine fl

free - due more to a desire to limit shipping weight than to succumb to complete alcoholism - and towards the end of the evening, Paul excelled himself by producing mulled wine for everyone (using sustainable resources like cloves and cinnamon, he

was quick to point out). We turned in around midnight, to be lulled to sleep/kept awake all night yes, you've got it in one - it was raining again.

Newton Ferrers for lunch

Unbelievable though it might sound, Sunday dawned bright and clear, with everyone except Dave, Cheri and Rich (who were not paddling with us on this part of the trip) ready for the off by 7.30. The surf in Bantham Bay seemed very enticing, but with a long trip ahead of us we pressed on round Burgh Island and set a line for Stoke Point. Again, the scenery was superb and this time we had sun for most of the trip. After a coffee break in a welcoming little cove that I can't remember the name of, we rock-hopped round Start Point and ran straight in to a very stiff headwind. This continued all the way to Wembury Bay, which meant that by the time we reached the shelter of Newton Ferrers at about 2 o'clock, some of us were pretty tired.



Yealmton or bust

Over lunch, we discussed our options. The cars were at Yealmton, some two and a half miles further up-river, and the tide was going out quickly. So should the drivers walk/try and take a taxi from here, or should we all paddle towards Yealmton? The fit ones amongst us (no names, but they both own sea kayaks) won the argument, so we set off up-stream. We did well: after paddling hard for about an hour and a half in water little over a foot deep, we had covered something like two miles.

Bust

By now, we really were up the proverbial creek without any water. Leaving Barry and Steve to walk up the middle of the riverbed (well they weren't exactly going to drown, were they?), the rest of us headed back to Newton Ferrers, with Paul towing both empty canoes. Another half an hour, and we were back where we'd started. This should have been the end of it, but when things start to go awry they have a habit of escalating. We hadn't realised, but after paddling into the centre of Newton Ferrers - up a *very* muddy stream - we were completely hidden from Barry's and Steve's view when they returned with the cars. Apart from which, Steve had been misdirected by some helpful people who'd spotted a group of canoeists paddling off in a completely different direction. To cut a long story short, we were eventually all reunited and got changed for the trip home. And so ended a great weekend. Despite being last to pack, Steve and Nick were first away, leaving Barry and company to follow. Or so they thought. In fact at this point, Bev discovered she'd packed the keys to Barry's car *somewhere* inside it, so first of all they unpacked the car, every dry bag and BDH, then

Nick

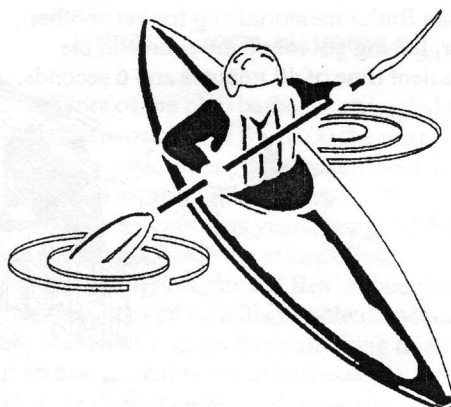
Would I go again? Yes - but only on the strict understanding that it definitely wouldn't rain!

CLUB MEMBERSHIP BOOMS

I'm not sure what we've done to deserve it, but club membership stands at an all-time high of 30 (as of September 1st). Apparently Southbourne Canoe Club has seen a similarly rapid expansion recently (they are much larger than RCC, with some 60 members). Maybe - just maybe - it's the first positive result of the Lyme Bay tragedy earlier this year, with more people now acknowledging that it is much safer to canoe with a club rather than on their own. Anyone want to undertake a survey of our latest members? (It's OK, we've got their money, so it's safe to ask why anyone in their right mind would want to join RCC!).

MEETINGS BLOODY MEETINGS

Just a reminder that the next committee meeting will be held at The Haven on Tuesday, 7th September, immediately after canoeing. Everyone is welcome to attend.



LOST IN WIMBORNE ST GILES

Your roving reporter turned up too late to actively participate in the RCC Treasure Hunt, and had to content himself with a pint in the garden of The Bull, which is where those who didn't get completely lost finished up. I can't vouch for the accuracy of this report, but I believe the event was won by Karen. Fresh from setting imponderable clues for the barbecue, she was obviously tuned in to this sort of mind game - though quite how you can confuse a sycamore with a laburnum beats me. I think the last person to return was Steve, but by then it was dark, so it was difficult to make out whether the figures stumbling round the pub garden were looking for the final clue or the gents. Our thanks to Barry and Bev for research, organisation and provision of prizes for all young entrants (which automatically disqualified virtually all RCC canoeists!).

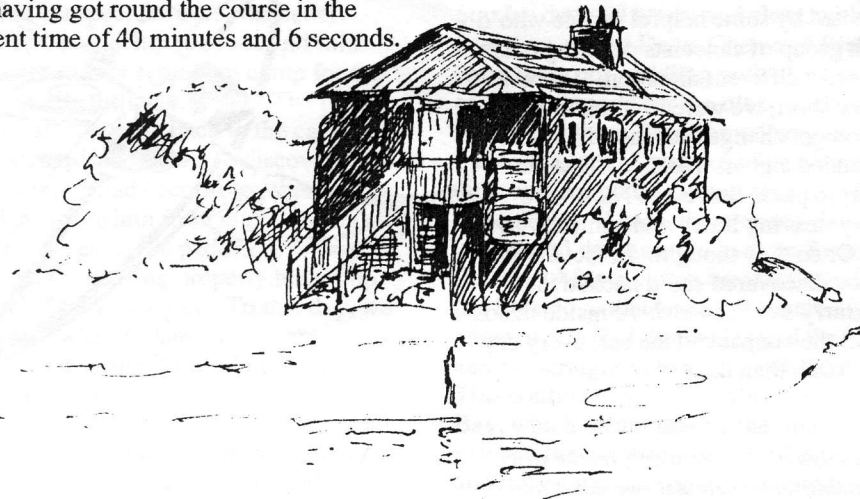
HENGISTBURY HIDROSIS

We had a very good turn out for the annual race round Hengistbury Head. Pete Ambrose (surprise, surprise!) retains the Julian Butler memorial cup for yet another year, having got round the course in the excellent time of 40 minutes and 6 seconds.

