

OCTOBER 1979

ADVANCED SEA KAYAK CLUB

NEWSLETTER NO 15

J J Ramwell
Secretary A S K C
32 Glebe Road
West Perry
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EDITORIAL

Thanks to the Goodman brothers of Valley Canoe Products and the British Embassy in Paris there may be a satisfactory outcome to the problem of the French ban on landing by kayak on the French coast. It is too early to be sure that the problem will be resolved in the short term. At present the B.C.U., the A S K C, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Sport, et al, are involved and we are keeping our fingers crossed. I suggest you contact me for the latest information before attempting a cross-Channel trip.

This attempt (so far successful) to ban unseaworthy craft from the French coast led me to comment on the need for us to put our own house in order in terms of proper leadership, safety and use of such items as flares and radio aids. You may remember (last Newsletter) that my comments prompted Alan Bye to write a rather cynical letter about possible official restriction on sea canoeists. Here is a letter in similar vein from Len Baldwin.

"As an experienced sea canoeist and an ex-professional seaman I read your editorial with a feeling of impending doom. The number of idiots and the abuse of flares and radio equipment is criminal, but as a nation of seafarers we cannot surely allow similar restrictions to those in France apply here. The implications of your comments are very far reaching, for as has been proved in the past, once permission is asked for, refusal follows (often for no reason). Most people who put to sea in small boats do not belong to an organisation, dare we implicate these countless thousands in a scheme as restrictive as you are suggesting. Do you really believe that the possession of the Advanced Sea Proficiency Award qualifies ANYONE to lead an expedition across the busiest sea lane in the world! Stop worrying about us, put away your pen and get out your paddle - we are not all as daft as we appear."

BUT THEN - how about this letter from K W Miles -

"On Saturday 26 May, a group of 15 canoeists attempted to paddle from Folkestone, along the Kent coast to St Margaret's Bay. The weather conditions were not good and the sea state was rough. The wind strength was force 6 - 7. Half a mile off Dover Harbour the party was apparently overtaken by the sea and wind strength. Although the group had a fishing boat escort, the 15 paddlers became separated and several capsized. I understand that at one time the sea was scattered with canoeists in both entrances to the harbour. The rescue operation involved Dover Lifeboat, Dover Harbour patrol boat and, I believe, a helicopter. Nobody was injured, but one person suffered mild exposure. In general, the group were lucky. There are no doubt many other facts that could be reported. No doubt those involved in the group will have their own opinion as to what happened. Whatever the pros and cons, in the first instance you will appreciate the clearing up operation was expensive. It certainly did not do canoeing any great favours in the Dover area..... Fellow canoeists please do not get our image a bad name by attempting expeditions that do not take account of all the problems that exist. Signed K W Miles, Div Youth & Community Service Officer, Organiser/Principal Dover Watersports Centre, BCU Senior Instructor, RYA Senior Instructor, RLSS Teacher, Deputy Launching Officer Dover Lifeboat."

FLARES

I have included a leaflet about the DAY AND NIGHT SIGNAL NO 1 MK 1. It appears particularly useful for our needs. I am able to supply these for £8.00 each (VAT included) as to the recommended retail price of \$9.75. I am also able to obtain any of the whole range of Schermuly Flares and signals, all at very advantageous prices. Let me have your orders soon and I can place the orders. Make cheques payable to the ASKC.

This leaflet has an emphasis on Flares. I have also included leaflets from Pains-Wessex/Schermuly and some correspondence plus a press notice on Yacht Distress Flares.

CIRCUMNAVIGATION OF TASMANIA

Earle Bloomfield is preparing a short report of this expedition for our Newsletter.

SEACANOEING IN TASMANIA (Cont)

In the meantime I still have a couple of the Official Reports left for sale at £2.30 each; they really are excellent reading and I can well recommend a copy for your own library.

OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS TO THIS NEWSLETTER INCLUDE

- (a) A report on sea touring in the North Friesian Islands by Mick O'Connell and Tony Ford.
- (b) Another interesting and useful article from Oliver Cock entitled "High Water Full and Change."

FOR SALE

- ASKC ties @ £2.00 incl P & P.
- ASKC stickers @ 30p incl P & P.
- ASKC letter headed paper at 5p per sheet (orders in multiples of tens only).

