

SAILING SCENE



The newsletter for **MEDWAY YACHT CLUB**

Issue No. 2, 2016



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Medway Yacht Club is now available for your special family and commercial events.

The Club with its high quality facilities provides an unforgettable location for Weddings, Christenings, Wakes, Parties, Training, Product launches and other events. We have spectacular views across the River which never fails to impress guests. We have the right mix of outside and inside space to be flexible whatever the weather conditions.

We would especially like you to consider using the Club for your family events and for those of your friends. Our facilities are ideal for Weddings, Anniversaries, Birthdays and Christenings.

The Club is available for hire Monday through to Friday during the day, and into the evening when required. We have room for 150 guests buffet style and around 100 guests for table dining.

When table dining, we provide circular tables with seating for eight to ten guests and all linen and table decorations, that will make the occasion look spectacular with that sought after 'wow' factor.



Our Chef and 'Galley' staff are experienced at catering for our own discerning Club Members and will meet your 'silver service' standards. We are able to offer a wide range of food options and will cater for your individual needs.

Our prices are competitive and we are keen to provide guests with the quality and service that they desire. We are able to offer boat trips and will work with you to design a unique experience at an affordable cost.

Mr & Mrs H said: Our 40th Wedding Anniversary Luncheon was a spectacular success. The Club looked quite stunning and we had pre-dinner drinks on the patio looking out over the water, in the warm sunshine. A hundred guests were well looked after with excellent food and service from the staff. The staff kept all our guests happy and made the day very special.



To discuss your event needs and reserve dates,
call: MYC Office
on
01634 718399



Commodore's Report

As I write this the season is drawing to a close and by the time you read it many boats will be ashore for the winter but it is worth looking back over a very full season.

Issue No.2, 2016

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In May we threw our doors open and held a club open weekend as part of the RYA Push-the-Boat Out scheme. The weekend went well with lots of visitors getting afloat. Some liked us so much that they stayed and joined the club. Next year we hope to follow up the open day(s) with learn-to-sail course as we develop a pathway into sailing. The following weekend we hosted the Squib Easterns where our home fleet put out five boats that were joined by seven visitors. Sailing conditions were almost ideal and everybody went home smiling.

June and the pace did not slacken as we held the 53rd Medway Marathon and half Marathon where monohull boats under 30ft sail a 26(ish) mile course down to Queenborough and back with doglegs up various creeks on the way. Numbers were slightly down with 31 competitors taking part. A week later and we hosted the Wayfarer Nationals which also attracted 31 entries. As you will read elsewhere the conditions were varied and race management challenging but Sunday, the last day, almost perfect and again we sent everybody home smiling.

July was our own Regatta which this year combined with the Sonata Eastern Championships and whilst we did not attract any visiting Sonatas (too close to the Nationals) the competitors enjoyed three days of full-on racing in strong conditions. At the end of the month we passed the club into the hands of our young sailors with first Mutiny-on-the Medway and then Cadet Week. Both events went very well with lots of sailing and shoreside activities.

August was quieter but things took off again in September when we hosted a SE Topper training day and Open event where we saw 25 young sailors putting on a fine display of sailing. At the end of September / beginning of October we held the East Coast Dragon Championship with a good turnout of both local boats and visitors.

It has not all been about racing and the Cruiser Class members have been on their regular second weekend of the month jaunts to Queenborough and I hear that, having tested every hostelry in town, they now have eating and drinking cracked. Some of the

planned longer cruises were impacted by the weather but there has been lots of independent and group cruising going on.

Ashore we have been busy as well. We completed the installation of gas and water mains and converted all heating and cooking to gas. The project got off to a slow start but was completed basically on time and slightly under budget.

On top of this there has been all the usual club activities including Tuesday & Wednesday gangs, Wednesday night racing, Friday nighters (very busy this year) Oppie and Cadet sailing (new revised and popular schedule) as well as RIB training for the Honda Youth RIB Championships. As you can imagine all of this takes a considerable amount of organisation and requires a lot of help during the events. So from me on behalf of all the participants a huge thank-you to all who have contributed in any way to making these events and our normal activities so successful. One of the privileges of being Commodore is being at the club a lot and hearing how well regarded we are both in terms of sailing and shore-side but also as a welcoming and friendly club.

