



CANEWS

September 2006

EDITOR'S CORNER

DON'T FORGET THE WEB SITE – the event list is kept up to date and the notice board, trip reports, etc. are there for you to fill !

www.ringwood.canoe.btinternet.co.uk

+ - the photos are in colour – by the time this has been through the photo-copier it loses so much!!

CANEWS IS AVAILABLE ON-LINE

This (and the last few) Issue of Canews is available in Acrobat pdf format for download direct from the web site (right hand click and select save as).

If you don't need a hard-copy posted in the future (and you feel like saving some forests and my time and costs on copying, envelopes, etc). let me know

ARTICLES PLEASE

A normal plea for articles – I guess I should be pleased that we do more paddling than writing – but there were loads of trips recently that could have done with a few words and piccies.

CAPTION COMPETITION

Visit the web site for the Caption Competition



Blimey - areithiai gwir!

Nick L

EGM 11TH JULY 2006

An 'Extraordinary General Meeting' was held at Highcliffe Sailing Club, adjacent to Mudeford Quay slipway, to discuss a possible affiliation of RCC to HSC. Only 10 members turned up (Paul T, Barry D, Nick L, Dave & Annie R, Simon B, Paul B, Ross M, Elliott G and Graham B)

Highcliffe Sailing Club's proposal to us was as follows:

For a £500 annual fee we would have access on Tuesday evenings during British summer time, use of the changing rooms, showers, lounge and bar. Two named members of RCC would become members of HSC (without voting rights) and be the responsible persons on those evenings. One of them would need to be there.

Use of the clubhouse for Social events at other times would be the same arrangement, with the standard hire rates, as applies to their members for private functions.

Any members of RCC subsequently joining HSC as a member would benefit from waiver of the HSC "entrance fee".

All considered that the costs and responsibilities far outweighed the small benefits that RCC members would enjoy. Of particular concern were: the required commitment from a number of individuals (ie. to be present to open and lock-up after a session etc.); the limit to Summer Tuesdays (when changing facilities are least required!)

Consequently – the meeting rejected the proposals and RCC members will continue to 'do their own thing' in the car park and the Haven!

POOLE HARBOUR BBQ

June 30, 2006

(with apologies to Alan Brownjohn and none at all to William McGonagall)



This year's Poole Harbour barbeque was not a badly organised event. Still less a well organised event. In fact, this year's Poole Harbour barbeque was not organised at all.

Even the organiser didn't know he was the organiser, so he didn't turn up to organise anything. Which was probably just as well, since in the event, the event proved un-organisable for the night on which it, er, wasn't organised.

Blissfully unaware of this parlous state of affairs, and blinded totally by the fact that the event had featured on the RCC events lists for what seemed like ages, Deb, Ros and Dave, Sally, Dave R and Nick dutifully turned up at the Rock Gardens car park, Sandbanks, at 7.00pm. Dave R reported that he'd just driven round to the Sandbanks ferry to take a look at the state of the tide, and was somewhat aghast to discover that instead of coming in as expected, which would have helped propel everyone safely through the harbour mouth, it was actually rocketing out at a considerable rate.

Ever the adaptable canoeists, we decided to launch on the inland side of the harbour, to head straight across the main navigation channel and then along the north side of Brownsea Island, and to brace ourselves for a stiff paddle. In the meantime, we confined our attentions to loading beefburgers, barbeque griddles, beer and mosquito repellent into various craft while we waited for all the other RCC members who were undoubtedly about to turn up any minute.

It was while this was going on that Ros happened to mention that she'd overheard a conversation at Sea Scouts the previous evening between one Paul Toynton and one Graham Bland. To paraphrase the conversation, it went something like this. Graham: "Have fun on the barbeque tomorrow night, Paul." Paul: "What barbeque?" Graham: "The one you've been listed as organising for the past 6 months or so." Paul: "I never agreed to organise any barbeque." Graham: "But you're down as organiser." Paul: "Well, I didn't know." Graham: "But it's featured on the events list for months." Paul: "Well maybe, but as a matter of principle, I never read the events list." Graham: silence.

