



CANEWS

March 2007

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.

CAPTION COMPETITION

Visit the web site for the Caption Competition



Some good efforts this time

Nick L's contribution: "*Hanna deliberately chose to misinterpret Olly's request*"

And Mike F came up with two:- "*Pre paddle nerves ensured that Hannah rapidly depleted the on board gin supply, so another bottle of Bombay Sapphire was rushed to the scene!*"

Or:

"*By the time she had inhaled a complete tank full of Helium, Hannah's impression of Paul in animated discussion was nearly perfect.*"

But the winner is Barry D with "*You're a brave girl putting any of Paul's kit in your mouth. Here, have a rinse.*"

RDCP DEMISE

Sadly the River Dart Country Park saga has finally come to an end – as Stuart Woodward reports:-

[Mark Simpson has pulled the plug for paddlers at RDCP.](#)

[Next season no bunk house, bar, car park and no access or egress in the RDCP grounds.](#)

[This week end saw the end of the AS Watersports shop. And at the end of this years Dart season, will see the end of one of the best, and sadly under supported boating facilities in the UK.](#)

While, as club, we haven't used the RDCP very often, many individuals in the club are down there on a regular basis and it has become a 'meeting ground' to put together day trips and to 'chew the fat'

Mark Simpson's support for the paddling community has been abused by the behaviour of a few thoughtless paddling 'yobs' over the last few seasons – with drunken all-night disturbance (sometimes involving the police), theft from the drying rooms, etc. etc.

The RDCP will be sorely missed

ANDREW IN NZ

Andrew is currently enjoying a 7 month river tour of NZ – a few extracts from his reports so far...



November 2006

Started in Auckland, didn't like it - busy, no character, 'unfriendly'. (a bad start really!)

Headed to Rotorua the next day. Stayed there 3 nights. Really beautiful area and met some really cool people. Then went to Taupo with two guys from Birmingham

Met 3 German girls in Taupo. - drove to Tauranga (bay of plenty) - went swimming in sea a lot, climbed Mt. Monganui, did a sky-dive

Few days later headed to Taihape ('ti-happy') by myself - for bliss-stick.

The Beginning, River Valley Lodge

Arriving here was what I would imagine going to heaven is like: sun was shining, stunning views, kayakers and rafters everywhere, camping is dirt cheap and there's an awesome play wave parallel with my tent!!



Met two guys also doing the ambassador programme with bliss-stick - we've decided that after our work at the kayak factory, we're going to buy a car together and do as many rivers around the country as we can... perfect...!

Too much rain has prevented us running the gorge outside the lodge - (the Rangitikei) - currently all raft trips are cancelled, and running it is considered 'crazy' by most standards... so we're waiting for levels to drop This is frustrating; we spent three days straight doing very little.

The Rangitikei Gorge

Our first river trip. This was considered "a pushy grade four", however levels were still reasonably high, meaning sections of grade 5.

We got a lift up with the River Valley Rafters* - then let them go ahead (we wanted to scout everything and take it slowly on our first decent).

The trip started off comfortably with grade 3, then 3/4 - a nice warm up and a good way to get used to the Mystic and river dynamics. Although it soon became fairly intense - grade 4/5 some beautiful drops and nice lines. Very exciting, bloody scary!

A few rapids from the end I had a bit of an epic - I swam... major embarrassment, although I'm told a lot of people swim this river - which made me feel slightly better.

The get out is actually at River Valley (where I'm staying), which is perfect. This meant a chilled afternoon of exchanging stories and discussing rapids at the lodge bar. Things are going really well, this holiday is amazing and is only looking to get better - although I have to say kiwi paddling is really putting me in my place!

Adventure Paddling

Spent the whole weekend paddling - really great fun.

Had a bit of a heavy one on Friday night, so we did a late afternoon run of the Rangitikei Gorge. This time I did it in a 'Scud' and had far fewer problems!

On Sunday we did some 'park and huck' style paddling (a new experience). This involved a 3/4hour road trip, trekking through jungle, an abseil and a few waterfalls - great fun



December 2006

Road Trippin'

We have a car!, after the small problem of changing a battery the car has been running well (touch wood). On the last day at the bliss-stick factory we built ourselves a roof rack and nailed it to the car (plus it's now coated with stickers - it looks awesome). so began our road trip...

