



molliette

The annual journal of the WEST MERSEA YACHT CLUB Founded 1899



December 2016

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Cover photo:

*Hannah Mills and Saskia Clark
win gold in Rio*

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Editorial

Well, here we are with our Olympic edition, squeezed in between a wealth of members' sailing (and laying-up) experiences far and wide: Russia, Finland, Sweden, Brittany, Corsica, Spain and the Azores, not to mention Rio. All this plus racing and cruising much nearer to home. Please enjoy!

2016 marks the 10th anniversary of the Molliette in its present form and 13 years since I took over as editor from Faith Tippet who first thought of it in 1993. The Molliette would not have developed as it has without Faith's original inspiration and the support and encouragement of successive Commodores, for which I am very grateful. I am now standing down as Editor and look forward to handing over to my successor early next year.

Meanwhile please send any contributions via the Club Office. Ideally send text in MS Word or as an e-mail attachment. Pictures, with suggested captions to identify persons/boats/places, are best as JPEG files, highest resolution possible but not embedded in Word files and, for large numbers, on a CD or memory stick.

As always, early contributions and boat names in italics will be much appreciated.

COLIN CAMPBELL
Editor

From the Commodore



Welcome to the 2016 edition of the Molliette Annual, a publication of which we can be proud thanks to all the contributors and the dedication and hard work of our editor.

As I reflect upon the events of the past year and what our

Club has achieved I am satisfied that we continue to move in the right direction to maintain our position as one of the leading yacht clubs on the East Coast and the only one that is open 365 days a year! Since 1899 our predecessors have worked hard to achieve the standards set by our founders that we now enjoy. I consider it to be our duty to maintain and improve these standards both on and off the water.

The restoration of the Molliette Bar, balcony and finishing kitchen on the first floor was completed in January and opened in time for the AGM. This has been a great asset to the Club and enjoyed by members both throughout the summer and for Long Room functions. Yes, I know that we do not have draft beer in there yet but in all other respects it is a huge benefit and has potential for even more use. As we go to press plans are also in place for a refurbishment of the ground floor in January, the completion of which, to the relief of our Hon. Treasurer, should see the end of major building works to the Club for several years to come.

New pontoons between the piles in Ray Channel have provided much needed additional mooring facilities for visiting yachts, member's boats and the growing Squib fleet. They are working well and in due course I am sure that more will be installed.

Racing has been well supported both locally and away from Mersea where we continue to 'fly the flag' for our club and obtain very respectable results. Support for EAORA races continues to dwindle but this is not unique to our club and I hear the same story from other clubs that I visit. Our White Sail series however is thriving with a record number of entries for Mersea Week in almost tropical weather which resulted in our lawn being full to capacity in the afternoons. Cruising both locally and abroad is growing in strength and a full programme was well supported with 19 boats and over 50 persons participating in the last cruise to Tollesbury.

The growth of the Squib fleet has been encouraging and it has been exciting to see them

starting and finishing on the Club Line for all to enjoy.... a trip down memory lane to when the WMYC Sprites did the same thing in the 1950's and 60's. In April we hosted the Squib Open Meeting with a total of 21 boats (including six from WMYC) representing seven different clubs.

We remain a popular destination for other clubs' cruises and thanks for this must go to our launchmen who find them moorings and to our staff who make them so welcome. In June we hosted 80 members and their partners and 17 yachts from the Royal Yacht Squadron on their East Coast Cruise. A very enjoyable reception was held on the evening of June 14th followed by a superb breakfast in the Long Room the following morning. I subsequently received a letter from their Commodore saying how much they had enjoyed their visit.

June 25th saw a successful Club Ball, reverting to the traditional menu of smoked salmon and strawberries. An excellent band kept everyone on the dance floor until late, except for those who were upstairs in the casino! Numbers were slightly down on some past years but a thoroughly enjoyable evening was had by all which will hopefully secure the event for the future.

The highlight of the year was that two of our members, Saskia Clark and Hannah Stodel, represented Great Britain in the Rio Olympics and Paralympics. Saskia returned with gold in the 470 class and we are immensely proud of both girls in representing their country, Mersea Island and the West Mersea Yacht Club at the world's top sporting event.

Sadly, after 13 years, our Editor Colin Campbell will be standing down and we will be looking for a replacement for 2017 onwards. On behalf of us all I would like to thank Colin for all the effort and hard work that he has put in to make the Molliette such an enjoyable read for so many years. Thank you Colin.

Finally, none of the Club's achievements would be possible without the support of the Flag Officers and Committee who work tirelessly throughout the year, supported by the hard work and dedication of our staff in the office, kitchen, bar, restaurant and on the launches. I would like to thank them all most sincerely.

I wish you all a very Merry Christmas, a happy New Year and fair winds in 2017.

MICHAEL WHEELER
Commodore

Swedish Highlights

For years we have dreamt about what we might do when we retired and the dreams have always been about adventures. At one time we wanted to cycle around the world. Then we got into sailing. I fancied the ARC and then round the world over two years. As we got older we got softer, or maybe just more realistic and less ambitious. We have sailed dinghies with our children, Will and Harriet, over the years. We have done yacht flotilla holidays in the Med and Caribbean and then ventured alone on bareboat charters. In the UK we crewed racing yachts, mainly Robin and Rachel Gozzett's *Phantom*. But we never planned to have our own boat until we could spend the amount of time enjoying it that the costs of owning demands!

At the end of 2012, we bought a Nauticat 331, *Tempus*, which we thought would be perfect for living aboard during future summer travels. At just over 11 metres she has terrific accommodation plus a pilot house, allowing us to sail from inside - in PJs, slippers and smoking a pipe if necessary. She has two double cabins. The compromise is that if you want to sail, expect it to be slow, otherwise use its beefy 75hp engine. We had two seasons exploring the East Coast from Lowestoft to Ramsgate, also Boulogne. By now we had decided that a circumnavigation of the UK would be good. But, as Linda studied for her Yachtmaster under the tutorship of Ian Draper at West Mersea Yacht Club, Ian persuaded us that time in the Baltic might be more fun. The idea of short day sails between pretty anchorages in better weather than the UK

has to offer had definite appeal. With a summer clear of inconveniences such as weddings (didn't mean it Will, Jodie, Will and Harriet!) we decided that we would spend the summer of 2015 heading off to Holland and then the Kiel Canal and into the Baltic.

We spent five weeks travelling the 'mast-up' route in Holland from Vlissingen to Delfzijl. We became very fond of the Netherlands. The German Bight on the other hand can offer challenging sailing conditions, especially in North Westerly winds which funnel the sea into the Elbe estuary, where the tides are very strong. The German Friesian Islands have shifting sands making access to the islands tricky. So timing and preparation for that part of the trip were critical and we had to wait several days in both Delfzijl and Norderney for the winds to abate. The Kiel Canal was easy and the Danish islands wonderful.

What follows are highlights of the Swedish part of our trip before over wintering at

Nykoping, just south of Stockholm.

July 28, Hano

Neither of us slept well last night. Not sure why but when we woke the rain was rattling on the coach roof. We decided to make an early start with the wind forecast to increase from 16 to 26 knots. So this is what counts as a good weather window! We motored, hoping to make the 18 mile dash to the small island of Hano in good time. We should have deployed sails but we didn't want to get wet. In the event the wind was about 12 knots most of the way. The current atmospheric pressure was unusually low at 997mb. We were in the middle of a depression (I don't mean mood - we are irrepressibly cheerful!)

We immediately spotted that our new Danish neighbours constantly wield a vacuum cleaner. We've never seen this obsessive behaviour on boats in the UK. In fact it is generally regarded as a psychiatric disorder that requires treatment.



We had yet to confirm where we would leave our yacht for the winter. I had found this somewhat frustrating and was pestering one particular boatyard for a reply. A Swedish yachtsman, Ulf, whom I met in the harbour kindly compiled a list of options for us and delivered it later in the evening with Ulrika and they stayed for a number of beers. They also gave us hints on small anchorages to find in the archipelagos. The message seemed to be that we would eventually hit a rock but advised "Just do it slowly"!

July 29, Hano

In the morning Viv looked at every weather forecast imaginable. Both the Danish and Swedish predicted gales today. I thought maybe we should stay here for another day and pulled the covers over my head! Our Swedish neighbours left, as did most of the yachts in the harbour.

The wind reduced throughout the day and we felt lame. We should have gone, the wind would have been behind us, what was the problem? Two British yachts arrived, berating the unpleasant experience of heading into the wind from Karlshamn. "The wind was great for heading to Karlskrona, the yachts were stonking along!", said Trev. We felt embarrassed that we were still there.

After a brew with Kay, Trev, Keith and Pat (CA Members) we took ourselves off for a walk along the colour coded paths across the island. Two hours later and much relieved we arrived back at the harbour. Someone was having a laugh when they took their brush and paint pot out this year: there were numerous paths through the moss and fern covered woods but following them was like an assault course!

July 30, Karlskrona

This was our sort of day: shirts sleeves in the warm sun and one knot of breeze, occasionally gusting two knots, although it did pipe up a little later as the clouds arrived. Not a day to give the sails a workout. So farewell to Hano, destination Karlskrona, Sweden's naval base with an interesting approach to the city avoiding a myriad of well marked islands and rocks. Nelson reported that the city was impregnable. It was also the location of the 'Whisky on the rocks' incident in 1981 when a Soviet nuclear submarine hit an underwater rock just six miles from the city and resulted in a major fallout between the two nations. It's not a cosy marina but a large modern set-up near the centre. That night we celebrated confirmation that we would be able to leave *Tempus* at Nykoping for the winter.

July 31, Karlskrona

Today didn't go quite according to plan. The intention was to go to one of the islands that forms the archipelago that is Karlskrona. We got to the ferry terminal and all we could remember was that the island began with an 'S'. Just minutes later we were aboard the ferry to Aspo.

It didn't take long after our arrival on Aspo for Linda to announce, "I think this is the wrong island". Fortunately, if you walk 2km there is a castle. The castle was a bit of a disappointment even though it took 70 years for a lot of poor souls to build it. At least both the ferry and castle were free,. The best bit was lunch.

On our return to Karlskrona we visited the maritime museum, went in a submarine (where I ripped my shorts) and learnt about Swedish naval exploits. It's a bit like Chatham but the British have been more successful in battle. There was an impressive display of figureheads mounted at the bows of old war ships to impress and frighten the enemy.

As we returned to *Tempus* the sun came out and we eagerly anticipated a few glasses of wine on deck. But just when we thought the day was getting better, it suddenly got a whole lot worse. While Linda was putting our food shopping away I thought I would fill up with water. What I hadn't intended was to fill the fuel tank with water! Fortunately Linda spotted the error and we removed the hose. The rest of the evening





was spent using the vacuum oil extractor pump to remove the water, 27 litres of it before diesel started to flow. Fortunately we have two tanks so we will not be using the offending starboard one for a bit. We looked it all up and we plan to keep pumping out the bottom of the tank over the next few days, then add a fuel stabiliser and when we start to use that tank again we will frequently drain off the bottom of the primary fuel filter.

August 1, Kristianopel

We tried out a new mooring technique today using our yellow 'Moor Fast' for the first time. Here you catch a stern buoy as you arrive and then tie the bow to the pontoon. It worked a treat.

August 2, Bergkvara

This morning we set sail for the rather disappointing small town of Bergkvara, just 10 miles up the coast. It has a history as an important Hanseatic trading town but there is no evidence of that now, just a campsite and a few boats in the harbour. At least we could turn Bowie up loud without upsetting anyone. Linda spent

time on the internet researching holiday locations that might offer some compensation for our rather chilly summer!

August 3, Kalmar

What Bergkvara lacked Kalmar has in abundance. It's a gem with the loveliest castle just a stone's throw from the harbour. The weather was glorious and we hoped it was a sign summer had finally arrived in the Baltic. Having bought a 'Kalmarpass' for 95 kroner each we hoped we would get the benefit of half price entry to the museums. There is a lot to see there. We walked through the pretty gardens to the castle which started life as a defence tower as early as 1180 to keep the Danes and any other pirates out.

Clever Queen Margaret masterminded the Kalmar Union in 1397. It was an agreement, signed within these castle walls between Sweden, Norway and Denmark to have one monarch: her, and with one common foreign policy - to keep the German States of the Hanseatic League out! She did well, the Kalmar Union wasn't dissolved

until 1523. The fortress was gradually transformed into the 16th century palace as it appears today.

The following day got off to a good start. Linda loved the scrambled eggs on toast that I cooked her for breakfast. The weather was gorgeous. Then I took my credit card to the chandlery and we came back with lots of goodies: diesel fuel stabiliser, new loo seat hinges, deck cleaner, glue and screws for the broken seat. But there was no time to play with our new bits because there was so much more to Kalmar. The museum has a wonderful feature dedicated to the raising of the Swedish ship *Kronan* which sunk nearby in 1676. It was a massive vessel for its time and over 800 people on board died as a result. The museum is full of artefacts brought up from the wreck.

Our newest neighbours were Finnish. They had just bought a new boat in Holland and were on their way home with two young children. A steel yacht lost control in a Dutch lock and put a

hole in their side. It was repaired in five days and they were on their way again. Imagine that happening in Mersea? Out of action at least a season!

'Balcony moments' (our code for drinks on deck) had finally become a way of life, now that we had a little of the summer we were promised. We love sitting on deck and watching yachts come in, sometimes making mooring errors of epic proportions. It made me realise what excellent entertainment our manoeuvres have given others in the past. We hope those days are behind us!

August 12, Alo

The wind never rose above four knots all the way to Alo and visibility was often poor. But as we entered the archipelago the sun came out and eventually revealed a very narrow access into Alo. As Ulf had advised a couple of weeks ago, go very slowly and have someone on the bow looking for rocks. It was

somewhat anxiety-generating but what a magnificent natural harbour! After a noisy boat left we were alone at anchor and we both took photos all evening.

Ulf also said Alo was probably not worth a detour because there are so many other lovely locations! We have a lot to look forward to because this was magnificent. After a fabulous sunset, caught on camera many times by Linda, we had a great display from the Perseid meteor shower in a cloudless, moonless sky before finally going to sleep.

August 18, Hasselo

Why do so many places in Scandinavia end with the letter O? Well, it's because O means an island, and is there a better letter that could possibly be used to mean an island? Not really, except it is not actually O that is used. It is **ö**. Which is even better because it depicts an island surrounded by rocks. And in Denmark the letter used is **ø** which to me depicts an

island with 2 pontoons. Maybe they could use **Q** to mean an island with one pontoon. That, however, is as far as any logical interpretation of these languages goes.

Hasselo had grown on us. Despite the warm sun, the wind remained brisk so we decided not to brave the unforgiving seas and stay another day. We cycled around the island on its gravel roads through forest to a few houses and a tiny fishing village. Linda got talking to a local who recommended his brother-in-law's smoked fish from his little smokery. We bought some salmon. Back at the harbour we spoke to the harbour mistress whose children go by ferry to Västervik daily, or by hovercraft when the water freezes.

August 21, Harstena

Four months on from our departure, it was amazing to reflect how far we had gone, in small hops, and the cultures and



scenery we had passed through. The weather had steadily improved and for three weeks we basked in sunshine and comfortable temperatures. We knew autumn was on its way because the days were so much shorter. The Swedes were back at work, few people out to play and it really felt that summer days were numbered.

We had a good cleaning session this morning in the quiet of our little bay, mainly the chrome as Linda likes to call it. She means stainless steel but she still thinks it's chrome. By midday we were ready to move on under sail most of the way to Harstena, population about 50. There is a bakery and restaurant but they closed the previous week. Normally it would be busy with holidaymakers. Good timing! We walked around the island and absorbed it's peace and tranquility. We were on a jetty with six other boats, all Swedish. The sight of the British is a bit of a novelty. There was about one metre depth at our bow. It seemed like our keel was floating though.



Photo from Viv's drone

August 22, Riso

Harstena was buzzing this morning with comings and goings, people enjoying 'fika' - coffee with kanelbullar (cinnamon buns), some having a dip or just enjoying the sunshine. As it was Saturday and the weather was holding, it seemed like people were out in force enjoying the final throws of summer. We polished a bit more stainless steel on *Tempus* to the approving glances of our neighbours and then left for another anchorage at Riso 12 miles away. Perfect weather and wind direction for flying the cruising chute. Riso seemed to be a popular anchorage with a total of 10 boats that night. All

were Swedes, bow to the shore with a stern anchor, except us and another British yacht, *Road Runner*, who were swinging at anchor. We looked on in amazement as the couple on *Road Runner* donned their wetsuits and swimming caps and proceeded to swim laps of the bay accompanied by an inflatable red balloon, presumably to warn all shipping of their activity. We preferred to drink wine and beer in the sunshine, occasionally peering into our binoculars to identify a bird or spot the manoeuvring of the red balloon.

