



molliette

The annual journal of the WEST MERSEA YACHT CLUB Founded 1899



December 2015

Contents

1	From the Commodore	<i>...recent achievements and future plans</i>
2	Colette's year in Brittany	<i>...go to the farthest point first</i>
5	Ancient mariners race	<i>...all helms must qualify for a bus pass</i>
6	A gastronomic guide to local racing	<i>...an ideal time for morning coffee and cake</i>
7	Book club	<i>...we discuss our monthly book</i>
8	Boatman Bill French	<i>...the club's first launchman</i>
10	Confessions of a volunteer launchman	<i>...Tim tells some tales</i>
12	Lifeboat	<i>...wet van man rescued, and many others</i>
14	Cruiser racing roundup	<i>...a comprehensive review, white sails and all</i>
17	Race mark sponsors	<i>...thanks to local businesses</i>
18	Diverted to Denmark	<i>...steering problems took him to unplanned waters</i>
21	Mersea week in the IRC	<i>...praise for an internationally recognised system</i>
22	North Channel	<i>..."Hey Jimmy, whit's that wee bit of land?"</i>
24	An English member in New York	<i>...a gruelling trip of non-stop cocktail parties</i>
24	House notes	<i>...international cuisine and a new balcony bar</i>
26	Moorings and boatyard	<i>...piles, pontoons and bathymetric surveys</i>
28	Jeremy Dumas	<i>...soldier, diplomat, sailor and family man</i>
30	Sailing or flying?	<i>...25 knots in a 40 foot foiler</i>
31	Gentlemen don't sail to windward	<i>...meeting people and learning the art of cruising</i>
37	Club cruises	<i>...five successful cruises and plenty of fun</i>
48	Cadet week	<i>...goes from strength to strength</i>
50	Lost and found	<i>...club trophy from 80 years ago</i>
50	In memoriam	<i>...friends remembered</i>
51	New members	<i>...a warm welcome</i>
51	Committee members	<i>...the guys who get things done</i>
52	Sailing honours	<i>...winners all</i>



Cover photo: *Maverick leading from Toucan in Mersea Week*
Photo by www.ifitsmedia.co.uk

Editorial

It's always a last minute scramble to get the Molliette to bed on time and I thank all those who helped me achieve it again this year. As someone once said, racers sail to get there first, cruisers sail to get there. Here you can read about members' successes on the racing scene and the learning experiences of those new to cruising and those more experienced but beset by mechanical problems. Even YC1, at 57 years old, attracts some attention, recalling the life of her first launchman and more recently the experiences of one of her volunteer drivers. I hope you will find this celebration of our club activities, in home waters and abroad, both entertaining and informative.

For next year please send your contributions via the Club Office or direct to campbellhome@aspects.net. Ideally send text in MS Word 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



It gives me great pleasure to write this report after my first year in office as Commodore. A year that has not been without challenges, but challenges that have been overcome with the assistance of my Flag Officers,

Officers and Committee, all of whom I thank for their support.

Sailing has been well supported. It is the *raison d'être* of our Club although numbers are down for IRC and EAORA races compared with several years ago. This however is not unique to our Club and we remain one of the busiest and most successful sailing centres on the East Coast. Our local racing fleets remain stable but have not significantly increased in size in spite of an enthusiastic and commendable effort on the part of Richard Hayden and the Sailing Committee. The races have been competitive and thoroughly enjoyed by all participants with thanks in a big way to Julian Lord who performs a superb job as Sailing Secretary. Brian and Wendy Bolton have worked diligently as Race Officers and committee boat with *Blue Horizon* for which I thank them enormously. The cruising division has been active with well supported and successful cruises in company around the coast, up the Thames to London and across to the continent, all ably overseen by Mel Daniels and his enthusiastic team.

I am pleased that Andrew Twiddle, our Head Launchman, is fit and well again after his hospitalisation and we wish him a full recovery. During Andrew's absence Fraser Haddow worked tirelessly to arrange cover for him, keeping our launch service running with minimal disruption or cost to the Club. Fraser has already covered this in his own report but I would like to re-iterate our thanks to Ollie Jarvis and Tom Calcutt for going the extra mile to keep the show on the road during this time; also to recognise members Tim Wood, Richard Taylor, Fraser Haddow, Graham Frost, Michael Wheeler and David Lewis who all stepped into the void and volunteered to give up their time to drive the launches. I would also like to thank our Hon. Bosun Richard Taylor for his dedicated work caring for our harbour surveys and mooring facilities.

After many years of discussion Mike Berry and his House Committee have moved the final phase of

the first floor development through the approval stage and, as Mike will have reported already, work will commence in January on what will be a significant improvement to the facilities that we can offer. Well done House! There are other projects in the pipeline which are exciting, but everything takes time and money.

Jo Steadman in her role as General Manager has continued to guide the Club on a day-to-day basis (not always an easy task!) and is to be complimented for doing so. Our new Head Chef Renato Soares has settled in and has produced some excellent function menus. Club catering is however under constant review by the House Committee together with Jo and Renato as, like many other establishments, they strive for continual improvement.

I would like to thank Ian Shay our Hon. Treasurer and Tim Wood our Hon. Secretary for their support throughout the year. Ian keeps us on the financial straight and narrow and Tim warns us when we might be stepping into legal hot water! I am sure that they both find these tasks challenging at times!

Our relationship with the Dabchicks is strong and healthy and we enjoy joint events that bind our two clubs and the sailing community of Mersea Island together. Mersea Week and Cadet Week were successful once again and our sincere thanks go to Richard Pink for organising Cadet Week and Peter Fitt and Jackie Stubbs of the Dabchicks for Mersea Week.

The reputation and standards offered to visiting yachtsmen and women is one of my highest priorities and it is very satisfying to receive compliments and words of appreciation when we have such visits, particularly from other clubs's rallies and cruises in company. For this our thanks must go to our launchmen who find moorings at short notice and work late to ferry visitors back to their boats after dinner, and to our staff in the Club who ensure they are made to feel welcome and have an enjoyable and memorable visit. A big thank-you also to all our staff for looking after us so well throughout the year. We do appreciate it.

It just remains for me to wish all our members and staff a very Merry Christmas and fair winds in 2016.

MICHAEL WHEELER
Commodore

Colette's Year in Brittany

The conversation between David Ewart-James (Chappie) and myself ran along the following lines:

"Where shall we go for this year's summer cruise?"

"How about Brittany?"

"Yes, it's the one place in Northern Europe we ought to do before we hang up our oilies, but it's a long way from Mersea - with our normal summer cruise we'll be coming back before we get there."

"Why don't we do something really different and keep *Colette* there for a year?"

"Now that would be different."

So at 1800 on 12th August 2014, with the aftermath of hurricane Bertha dying down in the Channel, David and I left Mersea aboard *Colette*. A quick stop in Dover to pick up David's brother Alan then on to Brighton to collect Colin the fourth crew member and after a night's sleep it was off to Brittany. The first port of call was L'Aberwrac'h, reached 46 hours later, and so the adventure had begun.

Without listing the 24 different friends and family who joined us at different times over the year, some of them two or three times, suffice to say that each person brought something to the party. That, and the fact that we visited about 40 different ports, made the whole experience so memorable and satisfying. What we would like to do is attempt to pull together some of our thoughts and observations in a way that is of interest, but more especially might encourage others to go and see this

wonderful sailing ground. We are by no means the first in the club to cover these coasts but we hope many more will follow.

Organisation

Love it or hate it the European Union does make our boating administration easier. We were never asked for any paperwork the whole time we were there and we had one form to fill in upon arrival in Guernsey. Marinas and harbours were friendly, generally spoke enough English to get by, and pricing was clear and very reasonable (helped by the exchange rate). We were further helped by excellent pilot books (now for sale), loads of info on the web, a certain wonderful lady in the club who hails from Brittany and who helped with a lot of telephone research before we even left and another couple of club members who sailed the area extensively in the past and lent us all their logs.

Our plan was simple: go to the farthest point first. So in August 2014 we sailed from Mersea to Vannes in Southern Brittany and then took a year to bring her home. In fact we both got a bit

further South, with David reaching St Nazaire. There were the inevitable conversations about carrying on – La Rochelle, Les Sables d'Olonne and even La Corunna being mentioned, but we held firm and stayed within Brittany. Otherwise Mersea might never have seen *Colette* again and she would have ended up in the Med. A boat share helps get better usage from the boat, with David and I both taking separate trips with friends and family. He was out there six times and myself five times, each trip being ten days to a fortnight and, along with crew, we both did the outbound and return trips which were each nearly four weeks long. In hindsight our house move coinciding with the year in France probably cost me another two trips.

Transport

We returned from the delivery trip on an excellent TGV service: 09.00 out of Vannes and we were in London at 16.00 that afternoon. For the return trip we flew Ryanair, Stansted to Dinan, then a one-way hire car to L'Aberwrac'h that we subsequently dropped off in Brest.



The entrance to L'Aberwrac'h at high tide

The rest of the trips were by car, David favoured the Dover-Calais ferry, whilst I did several via Newhaven-Dieppe. We got to know the autoroute pretty well, fortunately with very low toll charges, but as *Colette* went further west down the Breton peninsula it did become a long haul. The marinas were often reached late in the evening after an early morning start for the ferry. However if we had not been in a hurry, we could always have broken the journey with plenty of cheap hotels. Most sailing trips ended up at a different port from where they started. So this meant allowing a day to retrieve the car, usually involving the excellent and cheap local buses and trains.

The Sailing

It was wonderful. This is a stunning part of the world, the waters are clear, the coastline is dramatic, the estuaries are delightful and there are some lovely offshore islands within easy range. Despite literally thousands of sail boats out, and even in the French holiday season, it never seemed overcrowded. We had some great sailing days and nothing more needs to be said.

The Weather

It is definitely warmer than the East Coast and the water too if you like bathing. But it is subject to the same cycle of Atlantic weather systems as we are here. Thus, as you will all know, the summer of 2015 had more than its fair share of chilly east and north winds.

Rocks and Tidal Ranges

The Chenal du Four and Raz de Sein separate North from South Brittany. If you haven't watched the YouTube video of them in bad weather, with the waves



Raz de Sein

Photo by Alison Pangbourne

breaking over the lighthouses, then try Googling it. It certainly made us do our homework carefully, going through both at neaps, with a good forecast and getting the tides spot on. I have now been through this stretch of water three times, always under engine in F2 winds, but such is the way with things, I am sure it will bite me one day.

The rocky coast and the rows of 'dragons teeth' stretching out from it, make it potentially dangerous and it looks very forbidding at first. But there is nothing to be scared of. There are thousands of boats out there sailed by people like us. With careful passage planning and sensible pilotage it is all very doable for the average sailor, especially with a good chartplotter/iPad. Confidence builds up, though hopefully never complacency. We both remember arriving in L'Aberwrac'h, after a two day crossing from Brighton with careful notes for an entrance down the main channel, to see hundreds of locals apparently dodging through every little cut between fearsome looking rocks. The advantage of local knowledge.

South Brittany has plenty of lovely beaches but is not without

its share of rocks. The Gulf of Morbihan ('La Plus Belle Baie du Monde' – modest these French) with its awesome tidal flows, guards the entrance to Vannes. The pilot book comments are worthy of repetition:

"The Morbihan is a sort of rocky Poole Harbour. Instead of mud, however, there is mostly granite. Both can bring the unwary amateur to a full stop, the difference being that the amateur leaves his impression on the mud, while the granite leaves its impression on the amateur, generally too of a rather more permanent character."

After getting comfortable with the South Brittany stretch of coast from Quiberon Bay to Brest, our final leg in North Brittany, from L'Aber to St Malo, was an eye opener. There are twelve metre tidal ranges and tidal streams to match. Going east, it does cause problems as entering a river estuary on the flood for a night's stay you needed the ebb to get out the following morning. But this means that, once out of the river, you hit a strong west-going tide which slows progress. Again, careful planning and not setting too tight a schedule is the answer.

Final thoughts on this subject are: firstly, that French standard of buoyage is superb (no lighthouses being turned off in this part of the world); and secondly, a toast to all who navigated these waters before GPS, chart plotters, AIS, Radar, etc.

Shore Life

This is France and one of the nicest corners of the country. There is a lot to float your boat even when you are not floating on it - the food, the drink, the countryside, the beaches, the towns. Having tied up for the evening a common refrain became "Oh gosh, yet another drop dead gorgeous Breton town."

Marina facilities were good, although shops were occasionally a long walk away, WIFI was always available though rarely very easy to logon, and forecasts were plentiful and accurate. We enjoyed having bikes when we got ashore, though on board they can get in the way. Time ashore need only be determined by your schedule – try and make it as open as possible.



The town quay at Vannes

Winterisation

On our outbound journey we spoke to the Capitainerie in every port about winter facilities and there were lots of possible places, however we had always leaned towards Vannes. It's a beautiful medieval city and, with both families wanting to use Colette for a winter break, it offered an unbeatable attraction. She stayed in the water all winter on the town quay where facilities were good and security was never a worry.

In March we went out with some willing friends, got the sails back on, took her a mile down the river to a small yard who lifted her, lent us a pressure washer,

let us sleep on board on the cradle to do the antifouling the next morning, did some work on the rigging for us and popped her back in the water 24 hours later, all for a very reasonable sum. On this trip, which was the first week in March, we managed three days sailing around the Morbihan, Quiberon and across to Belle Ile in lovely weather. This is another advantage to picking this area as it offers some lovely sheltered sailing for the early and late parts of the season.

In Summary

It was a wonderful year and holds many fond memories of new places visited and new experiences gained. A trip like this tends to dominate your life for that period of time and you feel out of the loop back in Mersea. On the other hand once in a while that's maybe no bad thing and I know we have both returned looking forward to the Blackwater and the East Coast in the coming year – absence makes the heart grow fonder!

If anyone is thinking of visiting the same area David or I would be delighted to provide more details.....in fact we could ramble on about the subject for hours!



Colette with David, Colin & Alan on the river Odet in Benodet

IAN LOW
Colette

Ancient Mariners Race

A couple of years ago, whilst down in the Hamble, I spotted such a race on the calendar of Royal Southern Yacht Club, and we introduced a similar one-off fun race on our own programme for the first time this year.



Prize winners Tony Hawkes, Julian Lord, John Clifton and Sue Taylor proudly sporting their Ancient Mariners caps

All helms had to be entitled to a bus pass, with no one on board under the age of 50. The race was run on Local Handicaps, but with numbers adjusted according to the age of everyone on board, so the older the crew, the better the handicap! We didn't know the age of each individual, as we only required the average age to be stated on the signing on sheet, but these ranged from 67 to 77 across the seven boats and 30 odd crew that entered.

All the participants in this year's race enjoyed the event, which it is planned to run again, but with separate prizes for those boats sailing White Sail. I'm sure we can get well into double figures of boats competing next year if we move the date and also include White Sail prizes.

JULIAN LORD
Sailing Secretary

A Gastronomic Guide to Local Racing

"Different ships, different long-splices"

Each ship, and each country has its own seafaring customs and traditions. This also applies to the racing fraternity and this is how, on *Symbol of Lley*, Alison and Peter do their racing - the object is to enjoy the racing. One IRC competitor referred to *Symbol's* BCOS racing as a circular cruise of the Blackwater, although we understand that some boats have a different view on what a boat is for and get round the course on little more than a banana and a couple of swigs of water.

a target of 6 hours and an 8 hour time limit. They are usually set to take the ebb out of the river and back again with the flood. With this length of race the starts are often quite early and for a boat of *Symbol's* speed finishes can be late. This style of White Sails racing suits us and *Symbol*. We generally stay on board the night before and often the night afterwards as well. This means we don't have to worry about early and late launches. Living on *Symbol* is not a problem for a crew of two as we are used to doing it on a

After a pleasant night on board we woke up to murk and cold. Nevertheless we hoisted the racing flag, attached the White Sails pennant to the backstay and motored across to the start line. A nice coffee with a little soupçon from the brandy decanter made the early weather bearable. Fortunately, the sun came out and the oilskins came off. The run from the Bench Head up the Colne was an ideal time for morning coffee and cake! After a pleasant beat and a fast reach back to number 14 buoy, we negotiated the inshore passage round the Bradwell baffle. A nice cool pint of Broadside was enjoyed as preparation for Sunday lunch of ham ploughman's during a pleasant reach back to number 1 buoy. After a brisk couple of reaches and a beat to the finishing line, we got back on the mooring in time for a late afternoon tea of Earl Grey and more cake.

