



Save Our Heritage Huts Appeal

Help us preserve and restore two iconic coracle huts

From the Mountains to the Sea

A major multi-year currach building project gets underway

Spey river by Spey coracle

Peter Faulkner recounts his journey down Britain's fastest river



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Front cover photograph: Save Our Heritage Huts Appeal - the Rogers' hut at Ironbridge

Back cover: Poem by Raymond Rees, inspired by "*Llangunnor Mill*" (Anon)

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The Coracle Society Officers 2012/13

President	Sir Peter Badge
Vice Presidents	Rod Bowen John Davies B. Irlwyn John Terry Kenny Raymond Rees MBE Bernard Thomas
Honorary Chairman	Dave Purvis
Honorary Vice Chairmen	Malcolm Rees Andrew Betteridge
Honorary Secretary/Archivist	Dylan Jones, St Fagans: National History Museum
Honorary Treasurer	Euan Raffel
Membership Secretary	Brian Pearce
Committee Members	Martin Fowler Terry Kenny Julie Rees Brian Pearce Bruce Watson
Teifi netsman's representative	Mark Dellar
Tywi netsman's representative	Malcolm Rees

President's Thoughts

May I start by expressing my gratitude to Terry and his excellent committee and thanking those who have retired for all that they have done for the Society and welcoming our new members.

We are delighted that Terry Kenny has made such a good recovery from his recent illness. The excellence of his leadership of the committee cannot be overstated.

We welcome Dave Purvis as our new Chairman. He has made an auspicious start and we are singularly fortunate to have such a worthy successor to Terry.

No one has made a better contribution to the Society than Euan who, in addition to running our web site so well, has taken on the Journal and the role of Honorary Treasurer and we thank him for doing so.

There have been two memorable events during the year. Firstly, the excellent AGM at our spiritual home - St Fagans - where, amongst other things, we established excellent relations with the Lave net fishermen of the Severn Estuary. With them, the traditional coracle men of Wales, Ironbridge and Shrewsbury have in common the length of their histories and the danger of their occupations, unless proper precautions are taken. In addition they have suffered the frustrations experienced by the traditional coracle men when dealing with some of the authorities.

The second event, quite different in nature, is the disease decimating our beloved ash trees. As everyone knows, the majority of coracles in Great Britain are made of ash. We can turn to willow as the Teifi coracle makers do, or oak as did those who made Bewdley coracles in the past. It will be very interesting to learn what other woods will be used in coracle construction.

Sir Peter Badge



*Season's Greetings to everyone
from
The Coracle Society Committee*

Chairman's Chat

I would like to start by thanking my predecessor, Terry Kenny, for his diligence and good work over the last four years on behalf of the members during his time as Chairman. Terry took over at a very difficult time for the Society and by his experience and good sense managed to get us on course. Since then we have gone from strength to strength under his leadership - a hard act to follow!

The last year has seen a continued upsurge in interest in all things 'coracle', particularly in the ever-growing number of woodland festivals and ecological fairs. I am attending more and more of these in addition to the traditional water-related activities; the demand for coraclemakers/demonstrators is increasing. We continue to receive enquiries for next year. If you would like to participate in any of these events, please let the Secretary know your contact details and area of operation. This all bodes well for the Society if we can be promoted at every opportunity; new memberships as a result of coraclemaking courses and demonstrations help swell our numbers.

As well as a welcome to new members, I'd particularly like to welcome to the committee Julie and Malcolm Rees (Carmarthen Netsman and Coracle Association) and Mark Dellar (Cilgerran netsmen representative). Rod Bowen of Cilgerran has kindly accepted Peter Badge's invitation of becoming a Vice President. I am confident these appointments will further strengthen our ties with the traditional netsmen; we will endeavour to support them in their constant struggle to retain their netting rights.