VIV FOX
Tempus



Extracts from the Tempus log

25th July to 21st August 2016
Winner of this year's Reeve Tyler trophy

After meeting an Australian who was heading to the Finnish Lakes for the Savonlinna Opera Festival, we did a bit of research and decided that Savonlinna should be our destination for 2016. We promptly booked tickets for La Bohème on August 2nd. To get to Savonlinna you have to navigate through Russian waters and along the Saimaa Canal, so in early June we picked up our Nauticat 331 *Tempus* from its overwintering location near Stockholm. Our final port of call before the Russian border was Hamina, where we picked up our guests, Maggie and Fraser Haddow, who were to hold our hands as we passed through the Russian bit. It is from here that we pick up the blog.



25th July ... We left Hamina towards Santio, which is the island where the Finnish passport and customs control is based, before you set off for Russian waters. When we reached the tiny island two nice young guards appeared to help us with ropes. One of them came bustling on board to check papers, the other one stood on the jetty discussing their huge RIB patrol boat with Fraser. It was one of those conversations:

'Bet that goes fast.'

'Yes, much fast. One half hour, you go very far.'

Bet it uses a lot of fuel.'

'Yes, much fuel but I no pay for it.'

Linda, meanwhile, was having to explain to his mate exactly why we had so much alcohol on board. He made a list of it all. Once they had finished inspecting us, they said a courteous good bye, and stepped into the RIB. They cast off, pressed forward the throttles and showed us

exactly how 'much fast' they could go, roaring away round the headland at breakneck speed, staring at the horizon, shades on, cool as cool. What a job.

26th July ... We went through the first three locks in the Russian section of the canal with no incident, gaining confidence all the time, until we arrived at Palli Lock. As usual, Linda chirruped 'Hello world!' as we emerged back into the sunlight, only this time we came face to face with two grim, unsmiling female Russian customs ladies. 'Oh, hi!' we all chorused, ingratiatingly. The ladies took our papers and disappeared into their little hut for ages, where they did nothing much at all. Eventually they came out and one of them flounced up to Viv and said, moodily, 'Where does this boat come from?' Obviously West Mersea is unknown to the Russian Authorities, (take note of this, Mersea Islanders, it may come in useful one day).

Linda had a flash of inspiration: "Cardiff!" she said, helpfully. 'Oh, vell, guid luck, Tempyuz,' she said, "You can go." We chortled our way down the channel, shouting, "We're from Cardiff!" and giggling, as soon as we were out of earshot (and danger)....

Later, relieved to be back in Finnish waters, we had a bit of a party, starting with cocktails in the cockpit. Very much later, we had also consumed wine and whisky and were just getting down to James Brown's "Sex Machine" when, at one-thirty in the morning, there was a sudden loud banging on the cabin window, and our German friend from next door pressed his face up to the glass and bellowed "Ve vont to sleep!" It was at this point that Viv remembered the music was also being transmitted via the speakers in the cockpit, so it must have been deafening...

2nd August ... La Bohème was magnificent in its medieval castle setting at Savonlinna. We said goodbye to Maggie and Fraser who are returning home tomorrow. What fun it's been.

21st August ... Over the next few days, we sailed to Loviisa, 50 miles east of Helsinki, where we have laid up *Tempus* for the winter. We will return next year for more adventures.

The full log containing many more entertaining adventures can be read in the Club bar or accessed via the Club website.

Viv and Linda's blog is also available at
<https://tempusbaltic2016.wordpress.com/>

Cadet Weeks Remembered

In the summer of 1968 Sir Alec Rose had just been knighted by the Queen for his single-handed round the world voyage, following in the wake of Sir Francis Chichester who had completed a solo circumnavigation the year before. Harold Wilson was Prime Minister and "the pound in your pocket" had only recently "not been devalued". The first colour television broadcasts were being transmitted, although in those days hardly anyone had a colour set. But all these important events paled into insignificance in the mind of an excited but rather apprehensive 13 year-old boy, who was about to sail in his first Cadet Week, his family having moved to Mersea in the previous winter.

In the late 60s Cadet Week was far less organised than it is now. It was just a week of racing for children. The great significance for us young Dabchicks members was that we were, for one week only, allowed to set foot in the hallowed portals of the West Mersea Yacht Club, a privilege that seemed at the time to be huge, the Yacht Club being dominated by the local 'great and good' and having as members many recently retired senior military officers.

There were no social events, other than the traditional Shingle Head barbecue on the Thursday evening, to which the children were ferried in the various launches that had been used as support boats in the Week. These included the current *YC1* (the wooden launch) which was diverted from its normal duties to act as a 'rescue boat' in Cadet Week, along with the Dabchicks launch *Dabchick*. This was a wooden ship's lifeboat conversion, powered by an air cooled Lister engine that had given sterling service in an air compressor before being recruited by the Dabchicks for a new life at sea, and which gave the boat a top speed of about 4 knots, flat out. The support boat operation as a whole was pretty sketchy in those days. RIBs hadn't been invented although there were one or two 'dories' - rigid hulled fibreglass boats powered by outboard motors - and these were the only craft with any turn of speed.

Virtually all the dinghies we raced during the Week were made of plywood, and had either built-in buoyancy tanks which usually leaked, or inflatable buoyancy bags which either leaked and deflated or popped out of their fastenings and drifted away. Dinghies thus often nearly sank when they capsized, or at least just about floated 'gunwhales under'. So the club's diesel launch *Dabchick* had a

big pump, powered by the engine, with a long hose to pump out a boat that was awash. However, surprisingly enough people didn't drown right left and centre..... and we didn't have a "Cadet Week Book of Remembrance" for the victims of each year's racing.

The kit that we wore was pretty basic. Dry suits were years away from being available for sailing, and wet suits were usually homemade from a kit. If you were rich enough (I never was but had seen the process done by friends) you bought a kit consisting of sheets of neoprene rubber - shiny rubber skin on each side (nylon lined neoprene hadn't been invented) and a paper pattern in your size. The pattern was pinned to the neoprene, chalked round, and then cut out with sharp scissors. Of course this sort of thing was much easier in those days as your Mum would have grown up in the War and done dressmaking, with paper patterns, and so could usually be relied on to help out.

The cut pieces were assembled by sticking the edges together with rubber cement, and then covered with glued-on yellow tape (the tape was always yellow). However this was never terribly successful, and wearers of homemade wet suits could be spotted by the gaping unstuck seams, usually at the main stress spots such as the shoulders and, embarrassingly, the crotch (swimming trunks were essential underwear). Since most of us could not afford wet suits we sailed in our old school trousers and shirts, too worn for school wear but still fine for sailing. Our 'Wartime Experienced Mums' had usually knitted us woollen sweaters to wear if it was cold, and Christmas or birthday had sometimes brought us Peter Storm waterproof jackets. These were made of proofed nylon (nothing breathable - that was years away) complete with the little metal duck symbol, dressed in souwester and boots, pinned onto it. That little duck taught us a useful early lesson on how metal corrodes in a salt environment.

We all wore buoyancy jackets, which were compulsory even then. My own first buoyancy jacket was yellow and blue, filled with kapok (a naturally buoyant material, grown on kapok trees) and I think was ex US Army, war surplus. Plastic foam filled jackets were just coming in, not of course closed cell foam, which hadn't been invented, but lots of ordinary sponge foam pieces,

and so each piece was encased in individual pockets of plastic under the jacket's cover. You didn't want to tear it - the foam would soak up water fast! The more affluent were just starting to get the new 'Flotherchoc' buoyancy jackets, much lighter and more comfortable, with the buoyancy provided by strings of air-filled plastic chambers, similar to the 'sealed air' packaging that Amazon now puts round fragile packages.

We were keen racers and so used stopwatches for the start countdown - in those days it was 10 minutes, 5 minutes and start. No electronic watches yet of course, so again a Christmas or birthday might have brought you a 'Temsail Yachting Timer'. This was a silver 'pocket watch' stopwatch, with a hand-wound clockwork mechanism and a pre-set 10 minute countdown. It lived in a red rubber case, with a lanyard to hang round your neck. The rubber case was meant to make it 'water resistant' but of course it never did, so if you were unlucky enough to capsize, you had to take it to Mr Beagley the watchmaker, who had a little shop almost opposite where Tesco is now. He would charge 1s 6d (7½ p) to clean out and re-oil your Temsail, so naturally you tried to keep it dry as much as you could. We experimented with putting it in a plastic bag, and sealing the end with a hot iron, but that was never much good, so most of us were regular customers of Mr Beagley.

We sailed a variety of different boats: Optimists were hardly known in the UK, although there were some fleets at the big and prestigious South Coast 'Royal' yacht clubs, but certainly none in Mersea. My first boat was a Torch, a hard chine plywood dinghy with a painted hull, varnished interior, metal centreplate and a sliding gunter rig (later ones were Bermudan rigged). Other participants sailed Mirrors, Cadets, Gulls, Herons, and Solos, and the faster boats were usually Enterprises. In one of my last Cadet Weeks someone came along with a 'Lazy E', a Jack Holt designed plywood boat, like an expanded Enterprise but with a trapeze. They seemed to sail well but they never caught on in the UK although, like other Jack Holt designs such as the Yachting World Diamond keelboat, they have a current following in Australia.

When I think back to my days in Cadet Week the main thing I remember is the very first trophy I ever won for sailing - indeed the very first trophy that I ever won for anything - and I still have it on my mantelpiece today. I shall never forget how proud I was to win it and I shall treasure it for the rest of my life. My wife always used to laugh at me for keeping it for so long until I invited a guest speaker to our Laying Up Supper one year when I

was Commodore of the Dabchicks, and he made a point of mentioning that he still had in a very special place in his living room the first trophy that he'd won in Cadet Week, many years ago. You may know of him - chap by the name of Richard Matthews.

When I was racing in Cadet Week the overall championship trophy was a magnificent model of a Viking ship. Do we still have it? I remember I wanted to win that Viking Ship more than anything else in the world, but of course I was racing against the likes of William Sunnucks, Alan Vince, Danny Fox, Rob Gozzett and so on, and so I never did.

Sailing is the most magical sport in the world because you can take it up as a young cadet and you can carry on until you are my advanced age and beyond. And the great thing about it is you can still sail competitively and win races. It's a truism that experience and guile will usually overcome youth and power. It's so much different to other sports for this very reason.

TIM WOOD

Excerpts from this article appeared in the 2016 Cadet Week programme and website.



Torch dinghy

Playing Lay-up Lottery

You never know what you'll find

It's been more than 35 years since we had a mooring in Mersea although we can see the island from our windows. Instead we cruise from place to place on holidays, laying up ashore when the time comes to return to work. In the interim *Sheshi*, our She 31 had to fend for herself for long periods over the 22 years that we owned her and the same has applied for the last 16 to her successor, *Dorothea of London*, a Sigma 41.

Many boatyards abroad are exceptional ... and then there are the others. Returning to the yacht has often been interesting: there have been surprises and not always good ones.

In Lagos in the Algarve it was a bird's nest in the boom complete with a full complement of chicks; in Barbados piles of pine cones from an overhanging tree. In Corsica (on the only occasion we left the boat afloat) a foot of water over the cabin sole, black

mould on every surface and a complete absence of running rigging which someone had spirited away. In Sotogrande near Gibraltar a defective regulator had fried the batteries and in the Azores a couple of hundredweight of sand was deposited in the cockpit, blasted in from the adjacent beach by winter storms.

We first left the boat in Lezardrieux on the Trieux River in Brittany. The situation looked fine as we left her with the stern up against a large industrial building so we weren't expecting her to be green when we saw her again. But *Sheshi* was under a leaking gutter with perfect growing conditions for a verdant green carpet over the deck.

In the small boatyard at Le Lavandou, South of France the owner told me "She's a bit larger than the boats we normally haul out but we'll have a go." When next year we questioned him about the broken bow fitting and re-designed pulpit, clearly mangled and inexpertly bent back, he reluctantly admitted to dropping the boat on its nose.

In Porto Vecchio, Corsica the boatyard wrote to report a problem with "le mât et les flèches". This was intriguing since there had been history. A month earlier we'd received a letter from the yard indicating that they had replaced the cabin windows which had been blown out of the boat. When we arrived at Porto Vecchio the mast had a 30 degree bend and drooping spreaders (flèches).

The story soon emerged: bombing rivals is an occasional business negotiating tactic, almost a national sport in Corsica. Someone had clearly taken against the boatyard owner (he was a very irritating



Sheshi in the Grenadines

man) and bombed his crane. The falling jib cut a Swedish boat in half and the blast had blown out our windows. They then took our yet undamaged mast to their storage shed but there must have been unfinished business: two months later the storage facility was bombed.

It wasn't clear why they had then bothered to step the damaged mast back in the boat; obviously we weren't going sailing that year. I sawed it in half, strapped it to the top of a hired car and shipped it back to be copied in England. Corsica has no mast makers. The replacement made in Suffolk got lost in a railway siding in Paris so we didn't go sailing next year either. This was pre-EU and when it did finally arrive I was incensed to be informed that I had to pay import tax on it, given that that we were only in this position because the Corsicans had blown up our original. The new mast was lying unattended on a commercial dock a mile away so Anna and I fired up *Sheshi's*

motor at lunchtime (when all right thinking Frenchmen are having lunch) entered the deserted port, collected the mast and returned to the marina, obviously without paying any duty. Soon after lunch a very short and irate Port Captain arrived and began berating me. He was jumping up and down and getting increasingly red in the face so I couldn't resist teasing him, which made him yet more furious. Eventually he took a swing at me but being short the blow was easily avoided, whistling harmlessly past. Sadly however we ended up paying the duty.

Fitting out has its moments too. In Monastir in Tunisia the boat was very well looked after but periodically clerics led processions of religious zealots through the westernised marina. Once this happened during a musical and theatrical entertainment. In a palpably menacing atmosphere the music was switched off, the entertainment abruptly ended and the performers fled.

The earth moved in the West Indies. I was down below when a minor earthquake shook the yacht accompanied by the tattoo of rigging clattering against all the masts in the yard. No damage suffered.

We unexpectedly spent the first half of our holiday sharing the boat in St Lucia with a lovely West Indian shipwright of indeterminate age called Tyson. We had instructed the yard to replace the teak toe rail nearly a year previously. When I phoned a month before our return to enquire if all work had been done they confirmed that it would be, though I did detect a note of nervousness. Anna and I flew out on Christmas Eve, looking forward to Christmas sailing, only to find Tyson sitting astride the toe rail amid piles of splintered teak, hacking away with several large chisels and mighty mallet. He took Christmas day off but we spent much of our Christmas holiday in Tyson's company as he made a new toe rail. Only then could we press on direct to



Dorothea of London in Cephalonia, Greece

the Virgin Islands to lay up again.

Just as it had been pointless to step the hopelessly damaged mast in Corsica, what makes a yard start removing an old but functioning toe rail immediately before the owners arrive to go sailing ?

Worst was to come. We were in Chaguaramas, Trinidad in *Dorothea of London* when we discovered problems with the deck. There can be few Sigma 41's with their original wooden decks which deteriorate due to the manufacturing techniques employed. (Later the vendor told us that as soon as he became aware of this and the cost of replacement in the UK, he hastily sold the boat.)

So we commissioned a new deck and all was going well. The yard had removed the old deck together with many through-bolted deck fittings including their fastenings. Chaguaramas lies behind a line of steep hills which seasonally trigger near constant tropical rain storms in the humid climate. It really is extremely wet in the autumn and it was then that the carpenter working on the boat

was shot dead, sadly a victim of Trinidad's extremely high murder rate. With no other suitably skilled carpenter available the boat stood with torrential rain coursing through numerous holes in the deck for three months. Unsurprisingly this was not good for the electronics nor the internal furniture and fittings which grew mould and changed shape in the heat and damp. I had to spend much time repairing damage and making saloon and cupboard doors fit.

Fortunately the cost of a new deck was a fraction of UK rates and ultimately the workmanship was excellent.

They do things differently in remote places. I flew out with a friend of mine to sail his boat back from Newfoundland to Ireland. After a couple of years in Canada the boat had been laid up in a tiny fishing harbour in the middle of nowhere. Although not used to laying up deep keeled yachts, this was no problem for them. When they needed supports for the yacht, one of the boatyard owners picked up a chainsaw, loped into the nearby forest and returned with freshly sawn props.

There was no customs post anywhere along the coast; the local fishermen don't voyage internationally. So before sailing we went quite a distance by taxi to Customs at Gander international airport to check out of Canada. Examining our papers the custom officer announced that the yacht had entered Canada on a two week visitor's permit and since it had overstayed that period, full Canadian import tax was payable. We thanked him politely and picking up the papers, drove back to the boat, cast off the mooring and sailed for Ireland. On the fitting out front, when the engine packed up as we left the harbour I told the mechanically challenged owner that I would fix it. "No please don't bother", he replied "Now we have a real sailing boat. Much better."