This weekend we headed north to Rotorua in search of paddles, which are surprisingly hard to come-by in New Zealand. After this tiresome dose of retail therapy it was about 6pm, but with shiny new boats and paddles we were desperate to get on the water! We therefore drove a few km to the Kaituna River get-out where there's a really nice playhole - perfect for experimenting with the new kit. I love my SCUD!

Sunday morning we drove to the Wairoa - a dam released grade 4/5 which only runs every other weekend, we ran it as a group of 5. It was a really cool run with plenty of challenging boulder-gardens, drops, slots and waterfalls (plus the weather was fantastic which really set it off). We had no problems other than on one rapid - a particularly nasty rapid followed by a steep drop appropriately named "the rollercoaster".... our leader swam and I got a good beating in a monster stopper, got back-looped, and then experienced some unpleasant downtime pinned against a wall.



That afternoon we drove back to Rotorua, bought food, petrol and other essentials then set up tents on the lake's banks - beautiful spot and really chilled evening.

Huka Falls

We stayed in Rotorua for a few more days - running the Kaituna river almost every day, (I think we ran it a total of 13 times). Really nice river; a grade 3/4 with big drops, jungle-like vegetation and a couple of good playspots.

After this we headed down to the Taupo region to tackle the rivers there; these included doing the Tauraga river, both parts of the Rangitaiki River, Full-James playwave, Huka Hole and most recently Huka Falls.....this was awesome, definitely the scariest thing I've ever done!! –

Running this waterfall was really the reason for being in Taupo, although unfortunately, on arrival we found the river to be at its highest velocity meaning it would be a suicide mission. We thus waited the whole of 3 days for the water levels to drop, just camping alongside the river and eagerly watching the river gauge. Finally, about 10am on Sunday morning, the river had lost enough volume to make it runnable

We drove down to the tourist-viewing bridge where we could scout a line through the 200m's of whitewater above the falls. The bridge was swarmed with tourists... it made it very hard focusing on the river and calming nerves with people all around

whispering amongst themselves and pointing and gasping as they began to cotton-on that the 3 of us in kayaking kit were about to run the Huka Waterfall. It was a bit surreal walking our boats to the put-in; you could feel the eyes of the countless tourists on your back, hear murmurs of "insane", "crazy" mixed with the numerous pats on the back and good lucks.

The best part of all this attention had to be the group of awe-struck American girls who insisted on helping us get ready and filming the whole event for us.

The lines were fairly straightforward and a nice 'recovery eddy' had formed on the left 15m from the drop. This didn't really help to calm my nerves though, i was terrified! We ran it together, as a group of three with about a ten second gap between each of us. We all made it safely through the rapids and over the fall to the cheers of our audience overhead. What a buzz! I'm still shaking thinking about it!



Extracts nicked from Andrew's blog

While Andrew was running Huka Falls during his paddle tour of NZ I was perusing the latest issue of the Canoe & Kayak magazine.

There was an article by Doug Cooper on river running techniques. As chance would have it Doug had used a photo of Andrew and I running a section of the Coruh (Turkey) a year ago. I happened to be in the front and Andrew was behind.

Doug had used this to illustrate what he calls 'The Mother Duck' approach "where an experienced paddler leads a less experienced paddler" etc. etc.

I don't think Andrew would appreciate the "duckling" inference!!!! Who will be leading who next time?

Graham

LEADERLESS WITH PERMISSION TO PADDLE!

7th January 2007

For those who have not joined the RCC Upper Dart trips these trips are a group of paddlers with a common interest of running the upper Dart and such rivers. The trips are organised and informally lead by Graham or Chas, two experienced paddlers that keep the rest of us in order on the river. However, this weekend both had decided that some additional training was required and had signed up for 5 star training with Gene17.

Emails were sent to all the other usual suspects and a loose plan was formed to meet at the RDCP at 09:30. Seven of us convened at the RDCP and headed off to the shop to get out of the rain and do a little window shopping! A general consensus was reached that we wanted to do a grade 3 trip that wasn't the Dart. There had been some rain in Dartmoor

but the Dart was still below the ledge which was an indication that there wasn't masses of water about.

After a discussion with the shop assistant we decided to try the Teign as no one in the group had paddled it before. This was described as a Grade 2(3-) trip the guidebook (English White Water) and was recommended as 'the best open boat trip in Dartmoor' making it an ideal trip considering we had a Topo Duo in the group. We headed off to the egress at Steps Bridge and found the river at a nice medium level.

