



# CANEWS

December 2007

## EDITOR'S CORNER

THE WEB SITE – [www.ringwoodcanoe.co.uk](http://www.ringwoodcanoe.co.uk)

In this age of digital cameras the web site seems to be growing faster. There are now close to 1,000 image files spread across 31 pages. Within the 'Canews' pages there are well over 100 'trip reports' going back to 1999.

It is great to receive photos from the trips – but sadly I have to drastically reduce the resolution of images before uploading (the website is currently well over 70MB). Consequently if you download these to print you will be disappointed!

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

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

### THE RIVER AVON 'BLOG'



If you have any photos, information etc. on the river Avon that might be appropriate for the 'Blog' – please let me know

See: <http://theriveravon.blogspot.com/>

### CAPTION COMPETITION

Visit the web site for the Caption Competition



*"The farmer must enjoy anagrams; he's changed Blackness Beach into A Backless Bench".*

Or: *"I don't care if everyone else is in shorts. I'm not rolling them up any further – and get your hand out!"*

Barry.

*"As usual RCC were like coiled springs waiting for the tide to turn".*

Mike

*"Poisonous gas outrage claims 7 victims - Ross denies farting but there is overwhelming circumstantial evidence"*

Or *"RCC members grow bored waiting for results of knobbly knee competition"*

Nick

Barry has offered the following background to the Caption Photo:

The photo shows the rolling jetty on the new slipway at Blackness. For about 15 years, until last year, this was the site for wild camping on our annual weekend on the Dart estuary in Devon. I have camped there most years since 1968. The farmer has now developed a boat storage facility at his farm on top of the hill, a road and this slipway, all with UK and EC grants to encourage rural diversity.

In the first year of operation he already has a lot of customers because the cost of storage is much less than a floating berth on the river, and includes 12 launches and recoveries per year. A significant percentage of the income has to be paid to the Duchy of Cornwall estate (Prince Charles) because the slipway is built on their land, which includes the foreshore of the Dart, and most other estuaries in Devon, between the high and low water marks. The river bed below low water is owned by the Crown (Charlie's mum), and this perhaps explains why the slipway does not extend far enough to enable launching at low tide. Paying two lots of royalties to the same family might be too much of a burden.

Those who have been there may be interested to see how the place gets used now, and there are some good photos, together with their environmental claims, on their web site: [www.blacknessmarine.co.uk/](http://www.blacknessmarine.co.uk/)

**Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year** to all our members – I hope Santa is good to you all.



This issue has a distinct international flavour – taking you from the Fjords of Norway to Desolation Sound. What trips have you all planned for 2008?

## Notes on Norway Trip 2007 - Norway – land of water – fjords, waterfalls and rain!



**Friday 6th July** - Drove to Newcastle for the 3pm ferry and 24 hour trip to Bergen. Land Rover loaded with 2 sea kayaks, camping kit and food for a week.

**Saturday 7th July** - Arrived Bergen 5pm. Our idea was to start with a 3-day kayak trip. The weather forecast was not good, so somewhere inland and sheltered seemed sensible. We decided to start on Hardangerfjord then go on to the smaller Sorfjorden. Drove to Maested, went for a short walk and camped for the night.



**Sunday 8th July** - Drove via Voss, Granvin and Eide, through a long tunnel to Eidfjorden, then along a very minor road to find somewhere to park up and launch. Simple - except that the road was often high above fjord with no access and when near the fjord there was absolutely nowhere to park. Eventually found a suitable spot opposite Utne. Loaded kayaks for 3-day trip, set GPS so we could find way back to the Land Rover and set off at 11am. The water was flat calm, but as we started crossing South it suddenly changed to become very choppy. We continued down along West edge of Sorfjorden. In the next 4 hours we found only 2 places we could have got off the water. It started raining. Hmm – better start looking for a camp site – could take a while to find one. 6- 30pm – pulled in near Na at the only place we had so far found where we could camp. Not good, but may take hours to find anything else. Site

smaller than tent! Running water under (and in) tent. A couple of ash trees obstructed the porch area! Rained ..... ate, slept. Rained..... Tried to curl round the tree roots poking up. Large pool gathering around us!



**Monday 9th** - Got up 5-30am. Raining ..... Packed up soaking wet camping stuff, ate & then set off at 6-30am. Sorfjorden is a very pretty fjord (just as it said in the books), but it would have been better without rain. There are lots of cherry orchards on the steep sides and any nearly flat area had a small village crammed on. All very scenic.



