



## CANEWS

March 2018

### EDITOR'S CORNER

**A big thank you to the contributors to this edition... Mike W, Nigel, Lorna and Nick L.**

It has been a busy 6 months with lots of trips and events going on. Thanks to everyone who has organized and run them and it has been great to see such good attendance.

We have had a fair few new members join us this year and it has been great to see them getting stuck in and involved as well.

### AWARDS!!



Congratulations to those paddlers who have earned themselves a prestigious RCC swim sticker award in the past 6 months!

**Sheila** – USK, Exe x2

**Mike Jones** – Lowe Tavy x3?

**Jilly A-** Dart Loop x1

**Simon B** x4? – Dart Loop in C1 (friday)

Ok I admit it...**Nichola Ross** x1 dart Loop

and Drum roll.....

**Barry Deakin** – Barle x1

**Tim Bryan!!** – Exe x1 (open boat)

Sorry if I have forgotten anyone or failed to notice you taking a dip. I'll get you next time ;-D

### CAPTION COMPETITION



Elliott has not disappointed and provided us with a good subject for entertainment. Here were the best captions:

*I'm not swimming, it's a stealth boat I tell you..... Dot. T*

*Is that Elliott trying out a dagger dynamo? Simon B*

*The new sport of subkayaking Caroline U*

*And the winner is:*

*Once he had been lobotomized by an arrow to the back of the head, Elliott's paddling technique was coming on in leaps and bounds... Mike F*

### LORNA'S ACCOUNT OF HER FIRST TIME ON A WHITE WATER WEEKEND...

Our first weekend trip with RCC was in January at the National Trust owned Dewerstone Cottage on Dartmoor.

In a nutshell the weekend was great with fantastic company, great food, and lots of excitement and adventure.

The first adventure was finding the pub on Friday night as Mike and I and our walking buddies in the tail-end group didn't have a clue about the old dry railway path, so we tramped over very muddy, wet and slippery fields. My word I enjoyed my several

glasses of wine that evening!! Needless to say the return journey was amazingly a lot quicker, or maybe that was the wine?!

Saturday was my own personal challenge day, a paddle down the Tavy.



My first time having a dabble at white water and I am pleased I did it, no really I am, despite all outward appearances of looking serious and down right petrified!!

As a total novice I was looked after 100% and Ross became my 'carer' for the day and did a fantastic job keeping me going. He learnt not to tell me too much about upcoming river 'features' but to follow his course and "keep paddling".

I didn't get to see how everyone else was getting on as I was too wrapped up in my own white water experience, albeit a low grade one.

On some of the bigger river features there are options to walk / scramble round them so I got to watch some of our group navigating the features in true expert style (and some not so). Mike was amazed at the lengths he had to go to to get presented with a swimming badge at the end of the day!! I earned my own swimming badge literally right at the end of the run (sorry Ross I know you were hoping to get me back without incident).



The evening was spent eating lovely food and lots of chocolates.

Many of the group went on to paddle the Dart on the Sunday and we all packed up and went home.

Would recommend this as an sociable way to spend a weekend. Thanks to everyone for all your help.

Lorna Adams-Jones

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## DEWERSTONE TRIP. ( A PART OF ) I BLAME THE PADDLERS.

A tale of woe in Devon Well Saturday dawned to a mizzle and a bit of a grey day and the group split up into the hardened paddlers, the intrepid hill walkers, and the decrepit, feeling cold and ageing, the Slithering group.

Yes I was in the 3rd group, didn't want to get wet and cold before I probably would get wet and cold. Our team Dot the Leg and Nick the Ankle poured over maps of coffee shops and warm cafes but didn't come up with much. We had been told 'down the pub' of the Pannier Market, historic, old and indoor, yippee. First port of call and then to be followed up by a National Trust place Buckland Abbey, Sir Francis Drake's House but originally a Cistercian Monastery. We were fixed up; we could all hobble or slither round these places keeping warm. We watched the paddlers getting all wet loading the vehicles and the walkers packing their little knapsacks whilst dreaming of popping into Tavistock and getting a nice cup of hot coffee. Everybody set off. Peace and tranquillity settled on the woodland and we also left for Tavistock for coffee and The Market. As we drove around Drake's statue somebody said, 'oh lets watch them off down the river'. The start of the downward spiral Yes, there they were, all still getting wet in the mizzle, getting ready for the off.

Ross asked Nick or Nick volunteered his services for the shuttle, I mean it wouldn't matter to The Slithering Group to be a little late to starting their fun. The Shuttle began. Nobody said 'Houston we have a problem'. Maybe they should have ... Time



went by, I started getting wet thinking I might just as well paddled, oh well, next time. Then through the archway with their after burners raging, Mike & Evan appeared, oh dear, not Happy Bunny's. Oh Houston! Control! (Ross!!) where were you.