So you never know what you'll find but that is the point of a cruising yacht and half the fun of visiting all these places – there are many more brilliant and memorable surprises than bad ones and after a while you can even laugh at those too.

ADRIAN BRIGGS
Dorothea of London

Meanwhile back in the boatyard....

Here are two of Trevor Spero's much loved 'toys':

His Jowett Jupiter classic car, built 1952 and Stella Lyra, built 1962.

JULIAN LORD



Summer Ball

This year's Summer Ball, now held on a biennial basis, was a real success and both guests and our lovely staff enjoyed the night – see the photos for evidence! Our thanks to Carole Britton Reed and her committee - Jo, Mark, Anna - and their teams of staff for all the hard work, lots of it unseen and spread over a long period, before and indeed after the event.



The Summer Ball has always been one of the big social events in the club calendar and this year was no exception. It's a very major task in organisation and logistics and indeed finance, so while we celebrate a very good night I think its worth explaining some of the effort and costs involved, perhaps to blow away a few myths!

Thinking about the ball began well over a year previously when House Committee under Mike Berry's leadership at the time started to discuss the whole shebang: location, theming, costings, food, entertainment and likely numbers.

It costs a lot to bring the marquee, stage, and seating etc. to the club so we looked at the possibility of other venues. We also looked at what sort of entertainment to provide and got off to a great start when Frank Reed kindly offered to finance any losses on our Long Room attractions - the casino and cocktail bar - which were professionally run. We also thank those who kindly sponsored or donated prizes for the raffle, with Carole applying the pressure!

Ticket pricing was a real priority and we decided, after looking at preliminary costings and taking into account the general drop-off in numbers in recent years (even after making it a bi-annua event), to go for a competitive £60. This placed a real onus on the committee to keep costs down, so we looked hard at all aspects.

We decided that the recent trend to more complex food should stop and we should return, in the interest of costs, to the traditional salmon and strawberries format.

Two bands were rejected in favour of one and a disco, decoration of the marquee was reduced, and catering was kept in house.

Finally we reached a budget which meant we would break even on 200 guests, and that's ambitious in the light of recent numbers. In the event we got to 185 (incidentally the same number as 2014) so break-even was not possible.

We are aware that there is a perception in some areas that the ball makes a large profit. Not so! Here are some figures that might make you think. To provide the marquee, seating, lighting, stage, soft flooring, dance floor and tables cost £35 per head; the entertainment was £7.50; crockery and linen hire £5 per head; security (oops, another £3 per head!); which brings it to £50, plus staffing costs, agency staff, printing and food. And there's VAT on parts of it....

So you see, our Ball costs a great deal, in effort and money, to run. We do not make money on it, but that's not the intent. That is to provide our members and guests with a truly excellent evening in our club.



We hope those who came enjoyed it and that this article helps everyone understand just what goes into it and why it's like it is. The big question is – if we cannot attract more than 180 of you, do we do it again? And how much should a ticket be and how can we price it to attract without subsidy? Feedback very welcome or suggestions for an alternative!

JOHN COOK

Salty Dogs



Photo by Trevor Spero

Peter Haldene on his *Stella La Vie en Rose* with crewmate Rocky, in training to be a salty dog. Apparently he loves to go sailing, but not if it's too windy. What about Peter?

JULIAN LORD

...and now for a bear moment

I had a rare moment one day during Mersea Week when I was able to sit in the cockpit for a moment. Brian appeared from below wearing the hat in the picture and with wifely inspiration I announced he looked just like Paddington Bear (of whom I'm quite fond). He took this very well, as did the rest of the committee boat crew... so a couple of days later he was photographed with my Paddington Bear which he gave me some time around 1976!! Obviously my tastes haven't changed.

I did think of putting a label on Brian too, plus asking a passing competitor to hand him a marmalade sandwich, but that may have been taking things a little too far!

WENDY BOLTON
Blue Horizon



Keelboat Racing Roundup



Julian Lord's *Humdinger* on the wind in Mersea Week

Photo by Patricia Forrest

HOME WATERS IRC & LOCAL HANDICAP

The season again began slowly, with just eight boats sailing in the **Spring Points Series**, which was won by Julian Lord with his newly acquired International H Boat *Humdinger*, ahead of Leo Knifton's Melges 24 *Brandyhole* and Toby and Rachel Ramsay's one-off Ramsay 6.7 *Mojito*. Racing then burst into life on 6th May with 21 boats on the line for the start of the **DSC Friday Series**. In all, 34 boats raced during this series, with 19 competing in at least the eight races required for an overall score. John Bolingbroke's *JB's 80* having dominated the series in 2012 and 2013 (winning with 12.5 and then 9 points), Alan Vince, Nick Glanvill and Hector Heathcote then did the same thing in 2014 and 2015 with their Smokey 25 *Reasons To Be Cheerful* (winning with 12 and then 12.5 points).

This year saw 13 races completed and 10 individual race winners: *Any Old Excuse* (Cork 1720), *Secret Waters* and *Posh Totty* (Squibs), *JB's 80* (J80), *Wild Chorus* (J70), *Humdinger*, *Oystercatcher XXX1* (Humphreys 39), *Tramp* (Hustler 32), *Bananaman* (Projection 762) and *Camel* (Sonata). This is perhaps a record number which may illustrate that the efforts of the Mersea

Handicap Committee are reasonably satisfactory. *Humdinger* won the series (with 17 points), ahead of 'Reasons', Drummond Sydenham's *Any Old Excuse*, *JB's 80* and *Tramp*, skippered by Doug Seaden. Sixth was the leading non-IRC rated boat, Simon Farren's *Camel*.



Drummond Sydenham's Cork 1720 *Any Old Excuse*

Photo by Patricia Forrest

Partly by completing all three races, *Camel* also won the **Centenary Trophy**, raced on a windy day in June, with Richard Matthews' *Oystercatcher XXXI* and Laurie Pearson's little *Isis 21 Hex* next up. The **Ancient Mariners Race** (where handicaps are adjusted according to the average age of the crew) saw an increased entry of twelve boats and resulted in a popular win for Frank Reed skippering *Tramp*. *Humdinger* won the four race **Short Handed Series**, ahead of *Bugsy*, Geoff Hunt and Sally-Anne Turnbull's Club 19 and David Curtis Bavaria 34 *Hannelore*. Single handers placed first and second in the **Wallet Cup** race, Geoff Hunt winning for the second year running, ahead of *Bear*, Steve Johnson's newly acquired First 21.7. Ten boats (but only four with IRC ratings) sailed in the **Autumn Points Series**, in which *Humdinger* again took top slot, ahead of *Mojito* and first race winner *Reasons To Be Cheerful*. As usual, the season's finale was the **Autumn Trophy** race, which saw one of the best turnouts of the season, with fourteen boats on the line. *Bugsy* took the trophy, ahead of Richard Matthews' William Fife designed classic *Kismet* and Tony Hawkes and Pat Hill's Sonata *Aubie Too*.

MERSEA WEEK

The start of the week coincided with the arrival of some real 'shorts and tee shirt' sailing weather, with the best IRC racing of the year enjoyed by a competitive ten boat fleet. This consisted of eight sports boats and two slower, displacement boats, and on occasions, these two benefitted from the late arrival of the sea breeze, helping *Humdinger* to win the class by a single point from James Struth's *Wild Chorus*, with Oliver Gozzett helming the SB20 *Complete Madness* third. Starting with the IRC fleet and perhaps contributing to general recalls being needed on two of the five days, the **Local Handicap 'A'** fleet was won by Paul and Liz Harrison's Beneteau 33.7 *Maverick*, with Ed Taylor's 31.7 *Toucan* taking second on tie-break from *Hex*.

The **Local Handicap 'B'** fleet saw a good tussle, *Bugsy* winning the last race, and with it the week, from *Reasons To Be Cheerful*, with Vic Prior's MGC27 *Skybird* in third. With a cloud of sail up most days, *Kismet* dominated **Classics 'A'** ahead of Scot Yeates' beautifully revamped Holman & Pye designed *Stiletto* and the visiting 6 Metre *Sheila* of Dan Tester. Visiting Stellas took the top places in **Classics 'B'** - Tim Wood's *L'Étoile* from Walton & Frinton coming out ahead of Mark Montgomery-Smith's *Lodestar* from Hoo Ness in Kent. Beating last year's class winner, *White Noise* from the Medway, *Aubie Too* was the **Sonata** fleet winner, with Jack Davis third in *Blackjack*.



Paul & Liz Harrison's *Maverick*

Photo by Patricia Forrest

WHITE SAIL

The White Sail fleet's main results this season were determined using the RYA's NHC system, under which a yacht's rating may be adjusted after each race, depending upon her performance. A bumper entry of 18 boats competed in **Mersea Week**, with Jon and Penny French's Hanse 370 *Waterlily* coming out on top, despite her rating changing by a massive 59 points over the five races! Next up were Michael Wheeler's S&S 41 *Golden Fleece*, Ben Simpson's MG Spring 25 *Recoil* and Mike Berry's Hanse 331 *Rendezvous*. A White Sail class was introduced for the **Centenary Regatta**, with the **Coronation Cup** awarded to the winner - Rob Smith with *Tamarisk*, his Beneteau Oceanis 323.

Support for the eight race, season long **White Sail Series** was varied, turnouts ranging from three to nine boats, but with seven boats competing in at least five races which were needed to obtain a series score. *Skybird* won the series, well ahead of *Rendezvous*, which took second on tie-break from Dave Lewis and Mike Edwards' Moody 31S *Cirrus*. Seven boats turned out in late October for the **Finola Cup**, which was won by *Tamarisk* from Andrew and Jill Stebbings Hanse 311 *Seahawk II* and Alan Jones Beneteau First 29 *Raggerty*.

SQUIB FLEET

The Club's newly formed Squib fleet's first main outing was for the **WMYC Open Meeting**, held on a blustery weekend in late April. Six of our own boats joined fifteen visitors from seven different clubs, from Royal Victoria (on the Isle of Wight) to Royal

Yorkshire (Bridlington). Squib Association Chairman Steve Warren-Smith recruited club member (and former OK dinghy national champion) Lee Child as his guest helm, and they finished second overall, losing only on tie break to experienced Squib sailors Bryan and Jenny Riley from Waveney & Oulton Broad YC. Best of the local sailors were first race winners Jack Grogan and Sam Lightfoot, who placed fourth overall. **Club Series** racing – most of which started and finished off the club line around high tide - did not generally enjoy the best of conditions, but nevertheless produced some good close one design racing, which is what these inexpensive boats are renowned for. **Mersea Week** saw seven of the nine local boats racing, with Jack Grogan in *Knock Knock* winning the week by a single point from Vice Commodore Alan Jones's *Posh Totty* and Ray Apthorp's newly acquired *Nemesis* in third. See also page 30 for the development and progress of a National Squib Fleet at WMYC.



Vice Commodore Alan Jones with his *Posh Totty*

Photo by Patricia Forrest

AWAY FROM MERSEA

Stiletto enjoyed a very successful weekend at the **Levington Classics Regatta** in June, placing third in the Fast Fleet and an excellent fourth in the full 47 boat entry. *Golden Fleece* also did well at Levington, coming seventh in the Fast Fleet and eleventh overall. *Stiletto* was then trucked all the way down to Cornwall to compete in the **Falmouth Classics Regatta**, where she finished third in the 'E'

Fleet (Bermudans 25-35ft), before stopping off at Cowes on the way home for the **Panerai Classics Regatta**, a less successful but very enjoyable event for her crew. *Stiletto* has been accepted for the 2017 Antigua Panerai Classic Yachts Challenge, and will travel there in a 45ft container!

With his latest *Oystercatcher*, Richard Matthews had another active season, placed seventh in Class One at the **IRC Nationals** in the Solent before competing in **Cork Week**. This incorporated the first ever **IRC Europeans**, and *Oystercatcher XXXI* finished fifth out of the twelve boats racing in Class One. It was then back to race in **Ramsgate Week**, finishing third in Class One but winning Round the Goodwins and Gold Cup races. The delivery crew were then off with the boat back to the Solent for **Cowes Week** where an overall placing of sixth out of sixteen IRC Class One entries was achieved. Sadly, support for the **EAORA** series - both locally and more widely – continues to dwindle, with just seven entries and five finishers for the Buckley Goblets finale. This was won by *Oystercatcher XXXI*, with Angus and Rose Kearin's *Starcharger* being the leading club boat overall, by dint of sailing in just the first two races.

Although entering under the burgee of Burnham's Royal Corinthian YC, mention must also be made of club member Jack Grogan who, crewing with his father, dominated the **Squib** class in 2016, winning the **Nationals** at Weymouth, the **Inlands** at Rutland Water and the class at **Cowes Week**.

THANKS



Blue Horizon

Photo by Patricia Forrest

Thanks again go to Brian and Wendy Bolton and their regular team on *Blue Horizon* for officiating at a large number of club races, as well as Mersea Week and the club's EAORA races. The highly professional manner consistently in evidence is much appreciated by all those who race. Also to Sailing Secretary Paul Jackson who officiated in a number of races.

JULIAN LORD
Humdinger

House Notes

Firstly, I would like to thank Mike Berry and John Cook for passing on a healthy House portfolio with many ideas and schemes well advanced, to enable the House Committee to deliver some exciting developments in 2017. Secondly, on behalf of the members, I would like to thank Jo, Mark, Rachel, Anna and the rest of the house staff for delivering the 7 day bar and catering service which is the envy of many clubs in this area. The quality and warmth of our staff is for me a source of great pride and for which many of us, including visiting yachtsman, comment on positively.

The Molliette Bar & Balcony project has been a great success and this has opened up a further amenity for members to enjoy. In addition, the dumb waiter and the finishing kitchen have helped to remove the hazard to staff from carrying plates up the stairs when servicing the Long Room. Thank you to John Cook and the contractor Stroods in delivering a high quality result. In February the Commodore officially opened the bar and we have seen a steady increase in utilisation, something we hope to build on in 2017.



Commodore and his lady open the Molliette Bar



Saskia on stage

In line with other major regattas and sporting events we introduced for the first time a policy of wrist band only entry to Club premises on Town Regatta day which was well received by members, families, visiting yachtsmen and regatta participants.

The welcome home for Saskia was certainly an event that will go down in history. What a fabulous party in recognition of Saskia's commitment to sailing: her ultimate prize of returning to Mersea Island with a gold medal. Well done and congratulations to Saskia! Thank you to those members and local businesses who provided the ambition and backing for such a wonderful home coming event.

At the General Committee Meeting in October, approval was given for the bar and restaurant refurbishment. As we did with the Molliette Bar project, we anticipate conducting the works during January 2017, our marginally quiet month. During this time, we expect to be able to keep the clubhouse open, operating a selective catering & bar service within the Long Room and Molliette Bar. I trust that you will find our efforts a real boost to our clubhouse amenity.

Good sailing to you all for 2017.

Philip Woods
Rear Commodore (House)

LIFEBOAT

The number of shouts Mersea lifeboat has had in 2016 has increased by 38% over last year. As I write this in November we have had 62, which is the highest for a few years. It is very hard to attribute this increase to any one thing. The RNLI, with all of its statistics, can never say for certain why the number of emergencies nationally go up or down. It does seem to be random.

This year has seen the usual mix of rescues with boats aground, drifting, unable to make port and engine failure, which is perhaps the most common. We have registered two lives saved this year. The first was a man suffering a heart condition on his yacht in the Blackwater. His wife was on board and had anchored the yacht. An ambulance was summoned to Bradwell marina and the lifeboat crew administered their casualty care procedure as they took him to the marina.

The second was a lady who fell into the water while transferring between yacht and tender on a mooring in Strood Channel. It was October and the tide was flooding strongly. The man on board the yacht was unable to recover her, but did manage

to secure her with a rope. Because of the cold water she was unable to swim ashore and was not wearing a lifejacket. Fortunately for her the lifeboat was launched very quickly and was with her in a few minutes. She was hauled aboard and whisked back to the lifeboat station, where she was warmed up in the shower. An ambulance had been requested and the Paramedics decided to take her to hospital for a check-up as her core temperature was still low. She also had a chest x-ray since she may have ingested some sea water. I am glad to say she made a full recovery.

Every year around Christmas time, the Maldon Little Ship Club organise a rowing race to raise money for the RNLI. This event is a very large fund raiser and the lifeboat will always make a PR visit to the event. It's surprising how many Maldon locals think that Burnham is their local lifeboat, mainly I think because Burnham is close by land and the local newspaper reports Burnham lifeboat's rescues. However, our visits to Maldon are re-educating them! The photo shows the 'Basin Oars' rowing team on board the lifeboat after last year's race, always in a different fancy dress. They



The 'Basin Oars' girls after the Maldon rowing race

are a wonderful group of ladies who raise funds for the RNLI all year long by, amongst other things, running a lottery and being sponsored in rowing events.