The office has been going through a period of change with first Sue Watson retiring and then our replacement resigning but "new" Sue, Sue Aberly, joined us in June and has been doing a sterling job in role of Club Secretary. At the same time we changed banks and have also been updating our systems with new accounting software and a professional administration system called Sailing Club Manager which we are currently configuring and loading with information with the aim of introducing its functionality (including replacing DutyMan) over the next few months.

The House team has been busy not only supporting all the club and open functions but also finding time for the occasional outside event. As we head towards Christmas I know they have a full programme of social activities including Trafalgar Night, Fireworks party, Commodore's Dinner, Christmas Lunch, Carol Concert and Children's Christmas party. We aim to open the

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Illustrations for front cover "The Loss of Grain Power Station's Chimney as a useful Navigation aid - 7.9.2016" provided with courtesy of Mike Spurgin as are all photographs in this edition unless otherwise stated.

Club on Boxing Day between 11:30 and 14:30 when the bar and galley will be staffed by the Flag Officers and partners.

As the AGM looms (Saturday 3rd December) I would like to invite anybody who would like to become more involved with your club to get in contact either directly with a Flag Officer or through the office. This year there will be two places on Management Committee and other opportunities to get involved.

During the year your Management

Committee (MC) has tried to spend some time looking at how we would like the club to look in two, five and ten years' time. Every MC member without exception when asked when looking ten years into the future saw the need for a "new" or updated clubhouse. Exactly what that means differed depending on who you talked to but there was no shortage of ideas.

Replacing or renewing the clubhouse is a major project that needs careful planning and management which goes beyond the normal term of office of any one Commodore and the time available for Management Committee. I would therefore

like to reinstate the Development Committee (DC) as allowed for in our Rules with the sole task of looking at renewing or replacing the clubhouse. The DC would be tasked next year with looking at the feasibility of the project including all aspects such as location, finance and time-frame with the aim of presenting a report to the AGM in 2017. If you are interested in joining this committee please let me know via the office.

I look forward to seeing you at your club soon.

Colin Weston
Commodore



Vice Commodore's Report

The last time I was writing for Sailing Scene I had just attended the Dinghy show in

March and was looking forward to the season start. All too quickly it seems the Editor of this fine publication was asking for my November iteration which signals the end of sailing for this year.

What a year 2016 has been for the sailing not only for our Club racing but also seeing MYC hosting a National event for every sponsored class at the club starting with the Squibs and culminating with the Dragon East Coast championships. All of these events showed MYC at its best and I am personally extremely grateful to all of the Individuals and class committees that put in a significant effort in getting the events here in the first place and then organising everything from breakfast to safety crews. Our final task this year is to host the RYA Instructor conference where instructors from all over the South East will receive an update to help with planning for next year. This is once again a great opportunity for other Clubs to come and see our facilities. We may even attract a new member or two.

It is also important at this point to recognise that whilst the club does provide racing and hold these open events we do have a vibrant Cruiser class lead by David Boakes to whom

I am extremely grateful as he has provided many great events for the Class and represented your views at sailing Committee. It is not only the weekends that provide Sailing activities and MYC would not be the same if it were not for the Tuesday and Wednesday groups. These Groups also provide many of the unseen volunteers that help around the club providing much needed support.

Much discussion has taken place regarding a Committee boat which would replace Marguerite to provide a better platform from which to run racing. This year we have gratefully relied on a number of members who bravely place their cruisers on what can be a very busy start line. Our plan and hope is that a decision will have been made on the most suitable craft and a boat will be in service for the start of 2017 season. We already have a Topper and a Wayfarer opened booked.

Club windward leewards (W/L) have provided very exciting racing this year with 3 / 4 races taking place on a single day. These races also provide valuable training and experience for those members who attend class open meetings which are invariably Olympic style courses. In 2017 we plan to increase these race days and are currently looking to have these once a month.

Duties. As ever the task of allocating duties for next season is fast approaching but firstly I would like to thank all of those members who have done a duty or three in 2016. At a

recent Sailing Committee we discussed the level of cover to ensure that it is appropriate for our racing. It was agreed that having two Safety boats on the river, an OOD and line helper was correct and this will continue in 2017 which makes the total number of duties in the region of 280! This can be a challenge to achieve and at this point I have to say with regards to the line helpers that the Club and myself are extremely grateful to John Basley, the OOD's best friend, for turning out practically every weekend to get the race box organised and help with the starting the races. We are also reviewing Sunday duties which to date have been a 9-5 day. The aim is to see if this can be split into two to reduce the time; more information from your class captains to follow I am sure.