The AGM at St Fagans this year was very successful and my thanks to Dylan and his colleagues for hosting us. Those of us who visited the archives enjoyed the experience. The display by the Wye Lave Fishermen and the fly tying and casting demonstrations, the opportunity to meet Raymond Rees and his family once again, Barney O'Kane of the Down to Earth Project in Swansea and the prehistoric hide tanning at the stone age village before our regatta all made for a memorable day.

The weather has not been at all kind this year but as far as I am aware, no coracle related shows were cancelled. In June I attended the Scottish Traditional Boat Festival at Portsoy and in August the Cilgerran and Ironbridge regattas. It is very pleasing to see all these events still drawing strong crowds and increasing numbers of participants, despite the elements! In all cases, some activities were cancelled due to the weather, but at least the rain held off long enough to permit some enjoyment of the day. The Society and the National Coracle Centre have donated to the organisers of the Cilgerran and Ironbridge regattas a bronze coracle netsman trophy each, to be presented to the 'most promising newcomer'. These awards will be competed for annually and I hope they will serve as a permanent reminder of both our organisations at - and our support for - these events.

In July, I attended a currach building course run by John Whitehead and Rory

McPhee near Hay-on-Wye. This was the start of a much larger project - in the spring, a series of builds are planned which will cumulate in a journey down the Wye, starting at Llangors and ending on the Cornish coast. More information about the project is detailed later in the Journal.

Subject to funding, I will be working with Bede's World museum in Jarrow next year on a project to restore a four man currach, kindly donated to them by Sir Peter Badge. The Bede Currach Project will also involve the construction of up to six new currachs with community groups, to be used in festivals along the north east coast, as well as 'pilgrimage' visits to places such as Lindisfarne, Durham Cathedral and St Abbs Priory. All of this is part of an ongoing campaign to achieve World Heritage Status for Monkwearmouth and Jarrow. With all this going on, it seems to point towards 2013 as being the year of the currach - please let us know of any more currach events coming off next year.

Finally, as you are aware we are working with Jude Walker of the Small Woods Association (formerly Green Wood Trust) with regard to obtaining Heritage Lottery Funding to be used preserving two important coracle huts - those of the late John Thomas and Eustace Rogers. An update on our fundraising progress is detailed later in the Journal but I'd like to thank those who have donated so far. We are still a long way off our £5000 target to obtain match funding from HLF so please ask your friends and family for a donation – however small – to this most worthy cause.

I hope that you will find this edition of the Journal to be interesting and informative - remember we are always pleased to receive your stories and photographs.

Best wishes and happy paddling for 2013,

Dave Purvis



An unusual construction method - Ironbridge-style coracle made from PVC piping and estate agent sale boards! Spotted at the Ironbridge regatta.

Photo: Mike Twitchen

Save Our Heritage Huts Appeal

We recently wrote to members with details of our new appeal, raising funds to help support the preservation and restoration of two iconic huts - those belonging to John Thomas of Cenarth and the Rogers family of Ironbridge. The aim of the appeal is to raise £5000 in match funding by April 2013, for a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund. The lottery bid for funding will be used to preserve, repair and restore these huts to their original state and fit them out with displays of the coracle makers at work at their benches. Graphic panels will be installed, educating visitors in the art of coracle making, as well as the heritage and legacy these coracle makers have bestowed on the country.



Jude Walker, Executive Director at the Small Woods Association at Ironbridge's Green Wood Centre is leading the project and has had some promising conversations



with the conservation officer at Telford and Wrekin Council and Heritage Lottery Fund with particular regard to the Rogers' hut whose fate is currently in a state of uncertainty. The Thomas hut is currently in storage at the National Coracle Centre in Cenarth.

Since we launched our appeal, we have received a number of responses from members for which we are very thankful and grateful for. Donations

so far stand at **£337** which is excellent for the short time frame of the appeal so far. However, we have a long way to go to reach our £5000 target. If you are able to help contribute to this appeal, your donations will be much appreciated. Some suggestions on how you could raise funds include donating the proceeds from a coracle sale or asking for a donation from your local water sports club.

Donations should be sent to Euan Raffel (contact details inside the front cover), with cheques made payable to The Coracle Society.