NOTICE OF THE THIRD NATIONAL SEA CANOEING SYMPOSIUM TO BE HELD ON 15/16 DECEMBER 1979 AT THE CLIFF CONFERENCE CENTRE NEAR SHEFFIELD

This year's meeting includes the following guest speakers. Mr Tom Baptie on the organisation of sea canoeing meets and regattas. Mr D Richards of H M Coastguards, Mr J Kazula of Frank Cody Electronics on radio aids for sea canoeists, Mr Pete Deaks of London Weather Centre, Mr Frank Goodman of Valley Canoe Products and Derek Hutchinson.

The cost per head, all in, is £16.50. A £5.00 deposit secures you a place. Cheques payable to the Advanced Sea Kayak Club.

.....please tear off.....

APPLICATION TO JOIN THIRD NATIONAL SEA CANOEING SYMPOSIUM

NAME..... Send to my address as above.

ADDRESS..... Please find deposit/full amount for

..... £.....payable to the

..... Advanced Sea Kayak Club.

..... NB Let me know (on reverse) whether you wish to talk to the meeting for more than

SIGNATURE..... 15 minutes.

DATE.....

COPY

DEPARTMENT OF TRADE
Marine Division
Sunley House
90 High Holborn
London WC1V 6LP

D J Cock Esq
Director
British Canoe Union
70 Brompton Road
London SW3 1DT

Tel: 01-405 6911 Ext 408

RefL MS 93/12/06

19 July 1979

Dear Mr Cock

PYROTECHNIC DISTRESS SIGNALS FOR SMALL PLEASURE CRAFT

I refer to Mr William's letter dated 30 January 1978 enclosing copies of the agreed new specifications for pyrotechnic distress signals for use in small craft with no dry stowage facilities sailing inshore up to 3 miles from land. Manufacturers were invited to apply to the Department of Trade for voluntary testing of signals to the new specifications. I can now advise that the flares detailed below have been submitted for testing and have been certified as being suitable for carriage in small pleasure craft:

<u>Manufacturer</u>	<u>Signal</u>
Pains-Wessex Schermuly Salisbury, Wilts	Pinpoint Red Mark 6 Hand-held Distress Flare. Hand Smoke MKII, Daylight Hand-held Orange Smoke signal.
Comet GmbH, Federal Republic of Germany	Hand-held Red Distress Flare for Lifeboats and Liferrafts.

I enclose a copy of a Press Notice on the subject which we are issuing to the yachting press. As mentioned in the notice, details of the new specifications and the signals which have been accepted as complying with them can be obtained on application to this Department's CNS Branch. I am circulating this letter to the addresses on the attached list.

Yours sincerely
(Signed) (Miss G M Clutterbuck)

PRESS NOTICE

18 July 1979

DEPARTMENT OF TRADE
1 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0ET

YACHT DISTRESS FLARES
New Specifications for Hand-held Pyrotechnics

New performance specifications have been agreed for hand-held red distress flares and hand-held orange smoke signals especially for use in small pleasure craft. The introduction of new specifications was prompted by reports of distress signals failing to ignite and complaints about short burning times, the variety of firing mechanisms and difficulties in identifying the firing end of pyrotechnic signals. The Department of Trade held discussions with representatives of recreational boating and lifesaving organisations, search and rescue services and the trade, resulting in the setting of new performance standards covering convenience and safety in use, waterproofing, burning time, simplicity of operation and labelling. The specifications relate to distress signals for use in small pleasure craft, particularly those with no dry stowage facilities, sailing up to three miles from land and also for carriage in craft going further offshore for use in pinpointing the position when rescuers are within visual range. The Department of Trade has also introduced a voluntary scheme for testing distress signals to the new specifications. The first signals have passed the test and will be recommended for use in small pleasure craft.

Notes to Editors

1. Details of the new specifications and the signals which have been accepted as complying with them can be obtained from Department of Trade, CNS Branch, Sunley House, 90 High Holborn, London WC1V 6LP. Manufacturers can apply to have their signals tested to the specifications.