With all of the duties in mind it would be fantastic to hear from any members who would like to help on a more regular basis. We are also looking to create a pool of members who can help at events and the W/L providing the correct level of race management from race officer to mark-layers. This is key to getting these events to run smoothly. We will provide training over the winter and prior to the start of the season for anyone interested in becoming a Race Officer or helping more regularly at the club. Please get in touch with the office or me directly.

There is still a lot to get right at MYC and there are a number of initiatives to help improve all our sailing

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knowledge and abilities. Training is at the heart of this and we hope to provide a much fuller programme and pathway in 2017 which will also see the establishment of a Ladies section for the Club.

Lastly I would like to thank the whole of the Sailing Committee and the Bosun and his team for their help in making 2016 another great year and I look forward to working with many new Class captains developing our facilities, programme and sailing offering in 2017. I also look forward to seeing all members during the season and hearing your views on how we can improve MYC still further.

Enjoy your class dinners and the very best for the 2017 Season.

Mark Penny
Vice Commodore

The demolition of the Grain Power Station Chimney,

said to be the tallest structure of its kind in Great Britain, was going to be an interesting one to watch. Its location amongst other structures such as chemical tanks and electricity pylons must have given the demolition gang's foreman quite a headache!. The basic aim was to bring the structure down without incurring collateral damage to buildings and chemical tanks in the vicinity.

Brian Cameron and I arrived by water, with only 15 minutes to spare, before the chimney was due to be demolished at 1100 hrs. We were lucky to find a suitable position to film the event, amongst many other boats, intent on having a good view. I had already speculated as what might happen. What was noticeable was that a brick had been removed about 2/3ds of the way down from the top. In fact this is where a small charge had been placed and was the first charge to be fired.

It was uncanny to watch (and film) what happened. The top 2/3rds started to drop vertically and then it appeared

Rear Commodore's Report (House)



I'm writing this report in the middle of September, after a very busy year for the Club with Push the Boat Out and the Squib Eastern Championships in May, the Wayfarer Nationals and Marathon in June, the Keelboat Regatta and Sonata Eastern Championships in July and the Topper Traveller Series and Commodore's Day in September. Now we just have the Dragon East Coast Championships to look forward to starting at the end of September.

On top of the sailing events the Club has been chosen by both members and outside organisations for all sorts of celebrations with many positive comments received.

I have always been impressed by the ability of the Galley to deliver excellent food to up to 100 diners but this year we have decided to upgrade some of the kitchen equipment to ensure that we can continue to deliver the high levels of food we have come to expect.

The Galley and Bar are only able to work so well because of the hard work and commitment of Neil the Steward and Mark the Chef plus their team and the Club owes them a huge vote of thanks.

Looking forward to October we have re-introduced Trafalgar Day to the Club on the 21st to celebrate Britain's greatest sailor. Also in the month we have the Macmillan Coffee and Cake Day on the 8th and the RNLI Supper

and Auction on the 22nd so please offer your support to these very worthwhile causes.

Fireworks Night at the Club is on Saturday November 5th this year followed by Class Prize-giving Dinners and laying-up suppers later in the month.

December sees the Commodore's Dinner on the 10th, the Carol Concert and Supper on the 16th and drinks with the Flag Officers on Boxing Day. Finally, in December there is the New Year's Eve Party.

The first event in 2017 is the very popular Burns Night on 27th January.

The House Committee is always looking at new ideas for events but if anyone has ideas for the future then please let any one of the Committee members know.

The website and the rolling calendar are getting ever more important for all the up-to-date news and details of events. We have a lovely venue in probably the best setting on the Medway, so please take every opportunity to bring friends and family along and let them see what our Club has to offer both ashore and on the water.

I look forward to seeing you all at the Club.

Tony Newcombe
Rear Commodore

that a further charge was blown at the base. The cap, with 4 independent smoke vents (probably made in steel), continued to belch black smoke until it landed on the top of the rubble, still belching out smoke. For a minute or so the area was enveloped in a white dust storm which the wind carried it away in a Westerly direction.

My camera was set to take repetitive shots at approximately 1/4 second intervals. I ended up with 18 frames taken.

Later I talked to a Club member who happened to witness the event from the shore who then later, went to the actual site, I was informed that the

4 vent smoke cap was still intact thus indicating it was a steel fabrication.