Earlier this year, Matthew Haward (Diggle's son), was awarded a 30 year bar to his RNLI Long Service medal. Matthew is our senior Helmsman and longest serving current crew member. Neil Hancock, the Divisional Inspector at the time made the award on behalf of the Institution.



Senior Helmsman Matthew Haward receiving his Long Service award

You may wonder what happens to old lifeboats. Well, they are stripped of their RNLI identity and in the case of Inshore Lifeboats the engines as well. These are then offered for sale. You may well have seen old wooden lifeboats operating as cruising yachts. There is normally a very smart one moored in Herrings Reach at Heybridge. Quite a few are sold abroad to serve a new life as lifeboats and we received pictures of our last lifeboat *Dignity* which served us for 13 years, operating as a rescue boat in Valparaiso in Chile.



Dignity in Chile

Keen RNLI fundraisers will go to extraordinary lengths in their endeavours to raise funds for us. One young man of about 12 years old has a target of visiting every lifeboat station in the UK, which of course involves his parents going on holiday to different parts of the UK each year so that more lifeboat stations can be visited. He visited West Mersea this year unannounced and we missed him, but he left his calling card and ticked us off his list.

Another intrepid fundraiser is Steve McAllister who is cycling to every lifeboat station in the UK. Steve is doing this in sections, with breaks in between. When he visited us, we were able to save him quite a few miles by directing him from Clacton via the Brightlingsea ferry and then arranging for him to cross the Crouch from Burnham to Wallasea on his way to Southend.



Steve McAllister setting off to Burnham

One unusual but interesting task the Coastguard requested us to perform was to assist the Navy Bomb Disposal team from Portsmouth. We maintained an exclusion zone around a depth charge that had been trawled up by a fishing boat and left in shallow water on the Dengie Flats to the East of Bradwell. The four man Bomb Disposal team came out from Bradwell in their own rubber boat. Two of them dived down to the Depth Charge and attached an explosive charge to it with a timed detonation, allowing enough time to retreat to a safe distance. It went off with quite a bang!



Nationally, the RNLI hold Mayday events and we held ours on the 1st of May, (although the station and shop are open every weekend in the summer). During the day the Guild served refreshments and organised games for children in the station while the lifeboat launched several times and moored on the hammerhead for visitors to see it. At times children were queuing up to come aboard and see the lifeboat close up and their parents to photograph them.

MARTIN WADE

Lifeboat Operations Manager

Attracting quite a crowd on the hammerhead



Cruising to a New Life

It was 10.30am on Tuesday 7th May 2013 and we were ready to lock out of Heybridge Basin and set sail for Baiona on the Spanish north atlantic coast. For the last two years *Moonshine*, our 44ft ketch, after an extensive rebuild at West Mersea, had been berthed just inside the lock gates whilst we finished getting her ready to cruise to who knows where.

People strolling along the towpath used to stop and chat and enquire as to our plans. Our reply would be that we were going to investigate the Rias of Northern Spain before going wherever the wind and our fancy took us.



Moonshine about to leave Heybridge

We were extremely touched by the number of people who had come down and braved the drizzle to see us off. The lock gates opened and we were away: myself, Avril, Dolly our bedlington terrier, together with our crew Jim and Jeff. We made our way to West Mersea where we planned to put *Moonshine* on her swing mooring in the quarters to leave early the next day. Unfortunately the weather decided otherwise and we were to spend a week there waiting for gale after gale to pass.

We finally set sail for Cherbourg at 2 am on May 15th, stopping at Dover for a couple of hours for diesel and to empty the dog. We were unexpectedly rewarded by seeing our first porpoises in the English Channel, reaching Cherbourg at 11am on May 17th. The next couple of days were spent stocking the boat with essentials: 10 litre boxes of wine, lots of cheese, and sausages. We were boarded by the Douane who very kindly didn't disturb Dolly whilst she was snoozing in her favourite corner of the cockpit seat

while they were filling out their forms. Dolly decided she wanted a drink and being the pampered little girl she is woofed for her water bowl to be brought up to the seat rather than jump down, much to the amusement of the officers.

More bad weather detained us so we were not able to depart until May 20th for an overnight voyage around the outside of the Channel Islands and on to Roscoff for a day before continuing to L'Aber Wrac'h. We encountered heavy swells caused by continuous north easterly winds in the Atlantic, making the second part of the journey very uncomfortable. The watch system that I organised for John, Jeff and myself - 3 hours on watch, 3 hours below in the saloon in case needed, and 3 hours off - worked very well. Avril did all the cooking, clipping herself on at the cooker when necessary to make sure we had everything we needed, including hot soup or a stew keeping warm in the Wonder Bag, for us to help ourselves at night. Bad weather once again set in and we spent four days in the marina at L'Aber Wrac'h before setting off for the 25 hour voyage to Crouesty, which is outside the entrance to the Golfe du Morbihan, arriving, joy of joys, to warm sunshine.

Pornichet was our next port of call, again for an extended stay due to bad weather, and then on to La Rochelle where we spent a pleasant few days in warm sunshine exploring before setting off on the 230 mile journey to Santander, enjoying for the first time dolphins riding on our bow wave, and watching the confusion of our depth sounder as we left the Continental Shelf. About half way across, when Dolly was having her afternoon snooze, a large whale surfaced a few yards off our beam and vented its blow hole. Dolly, not expecting to see anything, nearly jumped out of her fur. For my part, I was just pleased when it sounded again and disappeared.



La Rochelle

After spending a day on board in Santander, because it was too far to walk into town, it was on to Gijón and then to A Coruña, where originally our crew had planned to leave us. But Jim had told us that when he sailed this way before on his way to the Canary Islands he had called in at Baiona and thought it was the sort of place where he could spend the rest of his life. So we invited them to stay on until we got there.

June 7th saw us setting out from A Coruña on the last leg of what we considered our delivery trip to Baiona. This stretch of coastline is known as the Coast of Death, but I thought it better to let Avril have this bit of information when we arrived. We passed the Tower of Hercules, the oldest Roman lighthouse still in use today, and the English Cemetery at Camariñas where 172 sailors from the shipwreck of HMS *The Serpent* on November 10th 1890 are buried.

We passed Cape Finisterre in darkness on a flat calm sea and arrived in Baiona at 3.30am. Avril immediately got up, opened a couple of bottles of wine and sliced some cheese and sausage to celebrate our arrival. After a day for us all to rest Jim and Jeff left for Santiago de Compostela to fly home, leaving Avril, Dolly and myself free to cruise and explore wherever we wanted.



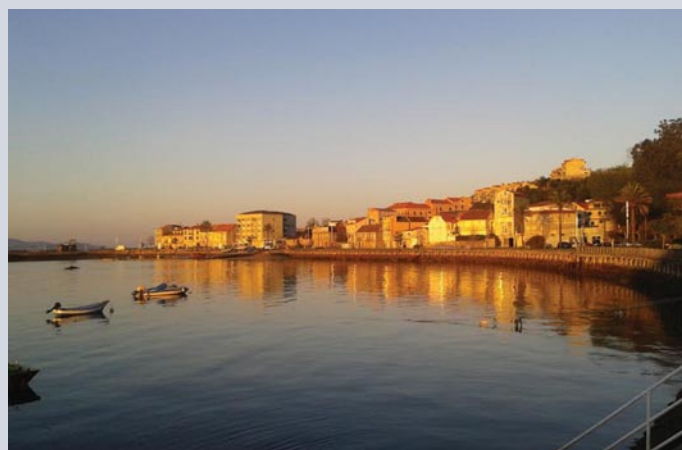
La Pinta replica in Baiona

After a couple of days resting in the marina in Baiona we decided to forgo paying them 43€ a night for the privilege, and moved out into the bay to anchor. One of the main reasons we chose this part of Spain was that should we find ourselves anchored on a lee shore it is usually only a short distance to a safer anchorage in the Ria. Two weeks resting at anchor and exploring the town (the walk around the Parador is spectacular) saw us ready to venture off on our own round the corner and into the Ria de Vigo proper, visiting Cangas and San Adrián.



Ria de Vigo

On our way into the Ensenada de San Simón we passed a pretty little town called Moaña, but had no luck calling the marina on the VHF. I found out later that my pronunciation was so bad that the marina staff didn't realise I was calling them. A few weeks later I booked in for five days, but this time by emailing them, getting a reply that they would have space for us the following Thursday. Little did we realise what a life changing email it turned out to be.



The old port, Moaña

It was during our five days in Moaña that it started to dawn on us that Galicia was totally unlike the rest of Spain. For a start Galego is their first language, although everyone does speak Spanish. From the word go the hospitality we received was astounding. It started with Bea, the girl who worked in the marina office, and her husband Agus inviting us out to different bars and showing us the town. We enjoyed our stay enormously and Bea said she was sad to see us go, as there was a week long tapas fiesta coming up in about 10 days. So we decided to go out for a cruise and booked a berth to return for it. After the tapas fiesta we prepared to set off again, and were told there was another fiesta shortly ... and that set the precedent for the summer. Every time we decided to leave there was another invitation.



Food is always a feature of the many fiestas

Moaña was growing on us more and more and the summer was starting to slip away. We knew we needed somewhere to over-winter. Our original plan was to go south to get the warmer weather, but we were starting to make real friends now, so I asked if we could have a live-aboard berth here until the following spring.



Moonshine in her berth at Moana

There are no ex-pat live-aboard communities in Galicia, they prefer the south, and we have never encountered Spanish people living on boats, so we were quite a novelty which I think encouraged the locals to be friendly to us. As we approached autumn we would come back to the boat to find someone had tied a bag of fruit or vegetables from their garden to *Moonshine's* rail. The onset of winter showed us that it rains a lot in Galicia, sometimes for days. That made us question occasionally not going south, although it doesn't get really cold. The day to day life of living aboard in winter was totally offset by being shown a side of Galician life that we would not have known existed, such as 'furanchos'. A furancho is someone's home, usually in the villages, where they make their own wine, and as long as stocks last are allowed to turn a basement, garage or

spare room into a restaurant, seating customers on long trestle tables and serving the new wine in white china bowls. They are very cheap and very popular during the winter months. Other highlights of our first winter as live-aboards here was being invited to large family meals on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Year's Eve, and we have been lucky enough to continue to receive these invitations.



Christmas lunch with Agus's parents

By the Spring of 2014 it was obvious to us that we were happily settling in to life in Moaña. We were both making Spanish friends. Avril joined the Asociación de Mulleres (equivalent to the WI), where she volunteers to help with the English classes. She also goes to pilates and zumba twice a week. We had adapted well to Spanish times and lifestyle, lunch at 3pm and dinner at 10pm, so we decided to stay, both of us agreeing it was unlikely we would find somewhere else where we would feel so at home and welcomed into the community. The surrounding Rias could provide us with enough cruising area if we wanted to go sailing.



On the Iles de Cles that guard the Ria de Vigo



Dramatic coastline around Moana

The following two years living in the Marina here confirmed we had made the right decision. Total immersion in a Spanish community where, apart from the odd visiting yacht, virtually nobody speaks English, is a great incentive to learn Spanish, and we are both making good progress.

In February 2016 we made the decision to give up the live-aboard lifestyle and rent an apartment. We now have the top part of a house right in the centre of Moaña. We enjoyed our years as live-aboards, but it's nice to have lots of space again. Living on a boat is all about being outside, and we were worried we would lose that, but the house has a large terrace so we can still take all our

meals out in the open, helped by this summer being the hottest in Galicia since records began. Dolly loves it. She delights in having so many different places to snooze and play with her toys after the confinement of living on a yacht. In March we applied for and were granted residency, so we now truly feel that this is our home.

There are some things that we miss about living in England, particularly family and friends, although we have had visits and hope to welcome more. We also miss the camaraderie of yachting in West Mersea.

JONATHAN, AVRIL and DOLLY HALL
Moonshine

Mersea's Golden Girl

Before Rio

Ever since Saskia Clark won silver in the 470 class in 2012 WMYC members have been following her progress with eager anticipation. This culminated in the 'Big Picnic' beach party on 24th July when members showed their support for her to go gold. We all wished her well. Her determination and persistence must pay off.



Photos by Liz Harrison



At Rio

After an energetic regatta in very changeable conditions Saskia and her helm Hannah Mills were all but assured of Britain's second sailing gold of the Games.



The final result was a cliff hanger. Forced to race on their reserve day, they secured two third places either side of a second to build up a 20 point cushion ahead of the medal race. It meant that, subject to protest, they would become Olympic champions if they completed the medal race without disqualification.



Photo by Richard Langdon

© Sailing Energy/World Sailing

© Sailing Energy/World Sailing

Saskia and Hannah beat New Zealand into second place

The result, as they say, is history. After a careful race the girls could not contain their jubilation any longer and, in a technical breach of etiquette, sailed straight up the beach to a rapturous reception from friends and family.



Photo by Richard Langdon

After Rio

The club went wild! The skies lit up. The homecoming was rapturous and the party on the lawn was terrific. This was an opportunity for both residents of Mersea and yacht club members to celebrate their pride in their local hero. Disco dancing and samba rhythms went on late into the night.

Photos by Phil Marfleet



And Then



Saskia and Hannah won the prestigious female World Sailor of the Year Award.

The National Squib Fleet at West Mersea



April Open Meeting

Prior to 2015 and with a gap of some 13 years there was only one Squib being raced at West Mersea, which was Trevor and Kat Child's *Secret Waters* No. 240. This was raced quite successfully, in the mixed Local Handicap fleet.

During 2015 the WMYC Sailing Committee decided to adopt the Squib as the Club's one design. This was championed by the well known Squib campaigner Jack Grogan, who in turn was elected as Class Captain.

Jack has crewed Squibs with his father Nigel for many years and this year they succeeded as National Class Champions, winners of their class at Cowes and lately Inland Champions. Jack sailing his own boat was first overall in the newly formed fleet during Mersea Week in August.

As the 2015 sailing season drew to an end Squibs started popping out of the wood-work! The 2016 season looked promising and the Committee set a programme of races for the new season.

As a first for many years a Squib 'Open Event' was set for 23/24 April, which was challenging to say the least, as we had no mass launching system that this type of event requires for the travelling sailors.

With the assistance of the Stone Sailing Club fleet we were able to utilise their 'wet launching trolley' and we re-discovered our own, very serviceable gantry. A last minute purchase of a lifting tackle and we were (in theory) in business.

The weekend was cold and windy, but an enthusiastic team of 6 local boats greeted the 15 travellers. The Sailing Committee members, not

least Jon French, worked hard at launching and recovery duties ensuring all were hauled in timely fashion.

On day one our RO Paul Jackson set three windward/leeward course races, with overall winners being Bryan and Jenny Riley. The format for day two was around the cans and the RCYC won the Club Trophy for the highest pairing score of Nigel Grogan/Ian Keely and Nic Tolhurst/Mel Titmuss.

Our home fleet best result was Jack Grogan's 4th on the Saturday with his newly acquired £1000 Squib No. 221, proving that the class can provide great fun and results for very little outlay.

The Squib year progressed with a Spring Series (won by Jack Grogan, 221 *Knock Knock*), a Summer Series (Trevor Child 240 *Secret Waters*) and a Tuesday evening Series (Alan Jones 842 *Posh Totty*), the latter series starting and finishing off the Club line, in front of the Club House. That was done for audience appreciation as well as quick passages from moorings to start and back!

Other season's notables were Trevor's *Secret Waters* and Alan's *Posh Totty* both achieving firsts in the two appearances they made in the popular Dabchicks Sailing Club Friday evening series.

On 17th September Trevor and Kat also won the RNLI Annual pursuit race for the coveted John Harrison Salver. Kat claimed that her arms stretched 6 inches in the more than gentle breeze!

The season's highlight has to be **Mersea Week**, the Joint Clubs' annual regatta.



Day 3 Start

Photo: Patricia Forrest

Eight of our fleet of nine boats entered and were treated to a superb week of one-design racing except, sadly Ginesta 79, Richard Davy, who lost her rig on the run-up to the week. We were treated by the Regatta Committee to our own starts in a busy schedule of multi-fleet starts.

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday were light winded affairs. Friday was a tad more, but on Saturday we were treated to some great downwind surfing. AND ALL AT CLOSE QUARTERS! A fabulous week of sailing.

Results:

1. *Knock Knock* (Jack Grogan) 5 points
2. *Posh Totty* (Alan Jones) 6 points
3. *Nemesis* (Ray Apthorp) 10 points.



Posh Totty

Photo: Patricia Forrest

For all matters Squib speak to Jack Grogan.

