



# CANEWS

April 2011

## EDITOR'S CORNER

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

**Sadly a very short edition this time – blame the lack of contributors and, big thanks to the few that did!**

### RCC HISTORY

Old issues of Canews are available to download and savour. See some real old school paddling!, find out what happened a decade or so ago, and for those RCC long-timers, relive some memories and cringe at what you, or others, said at the time.

DON'T FORGET .....

#### RCC Forum



Don't miss out on impromptu trips, gossip and banter

#### RC Photo Gallery



Share your photos with all members

### CAPTION COMPETITION

Visit the web site for the Caption Competition.



Mike Worth offered three:-

*Barry was mighty relieved, he could now feed the family on their annual luxury camping trip, without going near the shops*

*Who's pouting, who's smiling?*

*Barry is happy that his new Trout Tail Paddle works*

### THANK YOU MR. CHAIRMAN

The edition of Canews has been kindly brought to you by Mike Worth and Dot. Without their contributions there would have been diddly squat!

Come on guys – it is not difficult to pen a few paragraphs to share all those great times you are having on, off and in the water!

Graham

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## CATERING FOR THE CLUBS WEEKEND TRIPS

### Notes from Your Chairman – February 2011

It was not until the other day that somebody actually asked me how the food/duties system worked on an RCC weekend paddle. The fact is we don't really tell anyone, especially new members, hence probably the lack of volunteers, or just the same few doing the jobs. So I thought maybe it should be written somewhere

Where a club trip takes place over a weekend we have to cater for the lunches Saturday and Sunday and a supper on Saturday evening. The Friday evening is generally left to fend for your self as we all travel and arrive at different times.

#### Breakfasts: Saturday and Sunday

This usually includes the normal stuff: bacon, eggs, sausages, milk, butter, tea, coffee, preserves, tomatoes mushrooms etc

#### Lunches: Saturday and Sunday

We need the trappings for lunch: rolls, drinks, fillings /cold meats , pickle, salad, choc bars, fruit and crisps. etc

The club asks for volunteers to bring something along. The trip organisers will co ordinate this so we don't double up as we also carry some items over from one trip to the next. It sometimes makes it easier to apportion the 'load' so no single person has to fill their car up, before they even get their paddling kit in.

You purchase the goods, keep the receipt or remember what you spent, and the trip organiser will reimburse you when doing the final tally of costs for the weekend. So it doesn't really cost you.

#### Supper: Saturday

This generally is a super human being who will cook the Saturday evening meal. They might preprepare it at home and then bring it along frozen or do a Jamie Oliver on the night. It is nice to offer help to this person. Again the price of all the 'ingredients' will be paid back at the final tally.

#### Doing the Housework

We don't detail anybody to do any jobs. We rely on volunteering. People get up and start cooking breakfasts, if they wish, washing up needs doing, if you wish, tidying up, getting logs, making tea/coffee, setting out the crockery etc all require volunteers and getting the jobs done quicker means we get on the water quicker, or down the pub.

When we come to leave, we need to clean the place up, so sort out your kit and then volunteer to get cleaning, we like to leave these places as we find them, many hands make light work.

So don't stand back and watch the same people do the jobs, get stuck in.

Mike Worth

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## RIGHTS OF NAVIGATION

Doug Caffyn has just published his latest work – River Transport 1189 – 1600. It is posted on his own web site <http://www.caffynonrivers.co.uk>

Caffyn has undertaken to establish the extent of river transportation in the Middle Ages. Investigation is made as to which rivers were physically usable, which were legally usable and the comparative cost of land and river transport. The evidence of historic use is examined and these records are compared with the recent limits of use of the rivers. The

implication of this research for the present day law relating to public access on rivers is considered

Doug has concluded in his opinion that:-

1. all rivers which were physically usable were legally usable,
2. there is a high probability that each section of a river which is now physically usable was usable by small boats in the period 1189-1600,
3. on the balance of probabilities each section of a river which is now physically usable was used during that period.

Canoe England believes this important latest work warrants the widest attention. It is a significant contribution to the access debate and a presumption in favour of public access to inland waters. Canoe England and the BCU will be commenting further.

