

Paul Kirtley's Blog

Wilderness Bushcraft • Survival Skills • Outdoor Life

Paul: This is the Paul Kirtley Podcast episode 13.

Narrator: The Paul Kirtley Podcast; Wilderness Bush Craft, Survival Skills, and Outdoor Life.

Paul: Welcome, welcome to episode 13 of my podcast. It's been something of a cliché. And yet this has been a little bit of an unlucky podcast. I started off the air pretty well. We had a good interview with Lou Rudd, and I had the best intentions of interviewing more people straight away in January after Lou. And every single interview fell through and then I got busy with a course launch in February. And now I'm recording this late in March, and it will be put out very, very early April.

So yeah, this is in some ways the unlucky episode, but I'm very lucky to have my good friend and colleague, Ray Goodwin, back for this episode. It was back in late 2014 on podcast number two when Ray first joined me. And that was a podcast that we recorded while on the Bloodvein River trip in September 2014. We recorded it then on the banks of the Bloodvein River one sunny morning after quite a frosty evening. And a lot of people really, really enjoyed that discussion.

And so I thought it would be good to have Ray back, not least because he's one of those people who's continuously learning. He's continually layering on ways of doing things. He's always reviewing and refreshing and reflecting on what he does and how he does it. Even with him being so experienced and having been coaching and guiding people in canoes and kayaks for over 30 years now. It's really interesting to see how vibrant his desire to continually improve both in terms of his technique as well as his coaching abilities and his understanding of teaching people and coaching people and guiding people.

Ray has the second edition of his book Canoeing coming out soon. And I thought that would be a really good jumping off point to discuss. What's changed since the first edition came out five years ago? And also, what he's been up to and what's changed since we did that trip and had that discussion back in 2014. So without further ado here's Ray Goodwin. So yes, I would like to welcome Ray Goodwin. The first guest who's come back for more for a second time on my podcast. Hi, Ray. How are you doing today?

Ray: Very good. And good morning to you Paul. Well, good day.

Paul: Good day, good morning. Yes, and we never know, people can be listening to this late at night. So good day to whoever is listening as well. But nice to hear your voice. It's a while since we've seen each other. We did some paddling back in December. A group of us came up and spent a week with you in December. But I haven't seen you since then. We've communicated obviously, about work stuff particularly but what have you been up to in the last few months over the winter?

Ray: It's been very, very busy. In fact to be honest, it's almost a sense of relief now to get to the end of a very long stint. A lot of work on the water, coach education, leadership awards, chasing rain trying to avoid really high water levels and then chasing rain to find water which is fairly typical in North Wales. And finishing off the second edition of my book, so back and forth to my publisher. And so quite a lot not going on to be honest.

Paul: So when you say coach education, what do you mean there Ray, for people listening? What does that involve?

Ray: British canoeing uses the United Kingdom Coaching Certificate and we train people how to coach canoeing, kayaking, they're all under the umbrella of the United Kingdom Coaching Certificate. So you might be doing that in gymnastics though I'm not involved in that. And the only gymnastics I do is when I slip on the bank and that's never typically impressive except...well, to others it might be. But it's teaching people the whole process. One of the interesting things, with it is that we've brought this modern coaching science into coaching the movement in various aspects of what we do within paddle sport.

And on the whole it's extremely useful. We then share a common language, common research basis with every other sport as long as people remember that we're actually dealing with an adventure sport. And there's far more to it than paddling or twiddling a paddle or moving a boat. It's about the whole environment, the whole experience but it's a useful tool. So the coach education has been very much part of that.

Paul: You talked about the science common across coaching in different disciplines. Where is that being fed down from? Is that fed down from some central point where you're being kept up-to-date with the most recent coaching methods? How does it work in that respect?

Ray: Fairly straightforwardly because if you look into competitive sports, and again I would say there's a major difference with what we do, but in terms of teaching movement or understanding fear or motivation, the amount of massive research that's been done within that and at all sorts of level - masters levels, doctorate levels - people are constantly doing research and they can validate, come up with new theories. And of course then there are theories that have just stood the test of time. That people were introduced in 20-30 years ago and we just know that they'd give a very good explanation of what we do.

And then all that is a set syllabus by the United Kingdom Coaching Certificate people but then it's up to the British Canoeing to interpret it for our own sport. They have to have it validated. And then it's just a case of keeping in touch. Things move on, that syllabus changes, we have to add our own sport-specific elements to it. It's a constant movement.

What is intriguing is some things, it's like all these things, you get a period where somebody is really keen on a particular theory and they push it then it's over pushed. And later on, people realize, "Well, actually it's not quite true." One of those was to try and label people into the way they process information, whether visual, audio or kinesthetic. The reality is we're all a mix of that. It's a useful thing to consider how you present information. But to try and label people as specifically people use that one type or one of those types isn't particularly useful.

Paul: Yeah, I mean that is something you hear banded still quite a lot. So is that a theory of how people learn in those segmented siloed ways? Is that the bunch now? Is that been...?

Ray: To a large extent, yes. People will have preferences but the research is showing that sometimes it's really useful to step outside of those preferences for that person. And it might not always be the most useful way of learning. I had a guy who you get this pragmatist activist-theorist reflector right down in one set of theories and again, people being labelled. The reality is, I'm all of those are according to what I'm up to. If I get bored or I want to try something out, I'm now some activist, I just going to do it. But like any video that's good, I'm a massive reflector.

So to try and label me as one of those things isn't terribly useful. We change according to what we're going to do. And I had somebody who would have labelled himself an activist. He's elaborate, He explained right at the start of everything. He was on a leadership training course. But he said, "I really just got to get stuck in. I don't like the theory, I don't like this." I said, "Okay, that's fine." And we came to a point where I was teaching something very specific

and I showed him what I needed him to do. And he said, "All right, can I go and try?" And I said, "No." I said, "You're going to listen this time."

And I went through the points because I knew from watching me he didn't have enough information. So by that stage, I'd built up a relationship with him. And I think coaching on the whole is about a relationship. And he trusted me enough to actually sit there and listen. Listen to the points I made then went to try it and came back. He said, "You were right, Ray." And so not only the labelling with him I decided to ignore it, he got it into his head that he was a particular type of learner. I think sometimes it's not useful.

Paul: Now, do you think it's a little bit akin to people having a very fixed view of what they're good at and what they're bad at? People say, "I'm not good at spelling," or, "I'm not good at languages," or...and that often goes back to a particular learning experience that they've had in the past and then they've cemented that by telling them they're not good at something or they are very good at something. But in fact, they're probably better at most things than they think they are but they're just pigeon-holed they're good at math and they're bad at languages or they're good at sports and bad at academic stuff. Whereas in fact that's just back to something that happened back in their childhood.

Ray: I think there are massive influences. I think some of these things can be self-fulfilling. But very often...so I will come across it endlessly with people telling me that they're a poor learner, they're a slow learner or they're this type learner. And very often that is self-fulfilling because a slow learner in a physical sense could be somebody who's just so inhibited by that label that they have two or three go's at something. And it's all very hesitant and they're afraid to make mistakes.

And in that same time period, somebody who's labelled as a quick learner has actually had ten times as many go's because they're quite happy to make mistakes and understand its part of the process. And then that's part of my job, is to try to get people to understand that mistakes are part and parcel of it. And on those grounds, with the number of mistakes that I've made over the years, I'm pretty good at what I do. No, some of those mistakes I should not have made.