I was in the lead car and after my navigator had taken me down some of the smallest roads in Dartmoor with a nice crop of grass growing down the middle of the road, we eventually stumbled across the put in as the A382 Bridge. After adding a lone paddler who had lost his group during the shuttle we headed off. There was a pleasant and calm start to the river, after a kilometre or so we found a horizon line that indicated the first weir and the only bank inspection required. There was an obvious line down the fish steps on river left. This was made to look very difficult by another member of the group and after this demonstration of the line the weir was portaged by half the group!

This was followed by a really nice section of grade 2 punctuated with a couple of grade 3 rapids through a really picturesque valley. The river then flatters off a little with a few runnable weirs and some grade 2 rapids. We sacked the navigator and found a much better route for the return shuttle. This was a new river for me and I think it would make a really nice RCC trip for both kayaks and open boats.

Sorry no pictures you will have to paddle it yourself to see the views!

14th January 2007

A very similar group headed out minus the Topo Duo and had an interesting day on the Upper Dart with one pinned and one broken boat! But everyone made it off safely.

Ross

STARS IN MY EYES

Hmm – Over the same two weekends (above), and while Ross, Richard, Martin, Pete et al were wrecking boats, Chas and I had, indeed, opted for some training. I had managed to avoid any kind of formal training since 1998 – but was beginning to feel the need to 'brush-up'. This was partly due to additional demands from the Scouts However, I thought that this might also help me to keep pace with Andrew - at least sufficiently so that we could continue to paddle together without cramping his style too much.

Anyway – 5 stars seemed the next logical step and so, with Chas, I signed up for Gene 17's 5* Training over one weekend, extended with their Whitewater Safety & Rescue on the Monday, and the 5* Assessment the following weekend. A bit rushed, perhaps, but I would never get around to it otherwise.

The training gave us two consecutive days on the Upper Dart, blessed with mild wet weather and great levels. The days were spent brushing up on some advanced paddle techniques ("Westgarth's New School") and honing leadership styles and approaches. All good fun

We spent Monday jumping in and out of the Erme, tying ourselves up with Prussic Loops, throwing bags, fishing with live bait and practicing a whole host of rescue and retrieval techniques. If you don't know the difference between a Z-Drage and a 4-line cinch I would highly recommend booking onto a WWS&R course with Simon

The Assessment, the following weekend was much more fun than I had anticipated. Simon had shipped three Assessors in (two from PYB) – and we spent some time with each over the course of this weekend. Rather than the false scenarios and contrived environment that dogs the coaching assessments, Gene 17 run a really relaxed show. You get mixed up in a group of 4, spend the whole weekend paddling together, taking turns to formally 'lead' all under the watchful eye of Assessors that otherwise let you get on with it.. We had Saturday on the Upper (again with good levels) and Sunday on the East Lyn (at slightly higher levels than I am comfortable with – I didn't know that I could throw 3 cartwheels in my Creeker!).

All in all – 5 days paddling, with new people on great rivers, evenings spent paddle-talking over steaks and ale and you even get some stars. What could be better than that.

Graham

SPEY



Hopefully Dot is going to recount the story of this particularly evil strainer

RCC MEMBERS' APATHY ENSURED SKITTLES FUN



In my experience, most skittles matches are characterised by too many people getting to throw too few balls. Not so with RCC. Our annual skittles match was attended by just a few people who threw lots of balls. Some of them even hit skittles. And doors. And skittle putter-uppers. Ross achieved the highest score in all categories. I can't remember who actually won the match – or even whether anyone did – because someone rubbed out Jake's 'The Winner is...' message before

I had a chance to read it.

It was a great evening, and Godshill Village Hall turned out to be a surprisingly good venue, with a very pleasant ambience and first-rate facilities. Apart from the non-functional microwave in the kitchen and an electricity meter with a rapacious appetite. Well done for organising the evening, Bev – an excellent choice!

Curiously, those members who did attend were the same members who always help organise club trips, sort out catering arrangements and generally put themselves out for other people. I briefly pondered where the other 80% of RCC might have got to. But then realised that hey, they probably had homes to stay in. And it WAS dark and a bit chilly outside that evening.....

If you're interested, you can download a slide show of the RCC skittles night from the Website (see Trips 2007). But be warned, it's 15MB, so if you're still using dial-up, you probably won't want to bother. You'll need Quicktime Player to run it, and it's best played with the volume turned up. If anyone wants any of the photos, they are all available in hi-res format.

