



www.coraclesociety.org.uk

Spring Newsletter

2013

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Chairman's Chat

I have purposely held off doing this spring flyer earlier, partly because of my workload (two coracle builds with Barney O'Kane at the Down to Earth Project in Swansea, and completed my second currach this year already), but mainly I have been waiting for spring to arrive! I hope that the last few days of sunshine is the herald for a decent summer as a change from the last two years of poor weather and I hope you will find the following to be of interest.

Can remind you of our endeavours to raise funds to save two iconic coracle workshops, namely those of the late John Thomas in Cenarth and Eustace Rogers in Ironbridge. Both of the workshops are in imminent danger of disappearing into oblivion, despite the most important part they played in the past to the historic coracle tradition of our nation.

Since we launched the rescue appeal last October to purchase and refurbish them and fit them out once again as a lasting tribute to these great coracle personalities, we have managed to raise a very commendable £1097, but a little disappointing in that it represents a total of only twelve donations, from a membership of over one hundred.

We need to raise £5000 if we are to apply for matched funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund; so far we are well short of this target. Please can I ask all members again to use their best endeavours to raise a donation - however small - and send it to our Treasurer before I close the appeal on the 1st of August?

I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a very happy coracle season. Enjoy your paddling and I hope to have the opportunity of meeting some more of you as I travel around the various events.

Dave Purvis

2013 Annual General Meeting and Regatta

We have been very fortunate this year to be invited to attend and support the annual Carmarthen River Festival on Sunday 30th June. Your committee has decided to hold our AGM and regatta there and we are very grateful to our hosts, Julie and Malcolm Rees of the Carmarthen Coracle and Netsmens' Association and their festival organising committee, for having us.

The Towy netsmen will be joined on the day by their colleagues from Cilgerran on the river Teifi, providing a most unique opportunity for us to see the differing styles of boats and fishing techniques used on both rivers and give everyone the opportunity to chat to the experts. No doubt there is going to be some fierce competition when it comes to the netsmens' races!

Our own members regatta may be a little more sedate, but the thrills (and spills?) we usually see are going to keep all the spectators well entertained. So please grab yourselves a picnic basket (or visit Tesco opposite the event site), come along to support us - and let us know you are coming, the agenda is enclosed.

Dave Purvis

Heritage Panel erected on Camarthen Quayside

This spring, Carmarthen Town Council funded the installation of a heritage panel on the quayside in Carmarthen. With content prepared by the Carmarthen Coracle and Netsmens' Association, this panel proudly tells the 'coracle story' of Carmarthen to all who visit - whether locals or visitors! Here, Malcolm Rees and Dai Elias are pictured next to the panel with their coracles ready to go fishing.

Julie Rees



Spotted on the Carmarthen Coracle and Netsmens' Association Facebook page was this photo of a local police officer on the water - potentially a way of increasing 'on the beat' policing in these austere times?

Event listings

Signs are that we are in for a busy coracle year in 2013; your Secretary is getting a steady trickle of enquiries and requests from organisations for "coracle support" at their events. More exposure on celebrities' television programmes for our more photogenic members of the coracle fraternity is all helping to keep us in the public eye.

Below is a summary of this year's events. If you know any coracle-related events not listed, we would appreciate it if members can send us details so we can help spread the word. Please visit our website coraclesociety.org.uk/events - or contact the Secretary. Our contact details are overleaf.

- 15 Jun - Sunderland Festival - Herrington Country Park, Sunderland - 07787 699 158/kathryn.banfield@nect.org.uk
22-23 Jun - Scottish Traditional Boat Festival - Portsoy, Aberdeenshire - 01261 842951/contact@stbfportsoy.com
28 Jun - Heritage Skills Festival - Tynemouth, Tyneside - 0191 232 9279/skills@nect.org.uk
29-30 Jun - Coracle making course at Small Woods (Green Wood Centre) - Coalbrookdale, Telford - 01952 432769/office@smallwoods.org.uk
29-30 Jun - Carmarthen River Festival - Carmarthen - 07974 772393/ jrees@trevaughan.freeserve.co.uk
30 Jun - 2013 AGM and Regatta - Carmarthen - 029 2057 3438/info@coraclesociety.org.uk
3 Jul - Coracle making 'quirky workshop' - Greystone Bicycle Cafe, Greystoke, Cumbria - 017684 83984/annie@greystokecyclecafe.co.uk
7 Jul - ParkMade Live! - Preston Park Museum and Grounds, Eaglescliffe - 01642 527375/prestonhall@stockton.gov.uk
20-21 Jul - Bioblitz, Heritage Skills Weekend & BBQ - Foxglove Covert, Catterick Garrison, N Yorkshire - 01748 831113/foxglovelnr@btinternet.com
27-28 Jul - Fishing Weekend - St Fagans National History Museum, Cardiff - 029 2057 3500
2-4 Aug - Islay Festival of the Sea - Port Ellen, Islay - 01496 300579/kirsten-ldo@btconnect.com
3 Aug - Bures Coracle Regatta - Bures, Suffolk - 01787 313199/administrator@riverstourtrust.org
10 Aug - Coracle making 'quirky workshop' - Greystone Bicycle Cafe, Greystoke, Cumbria - 017684 83984/annie@greystokecyclecafe.co.uk
23-25 Aug - Coracle making course at Small Woods (Green Wood Centre) - Coalbrookdale, Telford - 01952 432769/office@smallwoods.org.uk
24 Aug - Cilgerran Coracle Races - Cilgerran, Pembrokeshire - 01239 841822/m_dellar@yahoo.co.uk
26 Aug - Annual Ironbridge Regatta - Ironbridge, Shropshire - 01952 432769/enquiries@smallwoods.org.uk
8 Sep - Guisborough Forest Festival - Guisborough, Teeside - 07876 546592/cath.brason@forestry.gsi.gov.uk
14-15 Sep - Wild About Wood - Castle Howard, North Yorkshire - 01904 643282/info@wildaboutwood.org

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