Paul: Well, they say that with businesses as well. The people who make lots of small decisions and make them quickly, they've made more mistakes but then they're also more successful ultimately because they've got more data effectively and they've got more experience.

Ray: Yeah, it's down to experience. That gets me onto one of my real hobby horses nowadays with things. That one of the problems of a United Kingdom Coaching Certificate is you really do not assess anything you've not trained and you've got to build people up in stages. And they work extremely well. And I think for coaching, that's very appropriate. But then that same mentality starts to come in in terms of leadership awards. That the people are being sold the idea that you can be trained to do every aspect of that, and you shouldn't be assessed in anything you've been trained in.

But one of my things that I keep telling people is that I cannot train you to get that award. I can point you in the right direction with the leadership awards. The reality is what you need to do is go out and experience that environment. Go out there with friends, go out there with people and learn in that environment. Learn yourself. And I can provide a very solid foundation for you to work on in any of those things.

You and I have worked together on these things but at the end of the day, it comes down to you going out and having those experiences. You going out and being in that environment and making those mistakes and sorting them out yourself. If I surely train you to that level and explain every mistake that could be made and how you solve it, I don't think that's real learning. It's not experience-based learning.

Paul: No, you're not embodying it then, are you? It's second-hand knowledge really.

Ray: It is. And that's helpful; it stops us making mistakes other people have made, but everything should have a very firm foundation and experience.

Paul: Well I feel the same with a lot of what I teach in terms of the bushcraft skills. For example, you and I take groups on trips in Canada. And we're using, not all of the skills that I teach back home, but we're using certain things day in and day out. And we're using them in a way that....it can be pouring with rain, and we need to get the fire lit. We need do it after a day of paddling.

We need to not spend too much time doing it. It's real experience applying those skills. Even if they're relatively basic skills, it's real experience. And we can bring that back to what we teach closer to home so that people have the methodology. But still, it's the experience of applying it for themselves which makes them good at it.

Ray: Yeah, I think so. And I think very much it's that real experience of being in a wilderness in the pouring rain after a long day with people that are cold,

and after that throw a tarp up, get a fire going, not messing around. You've got a petrol stove. So you get the petrol stove going so you can get some warm drinking to people. Because you know that the situation is such, we need to move fast. And it's something that you constantly connect to that you notice when people are dehydrated or cold. I think you're very analytical in the way can notice the decision making starts slowing and changing.

Paul: Yeah, absolutely.

Ray: I can remember one situation I became quite narrowly-focused. Because I realized, "Okay, let's get to there. And let's get this done and this done in this order because that's what we need to do." And you're able to step back from it slightly and watch that decision making and make an analysis of it, which is fascinating. And taking all that, whether it be running a rapidote in Canada or on one of our Scottish trips or getting the tarp and the fire going.

When we teach it in this country or we teach it to a beginner, one of the things I think you and I do very well and it's characteristic of my coaching is, I'm not teaching somebody how to cross an eddy line in low volume water. Transition to fast current to slow current or to the bank. I'm teaching them to do it in any situation, in any country, in any volume. And so I have this long term view of what I'm trying to achieve rather than the particular thing that I'm teaching at that time. Where is it going to be used? Where is it going to be used in a years' time, two years' time? And that gives the perspective to the coaching.

Paul: Yeah, absolutely. I concur with that completely. It's what I do with the bushcraft skills. And actually, I've had some flack over the years for teaching things in certain ways from people who've maybe not travelled very widely or maybe they're a scout leader and they're used to doing things in very controlled conditions and they've...particularly with some of the fire lighting techniques. People have said it's over the top, overkill.

And I'm coming from a perspective of teaching somebody that maybe in pouring rain in Alaska in three months or six months' time. Because I don't know where my students are going next. And I need to teach them techniques which they carry with them and use wherever they are. Not just something that works in the summer in Sussex but will work in the spring in North America or in Scandinavia or on an expedition somewhere where they really, really need to get that fire going.

If I show them an easy way of doing something in the summer, when they come to apply it in the wet, the cold and the wind it won't work. And that's my responsibility to my students.

Ray: And again it's what we do on the trips in North America. The last occasion, three nights in particular really stand out to me. One was that very cold night with people cold. We arrive in a campsite, we've just got to get some heating to people.

Paul: The day when we had rain all afternoon.

Ray. Yes. And then the two nights where it absolutely poured down I think the most impressive thunderstorms that I've been under in my life. I've seen more impressive ones, but fortunately, the more impressive ones I've had to be slightly removed in a deep valley with lightning hitting the mountain tops and light enough that you could actually read. But when there's no this business of counting the time between the flash and the bang, when you haven't got time to count you know it's pretty close.

Paul: Yeah. And that first night that we had that horrendous on the Bloodvein...and by the way, for listeners, there will be a video of this trip at some point. We got a lot of footage on that trip. But that first night when it was just rolling continuously very close to us, I've never experienced anything like that before. That was a tempest...I think we came up with the word tempest...a tempest had come from a different dimension on us and we're just rolling on top of the forest. It was just weird and unbelievable.

Ray: Yeah. And the serious question to you is one of these witch-crafty type people. I did manage to say not "Bush botherer."

Paul: Okay, thank you.

Ray: Where'd you go in the forest when there's lightning? Because all of these stuff of not being under a tree doesn't really work, does it?

Paul: No, it doesn't. It's difficult. I think you still need to try and...Not under the biggest tree I would say. Not under the tallest tree. And statistically, it's very unlikely that you'll...

Ray: I know.

Paul: If you're under a tree, say for example near where my parents live, I'm picturing an example here. There are a couple of open fields that have sheep in them often, but there are a couple of big old oak trees in those fields. One in one field. Those are the ones you don't want to be under in a thunderstorm. If you're in the middle of a forest with millions of millions of trees in Canada,

yeah, sure you still want to get as low as possible, and you don't want to be touching butts of metal and all that kind of thing. But I think that statistically you're highly unlikely to come across because there are so many trees.

Ray: But I do remember lying there in my sleeping bag in the dark, well not dark because of the amount of lightning going on in that, a sort of orange glow in the sky, and I'm looking up and I could just see the shadows of all the trees shaking above me. And I'm just going, "Don't strike my tree. Just don't strike my tree."

Paul: I was actually more worried - in that storm - I was more worried about the wind and the trees than the lightning and the trees. That was my...because they were moving around a lot. Because wind is not selective, it will take down lots of trees if it's strong enough.

Ray: Yeah, that was really impressive.

Paul: Yeah, Well, we survived, and it was, again, experience. Isn't it? It's experience.

Ray: It is. And it's a fascinating process being out there, and it does, it influences both of us massively.

Paul: Absolutely. One thing I think again I've noticed people don't quite understand this, and we've touched on it but maybe just explain it a little bit more. You've talked about coaching awards or, at least, coach education. You've talked about leadership awards. I think a lot of people don't realize there are two separate tracks in canoeing in the UK in terms of qualifications, in terms of certificates. Can you just talk people through that very briefly?

Ray: I think historically, and this is where canoeing, kayaking is a very unusual sport in that for an adventurous sport and for a hobby really if you like rather than a competitive sport, both mountaineering and canoeing and kayaking have depended a lot on instructors, coaches, whatever you want to call us. But it's intriguing in the mountaineering world until very recently, a vast majority of the effort was in teaching the people how to be safe and not in the movement. And you would be teaching people how to tie onto a knot, fasten a harness, how to belay, how to be safe, all the climbing course. And relatively little and some people will word it different but relatively little of the time is really about how to move and spending time in moving.

