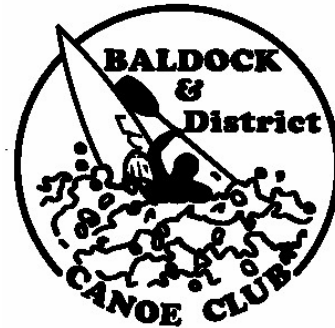


# The BAD News

July 2006



**A rare photo showing Steve Bratton in a boat *outside* a swimming pool (/ polo pitch in summer), in danger of getting cold and wet, and even looking like he might be enjoying himself.**

**Surfing at Newgale, May 2006**

## Chairperson's report By Andy B

Firstly I have a confession:

On 1<sup>st</sup> April I received a text from Pete saying that the trailer was dead. I envisaged it having disintegrated strewing kayaks all over the M11. I called him straight away. My fertile imagination exposed my gullibility at having fallen for an April's Fool. The word dead was being used as a metaphor for the fact we had been granted £5000 by Awards For All and could now go in search of a new trailer.

There is a delay while we await the new trailer. We've done a lot of research on what will best suit our needs, and as this is only our second trailer in 25 years, it's something we didn't want to get wrong. A special thanks to all those who've made enquiries, taken measurements and checked measurements, but especially to Paul who seems to have found them winning combination of price and functionality

Of the £5000 awarded. £2000 has been spent on Open Canadians. Approximately the same will be spent on the trailer. Some will go on new helmets and paddles, and the rest will be held back for a while to see how the needs of the club develop. We have a year in which to complete our purchases.

You'll have opportunities to try the Canadians on the Cheshunt weekend plus trips on the Thames and possibly Paul's trip to Yorkshire. They look a lot of fun so try them out. They'll be down the pool every now and then.

Paddling wise, people are going off on trips here and there. Keep in touch with the yahoogroup. The main trip so far was to St. David's in Pembrokeshire that proved so popular that we were in danger of cancelling the pool session on the Sunday night due to no one left. Thanks to Colin for doing the organising of that trip/.

The club welcome back Mark Taylor after a couple of years spent in Switzerland and wish both him and Nicky all the best as they start up their next adventure in Oxford.

The club pass on their congratulations to Rob and Debbie Clough on the birth of Andrew, to Al and Simone Green on the birth of their as yet un-named baby girl, and to Ross and Hannah Asquith on the birth of baby Fern.

P.S. If you want to tow the new trailer, all you need is one of these. It's a great fashion accessory. Every car should have one, As well as being able to tow things it also good for reversing into things without damaging your bumper!



Your reward is a free pool session, and the glow of satisfaction that you know you're helping the club out. The more that can help, the easier it is.

## CALENDAR

- July 15<sup>th</sup> Bedford River festival – Evening Paddle plus fireworks.  
See Andy Barras
- July 22<sup>nd</sup> Games and beers  
See Roy Taylor
- July 29<sup>th</sup> Cardington. Flat water paddle for free or £7:50 to do the course  
See Andy Barras
- August 5<sup>th</sup> Michelle and Andrew's House-warming party from 2:30 – late  
12 Russel Walk, Stotfold  
See Michelle Grudzinski
- August 20<sup>th</sup> Aquatic First Aid Course. Local. £20  
See Andy Barras
- August 26<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> White Water Safety Course, Tryweryn. Fully booked  
Come along if you just want to paddle the river.
- September 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> Activity weekend. Try Sailing, windsurfing, climbing caving etc.  
Also chance to try out the Canadians  
Camping available  
See Roy Taylor for details
- October 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> Trip to North Yorkshire  
See Paul Stephens
- November 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> North East Trip  
See Andy Barras
- Jan/Feb Upper dart trip  
See Rob Carter

Keep a look out for events on the club calendar [www.thecanoeclub.co.uk](http://www.thecanoeclub.co.uk) , and also on the onelist, as lots goes on but a quite short notice.

## Aquatic First Aid Course

As some of you may know, I've been working on material to deliver a first aid course aimed specifically at paddlesport. First Aid is not covered in the White Water Safety Course.

The 8-hour course will lead to the BCU Aquatic First Aid certificate. The cost of the course is £20. This is an introductory offer as some centres are charging £55.

### Syllabus

Incident management  
Resuscitation including choking  
Drowning  
Effects of heat and cold  
Wounds  
Shock  
Heart attacks  
Unconsciousness  
Fractures  
Assessment is through dealing with a scenario

We'll deal with the above situations with nothing else but the kit a=that I fit into a box measuring just 19cm x 14cm x 4.5cm

I've also stuck in some extra sessions on how to remove a buoyancy aid, cut neck seals, and move someone who is unconscious.