Coracle Society members raised £132.00 for the Save our Heritage Huts Appeal from donations at Wild about Wood, Castle Howard Arboretum

Raymond Blanc on the River Towy

One of the Country's most respected chefs, Raymond Blanc, visited Carmarthen, West Wales in May to film a programme on Trout for the BBC series 'The Great British Food Revival' which will be on our screens this autumn.

As a keen angler himself, he was interested in learning their local tradition of coracle fishing. The Michelin Award winning chef met some of the Towy coracle men and Seine nets men from Ferryside and was fascinated to learn about the nets and how they are used to fish the river.



The 63 year old chef was also curious to find out how the coracle is manoeuvred and took to the river for a lesson from Malcolm Rees. Although the production team appeared to be a little nervous at the thought of their presenter on the river in a coracle, he remained dry as he returned to the shore!

On his second day, he visited Scott Davis who is the chef behind the gourmet food company 'Cnwd' based in Cross Hands. There, Raymond Blanc sampled the Smoked West Wales Coracle Caught Sewin'.

Julie Rees

The “Hampshire Boyne” at the Bath and West Show

I work within the forestry and arboriculture team at Sparsholt College and as a consequence have contacts within the coppice industry; a useful link when it came to choosing what to demonstrate at the annual Bath & West Show near Shepton Mallet. I've been demonstrating at this show for about six or seven years - normally demonstrating the building of hazel wattle hurdles - but this year I wanted to do something a little different! It's also worth noting that many years ago I was heavily into dinghy and yacht racing, but when that became too expensive, I turned to kayaks, then to open canoes... and then to coracles.

With access to good quality hazel rods from an in-cycle coppice, the making of a Boyne-style coracle was an easy choice. Since that hazel came from a local Hampshire estate that had around 170 acres of managed coppice woodland, I decided that it would become a “Hampshire Boyne” style coracle that incorporated some ideas from making the hurdles. There was never any intention of creating an exact replica, but just to try out a couple of ideas that I'd had - the main one being with regard to the seat, as I didn't have a 12” wide, 1” thick plank of wood to hand.

From previous years I knew that pushing the sticks into the ground at the showground was going to prove problematic as there is a cap about 4”-5” under the grass which makes putting anything into the ground difficult. As I'm sure you are aware, one of the methods of building the Boyne style coracle is to push those rods that make up the frame into the soil.



Unfortunately I didn't have time to construct a mould, so I took a large, heavy metal pole with me to make 28 holes to accept the rods. This also proved to be more awkward than anticipated as I couldn't guarantee that all the holes would line up, so another option was sought after. The solution came to break up a rod into 28 smaller pieces and drive them into the ground with the wooden mallet, then remove each one and replace it with the frame rod.

Some of the hazel had become a little too dry and there were the inevitable breakages which got replaced, but I started the initial weave using twilley rods (a pair of rods woven together), then built up to the point where the seat was to go; this was the point at which I wanted to really experiment as I wondered if one could build the seat as an integral part of the coracle. The notion was to use a rod woven in from one end, double wound around a frame rod, across to the other side then back to meet

the starting point, this is done twice (one for each end) to provide the basis for a seat support.

As luck would have it, a large multi-stemmed willow tree was found to have a huge split in it and was deemed dangerous to the public - and me! The stem that had split out was overhanging the walkway right next to where I was building the coracle. This was fortuitous as it was me that had to sort it out and that meant climbing up and cutting the aforementioned stem. That gave me (and the other stall-holders) access to willow that was perfectly 'ripe' to have the bark stripped off easily and used for cordage. With a section of Willow split, and draw-knifed on the shave-horse down to size, it gave me plenty of slats to use for the seat, and the bark was cut into strips to tie the slats on to the Hazel seat supports that I'd wound in.