The second outing was from the Stone Sailing Club start line, at lunchtime. Fortunately the course set gave us a long run to the first mark off Mersea where we could enjoy smoked salmon and salad. The wind was very light and flukey but the entire White Sails fleet were swapping places depending on who had the catspaw. Around teatime it became apparent that none of the fleet would be able to complete the course in the time limit. As we were all within hailing distance we discussed whether we should ask for a shortened course and what that should be. On contacting the race committee on the radio we were told we could do what we pleased! A quick discussion and we decided only to go as far as



Symbol's 2015 BCOS trophies

The Blackwater & Colne Open Sailing Series (BCOS) consists of three races: one by Colne Yacht club, one by Marconi and one by Mersea joint clubs. There are three classes: IRC, Local handicap and White Sails. The courses are reasonably long with

regular basis, often in the past spending up to 6 weeks at a time aboard. We have never believed that because you're on a yacht you should not eat as well, if not better, than at home.

The first race this year was organised by the Colne Yacht Club with a start off Bradwell.



accordingly, foregoing our usual lunch! Coffee and cake was soon demolished on the first leg leading us to an interesting beat to Colne Bar. Unfortunately the leg from Colne Bar to Inner Bench was not really long enough to enjoy lunch – OODs please note – legs of half to three quarters of an hour around lunchtime would be appreciated! Again we enjoyed close racing with other boats in the fleet. After finishing our ham sandwiches we were back on the mooring in time for afternoon tea and then ashore for the prizegiving and BBQ. It was nice to meet crews from other clubs whom we had been racing against over the series but not actually met face to face.

North West Knoll and leave out North Eagle, which would have been against the tide. Unfortunately even this was not enough for some of the fleet who had to get back to catch the last launch and their desks the following day, and so had no option but to peel off at the Nass. We continued, having an interesting race with some of the fast IOR fleet who had done the

whole course. Having finished at Stone we returned to our mooring for a well deserved supper of beef casserole washed down with a Claret or two, not to mention a raid on the brandy decanter.

The third race was organised by WMYC and started mid morning. We know that WMYC favours short legs so we had victualled

All in all, it was a very successful series for us, winning two races and coming second in the third. (If we'd had a decent lunch we might have done better!!!!)

Now that's what we call proper yacht racing!

**PETER & ALISON
PANGBOURNE**
Symbol of Lleyn

Book Club

The WMYC Book Club is now in its third year. We meet at the club at 11.30 on the first Tuesday of the month. The Library supplies us with books, but only a maximum of 10 each month. We have 13 members, so some members access the books on their Kindles. Because of this we are limited to how many members we can have in the club.

When we discuss our monthly book we award it a mark out of 10 so we can see which have been the most popular through the year. This year the most well received book was 'The Round House' by Louise Erdrich; a story about growing up on a Native American reservation and all the laws and taboos that go with it. A fascinating rite of passage story.

Another book that we all enjoyed was 'The Quiet American' by Graham Greene. Although I had not enjoyed the film, the book was so different and we all agreed his descriptions of people, emotions and events were beautifully written.

The Yacht Club has donated a wide selection of sailing books, some practical, others autobiographical and some novels. We are hoping to have these available for members to borrow in 2016.

LESLEY MULLINS

Boatman Bill French

"Memories of my Dad" by Pauline Jay neé French



Burton Albert ('Bill') French was born in Mersea in 1913, the only son of Bertie French and Ethel neé Hewes. He spent most of his childhood along with sisters Gert, Nora and Violet ('Popsy') living at The Rosary which still stands at the junction of the Lane and Firs Chase, known then as Spite Corner.

He attended the local village school in Barfield Road and left at the age of 14 to make his living working on the water. He served his apprenticeship as a dredgerman for four years, working with his father Bertie, on the smack *Daisy Bell*. Leading up to the outbreak of the second world war, both father and son spent the summer months as crewmen, Bertie on the J Class yachts *Shamrock IV* and *Shamrock V* owned by Sir Thomas Lipton, and Bill on the 23 metre cutter *Astra*, owned by Hugh Paul of Ipswich. Both were aboard their employers' yachts during the 1935 Harwich Regatta.

Whilst serving on *Astra* during a race at Southend in 1935 the steward was lost overboard and in spite of a long search his body was never recovered. As a result of this fatality Bill was

appointed steward, a very important position on the big yachts with an increased wage to reflect this. But by the late 1930s the big class yachts no longer raced so other work had to be found.

He was employed for a short time as a conductor on Primrose buses which ran between Mersea and Colchester when he met Gladys Clarke who lived at Abberton. They were married in West Mersea parish church in the summer of 1937 by the Reverend Charles Pierrepont Edwards MC (known as 'Old Spiery' the fighting parson).



Astra rounds the Cliff End buoy, spinnaker boom run out to port ready to be set as she runs back into Harwich. Bill is very likely to be one of the crew on the foredeck.

During the second world war Bill served as a leading seaman in the Royal Naval Patrol Service



The Astra leading the J Class cutter Velsheda (K7) during the 1935 Harwich Regatta. The mate is on the foredeck, in charge of the headsails and spinnaker.

Bill steering the first Club launch



for four and a half years of which two years were on mine sweepers stationed at Gibraltar .

Bill started work as boatman to the West Mersea Yacht Club in 1947. During the summer months his time was spent ferrying yacht club members to and from their yachts in the club's first launch, a varnished, clinker built, tiller steered 14 footer. The winter months were spent working in the old Nissen huts behind the clubhouse which had been left by the RASC boat squadron after the war. These were ideal for use as storage and workshops in which to prepare the club launch, racing buoys and the many Sprites for the new season.

In 1958 the present clinker built launch was purchased and Bill duly collected it from Woodbridge bringing it back to Mersea by sea. Before the inshore lifeboat was stationed at Mersea Bill was often called out by the local police to search for missing boats or people. He also at times had the unenviable task of recovering any victims and bringing them ashore.

In spite of all the years working on the water as dredgerman, racing yacht crew, naval war service and yacht club boatman, he never learned how to swim.

It was an accident afloat that indirectly led to his untimely death. He fell and cracked several ribs on

the engine cover in the launch and as a result of the long illness that followed Bill died of cancer aged only 50 on 30th January 1964.

My thanks to the families of John Leather and the classic photographer Douglas Went for the use of the pictures of the Astra.



Bill as some will remember him, stepping out of the 'new' Club launch onto the wooden causeway. It was here that he slipped and had his accident.

PAULINE JAY
née French

Confessions of a volunteer Launchman

" This is YC 1, Over"

I was in Williams and Griffin when my mobile rang. "Tim, this is Richard Taylor. I'd like to take you up on your offer to do some launch driving - can you do tomorrow afternoon?"

A few days before I had been talking to Richard in the Club when he told me that Senior Launchman Andrew Twidell was currently away on sick leave, and as the cause was a back problem it was believed this would be relatively long-term. Although Ollie and Tom, our other professional launch drivers, were doing an excellent job and would take up the slack as much as they could, under the 'EU Working Time Directive' there was only a certain amount of hours they could work and Tom could normally only do weekends. In the circumstances, M & B Committee wondered if it would be possible to fill the gap with volunteers. Richard was doing a shift the next day and, somewhat rashly, I said "I'll take a turn as well if you like, Richard". Thus I joined the small band of volunteers committed to keeping the launch service running to the standard members had come to expect.

So I found myself undertaking a "launch acquaint course", with Ollie showing me the mysteries of YC 1. It was decided that volunteers would normally only use the wooden launch, as it was so much more manoeuvrable than the GRP one, turning on a sixpence and able to steer quite precisely in astern. It just goes to show, the designers of 50 years ago knew a thing or two about boats...

My first shift was an afternoon turn and seemed to me a great success (but I would say that, wouldn't I?). Certainly every member wanting a run out was dropped on their boat, and every member was collected. However my relative lack of experience with YC 1 meant that I was unable to hold her steady alongside simply by using the gears, as was the habit of the regular launchmen. I had to have the boat tied up before people boarded, but perhaps that's not a bad thing - at least it was safe and nobody fell in the sea.

My next session was scheduled for the following week but before then all volunteers received an urgent email from Jo at the club office. Someone had complained to Colchester Council that the club launches were being run by "unqualified people". This council that couldn't run the public toilets, fix the potholes or put the street lights on, had sent not one but two council officials the very next day after the complaint had been received, to check that all volunteer drivers possessed the necessary certificates. Of course we were not club employees and so there were no records held in the office. Hence Jo was asking us to provide urgent copies of our 'Powerboat Level 2' certificates, this being the standard said to be required by the council. They had given her a "stay of execution" until the next day, but would return immediately after that, hinting at unspecified but clearly dreadful consequences if the necessary certificates were not forthcoming.

This all seemed a bit daft as we had been running powerboats all our lives and had qualifications equivalent or superior to those required by the council. Still, as the council were apparently immovable, we all had to hunt round and look out the necessary certificates, which most of us had held for a considerable number of years, and so could not put our hands on right at the moment of asking. Copies were duly sent to the office and I imagine the council were happy, as we heard nothing further. The whole thing was a bit unnecessary, but I suppose it made a job for someone..

Most of us tend to believe that the life of a club launchman is a "dream job", but until you've tried it you don't realise that it's actually quite hard. You return from a trip out to the moorings with a boatload of people, and more people are there waiting on the hammerhead, expecting to be taken out immediately. The club launchman has very little "down time" unless of course the weather is bad, which normally means you aren't busy. However there is little weather protection on the launches, and sitting at the bottom of the causeway in full oilskins listening to the rain whilst waiting for someone to come down or call on the radio, is a pastime of which one could rapidly grow tired. And a touch screen smartphone doesn't work with wet hands.....!

I met some very nice people, both new and long-standing members. Most were appreciative of the volunteers'

help in continuing the service, with a few even offering to pitch in if ever we became short of volunteers. Town Regatta Day was probably the worst, as I was running the launch in the afternoon after being out racing all morning, and the service was scheduled to finish at 6:30, as was normal for a Saturday. There were a few members - who might possibly have been rather well refreshed at the time - who seemed to take exception to this, and one said to me, "How are members supposed to watch the fireworks from their boats if the launch service finishes so early?" to which of course the only reply was, "By going ashore and getting their dinghy, like I'm going to"..... Another accused me of "clock watching" when I was telling them that they needed to be quick as the last run would be just before 6:30, and I am afraid that I replied, "Too right I'm clock watching, as a purely unpaid volunteer you're damned lucky that I'm here at all!", which seemed to concentrate that member's mind a tad, as I've rarely seen someone move as quickly in packing up their boat.

Town Regatta afternoon also brought the arrival on the hammerhead of a party of what can only be described as "hooray Henrys", claiming to be members of the club - indeed also relations of prominent members - and requesting a trip out to the Regatta barge. I pointed out that as far as I knew, it was only members of the Town Regatta Committee who were allowed on the Regatta barge, but they pooh-poohed the idea, and insisted they should be taken out. I duly obliged but, as I suspected, they were denied boarding, so I took them back to the

causeway. Not to be put off, they appeared a little later, again asking to be taken out. When we got alongside the barge they were denied boarding again, but this time they decided to take matters into their own hands, leaping from the launch onto the side of the barge and scrambling aboard. I shall remember for a long time the sight of one of them being thrown over the side of the barge by a very large Regatta Committee member, with the words "You've been told once to **** off, now **** off!"

I became aware that many members had their own particular foibles when it came to the launch service. On one of my first launch driving sessions, one well known and very senior member gave me a hard time, saying that unless I came up by the shrouds it was impossible for people to get on board. Taking this to heart, for the next person I dropped off, I manoeuvred to put him right alongside his shrouds. He looked at me sadly and said "I can't get off here, I need to be by the cockpit"..... Other members have incredibly complex cockpit covers, meaning that the launch needs to be held precisely alongside while they laboriously undo every catch, popper, zip and turnbuckle. One particular member with a smallish motor boat has a cockpit cover which is a complete work of art, necessitating a long time in the launch whilst every fastening is carefully undone. So I thought I'll sort this out and, using the launch's quarter line, secured to his aft cleat and put the engine very slow ahead, as I had seen the professional drivers doing. The member's boat, with the launch alongside, proceeded to

rotate round the mooring, like a spinning top being wound up! It seemed like a good idea at the time.....

Although we were only supposed to serve members I took pity on a gentleman who appeared on the hammerhead, again on Regatta afternoon, saying that he was a former member (and indeed I vaguely recognised him) and he had left his boat stuck out in Besom, past the houseboats, with no way for his wife to get back to shore. When I asked "Why didn't she come ashore with you?" he said he had swum from the boat to the hammerhead but his wife didn't think she could swim that far! So it seemed the least I could do was to offer to pick his wife up, and they were both very grateful.

Another thing that sticks in my mind is taking a couple of young children and their grandparents out for what seemed to be their first night on grandad's boat. They were so excited as they said goodbye to their parents on the hammerhead! I wonder how much sleep anyone got on board that night?

After an operation on his back, and necessary recuperation time, Andrew returned to work and hopefully is fully recovered. The volunteer rota was therefore stood down. But I'm sure I speak for all of us, "We few, we happy few, we band of brothers", when I say that we all enjoyed running the club launch, and are all willing to do it again if necessary. Now that we've learnt the detail of various members' special requirements, it should be easy.....

TIM WOOD
Winter's Bride

Lifeboat

It has been a relatively quiet year for our lifeboat as far as rescues go: 45 by mid-November, with more medical emergencies than normal. Below are details of some of the rescues and events that have taken place this year.

In January we rescued a husband and wife from a capsized sailing dinghy in St. Lawrence Bay. They were unable to right the boat in the strong wind and had been in the water for quite some time. They did have thin wet suits on but the woman was suffering quite badly from the cold when we reached them. The lifeboat landed them ashore at Stone to be checked over by paramedics who had been requested. This service recorded two lives saved as had we not been there the outcome could have been very different.



Dayboat being recovered near Osea Island

In February a single-handed sailor capsized his dayboat in blustery conditions near Osea Island. He was in the water for about 40 minutes and suffering from hypothermia when the lifeboat reached him, after being spotted from the shore. He was taken in the lifeboat to meet the Coastguard rescue helicopter, who flew him to Colchester hospital where he was warmed up and recovered well. The lifeboat crew then returned to the dayboat and recovered it. Again, if the lifeboat had not been there the casualty could not have survived for much longer and again a life saved was recorded.

During February, on two consecutive days when there was a large tide covering the Strood,

medical emergencies occurred on the island. On the first day the lifeboat stood-by in case a transfer to the mainland was needed but the casualty was able to wait for the tide to fall and an ambulance to arrive. On the second day the lifeboat transferred a casualty to the mainland and a waiting ambulance. In March another medical emergency occurred, this time on Osea Island at high tide. After some searching on the island, the casualty was located and taken to Heybridge to be attended to by paramedics.

Again at Osea Island in May, the lifeboat was called to a van in the water half way across the causeway. It was half flood when the lifeboat arrived to find the van driver standing on his roof. The van was going to be well underwater at high tide so a buoy was attached as a temporary wreck marker. The RNLI Press Department titled this incident as 'Wet Van Man Rescued', although his feet were kept quite dry as one of the lifeboat crew carried him ashore!



Wet van man

I have written before about some of the 'unusual' visitors welcomed to the station. This year we had a visit from Jack Lowe, grandson of Arthur Lowe (Captain Mainwaring). Jack was touring the country, visiting every lifeboat station to take photos with a 120 year old camera and an early Victorian photo process known as Wet Plate Collodion, using glass plates. His transport was a decommissioned NHS ambulance that served as his darkroom. It took nearly all day to get four photos that he was happy with. Jack is planning



Jack Lowe, grandson of Arthur

an exhibition and picture sales at the end of this project.

On the 19th September the lifeboat launched on a PR trip to visit the WMYC RNLI Pursuit Race that is held towards the end of each year. The money raised through entry donations goes directly to West Mersea lifeboat running costs. After seeing the Yacht Club boats, the lifeboat continued up-river to the Maldon Regatta which also raises funds for us. The lifeboat was a big attraction alongside the pontoon at Maldon and was boarded by a continuous stream of children who were given a tour of the boat, while being photographed by their parents.



Griff Rhys Jones names Just George

Jumping back to the end of May, *Just George* was officially named. On a blustery day we were very pleased to have Griff Rhys Jones attend the ceremony. Griff, who lives in Suffolk, learned to sail in Mersea with his father and is a frequent visitor to the island. After press interviews, a witty speech and *Just George* named, he was taken for a short trip aboard the lifeboat.

This year the RNLI has set itself the target of halving avoidable drownings by 2024. The start of this task is a campaign entitled 'Respect the Water', the aim of which is to inform the public of the potential dangers surrounding water. Apparently half of all the people who drown in the UK and ROI did not expect to enter the water. So if you see our 'Respect the Water' logo anywhere, you will know what it's about.