Graham

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## BARLE / EXE 2011



The weather turned out fine for the weekend although we could have wished for a little bit more rain on the lead up. A couple of us managed to get down to Dulverton nice and early and checking into the bunk house, was a rare treat, as it had been booked the night before and the log burner was still going with logs to spare. Made a big difference.

We had a late lunch, a look at water levels, afternoon chocolate drink, really nice, and even managed forty winks before the troops started arriving.

Interesting night with the neighbours giving it some real party stick to the early hours of the morning, but you know Ritchie and the Sambuca clan, they did their best to keep going as well.

All credit due, Ritchie was up and cooking breakfast before the cockerel had fallen off its perch, and up in the bunk room we were awakened to the shrill cry of two peacocks that must have been given a stick up the rear to make the noise they did.

We were out going for the river in really good time, the Exe. The shuttle was executed swiftly but we thought we had lost Ritchie like we had last year, but he had an excuse, and it wasn't that he had gone the wrong way.

Lee decided to launch without getting into his boat a novel approach to river running, but luckily Nick was already afloat and grabbed it before it went too far.

Off we went, level a bit low, but passable and it was a lovely day ...somewhere along here Nick swam, I hear he blames an open canoe, tut tut whatever next , more like the kayak got in the opens way .

I decided to do some poling; the branches were low and on one bend a hazard of a strainer. Hands up, got it a little wrong and sat back down unceremoniously into the boat but avoided the strainer. Behind me all I could hear were peels of laughter from Paul Kendall, but with no concentration he sweeps straight into the strainer and opps, rookie error, over he goes, first swim of the opens.....they say, them who laugh last .....

The rest of the day passed nicely, the opens took a nice position out front and only occasionally lost sight of the kayakers. Ian was seen to STEP out and I believe Sam took a little swim at the Exbridge play spot. Princess Alice first time solo in an open made it down unscathed in the club barge, the Scout, well done.

The evening meal was a great dish care of Barry and Bev and the Trifle made with cream 'shaken not stirred' by Lee and Harris.

It was great to see such a good clear up after supper and a great thanks to all the young uns who were well noticed brandishing the drying up cloths. It makes a great difference, many hands make light work. Well done all.

We then commenced to play the Intellectual game of Donkey introduced by the master of games Tim who supplied his own nuts for us to play with. What a man! We found that Princess Alice was a cheat and although we tried to cheat more, she bested us, she knows how to grab a nut when the going gets tough. Dot joined in but found the rules far too difficult, but I blame the wine me self.



Sunday, Barle day, another good breakfast from Ritchies great bacon and sausages and amazingly, we are again, out the door fairly fast. Put in at the Tarr Steps, the levels could have been better but again it's another great day out.

Off we went, 300 hundred yards it was Ladies Ledge a pattern of rocks that most men don't see BUT yes you are right over they went Dot and Sue in the opens oh dear, more practice on the Scottish Rivers for you Dot and I think the Solo just wanted to prove a point Sue.

On the next bit Sam's boat decides to give up, too much boofing?, 4inch split in the bottom. We stop for lunch and a bit of fancy welding by Arc Eye Jennings (his native Creasote name)

Meanwhile Ian and Sue retire to their sweat lodge and the rest of us stand around and get cold, sweat lodge sounds good. Repair over Jelly baby research concluded, we get back on the water, .....but Sam now wrecks his paddle, duck tape to the rescue, kindly supplied by Duck Tape Jennings (his native Tapioca name, wasn't sure which tribe he was from, still think it could be Sambuca) and off we go again down to Dulverton where we parked the old and cold !!

All Ok down to Dulverton Weir, but over it, did we have a problem Paul? Don't say it was the Scout, Princess had got it this far without a swim, (Swim 2 for Paul)

At this point Paul hands the Scout back to Princess (Alice) and we proceed.

Step Weir. All over this, but it was interesting, Princess a perfect run, the kayakers all ok, Barry a lesson in gunwhale grabbing and a collective groan when it didn't go wrong, and Ian, you could have made our day, as you managed to wedge the open so precisely, well got out of, we had all put the throw lines away and were reaching for the cameras.