Although I never got to complete the coracle at the show, mainly due to giving demonstrations in the Woodlands and Wildlife arena and talking to the public, the coracle got plenty of attention - although some people were confused at what it was... "Is it a chicken house?" asked one person; "is it a log basket?" was another quip! The other stall-holders were equally intrigued and as we left the show there was an agreement made between myself, a trug-maker and a rustic furniture-maker that we'd meet up next year and race the coracles that we'd build for the next show!

D Vickers

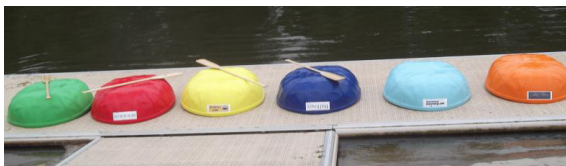
2012 Macmillan World Coracle Championships

After a year off, the Macmillan World Coracle Championships took place on Friday 15th June at the Pengwern boathouse in Shrewsbury. Despite the dismal weather and the deluges of the preceding week, the river was only slightly faster than previous years. Just as well, as most of the competitors are not expert coraclers. Needless to say there was a satisfying number of capsizes. The wise were wearing wetsuits under their fancy dress.

A feature this year was that the coracles, sponsored by local businesses, were all built by Arrowcraft. Purists look away now, as the boats were in bright team colours and looked really terrific. Being fibreglass, they didn't puncture, while the foam inserts under the seat kept them afloat. In fact, if I didn't already have a few coracles in the garage, I might be tempted to buy one.



The event features teams of four in relay across the river and back. This year's race was won by Morris and Co. But the real winners were Macmillan Cancer Care. This year is expected to raise about £15,000. Since the challenge began in 2007 it has raised over £100,000. Not bad for mucking about in boats, is it?



Terry Kenny

From the Mountains to the Sea



“From the Mountains to the Sea” is an extraordinary voyage of discovery in more ways than one. Taking place over a 4-year period from 2012 to 2015, the project has begun with research and a series of boat building workshops and seminars on the past, present and possible futures of the Celtic nations. After months of preparation, our first 4-day event of boatbuilding and seminars took place between 14th-17th July on the banks of the Wye at Glasbury. The workshops with Cornish currach

builder Rory McPhee produced a beautifully balanced 12ft currach, which was launched and tested on the final day of the event. The Coracle Society's Dave Purvis was amongst the many participants who helped build the boat and contribute to the daily planning sessions for the project.

The project aims to undertake 3 main voyages:

- The first voyage summer 2013 will explore the Celtic roots and heritage by following the journey of St Endellian, daughter of Brychan of Brycheiniog. St Endellians' voyage began from Llangors lake, followed the Usk to the Severn Estuary and then along the coast and across to north Cornwall and Port Isaac, where a church bears her name. We will follow this route next year, crossing from the Gower peninsula to Lundy Island and the Cornish coast in two 24ft currachs.



- The second voyage will follow the course of the river Wye from source to the sea then along the coast to Cardiff Bay, where we will deliver a cargo of messages and visions for a more sustainable future to the Welsh Assembly. Groups from villages, towns and cities along the route will build their own currachs and make the 200 mile journey from the source of the Wye to the sea. The journey, as defined by the river and coast, embraces the whole of south and mid Wales. We are hoping that at least 20 currachs will make the voyage. Building the currachs with communities will begin towards the end of 2013.
- The third voyage will be about exploring creative partnerships and sustainable trading connections between the Celtic nations. The voyage will begin from Iona on the west coast of Scotland, cross to Ireland, continue to Wales and Cornwall, then to Brittany, Galicia and Portugal. This will be in two 24ft currachs, with teams from each country taking part in the 1800 mile journey.



This combination of adventure, communication and celebration will contribute to a growing cargo of artworks and visions for a more sustainable future. These will become a touring exhibition, supported by a documentary and book. For more details, or if you would like to get involved, visit our Facebook page <http://bit.ly/mountaintosea> or contact John Whitehead - telephone 01874 713107 or email lightfootschool@hotmail.co.uk

John Whitehead

Spey River by Spey Coracle

The River Spey is the fastest flowing river in the British Isles. I was unaware of this when making my first acquaintance with this fast Scottish lady in May 2010. I was travelling to Calrossie to run a group Boyne course for Laird Henry Fosbrook. Night was closing in fast, Inverness was twenty odd miles away and I'd already driven the lion's share of five hundred miles; it was time to stop, eat and sleep. A signpost for Newtonmore seemed promising, especially as a campsite sign pointed in the same

direction.

