

Halifax Canoe Club Newsletter

WINTER 2013/14 Edition

In this edition:

Members Spotlight

Ramblings from the chair

Upcoming river trips for 2014

4 trip reports !!!

Gallery

AGM 2014 update

Plus much much more.....



HAPPY NEW HXCC NEW YEAR



Ramblings from the chair

First of all I hope you all have had a great Christmas and I wish you all the best for the New Year.

2014 will be another busy year, with lots of trips and events going on. Our AGM is coming up so we will be looking for volunteers to help out with the day to day running of the club, if you are interested in helping out please have a chat with one of the committee members. All the info will be in the newsletter and on the website.



At the end of another year I would just like to thank all the Management Committee who have done a sterling job in keeping the Club on track and in making it the great club that it is. Also to all the volunteers who have helped out during the year, whether it is cleaning up the river or helping at events, it is the only way the club can continue, so thank you.

Thanks also to Andy & Alex Luke who raised £230.00 for the club, doing a sponsored paddle, very much appreciated.

Well I managed to get on a river trip (the first for a while) starting in Kettlewell to Linton Falls. This is a great trip for me as Kettlewell is only a few miles from home so no travelling. The Weather was not great but plenty of water & I really enjoyed getting back on the water and seeing club members again. We decided against running Linton Falls because of the water level being high, not that I was in anyway tempted to run it. It was a great trip.

Well I must of nearly filled the page by now, so keep an eye on the website for up and coming trips and **HAPPY NEW YEAR.**

Thanks Pete.

AGM - SATURDAY 22ND FEBRUARY 2014

Hopefully you already have this evening marked up on your calendar for the clubs annual gathering which is again being held at North Bridge Leisure Centre, Halifax starting at 7pm.

As ever, we'll have a brief formal AGM, present the Club's prestigious Annual Awards (and the infamous Rubber Duck Award!) along with food, a bar and a band.



As usual we will be asking everyone to bring a dish, it doesn't have to be anything complicated but tasty is good! To make this run smoothly we need a coordinator, so if you are up for this then give Victoria a call.



New Club Coaches

Congratulations to Mike Highley, Simon Adams, Dig Coll, Pete Bell and Ben Kirk who all completed their training and assessment to become Level 1 Coaches last month. All are keen as mustard and starting to help out at the pool and on other sessions and I am sure will be getting stuck into coaching on the river next summer.

We have a few other people also looking to do their coach training to add more coaches to our dedicated and hard working band of volunteer coaches. If you are interested, speak to Les Ford to find out what is involved, where to start and how the club can support you.

MEMBERS YOUR CLUB Your Club Needs YOU

As ever at the AGM we are looking for keen volunteers to come forward and join the committee and help with the running of your club.

Full details of the post up for election at February's AGM will be circulated early in the New Year, but we are creating 2 new posts on the committee this year.

Fundraising Officer – someone to help us secure funding and co-ordinate fundraising events to ensure we can move forward with items in the development plan like improving our club house facilities.

Events and Competition Officer – someone to lead the co-ordination and promotion of club events and promote events and competitions that members can go to in the region and beyond. This role is co-ordinating the programme and supporting those who are the organisers, not taking on the running of everything!

Please look out for details of these and the other committee roles up for election at the AGM and consider whether you could get involved with helping to run the club.



Quickfire Questions

An opportunity to get to know your fellow club members a bit better

Name: Andy Luke (Lukie)

Kayak level: 2 star

Discipline: River running, touring and Open boating

Happiest kayak moment: Doing an Open boat trip in Wales, 20miles 2days with my son Alex mostly steering (Dads and Lads).

Scariest Kayak moment: Doing the Washburn for the first time, 2 run downs and 2 capsizes. Lots of boat chasing.

Best Place you've Kayaked: In the sea off the coast of Cornwall on a sit on top kayak, lost my wedding ring (Don't tell the wife)

Dream place you'd love to Kayak:

Would love to kayak abroad. Anyone fancy a week's holiday?

What do you love most about the club:

The support and training given freely to me and my children. And the great trips that get organised by the club members.

What would you do if you weren't kayaking: Would spend my free time riding my Suzuki 750GXR which gets upset when I open the garage and take out the kayak instead of it?

Favourite Film: Zombieland or Notting Hill (depending who is watching with me)

Favourite Book: Any Discworld novel by Terry Pratchett

Favourite Music: Old school stuff and Mashed up songs e.g.: Party Ben.

Other Sports/hobbies: Walking with friends, watching Rochdale play football and Motor biking

Something nobody knows about you: Regularly go on lads holidays abroad motocross riding. I have so far visited Portugal, Spain, Turkey and back to Spain in June.