The Shuttle had gone off as normal, like a dose of exlax, shot off up the road and these two who didn't know where they were going had got lost. I got in the car with Mad Mike, with Evan the Exasperated following, made our way to hopefully the others. Yes we found them. We had a bit of a near Mutiny and a severe case of Sense of Humour Failure at that juncture but, well, it all worked out in the end and we rejoined the waiting paddlers. Should have paddled, I had got wet.

Off they went and the Slithering group made its way to the Pannier Market. The building was closed for restoration work! whale I oil be flipped said us.

Well a good translation maybe. We had a mooch around the 'standby' market Dot the Leg getting yet another Chasser Bargain. Next coffee and then on to Buckland Abbey. Buckland Abbey was not that far. A picturesque setting and with spirits high we gambolled down the path like a flock of geriatric lambs to the entrance. SORRY THE HOUSE IS CLOSED, the last tour was 20 mins ago. OH MY GOD.Nooooooooooooo. Yes I blame the paddlers all that faffing , our day in tatters. We envisaged them all swimming, well not all, just a very select few!!! We had a great snacky lunch, food did seem good, it had said so in the guide. We had an amble around the outside and the gardens in the mizzle.

The barn was incredible. The place would warrant a return to see the insides of the house

and a walk in the grounds in fair weather. Definitely next time.

Anyway we had had a good laugh and at the end of the day that is what it's all about, cheers to my fellow geriatrics. A great day in Devon. PS A big hug to Sue, whose day on Team Walk didn't quite go as they expected. May your leg heal swiftly.

Mike W.

TEA BREAK...

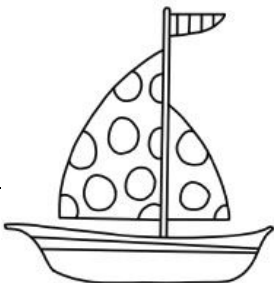
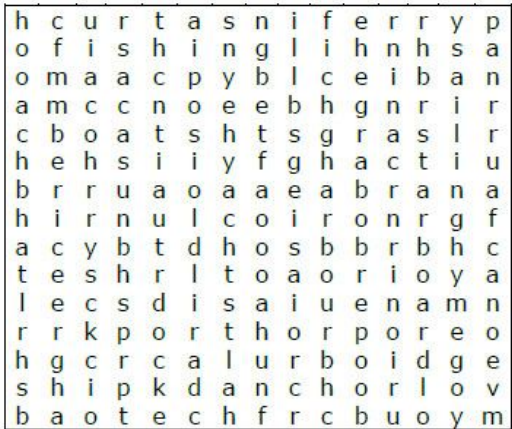
KIMMERIDGE KALAMITY  
JANUARY 6, 2018

'Twas a cold and blustery day. The wind howled hard round Clavell Point, then hammered straight into Kimmeridge Bay. Obviously no one in their right mind would venture out to sea on such a morning. Which is why every board surfer worth their salt, plus some idiots from Ringwood Canoe Club, were to be found chancing their luck on the gnarly mega waves.



Mike W, Sarah and I had more sense. After a leisurely coffee and bacon butty at Clavell's Restaurant in Kimmeridge village, we made our way down to the slipway at the Purbeck Marine Wildlife Reserve to meet n' greet any RCC survivors. Our lot were all dressed in canoeing kit (apart from Brun the dog), but to be honest I wasn't sure who had and who hadn't been paddling. There was a lot of milling around and general bonhomie, but it was far from clear who was, or had been, doing what. If anything.

Boats Word Search



- |           |        |
|-----------|--------|
| Boat      | Dock   |
| Harbour   | Anchor |
| Buoy      | Cruise |
| Fishing   | Port   |
| Starboard | Yacht  |
| Sailing   | Ship   |
| Ferry     | Barge  |
| Canoe     |        |



Apart, that is, from Sue J. It was obvious what she was doing – trying to cajole Cindy into risking sacrificing her kayak, having just completely wrecked her own by hitting the cliffs at speed. For those who thought that Kevlar was a high tensile strength material, this was a revelation; it might be ideal for

making things like bullet proof vests, but apparently it is rubbish for making Sue proof kayaks. I didn't actually see the wreckage – Sue had disposed of the evidence by the time I arrived at the scene – but she very prosaically assured everyone that it was well beyond its best before date, and that in any case its seat had been far too big for her bottom.



Sue in Kimmeridge Bay, demonstrating the best position to adopt when planning a high speed collision with sea cliffs.