The campsite, though basic, served as an ideal base for the night and after a hearty meal at a nearby trucker's café, I was soon devouring a deep sleep in the van. Waking early, I took a stroll to investigate the unusually designed road bridge, looming above some alders, that I'd obviously crossed the night before. Despite its dreary colour, the structure was huge and quite magnificent in proportion. Through its central arches flowed the peaty summer waters of an enticing river.

Exploring upstream I came across great shoulders of shingle and boulders that overshadowed me and where in places a torrent had sliced through, leaving almost a sheer cliff of debris. Returning to my van, I checked out the road atlas, discovering that I had just had my first encounter with the mighty Spey, a river that had sported hide coracles over a century ago. The seeds of another coracle voyage had just been sewn! Little did I realise that I would be making that voyage in just three months time in a brand new Spey coracle.

For me, it has always been a prerequisite to purchase the relative OS maps covering a proposed river trip. These came in the form of Explorer numbers 401, 402, 403, 419 and 424. Since my CCF days at Lucton School, I have been fascinated by maps and find it relatively easy to 'translate' the topographical information into a three dimensional picture. I knew that this voyage was going to be something of a challenge, for the contour lines showed many steep drops over the journey to Spey Bay.

Starting at the confluence and using my map measuring wheel, I marked off the river's course at five mile intervals until reaching the 95 mile post at the head of Loch Spey that stood under the shadow of Meall Clach a' Cheannaiche, standing at a height of 1500ft just two miles north.

It only seemed right and proper to do the voyage in an authentic Spey coracle. I had made one for Kilmartin House Trust in Argyll in the late 1990's so it was a fairly straightforward task, but I did enrol a friend and excellent basketmaker, Edmund Hawan, to take charge of the build. So, using my patent steamer system I was able to feed Edmund with a steady supply of hot and very flexible rods. By the end of the afternoon the whole willow basket was complete. With only six days left, I worked feverishly through the following day to construct and fit the internal supports, seat and lash in the gunwhale cappings of hazel. The prepared hide was lashed on that evening; it was now up to the sun and wind to dry the hide out.

After an uneventful drive we finally arrived in Newtonmore by late afternoon. With plenty of daylight left, we drove out beyond Laggan Bridge to the upper reaches of the river, hoping to find a suitable launching site. However the river was too rocky and shallow for any vessel other than Pooh sticks. Returning to the van we prepared for an early night, but only after a ritual 'blow out' at the trucker's café.

It was a very nervous coracleman that boarded his tiny craft below Laggan Bridge

on August 10th. I waved cheerio to Stephen just after 10am. Suddenly, after all the excitement and preparation, I was alone and very aware that I had not truly mastered my new craft. My paddling skills were intact of course and I was able to survive in fast currents, but the new coracle didn't have the streamlined contours of my Teme. Consequently, it responded more dramatically to my slightest movement and this unnerved me. Naturally this was a real concern for some eighty miles of river lay ahead. Thankfully, after a few hours I was more relaxed and responded automatically to the movements of current and craft.

The river banks were carpeted with wild flowers and were an absolute delight, truly a botanist's dream. I only met one person this first day and he, Euan McPherson, was angling – seemingly in the middle of nowhere. After exchanging brief pleasantries, I was again alone. Further into the day I caught up with a red deer moving downstream in the shallows below the right bank. I was within 25 yards and closing when she caught my scent and took off at speed, crossing in front and gaining the top of the left bank with a magnificent leap, disappearing into scrub oak.