2. The Merchant Shipping (Life-Saving Appliances) Rules 1965, which require the carriage of approved safety equipment, apply to pleasure craft of 45 ft in length or over. Smaller craft used privately for pleasure are not subject to statutory control but, in the Seaway Code, the Department of Trade publishes recommendations on the safety equipment which should be carried. The RYA Seamanship Foundation has also issued guidance in the form of a poster on the correct choice, use and stowage of flares.

The recommendations on the carriage of flares published by the Department of Trade and the RYA Seamanship Foundation divide pleasure craft into three categories; inshore (those sailing up to 3 miles from land or potential help), coastal (those sailing up to 7 miles from land or in conditions of low cloud) and offshore (those sailing over 7 miles from land). Craft operating inshore are advised to carry two red hand flares and two hand-held orange smoke signals; coastal craft need some form of projected flare to raise the alarm, so the carriage of four two-star red signals is recommended together with four red hand flares and two hand-held orange smoke signals for pinpointing the position to rescuers. Offshore at least 4 red parachute rockets, 4 red hand flares and 2 buoyant orange smoke signals should be carried. In addition, craft which are likely to be at sea at night should carry 4 white hand flares to draw attention to their presence in situations in which there appears to be risk of collision. Although the carriage of flares is not compulsory in pleasure craft of less than 45 ft in length the Department of Trade strongly recommends that seagoing craft are equipped with DOT tested flares in accordance with the recommended scale.

HALLIGAN HOLIDAY
Sea Touring in the North Friesian Islands

by MICK O'CONNELL and TONY FORD

"The met office says not more than Five." "Are you ready " "Lift!....Good grief - it'll sink!" But it didn't. My overladen Baidarka kayak slid down the tarred slipway into Dagebull harbour and we were off on a three day canoe camping cruise in the North Friesian Islands. Tony and I paddled straight towards Fohr for 20 minutes before turning in a curve to head south for the shipping channel (buzzing with holiday ferry boats), Langeness and eventually Halligan Hooge. The Halligen Islands are a group within a group, some of which are not much bigger than a few football pitches sewn together. I was knotted up with excitement and apprehension. It doesn't matter how well you may have studied your new chart, when it comes to sticking your nose into unfamiliar waters you can never relax. My paddling was erratic too. We stopped whilst I juggled a gallon of drinking water, trying to kick it from my feet near to the boat's C of G. Later I stowed it on the rear deck but it made little difference to my directional stability.

We drifted down with the ebb, crossed the channel behind a double ended car ferry and found ourselves in shallow water looking unbelievably at Langeness. The isolated settlements stood up proudly on their embankments, but at a distance the common causeway which linked them was invisible. It seemed highly probable that the winter storm waves must break over the houses. The birch perches (which are common to all secondary channels in the Friesian) were dutifully followed to come down on Langeness Point. This stretch for me was heartbreaking. I was having to do one king size stern rudder to every twelve paddling strokes, so my friend, never, never overload your kayak. Quite suddenly as we turned the point, we entered a different world. The sun went into soft focus, the Langeness sector light showed, the white patch of yet another ferryboat caught our eye and there on the murky horizon stood our destination, Hooge. The trip across, between the drying watts, was a dream. The challenge of navigating the confused channels was pure delight. We got a trans on a freshly painted starboard hand buoy and swinging into the green sector of the light tower, ferry glided across to this, 'our own' Halligen Island. The wind blew on our backs now and for the first time in almost four hours my boat stayed on course. We arrived half an hour and 20 yards of mud too late to enter the tiny haven. It was a hard and difficult portage up and along the breakwater. As we pitched camp, darkness overtook us but we fed our faces and fell into a sleep which was disturbed only by aching muscles and shift working oyster catchers.

The next day did not dawn bright and clear. The wind was fresh and visibility poor. We would need our compasses to show us the way to Amrum. Time and tide wait for no man, so after only 7 hours on Hooge we were packing up to leave. Our efforts in getting up early were well rewarded - there was water at the bottom of our camp-site. We got off to a good start without portaging and without a mud bath. The wind had kicked up a short chop which gave a bit of zip to the morning. We logged a few mud buoys as the ebb carried us westward, leaving Hooge to be enveloped in the mist.

