



WVCC MARCH 2010 NEWSLETTER

Another new exciting year is ahead of us! Rob Fisher is our new chairman having taken over from Dave Cassell who has decided after 10 years in the post to let new blood make a mark. WVCC is indebted to Dave for his leadership and from taking the club from a tin boat shed to the facilities we now enjoy. Our new vice chairman is Alan Jary with Graham Day as secretary and Callum Ball is the junior representative. Special Thanks must go to Andy Church for all his hard work as the previous club secretary.

A hedgehogs gestation period is 35 to 40 days! What relevance is that to a canoe club? Well if you had attended the Christmas party you would know it was one of the questions to the quiz. Next time we will make the questions harder for school swot Cassell. Top of the class again! It really was a fun evening, those that attended had a good evening trying to guess the logo or just catching up on news.

The Winter Trips and Pool Sessions have been well attended this year with members paddling on various local rivers and estuaries and honing their skills throughout the winter. Soon those warm summer evenings will be upon us and this year we will be looking to run a range of courses and activities down at the Staithe. Keep an eye on the web and E-Mails for more information.

Don't forget this is your newsletter and your contributions are welcome !

Happy Paddling for 2010

www.waveneyvalleycanoeclub.co.uk

Newsletter contributions to <http://www.k.poulson@btconnect.com/>

2009 WVCC AWARD WINNERS

Each year the club award individuals who in the opinion of the club have excelled, persevered or just contributed to the club over the year. This years winners are.

Best Beginner : Len and Julie North

Best Open Paddler : Rachael and Daniel Gibbs

Best-Advanced Paddler : Gordon Goodsell

Racing Award : Hannah Veale

Most Improved Paddler : Nicola Edwards

Member of the Year : Chris Jefferies

Well done to them all !

How to Break the Ice!

Tuesday 29 December Rob Randall, Paul Jary, John Rickett and Keith Poulson decided to go for a post Christmas blow out. Despite the forecast being cold with strong easterly winds we thought Ranworth to Thurne would be an ideal cobweb remover.

We were a little surprised when we arrived at Ranworth to see that the whole broad as far as the eye could see was covered in ice, ducks were walking on the ice (well trying to) By the time we got onto the water a cruiser was leaving the staithe and another was coming in. Despite that we still had to break the ice to get in and make our way to the cleared channel. It is very difficult to get any purchase with the paddle and we were beginning to understand how the ducks felt skidding along. The oncoming cruiser was now getting closer and the noise it made smashing through the ice was quite unbelievable. What was quite disconcerting was the channel the cruiser made was quite small for a big craft! Also the ice was reforming almost immediately.

We had a secret weapon, our ex nuclear submariner who was not going to be put off by half an inch of ice covering. "I remember when we were under feet of ice and that did not bother us," said John. He made an excellent icebreaker. With all the cuts the government are making for the forces we reckon that the navy could rig up a machine gun on Johns kayak and he would kick the pirates ass as well.

We made it to the main channel, which was clear of ice and made steady progress. It became quite a bird outing, we saw a cormorant feeding on an enormous fish, plenty of ducks and a number of Marsh Harriers quartering the marshes. It was definitely a day for pogies as the wind was very keen. Benetts Abbey looked quite impressive in the frost and we were also surprise how much work the broads authority have been doing to the banks to improve the flood defences.

We made Thurne for lunch in one and half hours, again the Staithe was frozen over and we had to battle to the slipway. Apart from a lone postman there was no one about! After a welcome warm drink and comparing our festive food leftovers of turkey, mince pies or sausage rolls we enjoyed the wind on our backs and made Ranworth again after an hours paddling. This time we managed to find the open channel back to the Staithe.

KP

Snape Maltings to Orford: Sunday 13th December 2009

Our first paddling experience with the club (or even with 8 other people!) started with a meet and greet at 9am sharp, in the car park of Snape Maltings having been shown where to park by the chief car park controller in a fluorescent coat. With a quick shuffle of cars to the finish location, we assembled the flotilla just downstream of the Maltings buildings. Dave the trip leader gave us a quick introduction to the group, and we were underway. Entry to the Alde was gained by sliding down the flood defence bank, through some reeds, and into the river.

The morning started grey and damp, and didn't look promising, although spirits were high, and we were happy to mingle within the group and get to know some new faces. As we rounded the corner at Iken church, the chill began to set in to our hands, which had "apparently waterproof" gloves on. However, we realised, looking around, no one else had gloves on- and the answer to cold and numb hands was in fact fleece lined pogies! After borrowing a few paddles with pogies attached, we realised these paddle mitts were our next essential investment.

After some hard paddling against the wind on the Long Reach, we reached a good lunch spot on the marshes, keenly observed by our more experienced paddling comrades. Some of the male members of the group disappeared out of sight for a few minutes apiece, so a gent's toilet must have been just around the corner! The biting wind made for a quick lunch, as we all wanted to get paddling again to keep warm. This next section was hard paddling against the wind, and was quite choppy, so a serious look appeared on everyone's faces as it took all of our concentration to keep upright. Once we turned the corner at Aldeburgh the banter started up again as we found calmer waters.