We crossed over to Epse and then turned North to go back on opposite side. Still raining. We stopped for coffee in the shelter of a derelict boathouse. Waterfalls everywhere. plummeting noisily from sheer, vertical cliffs down into fjord. Sometimes they spread across the hillside. Awesome! We continued past Lofthus and Kinsarvik (care – ferries crossing) into Einfjorden and on to where there is another ferry at Brimner, stopping only briefly for lunch. No-where to camp there and didn't look at all promising further on as the sides of fjord very steep & rocky. Back-tracked and early evening (about 5- 30pm) found a site beside some old boat-houses East of Ringay. A good site – enough space for tent! Used driftwood for table. Stopped raining briefly. Hung stuff up to let water run off.



**Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> July** - Raining again. Set off 7-30am (late!). Down Einfjorden but crossed over so we were on other (North) side of fjord . Porpoises around. Lunch on the way at some rocks – seals here - kept watching us – think they were their rocks we were on. Further down Einfjorden to Einfjord. Rain.... turned back, but went down a small fjord running North - towards Ulvik for a while, then headed for home (well the Land Rover) - now against wind and tide - choppy - battle all way back - arrived after 5-30pm. Another day with over 10 hours paddling. Tired! On the bright side - warnings about midges unfounded – so wet they had all drowned!



Loaded up and drove to a camp site at Granvin. Shower with heated floor (tempted to lay out all gear on shower floor for the night!). Nice site with good views of the end of the fjord. Only ones in camping field. Long grass – comfy – no tree roots!



**Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> July** - Drove to Flam. (via Voss and Gudvangen and lot of tunnels). Flamsbana train up from Flam to Myrdal. Up 900m – 20 tunnels, spirals in mountain. Stopped at impressive waterfall (but with with woman in costume beside it, wailing! Some legend).

Walk down via construction road. Through upland meadows with goats. Scenic. Then started raining! Lots more

waterfalls. Rained most of way down. Land Rover smelly with wet kit by now! Flam, Aurland, 25.5k tunnel (that's quite long), Naddvik, ferry to Sognal & then Hafslo. Decided would get a cabin for 2 nights - dry stuff out! Very civilised.



**Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> July** - Went to Gaupne. Jostedal area - largest glacier in mainland Europe. Went to glacier lake at Niggardsbreen & walked to glacier. Drove to dam at 1400M alt.itude - Styggevatn. Lots of snow.



Walked up to dam wall & along top – amazing views of glacier lake, glacier, icebergs etc. Loved idea of kayaking there – but not practical – long steep portage in snow to launch!! Instead drove back to Hafslo, then went for an evening kayaking on a glacier-melt lake (blue-green and no tide) near Hafslo, Hafslovatnet. – very peaceful and pretty – kayaking round various small islands - but still raining.



**Friday 12<sup>th</sup> July** - Drove to Fjaerland. Walked up 1000m to Flatbreen Glacier. On way up meadows with lots of flowers. Scrambled up on to terminal & lateral moraines near Flatbryhetta (hut). No ice axes – so David consented to use one of my walking poles for probing snow. Fantastic views of glacier and then of valley on way down. Not raining! Path a bit eroded – then discovered we should have been on a

diversion because the original path was now dangerous! Oops!  
Never mind – still alive. Camped near Lavik.



**Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> July** - Ferry over Sognefjord - longest and deepest fjord in Norway. Main road to Dale. Found good place to launch kayaks on upper part of Osterfjorden.



Initially went towards the sea for an hour, then came back and went down a narrow rapid and found a huge, tidal fjord further inland. The constriction between the fjords was causing the rapid. Lots of Jellyfish (and reflections). Rain started just as we finished re-loading gear.



To Bergen via the narrowest, windiest, most pot-holed road ever driven on. Was told it was scenic - but eyes were glued to the next hairpin bend. Rain.. heavy rain..... torrential rain..... In Bergen bought presents - silly hat for Sally, Troll jigsaw for Geoffrey, but took ages to find a Norwegian Blue for Stephen. Still raining .....



Evening - ferry to Newcastle, 24 hours on same, grim ferry we had gone out on, with the same girl doing an 18 hour shift in the only cafe. Newcastle -still raining, drive home (in rain) arriving 3-30am Sunday. Garden flourishing – been raining here too.

