



molliette

The annual journal of the WEST MERSEA YACHT CLUB Founded 1899

December 2017



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Front cover: Bananaman looking good sailing downwind

Inside Front: West Solent sailing in fair wind

Both pictures by Chrissie Westgate





From the Commodore

Michael Wheeler files his final dispatch

Our Club was formed on April 22nd 1899 by seven men who gathered in the White Hart Hotel (now closed) opposite the Church and the name of The Mersea Sailing Club was chosen with Mr. T. Gilbert as Club Captain. The name was changed on March 14th 1926 to the West Mersea Yacht Club and on that day Brigadier-General Sir William Horwood became the first Commodore of the WMYC.

As I sit down to write this message for the last time I reflect on how far our Club has come in 118 years. From that initial gathering of seven visionary men we now have over 1,000 members, some of whom are scattered across the world – an achievement that I hope our founding fathers would be proud of and one that we should strive to maintain. I also reflect upon the past three years and how quickly they have passed. When I took over as Commodore on February 7th 2015 the three years ahead seemed like a very long time indeed. In reality it has simply flown by and has been thoroughly enjoyable, thanks to the support I have received from the Flag Officers, Officers and Committee Members and not least of all, my wife Vicki.

I genuinely believe that we have an excellent club that is running smoothly and is in good health. During my term in office I have visited many other yacht clubs around the coast, either when racing or attending functions as a guest with Vicki and I never fail to return thinking how fortunate we are to have what we have; a superb

location, excellent facilities, friendly staff, a full programme of sailing and social events, supportive and like minded members - and a view that is the envy of many other clubs.....and we are still open 365 days a year!

In 2016 we created and built the Molliette Bar, introduced controlled entry to our Club on Town Regatta Day and celebrated an Olympic gold medallist amongst our members. During this year alone we have installed two new pontoons in Ray Channel, providing welcome additional mooring space for both members and visitors, and extended the Club launch operating hours until late into the night on summer weekends - which has been welcomed by both members and visitors alike. The long awaited ground floor renovations of the clubhouse were successfully completed this spring, moving the Club into the 21st century whilst maintaining a traditional yet nautical flavour. Our new chef Mathew started in March and his creative menus are proving very popular. The second edition of our Members List and Yacht Directory has just been published and has been well received as a useful reference document by both sailing and non-sailing members alike.

Earlier in the year we established a close working relationship with the Little Ship Club, London and the Royal Solent Yacht Club, Yarmouth, IOW. We are now closely affiliated with both clubs, sharing facilities, common interests and enjoying reciprocal visits by both land and sea.

As I write this message we are undertaking a feasibility study to establish the possibility of building our own Club pontoon and hammerhead for Members use, to relieve the congestion and reduce the risk factor of using the town pontoon. Research is in the early stages and Members will be updated when further information is available.

Although we follow the national trend that local club racing is not growing as fast as previously our local race schedule still continues to attract a healthy number of entries and we have been successfully represented in the Caribbean, Cowes and EAORA offshore races with good results. Support for cruising continues to grow with 19 boats registering for the final cruise to Tollesbury and 50 persons participating. In September, 14 members ventured further afield to Corfu to charter yachts which, as it has in other clubs, may become a future trend.

Finally it is time to bid farewell as Commodore and as mentioned above, none of what has been achieved would have been possible without the support of not only the Flag Officers, Officers and Committee Members but also the hard work and dedication of our Staff in the office, kitchen, bar, restaurant and on the launches. I thank you all most sincerely.

I wish you all a very Merry Christmas, a Happy New Year and fair winds in 2018 – and the next 118 years!

Editor's notes



So here I am, at the wheel of my first edition of *Molliette*. Not nervous at all!

It has been something of a roller-coaster ride since I was prevailed upon to take this role. But somehow we seem to have come up with a magazine and I can only hope it is one that WMYC members will enjoy.

My idea with this edition was to change the look somewhat, but to do nothing to scare the horses. If you do think this looks radically different, you should hear some of the suggestions that came my way. Maybe next year!

The content, of course, is all down to you and I want to thank all who have made such an effort to produce such a wide range of contributions. We have everything from racing to refit here, with a bit of nostalgia and lot of cruising – all written up by our intrepid membership.

I also want to thank my predecessor Colin Campbell for his unstinting help and support. As you may know, Colin did this for 13 years (don't even think about it) so has a wealth of experience at his fingertips.

Thanks also to Faith Tippet, the original *Molliette* editor, for her encouragement and for filling me in with the magazine's proud history.

A very special mention must also go to Chrissie Westgate, Mersea's maestro of the camera shutter. Her generosity in providing a great number of beautiful photographs has made this magazine possible.

I hope it manages to properly reflect the stunning place where we both sail and live.

John Davison

Mersea Stella tops the fleet

For the first time for several years, a West Mersea-based Stella 26 OD took the annual class championship – the 2017 'Stella Worlds' and the Buxey Trophy.

Peter Haldane, of WMYC and sailing Stella No 1 *La Vie En Rose*, took the top slot in an eight race (one discard) series with races spread over the Suffolk Yacht Harbour Classic Regatta, Mersea Week and the Haven Ports Yacht Club Autumn Classic Regatta.

In a field that contained some pretty stiff opposition, including other Mersea boats No 75 *Stella Lyra* sailed by Trevor Spero and No 90 *Scorpio* sailed by Richard Matthews, second place was taken by Mark Montgomery-Smith in

No 64 *Lodestar* of Hoo Ness Yacht Club on the Medway. Third place by Peter Dyson of Haven Ports YC at Levington in No 100 *Centaur*.

La Vie En Rose, built by Tucker Brown of Burnham in 1959 to win Burnham Week that year (she did), has spent most of her life at West Mersea and was subject of a major restoration by Keith Adams of WMYC in 1990. The Haldane family of Hatfield Peverel acquired her in 1998 and won the Classic Yachts class at Mersea Week 2002.

2019 will see the 60th anniversary of the Stella class - designed by Kim Holman on Mersea - a milestone for these marvellous boats.



La Vie En Rose leading *Lodestar* and *Centaur* in Dovercourt Bay at the SYH regatta
Picture by Emily Harris

Mersea man tops the World!



Jerry Hill, Mersea's former SB3 world's champion, has won this year's SB20 World Championship in his boat *3 Sad Old Blokes*. He receives this year's WMYC Silver Tiller trophy for outstanding services to sailing.

Racing with Geoff Carveth, a previous SB3 world champion, and Richard Lovering the result went to the wire on the last day of the event on September 1st.

Their final 1st place left the Australians and French match racing each other up the second beat of the last race in 2nd and 3rd places overall.

There is a great interview with Jerry's winning team (**below**) on <https://youtu.be/lmx3m1bakUA>.



There are over 700 of these Tony Castro designed one-designs sailing in more than 20 different countries worldwide. No less than 12 of these were represented among the 79 boats in this year's event. The 2017 event was hosted by the Royal Yacht Squadron and raced in the demanding waters of the Solent.

Jerry was also runner up in the 2017 SB20 UK Open and National championships. The continued success of the class has been enhanced by Jerry's involvement with Sportsboatworld, who now market the SB20.

Jerry also assisted Phil Plumtree of WMYC in the Farr designed *Swuzzlebubble* to win the 2017 Half Ton Cup in Kinsale, Ireland.

A downwind specialist, Jerry's skills were learnt racing a series of high performance dinghies, a favourite being an International 14 *Cuthbert*.

It's not suprising that many years ago his name was put on the Coconut Trophy for the Mersea Round the Island race - Paddy Hare's cup surviving the subsequent celebrations!

For relaxation Jerry likes cruising along the South coast of Britain with his wife Sue in their powerboat and some off piste skiing in the winter.

Steve Johnson

Oystercatcher - on fire!

Richard Matthews recalls a trophy-laden season

2017 Highlights

Heineken Regatta St Maarten	1st in class
The Voile St Barth's	1st in class
Antigua Sailing Week	3rd In Class
Cowes Panerai Classic Yacht Regatta	1st in class 1st overall long offshore race (Stella Scorpio)
Around the Goodwins race	1st in class 1st overall
Ramsgate Week	1st in class 1st overall
Ramsgate regional IRC Championship	1st in class 1st overall
Fastnet race	22nd in fleet (360 starters)
Fastnet race	RORC Denis Doyle Trophy R. Matthews (22Fastnets)
EAORA Buckley Goblets	1st in class 1st overall (14th overall win)

Our season started with the decision to ship our 39 ft, Tom Humphreys designed *Oystercatcher XXX1* to the Caribbean and partially escape the UK winter with some warm weather racing.

There are numerous Caribbean regattas but with crew and time constraints we opted for the Heineken Regatta in St Maarten, the Voile St Barth's and Antigua Sailing Week. Peters and May shipped *Oystercatcher* from Southampton to Tortola in the BVI, followed by a 200-mile delivery to Antigua, our Caribbean home base.

The three-day Heineken regatta is a brilliant event, the only slight compromise being berthing inside the lagoon, via waiting for the opening of a road bridge leading to the airport with inevitable delays. Saskia Clarke, West Mersea's own Olympic golden girl, was sailing with us for the first time, calling tactics. Hamish Cock, 18, another WMYC member, was doing his fourth season with us as bowman. Inevitably we encountered several of the yachts with whom we would cross tacks throughout the Caribbean season.

The event started with a race around the island of St Maarten, the

predominant feature of which is a nine mile NE beat up the Anguilla Channel. Racing is under the Caribbean Sailing Association CSA rating system, a secret measurement rule, similar to IRC.

Bernie Wong, a dentist from Antigua with *Taz* a Richael Pugh 37 was closely matched to *Oystercatcher* but we soon learned that the boats to beat were *Kick em Jenny* and *Lazy Dog* a pair of well sailed Melges 32's. We could extend upwind but the 32's, with their oversize asymmetric chutes, were amazingly fast downwind and could almost always run us down and overtake on the final run home. Pretty impressive when we were not exactly slow and would typically be doing 16-18 knots ourselves! Under CSA we would be giving the Melges around 40 seconds an hour, whereas under IRC they would have been giving us over two minutes. But hey "*dis am de Caribbean mon*".

We got lucky because *Lazy Dog* had the event won with *Oystercatcher* in 2nd place when she passed the wrong side of an exclusion mark on the final leg to the finish of the final race and subsequently retired giving us a lucky, and perhaps underserved, class win.

After the Heineken, *Oystercatcher* returned to Antigua to be laid up



ashore for four weeks before heading to the island of St Barth's for the five-day Voile Regatta 10-15 April. St Barths is rightly described as the St Tropez of the Caribbean with a waterfront lined with high end stores more like Beverly Hills than a tiny Caribbean island.

Our rented crew house is shown on the Bookings.com website as adjacent to Gustavia harbour, but was in fact 10 miles away at the other end of the island! The Voile was very well organised with allocated berthing along the harbour wall, while parking, normally a nightmare in Gustavia, was neatly overcome by giving competitors exclusive access throughout the regatta. Racing around the outlying



Left to Right: Saskia Clarke, Debbie Johnson, Hamish Cock, Richard Matthews and Steve Johnson among Oystercatcher's Antigua Week crew

rocks and islands, often in water so clear we could see the bottom, was amazing. It's easy to see why St Barths has emerged as a major regatta destination as well as an ultra high-end tourist location.

We were OK with the racing hanging in with consistent 2nd and 3rd places while the two Melges 32's again dominated. In the final race, we had Andy Green - one time WMYC cadet week winner, now America's Cup and Volvo commentator - calling strategy. We rounded the penultimate mark in next to no wind, and took a huge flyer to head at 90° from the course finish in search of breeze. It worked and we sailed around the whole fleet to win the race. The two Melges were so far

ahead that they missed the new breeze altogether and finished joint last. The following final days racing was abandoned due to lack of wind and with no discards we won our class. As with the Heineken, it was better to be lucky than good.

2017 was the 50th anniversary of Antigua Sailing Week, which for us is very much a home from home - owning a property on the island and having been knighted by the Government. The format for Sailing Week has changed over the years and perhaps not for the better. In years past a 200 plus fleet would sail to Dickinson Bay for the most amazing overnight anchorage and beach party in the sailing world. Music played, rum

flowed and we would routinely see members of the West Indian cricket team having a knock about with kids on the beach mid party.

In recent years, the regatta is centered around Falmouth and English Harbours with a simple out and back, around laid marks format. The good news is there is still a lay day midweek with the opportunity for a round of golf and a lazy lunch for us oldies and rum infused beach frolics and the legendary wet tee-shirt completion for the party animals. Steve and Debbie Johnson joined the crew and perhaps surprisingly opted for the oldies day out, although I'm sure Steve really wanted to be judging those tee-shirts!



West Mersea's finest! Left to right: Hamish Cock, Saskia Clarke, Pam Lee, Geoff Hunt and Alan Brook on the return leg from Fastnet Rock.

Oystercatcher sailed well and we desperately needed a win in the final race. We were over the line early with a late call to return despite which we were first by the weather mark. Alas we were not far enough ahead and with a screaming run home the Melges finally had their revenge for the first two regattas and dropped us to third for the week. There are so many regattas in the Caribbean these days that entries are generally down. But Antigua is still rightly regarded as the yachting capital of the Caribbean. With the sad news of recent hurricane damage to several of the other islands Antigua's tourism and yachting activities are likely to be on the increase in 2018.

Oystercatcher was shipped home and underwent a keel change to a 400kg lighter iron fin/low C of G lead bulb to hopefully further improve her overall performance for the UK season. Back aboard for Ramsgate Week, the new keel appeared well able to carry a small IRC rating increase. Ramsgate has long been a personal favourite of mine having first taken part in 1973 when we beat Edward Heath's yacht *Morning Cloud* into second place to win the Ramsgate Gold Cup. Over the years several of the locals have become firm friends. My Oyster 82 Midnight served as our mother ship and the race area with infinite course variety is barely 20 minutes from the dock. Little wonder that the Royal Temple YC has the largest and most active IRC fleet on the East Coast. With a super crew including Saskia and Hamish, with the exception

of the Gold Cup, we won every element of the regatta overall including overall wins in the Around the Goodwins, the Eastern Region IRC Championship and Ramsgate Week itself.

Oystercatcher has twin rudders and by the end of Ramsgate we had some concern about excessive movement in the top bearings. Geoff Hunt attended in Ramsgate with spares but it proved impossible to change bearings with the boat afloat. Our priority was to have the boat 100% for the upcoming Fastnet Race so we abandoned Cowes Week, returned to Fox's for a haul out, eventually getting to Cowes mid-Cowes Week. This was to be my 22nd Fastnet with a crew of eight: myself, Alan Brook - navigator, Hamish Cock - bowman, Geoff Hunt - watch leader and Saskia Clarke - tactician i.e. no less than five WMYC members aboard. We must have had one of the most experienced crews in the fleet because between the eight of us we had more than 50 offshore races of over 600 miles. Alan, Geoff and I had done the severe weather 1979 Fastnet together, and given *Oystercatcher* is just under 39 feet and very light, with nothing to prove, the crew unanimously agreed that we would not start with a heavy weather forecast.

With a light to moderate forecast we were happy to join the 360+ yacht fleet, the only slight negative being the prospect of a 350 mile beat to the rock. The first challenge of an upwind start is that the smaller yachts, including

Oystercatcher, wouldn't get around Portland Bill before the tide turned foul. In '79 I hit the rocks off Portland trying to cut the corner and that didn't work. This time we opted to stay six miles out but it was still slow going. We stayed offshore down channel with about half the fleet, the others staying close inshore. With hindsight, this roll of the dice didn't work and by the time we reached Land End we knew that the inshore guys had the best of it. Alan did his best to route us around the separation zone off Lands End that was in effect a virtual mark of the course. With every yacht having a yellow brick GPS tracker we knew big brother would be watching.

We did our best upwind across the Irish Sea, and with the wind rising to over 20 knots we rounded the Fastnet Rock at 3 a.m. after two and half days upwind. At this stage, we were around 110th in fleet on corrected time, in the top third perhaps but with a lot of yachts we would like to be beating well ahead. Reflecting on Fastnet rounds of years past we had been around in a full gale, a flat calm and everything in between. Daylight roundings are the nicest because in most weather conditions a spectator fleet of locals will come out to offer encouragement and you can see the Irish Coast. One year we hailed a youngster in a RIB, gave him a camera, and he snapped us rounding the rock and handed the camera back, which was fun.

This year we rounded in about 10 knots of wind but with a forecast for a lot more so we went with our heavy asymmetric chute, a good call because within two hours we were flying. The coarse to the Scillies was perfect for an asymmetric and as the wind increased so did our speed. We covered 120 miles in less than nine hours with lots of 18-20 knots. With a top speed of 24 knots it was absolute full-throttle, champagne sailing. At the Scillies, with a new course around more separation zones and on towards Plymouth, we hardened up and changed to a jib top and staysail with one reef in the main for balance. With this sail combination and with Geoff Hunt on the helm we touched 21 knots down the back of a wave, superfast in fore and aft sail trim.

It really was a quick run back from the Rock. While we were tired and wet, it was easily the best sail of the season. By the finish, on corrected time, we were up to 22nd in a fleet of 360 yachts, so a good result - especially considering our earlier position. The crew were all brilliant and I was very pleased to be awarded the RORC Dennis Doyle trophy for the skipper with the most Fastnets, in my case 22.

You can't top a good Fastnet but *Oystercatcher* returned to the East Coast to win the Buckley Goblets overall for the 14th time, this year finishing in Ramsgate because of some argy bargy with officials in Ostend about the colour of diesel earlier in the year. Sad that the WMYC IRC fleet is now about as rare as unicorns. On the cruising front, we enjoyed a nice week out of Naples, followed by a regatta in Palma and a week cruising Menorca aboard *Midnight* our lovely Oyster 82, complete with on deck movies!