Nick L

THE BEST OPEN BOAT TRIP ON DARTMOOR?

The BCU guide to English White Water describes the 12 km section of the river Teign between Chagford and Steps Bridge as 'an enjoyable quiet trip through scenic woods'. It concludes that this might even be 'the best open boat trip on Dartmoor'. Ross painted the same picture of bucolic harmony when we all met up at Runnage Farm, near Postbridge, on the night of Friday, February 9. The party comprised Ross, Mark, Tim, Dave R, Joanna, Dave C, Ros, Simon, Paul and Nick. Phil arrived at about 2 in the morning after driving down from Wales, and decided he'd have a more peaceful night if he slept in his car.



Although billed as RCC's annual 'Gunnislake' trip (our secretary doesn't like to confuse people by introducing too many new place names in the events list, so he resolutely sticks with the old ones), the weekend found us in a very cold bunkhouse in the middle of Dartmoor, nowhere near Gunnislake. According to Ross, this was because our usual venue, the Old School House, was closed for renovation. We all took his word for it, though with hindsight perhaps someone should have checked that he wasn't simply being blinded by a desire to wean people away from paddling the Tamar.

Despite the near zero temperature everyone survived the Friday night, and those fortunate enough not to be sharing a

bedroom with Simon (OK, OK, and Nick) probably even got some sleep. Ross had drawn a short straw, but treacherously decamped to the non snorers' room under cover of darkness. Over breakfast on Saturday, he further advanced his rosy portrayal of the Teign, so we all agreed that this was obviously THE river to paddle.

Since Dave had remembered that he hadn't remembered to bring any helmets (though he had remembered to bring along all the walking sticks Annie had asked him to leave at home), he and Jo first drove to Exeter to purchase shiny new headgear, then joined us at the put-in. This, combined with a rather lengthy shuttle involving mid-way car placement at Fingle Bridge in case anyone got tired and wanted to do a shorter paddle, meant that we didn't actually get on the water until midday. But this is RCC we're talking about, so there was nothing particularly unusual in this.

This section of the Teign is grade 2+ and very scenic, even at this time of year. The first kilometre reminded me very much of the Lynher in Cornwall. It was during this first kilometre that Ross casually mentioned the gorge and grade 3+ waterfalls that lurked 0.5 km downstream. As the only people paddling a Canadian on this trip, Dave and Jo immediately began to question the boat's suitability for the Teign. Or was it the Teign's suitability for a Canadian? Whatever, the seeds of doubt were sown.



Tim and Ross showed everyone the best line down the first waterfall, which had what looked like a healthy stopper on it. After duly noting this line, the rest of us took a different one. We portaged around it. After a succession of rapids, we came to the second set of falls. This time, several members elected to follow Ross's lead. Most of them made it, but as Ros and I observed, this was more by luck than judgement, with everyone taking completely different routes. Paul's route was the most complex, involving a double barrel roll under a low overhanging tree and a swift blow to the head, followed by a slightly dazed looking swim. While Tim and Dave C busied themselves rescuing Paul's boat, the rest of us made our second portage of the day.

The path river left climbed nearly vertically via steps hewn in the rock, so Dave and Jo chose to ferry glide across the river and get out on the right-hand bank. Ros, Phil and I made the mistake of listening to Ross, who assured us there was a path at river level on our side of the river. It turned out that his path was not so much next to the river as in it. Slipping and sliding amongst the rocks and tree roots during our 300 metre haul, we got much wetter and far more exhausted than we would have done had we shot the fall in the first place.

Dave and Jo, having portaged the fall, put in immediately below it and then sought Ross's directions for getting through the rock garden that succeeded it. Through a combination of paddling skill and determination, they were able to follow his recommendation to the letter. Unfortunately, that letter was 'B' for 'Boulder'. Ross's route was fine for kayaks, but not quite so practical for a five metre long Canadian which couldn't be manoeuvred with the same dexterity. To cut a very short story even shorter, the Canadian met the boulder broadside, swamped and promptly folded into a neat V shape. After reflecting on the situation and discussing various pros and cons, Dave and Jo decided to get out.