MARTIN WADE
Lifeboat Operations Manager



Cruiser Racing Roundup

HOME WATERS IRC RACING

By far the best local IRC racing in 2015 was seen in **Mersea Week** when ten boats, including Drummond Sydenham's newly acquired Cork 1720 *Any Old Excuse*, Toby Ramsay's recently launched self-designed and built lightweight flyer *Mojito* and visitors from Haven Ports and Brightlingsea came to the line. The highly competitive nature of the class is illustrated by the fact that during the week nine of the ten boats had a top three race result, four different boats won a race and, going into the last race, six boats could still have won the week. The final outcome was a win for Julian Lord's Hunter Impala *Scallywag*, but only on second tie-break from Malcolm Struth's J70 *Wild Chorus II*, with Leo Knifton's Melges 24 *Brandyhole* and last year's winner, the Smokey 25 *Reasons To Be Cheerful* (Alan Vince, Nick Glanvill and Hector Heathcote) next up. Indeed, had '*Reasons*' got across the finish line of the final three hour race just one minute sooner, she would have won the week, also on tie-break!

In contrast, the season opening **Mersea Spring Points Series**

was rather poorly supported, with *Scallywag* winning from *Brandyhole* and *Fizz*, Ed Allan and Peter Rowe's Cork 1720.

Despite the carrot of a 200 guinea prize, the **DSC IRC Weekend** run in late May attracted a disappointing entry of only 14 boats, including visitors. Richard Matthews' HH42 *Oystercatcher XXX* took the overall win, with *Reasons To Be Cheerful* second and the Merewether's Sunfast 3200 *Amazon* from Crouch YC third.

The **Centenary Regatta** in early June was sailed on a breezy but sunny day, again with a very poor turnout, *Scallywag* winning the trophy from *Brandyhole*. Most people's racing season now seems to finish at the end of Mersea Week in August, as a consequence of which the **Mersea Autumn Points Series** saw just three IRC boats out, with *Scallywag* winning from *Mojito*. With all IRC racing dual scored, the series was augmented by six non-IRC rated boats, the best of which was Ed Taylor's Beneteau 31.7 *Toucan*. The final race of the season for the **Autumn Trophy** attracted just two

starters, with *Brandyhole* winning from *Golden Fleece*, Michael Wheeler's S&S41. The **IRC Club Championship** was again won by *Scallywag* – but more for supporting all the racing than for much sailing brilliance.

HOME WATERS LOCAL HANDICAP RACING

Although turnouts were down at times, the best supported and most competitive Local Handicap racing was again the **DSC Friday Series**, where a total of 32 boats sailed in some part of the 14 race series, with 17 competing in at least eight races, thereby getting a series score. The final outcome went down to the last race, with *Reasons To Be Cheerful* coming out just ahead of *Scallywag*, with *Wild Chorus II* third and Simon Farren's *Camel* the leading Sonata and best non-IRC rated boat in fourth.

Varied numbers raced in the newly introduced four-race **Saturday Series**, which was



Gun! Line clear!



Reasons To Be Cheerful

www.patriciaforrest.co.uk



Scallywag to windward of Mojito, Reasons TBC and Jezebel after a Mersea Week start

www.patriciaforrest.co.uk

sailed on high tides with afternoon starts. *Scallywag* won this from *Toucan* and *Brandyhole*. The series included a very well supported race with a unique 'mark' in the course – the Radio Caroline Ross *Revenge*, moored up the River Blackwater.

Support for the **Short Handed Series** was patchy, with *Hannelore*, David Curtis' Bavaria 34 winning from Rob and Claire Smith in *Evita*, the Malbec 24. The series concluded with the **Wallet Cup** race which was won by Geoff Hunt sailing his Club 19 *Bugsy* single handed, ahead of Colin Campbell, also single handed, in his Countess 33 *Playpen*.

Trevor Child and Seb Struth in the Squib *Secret Water* dominated the **Coronation Cup** with three straight race wins, with John Clifton's Sigma 33 *Starfall* and *Hex*, Laurie Pearson and Dave Weston's Isis 21 in second and third respectively.

The **Ladies Regatta** in July was sailed in real shorts-and-tee shirt weather, and Sally-Anne Turnbull took the overall trophy, presented by the event's new sponsor Friends Hair Design & Beauty. Sally-Anne placed second in *Bugsy* in the morning cruiser race, behind Frances Meason sailing *Scallywag* and ahead of Jan Lawler at the helm of *Starfall II*. Lucy Milgate in an RS200 won the afternoon dinghy race, with Maddie Clifton in her Laser 4.7 second.

Mersea Week saw sixteen Local Handicap entrants split into two classes. Through achieving consistent results over the week, *Starfall II* won the Fast fleet of seven boats by a single point from Paul and Liz Harrison's Beneteau 33.7 *Maverick*, with the visiting J30 *Katla* third.

In the Slow fleet, Paul Gosling and Rob Smith in *Evita* took the top slot from Jack Grogan's Squib *Young Helmet* and Vic



Starfall, Mersea week class winner

www.patriciaforrest.co.uk

Prior's MGC27 *Skybird*. As usual, the **Finola Cup** rounded off the season's LH racing, with *Bugsy* beating the seven starters to take the trophy. Next up were Richard and Sue Taylor's West Solent *Black Adder* and *Starfall*.

WHITE SAIL RACING

This year the season long eight race **White Sail Series** was sailed on a 'Progressive Handicap' system, which saw some pretty large variations in handicap as the series went on. Despite finishing with a handicap equivalent to that of a J70, *Starfall* managed to win the series by just two points from *Hannelore*, with *Cirrus*, Dave Lewis and Mike Edwards' Moody 31S in third. Nineteen boats raced in the series, but only six of these competed in at least the five needed for a series result.

An excellent entry of 13 boats in the White Sail class for **Mersea Week** led to some good racing, Andrew Stebbing's Hanse 311 *Seahawk II* taking the overall win from *Waterlily*, Jon and Penny French's bigger Hanse (a 370), and *Cirrus*. Amongst the race winners was *Admiral Benbow*, the bilge keeled Westerly Centaur skippered by Annabel Porter, the lowest rated boat in the class. The top three White Sail boats sailing in the **Coronation Cup** were *Seahawk II*, *Hannelore* and *Clockwise*, Jack Davis' Sadler 32.

THANKS

Thanks go to Brian and Wendy Bolton and to Paul Jackson, who between them undertook the role of Race Officer for the majority of our cruiser racing. We did have to find a replacement for Paul on one occasion in July – when he (understandably) took up a better offer - to be part of the mark laying team for the first Louis Vuitton America's Cup World Series event in Portsmouth – thereby getting a close-up view of Ben Ainslie and co on the foiling AC45 catamarans!

BCOSS

Support from West Mersea boats for the three race Blackwater

Colne Open Sailing Series was a little improved in 2015, with an overall turnout of about 20 boats for each race. However, only a handful competed in all three races, and just one – Peter and Alison Pangbourne's Northey 34 *Symbol of Lley* - did all three races in the White Sail category, therefore winning that class. *Sallywag* and the Evolution 26 *Absolution* from Maylandsea Bay SC (helmed by the boat's designer Julian Everitt) had a really close tussle in the main fleet, the Evolution winning IRC by a point and the Impala winning the LH class on tie-break.

The very limited genuine support for this series means that it will not be run in 2016.

AWAY FROM MERSEA

The **Levington Classics Regatta** saw a number of West Mersea boats making the trip to the Orwell in June. In the overall results for the 38 boats racing, *Golden Fleece* took sixth overall, just ahead of Richard Matthews' William Fife designed *Kismet* in seventh. Scott Yeates' beautifully restored Holman & Pye designed *Stiletto* - later to win our annual RNLI Pursuit Race – placed 13th, with *Black Adder* in 16th. In the ten boat Stella class, Trevor Spero's *Stella Lyra* finished fourth.

Golden Fleece subsequently headed for the Solent to compete in the annual **Panerai British Classic Week**, finishing 14th out of the 18 entrants in Class Three, after suffering gear damage in the first race and missing two race days.

With *Sallywag* staying on the East Coast and Geoff Payne having sold his J80, the Club's main travellers this season were Richard Matthews with *Oystercatcher XXX* and the J80 *Jezebel* of Ray Apthorp. In a

very hot IRC1 class at the **IRC Nationals** held in the Solent, the HH42 placed seventh overall, Dutchman Piet Vroon's new Ker 51 *Tonnerre 4* dominating the 14 boat class. *Oystercatcher XXX* completed the **Round the Island race** – in 6½ hours – finishing twelfth in IRC Group 0. August saw *Oystercatcher XXX* in action in **Cowes Week**, racing in IRC0 again, and finishing tenth of the 21 entrants, with a best race result of fifth.

In July, *Jezebel* competed in the Felixstowe Regatta, placing third of the twelve boats in IRC Class Two and seventh in the full 26 boat IRC fleet. Late August then saw the J80 racing on the River Crouch during the bank holiday weekend of Burnham Week, winning the small IRC Class Two, before travelling to Royal Southern YC on the Hamble in mid-September to compete in the three day J80 Nationals, finishing a credible seventh overall in the 15 boat fleet.

Sadly, regional racing on the East Coast has gradually tailed off in recent years, and the **Sail East Series** did not run in 2015; one also wonders how much longer **EAORA** will continue in its present form. Only two WMYC boats raced in the 2015 series, but neither were amongst the seven boats which competed in the minimum seven races to get a series score, *Oystercatcher XXX* doing five races and Richard Bailey's Tartan 10 *Dark & Stormy* doing just the first two. *Oystercatcher XXX* did win the season closing Buckley Goblets from just six starters and also won Class One of the Royal Thames YC Offshore Championship.

JULIAN LORD
Hon Sailing Secretary

Race Mark Sponsors



Members who read Jo Steadman's emailed Weekly Club News will have seen that each week, in the late summer and autumn, we featured one of this year's race mark sponsors. The Club would like to thank all of them, and encourage members to support them whenever possible. The sponsors are:

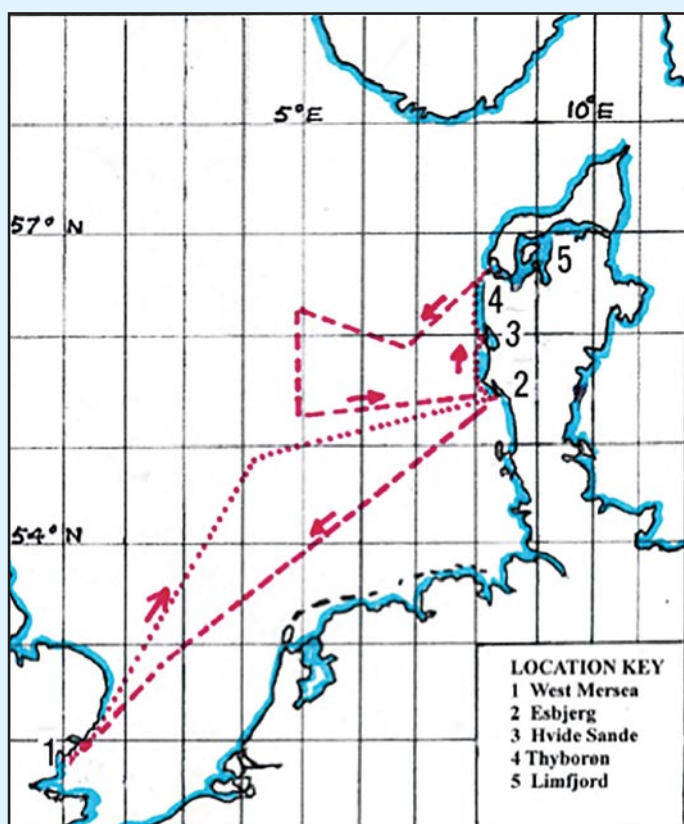
Mark Name	Mark Number	Sponsored by
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Quest	No. 1	Quest Motor Group
insure-a-boat.co.uk	No. 2	J Gosling (Insurance Brokers) Ltd
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Diverted to Denmark

Speedwell's summer cruise

The plan was for a leisurely tour of the Skagerrak, the Kattegat and the Baltic in my Westerly Fulmar twin keel *Speedwell*. Initially I would be accompanied by my old friend John who has never, in the 49 years that I have known him, learned anything at all about boat-handling, sail-trimming, chart-reading, knot-tying or navigation. He is, however, very good company and a reliable all-weather cook. Another friend, Peter, was due to join us in Norway. We sailed to Shotley for bunkering and left there on 26th May, bound for Mandal, in SE Norway.



On 29th May the Autohelm stopped working. Hand-steering downwind for a couple of hundred miles in a lumpy sea was unattractive, so we diverted to Esbjerg. We arrived late at night, found a vacant pontoon berth and had a midnight feast. Next morning I emailed Peter to suggest new arrangements for meeting, as *Speedwell* was now in Denmark rather than Norway. Over lunch, John announced, "I think I'll go home tomorrow. I'll join you for the return trip." After John had left I had a reply from Peter, saying that he would not be able to join me after all.

I bought a Simrad TP32 Tillerpilot and then discovered first, that I would need to carry out some surgery on the boat to fit the Simrad power

supply and secondly, that this device needed to be calibrated for compass, response rate and sea-state: motoring slowly in big circles in the Esbjerg fairway is ill-advised. I deferred the calibrations and put to sea, heading north for Thyborøn and the Limfjord. This may have been a mistake.

Out at sea, the Tillerpilot initiated a totally uncalled-for swerve and *Speedwell* gybed. The mainsheet threw me across the cockpit, breaking several of my ribs. Rather than plug on to Thyborøn, I headed for Hvide Sande, some 40nm closer. By 20.00 *Speedwell* was secured in her berth in the South Harbour and I was re-thinking my cruise plans. Two days later I left for Thyborøn, under genoa alone. Hoisting the mainsail would have been too painful. Thyborøn harbour entrance lies within the Limfjord, which is a shallow seaway running through Jutland, connecting the North Sea and the Kattegat.



Speedwell at Thyborøn

I spent two nights and a day in Thyborøn, before motoring 12nm in brilliant sunshine and a flat calm to Lemvig, at the head of a bay on the south shore of the fjord. The old harbour wall was destroyed by

storms and now the harbour itself is being enlarged. The town has many attractive old buildings, including a very pretty church and a fascinating little museum.



Votive ship in Lemvig church

After two nights in Lemvig I set out for the Oddesund bridge, a few miles to the east. Beyond the bridge, I turned south to look into the little harbour on the west side of the island of Venø. The box berths there were unwelcoming. First, I dislodged my pulpit navigation light and then I snapped my ensign staff. There was nobody around, either to help or to jeer. It was all rather painful. On her way out, *Speedwell* hit the bottom but did not stick.

In a bay south-west of the island, I secured to a yellow buoy and had a quiet night, helped by a hefty dose of Ibuprofen. Before motoring across to the town of Struer next day, I succeeded in calibrating the Tillerpilot compass but not the response rate.

In Struer I secured *Speedwell* in one of the very few vacant berths and only then noticed the red 'private mooring' plate at its head. At 13.00 next day the berth owners arrived in their large motor yacht. They insisted that I should stay in their berth as long as I needed and while I was there, use their pre-paid electricity supply. In the public library, I found a tourist booklet listing all the little yacht harbours in the Limfjord. This gave me the idea for a different kind of cruise, with no hoisting of the mainsail nor hauling in of anchors, just a gentle exploration of the Limfjord harbour.

Much of the fjord is quite shallow and charted depths are not reliable. A fresh wind blowing in the same direction for a day or two can alter depths by a metre or more. This made me very cautious, so there were some harbours I approached but did not enter.

Speedwell travelled through the fjord on a meandering route. By the time she had reached the eastern end of the fjord, we had stayed for one or more nights in sixteen harbours, inspected but not berthed in another seven, approached but turned away from a further four, and picked up mooring buoys in two locations.

There were nine towns along our route: Thyborøn, Lemvig, Struer, Thisted, Nykøbing, Skive, Løgstør, Nibe (where I only looked in) and Aalborg. I was able to find good alongside moorings in all of these except Struer and Nykøbing. All of these towns offer good shopping facilities and restaurants, but I thought that Lemvig, Thisted and Løgstør were the most engaging in their layout, architecture and general ambience. At a bookshop in Nykøbing, I found a copy of Komma's Havnelods, a very useful harbour guide giving plans and notes for over 1000 harbours in Denmark, Sweden, Baltic Germany and Poland.



Street statuary in Skive

The little rural yacht harbours are generally run by local yacht clubs with financial assistance from the government. Close by, there is often a small camping and caravan site and sometimes a few smart holiday houses. Commonly there is a small store, selling groceries and household items. The harbour office building usually incorporates shower, lavatory and laundry facilities. There are always good waste disposal facilities and usually, but not always, fuel pumps.

I stayed for several days in Jegindø, which was a proper island until 1916, when a causeway was built. One evening, the *Queen Mary* arrived in the harbour and berthed astern of me, under sail. She was 6 metres LOA. The owner, aged 68, told me that this boat was all he owned and that he was on his way back to the West Indies, of which he had fond memories.