The final leg of the trip flew past, as we took in the sights of the Martello Tower and Orford Ness. This was a spectacular sight from the river, as much of the radar equipment and buildings were still visible. We will definitely have to revisit the island. Before we knew it, we had reached Orford Quay, and were standing on the side saying our farewells in the first sunshine of the day. This was a great first trip with the club, and we are very grateful to have been invited. We had a really good time getting to know our fellow paddlers, and felt very welcome.

Sophie and Martin

Whitlingham Lane to New Mills Yards and back. Sunday 17th January

After all the ice and snow of the previous fortnight, it was great to be able to get back out on the water. Twelve of us met up at the Whitlingham Lane. Last vestiges of ice in the car park made changing into kayak kit more of a challenge than normal, but getting the boats into the water was no problem from a small beach across the road.

Paddling up river behind Whitlingham Broad we passed the Rushcutters pub before passing behind through all the new developments around Carrow Road and Riverside. Only when we reached the pumping station at New Mills Yard did I realise just what flow there was on the river due to snowmelt. Returning downstream was a breeze, broken by a leisurely lunch stop at Cow Tower – where some of the party experimented with self-warming food. The miracles of modern science.

As a novice paddler, with barely eight months experience, the club run trips have been invaluable for building up stamina and slowly but surely improving my technique (I think). Thanks go especially to Alan, Paul and Graham for all their organisation (and good humour).

Paul Hammerton

The River Dart, New Bridge to Holne Bridge.

A chance to run a classic English river for the bargain price of £60, I was definitely interested. Wensum Ospreys had spaces on their minibus and spare beds at the bunkhouse, so I booked a place with the promise of being pampered and chauffeured for the entire weekend, all I had to do was get to myself and kit to Fakenham on the 5th of March. We would be staying in Princetown at the Plume of Feathers Public House on Dartmoor.

I arrive in Fakenham to a warm welcome, after introducing myself to Nigel, Paul and Marcus who would be driving the minibus and the van with the trailer. We would be picking up other paddlers on route. Once my gear and kayak were loaded we set off for further pick-ups in Fakenham, Kings Lynn and Huntingdon. We arrived in Princetown a mere nine hours later after a slow but interesting journey. The bunkhouse was basic, 20 beds and 1 shower and toilet. We had the combination to the camper's washroom and soon trebled our facilities. Bunks sorted we headed to the pub for a beer, less than a 20 metre walk away. We sampled the local brew the aptly named Jail Ale but then we were in the shadow of Dartmoor Prison.

I woke early on the Saturday morning and went for a walk around Princetown a small town with stunning views over Dartmoor. Over a full cooked breakfast the paddling groups were sorted and we headed off to the river. The plan was to set off in two groups, play on the features, meet for lunch and then run the biggest feature, Triple Drop as a large group.

We put in at New Bridge after a briefing and an equipment check. We paddled down to our first play spot the confluence with the River Webburn, dodging rocks and eddy hopping we soon arrived. The confluence at low levels forms a 6 ft long surf wave that can easily be surfed. This section we were paddling is a grade 2 with some grade 3 features, the first being Washing Machine rapid a small stopper which is easily paddle through with care. Grade 2 rapids lead to Lovers Leap another grade 3 rapid with a cliff face at the end. Turn right at the cliff face, cross the flow and this is where we would be stopping for lunch to watch other groups paddle the rapid.

Sitting with a coffee in hand I watched as a paddle floated down stream, Marcus was back quickly onto the water to rescue it while I waited for the paddler and kayak to come into sight. Throw line in hand I waited but nothing appeared. I clambered over the rocks and walked 30 metres further up the river, only to find a paddler knee deep in water hanging onto a partially submerged kayak. We secured the rope to the grab point, dragged it to the bank and started emptying it out. We then pulled the kayak 15 feet up a steep bank and walked back downstream to where the others were lunching.

After lunch we were soon back on the water and heading towards Triple Drop through more grade 2 rapids. Triple Drop as its name suggests is a series of 3 drops over 150 metres, we decided to run it in 3 sections with an inspection at each point. Nigel scouted out the first section and came back with instructions how to run it. We watched another group tackle the next 2 sections and after a good look followed their lines on both of them. Safely at the bottom we regrouped, the true river runners in the group took the safest routes the younger play boaters bounced off every rock they could find. We used this section to break in and out of the flow, eddy hop and work our way back up to the large gnarly stopper.

Play time over we moved down to the Spin Dryer, a large recirculating eddy. At lower levels you can afford to paddle into it to avoid the rocky route but at higher levels you would struggle to get back across the eddy line. The last section to Holne Bridge (the get out) was through another rocky grade 2 rapid. We had another swimmer here only the second of the trip, safely rescued we exited the river at the bridge. After a quick shuttle we changed, loaded our kayaks onto the trailer and drove back to the bunkhouse. We had been on the water for 5 hours and it was starting to get very cold.