Try as hard as she could, Sue was unable to replicate the accident for the camera using



Cindy's boat. Every time she picked up a wave and hurtled cliff-wards she, er, fell out. After witnessing several runs and deciding that I wasn't going to capture any suitable disaster footage for the BBC's Six O'Clock News, I suggested that we should all repair to the Square and Compass at Worth Matravers for a restorative pie and pint.

#### Lunch at The Square and Compass

This suggestion went down extremely well with everyone, despite the fact that it involved driving pretty much the entire length of the Purbecks! Which is why the Saturday lunchtime saw all the aforementioned people, plus Nic, Nigel, Mike and Lorna, happily ensconced in one of Dorset's best pubs, with a log burning stove and glorious sea views further contributing to the lovely atmosphere. Leaving proved far more difficult than arriving!

Nick L.

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#### POWDER HOUNDS AND SNOW PLOWING AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN – WHAT AN INTERESTING TIME !!!

It feels like an age since Sue Jordan suggested going skiing as a Ringwood Canoe club trip, but any excuse for me is a good one where skiing is concerned, I was a little perplexed about the thought of uphill skiing (my way of explaining cross country skiing), also I am trying to fit a lot of other trips in this year so did not have a big budget.

So when not many people applied to go, I started to think perhaps it would be a good idea to go to the Alps especially as it had been planned for February a busy time, due to the school holidays in France and here.

The last time I went skiing in February was about 20 yrs ago and I swore at the time never to do it again (grumpy old man syndrome here) so I tried to suggest we go in March but due to holidays already being booked it was not looking likely.

However after wearing my fingers out typing and mastering group messenger (slight exaggeration here) also a fish supper with the likely candidates and we were off with Hucksters to Serre Chevalier in the southern French Alps. Hucksters is a budget chalet holiday which none of us had been with before, (Vivien, Sue, Nicola, myself) Viv and Sue had both been skiing before, Viv had a couple of injuries so was hoping to ease in gently and it was Nicola's first time.

Somewhere/how The Witches of Eastwick was mentioned probably after a dodgy joke of mine and we went into overdrive (well google actually) researching our characters my part was played by



jack Nickolson and had the rather dodgy name of Darrel Van Horne.

I had suggested we coach and all share a room, as it turned out Hucksters was more like Faulty Towers mixed in with a dash of Black Adder than the Witches of Eastwick and Basil Sibil and Manuel would have been more appropriate.

After nearly 24hrs door to door and not much sleep in the coach we arrived on Saturday morning to a stunning view of the valley and Brioncon (a world heritage walled town) and loads of snow everywhere it looked promising We hadn't had an easy time trying to book up Nichola's ski lessons and I had decided to try snowboarding lessons after a rumour that there could be a free lift pass with this – later translated to 30%off- I decided to bite the bullet and become a gay on a tray (as I had heard it referred to by some of my more disparaging skier friends as this)



So 6 days of getting battered and bruised for me then and loads of abuse for sitting down everywhere ( As it turned out getting up was the problem).

In the meantime Nichola and Sue were trying out ski hire, Viv and I went back to see if our room was ready, it was and it turned out to resemble a converted broom cupboard with 2 bunkbeds, 2 single beds and 1 wardrobe and 1 chest of drawers and a little bathroom ensuite. I chose the bed by the door as it was close to the exit and the bathroom both of which I use frequently, being not a very good sleeper.

Viv was concerned that the room was very small, also how Nichola and Sue would feel about it, as it turned out with good reason as both Sue and Nichola's beds had mattresses that felt about 40 yrs old, Nichola seemed to be almost touching the floor when lying on her's and Sue had the top

bunk and all the slats were at very funny angles and no side rails, the one plug was falling off the wall and the radiator was dripping water.

We had clothes and skis and stuff under the beds, propped up in corners, everywhere Sue was trying to book an Air B&B locally saying she could not stay here, the only problem being there did not seem to be much internet connection. As it turned out the staff were lovely and the groups we were skiing with were good fun, we had the use of a lounge and separate bathroom (when we had persuaded our chalet staff to find a couple more mattresses and a curtain for the extra bathroom)

After a couple of good days skiing and orientation from the staff, the mini mass exodus seemed to be abating.



I was having a fun time and the wine and bonhomie were abundant. There were some interesting sounds and utterances during the night, I may have nicknamed Nichola waddle bottom after her skiing posture and was only outrageous some of the time (forgive me girls please) and I only had to sit on the naughty stool (equivalent) once after being asked to leave a restaurant by a very annoying French women- so just another week in France and I am missing it already.



