



January 2009 News

## Happy New Year!!

Well folks it's a reality, it's a New Year and the holiday season is well and truly over, apparently there is a credit crunch, not that there is any credit available! The only crunch I'm aware of is the sound of blades cutting through the icy Cam during the early hours and sound of ice coated blades of grass underfoot most mornings, as I sleepwalk my way to a frozen bike with a rather cold saddle to face a hazardous cycle route to work, commonly known as the Black Ice rink of the Fens! So make sure you keep those cockles warm!!! Oh, and carry a bag of salt with you.

Memories of a well attended Xmas Social at the Fort still linger and I congratulate all who won prizes for the best dressed boat competition and the Raffle. Extraordinary night, I look forward to our next gathering, to be announced soon. Talking of gatherings set aside **Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> April for the 2009 Great Cam Cleanup** – Watch this space for more details.

### Help the University of Cambridge mark the occasion of its 800th Anniversary

Come to King's Parade and witness the anniversary year get underway. Senate House Yard at 7.15pm on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2009.

Watch Senate House come alive with projected images reflecting the University's history while listening to bell ringers performing a new work especially composed for the occasion by Clare College alumnus Phil Earis. The free light show for all the family will continue running on the evenings of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> January from 5:00pm – 10:00pm.

This is the first of many 800th Anniversary events happening this year, so keep an eye on this newsletter or [www.cam.ac.uk/800](http://www.cam.ac.uk/800) for further information.

Any questions to Elisabeth Burmeister (NB Sirius)  
[efb28@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:efb28@admin.cam.ac.uk)  
[www.cam.ac.uk/800](http://www.cam.ac.uk/800)

## Where are they now??

Following the big send-off from the Fort St George in September, here's an update from Camboater, PK (nb Hornblower), on his intrepid cycle from Cambridge to Kenya to raise money for Kenyan Schools. You can follow the whole journey and the growth of his beard at [www.downrightkenya.org](http://www.downrightkenya.org)

Dear friends and family,  
I'm embarrassed to admit being nowhere tougher than on 'beach leave' here in Egypt's Sharm-el-Sheikh while waiting for another team to catch up. It is a very welcome break from the saddle, and only dulled by the grottness of countless Russians plodding about in luminous orange thongs, and streets with names like 'Sharm Elysee'!

We have experienced an incredible tour through Turkey and the Middle East. Highlights include Syrian smiles (and their copious cups of tea); the mad dichotomy that is modern Beirut; Christmas Eve bobbing about on the Dead Sea; and the hospitality of Bedouin Camps. A lucky escape from a car crash in Turkey has been the only low, with a few days spent cobbling together a new bicycle and pondering the frailty of life.

Yesterday we all tuned in to hear a surprise radio message from our Patron, Desmond Tutu, during an interview with one of the riders. It has reinforced the feeling of huge support we've had from back home - thank you all! I'm also very close to my own fundraising target (see [www.justgiving.com/pkdownrightkenya](http://www.justgiving.com/pkdownrightkenya)) so a big grin if you are able to visit.

Tomorrow we head for the Western side of the Gulf of Suez and a week's cycle to Aswan and beyond into Sudan. Here, perched on the cusp of Africa proper, we are slightly apprehensive and very excited. I'll be back in touch soon.

With best wishes for 2009. PK  
[www.downrightkenya.org](http://www.downrightkenya.org)



## Embrace the winter blues...

Bring your instrument of choice or your voice, we'll provide kazoos!

Wednesday 25 February, 8pm onwards in the Fort St George back room.

## Recipe of the Month...

When I was asked for new ideas for the newsletter I thought of various articles to write about boat living but decided on my favourite topic: Food!!!

I love food and cooking and am always scouring the weekend papers for new and interesting recipes. I thought we should have a monthly recipe which has ingredients actually known to most people and available in Cambridge as well as easy to make. If you have any favourite recipes you would like published in the newsletter then please e-mail the camboaters committee: [committee@camboaters.co.uk](mailto:committee@camboaters.co.uk) and I'll write them up each month.