That's changing now. And part of that is the influence of the UKCC - United Kingdom Coaching Certificate - partially the influence of climbing walls where

people want to move better, climb harder. So indoor climbing walls have had an influence. And then in addition to that or very differently to that then you have in paddling from the word go, the instructor tends to oversee the safety. You make sure a buoyancy aid is on correctly. But what you really do in paddle sport initially is teach people how to move.

And so there has always been an interest in paddle sport in coaching. So very unusual for recreational sport. And then UKCC fixed that brilliantly. It teaches a lot about movement. Not only that, it teaches about the psychological side, the physiological side of things. So it's a very sophisticated coaching system, but it doesn't really address to the higher levels the business of leadership in that environment.

It's all about the process of coaching and a small amount of the safety. It works extremely well. So much so that for the United States it's really taken off for sea kayakers, they like the British awards. They've coached [inaudible 00:23:21] leadership and in Scandinavia that we've got more and more people doing those awards. They see them as very sophisticated awards.

But a lot of that is about the coaching the movement - the psychological side of it. Separate to it and say this stood the test of time, there have been changes are what they call the star tests. One three to three is a test of personal competence in gradually rising environment. And I help design those some years ago. And then we have the four and five stars with is different in that they are leadership awards.

The five star is the advanced level. And once you get that, you pretty well decide the environment you're leading in pure craft. And a four star is a moderate. The five is so successful it brought in the four star as the leadership award which is for a moderate water environment. Now that includes for the canoe open lakes with winds of up to force four and great two rivers.

So rivers with really quite decent rapids. And if you think of the stuff we do in Canada. On the last trip we had really great water level so we run a number of great threes because there was a line that was safe to take. And even if we made a mistake we weren't going to actually come stuck, might have taken a swim. There was no big consequence.

But generally most of what we paddle when we're abroad is great two. So you're getting a leadership award for that sort of thing. And congratulations on getting your four star, Paul, by the way.

Paul: Thank you very much.

Ray: [Inaudible 00:25:00].

Paul: Yeah, it's a fun thing to do. Also, it really does consolidate what you know, and it is, as you say, rightly so, it depends upon you having enough experience, and that certainly comes out in the assessment. It doesn't come out so much in the training but certainly in the assessment. If you don't have the experience, then you're not going to get through the experience. So I think it's a very good system. It's a good award, and I'm looking forward toward working towards five stars as well ultimately.

Ray: Yeah, that'll be good. That would be interesting for the two of us.

Paul: Yes.

Ray: This trip we're going to do in Scotland for us this September - sorry customers, this is for Paul and me and Allan. And it's about pain and grief and enjoyment and maybe above all, whisky. I'm just really looking forward to it. Again, for me, if I'm going to go out and teach this stuff. I still need to be going out for me, and I still need to... Well, I'm excited. The trip, I've done parts of it before and linking it all up together and towing our boats up from one sea lockup onto a high mountain lock. I'm I looking forward to that? Not really, but photographs would be good.

Paul: Yeah, photographs would be good. So tell everyone the overview of this route then that we're going to do later in the summer.

Ray: Well, it started on the West Coast to Scotland on the sea in the lake. Now we're really weather-dependent. If the weather is lousy, we choose another starting point because there's adventure and I don't want misadventure. What we'll do from the lake is on the sea we'll head north across and make for Loch Nevis and along the coast of Moidart, which is just spectacular anyway and into Loch Hourn. And then sail or paddle or whatever we do to the head of Loch Hourn and through spectacular mountains. It is some of the best scenes in the UK. And then there's a single track road that leads from there to Loch Quoich, which is about 600 feet, a couple hundred meters up more.

Paul: 300 meters.

Ray: Yeah, yeah. I've forgotten how, whatever it is, it's a long way up. And we'd be towing up the boats on trolleys there. And in this stage, I think you need to remember Paul, that I'm almost a pensioner so and would be appreciated.

Paul: I normally have to stop you from pulling more than your weight on trips, not pulling your weight.

Ray: I'm just beginning to realize that assistance would be greatly received at any stage at this period of my life.

Paul: You know all that to sit in the boat while we pull.

Ray: That would be awesome. You and Allan Pennington towing me up the road to Loch Quoich. Oh wow! I'd have to lose weight for that or you'd really get stuck on that one.

Paul: I'd have to carry you like some sort of little crown like you were in a little jar or something.

Ray: A little whip not a heavy whip just to get the cracking noise.

Paul: Yes.

Ray: But from there, if everything is going well, there are these fabulous rose mountains around there. A couple which I've done. So that would be nice if we got the time to do that.

Paul: Oh yeah. That would be fantastic.

Ray: But I'm not promising. And then down into the River Garry or the Upper Garry which in its upper ridges it's going to end up with this waded in using ropes to line the boat and a bit of squiging, a bit carrying and a bit of something else. And eventually that takes us through Loch Garry and down into the garriates - the lower Gary - which is a down release. Not a big citing, I think there's going to be a little adventure there. One sort than the other. And then down into the Great Glen. And really, if the weather is good we'll turn back to Fort William. But along there it's so weather-dependent and it's just such a stunning area. And I am genuinely, well I'm sure you can hear that I'm excited.

Paul: Yes, you are. I'm sure if we can see you'd have your excited face on as well definitely.

Ray: We were out in the force five wind sailing the other day, which I'm hoping we're not going to have on this trip. And of the customers just look to me with a very surprised face and said, "You're stoked, aren't you? You've got your stoked face on." And it was like, most of the time I got a very calm manner of not

showing a lot with it but it was force five and we were sailing across wave with solo sailing rigs and I knew it was going to be exciting.

Paul: Yeah, that does sound exciting.

Ray: It was very exciting. I was led full length in the boat - the pink one that is.

Paul: Yeah.

Ray: Yeah, the new pink boat.

Paul: The low profile boat.

Ray: Yeah, the low profile boat. People send me messages, were you on [inaudible 00:30:10] last week? We saw a pink boat. It was me. The trouble is that if some of the land owners get to spot it and recognize it's me. With the access laws as they are in the UK, it could be interesting.

Paul: You need to camouflage one as well for stealth launching.

Ray: I think this is the key. I've got a green one. So on the days I don't mind I'll paddle...but the pink one's coming to Scotland. You'll be pleased to know it's very photogenic.

Paul: Excellent. Well, we'll need to make a film about that trip as well I think. So I'm sure it will be a center piece in that film as the star - the pink boat.

Ray: Yes, yes. Probably. You haven't mentioned the book yet.

Paul: I was about to actually because all of this does feed into the book. Now, clearly you've put an awful lot of work into the first edition. A lifetime of experience in your career in teaching people various different water crafts. What's now changed? I mean this isn't just a re-print isn't it? This is a second edition with additional material. What's changed between the first and the second edition and why is there increased emphasis on these areas compared to the first edition?

Ray: In one way it's almost the first edition I wanted. The publisher/editor Franco Ferrero from Pesda Press was phenomenal with the first edition. And he'd never done a book with these many photographs - it was 800 in the first edition, there's another 100 in the second in addition to it. He'd never done a landscape before because he wanted to show off the photographs. So for him, it was, a huge experiment as well.