In the face of this unfolding, er, folding disaster, RCC members acted with a commendable sense of urgency. There was a frantic scramble to get out lunchboxes and flasks and find the best viewing platform. Those already on a small island close to the wreck shinned up trees to get a better view of the action, under the pretext of securing boat rescue lines. Jo waded ashore and Dave swam off in search of his beloved baler, emerging triumphant a minute or so later. It took about half an hour to free the boat from the boulder, and when it was finally released it miraculously popped back into some semblance of its original shape.

We spent another half hour happily bodging a temporary strengthening spar – involving plastic cable ties, buoyancy bags and a plastic waterproof drum – before declaring the vessel fit for purpose, though no-one seemed too sure exactly what that purpose might be. Tim gallantly put in a salvage bid, which was rejected by Dave pending a professional post-disaster survey by Paul Kendall. Personally, I suspected that at this point, the boat had the structural integrity of a soggy egg carton.

We all paddled the remaining 4 km or so to Fingle Bridge, encountering numerous small rapids, waterfalls and play features. During this, Mark reprised his patent non-rolling survival technique several times to help keep us entertained. This involves him patiently sitting in his upturned kayak counting sheep and waving his hands in the air, until such time as Ross happens to notice he's missing, or has finished playing on some feature, and paddles over to rescue him. I can see several flaws in this procedure, not the least of which is that in this position, Mark doesn't even know if Ross is still paddling the same river, but it seems to work for him.

Fingle Bridge marked the end of the trip for our intrepid paddlers of the modified Canadian. It also marked a glaring error in our trip planning, when it became evident that only

Simon could drive the car we'd left at this mid-way point, and he wanted to paddle the rest of the trip. Luckily Dave was able to get a lift to Steps Bridge from a helpful passing motorist, but by the time he'd retrieved his car and driven back to Fingle Bridge he had a very cold Jo on his hands.

The 6 km from Fingle Bridge to Steps Bridge was another excellent paddle, characterised by small rapids and a number of weirs. We finally exited the water at 4pm, just as dusk was approaching, and made our way, via the Warren House Inn, back to the farm and a very good evening meal, courtesy of Ratford Catering Services.

Dave and I left on the Sunday morning for a consultation with RCC's chief boat repair specialist, back in Bere Regis. But as far as I know, everyone else set off with the intention of paddling the Tavy.....

Thanks to:

- Ross for organising an excellent trip
- Dave R for cooking superb food on Saturday night
- Dave C for cooking all the breakfasts (again)
- Tim for really supportive paddling and backup
- Everyone else for the craic

A note concerning Runnage Farm

This was the first time that we had stayed here, so the jury was out on what it would be like. It's a bit basic, but will probably improve over time. At present, it has no proper heating facilities (apart from mobile oil-filled electric radiators which cost a fortune to run) and is cold and damp at this time of year. And although the owners seem really helpful, they could do with casting an eye over the equipment; expecting a party of 10 or more to enjoy a self-catering weekend armed only with two frying pans and no saucepans is a trifle unrealistic.

Conclusion about the Teign

A really nice river to paddle, though at the levels we encountered, perhaps not quite 'the best open boat trip on Dartmoor'! I place it above the Lynher, which has always been a firm favourite of mine.

Nick

And, recounting the next day

THE BLOODY TAVY

Ross, Tim, Mark, Paul B, Dave C, Jo, Ros, Simon & Phil.

Following a discussion about trips, it was decided to do the Tavy - we were told 6km of mainly grade 2 rapids. Dave R absented himself due to a floppy canoe (see Teign report) and Nick decided not to paddle. This left plenty of kit for Jo (Dave's crew from the bendy canoe trip) to choose from.

'Shuttle' complete we were on the water for 11-20 (a break with club protocol #173 part A - thou shalt not paddle before noon).

At the put-in Ross and Tim were demonstrating rock canoeing techniques while the rest put in just below that rapid. Phil was the first to capsize, on a vicious eddy line, and having emptied his canoe we continued down river.

Ross doing reconnaissance (occasionally using Mark as a probe) and the rest of the crew following when told to, either by boat or on foot depending on the rapid and their bravery/stupidity.



Paul had the second swim of the day on one of the more serious rapids, which persuaded most of the other to portage. Dave had the third swim on another rapid and his boat, pleased to have dumped its fat rider, continued for about 1/2 a mile downstream without him. Having retrieved the boat and brought it back upstream all the others bar Mark had portaged (and had lunch). Mark started to line himself up for the rapid and found the boat very unstable due the amount of water shipped through the open bung hole. Having righted the boat (using the bottom of the river) he made it back to the side to re-empty the boat, replace the bung and set off again. This time he didn't capsize until he was half way down the rapid, ending up beached on a rock with a bloody face and his boat on top of him.