Looking ahead I've been offered the loan of a new Judel Vrolik designed 42ft racer for the Caribbean season, an offer too good to miss, so here we go again!



Richard Matthews with the RORC Dennis Doyle Trophy.

While *Oystercatcher* was undergoing the re-fit, we recommissioned *Scorpio*, our beloved family Stella. A warm-up at the Levington Classic Regatta saw us take second in the Stella Class. Then it was on to the Solent for the Cowes Panerai Classic Regatta. Very strong winds were forecast for the major event of the week, a race around the Isle of Wight. The course was changed to take the fleet out of the eastern Solent, around the Nab Tower, and back upwind the length of the Solent to a buoy off Yarmouth, and back to Cowes, a distance of around 30 miles.



Scorpio rounds a mark at Levington.

As expected by early afternoon the blow started, quickly increasing to 28 knots, with a vicious wind over tide sea. All credit to our regular bowman Matt Ferris we somehow managed to change to a working jib and I can honestly say that in all her 50 years *Scorpio*, or any Stella, had never sailed faster upwind in such testing conditions. We set a spinnaker for the run home and with breaking waves took it down within 60 seconds before disaster would surely have struck. The run home with a poled-out jib gave us control to get into shallow water out of the worst of the foul tide and to our surprise our competitors gave us a round of applause as we entered the marina. We won the race overall and until the finish were unaware that over 50% of the fleet had retired. The Panerai is an event where there are prizes for everything and having won our class for the week it took three of us to carry the trophies home.



Return to Youth

John Kent takes a spin down memory lane

'Hi Dad! Here is your birthday present!' – said daughter Cathy, giving me a card. Inside was a small piece of paper announcing that I was going on a trip to the famous *Ross Revenge* – or the final floating home of Radio Caroline, currently living out her retirement on the River Blackwater.

A motley group assembled at the hammerhead on the appointed day and we were welcomed aboard Captain Stuart's launch, which proceeded to provide a high-speed trip out to the *Ross Revenge*. There we were greeted by the venerable Albert, who had worked on the ship during her heyday. The group clambered eagerly aboard. We then enjoyed a delightful couple of hours' tour of the ship while being regaled with tales of her past life. Interestingly, and unexpectedly, the tour consisted of two separate threads. Captain Stuart shared the history of the ship as a trawler, while Albert focused on the Radio Caroline story.

The ship started life as the world's then largest and most powerful side trawler – built in Bremerhaven in 1959 and named *Freyr*. She was purchased in 1963 by Ross Foods and renamed *Ross Revenge*, where she worked out of Grimsby. At that time, a single trip to the Icelandic fishing grounds could net fish to the value of £77,000 – at a time when the average house sold for £15,000! She was a participant in the 'Cod Wars' of the 1960's and 70's, when her then skipper was something of a challenge to the Icelandic Authorities. Eventually the European and UK Governments reluctantly agreed to Iceland's 200-mile fishing limit. The UK's deep-sea trawler fleets went into a steep decline and *Ross Revenge's* days as a working trawler came to an end.

Eventually in 1980, after undertaking a number of roles, *Ross Revenge* was saved from being scrapped by a mystery purchaser, who subsequently took her to Santander, where she was converted to fulfill her role as the

replacement for *Mi Amigo*, the original home of Radio Caroline, which had sunk in a gale!

The story was now taken over by Albert – whose association with Radio Caroline had started when he ran illegal trips from Brightlingsea conveying supplies, equipment, DJ's and sightseers to the famed pirate radio station. Albert took us around the ship and showed the various studio's, the accommodation and also the original bridge – which still contains most of the original (trawler) equipment and skippers chair. Albert shared how the ship broadcast both to the UK and Holland, how she was raided by both UK and Dutch authorities and how eventually in 1990 she broke her moorings and ended up on the Goodwin Sands. There were many tales of what the Dutch and British DJ's got up to at the time – aptly illustrated by the film 'The ship that Rocked'!

The ship did not succumb to the Goodwin Sands and was eventually

saved by an enthusiastic Radio Caroline Supporters group, who funded essential repairs and re-established broadcasts – albeit on the internet. For those of us who had our youth in the 60's and 70's, visiting the *Ross Revenge* was a reminder of how Radio Caroline pioneered commercial radio, which in turn helped to change society. When you hear the jingles, the memories flood back!

Much more information is available on the internet, on both the ship and the history of Radio Caroline. There is no substitute for the real thing though, and visiting the *Ross Revenge* is an essential day out for all Baby Boomers! You will enjoy the trip down memory lane. Thanks so much Cathy!



Original equipment on the bridge



The famous studio "that Rocked"

Northern Route to the Baltic

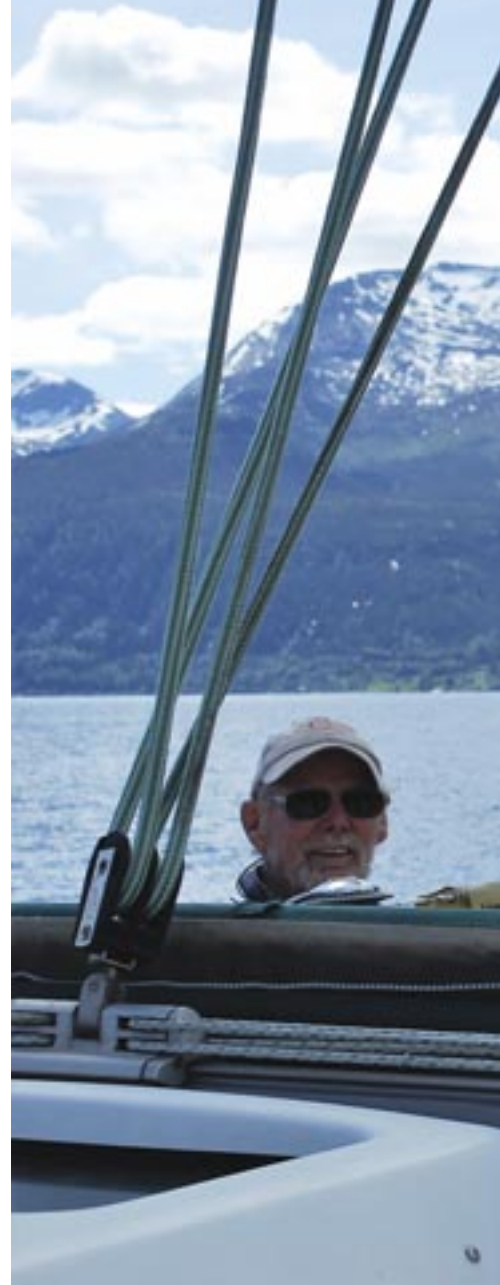
Ian Low and chums go the long way round

If you are reading *Molliette*, there is a fair chance that you love the water and the boats that float on it. One of the wonderful things about this hobby/sport/lifestyle is the vast array of opportunities it offers - racing round the cans on a Sunday morning, ditch crawling up some of the wonderful rivers and creeks in East Anglia, ocean passages or long distance racing. Yacht Club members have done all these at the highest levels. For me, longer distance cruising - but with a safe haven at the end of most days - is the ultimate enjoyment. The satisfaction of a long passage with the excitement, and challenge, of entering somewhere new at the end. In this I am fortunate to have a boat partner with the same philosophy, David Ewart-James (Chappy to most of Mersea) and a boat *Colette*, a Beneteau Oceanis 361, ideally suited to the role.

In the last few years we have both done Round Britain, spent two years in Brittany and crossed many times to the Netherlands. Chaps has also ventured

into the Baltic, as far as Denmark, and it was this direction that attracted us when we started to plan our next (last?) big trip in the Autumn of 2016. We have learnt that to really get to know these other countries it's good to be able to overwinter there, otherwise you find you are coming home before you arrive. So we decided it would be a two summers, one winter trip. We stretched the envelope a bit further by my wanting to go via Orkney and Shetland, places I regretted not doing before, as my Round Britain went through the Caledonian Canal.

I should say at this stage that our cruising is mainly "boys cruising" over the longer stretches with our wives joining us for the more peaceful bits. This does make a fundamental difference; romantic evenings at anchor under the stars are not on the agenda and we tend to cover the ground quicker, which has both plusses and minuses. It also means that we need crew and this year 25 different people sailed on *Colette*. This involved lots of planning, lots of Ryanair flights,



David, Jim and Nick in Hardanger Fjord

but also lots of great company. *Colette* is the four cabin layout so three get their own cabin and if there are four on board, generally the youngest sleeps in the saloon.

The planning for a trip like this can be done over a long period and with luck it evolves and takes on a structure as you kick it around. That structure must have flexibility built into it, as you will be fortunate not to be deflected by weather or family commitments. Yet again we were lucky with very generous friends and friends of friends lending charts and pilot books and giving us the benefit of their experiences. *Colette* had two winters in Mersea and we worked through a list of jobs so she was ready and



North Haven on Fair Isle



Sunday 14th May was chosen as departure day. We had a spread sheet that showed a plan leading through to September with all the crew listed, including change-over ports. Between us over 50 flights on Ryanair had been booked with Oslo, Gothenburg and Stockholm as the key airports.

Straight away the plan changed. An elderly relative of mine took a turn for the worst three days before departure and I needed to stay in Mersea. Chaps stepped up to the plate and with the novice but enthusiastic crew of Alan and James (see crew list at end) set off up the East coast. My situation resolved itself and I was able to help my wife Pauline with the necessary and six days later Nick and I drove to

Peterhead to join David and his brother Alan, whilst first Alan and James jumped straight into Nick's car and drove home – 1160 miles in 24 hours – good car! Lowestoft, Whitby, Amble, Eyemouth down, 64 ports to go. It would be tedious for you the reader if I covered every port we visited so I will endeavour to give you the highlights, a taste of what turned out to be a tremendous adventure.

We set sail on Sunday 21st May from Peterhead and arrived safely in Kirkwall, capital of the Orkneys late Monday morning, mooring on a pontoon just across from *Phoenix* the previous boat of Graham Sapsford, David's previous and much missed boat partner. We saw Scapa Flow and some

of the Neolithic stones before moving on to Pierowall then Fair isle and on to Shetland, where we were joined by Canadian Jim, who of all our crew travelled furthest to join us. After seeing some of the islands and with a crew of David, myself, Nick and Jim, and a moderate forecast, F5 NW, we set off for our major passage of the trip, 220 nautical miles to Bergen. We had a minor mutiny from the crew when David suggested we should first make Muckle Flugga (the most northerly point of the UK) which would have involved several hours tacking in the wrong direction. So our route was slightly south of east, which was good as at the start we were only 12 miles from stepping outside our insurance cover of 61° North. We crossed in 30

hours of perpetual daylight but no sun, little shipping, but lots of oil rigs, grey & awkward seas and a broad reach with winds that gusted to F7 and had us move steadily to three reefs. The best that can be said is it was a lot quicker than we ever expected. So into Bergen, a free berth near the city centre (another story) and an enjoyable stay, on down the coast with a detour to see Hardanger Fjord, spectacular but cold and very quiet. Round the bottom of Norway, usually on inside passages, but occasionally having to go outside especially round Lindesnes where the Admiralty charts are cheerfully marked "Dangerous waves." One of the many highlights of this stretch was the Blindleia – the Blind Lead, a most remarkable passage inside the rocks and skerries between Kristiansand and Lillesand. It is quite scary to pass between islands not two boat widths apart yet still having 20-30 metres of depth beneath the keel, but after a few days you get used to it.

We left Norway at Fredrikstad and crossed into Swedish waters at Stromstat and continued through more rocks and skerries down the beautiful Bohusland Coast, stopping amongst many other lovely places for an unscheduled but very interesting tour of the Halberg Rassey factory on Orust before arriving in Gothenborg, Here

Jim and I left to return home and David had four weeks cruising on the west coast with various family members. During this time *Colette* disgraced herself for the only time all summer by dropping her propeller. We will long discuss why it happened, but suffice to say that after sailing 2000 miles in waters up to 800 metres deep, we were pleased it happened in a marina and a diver could recover it. The next change took David home and Pauline and I with some friends did the 'divorce ditch', the 210 miles of canals – Trollhatte and Gota, 64 locks – and associated lakes made famous by Timothy West and Prunella Scales, which took *Colette* from the West to



David reunited with propellor

the East coast. It was great and we are still married! Even more exciting, we crossed over with Viv and Linda Fox on *Tempus in Motala* as they made their way westwards. Some of my youngsters joined me for the last stretch and we exited the canal and crept north to Nykoping, our next change over port just down the road from Skavsta airport. I went home; David came out for two weeks of East Coast cruising and then some more friends and I returned to join him for the final fling. By then the season was over and it was wonderfully quiet, but with good weather, and we were able to sail up to Stockholm where we met another Mersea member who had a few friends on board (see photo.) After two days in this lovely city we sailed through into Lake Malaren and then out through Stockholm's "back passage" down the Sodertalje canal and back south again.

We had spent the best part of a year discussing possible winter harbours but had made no final plans. Then we met the crew of *Kiloran* whilst in the Gota and they gave a glowing recommendation for Navekvarn, so we had called in there after leaving the canal and liked what we saw. After a final visit of the season to yet another delightful little island, Harstena, we sailed into Navekvarn and in a very convivial



Whale sandwich anyone? - Bergen Fish Market



Balta on Unst - next stop Bergen

atmosphere spent four days preparing *Colette* for her long Scandinavian winter. On Monday 18th September at 0830 the yard trailer turned up and in 10 minutes she was out of the water, pressure washed and up the road to

the yard. We went for the cheap option of outside storage, drained every drop of liquid from her or converted it to very strong antifreeze and covered her up. We will let you know next May if we did it well enough.

It is difficult in a few thousand words to convey the full story of four months, two and a half thousand miles, 68 new ports and 25 different crewmates. Suffice to say it was an adventure and we are pleased to have had the opportunity to do it. I hope you are tempted to follow us and if so, for a pint of beer, Chaps or I would be delighted to tell you lots more about it. Meanwhile we just have a little planning to do for next year.

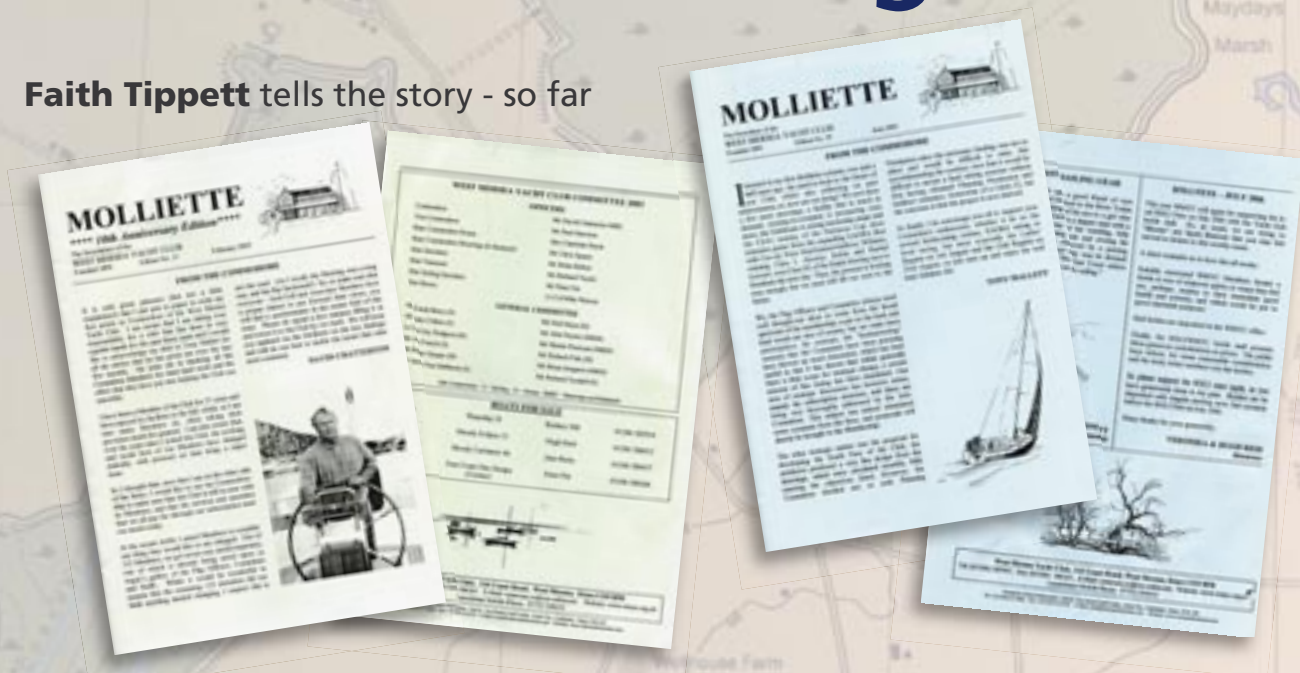


Ian Draper with Katie Body (right) and friends on *Starburst* in Stockholm

Joining David and Ian in 2017 were, from WMYC Alan Head, Nick Reay, Maddie Ewart-James, Pauline Low, Penny and Richard Russell-Grant and from further afield James Kellerman, Jim Evans, Magie and Paul Varrier, Rosie and Alan Ewart-James, Eunice and Richard Bishop, Miriam Low, James Low, Roy Jago, Clare, Julian, Tom and James Pemrick and Gordon Boorman.

Molliette musings

Faith Tippet tells the story - so far



This edition is the first for our new Editor, John Davison, and as he is only the third since the *Molliette* first appeared, this seemed an appropriate time to reflect on how it all started.