And I kept adding things and at a certain point, Franco said, "No, that's enough." And I said, "Well, I'd like to include this. I'd like to include that." And really he convinced me is well that we had to go with what we had. And honestly we please, the reality was without Franco, without the designer it would not be as good a book as it is. We did a superb job.

But what the second edition has allowed me to do is adding those things that I really wanted and a few other thoughts and a few updates. And the advantage of having a really good body of customers who are quite prepared to say, "Have you seen this road?" or, "Why don't you do this, this way? You're showing this?" And one of my characteristics is to listen and to watch and to go, "I like that." So I've included some more stuff on solo rescues. I enjoyed you swimming in Loch inch to providing me the opportunity to...

Paul: Oh, that stuff.

Ray: That stuff, yes. I know you wanted to practice it but I was encouraging you for the photographs, I must admit it.

Paul: Well, I think it worked, didn't it? What we were doing.

Ray: Yeah, and I've tried that particular method with a lot of other folks in the last months through the winter and they've liked it. And I think this is one of the things about me. Although I feel my body is now slowing down. It hurts more at certain times and I really don't feel as brave as I used to. So I don't paddle as hard. But my knowledge is still increasing. I've got these tremendous opportunities to paddle with other folk and in other areas. So I get these influxes of ideas.

And part of it is to put things like that in there. So there's more on quick ways of rafting canoes up. Like I have a single photograph of the system in the first edition. But since the first edition, five years have gone by and I've played with that law and I've it made it my own, I understand it better, so I wanted to do a lot more on it. And even little things like I used to tie two poles together to make a big A-frame to hang a sail from.

I used to use cross slash and the maps [inaudible 00:34:16], it takes time and I might with a couple of customers and I said, "Well, have you ever seen this method?" And they showed me a quick method with a [clap age 00:34:23] and winding it up like a [inaudible 00:34:25]. It was just brilliant. But you then have to go and play with it. I don't just reproduce an idea somebody's given me. I

have to go play with that and make it my own and understand it. Where does it work? If you do it too tight you're going to crush your pole.

Paul: That was something that I thought about straight away. And luckily we didn't crush anything for a while, did we? But then one of us did, I think.

Ray: Yes. So again it's learning from experience.

Paul: Yeah. But I used that on my four-star assessment actually - that technique - and nobody else on the assessment including the assessor had seen it before.

Ray: No, and again and the assessors with Tom simple, they give you...

Paul: Thomas the second day. Yeah, that was the first day.

Ray: Yeah. Good assessors will look at this stuff and go, "I like that." But then you have to make it your own. You can't just duplicate what somebody else has done. You've got to go out and find when it works, when it doesn't work and all the wrinkles that go with it. So I've put in a load more stuff on tracking and lining. But the nice thing is doing it in real context so that the two extra pages of tracking from the French River. So much more about the decision making of tracking rather than the technique. There's plenty of photographs in there of technique.

In the first edition, this is more about the decision making, when are you going to use what? And same as with the lining of the Bloodvein in Canada because that's the last trip that we did. I have no idea how many rapids we liked. It's just part and parcel of moving through a wilderness. So we still have a sequence in showing technique but then can show it in context, of a wilderness trip with fully-laden boats. That works well. And then the other thing that really, from my...the children section I've expanded seem to have an interest in that nowadays with Mia coming up six years old.

Paul: I guess you were writing it before Mia came along and then when the book was published, she was very, very young - one year old maybe.

Ray: Yeah, she was coming on one year old or just after one. Lina took a photograph of her because I was away in Pambiche working and the first copy of the book arrived here. And Lina said, "Can I open it? Can I open it?" I was going, "I really want to open it myself," But Lina was not going to let me open it so she opened it and there was just one picture of Mia in the book, a full page photograph introducing Starting in the Canoe. And she got a picture of Mia looking at the picture, which was really nice. But this second edition, we've got

a lot more pictures of kids in there. Mia features a lot more thoughts on kids and how to introduce kids and the safety of kids in that environment.

Paul: I think that's the key thing that people underestimate, isn't it? Particularly I think if people are relative beginners themselves, that the consideration for kids is quite critical.

Ray: It's massive. And it's my advice to anybody if you're going to take out kids, go and either get yourself some quality instruction. It doesn't have to be anything to do with star tests or coach awards, go out with somebody who knows what they're talking about as a coach. Or join a club. And the thing about joining a club is very minimalist cost but you're around people who understand the risk. And I think that's the biggest thing with children. Understand the risk. What's the consequence?

And I go out with Mia in pretty cold conditions. I'd go out with her in pretty rough waters. But the decision making that I make...I have a bag of kit ready to grab, get her into more clothing or to change her out of wet clothing. I've already thought it through. I don't do anything bold unless there's at least two or three boats so we can give each other mutual support.

So all the way through its part of my decision making. And exactly the same way I would do with customers or customers' children. I have to make decisions about what I can do and what the line is. They're exactly same with Mia but realizing that she's small. And little children have very little resistance to cold. They go fast. The go very, very fast. So there's idea is on that in the book.

And then the other one really which was great, because one of the sequences that Franco had turned down in the first book because he felt we had too much there if you like, was on how to map out a rapid in your head and join up the points. So you're going to hit this wave and this gap in the rocks or this point on a stopper. And ways of creating mental maps. And we've got, I think, something like four pages added on that. The thing is, it's an absolutely critical part of how I run a river. The way that I actually create it in my mind where I'm going to go. And we've managed to add a really good section on that.

Paul: I mean that's something that when we've been in journeys together, you can see that that's how you process. You break it down, and then you stitch it back together again and right back to, "Okay, well I need to start here," and, "That's going to take me there," and it's exactly how you do that. And it is a key way that I'd see that you get yourself down a river particularly one that you don't already know or is so big a journey that you don't recall the details of it from one year to the next. And the conditions change as well of course.

Ray: Absolutely. And that's what I teach when I've been working yourself, that's how I've explained to you of how to things, it's how I teach customers. So really vital parts. So to get four pages on that unchapped a bit. And then finally we've added three expeditions as exemplars as something to inspire people. A book isn't just about how to make a decision.

It's not just about how to twiddle or paddle or walkit carry. One of the things I really hope it does for folks is it actually inspires them to go and do things. So I've got a very adventurous Scottish trip in there to show what is possible in Scotland. I've got a trip on the boundary waters in Minnesota, which is a flat water trip. So Kevlar canoes much easier to port out and one of our trips on the Bloodvein. And then the only really sad thing of it is I've used a photo of you for the cover pool.

Paul: And why is that so?

Ray: I don't know. I thought I'd dive a little bigger on this...

Paul: No, that's all right. I think the only person who's particularly bothered about that is Malcolm.

Ray: Yeah, yeah. He says it could have been him, couldn't it?

Paul: It could have been. But you can't see it's me anyways. It's the picture that's fantastic.

Ray: To me that picture, here in words. It's early morning, it's absolutely still. The rocks and the trees are all in different shades of grey. The mist is working its way down a series of rock ledges and rapids. And it's just to me one of the things that inspires me about the environments that I go into. It's just...And initially, I showed Franco and he wasn't that keen to use it as a cover.

He felt a couple of things. And then the more he looked at it, the more he realized that's what it was about. The first cover has a very big picture of me canoeing on it, which is fine. And Franco said, with that first edition into the British market, we're selling out. It's about you and your view of it. Whereas I've now got the cover that I really want which is, it's about the inspiration of canoeing. So I'm chuffed a bit to have that as a cover.