Sam's boat died here, so he left it and he joined Alice in the Open. A good run on down to Exbridge playspot where everyone excelled themselves, Jake and Harris performing things kayakers do, Princess and Sam first time open boaters doing great stuff and yes by out performing myself I got in the water, mainly due to Jakes sabotaging. The camera man stood safely and dryly on the shore!!

To make Tims weekend of complete fulfilment, and I don't think a lot of you saw this, he borrowed Ian's boat for a Pole up from the take out , but I saw him coming back, the river paddling like a professional that he is, chasing the pole he had dropped, greaaaat.

It was interesting that as they were going back to do shuttles etc that they just caught someone taking Sam's boat from where he had stashed it at Steps Weir . A few minutes more and it would have been gone.

Bow =Front Stern = back .....Princess!!



A great weekend folks, hope you all enjoyed it as much as I did.

Mike w

## TORRIDGE / TAW WEEK END.

### **An introduction to Riffles and Wavelets. 18th /20th March**



Dave Ratford, Dot Tilley managed to get away really early for this w/end, to try and get an extra days paddling. I joined them first thing on the Friday morning and after a quick cup of Rosy Lee we went in search of the put in for the River Taw, a new river for us and RCC. I had seen a blog from SOTP so we were following this albeit it was probably out of date. We left a car at Umberleigh , it said that it was possible to leave it in the church Hall but we left it on what looked like a bit of 'free' land elsewhere, and inspected the possible take outs. Off we went but the put in was a bit elusive so we eventually threw the boats 'gently' over a bridge and it wasn't so bad, at Colleton Bridge. Sadly Dot came over a bit feint and breathless after doing a blow job on her canoe. Well I was getting gear out of the car and that's what she told me .....her words. So sadly we left Dot still flushed and breathless on the bridge, and her canoe with a smile on its face.

The river levels weren't great but Dave and I were afloat and moving at a good pace, the sun shone and life was good. It would be an interesting river to paddle with a flow, quite bendy in places and an awful lot of tree roots etc to strain the unwary paddler, but today it was benign.

We came upon a fisherman, and being of a polite nature we slowed down and I enquired if he would like us to go through on his inside, he was of the wading type, his answer was that he would prefer us not to be on the river at all , so we just chose the best side for ourselves, as conversation had seemed to take a dip, and paddled by , whilst he got hurriedly on his phone to someone, to say that 'another couple of canoeist were on their way down'. Gosh we thought we had the river to ourselves!!



So on we went wondering what sort of reception could be around another bend. A little while later 2 fishermen, again we slowed down and they stopped flying the line and we passed by with a thank you and all was well .

Further down, closer to Umberleigh, we got Mr Mouth, on river right beckoning us over to himself for a tate a tate or chat, if you can't read badly spelt French.

My hearing is bad, as I signaled that we were passing through, but managed to pick up a few fff's and Dave later translated that ' that the river was private and would we effing well like it he effing well walked through our garden etc' .....but the currant and a few well place paddles strokes carried us by .As you know Dave and myself are just not used to that sort of language he he !!

The take out was close, so we were wondering, as you do, if , a reception was there. Not this time but a Range Rover had been parked right across a gate of the river left Take out. An unusual way to park a vehicle as it would have meant the driver having to slide over the seat to get out, and the car park was huge, so.....make you think.

We went out river right and away we went after a really nice day on a new river to us. It was a great pity that Dot wasn't with us, but.....

The hardy few arrived this evening and we all went to the Pub for the evening meal. They had laid on a Jazz Band, I'm surprised you couldn't hear it back in Dorset, we were 3ft away, and finished eating our supper and brushing up on our signing skills, and moved to the Cider Press at Weare Gifford to be able to speak. We left Ritchie and Nicola to enjoy a quiet meal behind.

Saturday, Cold night, lovely morning. Put in Beford Bridge , again not a torrent of water but floatable ,at least for the canoes , as usual the Kayakers were picking the boulder route, but it was a lovely day , sun , no humans what more could you wish for. Purrfect.

The only two obstacles were Lady Palmer weir , very dry , but still shootable and we all went through and the next was Taddiport Weir , we all went through the fish steps, river right which had an unusual cushion wave affect , nearly caught Paul Beeston but no swimmers here.