I am sure there must be other seafarers who will be sorry not to have this 'landmark' available any more. I well remember using it as a homely guide when coming South from Burnham or West Mersey and indeed coming from the East having been abroad etc. You can now delete it from your charts.

If you missed this event you can witness the demolition of the Kings North power station chimney which is due to come down, as the final demolition event, sometime next year.

Mike Spurgin

Autumn Trot Boat Service

The summer trot boat service will stop on Sunday 30th October.

The autumn trot boat service will start on Saturday 5th November and finish on Sunday 27th November. As usual the operating times will be reduced during this period and whilst the start times are accurate the finishing times are only approximate, members are therefore advised to check with the trot boat driver on when the service may cease that day.

Times:

Saturday 09.30 – 15.00
Sunday 08.00 – 15.00

Sailing Committee.

Peter Aird
HSBC.

The Yacht “Vilda”

The Yacht “Vilda” has been lying in the winter storage this year among all the other boats and going through the ritual of preparation for the summer season. On Saturday 2nd April, when at the club to install a new battery, it was noticed that the propeller was missing. This was a very distinctive Brunton’s Autoprop self feathering propeller. The propeller was designed, by Brunton’s, to fit the particular hull shape, displacement and engine power characteristics for the yacht so it’s use for other yachts would be limited, however it had been stolen. From discussion with other members in the vicinity of Vilda and with the Boson it was felt that the theft occurred over night on Friday, the night before the theft was noticed.

Whoever stole the propeller had some marine and engineering knowledge, as they must have come equipped with the necessary tools to remove the propeller from the shaft. Anyone who has had to undertake the removal of a propeller will know that an appropriate extractor tool would be needed to force the propeller from the shaft. They would also need Allen and socket wrenches of the appropriate

Handelsbanken

The Club’s new bankers.

After many years of banking at Nat West we have now made the move of switching banks to Handelsbanken.

The background to this decision was an initial approach from Stephen Keast at Handelsbanken to our previous Commodore Benita Woolley. Stephen discussed our requirements and current situation with Nat West. The discussion mainly centred around the service that we received and the bank charges that we were levied by Nat West and the credit interest received.

Stephen explained the local operating model of Handelsbanken and that we would be serviced by the office at Victory House, Quayside Chatham. Handelsbanken have over 200 branches in the UK and have been in existence since 1871. Handelsbanken is a Swedish bank which believes in decentralisation, this means that all decisions and service operations for the client are made and carried out by the local staff who we have contact numbers for!

Important factors for us were the security and financial stability of the bank. During our discussions it was obvious to us that, in the electronic world we live in Handelsbanken takes security extremely seriously, furthermore Handelsbanken is the highest rated bank in Europe giving us confidence that our money is safe.

The switch went smoothly and the team at the Chatham office have always been on hand to assist and visit on a number of occasions to ensure all is working as it should.

Moving banks was not a decision the Management Committee took lightly but it is a decision we are pleased we made. In summary we now have a bank that is interested in us, we can contact and speak to decision makers whenever we need to and we are saving money and receiving more credit interest than we did at Nat West.

If you wish to find out more about Handelsbanken whether it be for Personal or Corporate accounts, please contact Stephen on – **01634 890942** or stke03@handelsbanken.co.uk.

John Airey
Hon Treasurer

<http://www.handelsbanken.co.uk/chatham>

sizes and sufficient strength to undo the nuts. It was obvious the propeller was designated for another yacht as they also took the shaft key, the sacrificial anode and the plastic securing bolts to refit the propeller.

A task like this would take some while to accomplish so if anyone observed the removal or has any further information please let the Police, the club, the Boson or myself know. (My number is 07719 377123). Equally, as you can see from the photograph, the propeller is of a very distinctive design so if you are approached to buy, are aware of anyone selling such a propeller or see it fitted to another yacht please contact those above. It is also possible it might turn up at a

boat parts sale so ask that you please keep your eyes open. The propeller has a unique serial number, which is known by the Police, AP6763, which is stamped on all parts of the propeller.

Michael Mew



Photo - provided by Michael Mew

Editorial

What an amazing season ...

This season has been like a RIB in full throttle. I am sure everyone had a great season with so much that went on at the Club. See for yourself in this edition as I am having problem fitting all articles in.

Surprisingly (after the last edition of the Sailing Scene being published), I had so much opportunity on the water safety boating and have learned so much from the experienced.