Paul: Brilliant. And I'll put a copy of that cover photo in the show notes on my blog as well so that people can see that as well so that they know what we're talking about. It's a fantastic photo. I think I've got...you put a mark-up on the

cover, didn't you? On Facebook a while ago. I'll use that and then people can see what it looks like. It is very inspirational definitely. It makes you want to get out there and do a journey straight away.

Ray: That's one of the things I really do hope that the book does. It isn't just about how to move the paddle. It is about inspiring people to go out and do things.

Paul: Yeah. And I think that people...I think you're right to include some stuff in Scotland as well. I've done some limited things in Scotland. I would like to do more in Scotland. We immediately think of going to Scandinavia or Canada for adventures, but there's a lot we can do closer to home as well. So I think if it inspires more people to go out and do some interesting things as well, that's fantastic. I think people can be put off by thinking they have to go somewhere international to have an adventure. They don't have to do that at all.

Ray: Well, the thing about it all is, when I really got committed into the canoeing coming from the mountaineering and a serious kayaking background, I couldn't afford to go to North America. I just had this dream of what a canoe was about. I was very much inspired by Bill Mason's films and his books. And to this day, they're a noted part of my collection if you will of books and things. But I couldn't do it.

So one of the things I knew the Scottish Highlands extremely well. I've roamed extensively some around winter through the highlands on foot and mountaineering and climbing. And so I thought, could we link up this patch of blue with this blue line and that blue line? In those days there were not the guide books, these things were not mentioned in the guide books at all. I met one particular man, Stewart Bell that was inspirational.

He'd done several trips, bigger than I was imagining at the time. And what he did very importantly knowing that Stewart was actually doing these things, linking up this little lines and patches of blue, was it freed my mind up. Because most people would say, "No, that's a silly idea, Ray," or, "That's not going to work," or, "Why do you want to do that?" Then you meet somebody who's already doing it and you go, "Okay, this is possible."

And now I listen and some of the trips we were doing back then which were the first time they were done and they were seen as extraordinary. Now I bump into somebody who's done it and its changing. People are accepting. It's beyond the standard River Spey, which is a fabulous trip. And the Great Glen, which again is a great trip. But there are those huge adventures to be had in the Scottish mountains linking up things. And even with that, the bits of guide book that you

do have is still huge adventurous. You really have to decide on what you see rather than a line in the book somewhere.

Paul: Yeah. And it's different to the forests of Canada as well, isn't it? Where it's a very different environment and a very worthwhile experience from a different perspective as well, different type of journey.

Ray: It is very much so. It's like this last summer; I did a trip to Vermont Pennington, so he, at least, has some idea of the pain involved in these trips.

Paul: That was the one you did in Scotland last summer.

Ray: Yeah. Crossing from Loch Morar to Glen Pin which probably should be called Glen Pain when you actually get into it. It's got to be one of the worst portages of my life.

Paul: Why was that Ray?

Ray: A whole variety of reasons. We were squeezing this trip in. I think this trip is phenomenal because I squeezed it in between bands of really bad weather, which meant in the early part of the trip where we were going to be heading into the prevailing wind and then onto the sea. And on the first day we caught, 57 kilometres. And that was because I knew what weather was coming.

So I've had to do certain bits of it before the bad weather came. And then we were into Loch Morar which is a freshwater loch heading deep into the mountains. And the glen at the end rises about 450 feet to the top of the Glen. There used to be a stoker's track there but it's now, other than the steeper sections across the flat areas, it's just a bulk. Al Funley had the hope that we could use a trolley. I tried to disillusion him on that one but until we attempted it, he didn't really believe me.

Paul: So you had Charlie with you?

Ray: We were part in tandem. And we bumped into the land owner who I would guess was in his 70s. He'd come in by a lonche, two ladies with him and I presume the gamekeeper, Billy. And we bumped into them at the head of the loch. And they said, "What are you up to?" And we said...but Billy and the landowners were in stitches.

They were absolutely rolling about at the thought of us taking the 16-foot canoe up this Glen through the box. And to my shame, I didn't get a photograph with them. Over the years, there are certain photographs you miss, and this is one of

them. And particularly them two smiling at the thought of what we were about to do. And I think there were times that I was knee deep in the box carrying a boat that weighs 70 up pounds.

So this is why I'm short and fat. I used to be tall and thin. I've certainly compressed the spine on this one. We got the boat and one load to kit up that afternoon and down at the head of Loch Morar. So walking back down is a buffy of a mountain shelter in Scotland that would generally open to the public.

So it meant at least we had a dry place for the night. But when I got back there, having carried this boat for three hours or so up the glen, there wasn't a single piece of my clothing that was dry. I'd been up to my waist in the water. I think there'd been a plague of frogs as well which didn't impinge on the journey but it certainly added a bigger course to the pain.

Paul: My goodness! And that's your idea of a holiday?

Ray: Yes, yes. I'm sure this coming September one will be much easier, Paul. I'm sure it will. But it will have its moments.

Paul: Bring it on, it'll be good.

Ray: Yeah, bring it on is the term. But the beauty of that is the next day we carried the last of the kit up and over. And the top of the glen, before you drop into Glen Pin is horrendously rough. We have to lower the boat down one bit on a road and then drag it through there, huge boulders the size of small houses. It's a really amazing place but then only a few hundred meters beyond the top of the watershed we're into a stream that is bare, probably not as wide as the canoe.

And we start off by having the boat, all the kit in the boat and just floating it in the swollen stream because of the rainfall that there'd been. And then we get in we're bouncing off the sides of the stream and push panting of with our shoulders or our elbows. You start with something...rarely, I can only think of one other occasion where I started in a stream that is as wide as the boat and then finished in a full-blown river a couple of days later. And that's quite something. Well, you talk of sourced to sea but when you've got to picture of your boat in something so narrow and yet you end up on the sea in Fort William in a river that's hundreds of meters wide, that's very, very special. And it's almost worth all the pain, almost.

Paul: Almost. And is Al still recovering? And has he agreed that it was almost worth the pain?

Ray: Yeah, he's agreed on that. You see I've tried to choose friends that aren't too intelligent because otherwise they'll never come on a second trip with me at this stage. And I was not only doing the second trip, but it's the next year as well. And I think there's something not quite right there. I will point him towards this podcast, so he understands that.

Paul: Yeah, that might be a good idea. And then in terms of other plans. So that's coming relatively close to home, we've got a few things we've got to look forward to but further away as well, haven't we? Including...not nothing in Canada this year, but we're looking to do something next year.

Ray: Yeah, going back to the river that I first did - my first Canadian river. My first trip out there was a flat water trip in Temagami. But going back to the Missanabie, it's a great river, been on it twice. It was on some television program I think, or rather on it, I'm not quite sure on that.

Paul: We'll not talk too much about that.

Ray: No, my memory is not good on these things. But the first time I did it, I did the full length of the river. The usual Ray thing is not having a lot of time and needing to be back for work. So we end up doing an 18-day trip in 13 days. And that's certainly not what I want to do with customers, but it was good experience. It's a fabulous river, there's lots going on, there's plentiful wildlife. So I'm really excited about being back out there, really. I'd like to get back on that river and enjoy that.

Paul: Yeah, I'm looking forward to it already, and it's more than a year away. And we need to get some details out soon for people. That would be good. And they can get themselves along with the next...we had this idea, didn't we? Of doing Ray-imposed big adventure every year and taking along some people.