Not much further on the Walkham joined the Tavy and the joint waters flowed onto a boulder garden. The team were now very cautious and all bar four portaged. Ross, Tim, Dave and bloody Mark ran the rapid with varying degrees of elegance. Everyone but Tim portaged the large, unfriendly weir, then there was a short play on a small, slopey weir just before the take out.

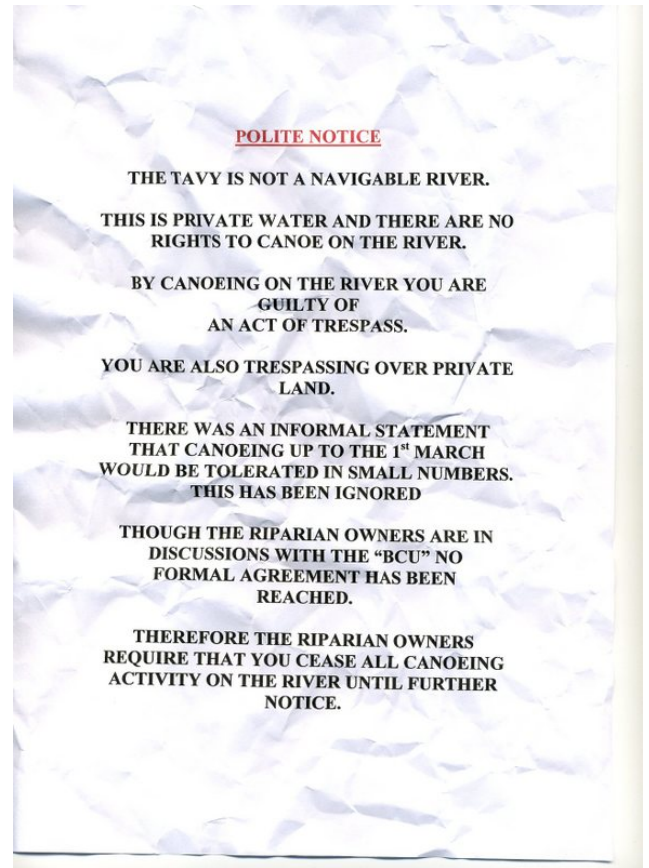
Having exited the river Ross was accosted by a lady from the house overlooking the river who told him in no uncertain terms, and in contravention of the facts (though some of the group may have agreed with her) that the river was not navigable. Ross anxious not to draw any more flack from the natives proceeded to set off his car alarm destroying the peaceful idyll of a quiet February afternoon.

The trip took 4 1/2 hours (breaking club protocol #189 part C - No Sunday trip shall last more than 3 hours). So with only four

swims (one with a bloody face), two broken protocols and a set of irate natives it was a good RCC trip on a beautiful river.

Dave C

The following notice was left on car windscreens at Denham Bridge the following weekend 17/18 February 2007. The 'Toffs' don't like us. (Graham).



THE AVON ACCESS DEBATE REACHES TV

In February 2007 and two of our own (Dave Ratford and Peter Holgate) volunteered to paddle Matt Baker of the BBC down the few short stretches of the Avon where we have 'permission' to paddle. This was televised on 23rd February 'Inside Out' and included an interview with Douglas Caffyn explaining why the public right of navigation established



in 1664 remains

Well done to Dave and Peter for volunteering to put our case

Old law may prove paddling rights by Malcolm Prior

Inside Out, BBC South

Campaigners claim a 17th Century law could give them the right to paddle along one of the South's protected rivers.

Canoeists say landowners are barring them from stretches of the Avon in Wiltshire, Hampshire and Dorset.

But now a university researcher has uncovered a 1664 statute that he claims gives people the right to get on the river wherever they want.

Local landowners are adamant there is more than enough access already.

The row over the river, which is a site of special scientific interest, has been brought to light by BBC South's Inside Out programme.

River access researcher the Reverend Douglas Caffyn told the programme he believed the "Act for making the River Avon navigable from Christchurch to the city of New Sarum", made under Charles II, was still relevant today.

The Law Society has confirmed that the act has never been repealed.