Barry came a close second, and may be worth putting money on next year (especially since some members were overheard plotting a change in the competition's rules to bar anyone who stood any chance of winning!). Surely someone can wrest this prestigious award away from Pete - if you need an additional incentive, just think of the problems he's going to have covering up the white circle on his mantlepiece.

The post-race sweep of the course this was done by Nick (who was confused to find himself accompanied all the way by Liz and Bev, and couldn't work out whether they were participating in the race or just being friendly) and the time-keeping was handled by Pete Moreton, who also provided the rather nice sketch on this page, which shows the house on the run (!) at Mudeford. Recorded event times (in mins:secs) were as follows:-

Pete:	40:06
Barry:	41:58
Graham:	45:36
Colin:	46:52
Steve:	47:50
Terry:	50:08
Danny:	57:07
Richard:	59:22



RCC EQUIPMENT INVENTORY

15-6-93

Kayaks

Europa (plastic)
Falchion (plastic)
4 x Reflexes (GRP)
Trisanna (GRP)
Snipe (GRP)
Unknown origin, white (GRP)
Unknown origin, red & blue (GRP)

Paddles

11, various makes & 1 split (jointed) paddle

Spray decks

more than 1 per kayak

Buoyancy aids

Lifeguard (medium)
Crewsaver (medium)

Helmets

2x AP2000 (fully adjustable)

Throwline

Green Slime 22 metre

Distress Flares

2 x red parachute
2 x red handheld
2 x orange smoke

(all above in individual watertight containers)

Pocket mini-flares

Books

BCU Handbook (comprehensive text book)
BCU Yearbook (BCU contacts, courses, etc.)
BCU magazine 'Canoe Focus' (monthly)
'Canoeists' Guide to the River Wye'
BCU 'Three Regions River Guide' (Southern, South West, London & South East).

This last book is very good and has details of all canoeable water in the south of England.

Video

Basic Rolling Techniques

Canoeing permits

3 x to paddle canals & rivers with navigation rights

FROG BURGERS

The club barbecue was a resounding success, thanks to the efforts of Colin and Karen who opened their Fordingbridge estate to members. Recreational pursuits included lawn tennis (or something like that), table-tennis, complex quiz games (devious minds some of our members have), fishing disintegrating vegeburgers out of the barbecue and trying to come to terms with Nick's chilli con-carne. Entertainment highlight of the evening was provided by Liz, who gave an impromptu display of skate-boarding virtuosity in the car park (hope the shrubbery's recovered by now).

Members who stayed the night were treated to the luxury of beds and a slap-up breakfast, though some of us felt just a *little* guilty that all younger Bowes and their friends had been thrown out into the garden to make way for us. Still, tent service seemed to be to the same high standard as room service - the kitchen took breakfast orders from the bottom of the garden over a mobile phone!

DURDLÉ DOOR HANGOVER

Survivors of the club barbecue struggled to make Lulworth Cove by 10.00 the next day, for a paddle round to Durdle Door for lunch and aspirin. Slightly less well-attended than previous years, but good fun for those who made the effort. Gastro-nomic highlights included Bev's chocolate bananas, cooked on a disposable barbecue supplied by Colin (is there anything this man doesn't know about barbecues?). Despite the flat calm conditions, one member managed to capsize as he went 'through the door' - no names, but apparently his pipe went out.

Forthcoming events

The following list shows most events planned for the remainder of 1993. If an event does not have a specific date, more information will be given out nearer the time.

Wales camping weekend

11th and 12th September

Probably canoeing around the Gower coast with the likelihood of some surfing at some stage. We might divert to the river Wye if the weather forecast is bad. Contact Paul if you are interested.

Isle of Wight trip

Sunday 3rd October

We hope to paddle from Hurst to the island and explore Newtown Creek, a picturesque wildlife haven. Meet at Hurst Spit near Keyhaven at 09.00 with a packed lunch and lots of energy. Contact Barry if you need more details.

Ilfracombe surfing weekend

30th and 31st October

Accommodation is now booked and takes limited numbers, so if you wish to go on this trip, contact Paul Toynton as soon as possible.

White water weekend

20th and 21st November

Our annual trip to Perth-y-Pia, near Llanbedr in the Brecon Beacons, for some white water kayaking. Non-canoeists are also welcome, but accommodation is strictly limited, so let Steve Sambell know as soon as possible if you intend going. If necessary, we will look into overflow accommodation in Crickhowell.

COURSES AND POOL SESSIONS LATE '93/EARLY '94

All Ringwood Canoe Club courses and pool sessions are held on Saturday evenings at Ringwood Recreation Centre. Please tell anyone who might be interested about the courses, and come along and help out if you can spare the time (one-to-one instruction is invaluable).

Rolling course

September 4th, 11th, 18th and 25th.

Pool session

October 23rd

Pool session

November 27th

Pool session

January 8th

Beginners course

January 15th, 22nd, 29th and February 5th.

Pool session

February 12th

Mixed-ability course

February 19th, 26th, March 5th and 12th

Pool session

March 26th

Pool session

April 2nd