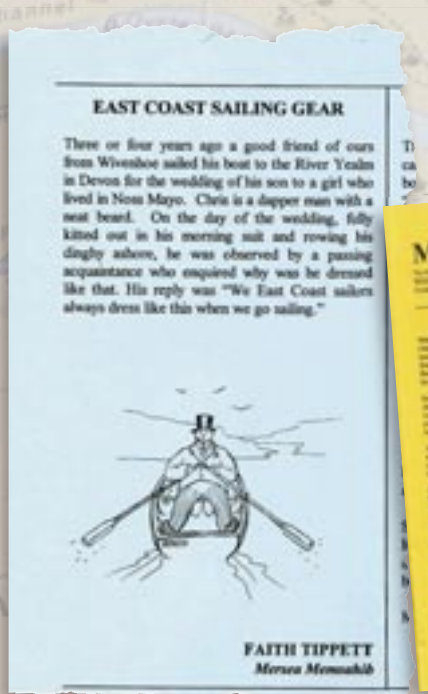
David and I often visited the Club only to find we had missed an event. I would comment to our Club Secretary Frieda, how sorry we were to miss whatever it was. Her inevitable reply was "It was on the Board", to which I would walk away muttering. We did not (then) live on Mersea, therefore did

not often see the Board. Richard Taylor must have overheard my mutterings, and suggested I should start a Club Magazine, which seemed a good idea. And so it all began.

The main team was Pauline Aspinall, Tony Fairs, and me. We also had a member who owned a new-fangled mobile computer. The Club Office was half the size it is now, and had no computers. Tony had a very pungent pipe and the atmosphere used to get a little foggy. Many a pencil was chewed and the computer certainly proved its worth.

I do not recall the first year we published, but as I was Editor for 10 years and Colin Campbell for 13 years, I can fairly assume it was in 1994. A major decision was the name, chosen from the *Molliette* a rather unattractive concrete barge, which fulfilled the role as the first Club House. The second decision was to publish three times a year - to achieve our aim for information. The first edition was due to be standard white, but hit a problem - the printers. After many hours spent producing a perfect copy, it went to the then printers in the





village, who managed to return it to us two or three weeks later containing several mistakes. So I then spent some time touring the various - relatively new - photocopying services in Colchester. Having settled on one, I decided to have a different colour for each edition: green for spring, blue for summer, and yellow for autumn. Each edition was 8x5 pages. The photocopying services proved endlessly helpful and we stayed with them until "our baby" developed into the professional "grown-up" Annual Journal that was produced by Colin.

Those days were for me extremely early computer and desktop publishing times. I had one amazing effort that turned a 500 odd word document into two columns. The result was a horrifying screen with each letter printed **vertically**! I eventually learnt how to add some delightful sketches of boats and seaside scenes, kindly crafted for us, mostly by Liz Morris and occasionally Sue Taylor. On my side, it was a deep dive into a totally new world - but fun and much helped by a usefully laid-out desktop printing programme. One thing though, I soon

gave up editing contributions (for reasons of size), an excessively difficult job because 'cutting' out a paragraph or sentence or so, usually resulted in making the text a nonsense.

I believe we can be justifiably proud of how well our "baby" has grown up. We hope the Membership enjoys it too. The Molliette Journal does our Club proud, and may we wish all the best to John for his Editorship.



New service launched

Malcolm Clark the Rear Commodore Moorings & Boatyards reports



Well... talking of being thrown in at the deep end! I can say that my first year as Rear Commodore Moorings & Boatyard has presented me with some unexpected challenges.

The first was to recruit a new launchman to replace Oli Jarvis, who left last year. Richard Sharpe (Hon Bosun) and I decided on a different approach to the usual recruitment process. We went out head hunting, looking for a new experienced hand in various surrounding marinas. Our strategy paid off when we came across Paul Hammond in Brightlingsea harbour. Paul has now settled in the work routine and what a breath of fresh air he brings to the waterfront.

Paul lived on his boat in the summer months making him readily available. So we were able to introduce the late

launch service at weekends. This has been a real benefit for members.

Just as we thought we had set the wheels in motion for a successful sailing year, our Senior launchman Andrew Twiddle announced that he had been offered another job and was no longer going to be handling the launch and moorings for the Yacht Club. Luckily, we were given a good lead from Stacey Belbin of 'Lady Grace'. She knew "someone who might slip into the role of launchman". Contact was made, interviews held and we were pleased to welcome Philip Ager, our second new addition to the waterfront, after many years working at the Youth Camp. Members will agree that Philip is a valuable asset to the team.

Finally, we consolidated the launch service with the introduction of Harry

Clarke, our third and part-time launchman. Harry is another great complement to the team. He has grown up on Mersea and has spent probably as much time on the water as on the land!

'Health and safety' was a contributing factor this year and all launchmen were pleased to be issued with smart new life jackets. A very professional looking team we now have.

On a different note, shingling of the City Road car park has been another project this year and has really spruced up and improved the facility for the members. A big thank you to the work party who helped spread the 40 (yes 40) tons of stones that was delivered!

Another section of pontoon was installed, extending the existing section to 97 metres! This brought its own issues, which took a bit of sorting out and we now have all spaces occupied.

Taking everything into consideration - so far - my first year has been rather full on!

I wish you fair winds and following seas for our next sailing season.

Clockwise from top left:
Philip Ager,
Paul Hammond (with Commodore's wife!)
Harry Clarke
Sunset on the moorings



New bar opened

Philip Woods the Rear Commodore House reports

Firstly, on behalf of the members, I would like to thank Anna, Allison, Matt and Rachel and the rest of the house staff for delivering the seven-day bar and catering service which is the envy of many clubs in this part of the world. I tried to run the bar whilst the staff had their annual staff team-building event and I saw for myself that being the other side of the bar or in the kitchen are challenging places to work, delivering the quality food and drink we all enjoy.

This year saw significant investment in the clubhouse, with the refurbishment of the downstairs bar, restaurant, foyer - and the WCs. Having displayed the House Committee proposals on a 'mood board', the resulting members' comments were incorporated into the

finished result. During the works, we addressed the rotten timbers beneath the oak flooring and updated the decoration with fresh materials and soft furnishings that have provided the feeling of additional light and space. The addition of the acoustic tiles has vastly improved the sound characteristics of the bar and an expanded trophy cabinet displays the best of our silverware. Together with the new carpet, the refurbishment project has produced a club that, I'm sure, will be admired by visiting yachtsman.

This year also saw the recruitment of Matt Allen-Tait as our new head chef. In the short time he has been with us, Matt has brought some significant energy and variety in to the kitchen. As the Molliette goes to print, the

General Committee is considering capital investment into the kitchen that will further enable Matt, Rachel and Alisha to continue to provide us with some of the best food we have seen produced in the club for a number of years.

Carol Britton has started a fund for a new lift to replace the current stair lift and the House Committee plan to undertake some fund raising to incentivise members to contribute to the fund. This will help those members with walking difficulties to access the Long Room and would also enable us to bring beer barrels to the Molliette bar. It's not often beer drinking and social responsibility go together!

I wish you all safe and happy sailing in 2018.



Above: The Commodore's wife opens the bar - with a free glass of bubbly for all.

Greece - Blue Water Cruise

Brigitte Texier-Pauton introduces a tale of two yachts and a motley crew of 14!



In the midst of winter last year, whilst socialising at the WMYC, an idea was introduced to a few of us: "how about chartering a yacht next spring and cruise the Croatian coastline!" On a cold rainy night, this suggestion spread like fire and the word quickly went round. To set this in motion, a meeting was announced in the Club's newsletter, the 'Moliette'. James Low, the Eclipse Yachting Operations Manager, kindly came along and gave us a talk about bareboat chartering. The result was quite impressive: seven couples decided to go for it with a slight twist to the programme - it was to be in Greece late summer and the Ionian Sea instead! The flight was booked for the fourteen of us from Stansted to Corfu airport and two yachts were to be chartered in Gouvia Marina for a week in September. Job done!

The motley crew was: Mike & Sue Berry, Michael & Vicki Wheeler, Brigitte Texier-Pauton & Malcolm Clark to charter a 46 ft Bavaria 'Borboleta'. Kevin & Lesley Mullins, Julian & Christine French, Richard & Sue Sharpe, Trevor & Judy Southey were on the second boat, a Beneteau 54, 'Agamemnon'.

Malcolm - getting underway

Once on the plane we took great pleasure in passing round our iPad, on which the Navionics app revealed we were cruising the sky at 484 knots! This was the easiest passage we had made over the last few years! No tidal Atlas to consult, no waiting for the right tide or wind strength/direction, no horrible Fisherman's Gat to North

Foreland to worry about. This was the way to do it - and with plenty of G & T's en route! We arrived in Corfu at approximately 21.00 local time (2hrs ahead of BST) on Thursday 21st September and headed for the hotel where we would stay for two nights before picking up our boats.

We had a fabulous time seeing the sights of Corfu and relaxing by the Hotel pool. The second night, after dinner, Julian led the way and was up and strutting his stuff round the pool soon to be followed by all but the shy dancer, meaning "moi" (Malcolm). As Julian said: "If I went home today... I feel that I would have had a brilliant holiday!" This was the mood to follow the whole trip. Indeed, what a brilliant Ionian cruising holiday it was to be! I recommend it to anyone as a relaxed and amazing September cruise.

Judy & Trevor - wine galore!

Friday 22nd - Coming down to a poolside breakfast in a sun-filled courtyard we were amazed to find ourselves mid-stage for the Hotel Telesilla annual wine festival. The red grapes brought from Pelopónnisos, the largest wine making area of Greece, are tipped into a huge container where the weight of the grapes presses the juice out ready to be chain-ganged by buckets to a feed leading to a vat in the cellar. The skins that are left in the first container are then trodden by Michael, the hotelier's son, to extricate more juice. This is very bravely done while surrounded by hordes of eager wasps!

Following this, the skins are scooped out and any remaining juice pressed in an old wine press. In the cellar the juice ferments without addition of sugar or preservatives for 40 days where it produces about 1800 litres of a Greek version of a Merlot with 13.5% alcohol content.

All of this process is done by keen holiday makers who return to the hotel each year to join in the fun. They are well rewarded for their work by being thrown in the pool afterwards and then the hotel supplies food and wine to all spectators and volunteers. The wine is served in the hotel the year after production - and the WMYC cruisers took delight in downing a decent amount with dinner to show their appreciation!

Lesley & Kevin - the Admiral's log

Relieved that our Ryanair plane was flying despite hundreds of cancellations, we knew we were getting off to a good start! Within one hour of touching down in Corfu we were in Harry's Taverna. Spanning three generations, Harry's restaurant was officially established in 1912 and is conveniently situated right behind the hotel. We were eager to immerse ourselves in the best of Greek food and hospitality. We ended up celebrating Malcolm's birthday, the first of many great nights out.

Hotel 'Telesilla' is situated just outside Gouvia marina in the Village of Kontokali. And what a friendly place it is! The second night, we had wonderful cocktails - Marilyn's Passion was a



favourite - and dinner by the pool. On Friday, following the wine making display, we caught the bus for a 10 minute ride into Corfu town and explored the many small alleyways of the Old Town. We found the internationally famous Museum of Asian Art in the palace of St. Michael and St. George which was excellent then lunch on the quay by the blue sea. Saturday 23rd came; it was the designated day for us all to get to the boats. We went to pick up our Beneteau 54 yacht 'Agamemnon'. What a sight... she was huge! Down below there were four double berths, three en-suite with a large saloon, galley and navigator's table in the middle of the yacht. In addition she had a generator to run the air conditioning, if necessary and two fridges. You can guess the use to which they were put. In the bow there was a very small cabin, shower and head that could be locked. Should there be any misbehaviour aboard the ship then the offender could be banished! The cockpit could seat all 8 of us comfortably. After luggage, food & wine were stowed we ate on board the first night. The next morning we set off to sail south to Lakka, a small sheltered bay at the north end of the Island of Paxos. We put in a few long tacks with us all taking the wheel, most of us were not used to the wheel or such a view down the long deck. After a few sail trims we were powering along at seven knots in a moderate breeze.

Christine & Julian - shop till you drop anchor!

Sunday 24th, Aboard 'Agamemnon', we were delighted with the beauty of Lakka our first port of call after leaving Gouvia (32nm). The crystal clear waters and friendly tavernas were captivating. Our stay was too short, but after all this was a cruise so we prepared to leave the next day. However on Monday Lesley slipped in the water taxi on return to 'Agamemnon' resulting in an additional night's stay in Lakka. Having consulted our resident GP, who diagnosed Lesley's injuries bruises rather than breaks, we sent Julian on a raiding party to 'Borboleta' and he returned successfully with painkillers. We determined to tie up to the Quay and engaged Kevin, henceforth known as the 'Admiral', to manoeuvre our super-yacht to the quayside, affording endless opportunities for retail therapy. Richard was first out of the blocks with a stylish Paxos t-shirt, which was soon replicated by the other male crew members. Not one to pass up on a shopping spree, Chris had soon reconnoitred a couple of shops selling Balinese goods, with the added incentive of an end of season sale. The boat was then plagued by an invasion of brown paper carrier bags! By Wednesday the 'Admiral', mindful of further drug-induced shopping binges, upped anchor for Parga where we anchored offshore enjoying a feast prepared by Judy and Lesley. Strangely enough a bottle of Amaretto evaporated that evening! The next day we motored to Gaios, capital of Paxos.

What a delight! Egged on by our previous successes Sue and Chris hit the jackpot with one size fits all colourful pantaloons! They were keen for Judy to make it a threesome but she had us in fits calling them shoplifters' pants. Lesley's taste was more elegant and by then she was drug free and sufficiently clear headed to ditch Sue and Chris and select her own outfit. Chris was having none of it and struck pay dirt finding an amazing silk shawl that matched an outfit Lesley had just bought. No doubt that shawl will attract many admiring comments in WMYC for years to come. Rumour has it the pantaloons will be making a star appearance at the New Year's WMYC Ball. Having re-energised the Greek economy, we celebrated at Takka Takka, a charming taverna recommended by WMYC members, and thoroughly enjoyed our meal there.

Brigitte - Parga the charming bride

Tuesday 26th, 'Borboleta' (meaning Butterfly) was the heroine of the day. On the recommendation of Trevor we sailed from Lakka on a day trip to Antipaxos, a small island (5 km²), to the south of Paxos. We anchored by Vrika beach for the afternoon, near the exotic Emerald Bay famed for its clear turquoise water reminiscent of the Caribbean. It was rather windy though and there was a lot of swell. We had just climbed aboard from swimming when it became obvious that a small boat was drifting towards us with no one on-board and seemed doomed to disappear over the horizon! Luckily the craft brushed past



our yacht and Mike quickly pushed it off the bow whilst Malcolm got on board to walk it along the side. They secured it safely to our stern. Meanwhile, a man was swimming frantically towards us. By the time he reached us, the poor man was altogether exhausted, apologetic, expressing his lack of experience in boat handling, wonderfully relieved that there was no damage done to ours and most of all, grateful and thanking us for saving his boat. We did not insist too much on the right of salvage!

On Wednesday 27th we all agreed to set off for mainland Greece.

Destination: the well-liked Parga resort, a mere 12nm journey from Lakka across the Ionian Sea. We enjoyed a lovely sail on board 'Borboleta' and anchored amongst other yachts yet again in an idyllic setting of transparent water, sandy beach and dramatic rocky cliffs. On the hill above Parga, an impressive castle with a turbulent history presides over the entire town. Built in the 14th century by the Normans, the castle with its houses within was burnt and destroyed by the pirate Hayrettin Barbarossa in 1537; rebuilt in 1572 by the Venetians but to be demolished once again by the Ottomans. The Venetians rebuilt this fortress three times! The French followed by the English ruled over it. When Parga was sold to the Ottomans in 1817, Ali Pasha enhanced it even more by placing both its harem and Turkish bath at the top. It took almost 100 years for Parga to be liberated from the Ottoman rule in 1913, following the victory of Greece in the Balkan Wars. With such a powerful past, it should be high on your list of sights to see.

In the evening, we welcomed the water ferry that took us from Valtos beach

round the hill into the picturesque town of Parga. What an amazing sight! Parga combines beautifully the magic of mountain and sea with rows of elegant houses of Venetian influence, nestled on the hill and gently stepping down towards the long promenade alongside the quay thriving with shops, restaurants and ouzo bars. The whole scene extraordinarily lit up by night. No wonder Parga is known as the "Bride of Epirus"! The enchantment was such that our three boys decided to buy "us three girls" a delightful Dolphin trinket each. Little did we know that these would be the only dolphins we would see for the rest of the cruise. We sat for a while and enjoyed a well-deserved sample of the local wine at the Captain's Bar, returned to the ferry by 21.00 to savour a lovely meal on board and much laughter.

Vicki & Michael - Hugging the shore!

On Thursday 28th, 'Borboleta' departed from our lovely anchorage in Parga en route to Corfu. We decided to stay as close to the shore as possible in order to discover the many small bays and caves along the coastline as the depth of water easily allowed this. Suddenly transported back in time, it reminded Michael of when he used to take the cruise ship S.S. 'Uganda' close inshore in these waters for the benefit of the passengers.

Hugging the shore paid off! Michael was helming at the time when Malcolm pointed out to starboard what looked like a small inlet. There was not much detail on the chart and so we cautiously entered this narrow opening, which was like a mini fjord, and proceeded towards the beach at the end until the depth dropped to 3.5m.

There was just enough room to swing and as it was tideless and windless we dropped the hook in a beautiful picturesque anchorage - with high rocky sides and a small bay with a sandy beach just metres away.