ALAN JONES

Vice Commodore Sailing

Moorings and Boatyard

Our main project this year has been the establishment of new pontoons on our pile moorings in the Strood Channel. The piles represented a scarcely used Club asset which now provide an attractive option for members and valuable new revenue for the Club. However before going ahead with the project concerns about the thickness of the steel were satisfied by ultrasound survey. In addition their height had to be extended to allow for the highest tides. For this season we were able to offer six new alongside moorings, particularly suitable for power boats. We are now assessing the feasibility of extending the pontoons for next season to accommodate further boats. If interested, please notify Julia in the office.

In addition, we were able to use the remaining pile moorings to provide rafted fore and aft moorings for our new Squib fleet. The challenge for next season is to be able to accommodate up to 30 Squibs for their National East Coast Championships in June, to be followed by a Dragon Open Regatta a few weeks later.

Improvements have been made to the City Road "field". There are new power points so that every laid-up boat should have reasonable access to electricity and we are re-instating the mast rack to give better access to spars. A working party of members put in a lot of work to remove rubbish and clean up the site. We have concluded that the best way to keep it free of rubbish is to remove the litter bins so that owners (and contractors) will have to take their rubbish away with them.

We believe that our Launch Service has worked well this season thanks to the efforts of Andrew Twiddle and Ollie Jarvis, supported by Paul and Tom at weekends. However we are very conscious that the popularity of distant moorings at the top of Salcott and the Ray can mean that it can take more than 40 minutes for the launches to get right round at low water. We are grateful to members for their patience, but we will need to address this issue in the future.

Richard Taylor
Hon Bosun

Square Riggers in St Malo

Linda and I were quite excited as we steered our Hallberg Rassy 34 *Pufnstuf* towards St Malo in June 2016. We had cruised down to the West Country to participate in the Hallberg Rassy Owners Association Rally. We then crossed to Roscoff and were coming back along the Brittany shore enjoying the fine weather, the different ports and marvellous French wine and cuisine!

The last time I had sailed to St Malo was about 30 years earlier on a friend's Southerly and I was looking forward to enjoying the ambience of the town again. As we neared St Malo there was much reading of the pilot book and checking tidal streams on off-sets as we planned our approach through the off-lying rocks and shoals.

We were probably about 5 miles out from St Malo when the eagle-eyed Linda said "I think the racing fleet are coming out, so we had better take good care.....". The binoculars were trained on the many sails and we took stock of our position as we neared the green lateral beacon on the drying Les Courtis shoal. The plotter showed many isolated rocks and we realised we were entering the approach channel and the scope for taking avoiding action was quite limited.

We watched as the approaching fleet drew nearer. "Let's hold our course" was the decision to avoid

getting swept sideways out of the approach channel. Again the binoculars were put to use. "Some of those masts look a bit different", Linda said..... We suddenly realised we were witnessing two square riggers leaving St Malo, escorted by a whole armada of support vessels, including a French Navy patrol boat! It seemed like a solid wall of vessels, large and small, was approaching us.

By this time we had the sails down and were motoring slowly towards the on-coming fleet. It actually went better than expected, even when five French motor boats, in line abreast but only about 10 meters apart, got within a few boat lengths and then one of them decided to turn across us. I think he was too busy watching the spectacle until our hail concentrated his mind!

As the fleet swept past Linda said, "Lets get in quickly before this lot come back...." Good decision. We opened the throttle and quickly found ourselves locked into the Basin de Vauban, chatting to the crew of a British racing yacht who had just completed the St Malo race and who regaled us with stories of blown out sails coming around the Casquets. Enough excitement for one day.....

JOHN KENT
Pufnstuf



RACE CONTROL

ROUND MERSEA ISLAND RACE
1996 – 2016

Having spent ages reading our log books for *La Jouette*, *Dame Hattie* and lastly, *Mersea Memsahib*, I realised I've had 20 odd years 'hyping' myself up to be RACE CONTROL. I took on the "hot seat" from Pat Fellows whose experience was a great inspiration.

I gained insight during previous Races into the requirements of running this special race. In the early days, Mersea Week Race Control was based in a caravan kindly loaned by John Gozzett, sited in the car park opposite the Club. It was our job to keep tabs on all entrants, ensuring that they were signed off at the end of the day. I recall one possible 'casualty'. Should I call up the Lifeboat, or the Coastguard? I more sensibly called Jeff Wass, our then Launchman, for his advice. On retailing the details, he laughed and told me it was two well-known senior Club members scrubbing their F.O.B. dinghy! If only all 'possibly missing' sailors were so quickly found. On many occasions I had crewed on our boat as one of the Radio Boats anchored off the Island. Race Control is now undertaken from the Club Long Room, which can become a hive of anxious last minute queries. So far during my 'watch', I don't think we have lost anyone – oh, except two rascals, eventually found playing in the boat park, not having bothered to sign off!

Some years the race has been abandoned due to adverse weather such as this year, but 'hyping up' for me happens regardless. I reckoned if for any reason the radio procedure was wrong, an accident *could* turn into a tragedy. Since 1996 "Elf and Safety" has become far

reaching and I have always held that if *anything* were to go wrong, it would be deemed to be the Club's fault, however many times the entrants are warned that it is *their* decision to compete or not. I have a slot at the race Briefing Meeting to create a set radio reporting procedure. Nothing is more confusing if reporting does not follow a formula. Every call is logged. I am only one cog in the Round Mersea Island Race Team, which has expanded over the years. I am known for trying to stop any radio link becoming confused by "over and out". Completing a conversation is ended with "Out". "Over" indicates a continuation, thus the two together cancel each other.

Some radio communications can be memorable; one occurred when David and I were competing in a Round the Isle of Wight Race. An urgent, rather breathless call came in to "Castle Point" from a lookout. "Was Castle Point aware that the *Queen Elizabeth* was entering the Solent from the West?" There was a palpable silence, followed by a solemn voice saying, "I should turn your binoculars round. It's the Isle of Wight ferry, and we did know it was there!" Radio procedure for that race, with 1,700 or more entrants, is superb, from which I learnt a great deal.

The best radio conversation I heard of concerning Mersea occurred before I became involved. It was between an entrant (whose skipper had a wooden leg) and an observer radio. In light airs, it seemed there was some discussion whether his leg or his boat would get round the Island first!

In 1999 the race was run during the solar eclipse. It was a remarkable day with reports from the Radio Boats of having to turn on their navigation lights. We were lucky to have a professional television camera set-up in the Long Room which enabled us to watch the actual eclipse owing to the camera's 'shading down' the sun.

Over the years Steve Scruton, from BBC Essex, has compèred two programmes from the Club Lawn, the first of which I was listening to on my battery radio. Suddenly I heard that my son Piers had won a competition being run by Steve's programme. Piers was telling Steve that I was waving at him from the Long Room! Some occasions did have their lighter, fun moments.



A final comment is the luck I have had with really wonderful assistants. As I get older, and the whole system gets more complicated, the Radio Team mate needs to be good. Mine have been and are the best! You will know who you are, and I welcome this opportunity of thanking you publicly.

FAITH TIPPETT

Cadet Week

Another year and another Cadet Week – this year was a carnival of fun both on and off the water!



Indeed, so keen was Simon to ensure that the Optimists got their day's sailing he moved the course four times in a single morning.

Racing was, as always, fair and highly competitive with many of the fleet prizes not being decided until the final day and whilst we applaud all those Cadets who participated we should congratulate the fleet and other prize winners (see below).



*Richard Holroyd
PRO Outside Fleet*



The Viking Trophy is one of Cadet Week's most prestigious trophies – the Fleet winners race against each other in a class of boat decided upon by the Committee. This year and for the first time, Squibs were used – and a fantastic match race ensued with all the boats arriving at the weather



Simon Clifton & Team Inside Fleet

The weather played its usual games but the week got off to a flying start with all fleets out on the water on the first day!

Once again credit must go to our principal Race Officers – Richard Holroyd (Outside Fleet) and Simon Clifton (Inside Fleet) - who kept the Cadets sailing despite the trying conditions at times.



Medium Fleet go to at the start!

mark in close order. In the end, despite some excellent sailing from the other helms, Hamish Eckstein was first across the line.

If sailing in trying conditions was not enough for the Cadets they certainly were kept entertained, and exhausted, with yet another full social agenda with a spectacular carnival theme. I thoroughly enjoyed the evening's fun at Mersea Island School although I am still suffering from the ignominy of being beaten by all the Cadets doing the Sack Race. However balance was restored and proper order put in place when the parents took on the Cadets at Tug-of-War! The fun continued through to prize giving where the parents were given the opportunity to demonstrate their dance moves thanks to the Anchorage Beach Club!

Cadet Week cannot happen without the enthusiasm and active participation of both Cadets and parents, the Mersea Cadet Week Committee, Dabchicks Sailing Club and West Mersea Yacht Club, and our Supporters – to all of you "THANK YOU"!

Inside Fleet (Optimist)



Gabriella Clifton Winner Gold Fleet

Gold

		Nett Points
1st	Gabriella Clifton	13.0
2nd	Daisy Weston	17.0
3rd	Charlotte Allen	39.0

Ruby

		Nett Points
1st	Alex Canham	17.0
2nd	Harry Blackmore	22.0
3rd	Eloise Fuller	22.0

Diamond

		Nett Points
1st	Matilda Milgate	9.0
2nd	Denis Richardson	23.0
3rd	James Blackmore	24.0

Emerald

		Nett Points
1st	Matthew Sanderson	13.0
2nd	Jack Evers	21.0
3rd	Calum Simmons	31.0

Outside Fleet



*Hamish Eckstein
Winner Viking Trophy, Fast Fleet &
1st Single Hander*

Fast

			Nett Points
1st	Laser	Hamish Eckstein	11.0
2nd	Laser Radial	Joshua Tierney	32.0
3rd	Laser	Robert Green	33.5



*Connor Wey & Beth Sharpe
Winners Medium Fleet, RS Feva Class &
1st Double Hander*

Medium

			Nett Points
1st	RS FEVA XL	Conor Wey	20.0
2nd	LASER 4.7	Tim Crossley	29.0
3rd	RS FEVA XL	Lucy Aird-Brown	29.0

Slow Fleet



Lucy Newman
Winner Slow Fleet

Rank	Class	Helm	Nett Points
1st	TOPPER	Lucy Newman	13.0
2nd	TOPPER	Drew Bessey	36.5
3rd	RS TERA PRO	William Gibson	41.0



Cadet Week Chairman Richard Pink and Emily Rogers

Other Trophies

RS Tera Class

Will Gibson

Topper Class

1st Luct Newman
2nd Drew Bessey
3rd Joe Hayhurst

Laser 4.7

1st Tim Crossley
2nd Cameron Dix
3rd Hope Gozzett

1st Single Hander

Hamish Eckstein

Hannah Stodel Endeavour Trophy

Jack Sydenham

Viking Trophy

Hamish Eckstein

RS Feva Class

1st Connor Wey & Beth Sharpe
2nd Lucy Aird-Brown & Amy Struth
3rd Tom Brown & Will Main

Laser Pico Class

Jess Sydenham

Laser Radial

1st Josh Tierney
2nd Freddie Rogers
3rd Rupert Watkins

1st Double Hander

Connor Wey & Beth Sharpe

Seamanship Trophy

Anna Gilbert & Heather Norman

...and finally as outgoing Chairman I would like to wish Gordon Eckstein and his Committee well for the next Mersea Cadet Week!

RICHARD PINK
Chairman Cadet Week

Brest or Bust

In July this year Golden Fleece, Odessa and Black Diamond set out by three different routes to attend the famous International Brest Maritime Festival for classic craft of all kinds. You will find three very different accounts of their experiences in the following pages.

Surfing into Deauville

It was more than two years ago when I was asked by Brigitte Texier-Pauton in the bar if I would consider taking *Golden Fleece* to the Brest Maritime Festival in July 2016 as Brigitte and Malcolm were planning to take *Odessa* and "Wouldn't it be great to fly the Club's flag there – it only happens every four years and maybe other Mersea boats would join us", etc, etc. It seemed so far away that I said "yes" and forgot about it for over a year. Brigitte reminded me of course and eventually I registered *Golden Fleece* for the event and quickly received an acceptance and invitation. So now we were committed and I had to get serious about it.

In 2015 our Club had a visit from Remi Delaporte of the Deauville Yacht Club who was welcomed by Rear Commodore Mike Berry. Burgees were exchanged and Remi made it clear that any member's boat from the WMYC would be most welcome at the Deauville YC at any time. It also turned out that Remi is the partner of Bridget Boelen in Honfleur and that Bridget is the daughter of WMYC members Richard and Mary Wheeler (good friends but we are not related). A sincere invitation was extended to us and I therefore decided that a visit to Deauville and Honfleur must be included on our way to Brest.

We sailed from Mersea on July 3rd with Club members Mike Berry, Nick Reay and Alan Head. After a short stop at Dover that night we set off for Dieppe early the next morning but on making good time we decided to give Dieppe a miss and sail straight through to Deauville (128 nm). At 0100 on July 5th Alan and I relieved Mike and Nick in the cockpit. It was a clear, calm night with little or no wind and we were holding station under power off Fecamp. To continue towards Deauville would have got us there too early to enter and it was more pleasant here, clearly in view of the Fecamp Casino, than doing the same thing in the Baie de Seine at the entrance to the busy port of Le Havre. With HW Deauville at 1215 we knew there would not be enough water for us to enter until at least 0915 but there was still 30 odd miles to go. So at 0200 I decided to proceed slowly towards Le Havre and Deauville.

All was well until about 0300 when the wind and the swell began to build from the west, the rain came down and within another 30 minutes the bow of *Golden Fleece* was burying in each oncoming sea with green water washing over the decks all the way back to the cockpit. It was not long before Mike and Nick shouted up from below through a slightly cracked open hatch, "What the hell are you guys doing up there, we left it nice and calm for you!"

The head seas slowed us down to about 3 knots but we eventually entered the Baie de Seine off Le Havre at about 0700 (everyone was up by now as sleep was not possible down below!) and turned left towards Deauville. We were now heading SE and whilst the wind had abated slightly the following westerly seas and swell were still substantial. We were surfing down the face of the swells heading for Deauville with the tide behind us as well so it was difficult to turn the boat around. We just had to try and slow her down as best we could so as not to enter before 0915. Then the mist set in!

At the Semoy cardinal buoy we lost visibility of the entrance to Deauville which was now only about two miles away. It was difficult to control our speed as the westerly wind, seas and flood tide had pretty much taken control and we were going in like a steam train. The mist cleared and then filled in again until it finally cleared at about half a mile out.

The elements are taking us in fast now and we can't slow down or turn around. We are all in the cockpit pretending to enjoy the sleigh ride with Alan glued to the depth sounder calling out, "1.6 - 1.2 - 0.8 - 0.4...." until I suggest that he stop calling out the depth and turn the bloody thing off! We are now committed and there is nothing we can do about it anyway. As we enter the channel there is a shallow sloping beach to port and a breakwater of rocks to starboard, neither of which looks appealing as we slalom around the first channel marker on one ski at uncontrolled high speed – no one's talking! Now it's straight down the channel and things are getting better, we

haven't touched the bottom and so our timing must have been right. Then, as we pass the casino to port and enter the outer harbour it's a different world....suddenly calm, peaceful and sunny!

We spotted Remi standing on the swing bridge and he directed us to a berth in the Bassin Morny which he had reserved for us right outside the Deauville Yacht Club. Bridget and Remi were waiting for us with warm baguettes and croissants and lots of hot coffee in the yacht club.



Nick, Alan and I were still unshaven, in our wet gear, with salt encrusted, tussled hair and red rimmed eyes but somehow Mike had managed to shower, shave and change into shoreside attire as only he can in such short time and showed no sign of having gone through the previous horrible night with us. Well, at least one of us was looking smart, and a better ambassador for the WMYC we could not have had. How does he do it?

After coffee and croissants Remi showed us around the Deauville YC and pointed out our WMYC burgee which Mike presented to him last year – it is mounted on the wall and hangs proudly in line with many others.



Remi Delaporte with Mike Wheeler

Bridget suggested that we should rest a day to recover from our overnight 'experience'. She reserved dinner for us in a fine restaurant owned by a friend where we were looked after royally. The next day she took us to their house in Honfleur overlooking the Seine Estuary for a barbecue lunch with family and friends. This turned out to be a magnificent day with champagne on the lawn looking across to Le Havre, and superb food followed by a visit to the old port of Honfleur before returning us to *Golden Fleece*. The hospitality bestowed upon us by Bridget, Remi and the Deauville YC was 'above and beyond' and will not be forgotten.