Tony's long sightedness was working well. He informed me that my long lines of birds were in fact 7 or 8 seals lying dogo on a nearby bank. After paddling another 3 miles I focussed on the picture. The pups took to the water first, followed by their mums. Even though we had approached from down wind they didn't let us get very close to them. With 30 yards between us the guardian of the herd recalled from the depths of his seal mythology that kayaks mean danger and flipped his few 100 pounds into the air. A few more bounces down the sandy slope and he was afloat. On our return, after looking at photographs, I now believe we saw the Common Seal. In fact this smaller species of seal is less common than the Grey Atlantic Seal we see around the rocky coasts of the British Isles. More sandbanks and more seals lined our route. The motor boat 'Hansa' appeared on the scene. It had been modified to beach on sandbanks and disembark tourists to view the seals. Tony and I were not very receptive to the Friesian insults but understood the implications behind the skipper's English. "We came to see the seals but now we are too late." "T.S.", mumbled the kayakers to themselves. Our indifference was more than his throttle hand could bear. He aimed his overpowered day boat directly at us, which gave us an interesting time dogging his bows and riding in his wake. I couldn't really justify sending a white flare through his wheelhouse - to brighten up his day - but we promised ourselves we would pull his plug out if ever we caught him in port. However, he did give us a useful lead towards Anrum, our lunch stop, so we contented ourselves with exchanging jokes and watching our progress against some distant buoys.

At the conclusion of our midday meal we were invited to carry our tinker's shop to a garden table at the edge of a fine seaside mansion. It would have been pleasant to relax and enjoy this contrasting welcome and perhaps discover a new friendship, but again the tide was calling us to continue. The flood sped us up the channel from Wittdun Hafen. We crossed the just-covered banks on a heading to take us to the 'sanitorium corner' of Fohr and the village of Utersum. As we related chart to sea bed and at last found the correct channels, some young seals played hide and seek with us. We were also using "50 thou" maps to aid our navigation. Tony did even better selecting the next landing and camp site. Just behind the sea dike was a sheltered grassy area. At a more leisurely pace we made camp, dried clothes and thought about our favourite canoe-camping topic - food!

When you have a cwt of gear to spread around the canoes it attracts the tourists like flies. "What's this " "Where have you come from " "In that!" "Never!" After the 5th round of explanations (all in German) my brain hurt and I cried for help. "Tony, your turn mate!" I wheeled around as a polit lady spoke in dulcet English tones to us. A good mannered couple introduced themselves and stayed asking questions for half an hour. They took us out that night to Nieblum the prettiest (award winning) village in Germany. We learnt that although they lived and worked in Germany, they were in fact Swiss. The next and last day of our trip they came to watch our departure, waving sympathetically as we disappeared from view.

So now our venture was drawing to a close. One mile out from Fohr we exchanged goodbyes and went our separate ways. Tony had a desperate time on a long hard flog around the north coast of Fohr back to Dagebull. For my part I took a hairy wind-against-tide ride to Hornum on Sylt where I stayed for a week, teaching some other army lads the art of my particular paddling passion - sea canoeing.