This month's recipe was actually first cooked by my other half, but like most things I stole it from him!!! It is very simple to make and tastes great, a good one if you want to impress friends and family.

### **Smoked Haddock and Pea Risotto**

A splash of olive oil (about a tablespoon's worth)

Small onion - finely chopped

350g Arborio rice

Small glass of white wine (a dry one such as Pinot Grigio)

900ml Vegetable Stock (Swiss Boullion is best and is for sale in supermarkets)

350g skinned and boned Smoked Haddock fillets

200g Peas (can be frozen but fresh are much better)

2 tablespoons of chopped chives

3 tablespoons of freshly grated Parmesan Cheese

### **Method**

1. Cook the onion in the olive oil until tender and turn the heat down to low.
2. Stir in the rice gently until the grains have been coated in the oil
3. Stir in the white wine until it has been absorbed
4. Stir in the stock a little bit at a time, this should take about 15 minutes in total.
5. When you put in the last bit of stock add the haddock and peas and turn the heat up to high. Stir continuously for 5 minutes (or until the fish becomes flaky)
6. Finally add the chives, cheese and season with salt and pepper.
7. Serve with a green salad and extra parmesan if required.

*Enjoy with the rest of the bottle of white..... and then some...*

Clare Laidler - Djovaki

## Boater Stars

By Mystic Mark and Transcendental Toni

### **Aries**

This week you will meet a long fast narrow stranger. Have no fear, the close encounter you are about to have will only dent your pride.

### **Taurus**

You are not a morning person and don't enjoy the tall dark stranger who lurks next to your boat at dawn with a mega phone..... or the nine strangers on the other side busy scraping your paintwork.

### **Gemini**

Soon you will find that your favourite shoes are mouldy. Hold back your anger, cleanse your inner sole and bring out the polish. This will be sure to damp down any negative feelings clogging your mind this Winter.

### **Cancer**

You are at your wits end this week and seem to be getting nowhere fast. Is the water of life that is amiss or is it just that sack around the prop?

### **Leo**

If you are suffering from the Winter blues and getting that sinking feeling again, always remember you have friends in tow to pick you up and help bail you out when you need it.

### **Virgo**

You will experience a number of highs and lows in the coming month, keep your poles in for the highs and hope they don't last too long!

### **Libra**

Over the next month you're your energy levels will get low. Recharge your batteries by taking a luxury cruise to a tropical beach destination. It is sure to make your life seem brighter.

### **Scorpio**

In this troubled time for banks, it is a good time for you to check the stability of your stakes. If your bank should collapse, your investments could become liquefied, leaving you at the mercy of the financial current.

### **Sagittarius**

Your New Year resolutions will have to wait as you try to tie up loose ends from 2008. Splice together those frayed aspects of your life and get ready to move towards neater, more secure lines.

### **Capricorn**

Don't let your neighbours get you down with their talk of rising damp and rotten floors. Take no notice, it's all a load of old bilge.

### **Aquarius**

Romance is in the air but do not be too hasty to get half-hitched. You may bight off too much and get tied down. If you need advice you can always ask Granny.

### **Pisces**

As the evenings grow brighter your spirits will lift and you can look forward to a cleaning day. You can wash out those cobwebs, dust off the sills and unlock your paddles and give the Cam a good clean up. (25th April to be precise!)

## **Cold weather operation and preventative maintenance of canal boat engines**

There are many different types of engines in canal boats. Some can be very old and basic and some modern and technically advanced. Whichever type is fitted to your canal boat, cold weather operation and maintenance remains the same. Over 90% of cold related problems on engines are preventable and the following bullet points should help you to ensure your engine is ready for the winter.

**Service your engine before the winter.** Change your oil to good quality diesel oil, which is the correct grade for winter, e.g. 15w-40-summer grade to a 10w-30-winter grade.

Change your fuel filters and clean out any water traps, keep your main tanks full of fuel to stop condensation build up in the colder winter months.

Service your batteries, don't mess around with cheap ones from scrap yards, buy new and they will last longer. Keep levels topped up and terminals clean and greased.

Ensure your alternator is charging correctly and that all batteries are working 100%.