At 7.30pm, the six of us decided that despite the fact that it was a stunningly beautiful evening, maybe no-one else was turning up for the trip after all. Perhaps they'd all had the sense to look at the 2006 tide tables, which would have shown that no-one in their right mind would have organised the event for tonight.

The paddle over to Brownsea wasn't quite as hard as we had expected. Personally I was knackered, but everyone else seemed fine; even Deb never faltered, despite that fact she had a much shorter boat than the rest of us; I guess all that Salisbury practice must pay off. Rounding the west end of Brownsea we had the usual debate about which island to desecrate honour with our presence, campfire and burgers. Again, as usual, we settled on Green Island, though this year we were somewhat later than previous years, not reaching ~~wet~~ ~~and~~ dry land until 8.45pm. I think that Green Island was recently sold, so we weren't too worried about incurring the wrath of the local landowner. And as Ros pointed out, if necessary, we could claim it marked the beginning of our long-overdue protest paddling, or that we were simply exhausted from paddling against the tide and were merely waiting for higher water levels before resuming our voyage. In the event neither of these strategies was needed – no landed gentry hove into view.

If Paul had been there (did I mention that he wasn't?) he would have been proud of our environmental awareness, ornithological sensitivity and general *bonhomie*. I happily gathered dry sticks to start the campfire, while Dave R burnished the griddle ready to feed the masses with impeccably cooked beefburgers, sausages, onions, etc. Then the screaming started.

A pair of oyster catchers had very selfishly chosen to make their nest and raise their brood right in the middle of our planned festival site. Obviously our first reaction was to debate the relative merits of spit-roast oyster catcher v Birds Eye beef burgers, but Ros convinced us that we should move further along the jetty and eat Pringles, salad and oatcake, rather than risk lighting a fire. Actually, it was a rather jolly non-barbeque, which perfectly matched the non-eventfulness nature of the whole non-event.

We broke camp at about 10pm and paddled along the south side of Brownsea until we reached Brownsea Castle. At this point we grouped up and prepared to head back across the main navigation channel. Grouping up, it was unanimously agreed, might not ensure safe passage, but at least we'd all die together in a horribly mangled heap under a Truckline ferry or a Sandbanks ferry that had broken its chain links due to the tide that wasn't supposed to running in that direction and at that rate. Plus, it had the added advantage that the only person who'd have to explain the loss of six RCC members would be the event organiser, who hadn't participated in the event on the basis that it either didn't exist or if it did, then he was the last person in the world to know about it.

None of us had a light stick, but several members had had the presence of mind to bring torches, which might or might not have contributed to our safety. In my case, I stuck my torch in my buoyancy aid chest pocket so that the beam shone straight up my left nostril – a sight guaranteed to scare the crap out of the two boy racers on jet skis who were practicing 50mph runs down the channel in the dark.

Despite the fact that the tide was still going out, we arrived back at the Rock Gardens car park at about 11pm.

There are a few points and cautionary notes to spin out from this tale. The first observation is that Ringwood Canoe Club's policy of not allowing unaccompanied children to paddle, even on 'tame' events, is obviously well judged and sound practice; they'd probably all drown within 5 minutes of start if we did.

The second point is that putting events in the club's event list without first checking whether they're even remotely practicable is a great idea, which should continue to appeal to

the adrenalin junkies amongst us, especially if no-one bothers to check on said practicability prior to the event. The third point is that appointing trip organisers *in absentia* smacks of sheer brilliance – it dispenses with the need to get anyone to sign up for anything, ever, and enables RCC's event list to contain something for everyone. Hell, we could even have cross channel away days to Cherbourg in January, departing Sandbanks at 11pm, ready for an early start in the hypermarket the following morning.....

But perhaps, just perhaps, we should dispense with tradition on this last point. In my view, if an organiser cannot be appointed when the event is first proposed and discussed, then it probably should not feature on the events list until such a person has been identified and accepted responsibility. Ignoring these points in the future would at best be inconsiderate, and could at worst prove foolhardy.