### Why is it costing £20?

I'm running the course as a business, not as a labour of love. A lot of work has gone into preparing material, and I've had to buy supplies such as the resuscitation dummies that have cost in excess of £250

### Course Dates

Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> August 11:30 am to 7:30 pm  
Minimum number of 5 and max of 8 for the course to run.  
Venue to be confirmed.

### What to bring

Come dressed in trousers, and bring a buoyancy aid and a packed lunch. One to eat and one to wear.

If this proves to be well received then I'll look to run a second course, possibly in December.

Contact me if you want to come along.

Cheers! Andy Barras

## Cardington Slalom results (June 06)

### SATURDAY

D2 K1 W

9th Carmel Buttimer 20 points

D2 C1 M

1st Paul Stephens 100 points

2nd page of results missing, but:

D2 Vet

1st Terry Griffiths 1000 points

D3 C2

3rd Carmel and Michelle

### SUNDAY

D2 K1 W

10th Carmel Buttimer 31 points

D2 Vet

1st Terry Griffiths 1000 points

D4 K1 W

2nd Michelle Grudzinski

D4 C2

2nd Buttimer/Grudzinski

On saturday there was only one clear run in any class, and on Sunday there were only two clear runs (Terry's). Congratulations to all who took part. For those who haven't tried slalom, div 4 is the entry level for novices, it is a great way to improve your confidence and your paddling on gently moving water!

## **Barn Dance**

Thanks to Tim Roberts for inviting us along to his farm for a barn dance. There must have been well in excess of 100 there, including some local girls dressed impressively for the part in short leather skirts. The food was no less stunning, and it was just a great night all round.

The contingent of about 10 from Baldock, included Michele and Andrew who had just returned from a day out in France. Thanks for your support. Money raised at the event went to 'Riding for the Disabled'



## Alps trip 2006 - Vallouise, near Briancon

We set off on Friday for the long long drive down to Briancon.... Luckily Kev's car were significantly ahead of us so Kev, Milky and Wes sorted out dinner so it was on the table once Paul and I finally arrived. We had rented a ski chalet about 10 minutes walk from the centre of Vallouise, walking distance from the Gyr-Onde confluence making those rivers convenient last paddles of the day. Paul broke the top bunk as soon as he climbed onto it, but luckily we had a spare bed so we were able to work round that problem. I used the lower bunk very gingerly for the rest of the week.

I can't remember all the sections we did in order but we did the Onde several times, the lower Guisance 3 times, inspected the Claree which was too low, though the level through the Briancon gorge was good at the start of the week (2 or 3 times?), Middle Guil a couple of times. We also did the Ubaye racecourse which Milky opted out of, resulting in a last minute car shuffle, so Paul left his glasses in the wrong car.... This meant he got a headache paddling without them so instead of repeating the racecourse we did an upper section of the Ubaye which he could safely wear his normal specs for. This was a beautiful but chilly continuous 2/3 section; Kev opted just for a thermal and took a roll (who knows what on, it must have been due to lack of concentration!) and I was chilly in a shortie.

The most notable section we did however was the Durance gorge. This was at the lower end of a sensible level with excellent grade 3/4 boulder gardens. We did the long portage, overtaking a group of 3 from Hertford, and came to slot and drop. This didn't particularly look like any photo I've seen of it and it didn't look inviting - a jet scraping along a cliff wall - but the portage didn't look good either! Paul went first uneventfully. Then Milky went through, got his paddles caught but hung onto them, resulting in a bent pair of paddles and painful shoulders. I went next (not having been able to watch Milky), got my paddles caught and let go, capsized, and ended up swimming after waiting for a rescue, not knowing I was still too far upstream for the others to get to me. Luckily Paul caught up with my boat so I didn't have to swim much more of the gorge to get to it (I walked some of the way, but then came to a cliff wall. However the water is relatively deep and slow around large boulders so it wasn't an unpleasant swim). Kev went last and capsized. Milky finished the gorge with the bent paddles - which were actually a pair of Kev's he always borrows - and actually they're not really Kev's, as Kev found them in Scotland 10 yrs ago, but then we headed off to "the Liquid Holiday Shop" at St Clement on the Durance, where Milky was able to try out some paddles in a paddling pool (or at least a pool you wouldn't really want to practise your roll in!) and I was able to replace my wetsuit shorts which are the only pair I had ever possessed and hence had done

numerous swims since my uni days and were starting to fall apart catastrophically.