Not sure about you, but, I am already looking forward to the next season... definitely doing more proper sailing.

Thank you and apologies.

As always, I cannot end without thanking those who have contributed to this edition and to all the advertisers for their continual support. Please accept my apologies if your contribution wasn't published in this edition, I will keep them for future issues as I know considerate effort has been put in to writing your article.

A BIG THANKS to Colin Marshall for helping me with proof reading (and advice), Mike Spurgin for his amazing photography, Kellie Jones and Sue Aberly for their liaison at the office.

Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year !

Henry Chung
Editor

Email: henrychungmh@btinternet.com

Dates for your Diary 2016/17

Sun	30 Oct	End of Season CC Autumn Series R1
.....		
Sat	5 Nov	MYC Bonfire and Firework Party
Sun	6 Nov	CC Autumn Series R2
Sat	12 Nov	Cruiser Laying Up Supper and AGM
Sun	13 Nov	CC Autumn Series R3
Sat	19 Nov	Sonata Dinner and Awards
Sun	20 Nov	CC Autumn Series R4
Sat	26 Nov	Wayfarer & Squibs Dinner / Wayfarer AGM
Sun	27 Nov	CC Autumn Series R5 Autumn Series Lunch
.....		
Sat	3 Dec	MYC AGM / Fondu Christmas Supper
Sat	10 Dec	Commodore's Dinner
Fri	16 Dec	MYC Carol Concert & Supper
Mon	26 Dec	Boxing Day Lunchtime Drinks
Sat	31 Dec	New Year's Eve Party
.....		
Sat	14 Jan	Dragon Dinner
Sat	21 Jan	Dragon AGM
Fri	27 Jan	Burn's Night Dinner

Advertising in this publication Advertisements for sailing items for sale, to buy, crew wanted, etc. can be placed free of charge by Club members. Commercial advertisers may also take advantage at the following rates:

Back Page (full colour) - £155 +VAT.
Inside Pages (black/white) Full Page - £103 +VAT.

Other adverts charged on a pro rata basis. Minimum charge £26 +VAT.
(All sizes are approximate)

Please contact the Editor for further information about advertising in "Sailing Scene"
email:
office@medwayyachtclub.com

BAR and GALLEY OPENING TIMES

From 1st November 2016

BAR		GALLEY	
Wednesday	18:00 to 23:00**	Wednesday	18:00 to 21:00**
Friday	18:00 to 21:30**	Friday	Closed**
Saturday	12:00 to 20:00**	Saturday	10:00 to 16:00**
Sunday	12:00 to 18:00**	Sunday	10:00 to 16:00**

* Functions & Bookings only, see website for details *

** All closing times are subject to the discretion of the Steward ~ Later closing subject to Functions **

Galley last orders ~ Half hour before closing time

Please note that the above times may be varied on any individual day subject to a Flag Officers approval.

My 2016 Adventure.

A few years ago I learnt that the association for my boat "a Contessa 26" was planning a 50th Anniversary Rally in Lymington, the birthplace of this yacht. This was an event that would only happen for me once and I was determined to attend.

This yacht was derived from the Folkboat which Jeremy Rogers built in wood. Then GRP arrived which was cheaper and plentiful and he and David Sadler sat down together and the Contessa 26 was born. Building started in 1966. A member of the grocery chain "Sainsburys", Vernon Sainsbury, financed the mould and history was started. Around 200 Contessa 26 were built by Rogers before the Contessa 32 became even more popular and production switched. The moulds were then sold to JJ Taylor in Canada and they have carried on and built over 400 more as they are very popular on the Great Lakes.

Back to my own story. The first priority would be to find a crew to share the voyage so part way through 2015 I asked Paul Jacquemin, you probably all know him as the Frenchman, if he would like to attempt it with me. He volunteered and I will always be grateful to him for his huge help with the adventure. With a longish voyage planned, well longish for me and my small yacht, it was the longest I had attempted. Until this, Queenborough to Pyefleet Creek, a mere 30 ish miles was my record but up to 60 miles in one day was in the planning. The winter of 2015/16 became a major check and overhaul of all I could see. I listened to many and the best piece of advice was to fit a spray hood. The Contessa 26 has a very low freeboard and is notoriously wet. They tend to go over the first and second wave and through the third when beating. More about this sound piece of advice later. I had bumped into a few owners of Contessa 26 on my travels and some were fanatics creating boats looking like new and obviously cherished. Up the mast and everything looked sound. But not only had the boat to be mechanically sound it would need to look her best. The varnish pot came out as I like a bit of bright work; the hull was polished and she looked very good when Steve collected her with the Wise and launched her at the

beginning of the season.