We departed Deauville on July 7th, through the Alderney Race at 13.3 knots and straight through to Perros-Guirec where Mike would leave us and Vicki join us. We stayed one night in Perros Guirec where I caught up with a friend who was once a French exchange student. He came to stay with us in Mersea when we were in our mid teens and has remained a friend ever since! Vicki sailed with us on the overnight passage from Perros to L'Aber-Wrac'h which started off beautifully but became horrible (again) and so she signed off in L'Aber-Wrac'h and took the bus to Brest where we met her later that day.

On arrival in Brest they tried to put us on an isolated pontoon 'G' with no facilities and no connection to the shore. But after sailing 400 miles we weren't having any of that and moved ourselves to Marina du Chateau where, after a bit of smooth talking with the Harbour Master, we stayed and spent a fantastic week enjoying the festival. We moored up alongside *Odessa* and *Gipsy Moth IV* (we warned *Odessa* about pontoon 'G' as they came down the Rade de Brest!). We met fellow Club members Colin and Diane Campbell (*Playpen*) who arrived by car, and Ben Morris, son of Bill and Elizabeth, with *Lulotte* but unfortunately missed Greg Dunn and *Black Diamond* amongst the other 1,400 boats attending! Alan had to leave us in Brest to get back to work.



Celebrating a happy arrival



Odessa, Golden Fleece and Gipsy Moth IV

Our son Jason flew down to help Nick and me bring *Golden Fleece* home while Vicki did another passage from Brest to Roscoff on July 20th. After Roscoff it was straight through to West Mersea arriving on July 23rd just in time for Cadet Week. A thoroughly enjoyable and rewarding trip.

MICHAEL WHEELER
Golden Fleece

Odessa's story

Along with two Mersea boats (*Golden Fleece* and *Black Diamond*), *Odessa* was invited to join other classic yachts at the famous International Brest Maritime Festival, a grandiose 4 yearly spectacle set in Europe's biggest harbour! Because of day and night sailing, Malcolm and I secured the help of two friends, Kevin of *Sea Breeze* and David Curry who actually was *Odessa's* previous owner of 18 years.

After months of careful preparation we set off from Mersea but within hours had to turn back due to serious mechanical problems (slipping clutch). Although this was eventually resolved, after an emergency haul-out and telephone discussions with the Nanni engineer, it delayed our departure

by two days and we saw our prospects of making it to Brest in time vanishing in the distance!

At last on the 13th of July, albeit a day late, we arrived at 19.30 in Brest... From leaving Mersea on Wednesday 6th of July, it had taken us four days entirely at sea, three nights in Cherbourg, one afternoon in Guernsey and sitting out at sea for four lots of six hour adverse tides ... In total, 7 days 5hrs! For all the boats making their way to Brest that week it had been a challenging task. In the final count there were 1,050 present and 200 didn't make it due to the weather conditions.

Golden Fleece meanwhile had left Deauville for Perros Guirec, a long 181nm stretch. Afterwards, in sympathy with the horrid passage, I jested with Michael, "Who's idea was it in the first place?" He teasingly admitted that my name had popped up a few times in conversation. After a stop at L'Aber Wrac'h, finally they were in Brest, right on time to take on board a special delivery... our little dog Tilly! Colin and Diane Campbell were joining us by car ferry and taking care of her transport.

Pontoon "G" rebellion. On approach to Brest, we called *Golden Fleece* to let Michael know of our imminent arrival...He warned us of our allocated berths on "G" pontoon, mainly reserved for the Old Gaffers! No electricity, no water, no toilets, no access to the land...simply a working pontoon. Soon an official rib came to us. We declared that we had a dog on board and needed access to land 24/7....With a shrug of the shoulder, we were told, "Go to the marina then!" Spotting Michael, Vicky, Alan and Nick holding Tilly like a little treasure and all waving at us, was such a warming sight! It struck me then that Michael Wheeler must be the first WMYC Commodore to be a guest at this prestigious event. Certainly a first for us.

I called Philippe Carrere, the official organiser I had been in touch with for these last two years and he graciously came to help us sort out the berthing matter... Our plea was simple: "After covering hundreds of miles of a very rough and tough journey G pontoon was not our idea of a holiday or an option...or we leave!" By then *Gipsy Moth* had been spotted on the other side of the pontoon next to the famous Eric Tabarly's *Pen Duick* yachts. The lady skipper Emma had offered to Michael and Malcolm to raft alongside. No more to be said... we had all found a place!

Bastille Day! Thursday 14th of July... The *Hermione*, a replica of La Fayette's frigate, looked upon as a symbol of freedom, entered the "Rade de Brest". The celebrations started! Tall ships had

come from all over the world... from Russia to Mexico! No harbour in the world has ever seen so many boats under sail at the same time. Several countries divided into "villages" were invited to share their culture, food and music. There was a huge amount to do and see. Still rather tired from our dreary passage, it was a lot to take in for our first visit.



I turned my attention to the water: it was a magical display of tall ships, three and four masted square riggers, workboats, fishing smacks, steam tugs and elegant yachts, all showing off their seamanship skills to the amazement of a crowd of thousands of spectators! Some nights we were graced with a "parade nocturne", the ships moving as in a slow waltz with light and sounds set against a starry sky and shimmering water reflecting the whole scene. I felt humbled and deeply moved by such beauty and expertise... The commentaries on loud speaker kept saying: "Here, there are no big or small boats... all there is... is passion!"

The "Lords of the sea!" One morning, a "Glénans" design wooden yacht came alongside us. I asked the skipper where he came from... it was Pont-l'Abbé. Stunned, I carried on, "I'm from there also! So you must know my brother... Dominique?". His answer, simply surreal, totally threw me back down a little nostalgic route: "Brigitte!...is that you?... I have always meant to ask Dom what had happened to his little sister!" It was Pierre Plumereau who used to play Rugby with my brother. On Monday, England was in the limelight and it was lovely to read in the newspaper, that the Bretons call the English "Les Seigneurs de la mer!" (The Lords of the sea).



LA GRANDE PARADE! Tuesday 19th, the Festival concluded with the "Great Parade of Sails" between Brest and Douarnenez. Offering a gripping show, a thousand ships converged behind the *Hermione* leading the fleet to the famous giant rock formation known as "Le Tas de Pois" (The Stack of Peas). Whilst she wisely by-passed them, the dare is to cross in between!

True to the promise, two years ago, of our rendez-vous at sea, my brother and his wife had joined us on board. Dom pointed to the land. It reminded me of a scene from the film "Zulu": the cliffs were lined with people watching, looking intently at us... It was magical. Boats started to disappear in between the rocks. Marie heard a voice on the radio: "Les carottes sont cuites" meaning "The die is cast" or "The chips are down" and then silence... not a sound. As Malcolm steered *Odessa* through a mass of ships into the narrow opening you could hear a pin drop... Simply breath-taking!

When we got to Douarnenez the *Hermione* was already there... she was furling her sails. Two dozen matelots had climbed the rigging. They stood along the yard to bundle the sail up tightly and tie it down, their arms in unison, pulling the cloth, again and again like a clockwork mechanism.



By chance, in the afternoon we noticed a classic boat looking for a mooring and we called the skipper over to raft alongside us. Pierre told us that his boat is another Glénans design. They had taken part in the Brest festival. As we looked down below, we were astonished by the very Spartan accommodation. Although designed for 5 people (4 crew and the skipper) there is no headroom and you virtually stand on your knees! There are no benches or table. Pierre explained "The living quarters are intended for 3 things only: sleep (in coffin berths), chart work and cook. The rest, meal and recreational times is spent on deck, hence the use of a deck tent". He told us the history of the Glénans Sailing Centre created after WWII, in 1947, by a group of young former Resistance



Fighters. Clearly it was designed strictly for training and the message was quite clear: Sea cadets would learn seamanship as well as humanitarian skills. Such tight spaces commanded total respect, trust and dependence on each other.

Black Diamond turned up! Having spotted Greg Dunn sailing in the Rade de Brest we had looked for him but in vain. In fact he was rather out of the way on pontoon G. It was good to get a chance to talk. When Greg visited us again with his wife Juliet, he had with him a rather cute accordion. As a little steam ship was passing by, I thought it would be rather fitting if he played a tune from the cockpit. Well, as a gesture of appreciation the little ship did a round of honour circling *Odessa*... and as a final salute let off a jet of steam. Thanks Greg that was great!

A thought... I told one of the Treizour, the Breton name for "passeur" (ferryman), how rough our passage had been and he answered pensively: "Un bateau... c'est le Paradis et l'Enfer" (a boat is... Heaven & Hell).

It was all over... Monday 25th, the port was empty and a big clearing work was in process on the quay...The maritime festivals of Brest and Douarnenez were over! Unforgettable moments! A colossal effort and triumph from behind the scenes on behalf of the organisers and the mass of volunteers. The call of the sea is powerful... hundreds of boats and thousands of sailors made their way to the celebrations. The pride, the seamanship, the sharing... They made the enchantment happen and we were part of it.

At a personal level, it had been a trip down memory lane... For me Douarnenez has a soul ... it was home to my grand-parents and the best years of my youth spent with them. My grandad always used to send me photos of the stunning parade of sails. The sea had taken me back to my roots, my brother and I descending to Douarnenez, almost expecting him to stand at the pier head taking a picture of us.



BRIGITTE TEXIER-PAUTON
Odessa

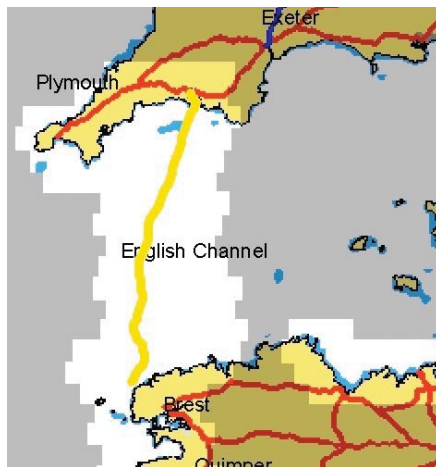
Brigitte and Malcolm's full account of their trip, including their adventures on the outward and return passages, is available in the Club bar and on the Club website. Recommended as a good read. Ed.

By dinghy

Sailing the Channel has been on my bucket list for a long time, so this summer I registered *Black Diamond* for the Brest/Douarnenez festivals but, being time-poor, decided to trail to Plymouth and do the shorter hop direct to Brittany. I tried to join the 'Brest Feeder Race' (I kid you not!) run by the Yacht Club Classique, but was turned down on insurance grounds as they considered my yacht to be a dinghy!

My stepson Hugo Doyle was mate for the voyage south, and after an overnight road journey to Saltash, we disappointed the assembled company of gongoozlers by launching on an alarmingly steep slipway without submersing the Transit van. We sat out a blow overnight and waited for the next tide gate the following day. That would hopefully deliver us to the north end of the Chenal du Four soon after HW. So we slipped our lines at 1730 and rode the ebb down the Tamar. This was to be the last blast for the old sails, their eleventh season and still going strong – great sails, Dolphin, thank you.

It was a lively overnight crossing, a Force 5, slightly north of west, and we put as much westing in our course as we could without scooping too many seas, just in case we were headed. The first



drenching came from the leeward side, as an ocean-going tug passed us by the Eddystone, going full chat and putting up a six foot wash. We stood two-hour watches after nightfall, but sleep was virtually impossible under the foredeck, with the sluicing of the planing hull and the creaking of 54 year old timbers. The average speed was somewhere near seven knots, topping out at 12.5 knots whilst surfing two consecutive waves. At the understandable insistence of my wife, I had fitted an AIS transponder, but neither of us knew it would cease talking to the internet soon after the Eddystone, so she had a fraught night, thinking the worst had happened.

The draughty night gave way to a splendid dawn and lighter wind, but no reduction in the sea state. Rounding the Grande Basse buoy meant we had safely crossed the Channel and now it was coastal sailing. We were just ahead of HW and ready to take the southbound escalator of the Chenal du Four, the legendary tide rip between Ushant and Finisterre. The sun shone, we had four knots of tide under us, and topped out at a smidgeon under ten knots over the ground. I couldn't understand what all the fuss was about. But I found out later....

After 18 hours on starboard tack, we gybed at the Pointe Saint Mathieu, the turning point for the Rade de Brest. That was the best sailing of the trip, recorded by photographer Michel Floch, who snapped us from the cliffs on a zoom lens and posted the photos on Marinetraffic.com. We scorched into the Rade, hove to under the lee of the inner harbour wall in Brest to put the outboard into the well and drop the sails, just over 23 hours out of Plymouth.



I won't dwell on the festivities in Brest, other than to say they were characteristically superb, a magnificent show that only the Bretons know how to put on. We had the honour of being invited to sail in the *concourse d'elegance*, a remarkable *son et lumière* at nightfall, parading around the harbour at a strict three knots.



Son et lumiere

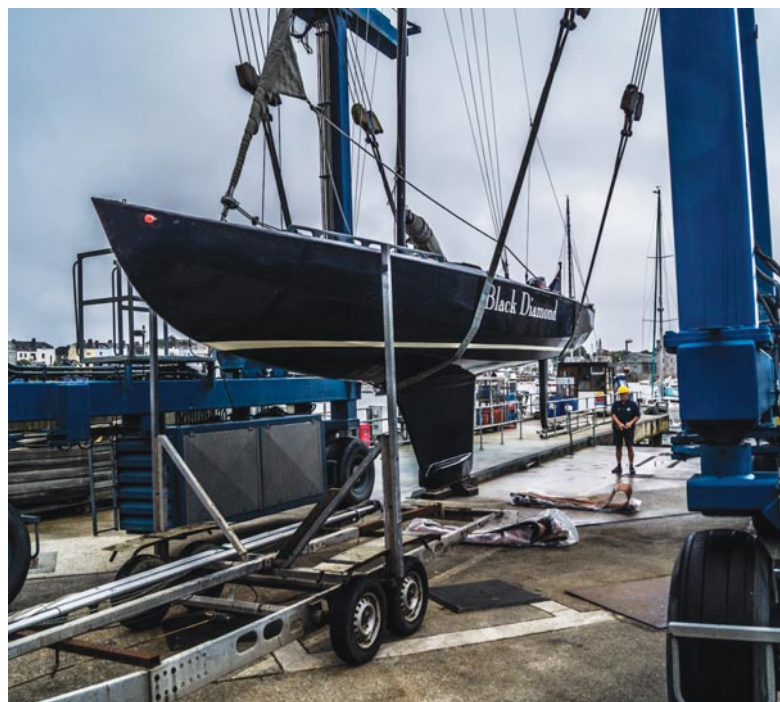
The 'Parade Maritime' to Douarnenez was both dull and magnificent, as it was a long noisy motor, in the company of over a thousand vessels, through beautiful coastal scenery.

I finally met up with Malcolm and Brigitte in *Odessa* in the Rosmeur Harbour, which was a great joy, but I was getting foredeck fever and needed to get to sea again. So I set off singlehanded for the eight-hour trip round the corner to L'Aber Wrac'h on the north Brittany coast. As I was motoring the whole way, I streamed an 80 foot lifeline in case I got in a muddle and fell overboard, but this nearly went into the propeller of a rib that buzzed me in the Chenal du Four. The disturbed seas of a raging spring flood over a relatively shallow and rocky seabed took on an oily grey appearance and steering was challenging, very different from the neap ebb we had come south on.

I left *Black Diamond* on a river mooring in L'Aber Wrac'h, and returned a week later with my son Jack for the return hop. We found *Odessa* preparing to leave the marina there, bound for Roscoff. We tucked a double reef into the main, as the forecast was rising to Force 6 south westerly, just the ticket for a sleigh ride home. We left half an hour before midday, calculating to take the flood tide up the Tamar. We suffered an involuntary gybe whilst Jack was helming, which shook him up, so I steered for the rest of the trip. He was kept busy bailing though, as the electric pump couldn't keep up with the seas coming aboard. It rained heavily for pretty much the whole trip, and as the wind built at nightfall, we furled the headsail and sped northwards under reefed main alone. We learned to like the roar of the combers breaking, as when we heard them, they didn't end up in the boat, unlike the silent-but-deadly poopers, which drenched us four or five times.

We cheered up a bit when the Eddystone light showed up, and made it through Plymouth Breakwater at about 4am. Somewhere out there in the dark, we topped out at 15.8 knots, but with a slow start and finish, the average speed was close to six knots.

The story of going ashore in Saltash at 5.30am is an essay in itself, but suffice to say that after 18 hours on the helm, I slipped on the cockpit coaming whilst tying up and stove in three ribs on the starboard winch!



Hauling out at Saltash

People have been surprised we did the trip. Although our designation as 'dinghy' is actually correct, *Black Diamond* has polystyrene behind



Greg and son Jack

bulkheads bow and stern. So with half a ton of safety equipment and not falling asleep at the wheel, it wasn't ill-conceived, but an enormously rewarding life experience.