Triple step on the Guil provided some entertainment. I'm not sure if this is graded 4 or 5, but I've never considered running it. However Milky and Paul were up for running the bottom two drops and we arrived there at the same time as a large Irish group, with a French guide. Most of the people who ran it took at least a roll, including the guide, Milky and Paul. However one Irish girl made a mess of the eddy before the first drop which she went over sideways with the obvious consequences. Below the second drop the guide (in double wetsuit and caving boots) was clipped to a rope and jumped out into the flow to seize both the girl and her boat. It turned out she was unharmed but swearing continuously!

On the Gyr - a river which always scares me, it is a continuous 2km run which takes 15 min and you can barely look round to check on the group behind you - I survived my first run and felt once was enough, but Kev and Milky persuaded me to try it again. This is a river I have swum on twice, but always on the slower upper bit. On my second run this trip I capsized just after elephant rock, the main rapid that a large group of rafting punters were busy spectating. Here the river is steep and gravelly with no eddies. I was unaware of taking chunks out of my knuckles, felt my helmet scrape rocks, and luckily rolled on what felt like my second attempt, although Kev who was following me said he didn't even see me upside down. The Gyr doesn't really offer eddies for recovery so I felt completely exhausted attempting to punch through the remaining stoppers, though I did have a bit of a break when we had to run aground on a gravel bank in order to portage round a tree. My hands were rather swollen and sore for the rest of the trip - not too bad when in icy water but a real pain for doing roofrack straps, cag seals, etc! Luckily it was just my hands though, I would not have liked to have taken a swim!!!! I wasn't up for doing the Gyr again that trip and shall think hard about it on any other trip!

Off the river, there was lots of good food as usual - we self catered most of the time, the big advantage of a chalet being a fridge. (plus a TV with awful reception, but Wes and Milky still managed to watch some of the football). thanks to Wes for all the shuttle bunny work, Milky for renting the chalet, Paul for driving and rescuing my boat on the Durance, and to Kev for general organisation and river guiding!

Ros

## There's a Bermuda Triangle in my Bedroom

There's a Bermuda triangle in my bedroom or to be more precise my study. What once was the guest's bedroom has become the computer room/office/study /den.

I first noticed this phenomenon when I was repairing my spectacles. A screw had come loose and I was attempting to fix it using those really cheap ultra small screwdrivers that you can only buy for a £1.00 from Tandy's or 50p from a market stall. Anyway, the screw was in position waiting to be screwed in when the frame sprang apart and the screw described a delicious, beautiful arc as it was catapulted through the air and landed on the Indian rug. This carpet has a swirly pattern that gives me a headache so I have to wear blinkers when I'm working on the computer. My wife says I look strange but the innovative lateral thinker will always bear the burden of society's misanthropic disapproval.

So within the floor space of the 10 foot by 8 foot room I knew where the screw was to within a 3 foot by 2 foot oblong of carpet. 2 hours later after conducting a fingertip search a head torch scan and a sweep with a magnetic bracket normally used to hold my sat nav in the car I had run out of expletives. I was now resorting to doubling up and trebling up my expletives but the gale force wind of abuse did not dislodge or uncover the offending, now lost article. After two days of bumping into things I managed to get an optician's appointment and he supplied a new screw.

Two months down the line I am entering some data into my little PDA when I drop the pointy scribing tool thing. This time I observe quite closely where it fell and I know where it is. It is in the top left corner of my Indian rug. Thank goodness a small area to check. 50 minutes later I ordered a wig off the internet so I could have some hair to tear out. The impossible had occurred again. The pointy scribing tool was nowhere to be found. I widened the search area. I tried to recreate the event like some crime scene aficionado by dropping various pens, bits of wood and letter openers but to no avail.

Conclusion, irrefutable proof that there is a Bermuda Triangle in my bedroom and I solemnly swear never to bring any canoeing equipment upstairs. Come to think of it I can't find my canoeing ear plugs and I left those on the window sill 3 months ago.

Yours, spatially challenged,  
[& £830 worse off after paying for the dog to have an operation]

Martin Home

## **Bitches / Newgale trip 2006**

I met Charles at 5am on the friday morning, in Kimpton, ready to attach his "rubber bus" (small motorised boat) to his car and head off to S Wales. As we enjoyed the dawn he described the process of catching and killing crows and magpies (\*), in order to increase the number of other birds (of winged variety) in his garden. He also described about the process of screeding a barn floor, which I had heard a bit about from Andy B. Andy did a plastering course and Charles had suggested that there was a small patch of his kitchen wall that needed re-plastering. At very short notice Charles changed the job to screeding a large sloping barn floor so that Charles could let said barn as an office. This had involved a cement mixer attacking Andy, and generally a lot of work, such that Andy might not have been the sharpest paramedic on night shifts that week. Charles did say that Andy had been shrewd about negotiating payment before starting!