"Queen Mary"

We arrived in Esbjerg the following evening and John said "I think I'll go home tomorrow. I've been away rather longer than I had expected."

My presence was required in England too, but before leaving I had to arrange a safe berth for *Speedwell* for the next few weeks, to do some cleaning and to carry out a few repairs.

On Friday, 14 August I flew back to Denmark with two new TP32 Tillerpilots, to make a solo passage back to Mersea. I made a point of calibrating both new Tillerpilots before leaving next day. There was a flat calm for the first few hours and then a slight breeze. The wind stayed light until about 2100, so *Speedwell* was motor-sailing with full sail and a bit of help from the engine.

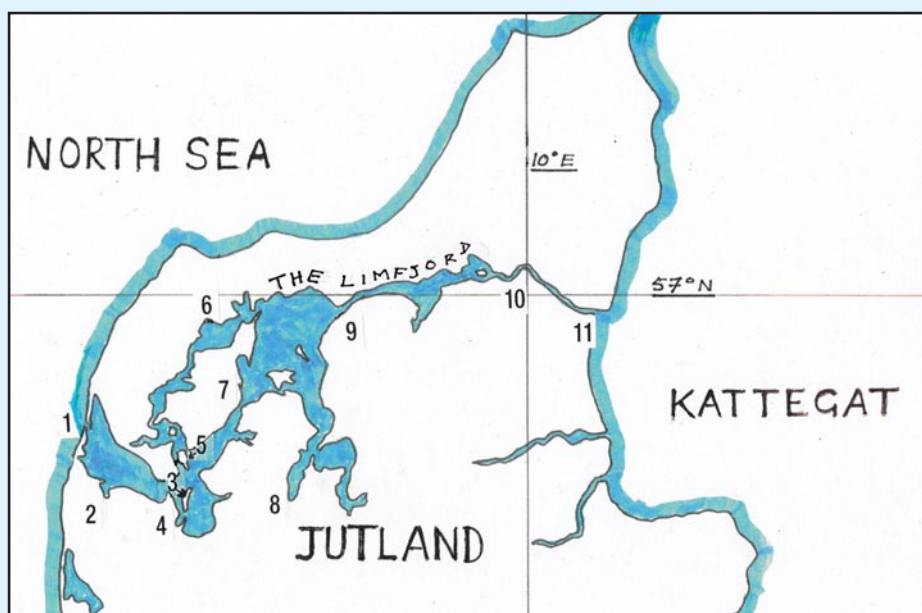
My AIS screen was indicating no ships within 24nm when a large coaster passed within 300 metres of us, travelling fast. In poor visibility later that night, a large wind farm suddenly appeared in front of us. It was not shown on my supposedly up-to-date chart.

Two days out from Esbjerg I felt a lurch and heard a crash from the cockpit. *Speedwell* had gone about and then gybed. The Tillerpilot was no longer working. This time of course, I had a spare. Nothing else went wrong until that evening, when the wind dropped and it began to rain. It continued to rain along the Suffolk coast and it was still raining as we entered the Wallet. Halfway down the Wallet a strong headwind blew up, but we were carrying the flood and with more unashamed motor-sailing, reached our Salcott mooring by lunchtime, 70 hours out of Esbjerg.

On 7th July I was at the eastern end of the Limfjord in the delightful little harbour of Egense. There had been strong westerly winds for some days, so I had decided to make my return westward within the fjord rather than going north-about through the Skagerrak. John joined me back at Aalborg on 9th July..

Our journey west to Thyborøn took several days longer than expected, because of various engine problems. We arrived on 16th July and left for West Mersea the following morning, in a near flat calm. By 1530, we had two reefs in the mainsail and by 21.00 the best course we could make over the ground was north of west. We held that course overnight to gain some westing, then next morning, tacked and headed south, across a big sea but under a bright sky. It was now blowing F7-8. At the very end of that day, the second steering gear failure of the cruise occurred. The new Tillerpilot was now jammed and inoperable. West Mersea was 287nm to windward and Esbjerg was 111nm away on a broad reach...

CHRISTOPHER HAMBLIN
Speedwell



KEY

1. Thyborøn
2. Lemvig
3. Venø
4. Struer
5. Jegindø
6. Thisted
7. Nykøbing
8. Skive
9. Løgstør
10. Aalborg
11. Egense

Mersea Week in the IRC Class



Mojito (Toby Ramsay)

Photo by www.ifitsmedia.co.uk



Wild Chorus II

Photo by www.patriciaforrest.co.uk

The ten boat IRC fleet for this year's Mersea Week was a real mixture – six sportsboats (a Cork 1720, two J80's, our J70, a Melges 24 and the one-off *Mojito*) plus four displacement boats (the Everitt 31 from Brightlingsea, two Impalas and a mini-tonner).

On board my J70 *Wild Chorus II*, we very much enjoyed the week, which saw a real mixture of results, with not one of the competing boats getting more than three top three placings. However all but one achieved a top three finish. With the week's overall result in doubt until the lowest rated boat had crossed the finish line in the WMYC Regatta, thus concluding the week, things really couldn't have been closer.

Perhaps this says something about the fairness of IRC, which we respect as an internationally recognised system that properly measures yacht performance. Whilst the number of West Mersea based boats with IRC ratings has fallen off a little recently, I believe it would be a great shame were Mersea to ever abandon IRC and relegate itself to the status of a third world sailing area.

MALCOLM STRUTH
Wild Chorus II

North Channel

We had a quiet night in Lamlash, having sailed thence the 25 miles or so from our mooring in Tighnabruaich the day before. It was a grey morning. Surveying the prospect from the companionway, cup of tea in hand, I recall that it had been said justly of this great harbour, much used by yachts, that it is more suitable as a battle fleet anchorage. It nearly became one. It is now forgotten that in 1913 a strategic canal was planned to connect the Forth to Loch Long at Arrochar, via Loch Lomond. It was to be 148 feet wide and 36 feet deep and, surprisingly, needed only two locks. The cost of £40 million and the outbreak of war effectively killed the proposal and Lamlash never sheltered the Grand Fleet. No grey ships therefore, but with thoughts back to the present, the grey sky, the grey sea and the early mists creating a symphony of softer greys on the Arran hills filled me with.....Well, one has to be lyrical sometimes and yes, I know, 'symphony' is hardly a collective noun for colours, but you know what I mean, and 'synchromy' is not in my dictionary.



We were off to Ireland. The previous year we had crossed the Irish Sea with Campbeltown our point of departure. This year we intended to go straight down the Clyde, past Ailsa Craig, and bid Scotland goodbye (at least temporarily) a couple of miles off Corsewall Point. We sailed promptly to catch the early afternoon flood in the North Channel. Once clear of the fluky downdrafts and wind shadow of Arran we found the forecast Force 3 from the northwest. This gave us that rarity of the Scottish

west coast: a broad reach. By the time we got to Ailsa Craig, and despite the forecast, the wind had strengthened to about Force 5 and I had to reef the mainsail. This operation was carried out successfully but not without the usual kerfuffle and interpersonal dynamics with the mate (Sue) who views reefing as a hazard in itself and indicative of something nasty to come.

Passing the Craig in an unpleasant chop, we saw upwind and apparently out of Campbeltown, a boat running under foresail alone. It was our sole companion. Our courses appeared convergent and, if unchanged, I could see that we would pass close to each other just short of Corsewall Point.

The wind continued to strengthen, white horses multiplied and, glory of glories, the sun came out. By this time *Sandaig* was loping along in the usual Nic 32 manner – at hull speed. About 5 miles short of Corsewall Point our companion, now seen to be a big sailing school Westerly with five or six men on board, came within hailing distance and asked us whither we were bound. "Bangor", we answered. They were going to Portpatrick. "You'll have a cracking sail!" they called, and we parted. How right they were!

Those of you who have been there will know that the North Channel has the distinct feel of being at the end of the world, a sort of marine no-man's land. Despite the sun, and from now on, this feeling rather coloured our perceptions. We were getting the still strengthening wind over the last of the ebb and things were not comfortable. I should perhaps have been further offshore – but then the forecast had been for Force 3. Sue was fighting off incipient seasickness and I was wondering whether to run into Loch Ryan, anchor at its mouth in Lady Bay and wait to see what the weather was really going to do. But that would be to miss the tide and by now it was a sparkling day. There was not a cloud. Sea and sky were so bright, the light so intense that, even with sunglasses, we had to squint to keep out the glare.

I was still not entirely happy. I knew that once into the North Channel and the south-going flood, we were going to have to alter course northward to avoid being swept past our destination at Bangor. At best this would put us hard on the wind and, at worst, we would not be able to lay our course. Beating against what was now a Force 6, and in a fierce tideway, was not attractive.

This fainthearted train of thought was broken by a radio transmission going something like this (with apologies to 'The Broons'):

"Clyde Coastguard, Clyde Coastguard, Clyde Coastguard this is yacht *****"

"Yacht *****, this Belfast Coastguard"

"Clyde Coastguard, we've go'a problem, over"

"Yacht *****, this is *Belfast* Coastguard, what's your problem? Do you need assistance?"

"Aye, oor engine's no' workin"

"Yacht *****, what is your position?"

"Aboot three miles offshore"

"Yacht *****, can you give me a more precise position?"

"Well, ah think it's south"

"Yacht *****, can you be more precise?"

"Er...., well, er....y' knaw, we're a wee bit aff the land y' knaw....Aye, Ah can see it"

"Yacht *****, which point of land?"

"Hang on....(Aside but still with a live mike) 'Hey! Jimmy!, whit's that wee bit of land over there?...(Second male voice – distant) 'Ah.....think we're aff Loch Ryan"

"Yacht *****, (calmly, the man must have been a saint) can you give me a bearing?"

"Er...., Ah'm no' sure. Wait a minute"

(Second voice) "Belfast Coastguard, this is yacht *****, oor position is", and here followed latitude and longitude in degrees and minutes to three places of decimals.

I looked at the chart. The casualty was two miles north of the mouth of Loch Ryan, and therefore only about three miles away. They were nonetheless quite invisible to us. There followed further exchanges in which it appeared that the yacht was a large motor cruiser with half a dozen people on board and that the Larne ferry we had just seen emerge from Loch Ryan was standing by. We then began to get glimpses of them when we crested the seas together. I was mightily relieved at the ferry's arrival. While the yacht was not in immediate danger, it was still our duty to help but, in the prevailing conditions, I doubted whether one man and a small woman could have done anything other than perhaps compound the problem.

Half an hour later we turned on to our new courses. The wind had veered a little and we

could lay it easily – which was just as well as the wind was now rather more than Force 6. With a scrap of foresail set and the reefed main eased off to leeward *Sandaig* crashed along in great style. Now the tide had turned the seas were easier but could still be frisky. One struck the starboard quarter and threw its crest into the cockpit just as Sue had settled at the helm, back to weather. She got the full benefit. While the seawater was refreshing parts she did not know she had, I soothed her by pointing out she would dry quite quickly in the sun and that Belfast has many excellent hairdressers. I was down below at the time (and laughing immoderately) which tended to inflame the situation but, after all, someone had to look after the pilotage.

By now there were no other vessels in sight. The sea was bright blue-grey and the numberless breaking crests brilliant white. Temperature apart, it could have been the Mediterranean. Behind us Scotland was fading into the haze. Ahead we could see the Irish coast, still featureless, but with a long dirty skein of smoke from Ballylumford power station defacing the blinding sky over Island Magee. We settled down and began to enjoy ourselves. Despite being heeled 30 degrees, and some sinister gurgling that I was at pains to establish as coming from the cockpit drains and not from Sue (who, although damp, was now feeling quite well) we ate a very welcome lunch.

Soon the Maidens light came in sight over the bows and from then on we watched the boat's head trace its way along the cliffs of Island Magee as the tide swept us south. Other than one or two ferries in and out of Larne, there was no traffic. We entered Belfast Lough and ran towards Bangor. We got sail down in the awkward slop that always seems to exist outside the marina entrance and motored into our allotted berth with no difficulty, despite the strong wind and the many boats on the move (it was Bangor Week).

We then sat back to enjoy the moment: faces glowing with sunburn, arms aching a little from hours on the helm and, one of us, still a trifle damp. It felt good. It felt even better when we heard that some of the scheduled races had been cancelled and a racing skipper told us with some feeling, "Wind! It hasn't been below Force 6 all day!"

DAVID MOORE
Sandaig

An English Member in New York

Earlier this year WMYC members Robert and Marianne Hill set off across the Atlantic, not one way but a return journey. This was accomplished to coincide with their dual retirement from corporate and legal life, respectively.

It was a gruelling trip of non-stop cocktail parties and black tie balls on board the QM2.



Hard work charging through thick fog at 23Kts, but they arrived safely in New York

Robert had made the Transatlantic many times in the 70's when he was an Officer with P&O, at the same time that our Commodore Mike Wheeler was an Officer with P&O sister company British India (BI).

Robert and Marianne stepped ashore in New York to have lunch at the New York Yacht Club with NYYC member Sally Helme.



Sally is known to many WMYC members, particularly Richard Matthews and Alan Brook. She is the publisher of the USA magazines Sailing World and Cruising World. She is also a leading light in the USA programme to encourage greater participation in the activity of sailing.

On behalf of our Commodore, Robert presented a WMYC burgee to NYYC which was graciously accepted on their behalf by Sally.



The NYYC have a policy of not handing out their own burgees so we set off home empty handed, passing under the Verrazano Bridge to endure a further eight days of cocktail parties and black tie balls. But all was not lost. On the return we had two former Bond girls on board – Diana Rigg and Jane Seymour!

ROBERT HILL

House Notes

Current trading in the beverage and catering industry is testing to say the least, with pubs, clubs and restaurants still closing at record levels and more people choosing to socialise at home, or pre-loading before socialising elsewhere! However, I'm

pleased to report that the club has bucked this trend and revenues for the bar on a month by month basis are ahead of last year. Budgeted revenues for the full year are also likely to be achieved, if not surpassed. Much of this success is down to excellent day-to-day

management by our General Manager, Jo Steadman. It is her commitment to the highest standards of presentation and cleanliness, together with stringent control of the club's competitive pricing strategy, which has ensured both profitability and members'



enjoyment when they drop in for a spot of R&R.

In October after many years working as part of our splendid bar staff Anna Bull was promoted to Food and Beverage Supervisor. This experience, and working closely with the General Manager, augurs well for the future of our welcoming bar!

This year has also seen the arrival of our new Head Chef and Chef de Partie, Renato and Marcello, the 'Boys from Brazil'. They have brought a very welcome international flavour to club cuisine, as well as continuing our traditional Sunday carvery lunches and very popular 'a la carte' evenings on Wednesdays and weekends. The role of Head Chef is both varied and challenging to say the least. 'Baguettes to banquets' is the order of the day and Renato and Marcello have achieved this with style and flair. In close co-operation with Jo, and our truly fabulous bar and waiting staff, they have catered for many diverse and varied occasions such as Cadet week, Mersea week, Commodore's Dinner, Laying Up Supper, winter supper lectures, ladies that lunch, etc.etc. Very well done in their first year of being with the club!

Part of the remit of Vice Commodore House, is to work closely with the House

Committee to ensure the fabric of the building is properly maintained and a regular servicing programme undertaken. This is very much a matter of team work and this year has been no exception. My colleagues on the House Committee have been John Cook, Philip Woods, Carole Reed and Victoria Tyndall. They have worked closely with our General Manager to make sure the club complies with exacting Health & Safety specifications, fire regulations and insurance requirements, all for the safety and well being of our members and staff. I thank them all for undertaking these responsibilities on behalf of the whole club.

At the General Committee Meeting in October approval was given for the final stage of the first floor development in the clubhouse and the necessary funding needed to progress this exciting project. The first two phases have been completed and paid for over the past five years including: fine shower and toilet facilities on the first floor; removal of the unused chimney breast in the bar area resulting in new floor space and carpeting; and a state-of-the-art room divider in the Long Room facilitating multiple options for functions, club dining, RYA training classes etc.

The final phase, planned for

early in the New Year, will be to build a finishing kitchen in the now defunct ladies wash rooms. This will be served by an electric 'dumb waiter' from the main kitchen situated immediately below so that staff will no longer be required to carry hot food and beverages up and down the stairs. This will comply with stringent health and safety measures. The plans also include the development of a 'Molliette Balcony Bar' which will replace the dilapidated kitchen at the northern end of the Long Room and will serve the Long Room functions. The bar itself will also have access to a brand new balcony/terrace area which will be built on the existing flat roof overlooking the lawn and offering stunning views across the saltings and moorings to those sensational sunsets!

I trust the finalisation of the first floor project shows a scope of ambition which will ensure the club's facilities continue to be of the highest standard for all members in the future.

In conclusion, a variety of issues have been dealt with successfully and I would like to thank the General Manager and the House Committee for being most supportive to me during my term.