Ray: Unsuspecting customers.

Paul: Well, I don't know about unsuspecting but...maybe about your bad jokes.

Ray: I know. I don't think we can sell my bad jokes as part of the package. Well, yes we can.

Paul: Yeah we can. The people who come back they've gotten used to it.

Ray: They tolerate it.

Paul: Yeah. But I mean I think we've managed to do that on the Bloodvein in the last couple of years. We've had an adventure. Not the adventure that you had when you were there a few years ago and when the water went crazy, but we've had some good adventures. I was explaining to someone the other day that we were looking at doing a different river next time.

Simply because, I think, when we do this bay, for example, we're guiding people, we're leading people down the river. And you know that river very well, I'm starting to know it reasonably well, having done it a fair few times in the last few years. But when you go and do something like the Bloodvein, when we did it with clients, you and I a couple of years ago, you've done it before once but you don't...it's a long journey and you don't remember all the detail. There are so many sets of rapids and you're making the decisions as we go and clients are involved in that. It's a joint venture, isn't it?

You're looking after people's safety and I'm helping look after people's safety on the land, you're looking after people's safety on the water. But in terms of decision making on the river, it's a discussion, isn't it? I remember very much with Rob and Malcolm and Lee and TC, we were literally getting to every single set of rapids and having a look at them and discussing and looking at the lines and you were letting us in to your thinking and other people were letting us into their thinking and it was a communal effort that. The problem is when you go back and you do it again the next year, it is a little bit fresher in your mind. And you remember the line you took or you remember where you got out to do the portage and it starts being less of that finding your way everybody in it together and more towards, "Okay, well I know how this is going to work out.

This is the efficient way of doing it." And I think doing another river takes you back to that position where you're in it together and you're working it out as you go. And they get that experience which they don't get if you're just leading them down the river.

Ray: Yeah, I'm totally with you on that. And I think with our discussions and the fact that we're both, if you use the terminology, we're reflective practitioners. We think about what we do. We think about it afterwards. We discuss it afterwards.

What goes well? What doesn't go well? And I think what we find that divide very clearly between the two of us is that...actually what people enjoy is being mentored. The people that come in with us don't necessarily just want to go down that river. They want to be part of that process. They want to be part of that decision-making. They want to be stood there.

I think on this next trip, one of my things is if they're making the right decisions even if it's not quite the decision I would make, as long as it's not a dangerous decision, then people should be doing those things. I shouldn't be there saying, "Do this, this and this." Obviously, I have the veto there. I'm not going to let people do something dangerous, or if there's a time pressure or a weather pressure, then you and I start up-ing our game. But then hopefully the sort of people that come along with us will realize that's what is happening and that we all need to be more efficient.

But part of the process is the same way I've got a group at the moment, they're going to Loch land. They're off doing two weekends with me, they're doing other paddling, but they're not paddlers before that other than one person. So what I'm having to do is to teach them how to make the decisions. I'm not going to be with them in the more serious environment. And one of the things I think we do extremely well is we teach people how to make decisions. How to do it themselves. Whether they wish to go on, some folks have since been home since those trips and done their own trips. But maybe in an easier context, but they're using us as a stepping stone. Other folk just like being part of the process.

Paul: Yeah, and they know what they're getting with us as well. There's a certain ethos both in terms of what we do on the river and what we do in camp and how we run the camp. Where we try and teach people about the environment as well. It's not just about banging down the river, it's also looking at the nature, looking at the trees and the plants around and understanding the environment that we're travelling through. And for me that's also a big part of it.

It's to become immersed in that environment. That's why I like the two-week trips in Canada I really love because you really do feel like you're immersed. You get halfway through on a calendar and you feel like you've been doing it for a while and then you've got the same to go again and you're really into it. That's a great feeling. I really like that.

Ray: Yeah. I think there is definitely a length to this thing. It's interesting if our friend Kevin Collin working in Canada is saying that the average length of the trip that people are now doing now in the wilderness is something like four to five days or nights.

Paul: I think it's less than that. He was saying a lot of people just go out for the weekends. They drive up to somewhere, camp on a Friday night, do a day of paddling and overnight camp and back again for a Sunday night drive back to Toronto or wherever. That's quite typical. Whereas 40 years ago, after the

Second World War, people were going out and doing month long trips. And I think that's reflected in the kit that's available.

I think we've talked about this before. I think I actually talked about it with Kevin when he was on the podcast. Usually, we have all the leather and canvass and all that, which is heavy when it gets wet of course, but it's durable. And now it's plastic stuff which is lighter, and it works well for a weekend or a week or two but beyond that, it starts showing some wear. And I think there's a lot of reflections of shorter tripping times out there. It changes people's perspective.

And I think for us, I think the other interesting this is going the other way where we're coming from the UK, and we're bringing customers, clients, from the UK that maybe are used to going out and doing days out, maybe they've done a spare trip or they've done something that involves maybe a little bit overnight camping and tripping but then you get into an environment where you've got much more kit, more food, you're completely reliant upon the boats to get you out of there. The decision making is different.

And I think just going back to that, is what I was going to say before, the decision making is not just about how to run the rapids, it's about consequence. And one of the things that I know I've noticed with you is that you're very, very protective of the boats particularly we're all used to paddling boats with flotation often at home, then when we get to Canada with outfitter provided boats, they don't have any buoyancy bags in them or flotation other than the kit that we lash in. You're very, very careful to protect those boats. And I remember, we've had some very competent paddlers with particularly thinking with Patrick last year. Where if we'd been closer to home, we'd have run things but because we were further away or you would have let him run it. But because you were further away and there was a potential rest of the boat, it was going, "No, let's not do that." And I think that to me is very interesting as well. That nuance decision making based on the environment as well.

Ray: Yeah. I think that's the most interesting one for me out there now. And I'm no longer as brave as I used to be. And I'm in my 60s; I've taken my knocks over the years, and I just don't recover in the same way. And I don't want to be as frightened anymore.

And then when you're dealing with somebody like Patrick who's patently in terms of these technical competencies, he runs his own business paddling and he's a more able technical paddler than me. And he was great to work with because he actually understood very quickly where I could give him the freedom if he was prepared to paddle so. Because as long as I felt it was no consequence to him, his partner or to the boat then I was fine even if I didn't

want to paddle it. But at the same time otherwise, I would say no. And a fair play to it, he accepted that.

He's got plenty of experience but not in that environment, but he could make that transition quite quickly, and the boat is really key. The environment he's created the birch bar canoe with the...that was the way people travelled through it. It was the efficient way. So the boat is in its proper place. And the boat is what you have to look after. The boat and yourself. And there were places we looked at very carefully because of the risk carrying a boat or lining a boat, the risk to our legs or taking a fall. Just unwanted in that environment.

It's creating a far, far greater hazard than here because of getting help and more. That's a hard situation. I think it's interesting getting people to change their mentality. So if we look at that on the boating front, yes that's one thing. But using a saw or using an axe and just the additional care you have to take for those tools in that environment.

Paul: Yes, absolutely. And we've seen it with axes as well where people are keen to use their skills, people are keen to apply their bush craft skills as well as their paddling skills but sometimes you have to say, "Well, you'll be better off using a saw for that or..." Again, going back to the observation of people being tired and cold and hungry, say, "Is that now the best time for you to be picking up an axe?" You're tired, you've been rained on all day, you've maybe not got great dexterity, you've got low blood sugar, you're trying to get a fire going, I understand that and you're trying to split some firewood out, but let us just have a think about being careful here because of those other factors. It doesn't mean that you can't use an axe, that's just...

