



OCA Newsletter



OPEN CANOE ASSOCIATION
2022 | SEPTEMBER

From the Chair

Welcome to the September edition of the OCA newsletter. I hope you all survived this summer's glorious weather, hopefully in a boat, on a nice stretch of water, keeping cool!

I would like to start by welcoming our members old and new, many of whom have joined us in the last few months. Our membership now stands at around 500. Considering the difficulties of the past few years, it is a testament to our community and to the efforts of so many volunteers that our numbers continue to grow. If you need any help with membership, then please contact membership@opencanoe.info.

We learned recently of the sad passing of Val Ottley. I was not fortunate enough to have ever met her or Bob, but I have heard a great deal about them and for the contributions they made to our community, we will be forever grateful. Our thoughts are with her family at this time.

As a national organisation we are always looking to build opportunities for our members. We rely entirely on the generosity of volunteers to provide a variety of trips and events across the country. If you would like to volunteer to run a day trip or have an idea for a residential weekend in your area, then see Sarah's article below and make contact.

We are always looking for keen volunteers to join our dedicated committee, we are particularly interested in those people willing to join our events team, or to become a member of our safety team or to join the Canoeifest 2023 team of volunteers. If you're interested, then please contact chair@opencanoe.info

Over the next few months, we are looking to develop our support for training our members. To that end we are applying for a bursary from British Canoeing. If successful will be looking to use this and a small surplus from our 2022 events to train a number of canoe leaders and coaches across the country. We will be drawing up an application criteria for those



who are interested in gaining leading or coaching qualifications and providing details of how in return you could give something back to the Association.

So if you are looking to gain leading or coaching qualifications, or if you would like to update your FSRT (changing in January) or WWSR then get in touch via chair@opencanoe.info for more information and to register your interest.

At Canoeifest I met with some of you who are interested in getting involved, I still have your details, but e-mail again just in case!

We take welfare very seriously and we now have a new welfare team. Sid Warburton and Tracey Richards are on hand should you need to talk to them. They can be contacted on welfare@opencanoe.info

Canoeifest 2022 was a tremendous success. A massive thank you to all involved. We were grateful to Greg Spencer and Paul Knight for bringing some of their merchandise for our members to try. Featured this month is Greg's reflections of the event.

Paulette

Playtime in Here-be-Dragons Territory

The last time we were central to organising an OCA Canoeefest, we were all heading to the mountains: to Dolben Hall in North Wales. Our trips were everywhere from the forest stream which ran through the campsite to the Conwy Estuary and Menai Straits in solo and "trad" boats and from the classic stretch of the Dee in Llangollen to the Upper and Lower Tryweryn (with solo, "trad" and WW canoes).

This year's event offered a stunning contrast, and for those of us unfamiliar with pretty much anywhere south of the M4... even the jaunt down to "somewhere between Dover and Plymouth" was a venture into Here-Be-Dragons territory - but any argument that all good British canoeing was to be found north of the Tees-Exe line got well and truly smashed with a glorious venue on the Jurassic Coast.





Elsewhere, Andy Maxted mentioned seeing more canoes than he'd seen since before Covid-19, plus smiles, glorious sunsets, great company, and more - a good start for any event! In addition, we got to meet up with a LOT of familiar faces, and got to know a new generation of OCA members. That was through workshops, trips, play and partying from a stunning campground set in a landscape which felt refreshingly wild and remote.

We got to enjoy good company, scenery and wildlife everywhere from Brownsea Island to Old Harry Rocks (Studland). We also got to enjoy everything from Sid's Dutch-oven cooked chilli to the wildlife-rich foreshore - and to spend an entire afternoon just messing about in boats on and from the beach. We even came away having inducted a newbie into canoeing!

Thanks to Paulette Hills, Marion Quemby and the team for making it all happen, and to Alan Goodman for making our weekend by getting caught on camera enjoying a boat I'd suggested would put a smile on his face 😊

Greg Spencer

Events round up

Upcoming events

- [OCA Oxford Weekend](#) – 16 - 18 September
- Open water skills – North Wales [17](#) - [18](#) September
- [Welsh Canoe Symposium](#) – 28 - 30 October
- [Barton Turf Bonfire weekend](#) – 4 - 6 November

On the radar

We've been scouting new potential venues for gatherings on the Wye, Hertfordshire, The Peaks, Scotland and Norfolk and lots more so no matter where you are there is something you can get to.

Look out too for various day trips, particularly as we get closer to Christmas. Santa may even want to join in.

We need you

We can't offer more weekends, trips and events without volunteers to plan, organise, coach and lead.

Would you like to help plan, organise and run an event or trip? We have materials and people ready to help. Please get in touch and share your ideas. I'd love to help make them happen.

Sarah - events@opencanoe.info



Let's start a conversation!

Have a question, an idea for a trip, or want to share a great day?

Pop over to our [OCA Members lounge](#) on facebook and make a post

Want to submit an article?

Contact our newsletter crew with your idea:
newsletter@opencanoe.info

Got a great photo we should feature?

Drop it into our photo pool:
<https://photos.app.goo.gl/b2pZdH1wG3ML2d167>

www.opencanoe.info

Key OCA Contacts

Events

events@opencanoe.info

Membership

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Welfare

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Safety

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