MIKE BERRY
Vice Commodore House

Moorings and Boatyard

Getting things done

I can't remember which M&B committee member first used the example of the swan to describe the Moorings and Boatyard operation, but it's a good analogy: the swan glides effortlessly and elegantly across the water, but beneath the surface its legs are paddling furiously. However I admit that the elegant swan analogy falls over badly when it's reflected against the characters in the M&B committee – ruggedly handsome at best I suppose – and more often seen wearing industrial gloves than blazers and red trousers.

The M&B remit is simple: ensure the launch service performs as advertised, and that the Club moorings and shore facilities - dinghy racks, lockers, car parks and boatshed - are available and operated in the members' interests. But you shouldn't underestimate the work this implies. I did!

with an extended hours two-launch service on Fridays through Sundays, augmented to three launches throughout Mersea Week. Together the boats logged around 1100 hours. The club contracts or owns 111 moorings, each of which has to be lifted and refurbished annually, and laid with strops for members' boats. It provides 55 lockers, 37 dinghy racks, storage for 8 or so dinghies in the shed, and around 30 larger boat winter storage spaces in the City Road car park. It prepares, lays and recovers 14 race marks in the river. On behalf of the Mersea Moorings Association it allocates temporary moorings across the whole harbour area to visiting yachtsmen and collects associated fees. It's responsible for the Club mast, and dressing it overall when required.

The M&B committee also has the unattractive task of policing the

one day when the car owner returned and declared herself a member. "Don't you know who I am?" she enquired. "I'm sorry madam, but if you don't know who you are how do you expect me to?"

That's very much a picture of the M&B standing tasks in the round, a set of tasks that have been executed successfully by club members for many years. The current committee has a lot to thank its predecessors for in establishing and maintaining the two anchor elements of the club: the launch service and car parking. Without those the other benefits of the club would be questionable. Beyond the standing tasks, the committee has pushed forward with a few initiatives to improve the service.

Ray Creek: the final frontier. Enabling members to boldly moor where no boat has moored before.

A tad hyperbolic, I admit, and not an entirely accurate description of the project, but this season the committee assessed the viability of laying a floating pontoon between the Club piles in Ray Creek. First Jo Kershaw carried out a successful ultrasound survey to confirm that the piles remained strong enough. Second, Richard Taylor and Jim Pullen produced a bathymetric survey to confirm the water depth along the channel. By the time *Molliette* is published we will have costed the project, with associated return-on-investment data, for the General Committee's decision. The aim is to have the pontoon, spanning three piles, in place by April 2016.



To remind readers briefly of scale, the launch service this season operated daily from 21st March to the end of November,

car parks on behalf of members, and dealing with the occasional opprobrium this produces. I was ticketing a car without a permit



Google my Mooring

In a spin-off of the bathymetric survey Richard Taylor geolocated all the Club moorings and identified them on Googlemap. Having a precise knowledge of the mooring locations will assist in their maintenance, and provide useful evidence against the introduction of unauthorized moorings close by. The moorings numbering system, which had become a bit out of kilter, was also reviewed. The renumbered moorings, coordinates and a copy of the Googlemap were posted on the club noticeboard for members' information.

City Road Car Park

Someone once said that the problem with car parking is that it's not going anywhere - we've tried to address that. Car parking for members during the summer, especially during the Cadet and Mersea weeks, had become increasingly difficult. Policing provided one solution, but more space would help too. The City Road site had become overgrown, and littered with discarded boating detritus that had accumulated over the years around the margins of the field. A couple of hard days effort, assisted by some inexpert,

bordering on comic, crane handling with the club dumper truck, cleared the waste into skips. The site can now accommodate 62 cars, a 20% increase.

Scrubbing Post Ladders

The existing steel ladders, fitted around 35 years ago by Peter Clarke, had become rusted and unsafe. Two composite ladders have been installed, along with D fendering on both the creek and shore side of the posts. The fendering takes up against the boat as it comes alongside avoiding damage to its hull, and allows more time for the crew to put boat fenders in place.

VHF Improvements

The VHF in the lobby was replaced to allow members to confirm the location of the launch before leaving the club. The antenna system will also be replaced to provide reliable communications into Pyfleet Creek.

Volunteer Launchmen

We were very pleased to be able to maintain the full launch service for three months over the Summer during Andrew Twidell's absence through illness. Club volunteers took up

the launchman task in rain and shine – and it did both to extremes throughout the period. We were also assisted by Clive Pickering and Ross Wey; and both Ollie Jarvis and Tom Calcutt gave more than we could ever expect through their cheerful and courteous manner. The ad hoc support was rewarding for all. It provided the volunteers with a better insight into the launchman's task: e.g. just how long it takes to get to the top of Salcott and back at low water, and return to a posse of disgruntled members waiting on the Hammerhead ... We're glad that Andrew returned after the summer, fit for work.

Postscript

You'll have read the other sections of the Molliette, and perhaps imagined sharing a glass or two in the cockpit of a member's boat in some sunny anchorage, or beating hard to a mark in the river on a fresh Saturday morning. Against those, the work of the M&B committee is certainly less exciting. But it's a great way to learn how the whole Mersea harbour operation works, and give something back to the club. I'm indebted to our team: Richard Taylor as Honorary Bosun for his deep experience across all areas of waterside activity; Dave Lewis for his mechanical and electrical engineering knowledge; Geoff Hunt for his background in boat building and repair; and Steve Dines for the practical experience he brought from the Brightlingsea ferry operation - and his knack of getting stuff cheap. I thank them all for their can-do approach.

Please come and join us. We'd be delighted if you did. The club needs more swans.

FRASER HADDOW
Rear Commodore

Jeremy Dumas OBE

1942-2015

Jeremy was already a keen sailor in 1962, when he first came to Colchester as a young Second Lieutenant to join 2nd Light Regiment, Royal Artillery (the Gunners) at Roman Way Camp. In his spare moments he would take out the Regiment's Enterprise dinghy, which was kept at West Mersea Yacht Club. This required a signature in a book, kept in the club, and the frequent "J Dumas" entries did not go unnoticed by the young Lizzie Odling. Jeremy later proposed to Lizzie and in 1966 they married in Colchester Garrison Church and embarked upon a peripatetic life of Army postings and adventure.



As a teenager in Germany Jeremy learned to sail in International Olympics (fore-runner of the Finn), Sharpie gaff-rigged dinghies and Star class yachts with his father on the Möhnesee (contained by the rebuilt Möhne Dam of Dambusters fame).



Lizzie, Jeremy & relations on Brynmere

He progressed to 30 and 50 Square Metre yachts, sailed from Kiel Yacht Club on the Baltic. Amongst these was the Gunner's *Brynmere*, a 50 Square, built in 1937 by Abeking & Rasmussen for sail training for the Wehrmacht. After he was commissioned his sailing was varied and

opportunistic, because of his frequent postings. In Germany he took out parties of soldiers from Kiel, passing the trips off as adventure training and when living in the UK, if time allowed, he would take out soldiers and friends in the Gunner yacht *St Barbara*, a Nicholson 43.

In 1975 when posted to Camberley and with a young family, he bought a West Solent Scow, which he sailed with the children on lakes and rivers and in Mersea.



With the children on the Thames

While on leave from Nigeria he chartered a yacht in the Caribbean, and in the Middle East he chartered in Turkey. During a posting in Jamaica he raced round Kingston harbour on an Oyster Lightwave every week.



On the Lightwave with Leafy

On returning to the UK he and Lizzie joined several of *Thalassa's* Brittany forays with Richard and Vivian (née Baker) Sewell, who took her over on her father's death and kept for forty-three years. *Thalassa* will be remembered as a Mersea boat for many years.



Thalassa

There were cruises with Rodney and Jill Hill in the Caribbean, where Jeremy's local knowledge and contacts were indispensable when *Grenville* was stolen by drug runners. *Grenville* was converted by Rod from a three masted cat-rig Freedom 70 schooner to the cutter below.



Grenville

In Mersea, in the early days of Humphrey Ellison's sadly brief retirement, Jeremy sailed with him on *Buckler*.

The family had returned to this area briefly in 1969 and again in 1977 when, this being Jeremy's third Colchester posting, they bought a bungalow in Firs Road, which was to be replaced by the house further down the road, to which they moved when Jeremy retired in 1997. After renovating and extending the house, Jeremy realised a lifelong ambition: designing a 35 foot wood epoxy gaff cutter, to be built by the Elephant Boat Yard on the Hamble and called *Ivy Green*. The design work took months and the build much



longer than expected because, just as the boat was about to be launched, the boatyard burnt down and a second boat had to be started from scratch.

Amongst the many special features of *Ivy Green* was Lizzie's tiny solid fuel stove. A great comfort for the wet and cold, it was inspired by the one on Alan Baker's *Thalassa*, which he fuelled with delicately stitched muslin bags of charcoal. It was such a clean and tidy idea, ripe for copying although, not being quite so stylish, *Ivy Green's* stove had to make do with paper bags.

In 2002 Jeremy started working for the Lifeboat and in 2007 he took over the management of the West Mersea station, a job he really enjoyed. He will be remembered for his trenchant comments to the press about people who wilfully drove onto the flooded Strood and got stuck.



Jeremy with the crew

Jeremy became Fabric Officer for the Parish Church and, because there was no money for repairs, he started an appeal. He also set up the Friends of West Mersea Parish Church in the hope of ensuring for the future a constant trickle of money for maintenance. Later he helped establish the Mersea allotments.

Ivy Green was eventually launched in 2003. Jeremy and Lizzie made several voyages in her to the West Country, to the Channel Islands, to



Ivy Green... To The Bench Head!

France and up the East Coast Rivers. Sadly the shared dream of a long sailing retirement was dealt a cruel blow by Jeremy's ill health in the last few years and led to the sale of the still young *Ivy Green* in 2014. He was also forced to give up the voluntary work, into which he had put so much time and effort.

In the concluding years of his much enjoyed and successful Army career, Jeremy found the niche in which he excelled. He was Defence Attaché at the British Embassies in two difficult areas of the Middle East. First was Lebanon and he was awarded the OBE for his courage and exceptional service during this tour. Next, promoted to Colonel

in 1991, he was posted to Damascus, where amongst other things he was involved in securing the release of John McCarthy and Terry Waite. His last posting, very different but challenging nonetheless, was as Defence Adviser Caribbean. His long-suffering wife Lizzie and his children accompanied him throughout his many postings.

His courteous modesty and friendly, easy social manner, underpinned by a natural understanding of the nuances of life in foreign parts, ideally suited him for diplomatic life. Soldier, diplomat, sailor, citizen and family man, Jeremy died on 22nd February 2015 from prostate cancer.

Sailing or Flying?



A number of years ago I made friends with the Johnson family of J boat fame in the USA. Peter Johnson founded Gunboat, the specialist builder of fast cruising multihulls.

I bumped into Peter in Antigua during Sailing Week this year where he was sailing the first of class Gunboat G4, a 40 foot foiling "cruising" catamaran. Peter's PR blurb on the G4 says, "Stomp on maxis, superyachts,

and any grand prix race-boat in sight. The GUNBOAT G4 offers Formula 40 speeds in an easy to handle and forgiving weekender. Unless your fleet includes an AC72, an ORMA 60 or a MOD70, your competition will only see your transom".

The offer of a sail on lay day was just too good to miss. But, and it's a big but, the same boat literally turned turtle and did a full 180 degree capsize when

sailing in relatively benign conditions two weeks earlier at the St Barts regatta. That misadventure is easily located (g4 capsized) on YouTube complete with "wipeout" sound track.

Harold Cudmore and I set out with Peter and crewman Shannon Falcone, who was aboard *Oracle* when winning the America's Cup, so what could possibly go wrong? Well, just to be on the safe side we had a chase boat complete with a camera toting pal to record the moment when in just 16 knots of wind, yours truly at the helm, we hit 25 knots! Man, this thing really does fly.

Designed and built in carbon Peter Johnson tells me No 2 will have an improved foil control system and is being bought by Elon Musk, founder of Tesla electric cars and the Space X project. Sunday sailing with the kids? Not yet, and certainly not far from shore, unless you have a chase boat and maybe a rescue diver. But foiling is catching on and who knows

RICHARD MATTHEWS

Gentlemen don't sail to windward!

Winner of the Reeve Tyler Trophy for best log

It was with some excitement, on the morning of 28th August 2015, that *Odessa* left her mooring... carrying on board Brigitte, myself and Tilly the ship's dog, for our first foreign venture alone! I had been contemplating cruising alone, just the three of us. Now that finally we were on our way I was feeling a little apprehensive about the voyage ahead: "Would the boat be ok? Would the weather stay on our side?"

We set off for Ramsgate in glorious sunshine with a nice gentle SW breeze forecasted to decrease in the late afternoon. A good friend had mentioned that "Gentlemen don't sail to windward", and here I was wondering what all the fuss was about? Windward or not we were going and were rewarded with a fantastic air display by the Red Arrows over the water off Clacton!

On to the Swin Spitway... past the Barrow sands and down to the SW Sunk Sand to cross into the Black Deep through a gap that we have come to call affectionately 'Gaspar's Gap'. Once again, thanks to our friend Roger Gaspar we cut across safely. Just out of Fisherman's Gat the wind suddenly started picking up, gusting up to 36 knots. The last two hours of our crossing, through a rough and choppy sea, became very unpleasant... So much for a decrease in wind prediction!



Off to Boulogne - 'La Douane'

It was crucial that we leave the following morning at 05.00 but I had not accounted for the fact that Brigitte's clock was already in holiday mode or dare I say her usual mode. So, true to form, we left in the end at 05.45! That little delay was really going to bite us later in the day. We were

however more worried about our first sail in the dark, although it was only to be just under one hour and a magical one at that! What a way to savour a sunrise!

We called Dover coastguard and informed them of our 'solo' passage plan. We felt more at ease that somebody knew we were "*out there, alone!*" and keeping watch. By 07.00 the mainsail and genoa were up. How is that for the start of a good working day? By sunrise we had such good visibility that we could see the shoreline of France from the Goodwin Fork! In the middle of the TTS, we saw a strange phenomenon... the water forming giant swirls. "Who pulled the plug out?" we wondered light-heartedly.

10.35 BST – Just past Cap Gris-Nez, "*Odessa*" was called. It was the French customs - la Douane. Satisfied with our details, they bid us "Bon voyage!" and as silently as they had arrived they disappeared. It was about an hour later that Brigitte, checking her log and the bearing from a landmark, pointed out that we had hardly travelled any distance. We had 3 knots of tide against us, our speed over the ground was decreasing to 2.4 knots... and at this rate still hours to go! I felt really quite cross by the time we eventually got to Boulogne. Had we left Ramsgate at the correct time we would not have been beating such a foul tide for so long! As we approached the entrance to La Rade de Carnot we were treated to the sight of a very large dolphin or porpoise surfacing just next to our boat. What a fantastic sight and welcome. I was smiling again!

Micha's story

We had intended to leave the next day for Dieppe but tiredness and 'getting waylaid by a motley crew' changed our decision. Sometime in the afternoon of our first day in Boulogne a German registered Elan 37 moored in the berth next to us and out stepped a very charming single-handed sailor called Micha. Well, what a lovely man he turned out to be. Micha was fulfilling a dream that he had had since boyhood. He had sold his business and his house, bought his dream boat and was living aboard with his Dulux dog Loupi. He had started in Croatia and spent the previous six months sailing back to Germany, via most of the Mediterranean countries and northern Africa! "It had been a fantastic trip... even if I was a bit

lonely at times!" he did confess. On his journey, he wrote a travel blog of his adventures and posted it on his website. He certainly had done some amazing things and some crazy ones!

Micha had set his boat with forward and rear facing cameras and linked them to a large TV screen down below so that, in the extreme heat of the Mediterranean summer, he was able to stay in the shade and still keep watch. He treated us to a fantastic video-show of his trip including the moment when his boat was surrounded by dolphins playing with an underwater camera he had fixed on a pole. On the subject of 'crazy things' the most extreme footage we saw was of his boat cruising with the spinnaker up whilst he had abandoned ship! His 'great idea' was to be towed behind in his inflatable dinghy and to take a film of the yacht sailing without him at 9 knots! Quite mad really and as he told us, "Very lucky to be here to tell the story". At one stage he didn't think he would be able to get back on board! All of Micha's trip and exploits can be viewed on the internet on his website www.X-trip.eu. We had been feeling quite pleased so far with our small achievements until Micha told us about his adventures!

The Sailing Conductors' story

We had decided that we must leave... But it was not to be! Micha invited and 'tempted us' into staying as he was being joined by some friends from his home town in Germany. They were arriving the next day, having spent the last five years sailing from Australia. "They are very hospitable musicians and they want to have a little party!" Well, with the will power of gnats, Brigitte and I were persuaded to stay!