HIGH WATER, FULL AND CHANGE

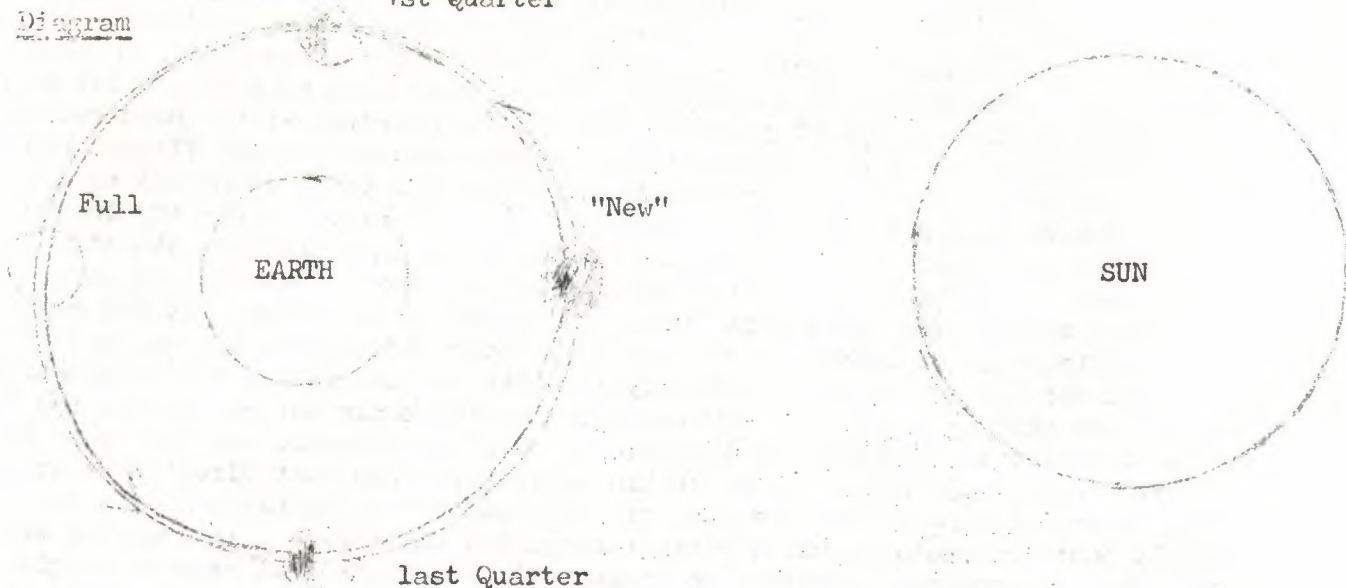
by OLIVER COCK

Last time I wrote on how to find the time of high tide from your Prayer Book. This time I am writing about a very useful Tidal Constant. I must have Tides on the brain, but I find it comes in useful when I'm canoeing at sea. This constant used to be in Reed's Almanac; but for some unknown reason they stopped publishing it a little while back. I suppose they wanted you to buy more copies of their Almanac to get your tides; but it is a pity it has gone missing.

"Full" and "Change" refer to the times when the moon is passing over the Meridian when it is "full" and when it is changing from 'old' to 'new', ie w en the sun, the moon and the earth are all more or less in one straight line (they are only in one true straight line when there is a total eclipse, but we don't have to worry about that detail here).

Diagram

1st Quarter



All this means that this Constant occurs somewhere near Spring Tides. But be careful! Maximum Springs occur three tides after "Full" or "Change". Thus my diary shows a New Moon on the 24th June 1979 (do they mean New Moon, or Change which might be the day before !). Maximum Springs at Dover at that time is on the second tide on the 25th, so one guesses that when the diary says "New" it means "Change", because so few people understand what is meant by "Change".

So let's try a Full moon, 9th July. Maximum Springs then are on the second tide on the 12th! Full moon must have been on the night of the 9th, ie midnight.

Next, we are dealing with the Meridian of the place for which we are seeking the Constant, NOT zero degrees of longitude. In the west of England or the north of Scotland this will be quite a few minutes after mid-day or midnight GMT. Happily, as we have been using Dover tides and Dover is only a short distance east of Greenwich, we need not work out how much earlier the moon will pass over the Meridian there. It will only be a few seconds earlier anyway. (Perhaps my next article can be on "How to work out whe the sun or moon pass over the Meridian where you are".)

So, to come back to "Full and Change", in our two instances we must look at the times of high tide at Dover at midnight on the 9th July (FULL moon) and mid-day on the 24th June (CHANGE of moon).

To the Tables:

July 9	44.49-	23.35	B.S.T.*
10	42.05-	*****	B.S.T.*

*Bother! We want G.M.T. therefore I subtract 1 hour.

July 9	40.49-	22.35	G.M.T.
10	44.05-	23.25-	G.M.T.

June 24	10.49	23.05-	G.M.T.
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The nearest time to mid-day on the 9th July is 22.35 therefore the Tidal Constant for FULL moon is 1 hr 25 mins.

The nearest time to mid-day on the 24th June is 10.49 therefore the Tidal Constant for CHANGE is 1 hr 11 mins.

The small variation here is probably due to the fact that we do not know the exact time at which the moon passed over the meridian at Dover. I think it would not be unreasonable to make an average and say that the Constant for High Water, Full an Change at Dover is 1 1/4 hours.

From this you can work out, again approximately, all the tides for all the year s long as you have a Moon Table - or whatever you like to call it. Try it at your local sea-side resort.