Charts were updated only to find that I could not update my chart plotter as the memory was too small for the new Navionics charts. A late Christmas present from my son saw a new chart plotter installed, only to find on installation that the previous owner had used domestic TV coaxial aerial cable instead of marine VHF cable. All new cable was fitted and a good job too as the through deck connection at the bottom of the mast was so corroded I just do not know how my VHF functioned at all.

A few shake down sails followed with the Tuesday Group. This led to one heart stopping moment as alighting from the trot boat one Tuesday there were three screws on the deck at the base of the mast. Up the mast again but could see no problems. I never found out where the screws came from but assume they must have been left by the electrician when he fitted the new through deck aerial connection.

I decided to leave early for the rally and give myself a month to get from Upnor to Lymington, day sailing marina to marina. So with the tide right we set sail at the end of June. To start we had a pleasant sail to Queenborough with the evening tide and a quiet night on a buoy. Off very early the next morning to catch the tide turn at North Foreland only to give my crew his first heart stoppage as I forgot to turn the diesel on and the engine stopped after 100 yards. No wind on day two and a motor sail all the way to Ramsgate. Up early next day with force 7 forecast to give us our first unplanned day in harbour. Next day it looked better with F4/5 gusting F6. Ramsgate to Dover did not seem a long sail so off we sailed. Hardly any wind so what were the forecasters talking about but halfway down the Gull Channel it kicked in and by the time we got to South Foreland we were beating into 8 to 10 foot waves with white caps. The new spray hood now paid for itself time and time again. We were thrown about everywhere and cabin looked like a bomb had hit it with drawers on floor and contents of cupboards everywhere. For the next two days we were locked in Dover with F8 forecast. Day five looked more promising with F4/F5 forecast but from the West and

we had a long run from Dover to Eastbourne to contemplate. Tried to get out of the tide by going inshore into Hythe Bay to get chased away by a guard boat as the firing range was active. Ended up motor-sailing against wind and tide for most of the day getting into Eastbourne after dark having avoided multiple lobster pots in the dusk on the way in. Took another days rest in Eastbourne.

Next was a nice little hop round the corner to Brighton. Having heard stories about the marina entrance I rang them to learn we could not get in +/- 2 hours either side of low water. As we had a couple of hours spare in our passage plan decided to go for a blast off Beachy Head but to find when we tacked back we could make no headway round Beachy Head. Motor sailing again to catch up when engine died so instructed Paul to sail out to sea while I sorted the problem. The primary fuel filter had strips of black sludge in it and after cleaning and replacing all filters off we went again. I think that there must have been a line of sludge in the bottom of my round fuel tank built up over many years which had been dislodged by the beating we took round South Foreland. Needless to say we got to Brighton half an hour late so sailed a couple of miles offshore and hove to for a couple of hours much to Paul's discomfort.

As we had plenty of time another days rest was taken in Brighton to get ready for our next long hop to the Solent. The plan was to go to Bembridge but here the tide would restrict our entry. Again wind F4/5 from the West on the nose and a motor sail through the Looe channel to the Streets Buoy. It was now too late to enter Bembridge so Chichester was planned but on bearing away at the Streets Buoy the boat picked up her skirts and gave us the best sail so far at over 5 knots straight to Gosport. Overnighted at Haslar Marina and set off in F4/5 for Lymington. Thought the sheltered Solent would be a piece of cake after South Foreland but how wrong we were. Beating into the short chop in the Solent was really hard work and in my view much worse than off Dover. But we made it and arrived in Lymington. Took over two weeks in

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some of the worst conditions seen recently. I now had huge confidence in the boat as my Contessa had proved she could take far more than we could. I was always told she was a great sea boat and now I believe it.

It proved right to go early as 45 Contessa 26 were planning to attend but only 39 made it with the remainder stuck in marinas along the south coast due to weather problems. As we approached Dan Bran Pontoon in Lymington we were honoured to have our lines taken by Jeremy Rogers himself with his wife Fiona and very privileged to have him admire Queen Esther and chat with us. I do not know what Jeremy thought at this event but seeing 39 boats lined up two deep, which he had built, along the entire length of the pontoon decked out in bunting and flags must have made him terribly proud.

