

Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> to Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2008

River Usk – Brecon, South Wales.

Organised by Chris Clarke-Williams.

I couldn't decide what to paddle on the Usk so Pat and I decided to take two kayaks and an open between us.

We arrived early and had a good look around the bunkhouse, which was excellent and very comfy!

Having settled in and met a few other early arrivals we began a long discussion on what to paddle considering the low water levels. The arrival of Ed and Sue Humphreys brought some semi-local knowledge and lots of previous experience – it was soon settled that we would run the Usk between Talybont and Llangynidr.

Pat decided to go on a more gentle paddle on the canal – exploring – as she was tired from the long drive up so on Saturday morning I moved more kit into my Dad's van and off we went. I soon recognised the get in – it was much warmer than the previous time I had paddle the stretch of river, there had been ice in the eddies on that occasion!

Although low the river was perfectly 'runable' with lots of fun little bits of white water to play on for those with the energy and beautiful scenery and some over-wintering birds to enjoy too.



Ed



Ken



Lester

The weather was beautiful and we were all warm enough during the day. Most of the paddlers in attendance were experienced and there were no capsizes although Sue Humphreys abandoned her boat on a shallow rapid at one point and managed to let go of it!



Back at the bunkhouse that evening we all enjoyed Chris's cooking – which is always excellent! A reason in itself to attend an event arranged by him, not to mention good company and conversation!

I was tired from the paddling on Saturday and wanted a change of craft so the next day Pat and I decided to paddle doubles open canoe. We were paddling on the Usk again, this time from Sennybridge to Aberbran.

Once again the weather was fantastic and although the open canoes had to portage the majority of the larger drops we very much enjoyed watching the kayakers improvise their way down them!



Jonathan



Sue



Jonathan

Our paddle was shorter than the previous day as many people had a fair distance to travel home. Pat and I were tired but not too tired to enjoy the awesome views of Southern Wales as we travelled homewards.

Mainstream events are well worth coming to, whether you are seeking good paddling, good company, beautiful surroundings or fellowship with other Christians. This trip to the Usk was under-attended, which may have been a result of the low water levels. However there is ALWAYS something to paddle. If you are a beginner, improver or experienced paddler or coach please feel free to contact the event organiser to discuss the possible water conditions and options available to paddlers during the event. We want to see Mainstream Members in their boats enjoying the wonderful creation God has blessed us with. May God Bless you as you paddle and I hope to see you on the water soon!