In the afternoon, a boat that I thought must belong to the Beverly Hillbillies arrived on the pontoon in front of us. What a sight... all custom painted and looking very scruffy! Two men with long beards and strangely, considering the fellows' unkempt appearance, two very pretty women in tow, stepped down onto the pontoon. The new arrivals turned out to be the German

friends Micha had told us about. Before long we were introduced and after coffee and our offer of rum "aperitifs" in the evening, we were soon best friends! That night saw seven of us partying hard on board *Odessa* and once again we were swayed to stay another day as Micha was going to be the host.

This gave us the chance to hear Hanse and Ben's story. They had been in Australia to finish their music degrees and found out some five years ago that their return tickets to Germany had expired. The new airfare was rather expensive and, totally against the idea of paying the going rate, they pondered on how to get back home. They were sitting on the beach contemplating their options when a boat sailed past on the horizon... "That's it, we'll buy a boat instead and sail back to Germany!" they decided. The only hitch was... neither of them had ever owned or sailed a yacht before!

Undaunted by that thought, a week later they looked at a yacht called a Rolsen 30, bought it and within two weeks (just enough for the owner to give them a quick lesson on how to operate everything on board), they were setting sail! To begin with, their main idea of safety on board was to stay close to shore and to "swim for it", dodging the sharks, in case anything happened! Well, they soon got the hang of things and went on to visit many countries including: New Zealand, India, Africa, Brazil, Argentina, the Caribbean, America, Spain, France and on to Ireland. It was amazing! They called themselves "The Sailing Conductors" and wherever they stepped ashore, they would meet other local artists and put together music compositions on their website: www.sailingconductors.com. The night went so well that our new friends didn't want us to leave. They insisted that we should all travel North together to the Baltic. As tempted as we were, we had our own mission to travel South in preparation for next year's passage to Brittany for the Brest Festival.



Brigitte, Hans, Ben, Marine and Tini

Dieppe

We had much discussion with Micha about what time we "thought" we should leave the next day and, doing his best to convince us that 04.00 was not necessary, we ended up totally confused. Doubting our own tidal predictions, there was only one thing to do: call the Oracle, Jim McNaughton! "Allô, Jim... what time should we leave?" A quick forage through his almanac to check the tidal flows and our yachtmaster genius confirmed 04.00! We were rather delighted to see we had learnt well as it was the same time we had chosen!

So at 02.00 in the morning, having had great fun, we bid farewell to our German friends and retreated to *Odessa* with only 1½ hrs sleep before departing at 04.00 for Dieppe! "Un lendemain difficile" the French would call it... translating as "a tough tomorrow". Although a flash storm passed over us with 30 knots of wind, rain and no visibility for about 15 minutes, we enjoyed a reasonable passage and arrived in Dieppe at 14.40, where we spent three pleasant days.

Fécamp & David

As we left for Fécamp at 06.00, we did notice another solitary boat heading in the same direction but much further out to sea! By 09.00, we were going along gently when another unpredicted freak storm hit us. Before we could release the auto-pilot and control the boat, we experienced a rather nasty broach. The cockpit started to fill up with water and even tore the corner of the dodger on our port side. I finally managed to dump the main and right the boat. For a while, with two reefs in both the mainsail and genoa, we were still flying at 8.5 knots! After five hours mainly sailing, we reached our destination: Fécamp.

We had just tied up on our pontoon and settled down when the other lone sailor appeared. He was a Frenchman, sailing single-handed, so Brigitte went and helped take his mooring lines. His name was Gilles. When we asked, "Why did you go so far out? Was it to catch the strongest current?", he winked at our boat and said, "No, mine is not a racing beast like yours, I cannot point that well to windward and also... those lobster pots... they scare the hell out of me!". We liked him already!

Brigitte's next good deed for the day was to go up the mast, for the second time now in our trip, to untangle yet again our mainsail halyard wrapped round the radar-reflector. This time I managed to get some sneaky shots of her, for the *Molliette* of course!



Then we met David, another solo sailor, who joined us on-board for apéritifs. Over a couple of drinks Brigitte discovered that he came from Le Havre, our next port of call. Whilst discussing which was best - close to shore or further offshore - David invited us to follow him. At 07.00, on the

dot, we were awoken by a sharp knock on the side of our boat. We knew he didn't want to be caught by a foul tide we had already learnt that lesson ourselves! The quickest ever... 15 minutes later, we were on our way!



Brigitte, Tilly and David

Going to Le Havre – A special Salute!

David had anticipated that we might sail faster than him and he had assured us his short route was safe. Well it wasn't too long before we were overtaking our leader and, much to his dismay, disappearing into the distance! This led eventually to drastic action from our French friend... suddenly his spinnaker was deployed! Game on!

There was no one else, just our two yachts on the water and we were rewarded by a very magical moment! A loud roar suddenly erupted in front of us and within seconds we were treated to a private air display by two French "Mirage" fighter jets. They flew past on each side of *Odessa* so low

that we could almost see the pilots' faces as they both tipped their wings and climbed higher before doing a Victory Roll, then circled and disappeared into the distance. This was very special indeed: two boats, two planes, one salute... we were honoured!

David eventually overtook us just as we arrived at Le Havre and we had the chance for a final chat over a beer. He had been a great guy and very helpful. His boat is a Courseul design, there were only 10 of that model built, and he had taken three years to restore his. He gave us some useful tips on sailing along the coast of Normandy. He also added with a gentle smile that we had forced him to do things with his boat that he would not normally try single-handed... "But I had to catch up with you guys!" This had been a record time for him: Fécamp to Le Havre - 27NM in 3hrs 45mins. We averaged 8½ knots all the way!

Meeting Gilles

We really enjoyed Le Havre considering it is known as the 'Concrete Town'. It was heavily bombed during WWII and its rebuilding was entrusted to August Perret, a specialist in reinforced concrete (*béton armé*) construction. He thought that 'greenery' was surplus to requirements and would interfere with the lines of his buildings. The results are so harsh that it's hard to believe it is one of UNESCO's World Heritage Sites. Despite all this, the town and its beachfront is vibrant and spirited like the Phoenix rising from the ashes.

The following day, another familiar French boat entered the marina... it was the sailor who had travelled with us in the distance en route to Fécamp. We were pleased to see him as we had not had the opportunity to socialise back there! Gilles was soon aboard *Odessa* enjoying an apéritif as the sun was past the yardarm. He turned out to be a very friendly ex-Naval Captain based in Ouistreham. He had worked for P&O ferries and I wondered jokingly if it was that which influenced his preference for a steel yacht? We were due to leave Le Havre at 16.00 to travel to Deauville but Gilles was such an interesting man that it really appealed to Brigitte to stop another night and listen to the tales of his travels. I really had to be firm on the day and as Gilles put it, "The captain wants to leave!"

Deauville – Responding to a Pan Pan call

So we finally set sail for Deauville, an hour late, for a two hour trip. On approaching Deauville Brigitte heard a Pan-Pan on the VHF: a trimaran was stricken and called the coast guard to ask

permission for the lifeboat (SNM) to come out as no station had responded to his initial call. Brigitte got straight on the radio and communicated that we were just entering the entrance to Deauville and that we would be able to assist

The coastguards, le "CROSS" in France, asked us to go to Channel 68 and enquired about our draft. Concerned that it would be too shallow they thanked us for offering assistance and set us free to carry on. The entrance is very tricky and as Tom Cunliffe puts it "to be taken seriously", so I was rather pleased to have Brigitte's full attention especially when at some point, despite being HW, the depth sounder recorded a rather daunting 0.8m... We received a very cheery wave from the crew of the outbound life boat!



*Deauville
entrance ...to be
taken seriously!*

Twin Towns

Deauville and Trouville, separated by the River Touques, are fantastic places to stop on the Normandy Coast and definitely one of our favourite destinations on this trip. Walking both sides, we never had a dull moment, enjoying all the advantages of a two-centre resort with quite a different look: the former suave and sophisticated, the latter happy-go-lucky and fun for all the family. We relaxed three days there and should we confess that our best meal of the whole trip was the one we had in Trouville? "A French delicacy?" I hear you ask... No, a Chinese one! "Sacré bleu" my father would have cried or "mange-tout" Del boy would have exclaimed!

Our last port of call St-Vaast was only one day's sail away, but unfortunately the Met Office had issued a severe weather warning! We were in mid-September; we'd had a good run and thought we had better turn homeward again.

Honfleur

We had one more port to visit: the much acclaimed Honfleur! This we did... and jumped on 'l'autocar'... the bus! It's easy to see the magic that Honfleur would bestow upon a yacht entering the ancient harbour. This beautiful, old picturesque port is surrounded by quaint wood and slate buildings, historic houses, art galleries and restaurants, all huddled together along the quays. It has been painted many times by artists who contributed to the Impressionist movement. We enjoyed Honfleur but we found that five hours was enough... Deauville's beach, freedom and space were calling us. As a visiting yacht we thought that after the initial amazement wore off it must be like being in a goldfish bowl with all the tourists looking down at you! We were glad to leave.



Sitting out the storm

The next morning we headed back to Le Havre in time for a relaxing sunny afternoon and a pina colada on the beachfront. The following day we were sailing for six hours en route to St Valéry-en-Caux where we had planned to sit out the approaching storm. Having been there last year, it felt good to be back! The town and port being situated in a valley between high limestone cliffs, it gave us ample opportunity for long walks. We did another excursion to Veules Les Roses and followed the circuit-promenade of "the smallest river in France". We walked in the footsteps of Victor Hugo, Guy de Maupassant and many artists who used to come to this romantic village... We ended up staying for six nights in St Valéry-en-Caux before departing for Dieppe.

Returning to Dieppe - Ricky and Michel

We only spent one night in Dieppe on the return leg, but again managed to make more friends. Ricky and Michel, two Frenchmen returning from a day fishing trip, were soon on board drinking and chatting to Brigitte whilst I was down in the galley cooking a prawn curry. Good job I had decided to make enough for two nights as before long we found ourselves inviting them to dinner. They

went off to their motorboat and came back bearing gifts. They had decided to treat us to their only catch of the day: two gutted mackerel, a couple of nice bottles from Ricky's wine cellar and as a final touch a small bottle of calvados.



Returning to Boulogne

Well, 10.00 the next day, when we left for a 10½ hr trip to Boulogne, I was nursing a proper hangover, much to Brigitte's amusement who was keen to remind me that Ricky and I had a great laugh; so much so that apparently, at midnight, we were up for 'painting the town red' after no end of 'high fives'. Thank goodness she didn't let us! She was feeling fine as she had been busy the whole evening translating jokes amongst us and writing down numerous dish recipes and a killer-formula for a cocktail we said we would name 'Sherry Ricky'. How very drôle! As the day went on, I soon recovered and we had one of the best sails of the whole trip. After all it was the 20th of September, my birthday, the sun was shining and we had a decent breeze. For the last three hours before we entered Boulogne we averaged 8.5 knots! The journey took only 8 hours.



Before painting the town red

Homeward bound

We were on our way home! We had become used to early mornings by now and sailing in the dark was less daunting so dead on 05.00 we left Boulogne for England. There was quite a lot of activity already on the water with passing cargo ships and fishing boats, all deck lights on, dropping their dreaded lobster pots! 5½ hours later we arrived at Ramsgate. That afternoon the heavens opened but we were safely tucked down below catching up with some sleep.

Last leg - the deluge!

We set off at 07.00. "Showers" was the forecast. Wind and tide being favourable we had decided that a bit of rain would be the lesser of two evils. We tried to race ahead but soon it turned dreadfully black and started raining: for six long hours, non-stop! By the time we reached Bench Head we were drenched! There was only one thing to do... carry on with our holiday - in Bradwell! Once secured on the pontoon and with electricity at hand we were able to dry our clothes and warm up. Soon, back on form and to celebrate our safe return, out came the Champagne bought by Brigitte for my birthday that I had not been able to face since my little interlude with Ricky!

Time to reflect

Over a very pleasant meal at the Green Man, we took time to reflect on our first 'solo' foreign cruise: *Odessa* had covered 450nm. This trip taught us a great deal.

We were forced to think and make decisions for ourselves, relying on our own knowledge but also learning new skills. We were totally aware that should we require assistance we would have to call on the radio to all stations or eventually the French coastguards. We had no other options there! But it had not been as solitary as you might suspect. We shared some great moments and made friends with sailors from other countries... we experienced a feeling of freedom and independence that you would not have travelling in a group. We could understand completely how tempting it must be just to keep going!

Last of all we had each other to share this cruise and, discovering just how wonderful it is to 'go it alone', we gained strength and confidence to do it again.

MALCOLM & BRIGITTE
Odessa



Club Cruises

This year has had its ups and down with the cruises. Our first one was un-official. John and Anne Cook pointed out that Bellowhead were playing at Ipswich Regent in April and wouldn't it be nice to sail up there and go to the concert by boat. Their enthusiasm inspired ten boats and their crews to buy tickets and get their yachts ready in time. Everything was set, tickets purchased, boats launched, crews eager but the weather decided not to play ball. Three of the boats decided to try and sail. For myself in *Stargazer* after over an hour we hadn't reached the Bench Head. I was thinking that this will be a very long trip, I will want hot drinks and food but I don't really want to go below so we reluctantly turned back. It wouldn't be until mid June that *Stargazer* managed to sail out of the Blackwater.

Sadly the Harwich pursuit race planned for the early May bank holiday was also cancelled because of the weather. However, as you will see from the following reports, the remaining scheduled cruises proved to be very successful, and I would like to thank all those members who acted as cruise leaders. It is my last year as Cruiser Captain, and a very enjoyable time I have had, meeting new faces and boats. Jack Davis has now taken on this role and has devised some lovely ideas for the coming season. If you have any ideas for future club cruises or would like to coordinate one please make yourself known to either myself or Jack.

MELVYN DANIELS
Cruiser Captain

Brightlingsea/Bradwell 23rd – 25th May

At the end of a very enjoyable Cruiser Lunch in February and in somewhat mellow mood I was moved to volunteer as 'leader' of the shakedown cruise to Brightlingsea. Since the pursuit race would take us merely around the corner and our Cruiser Captain Melvyn had already cleared the date for dinner with Colne Yacht Club and berths with Brightlingsea Harbour Authority, this seemed like an easy proposition. Eleven boats signed up for the trip including four for the race. Our Commodore Mike Wheeler on *Golden Fleece* agreed to act as start boat at the Nass, well away from the Eastern National Championships taking place on the other side of the river. Everything was perfectly organised. What could possibly go wrong?

Saturday morning dawned fine and bright with an easterly 4 to 5 to waft us into the Colne. *Clockwise*, *Seahawk 2*, *Playpen* and *Celeste* all made good starts and enjoyed a brisk two hour race. Both cruisers and racers then started to make their way under power into Brightlingsea ... with one exception. When *Playpen's* engine failed to start her skipper dropped anchor and called on Jack and Sandy Davis in *Clockwise* who were happy to offer a tow (no doubt recalling the time when *Playpen* towed them into St Valery-sur-Somme the previous summer!)

That evening the Colne Yacht Club provided a very enjoyable carvery dinner for our 27 members and the *Shakedown* Shield was presented to the clear winners: Andrew and Jill Stebbing in *Seahawk 2*.



Overnight attempts to diagnose *Playpen's* engine problem having failed, despite the willing efforts of other members, she was towed (or more correctly pushed) out on Sunday by an equally helpful Harbourmaster, only to go promptly aground whilst making her first gentle tack on the opposite (lee) shore! The cruise leader's embarrassment was complete. Seeing our plight *Seahawk 2*, with help from a passing dory, managed to pull us off. Then *Clockwise*, en route to Bradwell and sensing that his cruise leader had finally lost the plot, offered a tow all the way back to the Nass where we were shepherded to our mooring by Andrew Twiddle in the club launch. Over the next few days we found that the engine had been damaged by seawater and eventually pronounced dead, that is 'beyond economical repair'.

Most of the remaining fleet progressed on Sunday to Bradwell where they met *Kithross III* and *Odessa* and spent the night recovering from a gently successful cruise. Lucky them.

COLIN CAMPBELL
Playpen

Heybridge 19th – 21st June

On Friday 19th June we motored up to Heybridge Basin, leaving at noon in company with *Pelican* skippered by Mouse. On board *Matilda* were the usual suspects: myself and Julian French, ably assisted by Denny and Gill Dodd. We were met at the Basin by John and Mary Haynes, tied up for once without incident and the bar was declared open. Champagne corks popped celebrating my retirement. Afternoon entertainment was provided by Rob ploughing into *Pelican*, but no harm was done. A jolly evening was to be had at The Old Ship inn and drinks were dispensed in the evening on *Matilda*. The party continued long into the night. Out came the Scotch, which I took as my cue to retire, and I dozed off, serenaded by raucous laughter and the tuneful chink of whisky glasses.