Caveat emptor!

Nick L



RCC Poole Harbour BBQ: what the burgers might have looked like if we'd managed to cook them

ALPS JUNE 2006

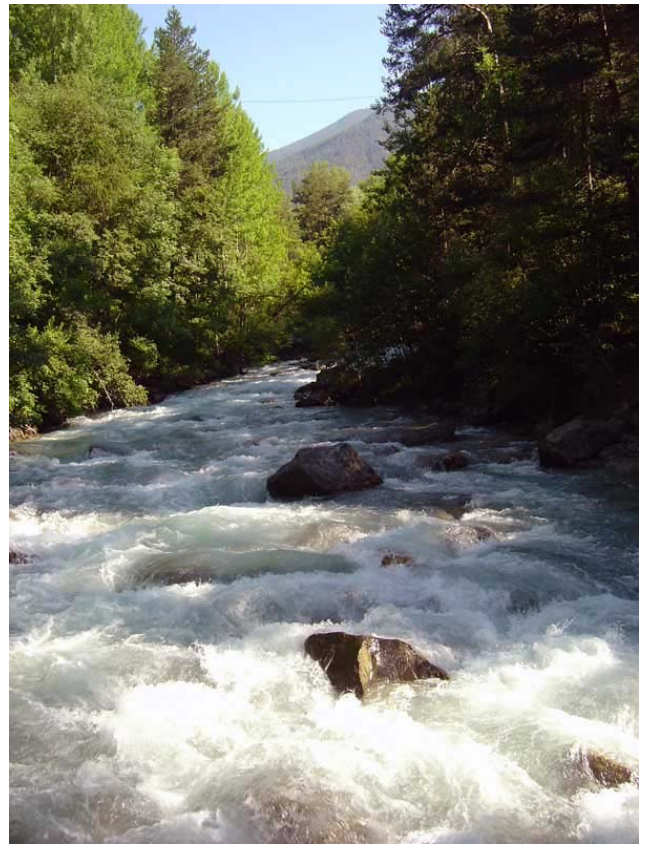
3 Ringwood members (Tim, Ross & I) joined 7 from Southbourne CC (Chas, Richard, Graham D, Martin, Gareth, Luther and Mark) for a packed week in the Alps. Travelling overnight we arrived in Briancon at around 1pm on the Saturday - and even managed a paddle that afternoon. We paddled 7 days straight and took in some classic runs (Guil, Durance, Ubaye, Guisane, Clarree, Onde, Gyronde, and the Dora Riparia across the border in Italy)

There were lots of minor epics, mishaps and problems to make the trip amusing but that is for others to recount. An excellent paddling week.

Graham B

(Hopefully someone will put some words together to go with the following pics.)





STORMBOUND MARINERS – IN JULY!!

The forecast was 'iffy' for this years 'Dorset Coast Camp' – but 5 of us needed the sea air. Paul, Richard, Elliott, Tim and I set off from Swanage in sunshine that Saturday. The intention was to paddle to Lulworth, stopping overnight somewhere on route, and using the morning tidal assistance. Despite an early rise, hiccups in navigation and the long shuttle that the plan involved meant that we were not on the water until 11:30.



We elected to paddle close in shore which gave us some shelter from a stiffening headwind and afforded us views of the cliffs and wildlife (including Puffins) but also meant that we

spent the whole day paddling against wind and tide. We didn't get to Kimmeridge until 16:30.



Divers at Kimmeridge informed us that the forecast had deteriorated, with the arrival of a F8 gale expected within the next 6 hours. We battled on against growing seas and wind, finally seeking shelter in the bay to the lee of Warbarrow Tout.



Sure enough, the gale hit us overnight – and rising from our wet pits early Sunday morning (woken by the crashing surf) the sea was none too friendly.



Sheltering from the rain and enjoying one of Richards brews we discussed options. It was still blowing F5/6, - we could hang around until the afternoon in the hope that conditions would improve sufficiently to allow our onward journey, or we could attempt an 'evacuation'. We plumped for the latter and Richard and I set off for the 5 ½ mile walk to Lulworth to retrieve his vehicle. Leaving the others (still in their pits) to pack up.