Onto Puffing Billy take out, where sadly just the Voyageurs continued, Dave Ratford , Ritchie and meself. New bit this, would take us right down to Sealock Barn, if the tide was right. Main obstacle was Beam weir, reports on it not good. It was low levels so was not bad for us ,but a nasty looking weir with rocks here and there and really rough concrete finish, we passed the boats over the lip and down the face making sure we didn't scrape them over the rough surface. I would not like to run this with water!!! After this a gentle paddle and as we entered the Weir Gifford bit we could feel a slight bit of flood tide , a good sign .We came to Sealock Barn on slack tide our Dave Columbus Ratford had timed it to perfection , as we paddled right through the Lock and just passed the boats up on the far side and retired in for a nice cuppa of cha . Another piece of new water paddled ( pity for the others )oh well .

Saturday night: Nicola's Cottage Pie. But no Worcester sauce. Emergency scramble to Bideford (somebody must love the place) . No apparent shops, so stop passing lady and asks if any shops around. She replies, 'what are you after ' me 'Worcester Sauce ' she ' I've got some in my bag , you can have that ' .What are the chances of that ? What a nice local xx. Meant we could go straight to pub where Ritchie got in deep conversation with all day wino!! Great Cottage pie Nicola

Sunday put in at Hele Bridge, the muddy one , and a nice gentle Paddle up to Beford bridge, not far but glorious sunshine and just a great day to be out and about . Dot took layers off , that's a first, and Big chief Ritchie and squaw

Minnie Ha Nic Ola entertained us with the attempt at an x stroke ( beats me ) but they didn't commit enough and swim , shame , you aren't learning if you don't get wet . So Minnie Ni Ola had to have a splashing time later .....



A great weekend folks, thanks a load to Marion for being our shuttle Bunny, Breakfast cook and defending the schools curriculum, Nicola for great Nosh, Nick ,Paul, Dot for paddling some of the way !! And Vasco De Garma Dave for reading the tide tables so well and Ritchie for getting his open out in strange waters.

Remember 'Open Boating Makes You Stiff ' ( if you put the miles in )

Mike w

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## OUR YOUNGEST MEMBER

Welcome Oliver

Ross and Sara announced the arrival of Oliver Macildowie on the 9th March. He is quite a big chap – on arrival he weighed in at 9lb 8oz.



I'm sure it won't be long before he is joining some RCC trips

Congratulations to the Macildowies

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## NOT THE ISLE OF WIGHT

Ritchi J Mike Worth and I hatched a plan to paddle around the Isle of Wight over 2 or 3 days in September 2010. At least that was the plan. Work commitments etc proved difficult but at last we had the time booked. We all met up to discuss our trip but the forecast was not looking good. Due to very strong north westerly's we changed our plans to paddle round the Island and opted to do the Devon/Cornish south coast. All sorted.....then Ritchi had to work instead.

Captain Worth and I met up for breakfast just past Exeter and headed down to The Fal estuary to camp at Mylor, a place that many R.C.C. members know well. We had the tent and tarp

pitched by 11am and were raring to paddle. As a rule I always put up all my guy lines out but in the rush to get on the water I only put out 4. Folly!!



We launched at Restronguet Wier to paddle up to Truro. We stopped for lunch and a cup of hot chocolate at the Smugglers Cafe. This overlooks the part of the estuary called Carrik Roads. Its here that many large ships are moored when things are slow in the world of commercial shipping.



After lunch the weather closed in and a light rain started. In ours haste to get on the water, we hadn't checked the tide tables, even more folly!! When we got to the lock gates outside Truro, we realised our mistake.(see photo). Huge mudbanks loomed on either side. So we did what all seasoned explorers do in that situation and broke out the jelly babies!.

We decided that seeing as how we couldn't get out anyway, we might as well wait for the tide which had just started to come in and see if we could get up to Truro.

What followed was quit surreal. We would paddle for a few hundred yards as the water rose (shepherding a family of swans ahead of us) till we ran out of water and off we'd go again. In this mode we made it as far as Truro Central.

We paddled back to the lock gates, still huge mud bank. Bummer. Just past the lock gate was a pontoon which we had just enough water to get to, so we made our escape from the mud.