Ros & Dave

---

## CAPTURED RIVER

No, not a new threat from someone trying to stop us paddling, but a geographical feature that might interest those who were on the river Avon in Devon in October.

South Devon is characterised by its attractive tidal estuaries, or rias, which are river valleys drowned by an ancient rise in sea level. The Exe estuary, the Dart estuary, the Kingsbridge estuary and the Tamar estuary are the four largest. Three of them are fed by the largest rivers in south Devon which give them their names, but the Kingsbridge estuary is named after the town at its tidal limit because there is no river to name it by. All of the rivers were much bigger after the ice age, but none of the tributaries of the Kingsbridge estuary are anything more than short streams. The estuary is very large and obviously was created by a substantial river, but where has it gone?



A look at the map reveals that the river Avon rises near the centre of Dartmoor and flows south directly towards the Kingsbridge estuary, but it takes a sharp turn to the west about 2 miles north of Kingsbridge. It once flowed into the Kingsbridge estuary, long before the valley was drowned, and was the river responsible for eroding the large valley. A much smaller river, flowing into the sea at Bantham, gradually lengthened its valley upstream by erosion at the head of the river, until it extended into the Avon valley. Like a boy diverting a stream on the beach, it captured the Avon and diverted it into the much smaller valley to the west.

The point of the capture is now a relatively deep and narrow gorge-like part of the valley near Loddiswell. It is quite different in character to the other valleys in the area. This steep part of the valley has no road through it, but some of the club's longer serving members may remember a walk that we had through it some years ago in pouring rain, following the route of the old railway. This was built along the Avon valley, then went through a short tunnel near the old course of the river to get to Kingsbridge.

With no flow though it now, the estuary has silted up and has huge expanses of mud flats at low tide. Great for the birds but not so good for boating.

Barry.

---

## PERPLEXING!

I wonder if any of you can give an explanation to a phenomena that I experienced on last years Spey trip.

It was on the Friday (before it all got very exciting) It was raining and I became aware of what I first thought was the sound of rain pattering in the boat but when the rain eased off I

was aware of the noise continuing. I couldn't work it out, then a couple of other paddlers in the group commented on hearing it in their boats.

One aptly described it as sounding just like bacon sizzling in a pan. One suggestion that it might be caused by power lines but there were none anywhere near.

Anyone got any answers.?

Dot.

---

## SEEKING HIGHER GROUND

After a dry start to the season – the rain came in Mid November for a reasonable day run on the Loop. Late November the rain disappeared again (a low run on the Upper). The first weekend of December saw us enjoying high levels on the Walkham and Tavy

But – the second weekend of December was immense – driving us to the highest ground...

Trekking around 'Gutter Tor'



We put in at the very top of the Plym



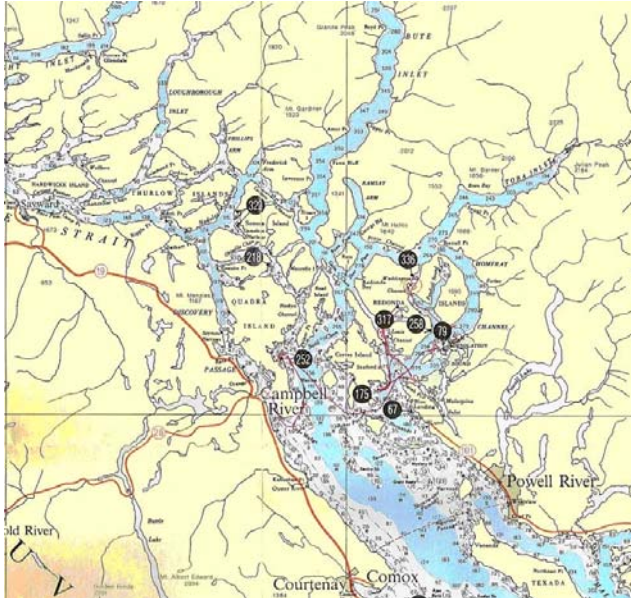
And within 1km there .....