Due to the ever changing topography my first day on the Spey was a veritable ballroom dance – “slow, slow, quick quick slow” as Victor would say. Just above Spey Bridge at Newtonmore, where the Calder enters the Spey, I pulled on to a great bank of shingle to investigate the ‘walls’ of rock debris seen briefly a few months earlier. Again, I tried to imagine the river in full spate charging along, like an express train, tearing out the river's bed, leaving new shoals and islands in its wake. It was now clearly apparent why the canny Scott had built such an awesome structure at the point.

As I was about to paddle the last quarter of a mile to the bridge and thus end my first day, the heavens opened and I sheltered under my rawhide umbrella for the next half hour. Suddenly the sun came back out and I was able to land under the bridge where Stephen was busy with his camera.

The next six days passed very quickly, but were packed with aquatic and terrestrial thrills, spills and encounters of a third kind, certainly enough material for a book. Otters and osprey were seen, huge salmon leapt and barbered gents flayed the water in the hopes of landing dinner.

On the 13th, Laird Henry Fosbrook joined me with his Boyne coracle built during the May course. Stephen waved us off at Boat of Garton, after Henry had enthralled us with an overture played out on his didgeridoo.

The river had now widened and slackened its pace, factors which together with a head wind made the going hard for Henry and I, but with the occasional increase in current and good craic to lift the spirits, we made the 12 miles to Boat of Cromdale where Stephen had the tea already mashing.

One of the many highlights for me came on the 14th, when for three miles I rode

a current of around six knots! By this time on the voyage the coracle was just an extension of my torso and I thrilled to the sense of speed and danger.

With some sadness, the 85 mile journey came to an end at Spey Bay. A small welcoming party had gathered, headed by my logistics wizard Stephen. Jim Skelton, a local author, and his wife had made a special journey to meet and present me with a signed copy of his book 'Spey Built' – a history of ship building in the area.

Bottle-nosed dolphins were breaching in the bay as our small party entered the café, anticipating a feast of steaming tea and mouth watering cakes. It seems fitting to close on a quirk of fate for in an outbuilding, I was shown the remains of a coracle framework that I immediately recognised as the handiwork of Eustace Rogers, whom I'd first met in Ironbridge in 1987 to learn how to make a coracle!

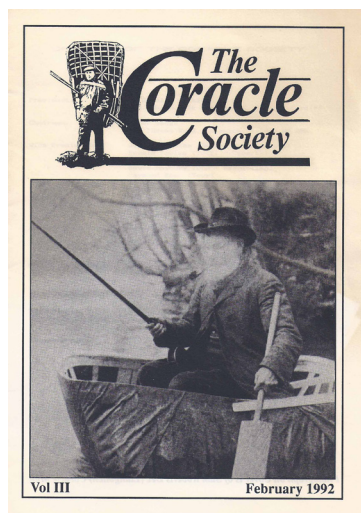
Peter Faulkner

Journal Archives

The Society has been producing the Journal in some form since its formation in 1990. With this being our 23rd edition, the Society has produced news, research, interviews, poetry, drawings and even a crossword, informing members on a variety of topics.

Those researching the craft, or simply interested in finding out a bit more about the incredibly varied history of them, will find the Archives an essential resource. Opened earlier this year, all members are entitled to access it to view, download and print editions of the Journal for personal use.

Further details are available on our website. Members without internet access can contact the Secretary to request further details and a hard copy to be sent to you.



Ash Dieback Disease

The recent news stories related to the ash dieback outbreak make for troubling reading for any nature lover, but much more so for the coracle maker. Ash is one of the 'staples' for coracle construction and this outbreak could, if it reaches the extents of the Dutch Elm disease outbreak - which by the 1990s had wiped out over 25

million elm trees - quite possibly put most coracle makers out of business.

The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority recently issued advice to its visitors, advising them to wash down their boots, vehicle tyres, pets - anything that might have come into contact with leaves or wood whilst visiting the area - and to avoid visiting similar areas within the following 24 hour period. This is some simple, sensible advice that the coracling community may wish to consider heeding when they visit any wooded area, to help prevent the spread of this destructive disease.