And I think as you said, I'm good at that, step back and go, "Okay. You're at more risk of hurting yourself now with splitting that firewood in a dynamic way because you're tired, hungry, wet, cold, whatever it is." And once you recognize that fact, you can adjust and you can make double sure that you're doing things safely and not be like a bull in a china shop perhaps. Otherwise, those are the sort of things that lead to accidents and we need to avoid that on those sorts of trips. Because I've cut myself, not that badly, I remember a canoe trip I was doing on the French quite a few years ago, and I closed a lock knife on my index finger.

And it was not debilitating in and of itself but in terms of then paddling for a week with quite a bad cut almost down to the bone on your finger, that it's getting wet, it's hard to keep it closed, it's prone to infection, it's sore, you can't grip the paddle as well as you normally would. Even a small thing like that is an issue potentially. And Amanda and I had that cup size on the Bloodvein last

year. It's just that little rock shell that we click at the front. It wasn't a major thing to go down, but we just went slightly too far left, the front of the boat went into some slower water. I think it caught on a little bit of a rock shell and then we went sideways into that small...like a tiny stopper, wasn't it? And that took us over.

But then in keeping hold of my paddle when I fell out there, I really knocked my thumb. And then that was again, it's just a small thing but it's an...I had to work really hard to keep that. It kept healing and then cracking and any small injury can be, it doesn't mean to say you need to wrap yourself up in cotton wool and not do these things but it's just worth bearing in mind that these small things can become bigger issues. Because you're there for longer and you need to keep using your hands and your limbs and what not.

Ray: Well, it's not only that side of things. And I'll go with you totally on that. And it's those cuts and those abrasions and those swings that we've taken, that experience that makes us really a lot more cautious in that environment. And then the other side for me is we go back to the coaching thing. And one of the things they talk about is TTPP which is technical; so how you do a stroke, make the body move, whatever.

Tactical; where you are going to do these things. Physiological; how the body works in this context. And they very often are looking in terms of overall fitness. And the psychological; and to me when we do something in particular in Canada because of the duration of it, the psychological and physiological effect on customers who are perhaps not...when a float plane or a shuttle leaves us and then we're alone in the wilderness, you see the difference in their body language. It's a realization that this is a different place.

And then when the body aches because maybe they're not as paddling fit as they should be, or they're carrying canoes and the body aches in the first three or four days. And there's not only that physiological side that we can't afford to get them too achy in that first period. But psychologically it's difficult because you're thinking, "My body hurts but I've still got ten days to go."

Paul: Yeah. And is it just going to get worse and worse? And I'm I going to be able to cope? And I wasn't fit enough. I should have trained more. A lot of that sort of stuff starts coming in, doesn't it?

Ray: And again this is where the United Kingdom Coaching Certificate has worked for me. It's enabled me to understand what I do better. All the things that are in it are things that are in there are things I've used for years, but now I

can give a name to it in the way that I can give a name to a paddling stroke. So I found it a useful process.

Paul: Yes. It gives us a framework over the top of what you've been doing anyway.

Ray: It does. And for me when I talk to people and coach courses, I actually mentor in Canada, and I talk about physiological and psychological side effects.

Paul: Is that your dog in the background?

Ray: That's my dog in the background. It's been incredibly patient for an hour and a bit. It's now deciding that it wants to chase things around.

Paul: Tell us about your dog because I'm not sure everybody knows you've got a new dog.

Ray: Well, think those who've known me for some years knew my relationship with Dilly, and she was just amazing. She features in the book still to this day. And she went on all types of paddling courses. She came to the Spey with us; she's done trips across Scotland. She was a feature of my coaching, and she became an incredibly well-behaved dog and a very knowledgeable dog in terms of water.

The first year I was paddling with her, she didn't like me to put the boat over on its edge leaning it to one side as I crossed, made transitions from one current to another. A vital part of technique. She so disliked that. She'd could go the other way and fight me. I've got to mention one story here because I was telling it the other day.

In the early days, we're paddling with me when I was working. She would lie on the front airbag on the canoe with a pole over the side on a sunny day just chilled out to the night. And then this one day I thought it would be highly amusing because there was this big rapid coming up with a big drop on it. And she was half asleep with her pole over to the side. I thought I won't wake her up, I'll just go over it, that'll give it a shot.

Dilly always chose different places in the boat according to the grade of the rapid. She'd look at the rapid, assess it herself and then she'd either come back into the boat, stand in front of me or even stand behind me. If she went behind me you knew the rapid was pretty hard.

Paul: That's pretty smart.

Ray: That's pretty smart. Well on this occasion I went over this big rapid with her half asleep on the front. And as the nose of the boat goes after the first drop, she realizes, and she decided she wanted to be behind me - the safest place in the boat. Unfortunately, the shortest route was to bury herself in my groin as she tried to dive underneath me. So I ended up with a [inaudible 01:10:40], buried into my whatever at speed as I pulled down the rapid. I was like, "uuuuuhhhh!" I never did that trick again.

Paul: Well I guess that serves you right for trying to...

Ray: It was a real come upings that one. But we've ended up...this is really...we tried various names. And the names are not...and at this stage; Dilly is gone. This new name has nothing to do with me because Lina and Mia tried various names. And then we then did up with Billy. So we only have to change one letter on Facebook when it's eventually taken over on Dilly's view of the world.

Paul: You need a new Facebook page. You need to start a new...

Ray: It would be a new one in due course. But Billy has yet to go paddling.

Paul: Right. How old is Billy now?

Ray: About 16 weeks.

Paul: And what type of dog is he?

Ray: He's a collie and from working parents. He's a tri-coloured collie. So he's a very pretty dog, and we got him from one of the farms on the Bourbon Mountains. And would have been a working dog. So we've really got to make use of him. But he's 16 weeks. At some stage this week, he's going canoeing with us. We'll see how he gets on and how well-behaved he is.

Paul: Is he quite well-behaved anyway?

Ray: Generally. But Lina is the dog trainer of the family. She's the person who understands dogs, and she always gets a bit iffy if you like when people going, "Oh, wasn't Dilly great!" with this that and the other. And Dilly actually was trained by Lina. The only part that I added in was the canoe training and making Dilly a canoe dog. So, Billy, we'll see how it goes. He's quite stubborn and independent at times. He's a quiet enough dog.

Paul: So he'll fit in quite well with you then.

Ray: Yes, he will. He's the most stubborn between Lina, Myself, Mia and the dog.

Paul: Yeah, so he sounds well suited to join that family.

Ray: Yes he does actually.

Paul: And he's been very quiet. I've heard him...has he been chewing on something? I've heard him a little bit, but he hasn't barked on anything.

Ray: What you don't realize is that when you've been chatting in this interview, I've been getting up grabbing the dog and pulling something that he's chasing around the floor out of his mouth inside. And then we've had more moments of peace before he's taken off again.

Paul: Okay. I heard a few things going on in the background. I wondered whether you were just getting fidgety in your seat or whether the dog was moving around.

Ray: It's the dog.

Paul: Good, good. Well, I look forward to seeing some photos on Facebook of Billy's first outing on the boat then. That'll be interesting.