Graham

## DESOLATION SOUND ON THE 'THE CURVE OF TIME'

June 21 – 26 2007 by Georgia Newsome



Desolation Sound was so named by Captain Vancouver as he returned disappointed and tired from Jarvis Inlet, on the coast of British Columbia, Canada. Vancouver had not managed to find the Inside Passage. The mountains rise steeply on the sides of many of the inlets and the good captain complained in his journal about the persistent rain and fog. Thankfully it didn't rain the whole time I was there, however I too was unable to find the inside passage (partly due to looking in the wrong place). Desolation Sound renowned for its beauty by the locals, remained within a misty shroud for the majority of the 5 day mother-ship and kayak trip, on which I was hired as kayak guide.



The 'Curve of Time' is the ocean fishing trawler, previously owned by Greenpeace then named the 'Moby Dick'. An email from a friend hooked me up with the owner who was looking for a kayak guide to teach and supervise the nine guests onboard. One phone call and the job was mine. Deciding that it might be good practice to have another experienced paddler onboard, I got the ok to invite a paddling friend and rookie guide along.



We all boarded the mother-ship at the Salmon fishing capital of BC, Campbell River, Vancouver Island, before motoring out of the harbour and around Mudge Pt to Rebecca Spit on Quadra Island.

Launching from the zodiac for the first time was an interesting and time consuming exercise. It was an hour before everyone was tucked in to their kayaks and on the water. I might add that the majority of the guests were 65 + year old women, who had never kayaked before. While not officially an Elder Hostel trip, it certainly had that feeling about it. Rebecca Spit was supposed to be a nice protected body of water for the ladies initiation to kayaking. By the time we were all on the water the wind had picked up and a gusty moment scattered the party in all directions. A hasty retreat to the beach to adjust client rudder peddles. While exiting my kayak I suddenly found myself sitting in the water beside it (a little embarrassed I might add). We finally regrouped and the basics of kayaking were imparted before another hasty retreat to the beach to take care of mother natures' internal fountains. A walk along the spit and now I'm dodging questions on the local flora and fauna (not my forte! Paul T could have used your expertise). Finally back on the 'Curve of Time' where a hearty meal was being prepared.

Crew quarters were down the ladder in the bow of the boat. They were simple, modest but comfortable. I had spent a previous week sailing on a Tall Ship so was becoming accustomed to being gently rocked to sleep.

The next day we motored across to Von Donolp Inlet, where the wind was funnelling through the inlet. No kayaking here today! We motored on to Takena Arm, where we hiked up to the waterfalls before returning to the 'Curve of Time' and motored on again. This time to Refuse Cave.

Refuse Cove marina is a hub of activity in the summer. Mariner's motoring up and down the coast are almost certain to stop here (for more than dropping their refuse!). The café and shop promises treats and goodies not to mention the latest news and gossip. For our little crew it was another opportunity to stretch our sea legs and take a walk across the island. By this time my land legs were beginning to feel very strange and I found myself wobbling and staggering like a drunk. The fungi in these damp regions are huge, as too are the old growth trees, or am I just hallucinating?

The sea life was also really cool. Having bought myself a Pentax waterproof camera I was able to hold it under water from the jetty and get some good shots of sea anemones, muscles and pink sponge/ tubers and, also neat jelly fish.



We left the refuse of the marina and motored to Prideau Haven, where we moored for 2 days, explored the islets in the kayaks in search of an old native Indian village. We found some hints of a site, but it was very much overgrown and lacked any real tell-tale signs that anyone had lived there at anytime.

Hearing that the bioluminescence was good in this spot we bundled ourselves into the kayaks for a night paddle. Contrary to the cloudy days we were treated to clear skies and an abundance of stars. What a magical evening!

Following the 2 day lay over we motored up Waddington Channel to Walsh Cove, where we had heard there were pictographs on the cliff walls. Some were more obvious than others.

This area also boasts an abundance of oysters. A fact that is made evident by the number of oyster farms and oyster covered cliff walls. Needless to say we feasted on them once we had gauged our fingers and hands prising them open. Apparently there is a right and a wrong way to open oysters! By the end of the bucket load I'd got it down to an art.



We also put out a shrimp net, but for our efforts caught only five shrimp. This was not exactly enough for the meal we had imagined and salivated over.



Early the next morning, even before most were out of their berths we had begun motoring back to Campbell River, via George Cove. After our five day sojourn we moored back at Campbell River marina, where the group said their goodbyes and went their different ways.

'The Curve of Time' owned by Jan Bevelander can be booked under his company Due West Charters at: [info@duewestcharter.bc.ca](mailto:info@duewestcharter.bc.ca)

Georgia Newsome