

Tonbridge Canoe Club

Newsletter July 2009



A Note from the Editor

Hello and a warm welcome to all new members!

Congratulations to Bryony on her new addition, and a huge thank you for finding the time to piece together this newsletter in between feeds and nappy changes.

As ever, a special thanks to all of the contributors. If you have anything that you would like to mention in the next Newsletter (due in September), please e-mail the details to me by the 9th August. *Happy paddling!*



Tessa Dias
email: tcc_news@hotmail.co.uk

Latest Club News

Congratulations

Four Tonbridge paddlers travelled to Nottingham for the National Sprint Championships last weekend, and everyone came home with a medal. The sun shone all weekend and the water was nice and flat, which suited the Tonbridge team. Andy Davey managed three golds in Mens C (including one with Matt Stenhouse in K2 200m), and would have got a fourth if he hadn't been disqualified whilst winning the 1000m K1. Gabor Levai also got a bronze in the Mens D 500m K1.

Meanwhile Clive Neale was racing in the Over 34's class and managed four silvers and a bronze from six events in K1, K2 and K4, which can't be bad. He missed out on winning the K1 and K2 1000m by just a few inches as confirmed by the photo finish. A bit more training required.....

*** New boats ***

At the recent committee meeting the following purchases were approved from 2009 subscriptions:

- 1 new trailer (exact specification to tba)
- 1 Cirrus touring boat
- 1 new Talisman fast touring boat
- 6 new buoyancy aids
- 6 new sets of paddles (3 light, 3 recreational)
- 3 new sea kayak spraydecks
- 1 new racing K2
- Various buoyancy bags for plastics and Canadians.

Beginners Courses for 2009

All our beginner's courses so far this year have been over-subscribed, with some new members having to wait a couple of months to get a place. We have even run an extra course for a group of friends who all joined together. Anyway, now the spring rush is over, there is a bit less pressure on places for August and September, so if you know anyone who wants to join, now would be a good time.

Ants in your pants?

As usual this time of year we have a bit of an ant problem in the clubhouse. We've put some ant powder down which seems to have got rid of most of them, but the kitchen and blokes changing room still seem to be particular popular with the little blighters.

So if you don't want ants in your pants when you come back from your paddle, please help by not leaving bits of food (e.g. chocolate) on the floor, and clearing up properly with hot soapy water if you spill any sticky drinks on the carpet or kitchen floor.

Private equipment stored in the boat store

There is a new roll of stickers for people who want to label their private equipment. The small white stickers say 'Private kit' and have a space for your name underneath for you to fill in. Once stuck on your paddles or boat this should stop other people using them, provided they read it of course.....

Other River Users

A couple of the Wednesday night time trial racers had a bit of a near miss with some paddlers from the sea scouts last week, resulting in a complaint to the club.

Whilst this particular incident was 50/50 responsibility between the boats involved, it is a timely reminder we must be careful on the river and slow down a bit if necessary. Not everyone is as familiar with the river as we are, and they might be new to the sport and not really in control of their boat.

A warning shout from a distance helps by drawing attention to your approach, but can also be perceived by some as inappropriate behaviour (as in this case), so be careful what you say and how you say it.

Remember also that the anglers are back now the fishing season has started, so watch out for lines and give them as much room as possible.

Wye Weekend

6th/7th June 2009

It was a wet weekend!

It started off well with a very cheap but good meal at the Green Man on Friday evening. Rain overnight did nothing to improve the comfort of those camping, and as it was still very damp when we set off, several people decided to keep warm and dry and not venture onto the water. Those of us that did, however, were rewarded with a great paddle from Kerne Bridge to Monmouth, via the re-vamped Symond's Yat. It stopped raining quite early on, and we lunched in the dry, and even had a bit of sunshine. The river seemed high, with a good flow, making the downstream paddle a lot easier and quicker than on previous occasions. As usual the wildlife added greatly to the interest, especially the birds –swans & cygnets, geese & goslings, ducks & ducklings, not to mention peregrine, sand martin, swift, grey wagtail, to name but a few.

However, down came the rain again, and the decision was not hard to make to abandon any ideas of barbecueing. So the Green Man was again host to 21 hungry souls. By Sunday morning, with puddles sporting ducks in front of some tents, several more opted out of paddling, so only an intrepid band of 10 ventured onto the river from the campsite to paddle down to Hoarwithy. I think we made the right choice:- it stopped raining before we got on the water, and soon the sun came out to make a lovely day, with good playing conditions at Ballingham Island and other places on the way.