But I am going by road next time!

GREG DUNN
Black Diamond

If You Want An Opinion

ASK ANY GREY BEARDED SEADOG

Wherever two or more hoary old salts are gathered together you can guarantee they will be keen to voice totally conflicting views on any subject of nautical interest you care to raise.

Back in the spring, the Club put out a request for volunteers to form a working party with the purpose of tidying up City Road Car Park after the winter boat storage. Wearing a variety of disreputable canvas smocks, mismatched gardening gloves and strange headgear, eight greybeards assembled and toiled with shovels and wheelbarrows, picking up the detritus obligingly left by other members, such as sandpaper and paint cans, old roller trays and brushes, scores of threadbare doormats, and sufficient filthy remnants of garish carpet which, when sewn together, would cover the floor of the Albert Hall.

After a couple of hours they began to flag, and it was obvious that a coffee break was needed, so I made a hasty trip to the shops to fetch brownies and flapjack and went to their rescue. This was their cue to park themselves on a variety of old wheelbarrows, trailers, and oil drums, and cogitate, clutching their coffee mugs.

"I've been up since six this morning, lying on my back at the top of the hard, anti-fouling my propeller," said one chap, breezily.

At this, the other seven seadogs took a collective sharp intake of breath, and to a man, shook their grizzled heads. In the following silence, I could have sworn that a ball of tumbleweed rolled through the boatyard.

"What's wrong?" faltered the breezy one, not so cheerful now. "You don't want to use anti-foul on a propeller," intoned another,

gloomily, accompanied by loud tooth sucking from the others. "A bit only has to chip off, then your propeller's out of whack, and it'll probably fall off and you'll never see it again."

The rest of the company continued to shake their heads slowly and stare at the ground. Someone rolled a fag.

"What do you use then?" ventured Breezy, looking appalled.

A brave soul perched on an oil drum at the back quavered, "I always use a bit of lanolin, meself..."

This time, there was a loud collective guffaw of disbelief.

"Lanolin!" mocked another. "You might as well get a tiny little blackboard and write on it, 'Special today - Lanolin!' and lower it over the side. The barnacles love the stuff - they'll be all over it."

Someone next suggested grease mixed with chili powder, which was also loudly pooh-poohed. "All right until you've been in the water for half an hour, then there's none left," was the general opinion, and the idea of liberally applying nappy rash cream brought howls of laughter and had most of them wiping away tears of mirth and wheezing over the flapjacks.

A coat of wax was next derisively discounted, and so was silicone compound, both being labelled 'useless' by the assembled highly opinionated would-be experts.

They were all looking pretty grumpy by now. I passed around the plate of brownies.

"These are nice," said someone. "Make them yourself?" I inclined my head and tried to look modest.

"Well now", I said, "you seem to have covered propellers pretty well. Can anyone give me advice about cleaning teak?" And we were off, galloping down the straight.

"Washing powder," said Oil Drum.

"No, no, no! Dishwasher tablets dissolved in warm water!" instructed Breezy.

"Absolutely not - use a two part teak cleaner," said Roll-a-Fag.

Suggestions rained down on me from every perch:

"Just a bucket and sponge!"

"Bleach solution!"

"Mould killer!"

"Sea water!"

"Don't bother, just leave it."

"Thanks, lads," I said, collecting the mugs. Then, to distract them while I made off with the remaining brownie, I said innocently, "Oh, I forgot to ask - do I clean with the grain, or across the grain?" And I scarpered off home, leaving them to fight it out, while cries of "Across!" and "With!" gradually faded into the distance from the direction of the car park.

So there you are. Not a conclusion was reached between them, and you can guarantee that they will all go on doing things to their boats exactly as they've always done while giving out conflicting free advice to anyone who'll listen. And as for the suggestions given here, my advice to you is to ignore them all and ask a real expert, unless of course you are reading this while wearing a disreputable canvas sailing smock and stroking your fine grey beard, in which case you'll know what to do anyway.

MAGGIE HADDOW

Atlantic Canter

After three seasons in the Azores, we wondered if we had hung up our long distance seaboots. We were under the spell of these lovely islands and finding it difficult to contemplate turning *Resting Goose's* nose out to sea again. Our offshore sailing was well satisfied by the 50-100nm distances between the islands but we had always said that we enjoyed adventure sailing rather than coastal cruising. Could we still enjoy an ocean passage?

On our southbound journey in 2010, we had skipped the coastal area south of Lisboa and made straight for the Canaries. Why not spend a summer visiting overlooked harbours? It is only when you scale off the track that you realise the distances involved as this island group is well into the Atlantic. 850nm east, 150nm south and 1000nm back west - a total of c.2000nm. That should do it, we thought!

We were joined by two ex-EAORA sailors, Julie Cuthbert and Martin Rhodes-Schofield 'Dubs' for the first leg, and on July 11th at 06.30am, we nosed out of our berth. It felt great to be adventuring again even though it was flat calm and we had to motor until late afternoon. The wonderful thing about the ocean is that it's never boring. The Cory Shearwaters swooped around us



Simon and Camilla Talbot take an Atlantic bath

till well offshore and we had several sightings of dolphin. We then spotted what looked like tiny feathers floating on the oily seas but which turned out to be the bladder sails of Atlantic Portuguese men of war (or 'floating terror' as they are sometimes called since they can give a very vicious sting). Fascinating!

With a crew of offshore racers, it wasn't long before the coloured sails made an appearance. First, the spinnaker and then the cruising chute. But by the middle of the night, the wind backed to



Tall ships in Lisboa

the west and we poled out the genoa to enjoy a steady 12-15 knot breeze. It didn't last but we finally settled on starboard tack with a new wind from the south east. With a forecast of increasing winds, building seas and a strong south-setting current, we kept north of our rhumb line. As the wind rose to 20-25 knots, sail area was reduced to 2nd reef in the main and the No 4 set on our inner forestay - a well-balanced and comfortable rig. As we approached the Rio Tejo, we encountered an acceleration zone which had us flying along at 8-9 kts - a fitting finish to our first leg and one that got us into Cascais harbour in time for a well-earned sleep.

Cascais has a great marina and lots to see (eg. Paula Rego's wonderful art gallery) and eat (moules & gin, a great combination). On to Lisboa for a crew change to the Dodgsons. The city is best viewed from the river, with its variety of ancient and modern architecture and it was a delight to see the Tall Ships again. We moored in the newly reopened Marina Parque das Nações to the east of Lisboa and visited their magnificent three storey aquarium. The marina is very well connected with supermarkets close by and transport easy and cheap into the city centre. A much better option, we felt, than the noisy and dusty Doca de Alcantara.

From the Rio Tejo south, first stop was Sesimbra - a tiny harbour and we were glad we had called up to reserve a place in advance. Known for its heritage as a fishing town, it lived up to its reputation, with the wonderful smell of sardines cooked on outdoor grills wafting through the streets. We were directed to their equivalent of the Oyster Bar and had the most delicious meal.

We sailed on into the Setúbal estuary and moored on the Troia Peninsula. Wow! Beautiful unspoilt

beaches that stretch down the Atlantic coast, uninterrupted for 18 km and, inland, a peaceful lagoon, perfect for bird watching. We took the ferry across to Setúbal and visited the fish market. Apparently, when the oystermen in Mersea needed to restock, this is where they came so we paid homage to the forebears of our wonderful Mersea oysters.

We set off on our last coastal leg in beautiful hot sunshine with a great beam wind. An overnight stay at Sines in a modern marina and then on down to Lagos which offers very sheltered berthing upriver. Here, we were joined by an ex-rear commodore, Simon Talbot and his wife, for the trip back to the Azores. Yet again, the gods were smiling on us and we set off with a good breeze which had us making 410nm in the first two days. With a full moon and clear skies, the night watches were a delight and Simon was ecstatic when he succeeded in catching his first skipjack tuna.



Day 3 saw the wind die away to 1-2 knots - time for a swim in crystal clear water with over 5000m to the sea bottom! All too soon, we sighted Santa Maria, the most southerly and sunniest of the archipelago. Our Atlantic canter was over and we were back in familiar waters. But our decision was made - next year it's off for another 2000nm, this time to the Eastern Mediterranean. Our adventuring days with *Resting Goose* are not over yet!



Fish market in Setubal

ANNE CHATTERTON
Resting Goose

Club Cruises



This year is my first as Cruiser Captain and I have been delighted with the popularity of all the planned cruises. In all 37 boats joined at least one of the cruises.

Highlights for me were the London Cruise led by Larry Botheras (particularly the historic dockyard at Chatham) and Ian Crossley's cruise down the French coast where new friends were made and, despite the variable weather, we all had a great time. Particular thanks go to the volunteer leaders whose organisational skills and support for those joining the cruises was excellent. The 2017 programme has been circulated and I am looking for volunteers to lead some of these cruises. Finally, the Cruiser Lunch and Photo Competition will be on Sunday, 26th February 2017 – hope to see you there.

JACK DAVIS
Clockwise

Brightlingsea 30th April – 1st May

What a terrific turn out for the first cruise of the season. We had a total of 12 boats sail to Brightlingsea plus crew that signed up but, because of last minute hiccups, drove there and took the ferry out for pre-dinner nibbles.



Topsy Turvy



Conviviality aboard

Topsy Turvy had a gentle maiden sail to the Harbour and offered to be host boat to celebrate their new acquisition – and what wonderful nibbles they were too, all washed down by copious amounts of Champagne. The mood aboard *Topsy Turvy* was so enjoyable that nobody wanted to go ashore for dinner. Colne Yacht Club were hosting

four clubs there on the Bank Holiday so the atmosphere in the club house was very convivial.

For the Sunday/bank holiday Monday 8 boats had a wonderful sail to Bradwell in a North to North Westerly force 5 wind. Once all boats were safely tied up the crew had a couple of drinks in the Marina Cruising bar before the cruise leader again tried herding everyone to the Green Man for an evening meal. Twice the crews had been 'encouraged' to move on to the next venue. By Monday the weather had turned and most boats left early. However, the weather overall wasn't too bad, the turnout was fantastic and everyone enjoyed themselves.

MEL DANIELS
Stargazer

Harwich 21st – 24th May

After a poor forecast and in winds gusting over 25 knots 9 boats out of the original 15 entries started the Pursuit Race. All boats were lightly crewed, only two per boat, with John French sailing singlehanded.

The wind was comfortably off the beam giving us a proper gentleman's cruiser race with no nasty tacking to interrupt tea and so on. Thanks to the good work of Rachel Ramsey and the handicap committee, John French (37ft), Kevin Mullins (25ft), Paul Gosling (33ft), Rob Smith (33ft) all arrived at the finish in close company. At the last minute *Waterlily* surged ahead to win the Thomas Preston Memorial Trophy. Rob Smith in *Tamarisk* had actually crossed the line first but retired having used his engine to avoid colliding with the start boat. This was deemed to be excusable in the context of good seamanship in a new boat and it was decided to award Rob and Claire an honorary 1st place bottle of wine.

We gathered for the traditional BBQ on the bank at Shotley, which was well attended, with John and Anne Cook and Tim and Adrienne Wood joining the racers, having cruised up the day before.

After the prizegiving the heavens opened and we all retreated to *Playpen* and *Carmina* for digestifs.

On Sunday seven boats sailed up to the Royal Harwich Yacht Club where we were warmly welcomed by Geoff the harbour master who kindly



Admiring varnish - the ultra modern in front of the *Nancy Blackett*

berthed us all close together. Mel organised a demonstration of an 'ascender' device for use when climbing the mast with only one's wife to pull one up. Sue Sharpe 'manned' the halyard and husband Richard went up *Solent Flame's* mast with no visible signs of exertion on Sue's part. Colin Campbell then thought a replay would be a good idea and persuaded Richard to fix a broken wind vane on *Playpen* which Richard gallantly achieved. Cabaret over, the crews of *Clockwise*, *Playpen*, *Solent Flame 2*, *Sea Breeze*, *Stargazer*, *Sea Hound* and *Carmina* enjoyed a very convivial evening meal in the RHYC clubhouse.

Also moored on the club pontoon was the historic *Nancy Blackett*, the favourite yacht of 'Swallows and Amazons' author Arthur Ransome, complete with trustees of the Nancy Blackett Trust who kindly treated some of our members to a tour of this historic vessel.



Dinner in RHYC

From Monday onwards the fleet split up, some on to Ipswich or Levington while *Clockwise* headed for Woodbridge where we were joined by Chris and Julian French in *Matilda*.

It was good to see so many boats taking part. We made some new friends, visited new restaurants and despite the somewhat variable weather, I think everyone had a good time.

JACK DAVIS
Clockwise

Heybridge 4 – 5th May

This was the first year in our official capacity as cruise leaders following many years of faultless organisation and dedicated partying from John and Mary Haynes, so no pressure! Luckily we had help. John Haynes and Mel Daniels decided the dates when the tides were most propitious. Grant the lock keeper was not so sure as he expected to have to deploy the flood gates. After many an amendment to our burgeoning list of cruisers, Grant announced he would be at a wedding on the main lock-in day, and we would be ably assisted by Dan.

It was fortuitous that for some years the custom of going up a day early and locking-in on the Friday has appealed to some cruisers, easing the workload for the lock keeper and providing more social and drinking time. With that in mind we set off on Friday morning. Julian always likes to sail in company so we pottered about the Nass waiting for *Odessa*. Getting into the spirit of it all we put up *Matilda's* main and jib, although we didn't go as far as turning off our engine. In due course *Odessa* appeared and we were promptly reminded of what a fast boat she is. Seeing her scythe her way through the water she sailed into the distance, leaving us for dead. We cast our eyes about for a new best friend and were gratified to see *Stargazer* and *Rendevous* who, with a bit more wellie from the engine, we managed to keep up with.

When all the boats were in, including the iconic *Pelican*, it was time to party, and *Rendevous* made us all most comfortable. After plenty of drinks and nibbles we were sufficiently lubricated to stumble over to The Old Ship for sustenance. During the evening Mel and Carol made mention of seeing us broadside in the lock, and as this used to be an unintentional party trick of ours, particularly at Shotley, they had concluded that we were back to our old ways. Julian told them in no uncertain terms we had been directed to do so.

It is the curse of the Heybridge cruise leader to overdo the celebrations on Friday and suffer for it later. Julian manfully took on that mantle and an uncomfortable night was spent on board.

Saturday dawned bright and warm and it was off to the Tiptree café. Suitably stuffed with scones and cream we waddled over to the lock, to be greeted by John and Mary Haynes, on hand for much needed help and advice. A busy hour or so ensued with three lock-ins and wonderful camaraderie from the local boat residents who helped to operate the lock. *Waterlily* treated us all to a solo demonstration of sailing poetry in motion while we stood mesmerised watching him tie up without assistance.

More drinks on the designated party boat *Sea Breeze* as it was Kevin's birthday. (*Does there have to be a reason? – Ed*). I don't think we could have squeezed one more person on board, and she started taking on water at the stern so Kevin dutifully moved forward and redistributed the weight more evenly.



Balancing the boat

The afternoon was followed by the inevitable BBQ. We dug out our steaks, a few bits of salad and a disposable BBQ. Unfortunately neither of us was sufficiently sober to light it, but thankfully those oh-so-organised Haynes's had a proper barbie going so we managed to park ourselves by them, and were treated to Mary's potato salad which deserved a trophy of its own.

The whole atmosphere was a fun family party, the weather was warm and balmy, kids and dogs played, food was handed round and alcohol flowed freely. The trophy for the pursuit race was presented to Shirley Swan of *Dura* followed by some very accomplished singing to guitar music by Alan Mason and an accident-free clamber over *Odessa* into *Matilda* for a very pleasant sleep.



Sunday dawned with the prospect of more scones & cream, but only after a short period of tidying up. Here again the usual suspects David and Mouse, Mel and Carol, were on hand for the tidy up. Everyone was around to help with the mass exodus as Grant termed it! A mega lock-out was achieved and we all sailed or motored back to Mersea.

CHRISTINE FRENCH
Matilda



Crossing near the Varne

France June 27th - 11th July

Having had a couple of meetings to thrash out a route, radio and timing the Club Summer Ball delayed the start to Monday morning. There were four yachts in total: *Clockwise*, *Hermione*, *Solent Flame* and finally *Sea Otter*, our Fisher motor sailor. That said I had a shakedown sail on Sunday 26th June to the anchorage off East Mersea Point. This first sail of the season allowed us to get things stowed and generally shipshape.

The following morning we got under way at 0615 with genoa and mainsail and set the mizzen an hour later. Wind up and down so most of the passage was motor sailing. As we approached the SW Sunk the rest of the cruise in company caught us up. *Sea Otter* has the original 28 HP Volvo and under power her best speed is 5 and a bit knots. Fisherman No.5 slipped by at 1042 having come through 'Gaspar's Gap' (SW Sunk). Ramsgate saw the four of us on the same pontoon and come 6pm an impromptu party took place on Jack and Sandy's *Clockwise*. The following morning we got under way at 9am, very civilised, and the tide served. The wind speed was nil so on with the chug through the Downs.