Ensure your Antifreeze, water mix is correct. 50:50 is what you should have in for winter. If in doubt, change it as it's a lot cheaper than a frozen engine.

For the engine to charge your batteries correctly it must be run slightly above tick over.

Ensure your throttle linkage is correctly adjusted

### **Tips:**

Cover your batteries with insulation material e.g. carry matt or old rugs. Make sure it's not conductive!!! A warmer battery is more efficient.

Add an additive to the fuel to prevent freezing if you are running on summer grade fuel.

Reduce airflow in the engine room by a 3rd to increase running temperatures.

If you're on shore power place a radiant heater in the engine room to keep it warm. No naked element or fan heaters should be used.

If you have the money, fit block heaters and battery warmers.

### **Running the engine in cold weather**

Older engines suffer more from the cold. Engine compression is less and it's harder to ignite the fuel in the cylinders. To overcome this you must ensure crank over speed is good and correct grade of oil is in the engine. Thick old oil reduces cranking speed. If you have lots of smoke but no fire then it might be time for an engine overhaul.

Once you do get your engine running then its best to slowly warm it up. The worst thing you can do is rev it up when it first starts. Slowly feed in the revs after a few minutes of running. If you're just using it for power, ensure the charge light has gone out and leave the engine running at high idle. Before shutting the engine down increase to full throttle for 30 seconds and then slowly back off. This cleans out any slow running residue. If you're running a BMC engine you will have to apologise to the surrounding boats for the smoke screen!

If you're away from the boat for any time its best to trickle charge the batteries. This can be done by mains, wind or solar very easily.

*Martin Bell, Vehicle engineer, British Antarctic Survey*

*Safety Ropes/ Grab Chains*

*It is a requirement of the River Mooring Licence Agreement that boats ensure the provision of grab chains or safety ropes on the riverside of the moored vessel. Not all boats currently have the provision of a grab chain or safety rope. Therefore, please ensure you have a safety rope or grab chain on the riverside of your boat, as this is a safety issue for yourselves as well as other river users.*

## The Big Chimney

Various people have asked me about my Big Chimney - have a look next time you're passing Victoria Bridge - and I thought I probably ought to explain! Back when I bought "Innocenti" in August 2007, the surveyor condemned the Morso Squirrel stove because the internal baffle had rusted away and the firebricks were cracked. On closer inspection both of these things had caused the stove itself to warp, and so it was beyond repair. I finally replaced it back in October - but my decision-making was clouded by a lot of confusion about stoves on boats. I hope I can share some of what I learned with you all! Anyway, a new Squirrel (without back boiler) would have set me back about £600. But it was clear to me that the old flue was part of the problem and would have to go as well. The old stove had been destroyed by water running down the inside of the flue (due to the lack of a flue terminal) and didn't draw all that well because of a sharp double bend just above the stove. Then, somehow, I discovered Natural Heating ([www.natural-heating.co.uk](http://www.natural-heating.co.uk)) who had much cheaper stoves in a selection of sizes. I plumped for the "Ladybird" stove - about the right size, with two hotplates, and a snip at £220. The reason for the lower price is clear when you lift them - the Ladybird is much lighter than the Squirrel, being made of thinner iron and having no firebricks inside.

Having settled on the stove, there then began the business of trying to design the chimney. The stove requires a 5" flue, but the old flue was 4.5" and passed through an old iron deck flange on the roof. This is where opinions differ. Go to a boatyard or chandlery, and they will happily sell you a 4" or a 4.5" flue, which is compatible with a deck flange and a traditional narrowboat chimney. They'll also sell you a reducing plate to adapt a stove designed for a 5" flue, like the Morso Squirrel. However, if you speak to a stove and chimney specialist, they'll tell you that reducing the stove's outlet is a bad idea, and would be against building regulations if you did it in a house. So, what to do? In my case, I cut out the old deck flange and flue and sent it to the tip, with considerable help from a neighbour (thanks John!). What I replaced it with is perhaps a bit unconventional but seems to work well. Inside the boat, the stove's outlet (which, oddly, is actually a smaller outlet with an expanding plate to go up to 5") goes into a 5" vitreous enamel stovepipe - there's a 15 degree bend, a straight section, another 15 degree bend and then, at roughly eye level, the vitreous pipe goes into a stainless steel adaptor. This adaptor then leads to a section of twin-wall rock wool insulated flue which passes through the boat's roof. The twin-wall flue is made by Poujoulat in France - it has a 5" internal diameter and a 6" overall diameter. The section passing through the roof is held in place by a supporting bracket screwed into the metalwork of the boat's roof.

