

AUGUST 1979

ADVANCED SEA KAYAK CLUB

NEWSLETTER NO 14

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EDITORIAL

In my last editorial I explained the difficulties encountered with the French Maritime Authorities when attempting to land or depart from the French Coast. The situation as defined then has not changed. I know of at least four groups who have had their application to land on the French shores turned down. I have correspondence to hand to show the applications were sound, ie describing all relevant details and safety measures taken. I also have copies of the replies from the French Maritime Authorities in which they make it quite clear that the answer is NO.

So now what I have written to the French Maritime Authority through their U K representative, Mons Marchand, stating our case as sea canoeists. I enclosed copies of expedition reports from Cape Horn, Nordkapp etc and have also been in touch with our Director of Coaching who is going to set up a meeting with the French, the B C U and myself in an attempt to resolve this problem. I shall keep you all informed, of course.

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I also said in my last Newsletter that in principle I agreed with the efforts being made by the French to 'police' and control small boat users leaving and arriving on their coast. I did not, of course, mean that they should stop us altogether, just impose a measure of control to prevent unnecessary incidents. My comments provoked Alan Byde to write me the following letter which I publish in full :-

"Right now, lads, two days to go. Check details. Kayaks O K Fully rigged in accordance with the MOT poster Flares up to date Firearms' certificates Passports Launching permit Landing permit Car fuel permit Food coupons Harry! You cannot possibly bring that boat! Don't care if it is your new design, does it have a Government certificate of approval of its design and construction No! You made it yourself. Eh, lad, this will never do. You'll have us all thrown off the sea. You are not with us. Ring the police Bob, and tell them what's happened. Harry isn't going. Means nipping in tomorrow and having the permits altered. Right, now do we all have our super advanced mariners' ticket for seagoing kayaks, navigation tickets, doctor's fitness certificates, inoculation certification, British Federation of canoeing-kayaking-baidarkaing-surfskiing-coracling and curraging diploma, Royal Yachting Association sailing masters' certificate (deep-water), MOT certificate (kayaks) Have we done all that Now all we have is the customs' check at point of departure, weather check, police check, coastguard overriding veto on weather grounds. Hope they don't do a spot check for contraband. Sleep well lads.

All here now Personal identity cards Envelope of permits etc attached to deck for ease of access All passed the check point for launching. There goes the green flare, we can take off. Now, how far is it from Calshot to Cowes

Reported by a fly on the wall, 1984, Britain, South Coast."

If you have any views on my suggestion as stated in the last Newsletter, I would be pleased to receive them. After all, it is an important issue.

AUSTRALIAN EXCHANGE

An ASKC member from South Australia is interested in an exchange visit with a sea kayakist art teacher. Anyone interested contact me.

CIRCUMNAVIGATION OF TASMANIA

A short final report of Earle Bloomfield and John Brewster's successful circumnavigation of Tasmania as taken from The Advertiser, an Adelaide newspaper.

Launceston - The experts said it could not be done, but yesterday two Victorians made history by completing a 1600-kilometre circumnavigation of Tasmania by kayak. Earle Bloomfield, 28, and John Brewster, 31, became the first canoeists to paddle around Tasmania when they reached Georgetown about 1.20 pm. On December 23, a

month before, the two were due to set off. Tasmanian police warned that the proposed trip was "suicidal". The officer in charge of Tasmania's search and rescue squad, Inspector M Massie, recommended to the Tasmanian Police Commissioner that he ask them to reconsider the trip. At the time, Inspector Massie told the Press: "Our information from the local experts who have done trips in kayaks is that this is a suicidal trip".

The canoeists said yesterday that their trip had taken 66 days, but they had retained their health and fitness. They paddled on 42 days, averaging 37.5 kilometres each day, and rested on the remaining 24 days. Mr Bloomfield and Mr Brewster had allowed until the end of this month to end the trip, but they had no time for celebrations when they arrived. After a hamburger and soft drink they had to load their canoes and drive to Launceston Airport to catch a flight to Melbourne.