Winter river trips 2014

If you plan to come on a trip, please let the listed contact know that you are coming – so we know who to expect (and make sure we wait for you) and on some trips numbers can be limited. Also plans may change at a late stage (due to water levels etc), so we might need to get hold of you to let you know

River Dee river trip – 26th Jan 2014

This is a popular venue that offers reasonably reliable water. Difficulty: Grade 2/3 with a short section of grade 4 (The Serpent's Tail) that can be portaged: suitable for intermediate club paddlers with experience of other white water trips. Vics will be leading the trip under the watchful eye of Les, in preparation for her 4* WW Leader assessment in February.

Places are limited & will depend on available coaches.

Where is it: Llangollen, North Wales.

Where do we meet? 10.00am at Mile End Mill. [Click here for a map.](#)

I will publish a list of attendees a few days in advance so car sharing can be arranged. Meet at the club if necessary around 7.45am.

What do I need? Personal paddling equipment (wetsuit/warm clothing – not wetsuit shorts – and waterproof top, buoyancy aid, spray deck, helmet) packed lunch and hot drink in a flask, additional snacks, a change of clothing (including warm clothes for after paddling), towel. Also money – MEM charge a fee of circa £5 to use their facilities & we might go for a drink in a café or pub.

Organiser: Vics Bradford-Keegan

Coaches: Vics Bradford, Les Ford (more welcome)

Other Information: If you're under 18 you must submit a completed consent form to the coach or organizer on or before the day. Download a trip consent form.

If you are not sure whether you are up to this trip, speak to one of the listed contacts for further advice.

River Lune Trip – 8th Feb

The Lune we have done for the last few years and is a classic with several grade 3 gorges and rapids, plus a couple of grade 4's thrown in along the way, and a dodgy weir or two. However, this does need a reasonable water level so we will have a fall back plan to paddle elsewhere.

Please note: numbers will be limited on this trip



Difficulty: Grade 3 (4) – and dodgy weirs. One grade 4 is very sensitive for access so inspection is limited. Therefore this trip is for experienced river paddlers only (upper end of intermediate paddling).

Where is it: Southern Cumbria

Where do we meet: At the club at 8am to load up / arrange car shares. If you plan to travel separately contact the organiser for details of where and when to meet us near the river.

What do I need: If you need to ask then you're not ready for this trip!

Organiser: Guy Fox-Kelly gfoxkelly@btinternet.com

Other Information: We will also need a consent form/parents permission for any under 18's that want to come on a trip. Download a trip consent form (pdf – 25kb).

If you are not sure whether you are up to this trip, speak to the contact listed for that trip, who will be able to advise you further.

River Rothay trip – Sunday 23rd March

A wonderfully scenic 7km paddle through the beautiful scenery of central Lakeland. Starting from Grasmere, follow the rapids down to Rydal Water taking in the scenery as we go. Paddle across Rydal before rejoining the Rothay to paddle down to Ambleside and then through to Lake Windermere.

Difficult: A couple of safe weirs, mainly grade 2 with a short grade 3, and a small lake. Please note that due to access issues it is not possible to portage the grade 3 or inspect it from the bank.

Where is it: Lake District

Where do we meet: At the club at 8am to load up / organise car shares. Or contact the organiser for meeting details if you plan to meet us there.

What do I need: Normal paddling equipment (wetsuit / warm clothing and waterproof top, buoyancy aid, spray deck, helmet). Note: wetsuit shorts are not appropriate for a full day trip, please bring wind/waterproof trouser to wear over them. You'll also need a pack lunch and hot drink (in a flask), plus snacks to take with you on the trip. Plus a change of clothing including, warm clothes for after paddling, and a towel.

Organiser: Pete Bell peterbell2008@yahoo.co.uk

We will also need a consent form/parents permission for any under 18's that want to come on a trip. Download a trip consent form.

The day of the Rothay or the River Tees 24 Nov 2013

The week before the trip the rain stopped. Nice blue skies, lovely for walking in't dales but I wanted some water. The days went by with no or very little rain. Saturday came along and there was no chance of paddling this picturesque river in the Lake District. So we chose the Tees.

We called in at Barnard Castle to scout Abbey rapids before heading off to Cotherstone where we were soon changed and ready. A quick brief on hand signals and dealing with rocks and then off. The river was certainly low but paddleable so we headed straight down on to the first shallow rapid for a good gentle start.



At the second rapid I looked for a high small break out but it was guarded by small rocks so I took a break at the bottom in a small eddy. With the others behind I hoped they would follow and I moved across to the large area on river right. Pete followed my route, Mike paddled straight to me not following the flow and got stuck, Liane followed to try and help Mike getting stuck herself and then rescued by Mike himself.