Then, on the outside, is my 1.2m twin wall insulated extension, with a matching flue terminal on top. The Poujoulat system is held together by locking bands, which are easy to remove - when I move the boat, it takes about a minute to unclip the locking band and lift off the chimney extension.

All this heavy engineering ensures that the flue gas stays as hot as possible before leaving the chimney (reducing tar deposits) and the stove draws really well. It's noticeable that when the fire is going, the smoke from the chimney is mostly quite pale, rather than the thick brown-black smoke you see coming from most boats' chimneys. The stove is nicely controllable, and the cabin can be warm and toasty very quickly indeed!

If you'd like more details, or to have a closer look, just give me a shout!  
[mike@randominformation.co.uk](mailto:mike@randominformation.co.uk)

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**Congratulations to Catriona & Dom on nb Serendipity, they recently got hitched ;O) at least someone knows how to tie a knot!!!**

**Thanks for the contributions, keep them coming.**

What do you think of the **draft poster** for the Clean Up (overleaf)? Another Mike Smih production.

Luther Phillips  
For and on behalf of Camboaters



## News from the Cam Conservancy

### 2009/10 registration fees

The Conservators decided at their quarterly meeting on 15 January to set 2009/10 registration fees + 7 % above last year's fees. The case for this above-inflation increase is that the Conservators have a large number of capital projects to address and until other means of securing funding can be researched, this increase will serve to fund some of the more urgent works required to ensure navigational safety and operational capability. The implication of this increase in the fees is that for a typical category 38 narrowboat, the fee will increase from £630.90 to £675.06 for the year.

The EA has set its new registration fees at 7.8 % up on last year's fees. For more information visit the EA's regional navigation web pages at <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/homeandleisure/recreation/boating/31613.aspx>

Both the Conservancy and EA will be sending out renewal notices in February. Please remember to return these with your remittance before the 1 April! This year's Conservancy licence discs will be green.

### Non-registration prosecutions

Some people have failed to achieve completion of their vessel registrations for 2008/09, and the first court hearings were held at Ely Magistrates Court on 13 January. More are to follow, most of whom have failed to produce boat safety certificates for their vessels.

Please could you make a note of when your boat safety certificate is due to expire, and contact a local examiner at least one month before the expiry date to arrange an examination date? Most boats require some minor works from one examination to the next and the Boat Safety Scheme does make changes to its checking procedures and standards. We should be happy to provide you with a list of local examiners, or you can get more information from the Boat Safety Scheme website at [http://www.boatsafety.com/site/Home\\_1.asp](http://www.boatsafety.com/site/Home_1.asp)

### Marked up

What is this? **G000000**

It is a sample EA registration number. Why, oh why, is there so much resistance to registration numbers being painted or affixed to the outside of your vessel hulls? You may have received a Form 'D' notice about this recently from the River Bailiff. Byelaw 8.6 states

that 'the registration number assigned to such vessel to be exhibited on both sides of the hull of the pleasure boat so as to be clearly legible at all times at a distance of 15 metres'.

A note on a piece of card placed in the window is better than nothing, but still not adequate. The more time we have to chase people on simple matters of enforcement, the less time there is for us to apportion to maintenance and improvement works on the river. Please help us make better use of our limited staff resources!

### Big Garden Birdwatch, Saturday 24-Sunday 25 January 2009

This year marks the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the garden birdwatch initiative. Your boat moorings are essentially next to a 'local park'. All you have to do is observe the birds next to your boat for one hour during the weekend of 24-25 January. Record the highest number of species you see at any one time. Only count the birds that land, not those flying overhead. Submit the results online at [www.rspb.org.uk/birdwatch](http://www.rspb.org.uk/birdwatch). Even if you don't see any birds, do submit a report as it still provides useful information.