The scene was not so jolly next morning. John had enjoyed himself so much he had to be taken home to recover. The *Matilda* crew soaked up the alcohol by breakfasting at the Tiptree cafe. The main cruising contingent arrived on the Saturday around high tide making a total of 14 boats attending. At the lock-in Brigitte's dog Tilly made a bid for freedom, leaping for land but almost strangled herself as she was tied to *Odessa*. Thankfully, Julian was on hand to rescue her.

The Heybridge pursuit race was won by Ollie Kieran in *Life*. John Haynes had entrusted the winning Trophy to Julian French, which is a measure of how ill he must have felt, and Julian surprised us all by being able to lay his hands on said cup and make a coherent presentation to the winner at the evening barbecue. Later, we returned to *Matilda* for me to dispense my hostess duties. The evening progressed in its usual liquid fashion. Brigitte decided to join the Heybridge Basin Swimming Club. Fortunately after hearing her cry out, followed by an eerie splash, Malcolm and Julian had sufficient of their wits about them to recover her quickly from the canal. Our shock turned to admiration when Brigitte showered, changed and returned to *Matilda* for a few more bebies.

Needless to say, the next morning got off to a slow start. It was fortuitous we had a late tide taking us back to Mersea. Mel and Carol had secured the late running of the yacht club launch to bring the cruisers ashore. Once out of the lock, *Matilda* steamed off in the direction of Maldon – thanks to some useful navigation from Julian and Denny. So much for Barnet night school. When we realised we had no company and were rapidly running out

of water a U-turn was performed and with full engine ahead we motored home. No doubt more occurred during the weekend, but alcohol has obliterated much of my recollection, probably for the best.



They must be here soon ...

CHRISTINE LANE
Matilda

Holland 24th June - 11th July

We signed up for the Cruising in Company trip to Holland. We were the newbies, having not sailed abroad before, and we thanked our lucky stars that we were sailing in such experienced company. We already knew Carol and Mel Daniels, Fi and Ian Brown and Lesley and Kevin Mullins, but this was the first time we'd met Sandy and Jack Davis. What a team they all made!

Scruffy Duck, Stargazer, Starlight, Sea Breeze and Clockwise set off from Mersea to Shotley early on Wednesday 24th June on a beautiful day. Three of us planned on having our bottoms cleaned (!) as soon as we arrived, in order to greatly enhance our performance across the North Sea the following day. The shakedown proved our gearbox wasn't working properly, so when we arrived David spent the next few hours with his head in the engine compartment while I became increasingly concerned and nervous. The thing is, I don't much like sailing out of sight of land as I have this ridiculous notion that if all else fails, I can always swim to shore, and our gearbox problem did nothing to make me less worried. But my concerns were unfounded and David sorted the problem.

It took 14½ hours to get to Ostend from Shotley, with Ian's passage plan taking us safely across the North Sea in perfect conditions, to a very warm welcome from the Royal Yacht Club

Harbourmaster. There'd been a certain amount of trepidation about red diesel issues but instead we were treated superbly and given discounts and goody bags full of information. We then had a rather alcoholic drinks party to celebrate our successful crossing! Some people at that point (no names mentioned) said they would never cross the North Sea like that again (how will they get home asked a friend?); not because there had been any NDE's (Near Death Experiences as I like to call them) but just that the length of time at sea had been exhausting.

But after a couple of nights in Ostend to recover, and lots of moules and frites to get us acclimatized to foreign ways, we had a great sail up the coast and then across the Westerschelde and into the canal system at Vlissingen (Flushing). One night there and then a short motor to Middleburg, with us learning the ways of bridge and lock etiquette as we went along. We were shouted at on VHF by the bridge controller, "You English yachts, speed up, go faster, faster" (which was slightly offensive to the Scots amongst us). This goes against everything my husband believes in, in terms of manners. His style being more the "after you" way of things. So he had to have a quick lesson to learn hovering at the start line and then going for it the minute the gun goes off (or bridge goes up in this case). It didn't come naturally to him at all.



"Hurry up you English"

Middleburg proved to be as beautiful as everyone had said it would be, with pretty houses, perfect church towers and everywhere looking so clean and fresh that it seemed as if it was newly built. Mooring right in the town centre is perfect for sight seeing and shopping.

One of the joys of Holland are "box" moorings. I had no idea what they were, but I was very



frightened by what I'd heard. The very words filled me with dread. After a failed first attempt in Flushing because our boat was simply too wide to fit between the posts, we succeeded on our next effort, but not without a bit of drama. By this time I was in a

state of frenzy and it required a large drink to settle the nerves. But then I calmed down and looked at it and wondered what all the fuss was about. I mean, what can go wrong once you are between two posts? You can't go anywhere. You can't really hit anything else. All we needed to do in our case was shout "we are very fat" whenever we went into a new town so that the Harbour Master would allocate us a big box. (It's a good job the Dutch speak good English). And it helps to have friends on the shore to help!



Sea Breeze, in Starlight's wake, leading Clockwise, Scruffy Duck and Stargazer

From Middleburg we motored to Veere and enjoyed a group BBQ overlooking the Veerse Meer. David managed to fall in, a few of us swam and Rachel, Robin and Catherine Gozzett joined us. They had left Shotley the same day as us on *Falcon*, bound for Holland as well, and this was our one opportunity to meet up. What can I tell you about Veere? Beautiful little town, very touristy and quaint with a nice church tower to climb and a few museums, including a Scottish one. How thoughtful of them. And lots and lots of shops selling touristy stuff but nothing useful at all, like fruit!



he'd been at the front making the decisions. But it proved to be a very special evening with lots of swimming and a very happy drinks party on the island in glorious hot weather.

Next stop Goes (or Hoos as it's pronounced). The prettiest of marinas by far with its very own toilet lighthouse! Yes, a lighthouse that's a toilet, and it was right next to *Scruffy Duck*. How convenient!!! Goes town is a delight in so many ways, but the marina, with its little wooden clubhouse, is the centre of a cooperation between boat owners who run it, maintain it, keep their boats in it and manage visitors like us. It was a little Utopia and we stayed there for three days.



Overlooking the Veerse Meer



Happy days in Goes



Marine bliss for David and Ginny

Next day saw us motor sailing (well, not really sailing, motoring) to find an island in the Veerse Meer to stay overnight. Ian motored towards the one we finally chose with his eyes closed (quite a neat trick actually) because he has the deepest keel and his depth gauge read 0. He was last in and wouldn't have considered it for a minute if



Lighthouse loo

Sadly Goes turned out to be as far as we got. We turned back at that point because Sandy needed to get home for some urgent medical treatment. We left them at Middleburg so they could catch a train home and we headed back down the canal and eventually holed up in Breskens because of some bad weather. A passage-planning meeting ensued after a day trip to Bruges. There were those who'd said never again, but there were also those who didn't want to spend the time going home via Dunkirk and Ramsgate. Ostend to Mersea won. It was while the meeting was taking place that Jack phoned from England to say that Sandy had had a miracle cure and they were on their way back to Middelburg to collect their boat!

So the following day we had a leisurely start while Sandy and Jack frantically hurtled across the channel by train, picked up their boat, flew down the canals and under the bridges, and arrived in Ostend a couple of hours after we did. It must have been an epic trip and it was certainly an emotional reunion. We were all so pleased to see them and happy that we were coming home together. It had been an interesting day as there was a whirlwind moving swiftly across the surface of the sea and it eventually hooked up with the sky to make a waterspout; it was quite frightening in a very compelling sort of way!



It was a 15½ hour trip to Mersea, much under motor but with a beautiful sunrise and clear conditions. However, three hours before our destination the wind got up, the sails came out, and we arrived home majestically as proper yachts. It had been a fantastic holiday.

GINNY JARVIS

Scruffy Duck

London Limehouse 31 Aug – 6 Sep

It all started at the Cruising lunch. There was no cruise planned for the Thames so I asked our Cruising Captain Mel Daniels if there could be one, and of course he said yes – but you organise it!! I had never organised a club cruise before but Mel said he would help and so I said yes.

Because Kevin & I had never sailed across the Thames to Queenborough Mel & Carol helped us choose the right days with the right tides that allowed us to set off and arrive in daylight. Having chosen August Bank Holiday Monday for departure it was up to me to contact the marinas along the way and confirm which boats would be arriving.

I first approached St Katherine's Dock, but was told I could only contact them four months before the arrival date which meant the beginning of May. This left everything hanging in the air. However luck was on my side: at the Fitting Out Supper in April I was introduced to Beryl, a new member who just happens to be General Manager of the Cruising Association in Limehouse Basin. She kindly said she could help us and proceeded to book us in. So the first key part of the plan was in place. The rest of the arrangements were easily fixed and confirmed.

The final flotilla comprised eight boats: ourselves on *Sea Breeze*; Mel & Carol Daniels on *Stargazer*; Colin & Diane Campbell on *Playpen* with Mike Berry and Malcolm Brider as extra crew; John & Ann Cook on *Carmina*; Larry & Lynn Botheras on *Gladys*; Conrad & Julie Chapman on *Sea Weasel*; Phillip Woods and his parents Rod & Lesley on *Jazz*; and Trevor & Judy Southey on *Gigi*.

The plan was to set off at 7am, so it was decided to organise a meal in the yacht club the night before and a late launch to deliver us all to our boats.

We had the Long Room to ourselves which meant we could introduce ourselves to new faces. The meal was delicious and quickly served so that the first launch group, for the moorings furthest out,

were ready on the hammerhead about 7.15pm. We were in that group and were all safely deposited on our yachts. Unbeknown to us when Ollie returned to the hammerhead he couldn't get alongside as the tide was so low. He and the next group had to wait an hour before there was enough water!



Monday was a grey and wet day as we left our mooring at 7am, one hour before low water to catch the last of the ebb and arrive at the Swin Spitway on a rising tide. From there we crossed off the marks into W Swin channel.



Vice Commodore Mike toughs it out on Playpen

The visibility was poor as we began to cross the Thames. Then we looked around and saw in the distance a dozen large ghostly white spinnakers: we were watching the start of the Clipper Round the World race from Southend. Having entered the

Medway channel and west Swale we took the last of the flood up to Queenborough.

Eventually all arrived safely at Queenborough and were faced with the choice of mooring against a rather uncomfortable concrete lighter or two available buoys. It was only the following morning that some realised the rather badly marked "dolphins" mentioned in the Harbour master's VHF instructions really did guard a major hazard on the bottom. Luckily we arrived near high water.



Jazz relaxing at Queenborough

Queenborough Harbour offered a free 'trot boat service' to take people ashore from 10am to 10pm, although they had just installed a new floating jetty where owners of single yachts could tie up and walk ashore. The night before we arrived, the Round the World yachts had all been moored at Queenborough and Robin Knox-Johnson had officially opened the new jetty.



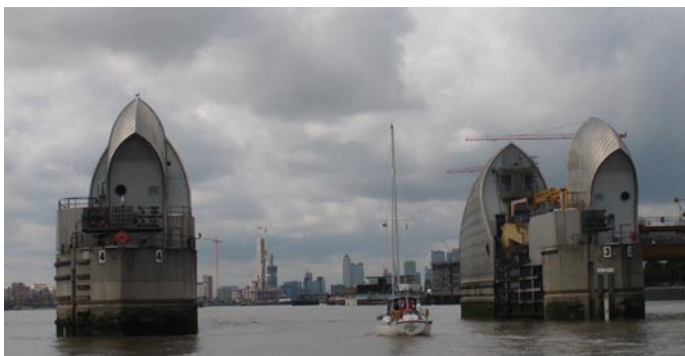
Carmina, Isle of Grain

The fleet left Queenborough at 07.45, one hour before LW, to get the last of the ebb out of the Medway and take the full flood up the Thames.

As we travelled up the Thames we tuned into different channels to hear traffic movements on the river.

Going under the QE2 bridge was an experience, even more so when the river police came up behind us in a big black rib and asked us who we were and where we were going. Their parting question was "...and it's just the two of you on board?" No, we didn't have any illegal immigrants stowed!!

When in sight of the Thames Barrier (very impressive up close) each boat called on Channel 14 to be told which 'gate' to use and followed the green lights.



Gladys enters the 'Jaws of London'

We had a great view of the towers of Canary Wharf and then followed the river around one of its most famous stretches. On the south bank we passed the O2 Dome, the Antony Gormley sculpture 'Quantum Cloud' and under the Emirates cable car. Then past historic Greenwich and the Cutty Sark. Further along the south bank we passed the South Bank Marina which we didn't know was there. Quite a large marina, maybe useful on another trip, although the transport links into London are not as good as Limehouse. From here we called up the Limehouse Basin lock keeper on VHF 80 to announce our imminent arrival.



Jazz at Greenwich

Then on past Canary Wharf, up to Limehouse Basin entrance which is just around the corner on the North Bank.

Half of our group had locked in before us. We had to wait about 20 minutes while some narrow boats locked out. Waiting outside was quite uncomfortable because of all the river traffic kicking up the water and a strong tide. The lock operates three hours either side of high water.

We had a wonderful welcoming committee of our daughter and granddaughter who had lunch at the Gordon Ramsey pub on the corner. This gave them a really great viewing point to watch for us and they came on board when we were tied up. All our boats were placed together in the corner of the basin. The Docklands Light Railway ran along the end of the basin and we all expected to be kept awake at night. In fact it was a very quiet marina. The only thing you had to keep an eye out for were the hundreds of joggers and cyclists going around at all times of the day!



That evening we travelled on the DLR to Bank and then walked down to the Little Ship Club. There we met our Commodore Michael Wheeler and Vicki who had travelled up (by land) to be with us. The club gave us a great welcome and we all enjoyed the lovely meal they provided. A fitting end to a great day.



The next morning I decided to organise a mystery tour to an iconic building that I thought the majority of people would not have visited and probably not heard of at all. Eight of our intrepid group signed up for it and all I told them was a whole lot of security instructions and to bring personal ID. Where were we going? To the Sky Garden at the top of the building Londoners have christened the 'Walkie Talkie'. It first made the headlines because its concave south-facing windows directed the sun onto a new jaguar car and melted it! At the very top is a beautiful garden, restaurant and coffee bar with wonderful views over London. If you want to go Google 'Sky Garden'.



Kevin & I then went for lunch at the famous local Limehouse pub – 'The Grapes' which is owned by Sir Ian McKellen. There is a tiny balcony at the back overlooking the river and there, rising from the waters on top of a pile, is another sculpture by Antony Gormley one of his standing figures.



At 5.30 that afternoon Jeremy Batch, of the Cruising Association, gave us a very interesting talk in the CA HQ, all about the history of Limehouse from early medieval times.

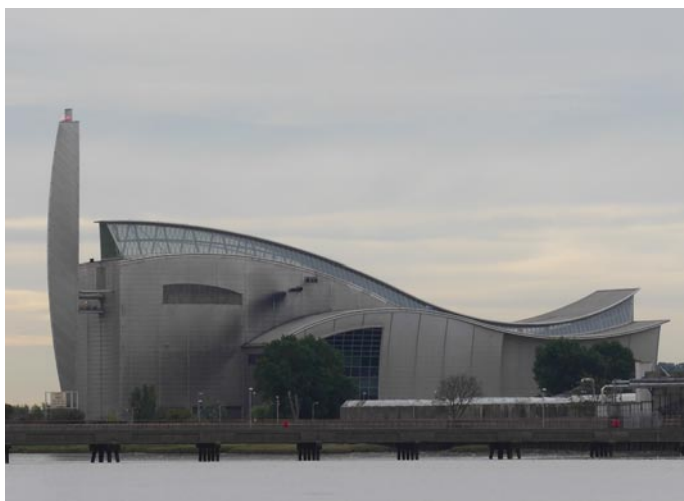
Unfortunately the next day Mel & Carol had to leave to go back to Mersea and we were sad to see them go. They went all the way back to Mersea in 12½ hours, only 1½hrs shorter than Ostend to Mersea! The rest of us spent a day at leisure.

Kevin & I decided we would go and explore the Olympic site. It was so easy to get to on the DLR straight to Stratford. We went into the Olympic Aquatics Centre, which looks quite small from the outside but houses a full Olympic and two training pools. We then went up to the top of the 'Orbit', the iconic sculpture by Anish Kapoor with a full view of the Olympic site. After a reviving cup of tea we walked around the site admiring the inspirational "prairie" planting.

That evening I had organised a 'Farewell to London' dinner at the Cruising Association headquarters on the side of Limehouse lock. They really looked after us, presenting us with a delightful meal in a very friendly atmosphere. The

Cruising Association had offered our group a 25% discount on membership fees and I was delighted that a few of us took them up on their offer.

