

Tonbridge Canoe Club

Newsletter May 2009



A Note from the Editor

Hello, and a particularly warm welcome to our new members!

By now, all re-renewing members should have received their Subscription Renewal forms, if you have not, please let me or Louise know and we will get one out to you.

Also, I would like to draw your attention to the article by Alison on Club Activities. If anyone would like to assist with or lead a session, please let us know. Similarly, if you have any suggestions on what we could include in the Newsletter do drop me a line.

The deadline for articles for the July's Newsletter is Sunday 21st June.

As ever, a very big thank you to all of the contributors, and also to Bryony for applying her technical skills (it's not like she has anything better to do than sit at home with her feet up at the moment – wink).

Happy paddling.

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Next Tour Dates:

Day trip on June 21st
River Rother. A non-hazardous paddle suitable for all.

Weekend of May 9th and 10th
River Stour from Sudbury in Suffolk

Weekend of June 6th and 7th
River Wye in Herefordshire

Weekend of July 11th and 12th
Rivers Leam and Avon, & canals
Leamington Spa, Warwickshire

For further details on any of the above, please contact Jane Blunt or Alison Wilkins (contact details are on the notice board or via Tessa). Watch out for the notices on the Touring Section noticeboard.

River Mole Tour 5th April 2009

It was a lovely spring day with blue skies and lots of sunshine for the second tour of the season, from Pixham to Fetcham (there's got to be a joke in there somewhere). We were a large group – some 21 people in 20 boats so it took a while to get loaded up, but we managed to get on the river in good time.

Most of us opted for a gentle launch in, but there were three brave (and subsequently quite wet) souls who managed to seal-launch from the top of the bank (Nick John M and Phil).

The Mole is always quite shallow in places and this time was no exception, though it must seriously flood sometimes judging by the debris and the sandbags along the railings of a house high up on a bank.

Most of the hazards were manoeuvred successfully, although we had some "swimmers" – and some surprising ones at that. John L took exception to a tree branch sticking out from behind a concrete pillar, and having emptied his boat, and being already wet, waded in and managed to remove the branch (that turned out to be best part of a tree!). He took another dip a bit later on, and not wanting to be left out, where the water was rushing fast around a projecting tree Ilse also went in. Here too was where Richard T and Peter M got wet although Pete insisted it was because he was going for the ball!

Phil came a cropper negotiating the stepping stones, where I too got wet, but only from a passing dog who had just swum across and had a good shake right beside my boat!

It was sunny and warm as we had our lunch, in the usual spot just past the stepping stones and where a family had been enjoying their own quiet picnic! They did say they didn't mind our intrusion and I had to believe them! Clouds seemed to be building up so we got on our way again as without the sun it felt a bit cool, however, the weather continued fine and often quite warm.

It was a great day, and as always it is the people who make it so. It was good to find that at every hazard someone seemed to be there to ensure all got through safely. Thanks one and all. Special thanks to all the drivers and especially John for taking the trailer.

Alison Wilkins

Member's Profile

Who is Nigel Hill?

These ten ice breakers are designed to help us get to know a little more about our fellow paddlers (and will hopefully help break the ice for those of us who are shy).

Q1. Are you related to any of the other club members?

Not that I know of

Q2. What do you most like about paddling?

I first learnt to canoe when I was 11 with 14th Tonbridge Sea Scouts that was when flares were in fashion umm.. a long time ago; they organised an annual race Medway Lock race which was from Yalding to Tonbridge. When I was 14 I joined Tonbridge & West Kent Canoe Club (as it was known) and learnt to race I took part in my first marathon race and surprisingly won and that gave me the buzz to train and compete in more marathon races; my high point was being promoted to Division 3 and winning the Longbridge Marathon. Paddling has been constant sanctuary away from the busy world

Q3. When was the last time you capsized and how did it happen?

It is hard to remember as it was so long ago; but I do recall a very icy swim with John Ince on a frozen canal during the Ross Warland Canal Challenge in 2005?

Q4. What else do you do to unwind?

With two small daughters I don't get a huge amount of time to pursue any other leisure activities; but I do enjoy taking my girls swimming and walking in the countryside.

Q5. What is the most adventurous thing you have done?

I once did an Ice climb on part of the Mer de Glace Glacier in Chamonix and skied down the famous



Hahnenkamm in Kitzbuhel which was very exciting, but the scariest thing I have done is a tandem freefall parachute jump from 12,000 ft.

Q6. What was the last book you read?

'Spun Out' Shane Warne

Q7. Who would you like to play you, if a film was made about you?

David Tennant may be the guy I some times feel like a bit of a time traveller and have done battle with giant wasps; and my 2 year old daughter once pointed at a picture of him and said its Daddy 'Bless her'.

Q8. Where is your favourite place?

My favourite place is 'Granada' in Spain. I really love the Alhambra Moorish Fort it is beautiful in Spring, Summer and Autumn and in the winter you can go skiing in the Sierra Nevada.