On the chart it was referred to as Thesprotia, but we found it to be Stavrolimenas beach (Latitude 39° 20' 57.7068" N - Longitude 20° 17' 8.9484" E). Access by land to this beach is not very easy and the tranquillity and relaxation it offers to the venturing yacht is unique. There is no bar or restaurant and the closest town is Perdika, a small village in the Epirus region of Greece.

We all swam in the crystal clear light blue water and Malcolm went exploring with snorkel and flippers after diving down to bed in the anchor. We felt lucky and privileged to have discovered such unspoilt beauty. After our swim we enjoyed a rum punch and our traditional on-board lunch of Greek tomatoes, avocado, feta, mozzarella, vine leaves, tzatziki etc. with local olive oil and fresh bread before reluctantly leaving the bay and heading north. Whilst underway, we passed some fascinating large caves which we later discovered are quite famous and can be entered by dinghy, so that is on the list for another time.

We were heading for Mandraki Harbour, a Venetian port constructed in the 15th century, directly under the steep walls of the Old Fortress of Corfu (our only marina stop of the week). We were looking forward to having some shore power to charge the batteries, which were getting a little low. However we had to berth 'bow in' to the low, rocky breakwater with a wobbly scaffold board tied to one side of the bow sloping down to the uneven



surface of the breakwater, only two or three feet above sea level with waves breaking over it! Disembarking and walking 100m on the uneven surface was the most challenging part of the trip!

After a few drinks in the marina bar the return journey to the boat seemed remarkably easy! Malcolm 'sweet talked' two raw onions out of the barman and a bag of flour from 'Old Thyme', the boat next door, for his 'Coq au Vin' recipe which we enjoyed on board, followed by various nightcaps.

Sue & Mike - Agni Bay? A definite yes!

The morning of the 29th September broke with the prevailing northerly wind and bright sunshine over Mandraki Harbour. It was Friday and our last day at sea!

Michael suggested an adventure to the Albanian coast might be fun, but this would have meant a long beat or motoring. So we decided on a gentle reach for a couple of hours or so to Agni Bay, which had been recommended by a number of WMYC members. They told us: "It is on the southern shore of the northerly bit of Corfu". Amazingly enough we found it! Once in this secluded but beautiful bay the true vista of the cove became evident, with bright turquoise blue water and a couple of tavernas with their own staging pontoons. At the end of one of them was a young chap waving his arms and inviting us alongside. The moment 'Borboleeta' was secured to the pontoon, we just could not resist going for a swim in the beautiful palest blue water.

We later retired to the Agni Taverna where we enjoyed brutally chilled Retsina, Raki, Ouzo and local beers,

which hit the spot and cooled us in the midday sun. 'Agamemnon' arrived at lunch time to join us. It was a great shame that much sunshine, swimming, sunbathing, drinking and eating had to come to an end in this lush bay. We called for the bill, which was a cool 140 euros. No wonder the chap on the end of the pontoon was so keen to see us! We had to leave to allow time to re-fuel the yacht and return it to the charter company at Gouvia marina by five o'clock that afternoon. However, the day was not over. We managed to incur the wrath of a chartered Jeanneau crewed by a group of young Dutch guys, whilst manoeuvring in a great queue of yachts for the fuel berth. A contretemps followed and verbal warfare ensued. We won!

Susan & Richard - Short, Sharpe & Sweet - The Epicureans!

Friday 29th - 'Agamemnon' & 'Borboleeta' returned safely to their home-berths and pass the diver's inspection with flying colours. The next day, Saturday, we would leave the boat in the morning to return to our hotel for one more night before departing for England.

Our Ionian week had undoubtedly reflected the moto: "When in Greece do as the Grecians do". On 'Agamemnon', we opted more particularly to follow the ancient Greek philosopher Epicurus (born 341 BC.). Although his true view of pleasure is far from the stereotypical one, we were contented to stick with his initial theory of hedonism, which holds that Pleasure is the only fundamental value.

Accordingly, we consumed vast amounts of food and even greater amounts of wine. Lesley and Judy produced beautifully presented Greek

delicacies which we savoured. It is not that we pretend to be fine wine tasters or collectors: wine boxes were better than bottles although the quality was somewhat dubious! We were so concerned about having enough provisions that with regret, a whole wine box and most of a bottle of gin were left on board for the cleaners at the end of the trip. Luckily, Lesley and Chris had polished off the Amaretto. All in all we certainly had a scrumptious time and thoroughly enjoyed ourselves.

Final notes

We are grateful for Beryl and Simon Chalmers, WMYC members, for joining our December meeting with pilot books and charts to help provide initial information on the Ionian Sea and the Greek islands and for their recommendation of the Telesilla Hotel. Finally, I would like to say a big 'cheers' - 'Yamas!' - to everyone on this voyage for their participation in telling their stories and speaking on behalf of all of us 'the Motley Crew'.

Perhaps, it is suited to conclude with a quote from Epicurus. This Greek philosopher who spent his life arriving at fascinating answers to one of the most challenging riddles there is: "what makes people happy?"

His conclusion? "Of all the things which wisdom provides to ensure happiness throughout the whole of life, much the greatest is the possession of friendship".

Now it's time to say...
goodbye!
'ΑΝΤΙΟ ΣΑΣ'
(antio sas)

West Mersea Lifeboat

Martin Wade the Lifeboat Operations Manager recalls some unusual rescues

This has been a bit of a quieter year for our lifeboat than recent ones, with 43 service launches to the beginning of November. Last year's total was 62.

2017 has seen the usual mix of rescues, with engine failure again the most common cause, as well as a few unusual ones which I have described below. As well as our regular exercises throughout the year, we do try to attend regattas and events on the river, which keeps people's awareness of the lifeboat up and helps with fund raising.

On the subject of fund raising, some people go to extraordinary lengths in their endeavours to raise funds for the RNLI, but this year one young man, Alex Ellis-Roswell, really stood out. Alex, from Margate in Kent, gave up his job and walked 9,500 miles around the entire coasts of the UK and Ireland, visiting every lifeboat station. The journey took him two-and-a-half years without a break. He stayed in Mersea for three days courtesy of one of our crew and left on 25th September heading for Burnham-on-Crouch and the last eight stations, including those on the Thames, until he finished back at Margate.



Alex Ellis-Roswell with the Mersea crew as he heads on to finish his journey around the coast

One unusual rescue occurred in the river Colne, while the lifeboat crew were on exercise. A distressed swan that had been stuck in the mud for two days had been reported to the RSPCA. As the lifeboat was going up-river, an RSPCA officer waved to them as she was unable to reach the swan. The crew were happy to help and crossed the marsh to reach the swan, which they extracted from the mud. The swan was then taken by the officer to a local rescue centre where it was expected to make a good recovery.



Rescued Swan is handed over to the RSPCA

Also on the river Colne, a drifting barge was reported near Wivenhoe. The Coastguard were concerned that someone might be on board and need assistance. So the lifeboat was tasked to search the area, but could find nothing matching the description between Wivenhoe and Rowhedge. The following day the barge was again spotted above Rowhedge, so the lifeboat returned to the Colne and found the vessel some way above Rowhedge. There was no one aboard and the boat was fairly derelict, so the crew secured it to the bank.



Drifting barge on the river Colne

During the summer, Stone Sailing Club held a Lifeboat Day for their cadets. We had RNLI souvenirs for sale and lifeboat videos playing in the club. In the afternoon we arranged for the lifeboat to visit the club so that the cadets could have a good look at her. At the same time we were presented with a cheque from the cruiser launching fees at the club.



Stone Sailing Club Cadets inspecting Just George

At the beginning of October we had one of our most bizarre rescues! A man from London, seeking solitude for the weekend, had bought an out-of-date liferaft on ebay and planned to spend two days at sea in it. He thought the tide would then bring him back. He travelled by train from London to Southminster and then walked to Bradwell carrying the six-man liferaft and several heavy kit bags. The liferaft was pumped up on the beach, loaded up with his kit and a small anchor and off he drifted. The westerly wind blew him off-shore and out over the Dengie Flats. Later that day the Coastguard received a call from him asking for help as he was feeling seasick and his anchor was dragging. When the lifeboat found him, he was three miles offshore in the Bachelor's Spit area and quite unaware that the next land he might see would be Holland. He was very keen to climb out of his liferaft as fast as he could. The lifeboat crew took him to Bradwell marina where a Coastguard mobile team collected him and took him to a train in Southminster, with some wise words of 'safety advice'.

For the third time in recent years we were called to a vehicle on the Osea causeway. This time the police had requested that we investigate a van that was just about to be submerged on a rising tide, to make sure no one was trapped inside. The water level had just reached the roof when our crew arrived. The doors were locked and the airbag had deployed. A crew member gained access and checked inside to make sure the van was empty, which it was. A can was then attached to mark the 'wreck' for passing boats.



The lifeboat approaching the drifting liferaft



A small van on Osea Island causeway

Confessions of a smack virgin



John Davison (centre) tells of the trials and triumphs of a smacking week

The first time I stepped aboard *Dorothy*, the 1899 fishing smack CK 159, I was greeted with the following warning from a long-time crew member.

'What you need to know about this boat, is that everything is either sharp – or broken!'

Looking about at the bewildering array of ropes, mostly colour-coded brown/grey for convenience (and authenticity) and connected to heavy things with names I knew not the meaning of, there did indeed seem to be a multitude of ways to do yourself damage on this vessel.

Welcome to the world of East Coast smack racing.

That was a few years ago when Rob Lee, *Dorothy's* skipper and co-owner, plucked me from the shore on a hungover Regatta morning. I escaped unscathed that day and have done a couple of races since, suffering nothing more serious than a minor fracture.

But this year I was to do the whole Mersea Week campaign with Rob and *Dorothy* (or 'Dotty'), scarcely any better versed in matters smack or gaff than I

had been on Day One. What could possibly go wrong?

In the event, very little (unless you count nearly having my head removed by someone else's boom during a start-line tussle. Let's not go there). Indeed we even won things. Lots of things!

Members aware of my own racing record on the beautiful, Mersea-built 1965 sloop *Segrist* will know that success has, so far, proved elusive. But with Team Dotty it seemed that a place among the chocolates was a permanent fixture.

Speaking of food, you do get well looked after on these smacks, if Dotty is anything to go by. Obligatory bacon sandwiches before a rope is touched and thereafter a fairly constant flow of pork pies, e-numbers and even homemade cake – mostly courtesy of Rob's wife Clare.

Which is just as well given that this is bloomin' hard work, yachty people. No 'tweaking' on sheets here. Oh no. Just grunting. And given that I spent most of my week on the main sheet, I guess I was 'grunter-in chief'. It makes you proud, if rather concerned about the resultant osteopath's bill.

The week, it has to be said, did not begin particularly well. I had to miss the opener and then on Monday we were late to the start line – delayed by a recalcitrant topsail and shaking out a reef. All complicated stuff against the clock for a mostly novice crew.

But then there was Tuesday, and all came good in Dotty world.

Rob's start was audacious, showing his pedigree as a national-standard windsurfing racer. We approached the line from the wrong side, with the seconds ticking down, and just managed to gybe around the pin before the entire smack fleet bore down on us – bristling with bowsprits. At least that's what I heard had happened. I had my eyes closed.

From there we sped away under big jib in the clean, light air that Dotty loves and hung onto third place overall for the rest of the race, despite (at 34ft) her being in the 'Slow' class. That made the difference and after holding our end up with the other 'Slow' boats *Gracie* and *Boadicea* in the following races, we won the class for the week.

Then came Regatta Day, with airs so light that the combined fleets of



'Dotty' (left) heads downwind for the mark while others round up

smacks and classics came together around No 12 and then crawled at sub-knot speeds, almost like a raft, towards the course-shortened finish line. Dotty was up there and with

Gracie 'touching' aground we won overall on handicap.

That's a win, people – the Mulhauser trophy from 1928, no less. And my first

of any kind on anything that floats!

We got the band back together for the Oyster Dredging Match a couple of weeks later. Augmented, it has to be said, by pro-oysterman Dale Belbin and Rob's dad Gilbert. It proved to be a deadly combination – for the Natives.

We dragged up some 35kgs in the allotted two hours, using two dredges (pronounced 'drudges', apparently). That was almost twice the average of our nearest rival. And more than enough to bag the Hervey Benham trophy for the 'Greatest Weight of Oyster'.

To cap it all, Rob was also awarded the John Frost trophy for the 'Smack Sailed in the Most Seamanlike Manner'.

Which was partly achieved by removing the tiller and steering the boat purely on a two-reefed main and working jib. Some may say that's just showing off.

Overall, I would say: 'Smack-tastic!'



Rob Lee enjoys a dredging joke with his dad Gilbert (left), crew member Andy Radley (centre) and oyster guru Dale Belbin. The author (orange trousers) is hiding behind Rob.

All pictures by Chrissie Westgate

Cadet Week 2017

Gordon Eckstein the Cadet Week Chairman reflects on another success - despite the weather!



Another year, another Cadet Week! Exhilarating, exhausting, competitive - and very windy!

Mersea attitude was in abundance from the huge entry of 159 cadets drawn from our two local sailing clubs.

This year we kept all the social events on the island. Jackie Morley and our tireless Social Team "kept it real and kept it local".

A timely break in the weather on Tuesday evening saw Mersea at its spectacular best, with a stunning sunset enjoyed by all on Monkey Beach.

Life-long memories were created while rowing, paddle-boarding, kayaking and water-sliding in the warm Besom Creek. Many generations of families lingered long into the night around a bonfire. Simple pleasures!

OUTSIDE FLEET RACING

Monday saw strong winds and was good preparation for a blustery week

of fierce competition for the 73 Cadets of Outside Fleet comprising of:

Fast Fleet	(29 Lasers, RS800, 29er and an Aero),
Medium Fleet	(17 RS Fevas)
Slow Fleet	(Toppers, Topaz, Picos and Teras)

The weather and tides made for some exciting starts for Race Officer Richard Holroyd, assisted by Ben Woodcraft on board Peter Clements's *Serendipity*. Thank you Peter for remaining so calm! They managed 12 races in an excellent week of competition.

Outside Safety Officer, Nick Purdie, together with his team, made racing as safe as possible in these conditions.

OPTIMIST FLEET

Under the guidance of Race Officer Simon Clifton, Dominic Barnes as Optimist Fleet Leader and James Sanderson as Inside Safety Officer 86 Optimists battled it out over the week. Gold Fleet managed a whopping 13 races, Ruby nine and Emerald 10.



Jonny Barnes Fast Fleet

Having sailed for just 12 weeks before, the 24 strong Diamond Fleet managed eight races in more sheltered waters, under the able watch of Chris Burr and Martin 'Lurch' Blackmore.

It is great credit to all the volunteers and safety boats that after such a daunting start, there were so many smiling faces! The future of Cadet Week looks strong!

Finally, the winners of the major fleets selected their crews for a mini regatta sail-off for the much-coveted Viking Trophy in the Squibs.



Picture by Chrissie Westgate

Tim Crossley came out as winner of the Viking Trophy after some close racing.

Along with the fleet winners, there are also awards for seamanship, tenacity, and endurance.

The Inside Endeavour Trophy went to Allegra Martin for not just entering but competing and giving her all after battling against illness.

Special mentions too for Daisy Weston and Gabby Clifton, 10 bullets in their Feva winning medium fleet. Also for

Finian Morris and Ellis Higgins who both managed seven Bullets to win Optimist Gold Fleet and Ruby Fleet respectively, and James Brosnan Wren with six bullets from two days racing in his laser 4.7. All will be names to look out for in the future.

My thanks to an amazing Cadet Week Committee, WMYC, Dabchicks SC. Our Platinum, Gold and valued Supporters. Boat loaners, anonymous donors, fuel givers, beach crew and wader wearers, computer programmers & logo designers, lawn crew, safety crew, beach crew, galley

crew, tally masters, race officers, spotters, mark layers, club launches ... the list goes on! (watch the video, see the photos, at cadetweek.co.uk).

For some this was the beginning of their Mersea Cadet Week journey, for others sadly it was their last event. But the friendships and memories created, along with the Mersea attitude, will sail with them throughout life.



Pictures by Chrissie Westgate



Cadet Week 2017 – Results

Optimist Diamond Fleet

1. Ruby Hester
2. Oliver Daniels
3. Joseph Bishop
4. Isabelle Bartlett
5. Oliver Bird

Optimist Emerald Fleet

1. Ruby Talbot
2. James Blackmore
3. Matilda Milgate
4. Anna Morris
5. Harry Fuller

Optimist Ruby Fleet

1. Ellis Higgins
2. Mary Richardson
3. Rufus Cock
4. Laura Fernehough
5. Juliet Martin

1st Bronze

- Matt Sanderson (6th place in Ruby)

Optimist Overall Inside

- Ellis Higgins

Most Improved Inside Fleet

1. Ruby Talbot
2. Anna Morris

CATs Trophy for Endeavour

- Allegra Martin

Tenacity Trophy

- Holly Wiley

Optimist Gold Fleet

1. Finn Morris
2. Theo Clifton
3. Charlotte Allen

Optimist Corinthian

1. Dom Gozzett (4th Gold Fleet)
2. Harry Blackmore (7th Gold Fleet)



Tera & Slow Handicap Fleet

1. Hattie Dumas
2. Charlie Jacobs
3. Jess Sydenham

Laser Radial

1. Freddie Rogers
2. Ru Watkins
3. Robert Crossley

Laser 4.7

1. Tim Crossley
2. Tom Brown
3. Hope Gozzett

Standard Rig

1. Robert Green
2. Evan Chess
3. George Holroyd

Overall Fast Fleet

1. Tim Crossley

Medium Handicap Fleet

1. Gabbie Clifton & Daisy Weston
2. Brown & Struth
3. Dougie Cock & Ben Milgate

1st Single Hander

1. Tim Crossley

1st Double Hander

1. Gabbie Clifton & Daisy Weston

Seamanship Trophy

1. James Brosan Wren

Hanna Stodel Endeavour

1. Jack Gibson

Viking Trophy

1. Tim Crossley

Most Bullets

1. Gabbie Clifton & Daisy Weston

View from the committee boat

Peter Pangbourne takes his first turn on the line

Having been racing dinghies and cruisers as skipper and crew for over half a century, I felt it my duty to give something back to the sport I love. Being part of the race team during the East Coast National Championships for the Dragon class and Mersea week/Town regatta gave me an opportunity to combine both my hobbies of sailing and photography. Here are some images from that combination.



