

August Volunteer Focus

Across the country, volunteers are making outstanding commitments to Paddlesport. Without the coaches, officials, committee members, administrators and helpers the sport could not exist as it does today. A special thanks goes to all volunteers and this section will provide the opportunity for clubs, centres and committees to say a special thanks to their volunteers.

Name: Neville Simmons

Club: Banbury & District Canoe Club

Qualifications: Level 3 Placid Water Coach and Competition Coach

Recently celebrating his 75th birthday, Neville coaches at the club three days a week without fail and has been doing so for as long as the club can remember. His dedication to the club doesn't stop there either. Neville is a member of the club committee; a club trustee; helps organise club events; and contributed to the school development programme through organising a school's bellboat festival last year. Despite recovering from surgery, he even finds the time to take part in training himself, and is still an active racer.

As an expert in glass-fibre boat repair, Neville runs master classes to teach people how to repair their boats. Its hard to imagine Neville is left with much time to spare, but when he does find the time Neville can be found enjoying gardening; carpenting; and doing odd jobs (admittedly for the club – only last week Neville was hard at work repairing the clubs lawn mower!). Being in charge of the twin group Hennef Canoe Club in Germany, Neville went back to evening school to learn to speak German and has turned into a computer whiz after gaining his European Computer Licence.

As fellow club members say: "Neville doesn't sit still much! He is an asset to the club and an inspiration to everyone." Neville's dedication to the sport and his club is clear to see and is a role model within Paddlesport. Even when Neville takes time out to spend with his loving wife Peggy, the couple enjoy boating on the Norfolk broads but he will no doubt have to be dragged away from any temptations to work on his boat!

Many thanks to all the volunteers in Paddlesport. Let Canoe England know about volunteers in your area for the chance for them to be recognised in Canoe Focus and receive a special gift of thanks. Email volunteers@bcu.org.uk or write to the Volunteer Coordinator, British Canoe Union, 18 Market Place, Bingham, Nottingham NG13 8AP.