Nigel

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## FLOATERS SPOTTED ON BARLE AND EXE 10/11TH MARCH

The environment agency put out an alert over the weekend as two very unusual things occurred . A spokesman said " It is not often that you get such high quality 'floaters ' in one weekend . It was a sight to behold and a lot of people have been almost in tears at not having seen this rare occurrence .

As the years progress maybe this will become more commonplace . It was over heard that one reason for this was "branches " attacking innocent passersby. Of course overhanging branches are something that you wouldn't expect to see, especially over the incredibly flat water of this stretch of idyllic river .

Another reason was that the conversation was sooo intellectually stimulating that it forced a somnambulist affect on the recipient and he became incapacitated and couldn't control his craft. As this was such an incredible sight we hope to see more of the "Timmo " affect as it has now become known as.

The second 'floater ' has been blamed on something in the water , like a rock or put in technical terms an obstruction . This is something you wouldn't expect to see in this particular stretch on the Exe. Maybe the ' Timmo ' affect happened here as well. Was the

conversation with himself !!! Is this going to become an epidemic situation? We hope so. Hopefully the elf and safety team bounced into action and patched these two very rare sightings with the specialised remedy of "Swim Stickers"

Pen Stroke

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## EXMOOR WEEKEND 2018 YOU DON'T HAVE TO PADDLE TO HAVE FUN WITH RCC

Northcombe Barn near Dulverton on Exmoor is usually a tad chilly during the winter months, but a warm welcome awaited RCC members on Friday, March 9. I was the first to arrive, just ahead of Cindy and Dot, and found the log burner already alight and the electricity prepayment meter (which currently only takes old £1 coins) fully primed.

The traditional sitting room gloom was immediately lifted by Dot. Partly thanks to her natural radiance, obviously, but mainly thanks to two bright light bulbs she had thoughtfully brought along as temporary replacements for the 5 microwatt incumbents. There was the usual group debate about whether to sleep with snorers or risk freezing your bollocks off in the back bunk room, slightly ameliorated this year by the discovery of a small radiator in the latter.

By about 5:00 pm the early arrivals had run out of coffee cake (thanks Lin) and decided to head off to the Bridge Inn in Dulverton, even though the table that Simon had booked for us all wouldn't actually be available until 7:00 pm. It was a very convivial evening; by the time we left, our party had grown to comprise Cindy, Dot, Nick, Simon, Evan, Jilly, Sheila, Barry, Bev, Jason, Mike F, Nigel, Viv and Nic (Mike W and Sue J also joined us on Saturday morning).

Much to Nic's delight, back at Northcombe Barn, the local residents were busy adding to the population with new piglets, lambs and calves. Personally I considered all the squealing, baaing and mooing to be somewhat OTT, but as Nic pointed out, we were staying on a farm.





Apparently no-one snored that night. OK, I made that bit up.

I'll leave it to others to describe the weekend's paddling. The reason for me penning a few words is merely to highlight that you don't have to paddle to have fun with RCC – if there's sufficient space on a trip, non-paddlers are made very welcome too. Dot and I helped with the car shuttle on Saturday morning, so that the paddlers could start at Tarr Steps and leave their cars at Exebridge.



On the drive down to Exebridge, I spent a while at Beasley Mill Hydro, about a mile downstream from Dulverton, chatting to a jobsworth about the dangers of paddling the fish pass in spate. Our lot subsequently took it in their stride. The new hydro scheme is an Archimedes screw type: commissioned in 2015, it is rated at 78 kW and is designed to generate about 320,000 kWh of electricity per year.



After abandoning the paddlers to their fate at Tarr Steps, Dot, Sue and I drove over to Lynton to meet up with Dot's friend Steph. After coffee with Steph and a conducted tour of her amazing garden high up on Exmoor, the four of us drove down to the centre of Lynton. I dropped the girls off so that they could walk the coastal path, then drove round to the Valley of Rocks to wait for them – always assuming they would survive the herds of feral goats that would doubtless leap upon them en route.

Post walk, we headed back to Dulverton to meet up with any Barle trip survivors. Cindy bought a bust and I bought an LP of the sound track from Easy Rider. There followed another few beers in the Bridge Inn, then back to Northcombe Barn for the evening. Jilly and Evan had created a delicious stew for everyone, and Nigel eventually managed to thaw the cheesecake he had inadvertently left in the freezer.

Apparently no-one snored that night either. OK, I made that bit up as well.

On Sunday, Dot and I again helped out with the car shuttle, again so that paddlers' cars could be left at Exebridge, and then we drove to Knightshayes near Tiverton, again to meet up with Steph for lunch. This is a very interesting

National Trust property, with a massive walled kitchen garden.



After a few happy hours of meandering, we drove back to Exebridge to meet the paddlers. It was a great weekend, despite not being able to paddle. Nick L