The Principal Race Officer may think they are the most important person on board but actually it's the timekeepers and spotters. In reality the whole operation is one of a team working together.



It is a well known fact that if you lay a start or finish line on the water, you never know who will sail through it first. At the finish you need to keep your wits and eyes around you as you can often be surprised, especially by smacks creeping up on you unseen and popping round your bow to finish!



803 (North Sails team) approaches the windward mark.



You don't need a brand-new boat to go racing at Mersea, or even a classic yacht. Boadicea and Martha have 350 years of water under their keels.



746 running to the finishing line. A rare opportunity to get a shot of a Dragon under spinnaker.



Thank you to all the competitors who acknowledge the work and effort put in by the race team.



Almost a perfect start, but watching the Dragon East Coast championship this became the norm.



Typical class racing. Just after the start the fleet breaks up, some preferring the southern shore and others the northern shore (best choice on the day)



Rimfire and Aelfwyn grab every breath to beat the tide to the finishing line.



When laying a course the race officer and his assistants often assume what will happen after the start. Frequently the competitors have other ideas!



One of the abiding memories of the Town Regatta this year was the finish. The problem being that boats tended to stop on the finishing line. The sight of the OD jumping about trying to see round Alberta was one of the committee boat crew's highlights.



Away with the 'brigs'

Steve Johnson introduces the folk and folklore of Mersea's biggest racing fleet

Mersea Fishermen's Open Boats (MFOB) have been the largest class racing in Mersea Week for many years, with more than 30 boats on the line. Yacht club members make up a large part of this eclectic fleet.

A fisherman's open boat demands many hours of preparation and maintenance, can be difficult to sail well - and occasionally gives the crew a unexpected swim. Squib sailor Sam Lightfoot, racing *Columbine*, had his brig baptism on the first windy day of the week. Conditions and courses this year were fabulous, a good first beat in this large fleet being crucial for a result.

Fortunately the MFOB's midweek rum party in the YC's upstairs bar didn't result in any capsize. Even the worst headaches had gone by the time

racing started at 1230hrs next day. Most civilised.

The week's champions were Brian and Will Sargeant, 1st overall to win the Bland Salver and 1st in the fast handicap (**WM25 pictured above**). Our own *Native* WM1 came third overall and won the Wyatt Cup for the slow handicap.

Brigs race all season from May through to November, the most popular events being the Green Man and the Salcott Challenge. The challenge of the former is to be the last boat to leave the mainland shore and sail safely back across the Blackwater, after suitable imbibement and rum toasts in the pub we all know and love.

The MFOB fleet is comprised of a variety of ex-working and racing craft, all wooden gaff-rigged open boats.

Foredecks and side decking which would be most advantageous in choppy conditions are not allowed.

Jerry Hill turned up one regatta day in *Curlew*, formally owned by Bob Matthews, and was told in true Mersea fashion that *Curlew's* foredeck was out of class. No problem, said Jerry, and with help from his crew managed to smash it off - and then win the race!

However, back to the fleet. The largest boats are oyster skiffs known locally as 'Bumkins', often sailed with four or more crew. Some have been observed with picnic hampers and flasks of hot (or cold) beverages. Such a craft is *Mersea Native* now owned by Lars and Nikki Ditchburn. She spent her working life as a motor skiff in the employ of the Tollesbury & Mersea Oyster Company before conversion to sail. Perhaps the most traditional and fine-

lined of this type is the *Boy George*, built to work under sail and beautifully restored some years ago by Johnny Milgate. She is now raced by his daughter Charlotte.

In among the fast handicap class are a number of converted ex-class racing dinghies. Instantly recognisable with her red hull and beautiful finish is David Haines's *Thrift*. She was originally converted for oysterman Teddy Woolf, who generally raced with a reef in to make her performance similar to the Jack and Don Bland's *Ino*. Others include this year's Mersea week winner *Merlin*, once a Royal Dart one design, MFOB chairman Dave Cope's Deben Kingfisher *Swift* and Ben Woodcraft's varnished *Tanner* - both previous Mersea Week winners.

Spread among the Fast and Slow handicap are a number of new build and restored 'winklebrigs', a term coined by the late author and local newspaper magnet Hervey Benham. These local work boat designs are around 14 to 16 feet and like most of the fleet sport considerable sail area.

Will Crossly's *Joy* is the most traditionally-rigged and was joint winner of this year's Salcott Challenge. *Joy* was the star of the 1970's film *Snow Goose*, with Jenny Agutta in the stern sheets. The *Jack*, probably the most iconic 'brig', now owned by Mark Farthing, has been in his family for



Steve and Debbie Johnson in *Native* round the mark

generations and was last rebuilt by his uncle - waterfront legend Pinky Hewes.

The keenly contested Slow class is made up with a number of the slower winklebrigs, and the smaller smack and barge boats. These are generally sailed by two people, with no extra hands to pump out, manage the large downwind Spanker or open the beers! The main protagonists are our own black-hulled *Native*, built at William Wyatt's in the late 1940's for my grandfather and oyster baron Will Baker's *Ally Lump*.

Performing well in this year's Mersea week was the Gerrard Swift refurbished *Samphire*, now owned by Louise Wheatley, and the ex-barge boat *Lady Gwynfred*, well sailed by Richard and Nikki Porter. Simon Jacklin has recently acquired the Maldon-built *Winnie*, very different from the J80 he used to campaign.

The success of this diverse fleet has been sustained for a number of reasons. Pre-race breakfasts in the Pearl, beers and banter after racing and starting when tides are favourable, are among them. And of course rum!



Sam Lightfoot and crew keel over in *Columbine* while others sail on

All pictures by Chrissie Westgate

Club Cruises

Jack Davis the Cruiser Captain introduces a packed programme

Cruises in Company were once again well attended and, with variable weather, subject to lots of changes of plan. We finally made it up to Lowestoft after last years failure and had lovely weather with not a few distractions (see Sandy's article). The summer cruise to Holland was disrupted by the variable weather pattern and the difficulties encountered by the Belgian authorities imposition of €500 fines for the suggestion of red diesel in your tank, which caused a change in the planned route. However, we eventually made it to Holland and had a great time. The three Blackwater Rallies were all well attended but regrettably the cruise to Chatham and Limehouse was cancelled due to stormy weather. Brian Warwick had organised several events for this cruise including a tour of the RNLI station at Waterloo Bridge and a talk and supper at the Cruising Association HQ at Limehouse. A party of 11 went up by car and had a great day in London so all was not lost. Kevin and Lesley Mullins stepped into the breach to organise the Short Cruise to Burnham and 10 boats enjoyed a long weekend in the Crouch.

Next year's programme has some new additions and some changes so come to the Cruiser Lunch and Photo Competition on February 24th 2018 and see what we have planned.

Brightlingsea Shakedown Cruise 2017

Date: 29 - 30 April



Traditionally the club has had an early cruise to check that our 'pride and joys' are fit and working properly. In the past we've had: engine difficulties, battery failures, forgotten gear and, for myself this year, there were reefing problems



that unfortunately plagued me all season. Generally these cruises have been local and Brightlingsea has been the port of choice. We have eaten at the Korvalam and Winkies. This year we went back to the Colne Yacht club where we were served a delightful carvery. The Colne YC have now replaced their chef with outside caterers.

A total of 16 boats sailed round to Brightlingsea and the majority of boats stayed on the pontoon in the creek, but a couple of yachts went into the marina. This has the advantage of not having to pay the Ferry Man. These days you can buy a 'block' of tickets which reduces the price of the journeys. You have to be on your best behaviour though, as the evening ferry man is a Mersea chap; Bram from the company shed.

Prior to eating at the Colne YC Trevor & Judy Southey hosted a pontoon party where copious amounts of canapes and drinks were supplied. John Kieran suggested that we didn't really need to go for a meal after *Tipsy Turvey's* food. Many thanks for hosting such a wonderful event.

It might be a shakedown cruise but not all the boats managed to be launched in time and several crews came by car. We had over 40 WMYC members sitting down for a meal. The Little Ship Club was also on a shakedown cruise and with a few Colne members in the clubhouse as well, a convivial evening was had by all.

Next morning we woke up to a bright but windy day. By early afternoon a decision had to be made should we go or should we stay as we needed to inform the Green Man and the marina. The decision was made that we were going to stay. However, *Tamarisk* reckoned that the wind would abate for an hour or so around late afternoon and said they would be going then; as Rob said the wind dropped and he had a wonderful sail to Bradwell.

So now the dilemma was should we eat aboard or try to find somewhere to eat on a Bank Holiday Sunday? Several phone calls were made but everywhere was full - except for this one restaurant. Why was this one available when everywhere else was full? After several chats we took the gamble and went for the meal. And what a delightful meal it turned out to be. The Wine & Fork up in the High Street had just recently opened, hence they could cater for us all at such a short notice.

So after a bit more banter with Bram we all made our way back to our boats safely.

After a leisurely start to the morning the various captains and crews had a group talk: what's your draft, when are you thinking of leaving, will there be enough water, when did the harbour master suggest we could leave?

Well everyone departed without running aground.

But I nearly did in *Stargazer*. We were heading for the port and starboard buoys half way along the creek that are almost in line with one another. I moved *Stargazer* toward the withy on the starboard side, only to get very very shallow, less than a foot under the keel. I happened to see *Sea Hound* on my Port side steaming out of the creek. I called

over and asked Dave how much water did he have? The reply was tons. I had strayed too far to the Brightlingsea side of the creek. The moral here is keep away from that single isolated withy!



Mel Daniels

May Cruise to Lowestoft and the Suffolk Rivers (Or as we came to call it 'The Calamity Cruise')

Date: 20 - 28 May

Stargazer, *Sea Weasel*, *Saltpetre*, *Starlight*, *Tipsy Turvey*, *Avanti* and *Clockwise* slipped our moorings and headed up the coast in brilliant sunshine with a 3-4 SW wind and enjoyed a lovely sail up the Wallet arriving at Shotley early afternoon. We learned that *Tipsy Turvey's* bow thruster had become tangled with the mooring line as they left the mooring so we had our first calamity. We agreed that dinner at the Bristol Arms would be a great start to the holiday and here was our second calamity. Everyone was served except Theresa and Richard whose order had been 'mislaidd' in the kitchen. Poor things watched as everyone munched their way through dinner and just as we all finished their meal eventually arrived. The only saving grace was that they had a free meal.

A new day and at 07.30 we set sail for Lowestoft, another lovely sail, 3-4 broad reach all the way. An army of Dutch boats had beaten us to it but we all managed to squeeze in too. Those ladies who had not previously visited the gents loos in the Yacht Club to admire the unique copper cisterns and plumbing were given the obligatory guided tour. Such a welcoming club, good food, excellent service so we stayed for two nights. The only fly in the ointment was Richard's engine water pump which was misbehaving (potential calamity).

Onward to Southwold where we were directed to the brand new pontoon on the Walberswick shore, the Harbour

Master telling us that we were the very first to use it. We felt quite honoured! And here was our third calamity. We all turned in for the night but *Sea Weasel* woke to find the boat outside him had gone aground and their masts were clashing. *Starlight* and *Tipsy Turvey* (also with boats outside them) awoke to find themselves mounting the pontoon, also aground. The Harbour Master was dumbfounded, he said the survey for the new pontoon had showed 1.7m depth at chart datum (should have gone to Specsavers).

We wandered into Walberswick, liked the Anchor pub so booked us all for dinner – highly recommended, great food. Walked across the marshes to Southwold on day two, weather still being very kind to us. Richard's water pump was upgraded to a full calamity (no.4) and as he waited for the engineer to fit a new one we waved him goodbye and headed for the Deben.

Another good sail down the coast and up to Woodbridge, it's always a pleasure sailing up the Deben. At Woodbridge we met up with Claire and Rob Smith and we all pooled resources and had a great BBQ at the marina. Spoilt for choice the following day, lazing around in the marina or retail therapy opportunities in the town. The replacement bow thruster arrived for *Tipsy Turvey* who was hauled out, replacement fitted and refloated in about thirty minutes (calamity rectified).

The following day we left for the Orwell and Wolverston Marina, 20kts of wind from the NE and a heavy chop off Languard Point didn't make for the best journey. We were expecting *Sea Hound* to join us, but as they were heading up the Wallet they discovered a diesel leak into the bilges (possible calamity). They notified the coastguard that they would need assistance berthing when they arrived in the Orwell as they had no diesel left in the tank. But no, the coastguard instructed them to anchor and sent a lifeboat which towed them, not to the Orwell, but back to Brightlingsea against the tide in the strong wind (upgraded to calamity number five) – Dave was not a happy bunny.

After a sail up to Ipswich we made our way back Mersea and in spite of the calamities (or maybe because of them) we all had a great time.

Sandy Davis



New pontoon at Southwold

Heybridge Cruise commentary

10 - 11 June

Once again the Heybridge cruise promised to be well attended with over 20 boats signing on, many opting to extend the jollities by coming on the Friday. We were a bit concerned the threat of strong winds would lead to mass cancellations, but the forecast improved leaving a weekend of pleasant, warm weather. On Friday evening we broke with tradition and dined at the Jolly Sailor whose staff managed to squeeze us all in at short notice.

On Saturday after a feast of a breakfast at the Heybridge (Tiptree) Cafe, we prepared to help with sighting the pursuit race and the subsequent lock-in. However, at the cafe we spotted a pamphlet advertising the 'Oars and Paws' dog show at the basin. The girls, Brigitte and Judy, were keen to give their canine companions, Tilly and Maisie, a fun day out and I couldn't resist along with Lesley coming as paparazzi! We left the men to their marine & drinking duties and after Brigitte had shampooed Tilly (not that she's competitive) we set off for the show. The Mersea contingent was strengthened by the addition of the beautiful Poppy from *Alderney*. We returned rather later in the afternoon festooned with rosettes! Poppy won 'best condition' and second for 'prettiest bitch', Brigitte was delighted with Tilly's (and Brigitte's possibly) second prize in 'most appealing eyes' class and Judy was a proud mum when Maisie came third in the puppy class. We had our bets on Tilly in the 'fastest sausage eating' class who duly

obliged, but the owner also had to eat a Brownie square and Brigitte was just too ladylike and slowed down the proceedings, so we were robbed! The locals, unable to fend off the Mersea onslaught, declared loudly that next year they were going to move the show to the Autumn!

Back in the lock, *Hannelore* had won the pursuit race and all were celebrating and setting up barbecues for the festivities. A great party ensued, along with prize giving.

Sunday required the boost of a full English fry up from the Tiptree cafe to get us moving again. In the meantime the Haynes family had tidied up the barbecue area.

There must be romance in the air at Heybridge as Georgina and Paul (Mouse) we're celebrating their first anniversary, having got together at last year's Heybridge cruise. Also Grant, the lock keeper, was away attending a wedding - which happened to be for Dan, his second in command, who had organised our lock in last year. We were ably looked after by Dave this weekend and all too soon it was time to return to Mersea, leaving a few hardened partygoers for another nights merriment.

Christine Lane

Harwich/Shotley

8 - 15 July

The Harwich pursuit race once again allowed our cruising members to test their competitive instincts before indulging their real love of cruising. It certainly helped to enliven a long beat up the Wallet, even for those owners of non-racers like *Playpen*, who set off early and found themselves trimming sheets excessively in an attempt to stay ahead! In the end *Playpen* got there first - but Jon French in *Water Lily* won the race.



Well, if the cup's not good enough here's a bottle to fill it.

Whether racers or cruisers at least a dozen boats made it to Shotley and enjoyed a very convivial round of boat parties and evening barbecues. This then became the jumping off point for various mini cruises. *Playpen*, *Hartley*, *Sea Breeze* and *Scruffy Duck* decided to 'do the rivers' and set off for the Royal Harwich YC, where they enjoyed a warm welcome with drinks on the lawn and an evening meal. The next day the group diverted to Fox's Marina to help sort out *Playpen*'s freshwater pump problems. A new pump was purchased and then expertly fitted by Kevin Mullins, proving once again the value of cruising in company.



This particular mini-cruise then visited the Deben, shopped in Woodbridge, ate very well at the Bengal Indian and two days later dropped down to moorings at Ramsholt. *Playpen* and *Scruffy Duck* returned to Mersea via Shotley while *Sea Breeze* found another river to explore for a few days (the Alde).



We hope everyone else enjoyed themselves as much.

Colin Campbell

Holland Trip

9 - 30 July

Monday, 10th July at 5.30 a.m. and *Saltpetre* (Richard, Theresa and Rosemary), *Clockwise* (Jack and Sandy) and *Brinestar* (Oliver, Michelle and James) left Harwich, after the Harwich Pursuit Race weekend and sailed to Ramsgate. This was the first port of call on our journey to Holland, and we arrived safely before the forecasted gales arrived. Strong winds delayed us until Friday but that didn't dishearten us and we had a marvellous time as the sun shone and we explored local places of interest.