After a leisurely pootle (sort of, at least by Charles' standards, well we were towing) we made it to S Wales late morning to join Colin and the others who had made an early start, camping in a bog across the road from the beach. We went out to investigate the surf which was nothing amazing but still well worth the drive. As the day progressed more bdcc members arrived - as there were probably about 30 people there and more than half the paid-up membership of the club, I can't remember all the names. Noel had forgotten his tent..... so Martin had taken him on a detour via Millets in Carmathen.

On saturday there was more surf, much the same.....Trudie was encouraged out through the breaks and tried out lots of different boats, as well as a few different swimming techniques. Charles appeared to be getting a little better at rolling since the prevoius day. As the day had been generally grey and overcast there was talk of going to the "pink palace" Chinese restaurant and sauna just up the road. However Charles was keen to investigate the Bitches in his rubber boat so I went with him as crew. He did explain how he could get me really trashed if he went into the waves at full throttle so I was thrown around, but amazingly his never-before-seen kind and sensitive side showed through and we only went at about a tenth of the potential pace (I had spent the entire day freezing cold despite my dry kit, which looks in good condition but appears to leak badly). Around this time the sky cleared and it turned into a



gorgeous sunny evening. We saw a commercial tour boat out near the Bitches - Charles

had already chatted to the operator in town - who told us where it was safe to cross the line of rocks, and we had a bit of fun surfing the wave and charging through the tidal race. However as the only boat out there most of the time we were slightly cautious, given the strength of the flow. It looked like a daunting prospect in a kayak.

On Sunday the weather was far sunnier until late afternoon, when it was time to go out to the Bitches again (of course after another day on the surf at Newgale). This time Paul S, Colin, Patrick, Steve R, Andy B and I were in kayaks - we set off for the paddle from St Justinians in good time and had time to chill (and get cold) on the island whilst the tidal race built. Charles went out in his rubber boat with first mate Martin, and most of the rest went for a walk on the cliffs armed with binoculars and Nigel's camera (which didn't have a small lens, so he took lots of photos without being able to see what he was photographing). Andy and I sat in the eddies feeling scared by the power of the water and the boily eddy lines whilst the others had a good surf on the waves of the Bitches, and Charles occasionally dragged someone into his boat to take them upstream of the main wave to drop down for another go. When it was time to head off Patrick and Colin quickly hitched the first lift back to St Justinians in Charles' boat. Meanwhile a paddler from another group had dislocated her shoulder so the remaining 4 of us paddled back to land across the tidal race, guided by Steve, so that Charles could take the injured girl back.

On Monday the surf was much as it had been for the rest of the trip, but many people decided a day on the M4 was preferable.... Charles, Andy and I had a play with Charles' inflatable one man kayak which handles remarkably similar to a regular kayak with the disadvantage that your legs get very wet. It is very stable though and Noel had enjoyed surfing it the previous day. It is very heavy though and with a relatively strong wind along the beach I was aware of drifting downwind.

We packed up in sunshine sufficient to dry the tents more-or-less, said goodbye to those staying for an extra day or two, and headed back down the M4, getting home by 9pm. I had a go at driving Charles' car whilst towing the rubber bus, but thankfully only on relatively simple bits of motorway.

All in all, a great trip. I was disappointed that by the end I had barely had a chance to speak to some people such as Nina and French Claire.

Other memories of the trip include Martin cleaning his frying pan with ocean fresh shower gel, and Andy B describing his plastering course in Romford and Martin suggesting that the teaching had gone along the lines of "bish bosh slap it on loads of dosh". (I never did hear how Charles' floor had turned out.)

After a pool session a week or two later Nigel brought his laptop to the pub with his photos displayed in continuous slide show mode. Unfortunately there were ~900 of them, unsorted, unedited. Thankfully he provided a couple of the better photos for this report!

\* A few weeks later Charles described how he had caught Bruce the Magpie (or maybe Bruciee, he isn't an expert on identifying the gender of magpies) and had used him/her as a decoy to catch 4 other magpies and 2 crows, which he had then killed and lobbed over the hedge. Bruce had a couple of trips in Charles' car too and retaliated for his/her captivity in the obvious manner, given that (s)he was being transported in a cage with a wire mesh base that wasn't lined with newspaper. (s)he didn't lay an egg though. Eventually Charles let him/her go.

Ros



**Martin at the helm as Charles gives Patrick & Colin & boats a lift back to St Justinian's**



**Charles has condensed the difference between "breaking in" and "breaking out" to a series of post-it notes for handy reference**