Mr Brewster said the trip had been completed with no real dramas because of both canoeists' experience. "We never came out of our kayaks", he said. Both men said they were not sick of canoeing. Mr Bloomfield said: "I love the sea, and I love canoeing". "If I were going to get sick of canoeing, I'd be well and truly sick of it by now". "I wouldn't do this trip again, now it's been done. But I'll go on future trips," Mr Brewster said.

A very full and comprehensive report of this expedition is well worth reading and is available from me at £2.30.

OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS TO THIS NEWSLETTER INCLUDE -

1. How to tell the times of tides by using a Prayer Book, by Oliver Cock.
2. Expedition report from Derek Hairon on his Alderney trip.
3. Sea Canoeing in the Netherlands by Mick O'Connell.
4. An excerpt from the "Coastguard" magazine about weather forecasting for those at sea.
5. The Safety at Sea Rule book.
6. A specimen copy of ASKC letter headed paper.

FOR SALE

ASKC ties at £2.00 each inclusive of P & P.

ASKC stickers at 30p each inclusive of P & P.

ASKC letter headed paper at .05p per sheet (orders in multiples of tens please).

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DON'T FORGET - THIRD NATIONAL SEA CANOEING SYMPOSIUM - 15/16 DECEMBER 1979  
to be held at Cliff College, Calver, Sheffield, sponsored by ASKC. Attendance open to all on 1st come, 1st served basis. Cost £16.50 per head, all inclusive. Applications to me please.

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Expedition reports - News - Views and Opinions for inclusion in the next Newsletter to me please.

J J Ramwell

## SEA CANOEING IN THE NETHERLANDS (Ex - LOAM BACKSTOP)

On the weekend of the 2nd December 1978 seven young soldiers attempted to circumnavigate the Dutch island of North Beveland. Setting out at low water from the dam at Vrowen Polder we calculated that the tide should take us to the Zandkreek Dam. From there we would have to paddle the tideless Veerse Lake in darkness to return to the starting point. It was very cold, bright but somewhat misty as we launched down the sand. Just 20 minutes later we had our first incidents. Lofty pulled a shoulder muscle and we towed him 2 miles to the shore. After some warming mouthfuls of hot coffee, he set off on foot for the camp site with Ginge who had already had enough of being cold, wet and bored.

The flood tide increased in strength and carried the remaining 5 of us along quickly. In the narrows by the artificial work islands the waves humped up and gave us our first bit of fun. We turned into the eddy behind a buoy and rafted up for a short rest. Nobby had more difficulty turning his Nordkapp than the rest of us and looked very unsteady at times. We landed at the camp site, recovered the kayaks from the previous landing, rescheduled the land based support party and enjoyed a welcome lunch.

The clouds and mist cleared completely and for half an hour we were warm. Only 4 of us put to sea again to take advantage of the tidal stream which raced us along through minor but exciting overfalls on our way to Colijnsplaat. We out-manoeuvred a fishing vessel which had left the safety of the main fairway to investigate us. It was like a game of chess, but fought with fear that we might collide at a speed of 6 knots. The harbour soon appeared and we took a break shore in a quayside cafe.

Then the weather turned nasty on us. The wind backed and drove against us. Clouds came in from nowhere and the meagre wintry sun was gone. We battled our way under the Zeeland Bridge (the longest in Western Europe). It was growing dark and Ray complained of very cold hands, which turned out later to be frost 'nipped'. Taking shelter in the private harbour of Kats we chewed on a Mars Bar and got torches ready.

Pushing through the heavy swell at the harbour entrance we had the unpleasant prospect of turning across the waves to face up the Zandkreek on the last leg of the seaward route. The water was shallow and 2-foot waves were breaking over us, making progress in a straight line very difficult. Mac was swearing and cursing, the swell was giving him a hard time. He would have drifted away from the rest of us and disappeared into the gloom forever, if we had not repeatedly shouted "Come across Mac!". At long last we were over the main channel and in deeper, less troubled waters. Using a red flashing light in transit with a distant hotel, we closed the shore. Another much brighter white light flashed at us. We responded with our torch - it was our support party. Ten minutes later it was all over. Four cold and soggy sea canoeists tumbled themselves onto the old jetty and decided that half way around was enough in wintry conditions.

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Mick O'Connell.