Back on the water following lunch I saw a tree followed by a bigger drop and thought Ooops. Placing the group in an eddy I peered over the edge. It was a tricky drop and grade 3 at a higher level but not today. A straight line on the right took you into a trench with a stopper. Pete and Mike came after me and dropped nicely through. Liane came over on the far right and a did great break out but reversed into the drop, headed down backwards and capsized.



As the bridge & Barnard Castle came nearer we saw that there was a sign to say no access as the weir was under construction. The water was surging under the two walls hitting the bottom as a mess of a standing wave and then on to rock below. We decided to call it a day, got out and walked over the bridge to a lay by and finished the day there as light was fading and the clouds were thickening.

A great day's paddling.
Paul Scarborough

Things to remember next time:

Mike: Don't look at the rock or you'll end up sat on it

Pete: Point kayak away from the trees

Liane: If heading backwards down a drop pretend it was intentional

Paul: Be quicker if you want a photo of Liane capsizing.

Volunteering news and views



Cleaning up October

Thanks to the small but hardworking bunch of volunteers who came along to the 19th October to help tidy up the river and club house as part of our latest clean up day. We picked litter from the river; fixed the bridge; cleaned the kitchen; and chopped back some of the overgrowth on the landing stage. Well done and thanks to all involved. Watch out for future club work days in the new year.

Coach and Volunteer Inductions / Orientations

In 2014 we will be running coach and volunteer inductions to make sure that all our excellent volunteers are up to speed with all the club policies and procedures that help to make the club run smoothly. The timing of these is so that everyone is up to date ahead of the summer coaching sessions. The dates are:

- **Sat 22nd March 2014 (9:30am – 12noon)**
- **Tues 1st April 2014 (7:00pm – 9:30pm)**

We want all club coaches to attend one of these sessions, so please could you put one of the dates in your diary.

As well as coaches the first part of the session will be useful for trip organisers, members of the committee and other regular volunteers who play an active part in the running of the club. This will help you to keep up to date with club policies and procedures, meet members of the committee and much more.

Clubhouse and facilities revamp.

Last year as part of the consultation over the development plan you told the committee that you wanted to keep looking for ways to improve the facilities we have as a club, in particular you told us that we needed to focus on the changing rooms. So we've taken on this challenge are looking at a few different options

1. The bridge we use to access the river is getting a bit old and slippery so in the new year we will be submitting a funding bid for monies to repair, reprint and even replace some of the planks and side railings. If you want to be part of the repair team please contact Pete Face.

2. We decided to investigate putting in a much larger funding bid to the Sport England, for up to as much as £50,000 to revamp the club house. But we need to do some serious planning before we do this. This will help us to work out what we want to do and to how much it will cost. We are setting up a small working group to look at this and would welcome members to join the group. We particularly need any one with architectural experience, building design or surveying experience and CAD skills. If you are interested in joining this group contact Victoria Bradford - Keegan to find out more.

To support both of these projects we will also need to do a substantial amount of fundraising, so if you think you'd like to get involved with this, by planning activities and events or organising fundraising campaigns get in touch with Victoria. In addition we will be recruiting a new post to the committee at the next AGM to look after this area generally so if you are interested In standing for this position talk to any member of the committee.

We also have a few other posts up for election as described on page 4.

Indoor Kayak Challenge and Social

Saturday 11th January 2014 - 7pm til late

Come and join us for our first ever indoor kayak challenge night for an evening of warm dry paddling fun!!

Where: Sowerby Bridge Cricket Club, Walton St, Sowerby Bridge (see the events section for a map).

We'll have:

- Two ergo machines - the photo below shows an Ergo - set up for head to head racing – with a big screen to see their progress!



- A ‘Beat the Stig’ type leader board for the evening and several prize categories!

- If there's space and time a K4 challenge (yes still indoors!!)

As there's no chance of falling in, this is suitable for non-paddling family and friends who can have a go on the ergo's.

The bar at the cricket club will be open, although organisers reserve the right to breathalyse paddlers before racing!

For any more details speak to Les or Sarah 01484 854099 or lesford@ntlworld.com. And if anyone can lend us a Space Hopper and a Swiss Ball for the evening please let us know!