We found a beautiful walk along the harbour wall, saw the tunnels used as air raid shelters, then carried on to an Italian Atrium where we had a delicious cream tea and in the evening we found a little Thai restaurant, 'Thai Orchid', which served amazingly good food. Our excursion the next day took us to Dover on top of a double decker bus. What



Afternoon tea in Ramsgate

an experience – we had fantastic views of the countryside, saw idyllic villages such as Sandwich, down narrow country lanes (better than a fairground ride), a 1½ hour journey for £6.00 return. Money well spent. We arrived safely in Dover in glorious sunshine and spent an enjoyable day exploring Dover Castle and its tunnels which were used in the Second World War by the Authorities to plan the rescue of soldiers from Dunkirk (Operation Dynamo) and the three miles of hospital tunnels with wards and operating facilities.

Friday morning, at the respectable hour of 9.15 a.m., we departed Ramsgate and sailed to Dunkirk arriving early evening and the next day continued to Vlissingen (Flushing), quite a lively 10 hour sail!



Middelburg YC

On Sunday we arrived in Middelburg (an interesting town with pretty houses and a beautiful cathedral with cloisters) and found we had to negotiate mooring bow on between two posts – not an easy procedure to the uninitiated! Having finally mastered the manoeuvre we discovered that we were in the heart of the town close to all shops and amenities. That evening we all ate at the Yacht Club, a traditional old building with dark beams, interesting features and lots of atmosphere. The food was amazing and I thoroughly recommend the 'surf and turf' – delicious.

Onwards to the Veers Meer and the Bastion de Langplats island, where we moored for the night and had our first BBQ together. We woke with sore heads to beautiful sunny day and sailed on to an island further down the Veers Meer. Time to relax, take a swim, read a book while the boys spent the afternoon solving problems with sails and rigging before another barbeque.

Wednesday and we arrived in Goes, a delightful marina,



En route to Goes

privately owned by the locals with a welcoming clubhouse and an honesty box for when you help yourself to that ice-cold drink. This was a lovely place to stay with its great shops, restaurants, pretty buildings and very thought provoking art exhibition at the Cathedral.



Breakfast on Moondancer

Bruinisee on the Gravelinmeer was our next destination to meet up with John Burgess and son Adam on *Moondancer* who had sailed over to join us. We found moorings on an island and enjoyed swimming and relaxing before the evening barbeque. Unfortunately for Oliver's group, their tasty looking BBQ ribs were snatched from the BBQ by a hungry seagull!

Back to Middelburg and then on to Breskens, deciding to leave at 4.30 a.m. the following day to catch the tide to Dunkirk. We woke to

torrential rain and strong winds but after a quick 'pow wow' and another look at the forecast we decided to continue our journey. While Richard was preparing the boat to leave (still very dark) he accidentally slipped and fell into the water by the bow in his waterproofs. Luckily John was close by and heard his calls and he and Oliver managed to haul him to safety. This is when cruising in company really does make a difference! Richard had cuts and bruises but otherwise hadn't lost his sense of humour.

On the leg from Dunkirk to Ramsgate we sailed into a foggy patch with nil visibility but thanks to AIS on *Saltpetre* we sailed together for security and fortunately the fog soon lifted and we had a great sail over.

Arrived back in West Mersea on Thursday in calm seas after a truly wonderful holiday spent sailing in company – can't wait until next year!

Theresa Singleton

WMYC Cruise to Burnham on Crouch

5 - 9 August

A total of 12 boats signed-up for this year's cruise to Burnham. The general idea was to have a good meal on the Saturday night at the Oyster Smack Inn and possibly go further up river for Sunday night or alternatively, head for the river Roach.

The passage to Burnham through the Ray Sand Channel was followed by everybody, with tail-enders grounding and having to wait for the tide. Most of us intended to sail but there was not enough wind so mostly we motored and arrived about lunchtime.

Everyone who had signed-up for this cruise ate at the Oyster Smack Inn on Saturday night where good food, good wine and especially good company were enjoyed by all.



On Sunday some of our party took the river ferry across the Crouch from the centre of Burnham to the Essex Marina on Wallasea Island and walked along the river bank for about a mile to view the new nature reserve. Walking back, lunch at the marina café, then the return crossing and being dropped off at the yacht harbour, made for a few hours of good entertainment. Others of our party had to return home to fulfil commitments so they set-off to get to the Ray Sand Channel on a rising tide.

Because the weather was deteriorating there was little enthusiasm for going further up the Crouch or down to the Roach. Most ate on board but some others found a Thai restaurant and came back with glowing reports; maybe a venue for next year.

On Monday the remaining boats headed back to Mersea as there was no prospect of better weather. All headed for the Ray Sand Channel and this time there were no groundings. Roger Gaspar's chartlet shows deeper water to the east of the channel markers and on *Sea Breeze* we followed his recommended course of due North at 1°East. This gave us safe water all the way to the River Blackwater. We had motor-sailed down the Crouch against the tide but were able to sail with a light breeze up to the Blackwater and a good beat home to Mersea with the tide into the wind. Everyone said they had a good time and enjoyed the organisation. Maybe they just want us to do it again.

Lesley and Kevin Mullins

Photo 1 – Sarah & Ed Robinson, Lesley Mullins, Ian & Fi Brown, Mel & Carol Daniels, Maisie, Judy & Trevour Southey. "Wallasea Invasion Party"

Photo 2 – Mel & Carol Daniels, Sarah Robinson, Fi Brown. Burnham waterfront in the Background. "Enjoying the weather"

Photo 3 – Ian Brown, Trevor & Judy Southey, Ed Robinson. "Someone's fallen in the water"

Photo 4 – Carol Daniels, Fi Brown & Mel Daniels. "A well earned rest"

Photo 5 – Burnham waterfront from Wallasea Island.

were and why they were so good for the conservation of the marsh environment.

Later 45 of us met up at the Harbour View restaurant for pre-dinner drinks and then all enjoyed an excellent dinner. Commodore, Michael Wheeler, presented the prizes for the pursuit race, only two hardy boats took part with *Rimfire* taking the line honours with *Odessa* second.

The next morning many took up the offer for a breakfast at the Harbour View restaurant before heading back on the long and arduous journey to Mersea!

Photo No. 1 – The Commodore presenting 1st Prize to Sue Taylor, winner of the pursuit race.

Photo No. 2 – The Commodore presenting 2nd Prize to Malcolm Clark, runner-up in the pursuit race

Photo No. 3 – Our Club Secretary, Julia Wey

Photo No. 4 – The Commodore on his boat "Golden Fleece".

Photo No. 5 – "Matilda" with Julian, Chris and Fraser

Lesley and Kevin Mullins



Tollesbury Rally

7 - 8 October

A total of 19 yachts signed up for the Tollesbury Rally but as the date got nearer and the weather forecast became more and more threatening, two or three boats decided to forget the sea passage and go by car. As it turned out the very high winds didn't materialise. Nearly everyone got over the sill ok, except *French Mistress* who just kissed it.

The forecast rain held off as 19 people turned out for the Tollesbury Wick marshes walk and talk given by warden Jonathan Smith. We walked a short way along the sea wall and then headed for a hide in the middle of the marshes overlooking a pond. Jonathan apologised for the lack of birds, saying the summer ones had flown off but the winter ones had not arrived yet! However we were all entertained by the variety of rare breed sheep that paraded one by one in front of the hide with Jonathan describing what type they

Racing Roundup

Julian Lord reviews all the season's action

HOME WATERS

As usual, the season began slowly, with just eight boats sailing in the **Spring Points Series**, which was won by Julian Lord's International H Boat *Humdinger*, ahead of Ed Taylor's *Toucan* and Richard Davenport's Beneteau 31.7 and *Bananaman*, the Projection 762 of Joe Billing and Bruce Woodcock. Racing then gathered momentum with the start of the **DSC Friday Series**, in which the Sailing Instructions specified that eight races were to count, regardless of the number of races completed. For a variety of reasons, four races were lost, leaving competitors with only two discards. This made consistency the key to success. A total of 31 boats raced in the series, and without being one of the six boats which won an individual race, Frank Reed's Hustler 32 *Tramp*, skippered by Doug Seaden was the clear overall winner; *Tramp* last won the series in 2006. Next up were *Bananaman*, followed by the leading Sonata, Simon Farren's *Camel*,

Humdinger, *Toucan* and *Hex*, Laurie Pearson and Dave Weston's Isis 21 sportsboat.

On a nice sunny afternoon in early June, the popular **Ancient Mariners Race** - where handicaps are adjusted according to the average age of the crew - saw a good entry of 11 boats and resulted in a win for *Humdinger* (average crew age 70), ahead of *Symbol of Lley*n, Peter Pangbourne's Northey 34 (average age 68) and Trevor Spero's *Stella Lyra* (average age 74). Later in June, the **Centenary Trophy** was contested by just five boats, with *Bananaman* coming out on top from Jack Davis Sonata *Black Jac* and *Brandyhole*, Leo Knifton's Melges 24.

The **Ladies Regatta** cruiser race saw a terrific entry of 15 boats, with Frances Meason taking the win with *Humdinger* from Maddie Clifton in the Sigma 33 *Starfall II* and *Tramp*, with Carole Britton-Reed helming. The



Stiletto pushing hard during Antigua Week



Tramp on an atmospheric Friday evening

Photo: Chrissie Westgate

afternoon was one of the very few days in 2017 when a Squib race took place, three boats turning out and Victoria Jackson in *Chaos* winning. After an encouraging start in 2016, the future now looks most uncertain for the West Mersea Squibs as a viable fleet.

Whilst there was a complete lack of support for the Short Handed Series this year, the **Wallet Cup** race saw seven boats out on a nice August morning, *Humdinger* winning by just thirty seconds from *Bear*, Steve Johnson's First 21.7, with both boats profiting from the available 10% time benefit through being single handed,



as well as through managing to set spinnakers for a long foul tide downwind leg. Sailing double handed, *Toucan* took third place.

The **Autumn Points Series** saw only five of the scheduled seven races held, with eight boats racing, *Humdinger* winning from *Bananaman* and *Aubie Too*, Tony Hawkes and Pat Hill's *Sonata*. As usual, the season concluded with the **Autumn Trophy**, delayed by a week through high winds on the scheduled date. This was won by Trevor Child's Squib *Secret Waters*, ahead of Steve Johnson's Micro *Spot Marley* and James Struth's J70 *Wild Chorus II*.

MERSEA WEEK

The week was mainly sailed in lightish breezes, with a lengthy postponement necessary on the final day (the Club's Regatta) to await the arrival of a sea breeze. For the first time, a dedicated sportsboat class was introduced, racing under **IRC**, and a competitive nine boat fleet entered. The five races saw four different winners, and the series decided on the final race, won by Toby Ramsay's Ramsay 6.7 *Mojito* by just six seconds from Ed Allan and Peter Rowe's Cork 1720 Club *Fizz* and *Brandyhole*, which dead heated for second place! This perhaps illustrates the benefit of IRC.

The small **Local Handicap 'A'** fleet saw the same outcome as last year - Paul and Liz Harrison's Beneteau 33.7 *Maverick* winning, with *Toucan* taking second on tie-break from *Hex*. The 10-strong **Local Handicap 'B'** fleet saw a good tussle between the front three, *Humdinger* winning from Vic Prior's MGC27 *Skybird*. It was good to see first race winner Barry Ashmore's C&C27 *Algonquin* back out; she finished third overall, with Alan Mason's Sigma 292 *Dura* in fourth. Despite a mid-week handicap adjustment, Scot Yeates beautifully revamped Holman & Pye designed *Stiletto* dominated the small **Classics & Gaffers 'A'** class, with the visiting



Humdinger on the wind in Mersea Week, with Algonquin to leeward

Photo: Chrissie Westgate

West Solent OD *Halloween* of Adrian Mulville from Foxes YC second and Richard Matthews *Kismet* third. A real mix of boats made up the nine entrants in the **Classics & Gaffers 'B'** fleet, with a mid-week rating change not preventing Tim Howes Buchanan Saxon *Aelfwyn* winning, ahead of regular visitor Iain Stubbs ECOD *Wizard* and Peter Clarke's Buchanan East Coast OD *Tasman*. The separate five boat **Stella** class was dominated by Tim Wood's *L'etoile* from Walton & Frinton YC, ahead of Mark Montgomery-Smith's *Lodestar* from Hoo Ness in Kent and Peter Haldene's *La Vie en Rose*. The **Sonata** fleet saw the first appearance of the newly acquired *Wet Endeavour* of the Gozzetts, Roberts and Shipton partnership, and they got off to an excellent start, winning the first two races, ahead of *Camel*. The positions were then reversed in the next two races, enabling Simon Farren to win the class on tie-break. *Black Jac* sealed third with a good win on the final day.

WHITE SAIL

The White Sail fleet's results were again determined using the RYA's NHC system, under which a yacht's rating may be adjusted after each race, depending upon her performance. The White Sail class in the Centenary Regatta saw Richard and Sue Taylor's Hustler 30XM *Rimfire* take the

Coronation Cup, winning on tie-break from *Dura*, with Mike Berry's Hanse 331 *Rendezvous* in third.

A bumper entry of 16 boats competed in **Mersea Week**, where Mike Edwards and Dave Lewis' Moody 31S *Cirrus* came out on top. Next up were *Seahawk II*, Andrew and Jill Stebbings Hanse 311, Bob Mercer's little Hustler 25.5 *UFO* and *Tamarisk*, Rob Smith's Beneteau Oceanis 323.

The eight race, season long **White Sail Series** saw *Dura* dominate the series, well ahead of *Skybird*, with *Rimfire* taking third on tie-break from *Cirrus*.

The White Sail season finished with the **Finola Cup** race, delayed for a week by high winds, and this was won by *Rimfire*, with Scot Yeates *Framat* second and Alan Jones Beneteau 29 *Ragerty* in third.

AWAY FROM MERSEA

Apart from Richard Matthews, who writes elsewhere about his season, Scot Yeates was the Club's main traveller this year, with *Stiletto*. They first competed in the 2017 Antigua Panerai Classic Yachts Challenge, the yacht having travelled there in a specially modified 45ft container. After finishing fourth of the six entrants in Classics Class D, she then enjoyed a good weekend at the

Levington Classics Regatta in June, placing fourth in the 13-boat Fast Fleet, with Michael Wheeler's S&S41 *Golden Fleece* seventh in the same class. At a windy **Panerai Classics Regatta** sailed in July in the Solent, *Stiletto* finished third overall in the 10-boat Class Three.

Sadly, support for the **EAORA** series – both locally and more widely – remains at a very low level, with just eight boats competing in the opening Ralph Herring/Pattinson Cup weekend to and from Burnham. The Club's Buckley Goblets EAORA finale saw 10 boats finishing at Ramsgate, and was won by Richard Matthews Humphreys 39 *Oystercatcher XXXI*, making her one appearance in the series. *Golden Fleece* was the only other WMYC yacht racing in the series, completing five races and finishing fifth overall in Class Three.

THANKS

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

The Mother of All Sport Boats

Greg Dunn unearths a bit of yachting history



Sitting inside an industrial unit in Rushmere Close, West Mersea is a remarkable piece of yachting history. It is the first keelboat in the world ever designed to plane.

She is *Zest*, Yachting World Diamond No.1, the oldest sister of my beloved *Black Diamond* (No.44), a class that has an interesting social history. In the 'You've never had it so good' era of Macmillan's post-war boom, following the austerity of the aftermath of WW2, Yachting World decided to try and break the perceived elitism surrounding yachting and create a stitch-and-glue plywood yacht, capable of being home-built (and funded) by the capable D-I-Y enthusiast that came to prominence in the late 1950s. Due to the success of his *Mirror Dinghy*, designer Jack Holt was commissioned to draw the new design, then called the *Yachting World Keelboat*, a name that was to be changed to *Diamond* in 1967. The rest of the story is best told in an article from *Yachting World* in January 1961 (right) - happy to share with anyone interested.

I first saw *Zest* over a decade ago, in a shed in South Holland, where she had been for 20 years, owned by Bob and Val Provoost. I was contacted by Val this summer, who explained they were selling up and it was time to pass the torch, and I was to be the new custodian of this iconic boat. Fortunately, she came on a purpose-built launching trolley/road trailer combo, by RM Trailers, so all we had to do was drive over in the works Transit van and hook up. Coming back through Calais caused a lot of attention from

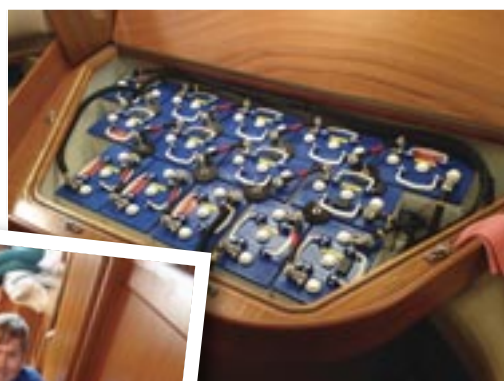
the border forces, keen to look inside for stowaways, but otherwise, she towed like a dream, and fitted neatly into our small warehouse unit.

What of her future? As the class no longer actively exists in the UK, I intend to take her out of class and replace her keel with a fin-and-bulb and situate a deep spade rudder further aft (à la *Black Diamond*). The biggest expense will be encapsulating her in epoxy, to shore up her 57 year old timbers. But as is always the way juggling budgets, it's a case of jam tomorrow, so at least for the time being she is saved and safe inside.