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### SODD'S LAW

Sir Josiah Sodd (1770-1899). Born prematurely at the wedding of his parents, an Irish gravedigger and the Duchess of Bootle, Josiah met many mishaps in his infancy. His father, celebrating the boy's birth, slept it off in one of his own graves and was accidentally buried beneath a coffin. Accidents such as these led Josiah to formulate his first law. ERRARE QUID POSSIT SODDIT - if anything can go wrong it will. This later became his family motto. Josiah determined to devote himself to the study of SODDISM and the extension of SODD'S LAW. At age 3, he conducted the famous JAM BUTTY EXPERIMENT, dropping 3,874 butties to check frequency with which they fell jam side down. Defined his second law 'The probability of a dropped jam butty falling jam side down is directly proportional to the cost of the carpet'. Josiah's youth was spent furthering the study of SODD'S LAW, producing several new laws, notably :

- 3 Enough research will support any conclusion.
- 4 Everything takes more time than you have.
- 5 Whatever you set out to do, something else will have to be done first.

By now his fame brought students with SODDISTIC tendencies to study him; later to become famous were Murphy Parkinson and Hoffnung. These students inspired him to produce several brilliant additions in later years, the most famous being :

- 6 Every explanation breeds more questions which need explanations which breed etc.
- 7 All constants are variables.
8. All warranties and guarantees become null and void on payment of invoice.

True to form, when knighted by the King, Sodd lost his left ear when the sword slipped. After being knighted, Sir Josiah applied his mind to practical applications. Classes were then held on the subject of cars where Sir Josiah noted that :

- 9 The minor part which wears out is always irreplaceable.
- 10 When your windscreen shatters it always rains.
- 11 When you have a puncture the jack never works.
- 12 If you have a Japanese Car, the broken part is always available, ex stock in Japan, at a cost of only £2.32. Transport costs £45 and it takes 3 weeks on the boat.

In the house, Sir Josiah formulated from experience the following Laws applicable to every DIY enthusiast :

- 13 Any item cut to length will always be too short.
- 14 The most fragile piece of equipment is always dropped.
- 15 The vital tool is always mislaid.
- 16 Paint drops always get onto the carpet and furniture.

Sir Josiah even devoted some of his time to formulating a set of laws for Canoeists

- 17 The best stopper to play in always conceals a boat wrecking rock!
- 18 The hardest gate on a Slalom course is always the one everyone else finds easy!
- 19 When you are first off your alarm clock always stops!
- 20 When you are late for your run you have always forgotten something!
- 21 When you are judging the numbers are always illegible!

Sir Josiah spent his declining years in compiling his autobiography. Unfortunately he died before it was published. It later became a multi-million seller. Sir Josiah composed his own epitaph which reads : "Whatever task anyone attempts will be thwarted by the intervention of whatever part of Sodd's Law is applicable to the task in hand!".