We were in the lock at 06.15 on Friday morning and then retraced our steps down the river aiming to arrive at the mouth of the Medway at LW 11.30 and take the flood up to Chatham Maritime Marina. It was a lovely sunny day with a fair breeze. We had more time to look around and were amazed at the industry there is along the river banks. There were two particular buildings on the south bank on Halfway Reach, just before Erith. One was beautifully designed with an amazing sweeping roof and twisted chimney. We had heard that precious metals are smelted along the river and thought these buildings must be it. No, they are sewage works!!



We passed the West Nore Sand buoy at 11.40 and 14 miles later arrived in Chatham. What a lovely river to explore. As we approached No. 32 buoy on the last bend before the marina entrance, we called up on Channel 80 and were able to go straight into the lock. The marina is accessible at all states of the tide. From the lock we went to the fuel pontoon, filled up and then, oh dear, the engine wouldn't start! Eventually Kevin got it going enough to limp over to our berth. Was it the fuel?

The marina had grouped us all together on the events pontoon which is just through the lock on the left where four boats lay alongside and three of us rafted up. That evening John & Ann suggested we all go to the Chinese Buffet just outside the marina. We had such a good fun evening trying out all the Chinese food.

Saturday was a day of leisure, for some! *Carmina* and *Jazz* set off back to Mersea leaving *Sea Breeze*, *Gladys*, *Playpen*, *Gigi* and *Sea Weasel* to follow on Sunday.

Our intention was to explore Chatham and all its museums and local attractions. However we had to try to sort out the engine problem – we didn't. It just would not start, even with all the pooled knowledge from our group. What to do? *Playpen* and *Gigi* both volunteered to tow us back. Oh dear, what an end to a fabulous trip!!

That evening I had planned a Pontoon Party but the rain threatened and a cold wind blew. It was not what I'd wanted. Trevor and Judy came to the rescue and offered *Gigi* as host boat, and what a great evening we had. I think Kevin & I drowned our sorrows.



On a beautiful sunny morning we locked out of Chatham Marina at 07.20, towed by *Playpen*. As we reached the Medway entrance we could clearly see the wreck of the WW2 ammunition ship *Montgomery*, a very eerie sight.



We punched the tide until we crossed the Thames estuary. The breeze was light and there was hardly any swell, ideal towing conditions. Kevin & I were able to look about and take in the view we had missed on the outward journey. We carried the ebb

up to the Swin Spitway arriving at 12.57, perfect timing approx 30min after low water. Back on home waters we arrived in Salcott creek where Colin gave us a master-class on how to bring a towed boat up to it's mooring. We tied up at 15.10.



Not a great end to the cruise but, engine breakdown aside, we had such a good time. Sailing to new places, meeting new friends. A great week. It's what cruising in company is all about.

Monday 31st Aug

Mersea to Queenborough - 37 miles in 6.30hrs

Tuesday 1st Sep

Queenborough to Limehouse - 41 miles in 7.25hrs

Wednesday, Thursday – in London

Friday 4th Sep

Limehouse to Chatham – 47 miles in 8hrs

Sunday 6th Sep

Chatham to Mersea – 43 miles in 7.50hrs

LESLEY MULLINS
Sea Breeze

Tollesbury - 17th October

First it was cancelled... then, thanks to some hardened rebellious sailors looking for one last fling on our lovely home waters before laying up their boats ... it was UN-CANCELLED !



Thus a mutinous team of six yachts: *Golden Fleece*, *Carte Blanche*, *Jelly Bean*, *Clockwise*, *Odessa* and *Winters Bride* (also hosting *Seahawk's* skipper Andrew and his good lady Jill) made passage for the late cruise of the season to Tollesbury. The outing was now being overseen by our new Acting Cruise Leader Mel Daniels and wife Carol. They were to join us by land together with Julian and Chris from *Matilda* since *Stargazer* was out of the water.

Reflecting on my shortened version of Mel's instructions, this pursuit race already had an ominous sense of laughter: "The race is 'white sail'. The length of the course is 5.6 NM. There is no start boat and the first one in is the winner. Have fun and a good race"

So here we are, *Carte Blanche*, *Winter's Bride*, *Odessa* and *Golden Fleece*, starting the course at the Nass in our ordered timing on to No.3 buoy, No.5 buoy then No.1 with only No.2 buoy to round up to starboard and back on to the finish line. We knew something was wrong as we kept searching and searching for No.2 buoy and although *Winters Bride* appeared to keep a steady course ahead of us and go round the mark, the rest of the fleet, including ourselves, seemed to be hopelessly looking for the right spot. Thankfully Tim came to our rescue when a VHF call to *Odessa* announced, "No.2 buoy is no more there!" And he was going to give us a GPS position as to where it should have been. You could hear the sound of rustling papers and pens as we all scuffled to mark the GPS spot.

"About getting in the Marina", Mel had warned us, "the main thing to remember is that the sill dries 2.1m above chart datum....everything else will follow from that". Entrance to Tollesbury Marina is available to most vessels two hours either side of high water so, considering *Golden Fleece* and *Odessa's* two metres draught, we both entered around High Water with 8 foot showing on the sill.



Golden Fleece beginning to overhaul Odessa!

A great "cheers!" to *Golden Fleece* and our Commodore and his wife, Michael and Vicky Wheeler, for hosting the pre-meal drinks.



Golden Fleece

This little warming-up session before the evening meal became a most enjoyable forum for new people to meet, a chance to welcome Barry and Jill of *Carte Blanche* to the Cruises in Company crowd... and I mean "crowd". By the time we all stepped on board we had a final count of 19 people and 2 dogs, namely our little Tilly and Peggy Sue with her owners Terry and Pat with their daughter Elizabeth of *Jelly Bean*. Michael and I were quite tempted jokingly to check if it affected *Golden Fleece's* waterline but the Captain decided instead to concentrate on the level of "what was in our glasses" and Vicky brought out some fabulous nibbles. Well done for such good hosting!



The fun carried on...

For sure, the mood for the evening was set by now and we had no end of laughter throughout the meal...

Taking into consideration the un-cancelled cruise, the mysterious G-spot and the piling up on *Golden Fleece*, none of us were short of witty remarks... especially when the winner of our pursuit race was announced, to no-one's surprise, to be *Winters Bride*! The rest of the fleet, feeling at a slight disadvantage, could not help but tease Tim. After all, thanks to his wife's help, he had been the only one to know where to round the mark without wasting too much time. As Adrienne put it, she steered him in the right direction with "You're on it now!".

Gracefully Tim consoled us by inviting us on board the winning ship for "digestifs", to sample a most pleasant German Brandy ASBACH and German Rum FLENSBURG.

By this time, the count was 12 of us on board and one dog... and much later, two empty liqueur bottles!

As expected the pontoons were rather quiet the next morning. But we had a lovely surprise, two more "Cruising in Company" friends and Club members joined us: Ray & Debbie of *Kahuna*. To add a bit more humour to this fun outing, they ended up on board with us for the return journey to Mersea. We then drove them back to Tollesbury Marina car park!

As Jack and Sandy (*Clockwise*) declared: "Great weekend. Thanks for organising it so well – a fitting end to the cruising season!"

BRIGITTE TEXIER-PAUTON

Odessa



Cadet Week



Cadet Week continues to go from strength to strength! As always we continually seek to build on past Cadet Weeks, learning from all the good and not so good things that have happened, whether on or off the water, and introducing change where necessary. This year has been no different – we went digital and green! We introduced on-line registration and payment, along with an event brochure.

We had one of the largest entries for Cadet Week with 148 Cadets taking part. So our biggest change to the set-up of the week came with the decision to sail all the Optimist fleets together: Simon Clifton managed courses for the 'Inside' fleet, conducting his operations from the Dabchicks' Committee boat *Centenary*; while

Roger Sydenham in his final year as PRO took on the guardianship of the Handicap fleets, sailing as the 'Outside' fleet. The Outside Fleet was ably supported by our new Committee Boat *Carronade of Tortola* - although it was a near thing with Peter Clements having to rely on a screwdriver to start engines at times!



Laser 4.7 fleet

The decision to split the fleets in this way gave us greater flexibility when organising the racing for each day – and this paid dividends since, despite the blustery conditions, the Outside Fleets posted 14 races for the week with Inside Fleets not far behind. The Cadets' sailing abilities were truly tested on the first couple of days with winds gusting up to 18-20 knots at times!



Medium Handicap fleet



Hamish Eckstein – on his way to victory in the Viking Trophy

Congratulations to our worthy fleet winners:

Outside Fleet

Fast	Hamish Eckstein
Medium	Georgia Grice & Rosie Barnes
Slow	Joe Purdie

Inside Fleet

Diamond	Callum Simmons
Emerald	Matthew Purdie
Ruby	Theo Clifton
Gold	Daisy Weston



Happy faces all round for young Dom Gozzet and his dad Martin!

We placed greater emphasis on seamanship this year and it was great to see those Cadets starting out on their sailing adventures not only having fun but able to race safely and competitively by the end of the week.

We are indebted to the owners of the Sonatas who lent their yachts for the *Viking Trophy* – Hamish Eckstein completing a week of 'bullets' walked away with this most prestigious trophy!

As always there is a host of organisations and people to thank for making Cadet Week the premier event for cadet sailing in the UK! My personal thanks go to all of our Platinum & Gold Supporters (Micro Scooters, The Royal Hospital School and West Mersea Dental Practice) & other supporters who have been generous with donations of prizes (Curves, Essex Outdoors, Hyde Sails, Jump Street, Mersea Island Watersports, Weetabix); and Dabchicks Sailing Club and West Mersea Yacht Club for hosting us.

However, my biggest thanks go to the Committee for all their hard work over the year and to the Cadets themselves for making the week so special for everyone.

RICHARD PINK
Chairman Cadet week

Lost and found

Terence Smith e-mailed me in July to point out there was a West Mersea YC trophy on eBay in 'used' condition. I put a bid in for \$100 US which due to a small typo turned out to be £100, and we got it. It's engraved:

WEST MERSEA YACHT CLUB
OPEN RACE
2nd
1934
"FELICIA"
F.W. NOAL

Anyway it duly arrived in a much smaller box than I was expecting, actually only seven inches top to bottom. It's obviously a keeper trophy from the 'good old days' when engraved trophies were presented.

Perhaps there is a story here. How did the cup find its way to the US, What was the yacht and who was her owner? Eighty years is a long time but I wonder if any member has any ideas?

RICHARD MATTHEWS



In Memoriam

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

Richard Hudson on 11th December 2014. Richard was a member of the club since 1950.

Alan Wyatt on Sunday 21st December 2014. Alan was a member of the club since 2007.

Alan Roberts peacefully on Sunday 7th December 2014 at St Helena Hospice after a long illness. Alan was a long serving member of the club since 1991.

Sharon George on 9th January 2015. Sharon was a member of the club since 2005.

Richard Oxley during the night of Monday 2nd February 2015. Dick was a member of the club since 2001.

Jeremy Dumas Sunday 22nd February 2015. Jeremy was a member of the club since 1985.

Tony Scott 19th May 2015. Tony was a member of the club since 1978.

Hettie Lewis Tuesday 7th July 2015. Hettie was a member of the club since 2004.

John Desmond Wyatt 20th July 2015. John was a member of the club since 1977.

Frank Berry peacefully in his sleep on 5th August 2015, in his armchair, looking out at the fabulous view over the Blackwater which he loved. Frank was a member of the club since 1988.

Cy Blackwell on Saturday 8th August. Cy was a member of the club since 2004.

Steve Temple Cox (T C) in hospital on Tuesday 1st September 2015. "T C" was a member of the club since 1972.

Ruth Bland peacefully at home on Monday 28th September 2015. Ruth was a member of the club since 1971.

Pat French on Sunday 1st November 2015. Pat was a member of the club since 1975.

New Members

A warm welcome is extended to the following new members:

Full Members

David Amass
Stephen Baines
(*Sanderling*)
Stuart Bradshaw
(*Any old excuse*)
Susie Bradshaw
John Burgess
(*Moon Dancer*)
Beryl Chalmers
Rodney Clark
Ron Clarke
(*Shortwave*)
Lorraine Cope
Adam Coughlan
(*Merlin II*)
Anthony Culley
(*Karindy*)
Lesley Culley
Richard Davy
(*Hermlove*)
Beverley Green
James Goldring
(*Just So*)
Susan Howat
Graham Howat
(*Whistledown IV*)

Full Members

Judy Hymns
John Kent
(*Puf N Stuf*)
Linda Kent
David Lennan
Michael Mahoney
(*Twist again*)
Keith Padbury
(*Ma-Belle*)
Simon Palmer
(*Chipper Too*)
Mary Rudd
Oliver Shorey
(*Brinestar*)
Trevor Southey
(*Gigi*)
David Starling
Terence Sucksmith
(*Ptarmigan*)
GillianThompson
Brian Warwick
(*Taurito*)
Stephen Watkins
(*Stormgull*)
John Wiley
Rob Williamson
(*Maid of Tesa*)

Associate Members

Deborah Amass
Geraldine Arter
Amanda Bizzell
Rosalyn Clark
Doreen Clarke
Leigh Gilbert
Andrea Gilbert
Jill Hakes
Chris Holt
Antony Johnson
Jean London
Pauline Low
Glenn Miller
Fiona Rose
Nicholas Rose
Judith Starling
Brenda Wyatt

Crew Members

Kelsey Haddad
James Lewis
Edward Moore
Katrin Vetsi

Committee Members

Commodore: Michael Wheeler

Sailing: Richard Hayden (Chairman Sailing Committee), Julian Lord (Hon Sailing Secretary), Melvyn Daniels (Cruising representative), Sally-Anne Turnbull, Paul Jackson, Tim Hurst, Brian Bolton (Seconded Race Officer), Jack Grogan (Seconded), Rachel Ramsay (Seconded), Jane Richardson (Seconded), Paul Gosling (Seconded)

House: Michael Berry (Vice Commodore)
John Cook, Carole Reed, Philip Woods, Victoria Tyndall (Seconded)

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

Treasurer: Ian Shay

Hon Secretary: Tim Wood

Sailing Honours 2015

SCALLYWAG

Julian Lord

1st Taxi Lewis Salver
(IRC Club Championship)
1st Quest Trophy
(Spring Series)
1st Lewis Powell Trophy
(Saturday Series)
1st Knight Hall Trophy
(Autumn Series)
1st Centenary Cup
1st Peter Vince Trophy
1st Ellis Cup
1st Cirdan Trophy

OYSTER CATCHER XXX

Richard Matthews

1st EAORA Plaque
1st Buckley Goblets

STARFALL

John Clifton

1st Blackwater Trophy
(White Sail Series)
2nd Coronation Cup
3rd Finola Cup

BUGSY

Geoff Hunt &

Sally-Anne Turnbull

1st Finola Cup
1st Wallet Cup
3rd Halcyon Cup
(Short Handed Series)

HANNELORE

David Curtis

1st Halcyon Cup
(Short Handed Series)
2nd Blackwater Trophy
(White Sail Series)

SECRET WATERS

Trevor Child

1st Coronation Cup

LULOTTE

Ben Morris

1st RORC Salver

EVITA

Rob & Claire Smith

2nd Halcyon Cup
(Short Handed Series)

FIZZ

Ed Allen & Peter Rowe

2nd Taxi Lewis Salver
(IRC Club Championship)
2nd Cirdan Trophy
3rd Quest Trophy
(Spring Series)

TOUCAN

Ed Taylor

2nd Lewis Powell Cup
(Saturday Series)
3rd Autumn Series
(Local Handicap)

PLAYPEN

Colin Campbell

2nd Wallet Cup

BLACK ADDER

Richard & Sue Taylor

2nd Finola Cup

GOLDEN FLEECE

Michael Wheeler

2nd Autumn Trophy

CIRRUS

Dave Lewis & Mike Edwards

3rd Blackwater Trophy
(White Sail Series)

SPOT MARLEY

Steve Johnson

3rd Wallet Cup

HEX

Laurie Pearson

3rd Coronation Cup

Round the Island

Joe Purdie

1st Coconut Trophy

John Ready & Josh Taylor

1st Reg White Trophy

David Green & Paul Godfrey

1st John Litton Memorial Trophy

*

Ladies' Overall

Sally-Anne Turnbull

Overall (Friends Trophy)

Frances Meason

Cruisers (Molliette Bowl)

Lucy Milgate

Dinghies (Thornfleet Bowl)

*

Carrington Cup

TILLER GIRL

Roger Gaspar

*

Reeve Tyler Trophy

For best cruising log

Malcolm Clark



Mersea Town Regatta day



Photo: Paul Gosling

West Mersea Yacht Club, 116 Coast Road, West Mersea, Essex CO5 8PB
tel: (01206) 382947 (office) (01206) 384463 (restaurant) fax: (01206) 386261
email: info@wmyc.org.uk website: www.wmyc.org.uk
launchman mobile phone: 07752 309435

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