Ray: It will be, it will be. And it's funny because like a lot of young animals, the first times in the car, you really have to hold them. He didn't like to get into the car. You had to drag them into the car. Now, Lina and Mia went to the car and the first person in the car is the dog. He now sees it like it's exciting. And that's what happens with Dilly with the boat at first. She was really horrified by the boat. And then she became very excited because it took her places that were smelly, there would be other animals to ferret after...

Paul: And roll around in Otto poo and things like...

Ray: That was an absolute delight. Its absolute delight to be camping on the Great Glen to find my dogs rolled in that Otto poo.

Paul: And she has to share a tent with you.

Ray: No, she thought she was going to share a tent. My environmental credentials went out the window because I went and got my shampoo and I stood in the loch and watched. So it was that, or I don't know what I would have

done. There was no way I could have let her near the tent. It was just appalling; it was appalling.

Paul: Needs must stay.

Ray: Needs must. If it's the planet or me in that stage with Otto poo, then I'm afraid the planet has to go.

Paul: Yeah. Carry some biodegradable shampoo in the future or something.

Ray: I will in the future, Paul. Obviously, it was biodegradable I think.

Paul: So, we've mentioned Facebook. That's your main online presence really isn't it? In terms of where people can find you?

Ray: Yes it is. It's strange, I went onto Facebook kicking and screaming, but I really enjoy it. I enjoy the banter that goes on there and the bits and pieces. It seems to work very well for me. The pictures that I put up and the bits. There is a website raygoodwin.com which I update every now and again. Eventually, when people tell me, I have not put details of the book on it.

Paul: Well, we'll put details in the show notes under this on my blog as well. When is the book due out? What's the best estimate at the moment, the second edition ready?

Ray: It's gone to the printers. So there's no changing it now. And I am told that it is the 28th of April that it will arrive at the warehouse for coding. So I presume it's being printed in Hong Kong again which is where the first edition was. So they're well-travelled books.

Paul: That's kind of fitting, isn't it?

Ray: It is. Yeah, the first edition I actually followed the boat back from Hong Kong. And it has a little...

Paul: Well, paddled. You paddled behind it.

Ray: Now, Paul, was truly that necessary? But it has a VHF transponder on it. So I was able to follow it. The morning it came into Southampton, I got up very early. And actually you just get a little computer screen of the Isle of Wight in the Southampton waters. And I actually followed the individual ship in. You just have a little [inaudible 01:16:38] of the boat and then a label next to it what it is which you can click on to it. So all boats are the same. Then it came up all

the way into Southampton docks and then two tug boats came out and they didn't have names, they just had numbers which is really sad. And they pushed my ship with my books into dock, which was fantastic. When we had the reprint I was that sad I didn't do that. I may do it again for this because it's just good fun.

Paul: It's fun.

Ray: It is. So in some huge container-ship on one pallet in one container were my books on that first occasion. So 28th of April.

Paul: So people probably hope to start getting copies in May sometime.

Ray: Yeah. I'll start taking orders soon. If people are prepared to pay a lot extra, I promise not to sign them.

Paul: And to be fair to you, it's much better if people buy them directly from you, isn't it than from Amazon?

Ray: It is funny. If you buy say with the old edition, if you bought it on Amazon, I got 68 pence.

Paul: That's incredible. Again, people don't realize how little money actually falls through to the author of the book when something gets sold like that.

Ray: No, the reality is, and I can't really mourn too much about this because I've just been on Amazon ordering a bunch of stuff as well. It's convenient, it's easy. You know what you get and it's packed up. Some things that don't go via Amazon, and the reality is they company that supply this stuff I've gotten from Amazon I've used before so it's something towards them. For a specialist book, the royalties are relatively a small thing.

Because the editor or the publisher is held in a warehouse. There's very little money to be made with books. But the difference is with the last edition, I managed to sell well over a thousand themselves, which the publisher was quite stunned by.

Paul: And you're effectively getting a retail margin on that then, aren't you? If you're selling yourself rather than going to Amazon?

Ray: Yeah. So it really does make a difference. It makes it worthwhile financially.

Paul: People listening to this, please go to raygoodwin.com or contact him via Facebook or both and buy the book through Ray if you can.

Ray: And if you ask really nicely, I won't sign it. Apparently they're the really valuable ones.

Paul: The rare one. That after valuable, they're rare.

Ray: Certainly rare. Whenever I see anybody with one, I check if it's been signed and I wrestle them to the ground. Unless they beg me not, I sign it.

Paul: Scribble in it with a sharpie or something.

Ray: Something like that, yes.

Paul: Fantastic. Well, I think we're all...I'm certainly looking forward to I I know you're akin to say it's a second edition it's not a complete book. But it sounds to me like it's got a lot of really good extra stuff in there. And I've actually got two copies of your first edition. One that's pristine and one that I've carry it around with me if I want to have it around with me.

And I'll definitely be getting a copy of the second edition as well, I'll be looking forward to that. I know other people are looking forward to it as well. And it's worth it just for the front cover photograph I think. You can frame it for the front cover photograph if you don't want to read it.

Ray: To me it's a great photo but we've got another 100 photographs in there, and some of them are really, I'm chapped a bit, to be honest.

Paul: Well, that's a significant increase. I know there are a lot of photos in the first one. There are 800 in the first one you said, and another 100 is a significant increase and content.

Ray: It is.

Paul: Definitely, definitely. Well, I look forward to that. I'm sure other people will too. And I need to get you on an Ask Paul Kirtley as well. We can do a Q&A session around the time the book comes out. Maybe we can get that done in May sometime.

Ray: I'd look forward to that.

Paul: I think that'll be fun. So again, if people are listening to this and they're got questions for Ray if you email them to me paul@paulkirtley.co.uk and put in there Ask Paul Kirtley, question for Ray. And then we'll do a special edition of Ask Paul Kirtley when Ray and I can get together to film it and answer some of those questions. So around canoeing and canoe camping and canoe tripping, anything to do with that. I think that'll be a great little extra resource for people and a good way of people having their questions answered.

Ray: I'd be pleased to do that. But do they realize that actually I'm short and tubby not tall, muscular sort of [inaudible 01:21:19] looking?

Paul: I don't know. I mean I think that's why people call you the Yoda of canoeing.

Ray: I thought it was the large green ears actually.

Paul: Oh yeah. You need to sort out that mildew problem out.

Ray: Okay then Paul.

Paul: And on that note...

Ray: I think we'll leave.

Paul: Yeah, we'll leave. But thank you very much, Ray. That's an interesting chat, and I think it's a nice follow on from the last podcast we did, which was actually recorded on the first Bloodvein trip that we did with clients a couple of years ago. So I think to have this follow up now and to hear how some of that filters to the new book, that's a really interesting continuation. So thanks for sharing that with us Ray. It's much appreciated, Thank you. Take care.

Ray: Thank you.

Paul: Bye, bye. Well, thanks again to Ray for joining me for episode 13. I find that really interesting and I hope you did too. I'll put all the links that I mentioned in the show notes. And also check out raygoodwin.com in terms of exactly when the book is coming out. Also just to reiterate about the Ask Paul Kirtley, I'm not sure exactly when it will be but Ray and I when we can get together, we'll film an episode of Ask Paul Kirtley.

And if you're not familiar with Ask Paul Kirtley, I put that out both as a video show on my blog and on YouTube. And I also put it out as an audio podcast on iTunes and the Apple platform. As well as you can listen to it directly on my

blog. And I also release that on Sound Cloud as well. The links to all of those places are easily found at paulkirtley.co.uk.

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