Cloudy Bay re-fit

Glen Samson prepares his Hallberg-Rassy for a round-the-world trip



Left:
Before re-fit

Top right:
Before, 14 lead-acid batteries

Bottom:
New Li Ion batteries in place

We purchased *Cloudy Bay*, an HR54 from 2008, in the spring of 2016. She'd been sailed from Elios to Lanzarote and with only 2500 miles on-the-clock she clearly hadn't moved much in her 8 years. She was well spec'd and excepting where the sun had touched her, and the "cleaning boy" had pressure washed the decks, she was almost like new. Our plan is to circumnavigate but decided to spend 2016 getting to know her followed by a winter refit in preparation for the next 5 years. In 2017 we cruised to Greece to check everything worked as anticipated, before planning to cross the Atlantic early 2018.

The refit started with a few key objectives: get rid of the lead-acid batteries; upgrade the power systems; sand the decks before we get any more splinters; add davits; add spinnaker and bowsprit and change the power hungry Furuno system for a Raymarine. But of course, the list

ended up extending to much more and the budget was exceeded by quite a way. But what the hell, this is sailing right?

Where to do the refit: Last year we had stumbled across a small British team in Almerimar, Costa Del Sol, so in January we sailed from Gibraltar and spent the next two months in an apartment while *Cloudy Bay* was attacked from all angles while we closely supervised.

As for research, we looked at forums, spoke to other HR owners, and went to the Southampton Boat Show. But without any doubt, the best information and show was METS in Amsterdam. METS is an annual trade show for the leisure marine industry and exhibits every possible part that can make or be put onto a yacht. Simply brilliant. It was there that we landed on Raymarine vs Furuno and Mastervolt for all the electrics upgrade.

Power and Electrics. We decided to go directly for Li-Ion batteries rather than Gel. 100Kgs replacing 450Kgs of Lead-Acid. This weight loss in the stern would be replaced by a heavy RIB on new davits whilst the new batteries to port would help balance our starboard list – its odd that HR put all the heavy stuff on the starboard side! We placed the two new batteries neatly under the galley floor freeing the space previously occupied by 14 Lead-Acid batteries under our bed to make a new cavernous locker there, now full of bikes, shopping trollies and Sea-dos! Li-Ion batteries need to control what charges them and that meant we needed to also upgrade to a Masterbus. As well as the very deep cycle (down to just 20%) the beauty of Li-Ion is that every charging amp you have all goes into the batteries, there is no charge drop-off or lengthy absorption phase. We added a 24v / 100A / 3500Kw Combi and also kept one of the two original 24V/75A chargers, giving us a whopping



Top left:
Apartment became a fittings cleaning center in the evenings

Top right:
sanding in progress

Bottom left:
Some deep wear just could not be sanded. Note also the air bubbles in the original sika flex

Bottom right:
What do we do with this space, Jaccuzi maybe

175amps of charge with shore power or generator. We can now charge the batteries from flat to full in just two hours! And when away from shore power, we don't need to have the generator thumping away for 10 hours every four weeks to get through an absorption phase.

We also upgraded the engine alternator to 150Amp from 100Amp. The main reason for this was to allow us to make water with our 230v ENWA system while motoring, utilizing the new alternator and combi inverter. Now that we can make 120Litres/hour while motoring, we never have to worry about water. We even wash the boat with it! And, added bonus, the generator is barely used these days.

Lastly we added solar panels. A big debate was where to put them. We didn't want them on the deck and heaven forbid making an ugly stern gantree to mount them on. Mounted on the bimini seemed obvious, but

then we often use a full over-boom cover when at anchor, to take the heat off the boat. So it was decided to have two flip-up panels on the life-lines. This meant extending the pushpit forward to the first stanchion point so the panels would be on solid rail, not wire lifeline. We thought this may spoil the looks, but in fact we feel it has enhanced the back on the boat making the aft deck feel a very safe place now. The panels have a neat flip up device and assist the battery charge when sailing or at anchor.

Decks: Years of jet washing had 'grained' the decks. To make the situation worse, the SikaFlex was now 2-3 mm proud and water could not run off the wood. So sadly they had to be sanded. But we really didn't want that sanding effect you so often see, when the decks end up 'raising' around the fittings. So all the fitting had to come off. BIG job! Especially the main and genoa tracks. Think twice before you tackle this one. But

the result was well worth the effort. Beautiful decks, looking like the day they left Elios ... minus a few mm. We were lucky enough that we never came to the bottom of the SikaFlex routing. That said we did have to do some work on the SikaFlex, because in many places, when sanded down, a line of air bubbles in middle of the original SikaFlex was exposed. I guess a trainee was on the SikaFlex gun when our decks were laid?

Swapping Furuno for Raymarine:

We loved the idea that we had "Furuno" on the boat. But we found it to be very power-hungry. The other issue was that we simply could not find anyone from Furuno that was willing to help us diagnose issues or suggest ways to upgrade. We came to the conclusion that Furuno really are not interested in the leisure business. Raymarine were the opposite, they were all over us giving hints ideas and great support. Lastly, we could only have Maxsea charts on Furuno where



Above:
Custom davit shoes

Top right:
much neater radar arrangement

Bottom:
Dinghy on davits, solar panels out



as Raymarine had Navionics. Cruising in one place this would not be a problem, but global charts meant 20x the cost from Maxsea compared to Navionics. So, off came the large Furuno open array radar (all 30Kgs of it!) to be replaced by a Quantum; and off came the desktop computer sized MFDBB and its cockpit screen and keyboard controllers. These were replaced by a Raymarine 12 inch touch-screen MFD in the cockpit, that we put safely inside a snazzy black carbon NavPod. Unfortunately these changes also meant that we had a lot of unwelcome holes in the beautiful wood either side of the companion way. So a quick call to HR parts was needed to obtain some new teak faced ply matching what needed to be removed.

While we were at it, we upgraded the Raymarine ST60 instruments to i70s (in for a penny, in for a pound!). The beauty of the i70s is that you can

programme any reading onto any of the instruments. So far we really like them. It's worth a mention here that all the Furuno, Raymarine and Mastervolt gear that we took off the boat was very easily resold on Ebay. I think we ended up actually getting more for the Furuno system than the new Raymarine cost us!

A second autohelm. We kept the original Raymarine ST6000 and also added a new EVO400 with a change-over switch. This allows quick access to a back up autohelm should we have issues. With just two of us on the boat, Arthur (Arthur-the-autohelm) had to be 100% available at all times! I must say, the new EVO400 seems to do a better job than the old Arthur!

Davits: we had a nice Avon-airdeck 310 with a 4HP engine. We could nip this on the foredeck in minutes and the set up was great for the Med. But going further afield we wanted a RIB

and a bigger engine so that we could do distances at speed without getting wet. And yes, I fancied something to wakeboard behind! A halyard was not going to like this, so we needed davits. We chose Simpson-Lawrence, with electric powered dynema lines and a remote control. The challenge of course is where to fit them on the boat. We'd heard so many HR davit owners telling stories of gelcoat cracking where the davit shoes met the transom. Added to that, HR told us where to position the shoes and it seemed much too wide for my liking - we would have needed a 360 or even 4m RIB just to fit that width! So we bucked the advice and placed the shoes just outside the swim-platform opening, where there was a right-angle in the transom glass fibre, making it very strong. We also cut out a section of the gunwhale teak capping (that was painful to watch!) so that the shoes gripped right over, and bolted into, the glassfibre of the



Top left:
Locked finished, from ex battery box

Top right:
new Ultra anchor and spinnaker bowsprit

Bottom:
After refit

gunwhale. This meant that the strong gunwhale took most of the weight, not the transom. The shoes themselves were made in Almerimar and I must say he did a brilliant job. They are small, discrete and beautifully made, even mimicking the curve of the teak caprail. With all the precision and cutting, it was a relief when the davits were placed on the shoes and found to line up perfectly. And now, in use, our new Avon 310 RIB with 20HP engine is in and out of the water in just two minutes. We even take it out at night its so easy. And of course, I love polishing all that shiny stainless!

Spinnaker: We wanted a good down wind foresail. I'd had a cruising chute with snuffler on a Moody 34 previously, so thought nothing of repeating it. We added a bow-sprit, similar to those HR makes, only ours was made from a former 50mm propeller shaft costing quite a bit less than a Swedish export! The sail itself

was a Rolly Tasker assymetric, made at their loft in Thailand at a fraction of the cost from Elvstrom. But when it arrived we were horrified at the size of the bag. And we all know that sails can never be packed so small ever again! So in the forepeak it went. And yes, it took up a whole berth there. After the refit we tried it and frightened ourselves silly trying to get it down in just 12 knots. I was wrong on this one. I should have taken the advice to have a code-0 on a furler. Because even if we can snuffle it, there is no way we can leave the snuffler up the mast when a squal comes. So we will have to re-think on that one. Anyone want a 'used-once' asymmetric aptly named: Monster?

Last important item was ground tackle. We put the factory fitted 60m chain under saloon floor and the 34Kg Delta in the forepeak to be used as a spare, and replaced with new 100m chain and a shiny Ultra 45Kg anchor. We would

have gone for a Rockner, but that roll bar would not have fitted under the new bowsprit. Ultra, made in Turkey, seemed to have all the right credentials as well as looking beautiful shining there on the bow. So far we have not had great experience though. It digs in super quick, and is great in sand and mud but in thick grass weed it soon pulls up what can only be described as half a football field, leaving *Cloudy Bay* drifting out to sea as we sip our cocktail in a beach bar. Yes – that was the first time we used it!

The total refit list goes on at over 100 line items, but the above were the key items. We have been in Greece for two months now and generally very pleased with all the refit items. A couple of refinements in November then we are off across the pond to start the adventure. You can follow us on Facebook. The page is called Sail Cloudy Bay.

Baltic the right way round!

John Kent takes the southern route north

Inspired by my father in law's single handed retirement cruise to the Baltic 20 years ago and armed with Viv & Linda Fox's hints and tips, we decided to take the plunge and navigate our own boat to the Baltic for our summer cruise. It turned out to be a great experience so we wanted to share some of the highlights of the trip, getting there, getting back and spending time rather further north than we are generally used to.

The Weather

We had heard much about the famed 'Baltic High' and how hot it could be – well the Weather Gods were clearly on a different page in 2017! While the weather was quite decent in late May and early June, it seemed to deteriorate as the summer progressed. A succession of depressions tracked across our route for much of the time. Having said that, when in the sun and out of the wind, it was really a very pleasant temperature. The sun is quite strong in mid-summer and sun screen

was needed to avoid burning – all helped no doubt by the pollution-free atmosphere, which has relatively low humidity.

Places to Visit

The Baltic is vast, a fact I first appreciated when looking at an Admiralty chart big enough to be a table cloth! It is a huge area and one could spend a life-time cruising and still only cover a small proportion of the accessible regions. Apparently if you pivot Sweden on its southern tip, then it would reach to Rome!

To enjoy a trip to the Baltic, we realized we must focus. For this trip we spent time on the German coast, the Southern Danish Islands and the south and east coast of Sweden. We never got as far as Stockholm, but did visit many of the Hanseatic towns, such as Flensburg, Rostock and Wismar. Visits to the cities of Malmo, Copenhagen and Aarhus and many islands and smaller towns were also included. We even stayed in a 'refuge harbor', Utklippan, that was literally blasted out of a small rock, surrounded by skerries off the southern Swedish coast. It was like berthing in a large swimming pool and made all the more exciting by the endless succession of boats that squeezed in, culminating in a small schooner! That long bowsprit coming straight towards them, was pay back for the fifty foot boat moored four outside us!

Having a flexible approach helped and paid an unexpected dividend. We hired a car to explore the Danish island of Bornholm when stuck for several days, due to strong winds. The car enabled us to discover, right in the middle of the island, Fru Petersen's café – where a cake buffet awaited. We were not saved from ourselves by the slices of water-melon that were available to refresh the palate, before



Sonderborg's Town Quay

sampling yet another delicious cake!

With a little organization and pre-planning, it is possible to visit many festivals and other cultural events along the way. Many of the castles and towns offered good value tours, in English. Helsingør (north of Copenhagen) was a particular treat, as actors around the castle brought the story of Hamlet alive with vignettes from Shakespeare's play. An alternative experience is Freetown Christiania in Copenhagen, a semi-legal commune where taking photographs of colourful Tibetan flags hanging over the 'plant' stalls is not to be recommended!

The various tours and exhibitions,



Ianassa in Helsingør refuge harbour



enabled us to learn how a town was founded by the Swedes, then burned and ransacked by the Danes and then recaptured by the Swedes. Or was it vice versa? I got quite confused by all this history and am still trying to figure out who the 'Vikings' actually were and whether they really had horns on their helmets.

The Baltic has everything anyone could want in the way of attractions.

Harbours

There are many marinas in the parts of the Baltic we visited. Typically, we found a generally good and consistent standard to the facilities, though of course there were variations. There tended to be some 'country-wide'

practices. Denmark has a large number of almost unmanned marinas – you find an empty space designated by a green (as opposed to red) marker and then pay in an automat using a credit card. Germany tends to have manned marina offices and Sweden like-wise. There are frequently saunas, communal and mixed sex, in the Swedish marinas. Many of the marinas have washing machines and dryers, but in Sweden you may have to book a time slot, rather than use the machines on a first come, first served basis. It is a little embarrassing when your washing is in the machine, in someone else's time slot – but we were graciously forgiven! There is often a supplemental charge for electricity and showers and on

occasion, for water. Charges were reasonable though, when compared to UK, even at current exchange rates. Typical costs were Euro 25 – 28 per night for an 11.5 metre boat.

Chandlers were a fun place to visit – the contents of the ones we visited generally had familiar brands but they are good for local pilot books, charts and especially in Sweden, a plethora of items for attaching a boat to a rock!

Natural Harbours

One explanation given to us for the more reasonable marina charges, was because there is an abundance of anchorages in sheltered bays, behind islands etc. We met many people who



Utklippan refuge harbour nearly full as small schooner nudges in...

had not been in a marina for several weeks. Despite all the encouragement we received, we did not gain much experience of natural harbours, though some did look lovely, if a little secluded. To enjoy them properly, we will need a stern anchoring system and solar panels or a wind generator.

Berthing

We came to love box moorings (Germany and Denmark) and stern buoys (Sweden). Alongside mooring on fixed or floating pontoons were the exception, though could be found where a commercial dock had been converted to a marina.

Stern buoy moorings seemed easier as the buoy generally moves over when nudged by the boat. This mooring experience is improved by using the appropriate long hook easily found in most Swedish chandlers. Our first experience of using said hook, in Figholm, was enhanced by the harbor master's welcome coffee which in the absence of milk was apologetically laced with whisky.

Box moorings were a bit more of a challenge and we had several Pooh Bear moments when we thought we would fit, but did not! The main things we tried to remember was to ensure the fenders were up when going through the posts, nice long lines and a smile when getting flustered – everyone will be watching so better at least look confident. The

upside is we invariably found someone would be there to take the bow lines.

For those of us no longer in the first flush of youth with the agility of young gazelles then a sturdy, folding plastic step tied to the bows makes for much more dignified access to the pontoon or dock. Many Scandinavian boats have more permanent bow mounted boarding arrangements but our solution sufficed.

There is no Tide

There is no tide in the Baltic! Despite

this we often noted a small current, it was nearly always against us! Additionally, water levels could suddenly vary by a couple of feet or so. One day we came back and found the bow of the boat firmly hanging off the fixed pontoon, having inadequately allowed for the anchor overhang. The wind will blow water in and out of the inlets and this can have quite a noticeable effect. We also noticed the Baltic can develop quite a short, steep chop when it is windy – but the good thing is the chop drops away as soon as the wind eases.

Getting There and Back

We elected to go via the north Dutch and German coasts, to the Elbe and then through the Kiel Canal. On the way there we stopped at several of the Frisian Islands, but found we spent a lot of time getting 'in and out' of the island harbours. The waters around the islands are quite shallow and so our 1.95 metre draft proved to be something of a challenge on a couple of occasions, not helped by chart anomalies. Consequently, on the way home we elected to go from Cuxhaven to Vlieland in one hop. This is about 100nm so involved an overnight passage, which was straight forward except for dodging the fishing fleets from each of the Frisian islands! A little planning is needed, as the Elbe can run at up to 5 knots, so when we got the tides wrong, covering just 10



A classic Baltic sight

or 15 miles took a very long time. We also noted, too late, the current change in the Elbe does not seem to coincide with high or low water, so checking current change timing, rather than just high or low water times is now on the 'to do' list!

The Kiel Canal, referred to as the Nord Ostsee Kanal outside the UK, was straight forward. Though the ships seem big as they come past there is lots of room. When we navigated the canal in 2017 yachts were not being charged, as the yacht locks at Holtenau were under repair, so there was no need to leave the boat and figure out where to pay. The radio operator at the Kiel end of the canal was a very chatty individual and the banter with various yachts kept us amused while waiting for the locks to open. Particularly the advice not to confuse his occulting white entry light with the sun which was making a rare appearance.

Food, Drink and Shopping

As always, shopping in unfamiliar places is a challenge, but can be good fun as long as you do not mind the odd surprise. Google Maps was a big help when trying to locate a supermarket and larger marinas often had bicycles for hire, at modest rates, to assist with the weekly shop. Food prices were similar to that in the UK. Germany generally had the better



Tallships abound

choice and prices but Denmark had many artisan food producers and trust-based, collective farm shops where your money went in a locked box and you noted your purchase on a pad of paper. Buying alcohol (spirits and full strength beer and wine) in Sweden was only possible in the specialist outlet, Systembolaget, which could take a bit of finding in some locations – but Linda likes such detective work! Whilst more expensive than the UK, costs were not prohibitive and the wine always of good quality. We did take a plentiful gin supply as insurance though and

soon came to know which supermarket chains stocked the favoured tonic water. Eating out in the evening in Sweden was an expensive treat, but conversely, we sometimes found a total bargain at lunch time. The 'eat all you want' lunch time buffet in the Karlskrona Maritime Museum was a snip at the equivalent of about £10, after the application of the appropriate senior concession.