Tim Cannon

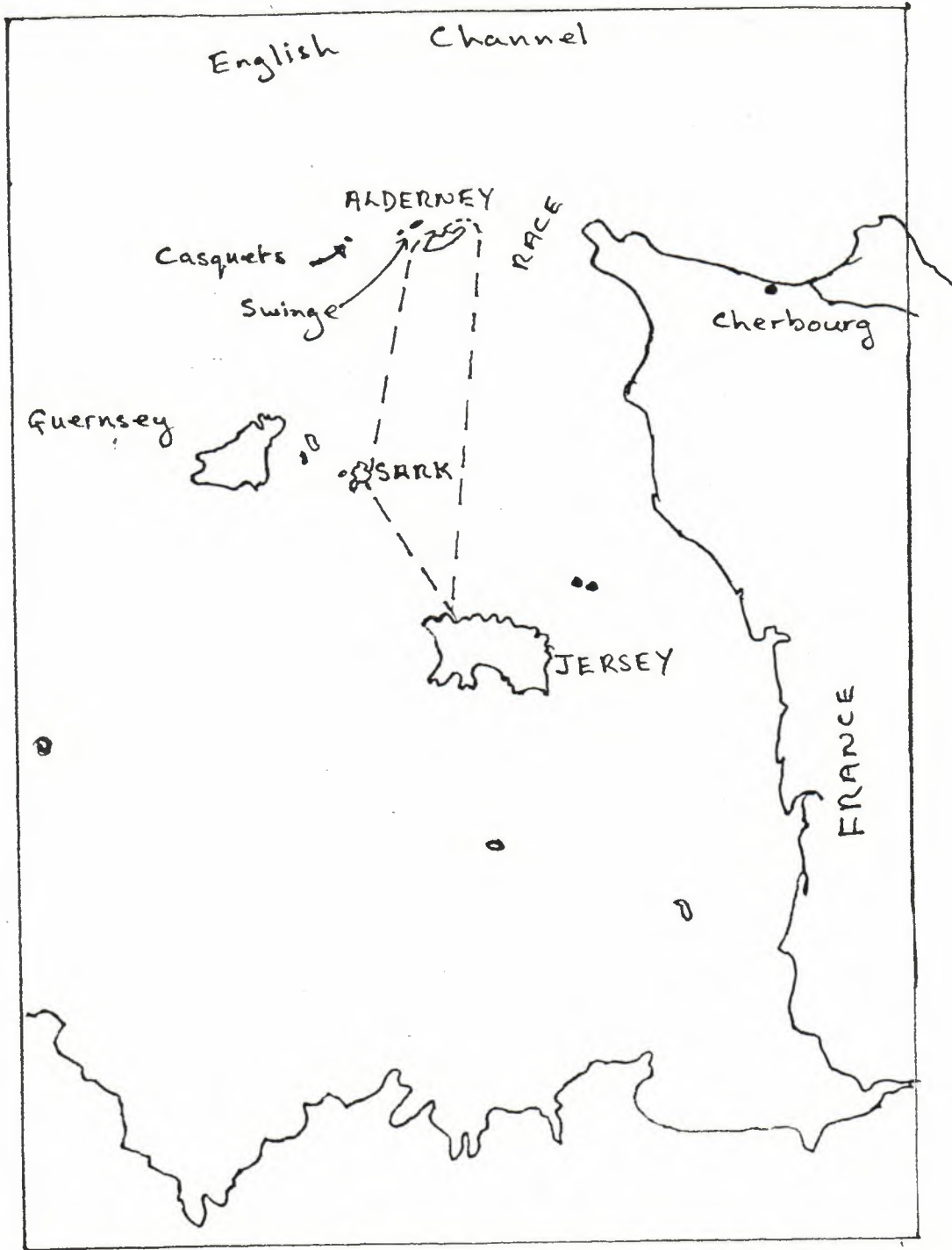
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#### ALDERNEY TRIP

The island of Alderney with its famous tidal race of up to 10 knots (resulting from the large tides of up to 40 feet) presents an interesting challenge to the sea canoeist. Added to this a trip to Alderney from Jersey posed the challenge of accurate navigation with allowance for the tidal stream and a high degree of commitment, plus the knowledge that no-one had canoed to Alderney before. Due to the various commitments of other local canoeists the group which finally met at Greve de Lecq beach on May 5th consisted of Franco Ferrero, his brother Steve (attempting his first major trip), and myself.

Rather than paddle directly to Alderney it had been agreed that we should travel via Sark in order to obtain more favourable streams the next day to Alderney. Sark, although 14 nautical miles distant, could clearly be seen with the 250' cliffs which surround the island thrusting upwards from the sea bed. Even from Jersey the details of the houses and a few trees could be seen which soon led to Franco grumbling that the island never seemed to be getting any closer. Once at sea with a moderate swell and a NW3 headwind, the trip to the island proved to be relatively straight forward until shortly after lunch when Franco obviously began to look unwell and complained of being very sick. This was particularly worrying in that Franco was hardly ever ill at sea and has never suffered from sea sickness. Sitting more than 7 miles from shore there was little that could be done apart from paddling onwards with the hope that the next few days were not going to be put at risk by Franco falling ill. Luckily it turned out that he had probably eaten too much!

