

Are you up for a unique paddling experience in Spirit Dancer ?



Spirit Dancer along the British Columbian coastline, Canada

Spirit Dancer is a unique voyage which starts in London in May 2008 and circumnavigates Britain clockwise to finish in London in 2010

I have been asked as a member of the SCA, to help plan, publicise and look for paddlers for a month's journey in Scottish and Irish waters starting in Port Carlisle on the English side of the Solway Coast, crossing to Ireland and back, and finishing for the summer in Cullipool on the Island of Luing. Timing of the trip is dependant on the weather but the intended dates are:-

5th September Leave Port Carlisle

11th September arrive at Portpatrick via Rockcliffe, Kirkcudbright, Isle Whithorn & Mull of Galloway.

16th September arrive at Rathlin via Donaghadee, Bangor & the Antrim Coast

22nd September arrive at Greenock via Mull of Kintyre, Campbeltown, Brodick, and Largs

27th September arrive at Crinan via Dunoon, Rothesay, Kyles of Bute and Ardrishaig.

7th October arrive at Cullipool via Islay, Jura and Corryvreckan

Spirit Dancer is a 12 person open canoe based on the cedar wood Voyager Canoes used by the Indians on the east coast of Canada but has been custom built for the challenges of open ocean paddling in the UK. It is 42 feet (12.8 meters) long by 67 inches (1.7metres) broad (see photos)

The canoe is made from fibreglass and wood and a full spray deck encases the paddlers with individual cockpits as in a standard kayak. It is paddled using single bladed "Canadian" paddles from a seated position.

The organiser of the project is Chris Cooper from British Columbia who has been a professional guide and explorer in Canada for the past 30 years. He has been instrumental in opening up the Voyageur Canoe business in Canada and is now bringing it to the UK for this unique journey.

More information is available at <http://www.spiritdancercanoejourneys.ca/index.html>



Chris has asked for help in obtaining paddlers for the trip (particularly those with paddling knowledge of the area) and in finding if anyone would like to extend a welcome or hospitality at a location or arrange for local youngsters to have a short trip in the canoe.

If you want to paddle you will be expected to arrange your own transport to/from your start/finish point and to be self sufficient in food, personal gear and camping equipment which can be accommodated in one 80litre and one 30 litre waterproof bags in the canoe. Anyone who wants to contribute to the project is more than welcome to do so.

So if you have ever fancied paddling a 12 person open canoe and are aged 18 or over, then here is your chance to sign up for part of the journey through Scottish and Irish waters during 2008.

If you would like to paddle on the trip, want more information, offer hospitality etc please send details marked for Spirit Dancer to sca.touring@canoescotland.com

Ron Mather