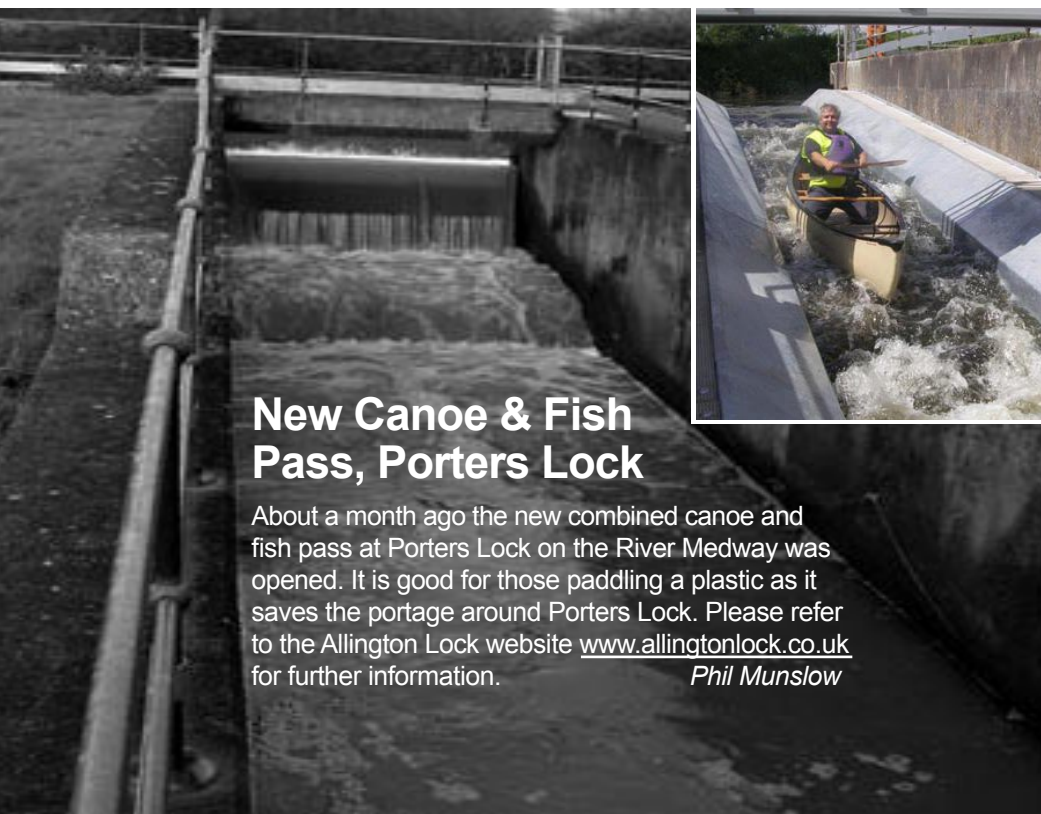
Thanks to all those who took boats for other people, and to those who did the shuffle-driving.
Alison Wilkins

Downstream Tour

21st June 2009

We were unable to provide transport to visit the River Rother as planned, so instead ten of us took our picnics and ventured downstream from the clubhouse as far as Sluice Weir – there and back a total of 11 miles.

Some of us with suitable boats had a go down the new chute at Porters, but it is a long way back round to the lock! It was very enjoyable - the weather was fine and warm, with some sunshine later on; the pace was leisurely; the company congenial; and no-one fell in (at least not unintentionally!).
Alison Wilkins



New Canoe & Fish Pass, Porters Lock

About a month ago the new combined canoe and fish pass at Porters Lock on the River Medway was opened. It is good for those paddling a plastic as it saves the portage around Porters Lock. Please refer to the Allington Lock website www.allingtonlock.co.uk for further information.
Phil Munslow

Guide to Canoeing the Medway

Please visit www.medwaycanoetrail.co.uk for information and advice on canoeing on the River
Phil Munslow

Code of Conduct

Please be advised that the Club Codes of Conduct are posted on the notice boards within the clubhouse. Please take some time to familiarise your self with the Codes and if you have any questions or concerns, please speak to one of the Committee Members.
Club Committee

Tonbridge Sports Festival

On April 26th the Club displayed a stand at the Sports Festival which was held at the new Tonbridge School Pool Complex.

We set up a static display in the main hall together with the other sports clubs from the Tonbridge and Malling Area. In the afternoon we held try it out taster sessions in the pool.

The event attracted a lot of interest from juniors who will hopefully sign up for one of our beginner courses.

Thanks to all the club members who helped on the day. *Jeremy Clarke*

Marathon Races

The Regions Hasler Marathon races this year have been well supported by the club. It is great to see a good team of Juniors taking part this year with the rest of us.

As more members are taking part and winning places, we are for the first time in many years in for a chance of getting though to the regional finals.

The Tonbridge race is on Sunday 23rd of August we need a good number of entries in both K1 and K2s.
Jeremy Clarke

River Stour Trip

9th - 10th May 2009

(The Tale of Clare and the Angry Swans)

The sky was blue, the sun was warm and the swans were mad.

But that's all right because we had Clare, our very own angry swan magnet. Bravely paddling on ahead despite the swan's devious and downright dirty tactics of only attacking when her back was turned. By the time the rest of us had caught up she and her trusty paddle had successfully beaten them into a state of submission.

With the exception of the swans the trip went without a hitch, we arrived at Sudbury on Saturday morning and set off in our boats through the beautiful Suffolk countryside. We travelled at a leisurely pace appropriate to the sunny weather, but possibly not suitable to the distance we had to cover. Measured not in miles or kilometres but entire map pages. It wasn't long after lunch that many of us were fighting the urge to sound like small children and begin to ask "are we nearly there yet" every five minutes, despite knowing full well we were only on map page 2 of 7. But Jane's staunch leadership and enthusiasm kept us all going until tired but happy we reached Nayland.