Nearing Sark, we changed course for the tiny harbour and Pt Robert lighthouse. We soon discovered, however, that the excellent visibility had deceived us into believing we were nearer the island. As a result NNE stream along the coast swept



us past our landing and we were forced to paddle against the stream to Creur hbr. 3½ hours after leaving Jersey 3 Nordkapps slipped into the tiny harbour to be greeted with the puzzled faces of the local fishermen and the usual question "Whereze you come from". Our reply "Jersey" led to a loud burst of laughter and shaking of heads. It was clear what they were thinking "only those nutters from Jersey would be mad enough to paddle to Sark!" After a long hard plod up the hill to the top of the island we made camp. Immediately the peacefulness was noted for apart from some tractors the island population of about 700 use only horse and carts. Unlike the other Channel Isles Sark is very different in that it is still governed along feudal lines with a lord of the manor who is entitled to one thirteenth of the selling price of a tenement, every tenth sheaf of corn and, more strangely, he is the only person allowed to keep a full bitch or have pigeons.

The next morning we were up to catch the 0745 forecast which was excellent. Though still NWly the wind had dropped to a 2-3. During the night the lights of Les Casquets lighthouse to the west of Alderney had been visible but by the morning had been lost in a light mist. Having made final checks of our chartwork we were on the water by 1145 and were soon heading up the Great Russel towards Alderney 18 miles distant which was still hidden in the light mist. Jokingly Steve remarked that if anything went wrong we could always turn back, only to loose his grip when Franco replied "Oh no you won't" and went on to point out that we were getting pushed northwards more and more and that we were going to Alderney "like it or not". Rather than head through the race it had been decided that we would enter the Swinge which is a 2 mile wide channel between Alderney and the tiny islands of Burhou. Like the race overfalls were clearly marked. Nearing the coast we were soon aware of the speed at which we were now travelling as we shot past Les Etacs rocks. To our surprise the seabed was exceptionally clear even though soundings reported depths of 10 metres.

Entering the Swinge large 'oily' swells appeared as the channel came into view and overfalls stretching the entire width of the Swinge could be seen. Rather than go straight through the overfalls with the chance that we might be swept across to Cherbourg and an unpleasant welcome from the French authorities, we cut in close to the cliffs. Unexpectedly, the eddy reported in the pilot was not present and about 10 minutes later, with a few extra seeps of the paddle, we rounded the breakwater to paddle into the island's harbour at La Braye.

A visit to the sailing club to inform people of our presence led to the offer of a bath and an invitation to a dinner party! Rather than walk we decided to paddle across the bay to the camp site at Saye bay where "you pay what you think".

During the next two days we had planned to canoe to Les Casquets l.h. but this plan was soon changed following the fantastic hospitality we received and the pleasantness of the island. Instead we explored the island on foot, passing hundreds of German bunkers which had been built during the occupation when the island had been evacuated. Earlier examples of the island's strategic value at the entrance to the Channel could also be seen with many British fortifications. Perhaps the strangest feature, however, was the pier built at the bottom of a 70 metre cliff which we discovered had been the site of a quarry. Sitting in a pub that evening the extent to which the island is exposed to gales was clearly revealed. At first I thought a photo of a wave breaking looked somewhat surrealistic until I realised that the wave was breaking over the 25' high x 40' wide and 1 mile long breakwater! Other pictures showed huge sections missing from the breakwater. Our decision to stay 2 days in Alderney meant that we would therefore have to travel directly to Jersey some 30 miles distant passing through the Race 3 days after springs.

Again the day dawned fine and sunny with hardly a bit of wind. After fond farewells to our hosts we headed out of Saye bay passing the lighthouse and Les Homeaux Florains fort to enter the Race. To our surprise it was virtually calm (which contrasted to the previous 2 days). A few overfalls were visible as we charged along. At one point the water hit a large rock on the sea bed creating

a strange effect of dropping completely out of sight for a few seconds. In superb weather we headed South with a lot of help from the Race. With a heat haze hiding Jersey there was nothing else to do apart from settling down into our own paddling speeds as we passed the overfalls of Banc de Scholl 1 mile to starboard. Soon Herm disappeared behind Sark and the outlying rocks of the Paternosters came into view. Five hours later our 3 Nordkapps slid onto the beach at Greve de Lecq marking an end to a memorable paddle.