Showered and changed we sat in the kitchen for an impromptu pop quiz. The 80's seemed to be my era but I am a gentleman of a certain age and for once that was actually a good thing. Someone suggested running a sweep on the first swimmer of the following day. £1 in the beaker and a name out of the colander and we were set. I picked James, I had watched him paddle most of the day and realized my £1 was truly wasted. Someone else would win the princely sum of £12, not a fortune but enough to pay for an evening meal and a pint. Our meal was booked for 7pm so we headed for the bar. The meals were good quality, large portions and reasonably priced. After the meal we settled in front of a roaring fire for a few more sips of Jail Ale. The bar was filled with campers, walkers and paddlers all enjoying an evening meal and a drink in a very friendly pub.

Sunday for some got off to a slightly slower start, some blamed the Jail Ale but I was fine and raring to go. The temperature had dropped from the previous day and all the kit on the trailer had frozen overnight. After breakfast we packed up all our gear, tidied up the bunkhouse and headed again for the river. We would be running the same section again but quicker, our plan was to get finished and be travelling by early afternoon for the long drive home. We spent less time at the play spots but still stopped at most of them, it is very difficult to resist them when you are paddling past. The grade 3 sections were run taking the same lines as the previous day. Our first swimmer was at Lovers Leap, we were in the lead group and unaware that someone had already taken a swim shortly after getting on the water. The rest of the trip was uneventful and finished far too soon.

Once off the water the trailer and minibus were loaded and we were soon on our way home. We made excellent progress coming back with the drivers taking a couple of hours each in the driving seat between toilet stops. After getting some food and dropping everyone off we were back in Fakenham by 9.30 pm and I was home by 10.30 pm. The water levels could have been higher but it had been a good, safe and fun trip. The trip had been organised and run well over the weekend. I had met a group of very friendly strangers and I am looking forward to the next Wensum Osprey and Guests weekend away.

Rob Fisher

Summer Date for Your Diary

25th to 27th June 2010 Cardington Whitewater Experience, Bedford, with the Lowestoft District Canoe Club

Cardington is a safe moving water experience for 1* paddlers or those new to moving water. The camping weekend is open to WVCC members and family, you can camp 1 or 2 nights or just come for the day. Camping is very basic as there are no facilities other than porter loo's. It cost £3 per person per night and paddling is £5 per day. It will finish 4pm on the Sunday. A fun weekend with a good mix of people.

Graham will be e-mailing more information. If at this stage you are interested contact Graham and he will assist you.

New Courses and enrolment for 2010

These will be announced very shortly by e-mail and on the web.

Current WVCC members keep Monday 19 April available in your diary as a provisional date for enrolment commencing at 18:00.

Again WVCC have been shopping for more new kit and we continue to reinvest for the future. This includes some smaller racing boats. Hannah is hoping to organise some coaching soon.

AND FINALLY.....

Congratulations to Dave Cassell for his award for Outstanding Contribution to Paddlesport. You can read all about it in the attached press release. WVCC and the committee are very proud of Dave's achievements. WELL DONE.

Canoeist honoured

Mr David Cassell, formerly chairman of Waveney Valley Canoe Club and Level 3 Coach has been honoured by Canoe England for his Outstanding Contribution to Paddlesport. Dave, Head of Maths at Sir John Leman High School, has been chairman of Waveney Valley Canoe Club based at Bungay, Suffolk, for ten years and active in the sport for more than twenty years coaching and paddling at various clubs in the Norfolk and North Suffolk Area.

In that time he has introduced numerous people to the sport with a specific interest himself in Open Canoeing and Sea Kayaking. He has overseen the Waveney Valley Canoe Club grow from a handful of members with the club operating from a pair of wooden sheds to a club with around 150 members of all ages in specifically built club house but not losing it's friendly atmosphere.

During his time at the club he has also organised paddling sessions for local youth groups and the partially sighted. "I am accepting this on behalf of all the volunteers who have, over the last 10 years, made such vast contributions to make our club the fantastic organisation that it is today". Said Dave of his award.

Although he has recently stood down as Club Chairman he has no plans in slowing up whilst continuing to paddle and coach with the Canoe Club he is also planning to lead a school Trip to Mount Everest In the summer of 2010.

Waveney Valley Canoe Club is a British Canoe Union affiliated amateur paddling club that accommodates all ages based at Bungay Staithe, from beginners to advanced paddlers. The Club hosts a range of British Canoe Union (BCU) endorsed Courses in the summer months at Bungay Staithe as well as running river and sea trips and whitewater trips further afield, and racing activities. All coaches are qualified to BCU standards. For more information go to www.waveneyvalleycanoeclub.org.uk

Key Committee Members

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Check our web for changes – 'What's On' www.waveneyvalleycanoeclub.co.uk

Newsletter contributions to <http://www.k.poulson@btconnect.com/>