2012 Annual General Meeting and Regatta



This year's Annual General Meeting and Regatta were held at St Fagans: National History Museum near Cardiff by kind invitation of our Archivist, Dylan Jones. After the formalities of the meeting, members were invited on a tour of the archived coracle and net fishing assets at the museum. In the afternoon, we caught a lucky break with the weather as clear, sunny skies graced us with their presence for the regatta, which took place in front of St Fagan's Castle. Whilst there weren't

too many participants this year, the growing crowds enjoyed watching the various challenges on the water, which included whirling dervishes, sprint around the lake island and a new activity for this year - a sprint across the lake, stopping at the island to get out of the coracle, carry it across the island before getting back in it to continue the sprint.

The winner of the Geraint Jenkins trophy this year was Malcolm Rees - perhaps not such a surprise, being Raymond Rees' son and competing in his fibreglass craft!

Euan Raffel



Hackney Wick Coracle Regatta - September 2012

Not your normal venue for a coracle venue, but on a pleasant September Saturday, a sizable crowd gathered in Hackney Wick, East London, for an afternoon of activities on the water.

Photos: Daniel Weill



Annual Basketmakers' Summer Meeting

We were asked to attend the Annual Basketmakers' Summer Meeting on 23rd June at the National Botanic Garden of Wales, Carmarthenshire where they were displaying and demonstrating traditional Welsh craft basketry.

We displayed our traditional Towy coracle and several photos of how the coracle is made and it's history.

We were helped on the day by two young members of the Society, Miss Jaymee Rees & Miss Mia Rees - granddaughters of Mr Raymond Rees, who proudly wore their Society sweatshirts.



A representative from The Basketmakers' Association said, 'It is very encouraging to see that the craft is flourishing and there such enthusiasm in Wales'.

Julie Rees

Our Vice Presidents

I hope the following brief thumbnail sketches may be of interest to members, both new and existing. We presently have six Vice Presidents. They are:

ROD BOWEN, newly appointed to replace the Cenarth coracleman, the late Ronnie Davies. Although Rod now lives in the USA, he always returns to his old home in West Wales where he races with great skill during the Cilgerran annual races and makes Teifi coracles to a very high standard, as well as net fishing. Indeed Ronnie told me, in his view, Rod makes a better Cenarth coracle than he did. Praise indeed!

JOHN DAVIES, Severn (Shrewsbury) coraclemaker and user. His family have been coracle men for very many years. He is one of the most skillful coracle makers and users I have known.



Irlwyn John

IRLWYN JOHN, (Taf) former maker and user. Unlike his successor the late Edgworth Evans, Irlwyn always made his coracles in the unique Taf traditional way of constructing their gunwales with an apple tree bough suitably chosen for its shape and then split.

TERRY KENNY, our former Chairman and Director of the famous Ironbridge Coracle making courses who needs no introduction.

He replaced the late Eustace Rogers, the last member of probably the best known Ironbridge coraclemakers and handlers in England.

RAYMOND REES MBE, the legendary Twyi Coracle maker and user whose contribution to the coracle was recently recognised by the award of an MBE by Her Majesty the Queen; his grandfather having been similarly honoured. Raymond's family tradition has been carried on with distinction by his son, Malcolm.



Bernard Thomas



Raymond Rees

BERNARD THOMAS, Teifi (Llechryd), probably the best known of all coracle men by the general public in the United Kingdom. He is the only man who has paddled a coracle across the English Channel to France. He made my first of many coracles for which fact I am truly indebted to him.

Sir Peter Badge

*On the glittering River Towy behold
Those fishermen of courage hold
Who still pursue their ancient trade
In coracles themselves have made*

*Fashioned of ash and willow rods
Sometime designed by river gods
Covered in cloth and pitch and tar
They seek the salmon that's travelled far*

*Sons of fathers long since dead
In their footsteps they still tread
But unlike the horse that bears it's pack
They carry their horses on their backs*



www.coraclesociety.org.uk

The Coracle Society Journal

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