Derek A Hairon

HOW TO TELL THE TIMES OF TIDES TO 2299

by OLIVER COCK

No, this isn't a joke, although I don't suppose many of my readers will be alive in 2299 - well, not in their present forms, anyway; but I think the method may be useful to some of them between-times. And to prove my point I'm going to start with a little tide table that I have in my possession for 1971, for Shields Bar (Mouth of R. Tyne, you ignorami!). The tides, as everybody knows, hang upon the moon and sun, but the moon principally, and their rotation round the earth - sorry! The earth's rotation - no both! The job is to find out the state of the tide on the day on which you hope to be able to muck about in a canoe at the seaside. So, out of my head I am going to suggest that we want to go canoeing at Shoreham this August Bank Holiday Sunday, 26th August, and we have misplaced our 1979 Tide Tables.

All we want is a Church of England Prayer Book. Near the beginning of the Prayer Book there are a lot of tables. The ones we want are those to find Easter Day. There are six in my book. The two that I am going to use are the first and third, because for some unexplained reason the first is sometimes one day wrong and the third table puts that right. What we've got to find are the dates of the Paschal Full Moons in 1971 and 1979. Full moons give us Spring Tides, and the Paschal Full Moon is the one immediately preceding Easter Sunday. Don't ask me why; there are reasons, but they need not bother us here. Let's start. Taking Table One, we learn we must find the Golden number for the year(s). Here, side by side, are the workings out-

<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">Add</td><td style="text-align: center;">1971</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">1</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">1972</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">1972</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">103</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">15</td></tr> </table>	Add	1971		1		1972		1972		103		15	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">Add</td><td style="text-align: center;">1979</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">1</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">1980</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">1980</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">104</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">4 over</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">4</td></tr> </table>	Add	1979		1		1980		1980		104		4 over		4
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Divide by 19

The remainder is the Golden number for the year

These two numbers now appear in our table as Roman numerals. Therefore they are -  
For 1971 - XV For 1979 - IV  
Against these two numerals our Tables show -  
For 1971 - Table One: April 10th Table Three: April 11th  
For 1979 - Table One: April 11th Table Three: April 12th  
(My 1979 diary tells me that full moon is on April 12th. So table three is the correct one; but you must use Table One to work out the Golden Number. All very difficult!).

So we learn so far that the Paschal Full Moon for 1979 is only one day after that for 1971. That means that all the full moons for 1979 are one day after that for 1971. That means that all Tides are one day later. So, if we look in our Tide Tables for August 25th 1971, we shall have the times of the tides for August 26th 1979 at Shields Bar - approximately. The table shows: B.S.T.  
August 25th 06.34 19.04

Next we've got to convert this to Shoreham. My little table for Shields Bar says-  
Tidal Differences with Shields Bar  
Dover:- 4 hours 35 minutes (i.e. Dover is 4 hrs 35mins earlier than Shields Bar).  
So more sums: High Tide at Dover on August 26th 1979 will be:

<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">Less</td><td style="text-align: center;">06.34</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">04.35</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">01.59</td></tr> </table>	Less	06.34		04.35		01.59	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">Less</td><td style="text-align: center;">19.04</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">04.35</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">14.29</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">B.S.T.</td></tr> </table>	Less	19.04		04.35		14.29		B.S.T.
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	04.35														
	01.59														
Less	19.04														
	04.35														
	14.29														
	B.S.T.														

I'm going to cheat! I said this system is approximate. It at least tells you more or less at what time of day high tide will be, morning, afternoon or evening. There are other things which will alter the times of the tide as well as the sun and the moon, the weather for instance, so you'll have to check again when you get there. My 1979 diary shows high water at Dover at -

	00.38	and	12.57	<u>G.M.T.</u>
<u>Add for B.S.T.</u>	<u>01.00</u>		<u>01.00</u>	
	01.38		13.57	
Difference	21 minutes		52 minutes	(Not bad, eh?)

But we haven't got to Shoreham yet!

Shoreham's tidal constant with Dover: + 0.03

Oh, well! What's three minutes among friends? I'll leave you to add them on.

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