In summary

We really enjoyed our trip to the Baltic and many thanks to David and Penny Banks for helping us get to Kiel on the outbound leg. We were fortunate to be able to spend three months on the voyage and during this time we covered 2,552 nautical miles. The hidden benefit of spending this amount of time in the Baltic was the boat stayed clean with minimal fouling. Once out of Kiel few red ensign's were spotted, but our lack of language skills was not a handicap. We met many charming people and everyone was generous with their time and knowledge. With no tides, direction of travel was dictated by the wind and desire and, in many areas, daily distances can be small. There are many interesting places to visit and everyone can find something to suit their tastes, from large cities to deserted anchorages. We will return, and who knows, perhaps next time we may even get some decent weather!



Holtenau Lock, Kiel. Just a small neighbour

Suggestion Book



Alison Pangbourne takes a wry look back in the bookcase

The Suggestion Book, containing entries from 1936 to 1970, is available for perusal on the club bookcase. Included here are some of the more amusing entries from 1936 to 1960. There appear to be long periods when the book was not much used – understandably during the war years. Several of the suggestions are from the same members, so to save embarrassment to their descendants I have not included names. You will have to look for yourself!

1936

- That there should always be a fire on cold days.
Response: There always is at least one fire on cold days. The downstairs fire for reasons of economy is not always lit on weekdays but can be lighted at any time if requested.
- That the committee should seriously address itself to the question of holidays for those who minister to the comfort and convenience of members.
Response: This has been done and the committee are satisfied that the Hon Secretary's arrangements are quite adequate and the staff have no complaints to make. The remark would therefore appear to be superfluous.
- That a club burgee should be purchased so it can be flown when the commodore is not at the station.
Response: A burgee has been presented by
- Can canned peas be omitted at this time of year or a variation from gooseberries be provided?
Response: It rather depends on the weather, and the peas. Endeavours will be made to provide an alternative to gooseberries.
- As generally has been suggested may I again propose that the Saturday racing of all classes be reported by phone to the Sunday and Daily papers i.e. The Times, The

Post, The Telegraph so that a card shall be properly set out giving the weekend results to the weekly papers i.e. Yachting World and The Yachtsman etc
No response

- That a postal order be placed with the Nairobi Coffee Company of Dover St London for coffee at 1/6 per pound to enable us to have good strong coffee without any undue expense to the Club. I personally can recommend this coffee.
Response: No doubt everybody would be pleased to have coffee at 1/6 per pound personally recommended by but at this moment we are using coffee recommended by someone else.
- That a dart board be supplied thereby saving the necessity of going to the Victory. (someone wrote 'bosh' over this)
Response: Who wrote 'bosh'? All remarks in this book should be signed by the writer otherwise suggestions cannot be considered.
- That the club should follow the custom of even the least expensive teashops and not charge 3d for 'extra jam' when an additional helping is asked for at dinner.
Response: But do teashops give jam with dinner?
- That it should be possible for a member who is occupying a bedroom in the club to be served with early morning tea at 7.30 (if required) instead of being informed that 'the club opens at 8am'.
Response: The matter will receive attention so that members can be served at any reasonable hour.
- That a stove be provided in the sail drying shed for the purpose of completing the drying of sails in order to prevent mildew.
Response: If sails are left hanging in the air mildew cannot occur. To properly dry sails all traces of salt should be removed. Has this been

done? Should there be a stove under each sail? If so whose sail should hang next to the stove?

1937

- That an alarm clock be available in the club for the benefit of members wishing to leave early on Monday mornings and also to ensure the staff have an aid to working in addition to their natural inclination.
No response
- That a suitable can be provided with which to fill radiators of cars. There being a tap at rear of premises.
No response

1939

- That Turkish or Egyptian cigarettes should be on sale for those who do not smoke Virginians.
Response: A reply would appear to be polite even if somewhat overdue.

1940

- Suggest that the piano be locked up and the key lost.
Response: Remarks noted.

1941

- A few members thought the bar closed on 12/7/41 5 minutes too early. Could the club clock be kept at the proper Greenwich time?
No response
- As a somewhat new member I do suggest a wireless be installed. This is suggested due to members of His Majesty's forces who visit the club often leave and proceed to another club where 'The News' can be heard at 6 and especially at 9 o'clock.
Response: The committee considered the question of wireless and felt that it was not necessary.

1947

- Yesterday evening at 8.10pm I was refused a meal. Of course I am fully aware of all the present difficulties about supplies etc. I would have

been quite satisfied with a 'scratch' meal but the refusal was definite. If this is to be the rule it will mean that the man who comes down (as I did) by the 5.30 from Liverpool St will have to go supperless or go somewhere else.
Response: This is being looked into.

1948

- At 1.55 today I was refused a sandwich. The reason given was 'that the staff was having their dinner'. Is the club run for the benefit of staff or for the members?
Response: The member was in the club from noon and could have ordered at any time. As the staff have been unreasonably imposed upon by local members without excuse the house committee have had to fix a limit of time for orders as appears in the notice on the notice board.

1949

- Suggest that we revert to Youngers Draught Beer instead of Wardle, which is very nasty and does not suit my liver.
Response: The House committee has considered this and it is thought that the present source of draught beer is the best that we can manage. The difficulty with Youngers is that it doesn't keep well

and involves us in a loss unless quickly drunk after tapping. Youngers is available in bottles for those who prefer it. Why not get a new liver?

1950- the ladies are beginning to make themselves heard

- Would it be possible to trust to the lady members' honesty and have detachable coat hangers in the Ladies Cloaks?
Response: We are arranging some more hangers.
- When? *Then a month later* Not enough. Why not unwind the original hangers thereby saving buying extra. Hear Hear!

1952

- Would it be possible for the club to have a weather vane? Perhaps on top of the flag pole?
Response: We have often considered this - and also the possibility of an anemometer - but feel that the wind shown here would be so off the true as to be valueless. *Followed by:* I know but strangers would know which way they are facing.

1958

- The suggestion book would be more useful if the sailing secretary remembered to take it to meetings.

Response: I eat humble pie and will buy a new handkerchief to tie a knot in to remind me.

- In order to improve the sedate atmosphere of the bar it is suggested that an All American Juke Box be installed and how about an Espresso machine?

Response: Rather ridiculous.

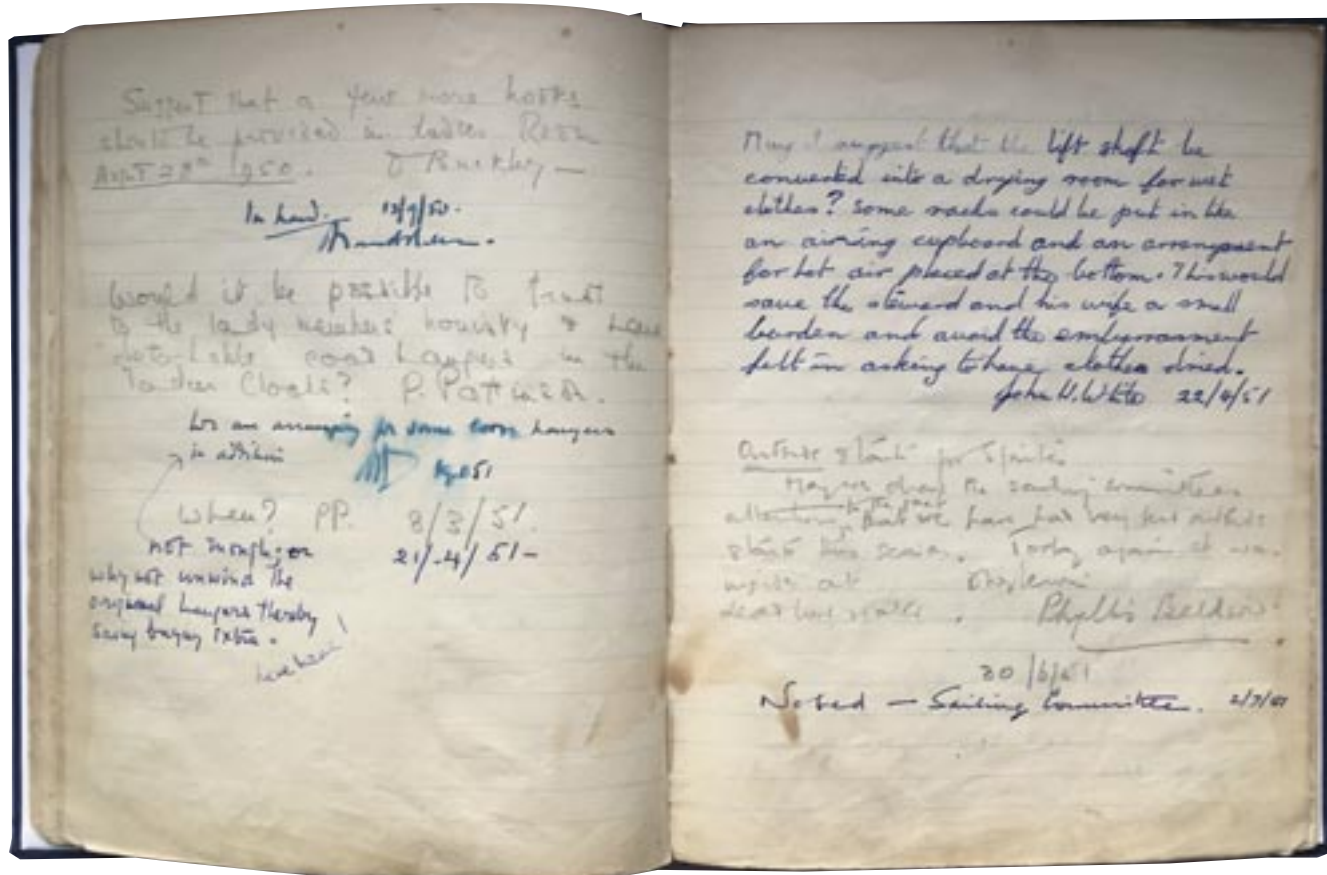
1959

- It was a pleasant surprise to find the bar moved upstairs where it would appear to have every advantage including a view which was almost entirely absent before. The upstairs bar, while perhaps not perfect as yet, possesses the following obvious advantages:

1. Upstairs Next to the toilets
2. Children can be left downstairs
3. Airy and spacious
4. Adjoining balcony
5. Ease of access to steward

The downstairs bar in comparison is dark dingy and unpleasant and I suggest the move be made permanent. (Endorsed by 5 signatures)

How similar some of these comments are to recent entries!



Committee Members 2017

Commodore:	Michael Wheeler
Sailing:	Alan Jones (Vice-Commodore) Paul Jackson (Hon Sailing Secretary), Jack Davis (Cruising representative), Tim Hurst, Richard Taylor BaCASA/Mersea Haven Rep Brian Bolton (Seconded Race Officer), Jon French (Seconded), Jack Grogan (Seconded), Rachel Ramsay (Seconded) Andrew Stebbing (Seconded)
House:	Philip Woods (Rear Commodore) Carol Britton, Linda Kent, John Clifton, Robert Hill, Lesley Mullins, Abbi Roberts (Seconded)
Moorings & Boatyard:	Malcolm Clark (Rear Commodore), Richard Sharpe Hon Bo'sun Tom Fleetwood, Julian French, Geoff Hunt
Honorary Treasurer:	Ian Shay
Honorary Secretary:	Tim Wood

In Memorium

Vera Munson passed away in December 2106. Vera was a member 5 years ago but left due to illness.

Joan Ward passed away on January 20th 2017. Joan was a long time member of the club since 1962.

John Bird passed away on Thursday 5th January 2017. John was a member of the club since 1958.

Alan Hills passed away on Sunday 15th January 2017. Alan was a member of the club since 1970.

Arthur Ashenden passed away on Tuesday 24th January 2017. Arthur was a member of the club since 1987.

Felicity (Lissa) Dunn passed away on Saturday 6th February 2017. Felicity was a member of the club since 1996.

Charles Willis passed away on Saturday 25th March 2017. Charles was a member of the club since 1984.

Keith Glanvill passed away peacefully on Tuesday 6th June 2017. Keith was a member of the club since 1980.

Geoff Payne passed away on Sunday 11th June 2017. Geoff was a member of the club since 2007.

Michael Spear passed away June 2017. Michael was a long standing member of the club since 1963.

Frank Collard passed away suddenly on 27th August 2017. Frank was a member of the club since 2014.

Jennie Pyle passed away suddenly on 17th November 2017. Jennie was a member of the club since 1973.

New Members 2016/17

Full Members

Christopher Burr
(Rosy)
James Chatterton
Keith Cropp
(Morgane)
Paul Dunn
(Verity)
James Fleetwood
Colin Foulkes
Glenn Granger
Tracey Granger
John Hooper
(Spirit)
Oliver Jarvis
(Black Orchid)
Katie Johnson
Oliver Kearin
(Life)
Michael Kenny
(GinaG)
Colin Linscott
Sylvia Linscott
Sacha Martin
Rosemary Nunn
Denise Prior
Nick Reeves
(Une Vie)
Hamish Shaw-Stewart
Michelle Shorey
(Brinestar)
Guy Smith
(Free Spirit of Orwell)
Virginia Stapley
Jay Stapley
(L'etachon)
Sarah Williams
Ava Wood
Laurie Wood
(Full Circle)

Associate Members

Stuart Bethell
Karen Bethell
(Monkeying Around)
Gemma Bird
Philippa Bird
Dan Blacklock
Jane Blacklock
Gloria Blanc
Michaela Burr
Alexa Chatterton
Caroline Conway
Susan Cropp
Stephen Dinsdale
(Dorisimo)
John Dixon
Shan Ellison
Lynden Hockey
(Sunbird)
Amanda Hincks
Heather Jarvis
Geoffery Johnson
Spencer Kelly
Gina Kenny
Sophie Langley
Marc Lindup
Brett Lord
Laura Lord
Georgina Marshall
Jason Pearce
Judith Pearce
Gary Petley
Jill Petley
(Lady Ann)
Valerie Sheane
Peter Sheane
Neil Smith
Daniele Spiers
Carmel Stephens
Benjamin Taylor
Joanne Tyrell
Shirley Ward
Gillian Warwick
Susan Wiley

Crew Members

Alexander Birch
Lewis Frost
Rebecca Hewes
Scott Stephenson

Cadet Members

Toby Bird
Oliver Bird
William Burr
George Burr
Dudley Burr
Charlotte Granger
Dominique Granger
William Harrison
Henry Ryan
Hollie Wiley

Young Adult Members

Beth Blacklock
Catherine Blacklock

Sailing Honours 2017

HUMDINGER

Julian Lord

1st Taxi Lewis Salver
(IRC Club Championship)
1st Quest Trophy
(Spring Series)
1st Knight Hall Trophy
(Autumn Series)
1st Cirdan Trophy
1st Ancient Mariners Race
1st Wallet Cup
1st Lewis Powell Cup
3rd Peter Vince Trophy

BANANAMAN

**Bruce Woodcock &
Joe Billing**

1st Peter Vince Trophy
1st Centenary Cup
2nd Taxi Lewis Salver
(IRC Club Championship)
2nd Knight Hall Trophy
(Autumn Series)
3rd Quest Trophy
(Spring Series)
3rd Cirdan Trophy

OYSTERCATCHER XXX1

Richard Matthews

1st Buckley Goblets
1st 43rd Light Infantry trophy
2nd RORC Salver

RIMFIRE

Richard & Sue Taylor

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

GOLDEN FLEECE

Michael Wheeler

1st EAORA Plaque
2nd Pattinson Cup
2nd Perkins Cup
2nd Lawson Trophy

SECRET WATERS

Trevor Child

1st Autumn Trophy

DURA

Shirley Swann

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

LULOTTE

Ben Morris

1st RORC Salver

TOUCAN

Ed Taylor &

Richard Davonport

2nd Quest Trophy
(Spring Series)
2nd Lewis Powell Cup
2nd Peter Vince Trophy
2nd Cirdan Trophy
3rd Wallet Cup

BLACK JAC

Jack Davis

2nd Centenary Cup

BEAR

Steve Johnson

2nd Wallet Cup

SPOT MARLEY

Steve Johnson

2nd Autumn Trophy

SYMBOL OF LLEYN

Peter Pangbourne

2nd Ancient Mariners Salver

FRAMAT

Scott Yeates

2nd Finola Cup

STELLA LYRA

Trevor Spero

3rd Ancient Mariners Salver

RENDEZVOUS

Mike Berry

3rd Coronation Cup

WILD CHORUS II

James Struth

3rd Autumn Trophy

RAGGERTY

Alan Jones

3rd Finola Cup

*

Round The Island

Jack Grogan

Coconut Trophy

*

Ladies' Regatta

Frances Meason

1st Molliette Bowl (Cruisers)
2nd Ladies Squib Trophy

Victoria Jackson

1st Ladies Squibs Trophy

Jill Stebbing

2nd Dinghys (Thornfleet Bowl)

Carole Britton Reed

3rd Molliette Bowl (Cruisers)

Annabel Porter

3rd Ladies Squib Trophy

*

Reeve Tyler Trophy

Wendy Bolton

*

Silver Tiller

Jerry Hill

*

Carrington Cup

Jon French

Mersea Week Photo Competition

Peter Pangbourne wins coveted prize with picture of *Tearaway* - and her completely crazy crew!



Back cover: Stereotypically Swedish.

Picture by John Kent



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