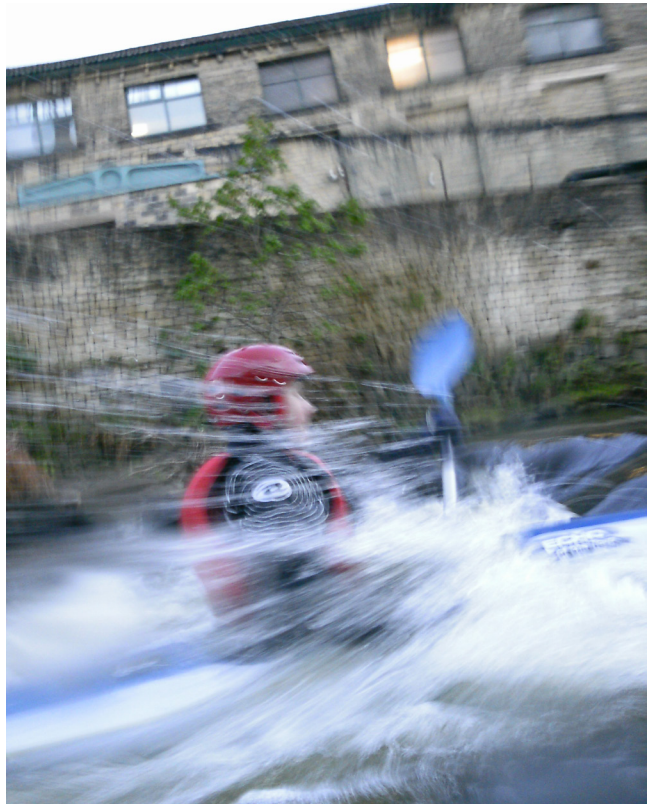
Club Saturday – Saturday 18th Jan

Come along for an informal session at the club.

Meet at the club at 10am for a up to a couple of hours of paddling.

This sessions is for anyone who has completed a club beginners sessions (or more) and offers the chance to get out on the water in the winter. Although not a formal coaching session, club coaches will be there to support paddlers who need them. Depending on interest and water levels we'll either play at the club or do a short round trip down the river and back up the canals from the club.

Please contact Les Ford if you are planning to come along (lesford@ntlworld.com 01484 854099).



CALDER CANOE TRAIL - 1st DEC 2013

A bright wintry Sunday morning saw us launching two tandem Canadians, two solo Canadians and a couple of kayaks into the Aire & Calder navigation at Calder Grove near Wakefield. Heading west, we were hauling the boats out again after only 75 metres in order to get around the first lock. Fortunately, after this, the canal offers a long uninterrupted run for over 3 miles, past Horbury Bridge to a double lock near Healey.



The scenery is picturesque on this part of the waterway – probably even more than the nearby river. It was really nice to see Kingfishers darting around the banks as we paddled through the still water. At Healey, we hauled our boats out of canal and ate lunch before sharing the portage duties between us necessary to cover the couple of hundred metres which would allow us access to the adjacent river. We put in beneath one of the concrete railway bridges serving the Horbury marshalling yards and where there was a small wave with a grade 2 rapid to provide a playspot for a half-an-hour of messing round.

Eventually, we turned downstream to paddle back towards the way we had come. The river meanders and is largely flat for long stretches. However, a very small drop and a rapid at Horbury Bridge gave us a little more fun as we dodged the rocks amongst it. A couple more gentle rapids and an hour or so of paddling brought us to the sloping weir At Horbury Junction. This was easily shot by everyone, the only hazard being the low, bare branches our boats seemed to career through in the moving water at the bottom.



A short distance later, a high lock provided access back on to the canal, allowing us to turn west once again. The high banks tested everyone's endurance at this end of the day as we hauled the boats up the banks to the towpath high above. Portaging around lock as barges came the other direction, we put in again into the still, leaf strewn water of the canal. A couple of hundred metres paddling returned us to the exact same spot we had put in approximately 5 hours before. (Ok – I thought it would be a lot less... I'll know better next time!)

Lots of fun – hard work – ached all over the next day.

Chris Halligan

To view the short film of the trip click on the link [HERE](#)

The Lukeys Welsh Marshes Trip

12th to 14th July 2013

Alex and I decided we wanted to go on this trip at the start of the season. It was going to be our first overnight kayaking/canoeing trip. We decided to borrow a canoe from Halifax Canoe Club as Alex feels happier in a canoe.

This trip was going to be a twenty mile trip over two days, canoeing first down the River Vyrnwy on the Saturday and then down the River Severn on the Sunday.

As we are both members of the Club we decided it would be a great opportunity to give something back to the club in the form of Sponsorship.

We set about raising sponsors, begging and borrowing kit and 'training'. (Thanks to Paul for fast track canoe training).

The day eventually arrived and for once the weather was on our side. The journey to Wales was hairy; hoping the massive canoe on the car roof would stay there. We arrived late on the Friday night at Melverly, pitched camp and opened a cold beer.