The Rev Caffyn said: "My view is that the earth was created by the lord and everyone should have the right to appreciate the beauty of the countryside.

"People should not be allowed to purchase a piece of land and exclude the general public all of the time. I think that is wrong."

He has written to landowners along the Avon explaining why he thinks people have a legal right to access the river.

"No-one has written back to me explaining to me why they think those reasons are invalid. I don't think they can," he said.

"Some things in life are fairly certain and the fact that there is a right of navigation on the Avon is one of them."

However, with the claim yet to be tested in court, landowners remain sceptical about its validity.

One landowner, Rae Borrás, who owns a mile-long beat on the Avon, said of the Rev Caffyn's argument: "Anything can be argued - that's really what English law is about, precedent etcetera.

"It could well be that Edward II gave somebody a mining right somewhere in a village where now there are gardens but I wouldn't expect people to just remove their flowers and get on with mining."

Mr Borrás argued that there was plenty of access for canoeists at the tidal mouths of the Avon and other nearby rivers.

He said: "There's Poole harbour, Chichester, Christchurch harbour - these are areas that are easily navigable. Why do they have to add to that which they can already use by coming up to here?"

Currently there is no blanket legislation giving people the right to navigate rivers in England and Wales in the way ramblers were given the right to roam the countryside.

GLOBAL WARMING - IS IT SUCH A BAD THING?!!



Serious flooding is expected.

Rivers are likely to reach a level that will cause widespread danger, severe disruption and a risk to life. Flooding to significant numbers of properties, businesses and travel networks is expected.

Act now.

It's the end of February 2007 - we only have a few weeks left of the 'white water' season - but what a season it has been! I love mild and wet!!

I have managed to get down to Dartmoor/Exmoor more times than I should have over the season, with runs on all sections of the Dart, the Walkham, Tavy, Erme, Lyn, etc. Indeed, it's been 8 home runs on the Upper Dart so far. Not once have I had to cancel a trip due to low levels. And only once have I had to scrape ice off the windscreen as I set off on a Sunday dawn.

No numb fingers, no ice-block feet, no hunting around for rivers with enough water to paddle. And they are now forecasting a long hot summer for Sea Kayaking! Life is good



This last weekend it was to the Erme again - enough water and sunshine. The 'Slot' provided some entertainment (rope retrieval of swimmer, boat, paddles and a left shoe) and the Gorge was magnificent

Graham

**MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT THE INN ON THE FURLONG
SATURDAY, 17TH FEBRUARY, 2007**

Present: Dave (Chairman) and Annie Ratford, Ros White, Dave Chadwick, Liz Gibbons, Trish Hardy, Ross Macildowie, Mike Farnden (Part),

Apologies: Graham Bland, Barry and Bev Deakin, Dot Tilley

The main topic of conversation was the Events List with the following proposed amendments / additions:

1. Ros White requested the date of the Julian Butler Memorial Race be changed as the beavers / cubs are at Spinnaker that evening and hopes that several other canoe club members will be helping her out. Suggested revised date: 26th June, 2007
2. River Wye – April?
3. Thames camping trip – May 19th/20th. Mike Farnden to organise.
4. Dart Estuary camping trip – September 8th/9th. Ross to check tides. Barry?
5. Isle of Wight trip – tides?
6. Change one of the Keyhaven trips to May? Check tides to suit.
7. Dorset Coast – puffin watch. Special request from Dot to Paul Toynton.
8. Falmouth trip? Dot and Mike for information.
9. River Arun - day trip only. April? Ros White to organise. Ross / Graham to let her know tides.
10. Investigate Anglesey trip – Dave / Annie to contact Julian Cornes (from Arisaig trip). Suggested Whit week.
11. Lepe paddle?

A suggestion was also made to book the Pengelly Centre for a non paddling weekend. Because of its location people would like a chance to explore the area.

Sea Kayak Rescue Skills

With the increase in the number of people taking up sea kayaking Ross suggested organising a sea kayak rescue skills training course (possibly in June). He will investigate the type of course available and costs involved and report back to all members.

AGM

A request was put forward to change the day of the AGM to a Wednesday (June / early July).

There were also two suggestions for speakers at the AGM – Justine Curgenvin and / or Mark Rainsley. If neither are available on the night of the AGM it was suggested that another evening be booked to accommodate when one or other is free to talk to us and keep the AGM just as the AGM.