All went well, and we even managed to persuade a range warden to open the gate at Tyneham to allow us to drive down to the boats.

Good fun

Graham

"DANGEROUS WATERS WARNING" (THE AVON!!!)

The following appeared in the New Forest and Salisbury Journals in July

"YOUNGSTERS are putting their lives at risk on the River Avon by drifting dangerously close to weirs and river hatches in small, non-powered boats.

John Levell, vice chairman of the Wessex Salmon and Rivers Trust, has raised his concerns with Fordingbridge town council after he spotted three young children drifting down the river at Somerley.

The children two girls and a boy aged about ten had already negotiated a precarious weir at Bickton, just south of Fordingbridge, and were stopped just before they reached the Ibsley hatches.

They had been launched by their parents at Fordingbridge and left to drift in the dinghy for collection at Ringwood.

Mr Levell said he wants something done before disaster strikes.

"It's horrifying," he told the Forest Journal. "The potential for disaster is increasing to a stage where it's likely to happen because of the frequency of people on the river, which is increasing dramatically.

"People are allowed to access the river without being aware of the dangers."

The WSRT is a charitable trust formed in 1992 by a volunteer group of individuals, anglers, river managers, scientists and environmentalists.

Mr Levell has approached the town council on behalf of the trust, and also contacted Salisbury district council, in a bid to have notices posted to prevent boats being launched.

"We are informed that it has become a regular occurrence for canoes, inflatable and even raft-like crafts to launch at Fordingbridge recreation ground, and the parks in Salisbury, to drift and paddle downstream to meet a previously positioned vehicle at locations such as Ibsley, Ringwood, Avon Tyrell and even Christchurch," Mr Levell said.

As well as the dangers involved, he explained that the summer pastime is also breaking a law related to non-navigable, privately owned rivers.

"Unfortunately, many people appear completely ignorant of the existence of such laws," he added.

"This has serious implications related to health and safety and insurance with regard to the weirs, fast flow and heavy weed growth that make the Avon a particularly dangerous river."

In some cases, boaters are claiming they are exercising their "right to roam" but they are going too far, said Mr Levell.

The new legal right or right to roam provided by The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, applies only to mapped areas of uncultivated, open countryside namely mountain, moor, heath, down and registered common land.

Mr Levell said: "We must ask that the amenity value of the riparian owners and tenants is respected.

"Rentals in excess of £10,000 per mile are paid for the privilege of undisturbed peace and tranquillity to enjoy the sporting rights of the Avon.

"If these rights are to be eroded by the unlawful access the very infrastructure of the river will be threatened."

Fordingbridge town council last week agreed to erect two signs near the river in the recreation ground, warning boaters not to launch any small craft from the site.

The full wording for the signs has yet to be agreed.

Town mayor Alan Lewendon said the signs still would not prevent people from launching their boats elsewhere on the river.

He said: "It is of course gross stupidity, verging on criminal negligence, to allow young children to drift down the River Avon from Fordingbridge, apparently intending to pick them up at Ringwood.

"The Avon, even at times of low flow rates, holds many obvious and hidden dangers.

"That said, this is the first report we have received about such activities, so I am unable to comment upon how common a problem this is."

8:20am Friday 14th July 2006

HELLO FROM CANADA

Message from Georgia

Hi all, this is the third email I've written, but the previous 2 deleted themselves due to some technical error. Don't you just love technology? So will not write much other than I'm well. Paddling lots (Graham, I will submit trip reports when things quieten down).

I move into a place I'm renting on Sept 1st, so I expect visits. 3 rivers close by and can walk out of door with kayak on shoulder and paddle.

Here are some photos from trips so far.



Out u a boat

Georgia

AND PETER IS OFF TO NZ

I should be leaving for NZ in the next few weeks to emigrate with my wife and 2 kids.

I wish you all well and have enjoyed the previous couple of years paddling with you.

All the best

Pete Fisk