

Deva Canoe Club

AGM 4th June 2009

Club Report for 2008/9

The Club is 10 years old this year so we must be doing some things right. We have a club of just over 100 members and this has remained quite constant over the last few years with some members hanging up their wet suits and new ones coming to try the fun of swimming down the weir.

Our members have a wide range of interests from kayaking on rivers to sea kayaking and open canoeing, surfing and expeditions. The age range is from 18 to a lot older but the enthusiasm of the members for this varied sport never ceases to amaze us. Some just like to wander peacefully down a lazy river whilst others are crashing down the best the rapids of Scotland and the Alps can throw at them! Others prefer the salty briny and yet others the wide open lakes.

This last year we have had a full programme for members of training days, trips and activities. The Thursday night sessions have again been very popular. We ran 23 sessions with a total of 530 people turning up. The numbers each night varied from 10 up to 43, averaging out at 23. This meant that we were able to cover our costs for the Riverside Centre, including Lyn's fantastic supply of biscuits and cakes. Some people used it as their main meal for the day! We have had evenings of fun on the weir, learning new techniques and open canoe 2 star training and assessment, and 3 star assessments. Also Star testing for kayaks and a fun evening with Brookbank bringing a range of kayaks and canoes for the members to try! These sessions would not run without someone to collect the keys, organise the evening and provide the help and encouragement to the new paddlers. Thanks must go to all those who helped regularly from the instructors on the water like Ray, Simon, Peter S, Peter C, Alan, and all the others, as well as to Lyn for the refreshments. Thanks especially to Peter Cook, the Chairman, as he sets the whole thing up every year by liaising with the School and organising all the gear to be down at the centre. This he has stored at his house all winter! Thanks Peter!

For the 2009 season we have had many more helpers opening the building and organising the Thursday sessions with the help of Peter Steel. This is working well so far, so thanks to all those volunteering.

Those just starting paddling are able to progress their skills with the help of Simon, Peter S, and Ray who all help to run the white water trips at weekends for Club members. These trips go to Llangollen, the Washburn, the Tryweryn and the Ribble depending on water levels. The dam release rivers are often the only reliable water in a dry summer. This means those who have learned at the Arena in the winter can come to the Club Thursday sessions, progress their skills and then with practice on other rivers be ready to join the Club weekend trips in the autumn, and go on trips of their own in small groups as well! Simon ran his annual White water Safety day at Llangollen, which always proves useful and very enjoyable, particularly as the swims don't count as an OBE! There are many "ad hoc" trips with groups of friends paddling at weekends as people meet those with like skills at the Club. There was

even a group of paddlers on the weir on Boxing Day paddling off the excess of the day before.

The sea kayakers have also had a varied number of trips and training days. The number was limited by Peter's grandad duty and Alan not being well, but he is now fighting fit and back to running trips for us. They have done trips to Hilbre island, the Conwy river, the Orme and many trips round Anglesey. This month they have provided bodies and kayaks for a rescue training day with the Flint Inshore Lifeboat in the Dee Estuary so they can be ready if any sea kayakers need a rescue. A good learning day for all, with many lessons and tips picked up on both sides.

We have also had Club weekend trips to South Wales and a group going to the Alps in the summer. Thanks must go to Simon and Peter S who organise these trips and also the superb catering. It is a great chance for everyone to enjoy a trip away and have a good time.

As well as the change to the running of the centre, we have also changed the newsletter and the website. Hopefully this is much easier for members to use and it is thanks to the efforts of Richard Hudson and Charlotte Walton. Thanks very much for all your hard work. We love the new look newsletter.

The Tuesday morning group still go to Llangollen at 10.0am if anyone has time to join them, and numbers are growing for this group as well. Peter C, Alan, Chris and Lyn help to run this each week and we have had as many as 14 there.

The Club relies on its many volunteers, who willingly give their time and skills, to help to make the Club a welcoming and friendly experience for those coming to learn to paddle. Thank you to them all for all the hours spent splashing about in water and having a great time!

We look forward to our 11th season and lots of fun paddling!

Membership continues its normal fluctuations. We lost 29 members who did not rejoin, but gained 19 new members. This meant the overall membership in 2008/08 was 102.

There were 81 male, 21 Female members of which 14 were family members.

The finances of the club continue to be healthy, with the total income from all sources roughly balancing our total expenditure.

The Wales weekend trip made a very slight loss.

We paid out £920 to hire the Riverside Centre for the season and this, together with the refreshments, was covered by the weekly payments by the paddlers.

We sold off three old kayaks but have replaced them with new & second hand up-to-date kayaks.

The Membership fees for 2009 – 10 should remain at the current level.