By South Foreland the wind filled in and for a few hours we had a great sail. While crossing the Channel I was able to lash the helm for a couple of

hours and sit back and do nothing. However I was now at the back of the fleet, lost the tide for the last few hours and the wind backed - so on with the iron topsail to get into Boulogne.

Boulogne's first night ashore for a meal was a gourmet's delight in the Welsh bar, also known as chez Nicholas, at a very reasonable price. The wind got up and up so we stayed put until it moderated and we visited the Welsh Bar again. The seas were rolling over the outer breakwater, not good for sailing South. We finally left at 10am on Sunday 3rd July for Le Treport, wind South West 15 knots and a moderate sea. I was making too much leeway so had to make use of a few litres of diesel. Twelve hours after our departure we were in the Ecluse of Le Treport and half an hour later were all fast at the far end of the harbour near the showers. They were simple but clean and hot. Great!

Our next passage was very bumpy but the wind was with us. Only a short passage but a difficult one as it was imperative to find the Somme Buoys No. 1 and 2. Once these were sighted it was just a question of following the channel as it snaked up to St Valery. The marina staff were as usual most helpful in getting everyone moored up. And the sun came out. Now, St Valery-sur-Somme has a big boys' train set, so we were pulled around the



bay by a steam engine built over a hundred years ago and spent a couple of hours in Le Crotoy. It was hot and sunny and ice creams were the order of the day.

Leaving St Valery-sur-Somme not long after the very strong flood tide starts seems a little pointless until you realise that the flood only lasts a short time and if you leave late there is no water at the mouth of the river. We let go at 1345 on Thursday with the wind NW force 1-2 and a calm sea, destination Dieppe. We arrived at the piers some six hours later and departed the following morning for St Valery-en-Caux. This passage was fraught with fishing buoys and whilst trying to keep out of the tide and beating against the wind *Solent Flame* met a wreck with a bang. No damage except to the nerves. *Hermione* with her extra length had a cracking sail. I motorsailed! I did not record our time of arrival but we made the tide and joined all the club boats on the same pontoon, very handy for the town.

On Sunday they held a 'Mackerel fest'. All roads near the harbour were closed and there were stalls galore including a baker with a wood fired oven.

I went to the top of our mast using Jack's ascender to sort out problems and Monday evening saw a party and farewell meal on board *Hermione*, each yacht contributing something. At 0500 the following morning I got up to see the fleet leave: *Hermione* for Dover and the others to Boulogne. Rosamund and I were going on West to St Malo where we were meeting *Flapper 111* with our family ...but that's another story.

IAN CROSSLEY
Sea Otter

Burnham 6 – 9th August

A very satisfying total of 18 boats took part in this "flexible cruise in company" and, despite nervous anticipation by some, the majority followed the Cruise Leader's flag and opted for crossing the Ray Sand, some even eager to do so. This added a frisson of excitement to an otherwise uneventful passage on the Saturday, albeit against a persistent headwind.

That evening 46 of us enjoyed an excellent dinner at the Royal Corinthian YC. We were joined by Chris Tyas, RSPB Wallasea Island Project Manager, who gave a very informative update on this ambitious conservation and environmental engineering scheme on the south bank of the Crouch, the largest of its type in Europe.



Building more windmills on Dengie



Drinks at the RCYC



For unloading Crossrail spoil onto Wallasea Island

On Sunday morning there was much muttering about strong winds and most of the fleet, after one or two manoeuvring incidents, stayed in the Yacht Harbour, while seven boats braved a rollicking motorsail up to North Fambridge and berthed safely (on the leeward side of the large pontoon!). This gave us easy access to the Ferry Boat Inn where 17 sat down for dinner.



All calm at Farnbridge



Seals basking on the Buxey Sands

COLIN CAMPBELL
PLAYPEN

Chatham & London 3rd - 10th September

At the Cruiser Lunch in February, your humble correspondent came away with a long list of "interested parties" for a cruise to London via the Medway. Having had one or two experiences of marinas being booked in advance, I immediately got in contact with Limehouse, Queenborough, and Chatham. The good news was that Limehouse and Chatham were available. Queenborough was not, as it was already reserved for another club. The bad news was that Limehouse wanted a £25 deposit per boat. I needn't have worried - all the early bookers stumped up and we were assured of our reservation. With Queenborough being out, Chatham filled the outbound void.

Fast forward to late August, and three of the original seven had dropped out, to be ably replaced by five others, who largely gathered together on Friday 2nd September for a quick chat about the plans, an enjoyable WMYC supper, and two late launches.

Between 0630 and 0730 Saturday, *Carmina*, *Clockwise*, *Hartley*, *Hermione*, *Kittiwake*, *Stargazer*, *Rimfire*, *Avalon* and *Gladys* dropped moorings and departed into the lovely sunrise with a light westerly breeze.

By the Spitway there was a pleasant sailing breeze, although by the West Swin it was pretty much bang on the nose. Some boats decided to motor, while others carried on tacking in the channel in the rising breeze. By the time the leaders reached the mouth of the Medway, it had chopped up a lot, as only it can.

We arrived Chatham at 1330, the final boat getting in an hour later. With the forecast for Sunday being stronger from the SW, we had all decided on a "lay day" in Chatham. So 10 repaired to the Chinese whilst others combined resources aboard.



Five boats returned to BYH for Monday overnight while *Playpen* and *Hartley*, not relishing another night cooped up in a marina, stuck to the original plan and, having wafted down river to the Roach, spent an idyllic night on one anchor in Yokesfleet Creek. Seals, bird life, good conversation and even a swim provided the entertainment. Meanwhile back in the Yacht Harbour most crews explored Burnham town and ended up enjoying a fine meal at The Oyster Smack.



Apart from one or two who left earlier to meet family commitments (including Brian and Gill Warwick in *Kittiwake* to relieve their cat and chicken sitter), most of the fleet enjoyed a sunny return to Mersea on Tuesday via the Swin Spitway.

Unfortunately, the delay meant having to cancel the planned visit to Embankment RNLI in London.

Monday dawned with locking out starting at 0730 in a light SSE drizzle/low cloud, and reduced visibility. For the neophytes, this meant missing some of the more interesting vistas of Sea Reach and the Yantlet. However it cleared as we got to Mucking and were able to witness demolition in progress of the landmark Isle of Grain power station chimney.

The remaining up-river passage to Limehouse was uneventful, with the first three (*Stargazer*, *Hermione* and *Gladys*) locked in and moored up by about 1520. I then rushed around waving arms and marshalling boats as the next two tranches entered in quick succession (once *Hartley* managed to see where the lock was!).



On Tuesday the organized event was dinner at the Little Ship Club. For those of us using TfL services, it became slightly convoluted due to (a) an escalator failure from the DLR, (b) overcrowding in Bank ticket hall preventing us from taking the right exit, and (c) the front door of the LSC being closed. However, all difficulties were overcome and a full complement sat down to a very nice dinner. On return to Limehouse at about 10pm, a large contingent sat in *Carmina's* cockpit enjoying a very balmy evening.

Wednesday saw a division of the party between the Cruising Association (where Jeremy Batch gave a brilliant talk about the history of the London docks, followed by dinner) and an evening at the theatre. The only downside was the start of lock-out at 0600 Thursday bringing celebrations to a prompt close.

So, three locks of three boats saw us all out of Limehouse at 0650, with the party starting to fragment. *Rimfire* came down to Queenborough in order to get back to Mersea on Friday, with the other eight proceeding to Chatham. Fortunately, it was a glorious day, with loads of sunshine in a building westerly. By Mucking Reach, most of us had sail up but, with the wind dead astern for a number, it was genny only. Of course, on the return

Grain chimney was gone, save for the top sitting on the deck.



Remains of Grain chimney

Entry into Chatham lock was "interesting" with the strong westerly blowing us in, but damage was avoided due to sterling work on all sides. No sooner were we in and secure, who should turn up but Chappie, who had come down to Chatham with John Preston on *Boadicea*. Jack booked dinner at Villaggio with 18 of us sitting down to eat.

On Friday we dispersed to a range of sites: the Dockyard Museum and Fort Amherst for the more esoteric, and the shopping arcade for the less so, before a "pontoon" party in the Marina marquee. *Carmina*, *Avalon* and *Hermione* had a brisk trip back on Saturday, with the "stinkpot" amongst us finally realising that a bit more adventure with the throttle gives a more comfortable ride.

On Sunday we finally saw the end of the cruise with *Gladys*, *Hartley*, *Stargazer* and *Clockwise* booked out at 0730. Three of us were in the lock when I received an urgent call from Jack announcing a flat battery. A quick radio call to the lock, and the keeper poked his head out and announced they had an emergency starter pack. So, in zero wind the three of us left the lock aiming for home. The good news when I phoned *Clockwise* was that they were only a spit behind. It was an easy trip back with *Gladys* on her mooring at about 1400.

Thanks to all participants and host locations for creating a wonderful cruise.

LARRY BOTHERAS
Gladys

Tollesbury 15 – 16th October

The most surprising thing about this rally was the number that signed up. A total of 19 boats went to Tollesbury, although unfortunately two late applications could not be accommodated. In addition to those who journeyed by boat more came by car.

As is traditional a pursuit race was organised and 12 boats started. There was fun and games with the start line resulting in two of them getting booby prizes!! The winner was *Tamarisk* sailed by Rob and Clare Smith. Congratulations to them.

The weather played its part, the sun came out and there was a fair wind too. Everyone, even the deepest keeled boat, negotiated the marina sill and we all settled down to enjoy a relaxing afternoon.

Fifty sat down at the Harbour View restaurant for their evening meal. This was delicious, hot and beautifully cooked; not one complaint and all served by friendly, efficient staff. A great evening was had by all.

Some interest was shown in having bacon sandwiches the next morning. The Harbour View said they would cook them if there was enough interest. Well, there was! More than 20 enjoyed a hearty breakfast.



Back to Mersea in a bit of a blow, some boats registering 40 knots. Luckily it's not far back to the quarters.



Carte Blanche returning

This may be only a local rally and doesn't overly tax one's navigational skills but it's a fitting and enjoyable end to the cruising season.

LESLEY MULLINS
Sea Breeze

Committee Members

Commodore: Michael Wheeler

Sailing: Alan Jones (Vice-Commodore), Paul Jackson (Hon Sailing Secretary), Jack Davis (Cruising representative), Tim Hurst, John French, Brian Bolton (Seconded Race Officer), Jack Grogan (Seconded), Rachel Ramsay (Seconded)

House: Philip Woods (Rear Commodore)
Carol Britton, Linda Kent, John Clifton

Moorings & Boatyard: Richard Taylor (Hon Bo'sun - BaCASA/Mersea Haven representative), Stephen Dines, Dave Lewis, Geoff Hunt

Treasurer: Ian Shay

Hon Secretary: Tim Wood

New Members

A warm welcome is extended to the following new members:

Full Members

John Attewell
(*Sampan II*)
Nicholas Bunyan
(*Wild Rose*)
Richard Burgin
Michael Charles
(*La Bill*)
Michael Coleman
Richard Davonport
(*Toucan*)
Christopher de Courcy-Bower
(*Avanti*)
Matthew Dixon
(*Doris*)
Bryan Gasson
(*Whispering*)
Emma Kearin
(*Life*)
Jamie Kelly

Crew Members

Matthew Birch
Charlotte Conway
Jordan Day
Oliver Grogan
Valentina Morano

Full Members

John Lattimore
Elaine Lattimore
(*Message to Michael*)
Robert Mercer
(*UFO*)
Frances Morris
(*Tim*)
Phil Plumtree
Michael Procter
Andrew Sharpe
(*Solent Flame II*)
James Shaw
(*Shindy*)
Dominic Talbot
Elizabeth Talbot
(*Sacawi*)
Pippit Temple-Cox
James Thomson
(*Demelza*)

Cadet Members

Iona Doyle
Harrison Phillips-Pearce
Ruby Talbot
Harry Talbot

Associate Members

Juliette Berryman
Corinne Bishop
Katy Charlton
Joanna Davonport
Sarah de Courcy-Bower
Juliet Dunn
Alan Harrington
Sally Harrington
Stuart Jowers
Marion Jowers
Paul Jowers
Judith Kearin
Yvonne Kelly
Margaret Kimberley
Janie Martin
David Milligan
Jon Pearson
(*Solent Flame II*)
Roy Pickles
Sally Pickles
Suzy Ryan
Paula Shaw
Deborah White

Young Adult Members

Jonathan Watkins

In Memoriam

It is with great sadness that we have to report the following members died during the past year:

Nelson Oliver on 1st December 2015. Nelson was a member since 1980.

Terence Wilson on 6th December 2015. Terence was a member since 1981.

Neil Bailey on 4th February 2016. Neil was a long standing member since 1934.

Trevor Wright on 29th February 2016. Trevor was a member since 2013.

David Tippet passed away in the early hours on Sunday 13th March 2016. David was a long standing member since 1949.

George Freer peacefully on 19th April 2016. George was a long standing member since 1958.

Bernard Richardson on 2nd June 2016. Bernard was a member since 1963.

Peter Jenkins on 10th July 2016. Peter was a member since 2010.

William "Kim" Kimberley on 1st September 2016. Kim was a member since 1990.

Leigh Gilbert suddenly in September 2016. Leigh was a member since 2015.

Sue Clifford passed away peacefully on 13th October 2016, after less than a year's illness. Sue was a member since 1992.

Mark Harrison on 4th November 2016. Mark was a long standing member since 1965.

Colin Jarman on 6th November 2016. Colin was a member since 2006.

Sailing Honours 2016

HUMDINGER

Julian Lord

1st Taxi Lewis Salver
(IRC Club Championship)

1st Quest Trophy
(Spring Series)

1st Knight Hall Trophy
(Autumn Series)

1st Halcyon Cup
(Short Handed Series)

1st Peter Vince Trophy

1st Ellis Cup

1st Cirdan Trophy

2nd Ancient Mariners Race

3rd Wallet Cup

BUGSY

Geoff Hunt &

Sally-Anne Turnbull

1st Autumn Trophy

1st Wallet Cup

2nd Halcyon Cup
(Short Handed Series)

TAMARISK

Rob & Claire Smith

1st Coronation Cup

1st Finola Cup

OYSTERCATCHER XXX

Richard Matthews

1st Buckley Goblets

2nd Centenary Cup

STARCHARGER

Angus & Rose Kearin

1st EAORA Plaque

TRAMP

Frank Reed

1st Ancient Mariners Race

KISMET

Richard Matthews

2nd Autumn Trophy

RENDEZVOUS

Mike Berry

2nd Blackwater Trophy
(White Sail Series)

2nd Coronation Cup

BEAR

Steve Johnson

2nd Wallet Cup

SEAHAWK II

Andrew & Jill Stebbing

3rd Blackwater Trophy
(White Sail Series)

3rd Coronation Cup

HEX

Laurie Pearson

3rd Centenary Cup

RAGGERTY

Alan Jones

3rd Finola Cup

HANNELORE

David Curtis

3rd Halcyon Cup
(Short Handed Series)

CLOCKWISE

Jack Davis

3rd Ancient Mariners Race

*

QUIET WATERS

Trevor & Kat Child

1st Martini Cup

(Squib Summer Series)

1st John Harrison Salver

(RNLI Pennant Race)

KNOCK KNOCK

Jack Grogan

1st Open Challenge Cup

(Squib Spring Series)

2nd NSOA Half Model Trophy

(Squib Tuesday Series)

3rd Martini Cup

(Squib Summer Series)

POSH TOTTY

Alan Jones

1st NSOA Half Model Trophy

(Squib Tuesday Series)

3rd Open Challenge Cup

(Squib Spring Series)

SURF & TURF

Geoff Payne

2nd Open Challenge Cup
(Squib Spring Series)

2nd Martini Cup

(Squib Summer Series)

3rd NSOA Half Model Trophy
(Squib Tuesday Series)

*

Ladies' Regatta

Sally-Anne Turnbull

Overall (Friends Trophy)

Frances Meason

Cruisers (Molliette Bowl)

*

Reeve Tyler Trophy

(best cruising log)

Linda & Viv Fox

and

Maggie & Fraser Haddow

*

Silver Tiller

Saskia Clark

*

Cadet Viking Trophy

Hamish Eckstein

*

Carrington Cup

Julian Lord



Another classic at the Brest Maritime Festival
© Colin Campbell

Seal of approval



Photo by Paul Gosling

'Sunny' is well known on the Orwell and has sunk many a dinghy doing this.

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