



# ISLE OF PORTLAND CANOE CLUB

## July 2010 Newsletter



**Passing through Bantham**

We enjoyed a lovely, dry, warm, sunny month with just a couple of wet days on 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>. These wet days were especially memorable for us, not because of the paddling conditions but because we were moving into our new home at Burton Bradstock. It has been dry and sunny since we moved though and we have enjoyed long days in our new garden. Towards the end of the month Ian has been forced to lay off after having surgery to re-route the biceps tendons in his right shoulder. (Ouch!)

The weekend before we moved was the main Club event of the month. Ten members met at Aveton Gifford in the South Hams of Devon to enjoy a weekend of paddling with a wild camp on the Saturday night. This was the first main event for Julie and Geoff to

paddle their shiny new composite sea kayaks. Julie in a Nordkapp LV and Geoff in an Aquanaut. The group paddled down the River Avon and then out through the considerable waves at Bantham and out onto the ocean. There was enough swell to maintain interest and too much swell to paddle through Thurlstone Rock which is a natural arch, a bit like Durdle Door. The group went into Hope Cove, landing in the sheltered Harbour, to have an ice-cream break. Afterwards a paddle out to the rough water off Bolt Tail was experienced and enjoyed by most before heading back ashore at Beacon Point Beach to set up camp. Most people chose to spend the night in tents but the two John's sought out their Ray Mears tendencies with John C using a tarp to bivouac under whilst John M. found a suitable rock to lay his head under for the night – narrowly escaping the encroaching waves.



**Barbara at Thurlstone Rock**

The following day the group were able to enjoy some rock hopping and some braved the swell to paddle through Thurlstone Arch. Hilary waited for the biggest wave of the day before her turn. Burgh Island was circumnavigated before stopping for a very pleasant brunch at the café at Bigbury. Suitably refreshed some surfed their sea kayaks in the small waves before making their way back into the mouth of the Avon. The waves claimed two victims as first Jill and then John M took a swim. The paddle back up to Aveton Gifford was pleasantly easy with the flood tide. You can read all about this trip and look at the photographs on the newly revamped Trip Report pages of the web site. (The Webmaster has not been completely idle during his postoperative recuperation)



**Bigbury Surfer's Cafe**

Every year a few weekends are set aside for an attempt to paddle out to Lundy Island in the Bristol Channel. This is a long exposed trip with a 20-mile open crossing each way which demands a good level of fitness and self-sufficient paddling skills. It is preferable to

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take 3 days over the trip to allow a day to paddle out, a day to enjoy the superb scenery on the Island by paddling round it and walking round, and a day to paddle back. It is also important not to have any pressing engagements on the following days as the return trip may be delayed if the settled period of weather suddenly deteriorates. In the last few years many plans have been thwarted as there have been few periods of settled weather. The timing of a paddle out to Lundy is dictated by the tides as it is essential to paddle out with the ebb and back with the flood. There are significant tidal races to be negotiated at Bull Head and Morte Point on the Devon Coast and also at both ends of Lundy.



**Launching at Lee Bay**

We were very lucky to have a settled weather forecast for the weekend and on the evening of Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> we decided to go for it. A small group of six were able to down tools and take the long weekend off. We launched from Lee bay, which is just south of Ilfracombe, just before high water on the Friday. The group kept to the North of the tidal races off the headlands and enjoyed a smooth crossing to Lundy being entertained by seals, dolphins, a fly past by Manx Shearwaters, Gannets Puffins and other birds. We kept well to the North of the Lundy Coast with the tide constantly trying to push us down into The Race at the Southern end of the Island. Julie kept us strictly on our bearing and we were successful in keeping out of trouble and landed safely at The Landing Place in just under 5 hours. After paddling for 5 hours you then have a half hour uphill slog carrying all the camping gear to the top of the Island. This is also where the excellent Marisco Tavern is so refreshment is waiting when you get there. Camping on Lundy is quite civilised with showers, a shop and meals of a suitable size for hungry paddlers at the pub.



**The excellent Marisco Tavern on Lundy.**

On the Saturday we enjoyed a superb paddle round the island with exceptional scenery, arches, tunnels and stacks providing excellent rock hopping opportunities. After a short period of relaxation we then enjoyed a ten mile trek round the Island, picking up the Shipping Forecast for the return paddle whilst watching the Hens and Chickens tidal race at the northern end of the Island. Gales were forecast in many areas of UK but thankfully shipping area Lundy was only force 3 –4 so we were good to go with the flood tide at 06.30 the following morning.



**IOPCC on the way to Lundy**

After an evening in the Marisco Tavern we carried all the gear down to the beach at the Landing Place and slept out under the stars ready for an early start. It was a most beautiful night with a sunrise to remember forever. The wind was stronger than forecast when we launched and this had created some waves. Unfortunately Hugh got swamped so

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we were delayed whilst we pumped his boat out. The exertions of the previous two days had been cumulative and energy levels were a little lower. This combined with some wind and waves slowed the group on the return trip. On approaching the North Devon Coast the group were swiftly drawn into the Morte Point tidal race, which was 'working' producing a confused sea with waves of considerable size. At this stage of the game this is the last thing you want but everyone coped and managed to avoid adding their name to the swim chart. We slogged on through the Bull Point race before landing at Lee Bay just as the tide turned against us.

By the time we got the boats out and everything packed into away we were exhausted with just enough energy to walk up to the pub in Lee village for lunch and celebratory drinks.

Now that summer is here there are many people out on the water enjoying different activities. It is important that we always behave with consideration and care for other water users. Sandsfoot Beach is used by members of the public and Castle Cove Sailing Club. It is worth bearing in mind that sailing boats, which appear to be sailing in a random loose group, are probably racing and when sailing into the wind may change direction without warning. Probably best to keep well out of the way of yachts if possible - they are bigger than us!

As IOPCC members we have a permit to paddle in Portland Harbour. However there is an area of the harbour, which is off limits to all leisure boats, with the express intention of separating commercial and leisure craft. If you go to:

<http://www.portland-port.co.uk/leisure/documents/DLLeafletversion3.pdf>

you can get a small map of the harbour with the area in question marked.

Whilst on the Portland Port site it is good to visit:

[http://www.portland-port.co.uk/statutory\\_notices/Intm.htm](http://www.portland-port.co.uk/statutory_notices/Intm.htm)

and check the Local Notice to Mariners which gives information about the regulations that affect the harbour. All members who use the harbour should be aware of the regulations.

Paddling events in July are set to include a Family and Friends funday organised once again this year by Cate. There are also some local day paddles planned- Sidmouth to Exmouth and West Bay to Lyme Regis. There is also talk of a circumnavigation of the Isle of Wight. Planning for the expedition to Pembrokeshire is reaching an advanced stage. Thursday evening sessions continue throughout the month. If you are going out paddling and would like some company share your plans on the Forum

Happy paddling - see you all out there!

**Barbara Browning**  
IOPCC Chairman



**Well deserved refreshments at  
The Grampus Inn at Lee.**