Now the only thing between us and the pub was pitching our tents. With hindsight some people's tent pitching abilities may have actually been improved by going to the pub first, but as the sun set behind the trees our canvas homes were erected and we were off for a well earned hearty meal and a good few glasses of wine.

Sunday arrived equally sunny but far too early for my liking, and we were off again. This time paddling from Nayland to Dedham. Like intrepid explorers we navigated round dangerous shallows, dodged deranged swans and stopped for elevenses on a nice sunny calm bit of the river.

Our lunch spot next to two flumes proved to be perfect for racing one person down each side. A sort of 10m sprint rather than a long distance marathon, but we took the time to have a play, safe in the knowledge that today's river was only 5 map pages long (and two of them went down the short side).

We arrived at Dedham mid afternoon. It was a good job too, because people's seal launches at the portage points were getting crazier and crazier. Why carry your kayak down when you can just slide?



But even the best trips have to end sometime and eventually we had to head for Tonbridge, leaving the beautiful river and (much to Clare's relief) the deranged swans behind....

Elizabeth Gray

(No swans were injured in the paddling of the Stour)



Looking Forward

Tour Dates

Day trip on Thames at Wargrave.

A figure of eight round trip, not suitable for absolute beginners, but if you've been paddling for a few months, a good challenge. *We are currently looking for a tour leader for this trip. Any offers?*

August 9th — Day trip on River Ouse

From Lewis. A non-hazardous paddle suitable for all.

August 23rd — see notice board

Weekend of September 5th & 6th — River Cuckmere

With walking on the Saturday. Paddling on River Cuckmere from Exceat to Alfriston on Sunday. Suitable for all.

Watch out for the notices on the Touring Section of the notice board.

For further details on any of the above, please contact Jane Blunt or Alison Wilkins. Contact details are on the club notice boards or via Tessa Dias

Saturday Activity Sessions

The organised Saturday session continue each week for the remainder of the summer. Anyone and everyone can join in with these, so if you're not sure what boat to paddle one day, join in with the activity and perhaps try something you haven't done before. Updated schedule for the next month is on the big whiteboard in the clubhouse. Proposed schedule is below.

Thanks to all those who have arranged and organised these sessions. Much appreciated.

Proposed Club Activities

- 18/07/09 Have fun in plastics — Rosemary
- 25/07/09 How long does it take? — Andy
- 01/08/09 For Beginners, an escorted trip upriver to the flood barrier — Alison
For others, a trip downstream
- 08/08/09 Suggestions please
- 15/08/09 How long does it take?
- 22/08/09 Game in plastics
- 29/08/09 Escorted trip downstream, over a couple of locks.

It is hoped to get the slalom poles out in September or October.

The above are proposals only and are dependent on people's availability to run the sessions. Please watch out for details on the big white board in the clubhouse. If you have any ideas or proposals re an activity you would like included, talk to any committee member.

Volunteers Required

Helpers are required for the Medway Marathon and Tonbridge Race on 2nd August and 23rd August. These races not only improve the standing of the club as a racing club but also raises money that goes towards the purchase of new equipment.

Please could you speak to either Clive or Louise (01732) 361759 to offer your help. Help can range from serving refreshments, timekeeping or marshalling. "No experience needed!" — Thank you.

Monday Evening Paddling

In response to those members who have asked if we can run a session on a weekday evening, whilst it remains light, each Monday, a key holder will be at the club to let you in between 6:00pm and about 6:15pm.

In the interests of safety and security, we need to go out in groups, and only those who have completed the One Star course can participate in these sessions. Please aim to be off the water by 8:15pm, with a view to the clubhouse being locked up by 8:30pm.

Please direct any queries to Tessa Dias on 07989 438 629.

Racing Calendar

- 19th Jul Thames Valley Circuit (Reading) Divisional race for those who like going round and round laps.
- 2nd Aug Medway Marathon – Allington to Tonbridge 18 miles – our classic race with a difference. A long way but worth it. Race or just enjoy the challenge!
- 23rd Aug Tonbridge Marathon – Divisional race at our club – no excuses for not paddling all you racers.
- 5/6th Sept Inter Club championships regatta – Nottingham NWSC – always well supported this regatta, the weather might even be nice.
- 13th Sept Henley Marathon – Divisional Race – Popular marathon where you get to race up and down the famous Henley straight where the rowers live.
- 27th Sept Hasler Finals – Divisional marathon inter-club finals for the most successful four clubs in each region. We might just qualify this year thanks to all our new paddlers!
- 4th Oct Elmbridge Marathon (Weybridge) – nice Thames race where all the top paddlers turn up.)
- 11th Oct Windsor Marathon – Another race run by a very friendly club on a lovely bit of the Thames close to Windsor Castle.)
- 18th Oct Richmond Marathon – Normally the final divisional marathon of the year for us. Can be a bit choppy and fast flowing as its tidal, so K2's for the wobbly people at this one!

Details for all these from Clive Neale 01732 361759