Back at camp, it was a quick wash and change and down to the Lemon Arms in Mylor for an well deserved meal. When we got back to our tents there was a light drizzle falling, nothing to worry about though. I woke about 2am with the wind screaming and the rain coming down in torrents. It was blowing a hoolie as only it can in Cornwall. I weighed up the options. getting to Captain Worths tent and getting the car keys so I could got the mallet and put out the guy lines or snuggling down in my sleeping bag and hoping for the best. I chose the latter. Wise choice, my tent hadn't let a drop in.

The next morning dawned bright and clear. We put in at Restrongut again and paddled down to Falmouth. We're able to land on a small beach beside a wonderful chandlers called the Bosuns Locker, worth a visit when your in Falmouth and even better, the a really nice coffe shop right next door. Of course we had to partake and of course text Ritchi to let him know what he was missing, after all, what are mate's for.! Strangely we had no reply.



From there we nosed around Falmouth harbour looking at some of the amazing craft moored there, its another world. We paddled across to St Maws for lunch. Sat under the sea wall in the warm September sunshine, we indulged in a pint and a pasty its about as good as it gets really so again texted Ritch, strange, still no reply. From there we had a leisurely paddle back to the take out. We stopped to chat to a guy in a rowing boat working the mussel beds. The Fal estuary is one of the few places left in this country where this job is done by people in rowing or sailing boats.



We packed up our tents and went over to Mikes Daughter and family who live nearby and had kindly invited us for dinner. A lovely end to a trip that was far from the original plan but was two days of varied paddling and great fun.

## TUESDAY EVENINGS

A great deal of discussion at the 2011 AGM centred on the organization of the clubs regular Tuesday Evening meets. Concerns were raised over 'casualness' of these meets which, on the one hand, provide the very relaxed and informal nature of the club, but on the other compromises group awareness, safety and the ability to adequately introduce and develop

paddling skills within our membership. The situation has been made more difficult by the trend for a variety of craft. A few years ago everyone paddled short general purpose boats, now we have fast sea kayaks and slow river boats, paddling in the same direction to the same place but at very different speeds!!

Three issues or needs were debated

### Group 'Management' and Safety

For the general safety of all members we have to reinforce the need for increased awareness amongst those paddling on any given evening. Not just awareness of the hazards (as discussed under Mudeford Safety on the web site) but awareness of other paddlers, their own abilities and experience.

Can we please request that all members paddling on a Tuesday ensure that they are part of a group, that they know where they are going to be paddling and who with, and that all members of that group stay together and return safely. As you paddle, turn around and check your buddies, count heads, ensure everyone is safe and happy.

We want to steer away from appointing individuals to manage each Tuesday and keep it informal – but this relies on all members watching out for each other and paddling within loosely structured groups.

### Opportunities for skill development

The club needs to cater for members that want to develop their paddling skills. But, again, we shy away from formality. Graham and Ross have volunteered to run some 'skills' and 'safety' evenings over the course of the summer but we have a large number of experienced boaters within our membership who are more than happy to help. Can we encourage experienced members to offer tips where appropriate and for the inexperienced who wish to develop, please ask

### Try It Out for new members

The meeting agreed to discontinue the monthly 'Try It' sessions and not re-introduce the 'Tuesday Rota'. However, it is important that the club offers the ability for potential members to try out paddling (and the club). The club still wants to encourage the take up of paddle sports even if we are not in the business of increasing memberships.

I have been tasked with compiling a list of members who are willing to assist.

Should a new or potential member wish to 'try out' the club I will put them in touch with one of these volunteers (I will ensure this is done evenly). That member will then arrange with the newcomer a suitable Tuesday evening, make sure all necessary kit (boat/paddle/deck/BA) is available and give them a 'try'

Obviously, your paddling will depend on the weather / sea conditions and the ability of the new recruit. In most cases, you should be able to potter around the harbour safely. If you don't feel happy supervising the new recruit on the evening in question don't hesitate to tell them so and call it off / re-arrange for another week.

**So – can I please have some volunteers! – If there are enough of you willing to help the job will be spread very thinly and would probably only involve you once or twice a year.**

Graham B