### **Events on the River 2009**

|                             |                                   |                                            |                                 |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Sun 18 Jan - All day        | Fishing Match                     | <i>Baits Bite to Clayhithe (Cam B)</i>     | CFPAS                           |
| Sun 18 Jan - All day        | Winter League 1 <sup>st</sup> Leg | <i>Baits Bite Clayhithe (Cam B)</i>        | X-Press BC/City RC              |
| Sat 24 Jan - 09:15 to 13:15 | Cambridge Head to Head            | <i>Baits Bite to Chesterton Footbridge</i> | City RC                         |
| Sat 31 Jan - 12:00 to 17:00 | Newnham Short Course              | <i>Baits Bite to Chesterton Footbridge</i> | TBC                             |
| Sun 1 Feb - 10:00 to 15:00  | Winter League Match               | <i>Baits Bite to Clayhithe (Cam B)</i>     | CFPAS                           |
| Fri 6 Feb TBC               | Robinson Head                     | <i>Baits Bite to Chesterton Footbridge</i> | Robinson College                |
| Sat 14 Feb - 08.00 to 17:00 | Pembroke Regatta                  | <i>Baits Bite to Chesterton Footbridge</i> | Pembroke College                |
| Fri 20 Feb - 13:00 to dusk  | Lents Getting On Race             | <i>Baits Bite to Chesterton Footbridge</i> | CUCBC                           |
| Sun 22 Feb 08:30 to 14:30   | Winter League 2 <sup>nd</sup> Leg | <i>Baits Bite to Chesterton Footbridge</i> | X-Press BC/City RC              |
| Tue 24 Feb 13:00 to dusk    | University Lent Bumps             | <i>Baits Bite to Chesterton Footbridge</i> | CUCBC                           |
| Wed 25 Feb 13:00 to dusk    | University Lent Bumps             | <i>Baits Bite to Chesterton Footbridge</i> | CUCBC                           |
| Thu 26 Feb 13:00 to dusk    | University Lent Bumps             | <i>Baits Bite to Chesterton Footbridge</i> | CUCBC                           |
| Fri 27 Feb - 13:00 to dusk  | University Lent Bumps             | <i>Baits Bite to Chesterton Footbridge</i> | CUCBC                           |
| Sat 28 Feb - 12:00 to dusk  | University Lent Bumps             | <i>Baits Bite to Chesterton Footbridge</i> | CUCBC                           |
| Sat 28 Feb - 15:00 to 16:00 | RAG Week Duck Race                | <i>Middle River</i>                        | <i>Cambridge University Rag</i> |
| Sun 1 Mar - 10:00 to 15:00  | Winter League Match               | <i>Baits Bite to Clayhithe (Cam B)</i>     | CFPAS                           |
| Sun 8 Mar - 08:30 to 14:30  | Winter League 3 <sup>rd</sup> Leg | <i>Baits Bite to Chesterton Footbridge</i> | X-Press BC/City RC              |
| Thu 12 Mar TBC              | St Catherine's Cardinals          | <i>Baits Bite to Chesterton Footbridge</i> | St Catherine's                  |
| Sun 15 Mar 12:00 onwards    | Junior Sculling Head              | <i>Plough Reach to Penny Ferry</i>         | Champ. Thames RC                |
| Sun 15 Mar All day          | Turing Trail Relay                | <i>Waterbeach to City (towpath )</i>       | Ely Runners                     |

If you should like to host an event on the river, or if you have any comments or complaints in relation to any of these events, please contact the River Manager ([river.manager@camconservators.org.uk](mailto:river.manager@camconservators.org.uk), telephone 01223 863785 office hours).

## ***DRAFT POSTER***

# The Great Cam Clean-up

Do your bit for the environment while enjoying a day by our beautiful river!  
Join Camboaters in a clean up of the River Cam and surrounding areas.  
Gloves, litter pickers and bags provided – just bring your friends and lots of enthusiasm!

**25th April 2009**

Meet at the Fort St. George, Midsummer Common at 10am.