Saturday morning came and we put in to the River Vyrnwy at 10.30 am. It took only 15 minutes for us to capsize!!! I waved goodbye to my beloved cap as I watched it float off down river thinking I'd never see it again. Lo and behold 10 minutes later it was found and returned.

Thanks to the wonderful weather we dried off quickly and my cap was needed to pour water over our heads as the trip progressed.

Not much to see on the way down stream, banks were steep with no shade from the blistering sun. Got a bit lost, when we went up an ox-bow lake, but sent Chris ahead to find out which way was right. One unusual sighting was a black and white cow taking a paddle amongst a bed of white flowers and a drink in our path. When we stopped for lunch, we were joined by two horses. In the background we kept hearing gunshot going off. Most of us thought it must be clay pigeon shooting, but only to be told it was to scare off the birds, I thought it was more likely to scare off kayakers!

We carried on paddling downstream until about 4pm when we reached our camp site. At 5pm we suddenly got a quick down pour of rain, which was much appreciated, it only lasted 10mins but cooled us down nicely. (Except Alex left my camping chair outside while I was in the shower!!!!)

For the majority, spirits were high that evening with beer and BBQ on offer, with everyone looking forward to the Sunday, despite back ache, leg ache and slight sun burn.

Sunday arrived and once again the weather was glorious. After a fried breakfast we set off again about 10.30am.

The River Severn was more enjoyable as it was wider and more scenic. Alex started getting bored, so Andrew Livingstone swapped over for a while (mid river), with Alex having a go in his kayak. Secretly (or not because of the jeering and shouting) most people were hoping for someone to get wet! But alas we easily managed it.



When we stopped for lunch this time it was in a farmer's field, in the distance we could see a herd of cows (40+), within 10 minutes the herd of cows had come over to see what we were doing, getting closer and braver, so time to head back down river.

The last leg of the tour was very tranquil and very good views, with not being able to see landmarks when in the river we asked a couple walking their dog "How far to Montford Bridge?" with the reply "3 Miles". It seemed to flash by and before we knew it we had arrived at our destination.

We had a memorable time, raised £230 for the club and had a brilliant time, so much so we have recently done the River Esk trip (10 Miles) into Whitby Harbour (see video footage on youtube – River Esk Paddle 2013) and looking forward to a River Calder Trip soon...

Andy and Alex Luke

BURRS TRIP 6th OCT 2013

On a lovely Sunday morning in October a small group of us met at the car park early morning, last to arrive was the closest person to Burrs (I won't mention names!)

We put in on the small waterway but had to go in, in single file due to the vast amount of pond weed in our way. Some people got over zealous with their paddle strokes and ended up wearing it and becoming pond life. (or wanted to see if it had youthful properties).



After a short paddle we got out and put into the River Irwell most of us taking the 'chicken run' but a few mad fools decided to seal launch in, making sure Andrew went first as depth tester!

Flouting with tradition we decided to venture up river, much to the disappointment of the waiting spectators. After manoeuvring round a few bends and rocks we climbed out and walked a little way up stream to where we could put back in.

On our second encounter with a large expanse of rocks we decided to retrace our steps back to the weir. Due to a lack of flowing water we had to push ourselves over the weir. As a biker the best way to describe entry was like 'popping a wheelie'.



At the bottom we split into two groups, with one group heading off downstream, and my group playing in the weir until it was time to move on.

Our journey downstream was pretty uneventful, a few eddies and some good playful drops, there was just enough water to have some fun. We were getting plenty of practice using our support strokes and guidance from our fellow experienced paddlers.

There was a nice wave at the end of the course, plenty of surfing to be done on it.

So Vic decided to show us how it was done, only problem was that Andrew was taking pictures on the bridge so on her exit the only capsized was done, many thanks Vic.

Andy Luke

GALLERY



Above: Lukey, Chris, Mike and Julie get set for the Burrs trip in October

Middle: Andrew batters through the bottom weir wave at the end of the Lake Districts' River Eden in November



Below: Simon Adams gets feedback from Scott Bradley during Decembers Level 1 coaching course whilst Ben looks pensively into the future !



GALLERY



Above: Mark and Dig taking on more water than is paddleable during November's Tyne Tour event in the North East watched by Vics & Andrew.

Below: A fantastic view of the paddlers on the Burrs trip breaking in and out of the flow.



GALLERY



Above: Mark and Oz get in each others way on Novembers River Eden trip.

Below Left: Pete & Mike get last minute instructions from Paul on the Tees trip in November.

Below Left: Vics get ready for off with Ian & Lois behind on the Eden

