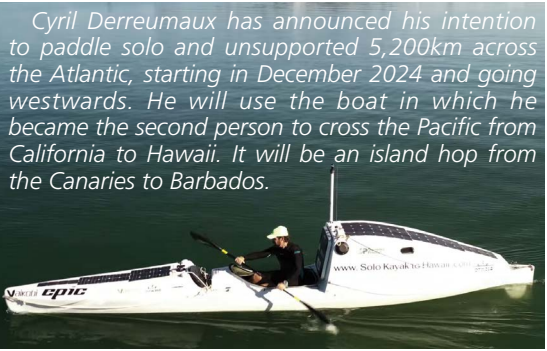


A kayak angler was rammed by a shark off Oahu, Hawaii. Kayak angling seems to be encouraging attacks on paddlers, whether anglers or not. At the same time, ramming of larger craft, especially the rudders of boats around the Iberian peninsula, seems to be a fashionable game, particularly for young orcas, 207 such collisions recorded in 2022. One North Sea event has also been noted. The suspicion is that this is a craze that has developed among intelligent animals. A drone film shows a humpback whale swimming alongside a kayak paddler for 3km in Australia. It was shown on the BBC news website in June, when it was the most viewed film clip.



Cyril Derreumaux has announced his intention to paddle solo and unsupported 5,200km across the Atlantic, starting in December 2024 and going westwards. He will use the boat in which he became the second person to cross the Pacific from California to Hawaii. It will be an island hop from the Canaries to Barbados.

### Trips

Nick Ray has spent a year paddling around the Scottish coastline. As well as looking at the scenery and handling the conditions his purpose was to spotlight mental health issues, based on his own problems with anxiety and mental health difficulties.

Once the ice had broken up in May on three large lakes in the headwaters, Paul Cox, Scott Miller, Judson Steinback and Wally Werderich set out to challenge the record for the 3,695km of the Mississippi from Lake Itasca to the Gulf of Mexico. A record of 17 days 19 hrs 46 mins was set in 2020 by KJ Millhone's team, Miller's team sinking on the lower river in Louisiana a fortnight later. They paddled continuously on this trip. The 7m Wenonah Minnesota 4 was modified to facilitate resting. During the 16 hour day they had three paddling with one resting in four hour shifts. At night it was two paddling and two sleeping in four hour shifts. A

### Most watched

- 1 ▶ Watch 'curious' whale follow kayaker in Sydney
- 2 ▶ Watch moment tornado tears through US city
- 3 ▶ Ros Atkins on... five impacts of the Wagner mutiny
- 4 ▶ Glastonbury: Watch the final day's acts in 93 seconds
- 5 ▶ Lana Del Rey talks to fans after her Glastonbury set

### Dartford Crossing fines

Gavin Newlands (SNP, Paisley & Renfrewshire N) has called for time allowed to pay the Dartford Crossing charge to be extended beyond midnight on the following day. For the Government, Richard Holden said the 'vast majority' of journeys are paid for correctly, 94.7%. This still means that more than one driver in every 20 fails to manage to meet the deadline and gets fined (Nov 21, p94), a nice little earner.

### Many questions

After many months of delays over announcing the details of the future of the CRT's grant it was clear why the Government were not keen to say what they had planned. However, few were ready for the £300,000,000 reduction over a decade, effectively a 40% cut at a time when construction costs are rising fast. Some 97% of canal users are on the towpath, in addition to wildlife that benefits from these corridors, and pay nothing directly for their use, 885,000,000 visits last year. A quarter of CRT funding comes from boat licences. At this time the damage from the weather to the ageing infrastructure, much of it of heritage value, is increasing, as is the cost of repairing damage and there is a real risk of having to start closing canals, which provide far greater value in public enjoyment and health benefits than is paid for their upkeep. The environmental, economical, social and health value of the canals to the country is put at £6,100,000,000/year, 150 times the Government grant. This alone should justify proper funding, even if Defra politicians have shown themselves to have had little enthusiasm for boaters over the years.

In the week the announcement was made, Radio 4's *Any Questions?* was broadcast from Melksham. As well as the topicality, the Melksham Link from the Kennet & Avon Canal has been delayed for the dozen years it has been shovel ready by the EA finding ever more reasons to prevent its going ahead and relinking the town to the canal network so it was also of local interest. PI prepared a question on the CRT grant, having already briefed one of the panel, but the BBC did not take anything on the topic.

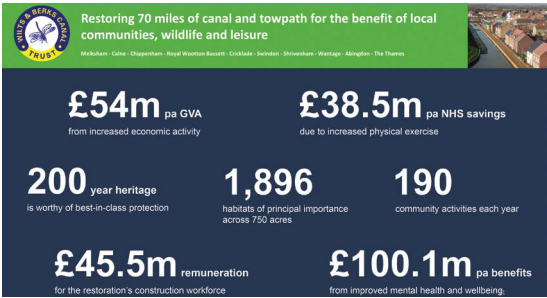


Scott Miller's team on the Mississippi.

### Memories to share?

Do any of your trips deserve a larger readership? We are pleased to hear from those who wish to share memories of their trips with others.

mail@canoeist.co.uk



The estimated value to society of the Wilts & Berks Canal when completed.