Q9. If you were to live on a desert island, what three things would you take with you?

I would have to take a Camellia sinensis tea plant so I can cultivate Tea. I would find it very hard to live without a cup of tea; I would like one of those clever wind up solar radios so I could tune to BBC radio 4 and listen to test cricket to remind me of England and a telescope so I could look at the stars and look for ships. I don't think I could live on a desert Island for very long.

Q10. Who is your favourite band/musician?

The Who 'They Rocked' Once!

Waterside Series

Doing the Waterside series as juniors was always going to be a challenge – we had been racing for less than six months before Waterside A and not much longer for D. Still the training went well(ish) we didn't go swimming too often... We weren't too sure what to expect for the races and A was a steep learning curve, still it was only (?) 13 miles and though our times weren't great we were not last by any means. After another frantic week's worth of training we had Waterside B to content with; an 18 mile race half of which is against the flow. This was a harder race, though easier for Phil as his partner (Will) could make it to this one. We all had pretty good starts and then came to the turn... This was interesting – I have seen the sea calmer than this, but we all stayed dry and battled back against the flow and wind to the end. Then came C, we had been

told that C was a much better race than B and it was, for the most part – during this race we had a problem, or more correctly Greg and Rory had a problem: They'd had a really good start and had flown along and enjoyed the tunnel (I did not!) then on the Crofton flight then both slipped and the boat went back into the canal, after a quick retrieval then ran on, only to slip again! This time there was a much bigger problem than some lost time – Rory's paddle snapped!! This was a major problem, but they couldn't stop so with Greg paddling the K2 by himself and Rory running along the bank they fought their way on to the next supported portage where emergency repairs were carried out on the paddle – unfortunately tape and a prayer didn't hold the paddle for long and it broke again here there was no place for Rory to get out so Greg dragged the pair

of them to the next portage, Rory ran this one and only meters from the next portage a random supporter ran up to them and thrust a paddle into Rory's hands – surprised and grateful they paddled on – suddenly back up to full speed – and at the next supported portage – about 200m away. Here they were greeted by a surprised Rosemary – who was amazed by their acquired paddle. Still overall it was a great race for all of us –Will and Phil showed their true colours here really getting going and were considerably ahead of me in the Talisman and Greg and Rory. Then we had D – I don't care what anyone says about D – it is a VERY long way to paddle. It was always going to be a slog, but we were in good spirits after staying the night up in Devices and we all had a great race. Overall we all really enjoyed the races and can't wait to improve upon our times next year!!

Jon Passmore

White Water Rafting or Kayaking

We are going to try to raise £2000 this year for a pool cover for the Pepenbury Charitable Trust in Pembury. The Trust supports adults with special needs in our local area. They provide education, supported living in the community and residential care for the more severe affected residents. If you want to know more check their website: www.pepenbury.info or talk Sigi.

When: Sunday, 12.7.09, meet at TCC at 11 a.m. to share transport or at the centre at 2 p.m. (actual activity from 2.30-4.30) expected return to TCC 7-7.30p.m.)

Where: Nene White Water Centre, nr Bedford

Who can go: For the rafting you need to be age 14 and don't need any experience.

For kayaking you need to be a 2-3 star canoeist. We will be getting coaching at the centre. So this may be your first introduction to white water.

How: You need to raise a minimum of £100 (with a £40 non-refundable deposit to pay for the activity when you sign up, the rest of the raised money after the rafting/kayaking.)

You can bring "supporters", if you like, your sponsorship form, (see form on next page) a packed lunch and a drink. All the kit for rafting will be provided, but if you've got your own wetsuit etc. it's nicer.

The kayakers may want to take all their kit (helmets can be borrowed from the centre). There should be enough roof racks to carry the boats.

Everyone under 18 needs a consent form.

For further questions please contact Sigi Lester (Sigi's number is on the board, or you can get it from Tessa).

Please book soon as the places are limited!

Racing Calendar

9th May National Sprint Regatta Nottingham

17th May 1066 marathon at TONBRIDGE no excuse for missing this race as it takes place at our own club!

24th May Reading Circuit divisional race

30th May Windsor Veterans Race old fogies only for this one.

Details for all these from Clive Neale 01732 361759

Club Activities

Further to the discussion at the AGM, the following are the proposed Club Activities for May.

They may be subject to change and if so details will be put on the white-board in the clubhouse.

The activities are open to all club members and it is hoped that lots of you will take part.

In all cases, please be ready to paddle by 10.00 am on Saturday morning.

2nd May	Observation	Alison
9th May	Downstream trip	tba
16th May	How long	Clive
23rd May	Game (plastics)	Jeremy
30th May	Challenge	Tessa

Do you have an idea for a suitable activity?

And/or would you organise one?

Contact Alison (contact details are on the notice board or via Tessa) or leave a note in the clubhouse, or on the white-board.