The rally itself was a great success and I was glad I had made the effort to get to Lymington. On Friday night we took over the pub garden down the road for a barbeque. We met many old and made new friends and listened to much talk of Contessa 26 sailing along with a number of tall tales.

Saturday saw a gentle sail in company, with light SW wind, down to Hurst Castle where we all anchored and spent a couple of hours in warm sunshine enjoying the afternoon, with a back drop of Contessas and much wine. Saturday evening was the highlight as we enjoyed a very good three course meal at the Royal Lymington Yacht Club. 130 people were present including the lady who had sailed a Contessa 26 round the world single handed. Lots of good speeches and the Club Secretary was presented with a scale replica of his Contessa "Elinor" made and presented by Jeremy Rogers himself.

Sunday saw a light hearted race to Yarmouth for a huge carvery lunch. The rally broke up here with some of the Solent based sailors departing to their own home moorings. We elected to return to

Lymington to leave later in the week.

What a difference the return voyage was with wind from the West for the entire voyage except for our last day where we had wind from the NW, a direction we had dreamed about all the way to Lymington. On the return we were rewarded with one day of idyllic sailing from Brighton to Eastbourne. F3/4 with a clear blue sky and matching blue sea, making 5 to 6 knots through the water against the back drop of the Seven Sister and Beachy Head. We got back safely to the club in under a week.



Rally1. The gathering at Lymington.



Rally2. The great man himself. Jeremy Rogers sailing Greyling. Owned and restored by Jeremy. The 5th Contessa 26 built.



Rally3. Sunset on the fleet at Lymington.

Kevin Thornton
Contessa 26 "Queen Esther"

All photos for this article - provided by Kevin Thornton

Valhalla 2016.

A cruise around the Zuider Zee, visiting the beautiful old ports of Holland's Golden Age.

This Summer we wanted to see a part of Holland new to us. In previous years we cruised the Southern areas of the Netherlands, Zeeland, which I would describe as a yachties' paradise, with its huge expanses of sheltered non-tidal waters, its ancient ports and cities, friendly locals and reasonably-priced berths.

We wanted to visit the ports that also prospered during the 17th century, when Holland was the world's leading nation. The Dutch set off to trade with the rest of the world with the formation of the East India and West India Companies in 1602 & 1621 and for the next 100 years brought back treasures from all corners of the globe and sold them for huge profits to the rest of Europe. "Free trade" and "Freedom of the Seas" only existed for the most powerful of seafaring nations.

The Holland of the 17th century bears little resemblance to the Holland of today, due to the recovery of land from the sea. Dykes, dams, vast areas of polder land and huge defences against encroachment of the North Sea and flooding of the Rhine would make the present map unrecognisable to any brave seafarer 400 years ago. Amsterdam was approached from the North and East, through the Zuider Zee, unlike today, through the North Sea canal from the West. The 17th century sailing ships returned from their voyages making landfall at Den Helder then sailing South to Stavoren (NE IJsselmeer) or the only other ports that existed at that time, Medemblik, Enkhuisen, Hoorn, Edam, Volendam, Monnickendam and the island of Marken, on the West side of this inland sea.

Today's Zuider Zee (Southern Sea) is cut into two sections, the Markermeer to the South and IJsselmeer to the North and all the old ports are on the West side quite simply for the reason that all development on the East side is on reclaimed land. From geography classes in my youth I still remember the exam question "God made the World but the Dutch made Holland" Discuss.

(continued on page 10)

So, with 4 weeks of summer holidays before us we set off from MYC to Harwich, then across the North Sea to Ijmuiden, the entrance to the North Sea Canal. It was flat calm, not a ripple on the surface, not even the remnants of a swell. It wasn't even busy, ships were few and far between, the only sights to brighten the night, the various farms of wind generators. We locked into the canal at Ijmuiden and continued to Amsterdam.

The huge (350 berth) Amsterdam Marina, built 3 years ago, is where the adventure started. This modern marina has all facilities you would expect and also a fine restaurant but it's best feature is a (free!) half hourly ferry service to Amsterdam's central station and all the sights of the city.

Our first destination was Marken, a small island off the ports of Volendam and Monnickendam with its lighthouse high enough to guide all ships towards the approaches to Amsterdam. Volendam itself is typical of all the heavily fortified ports of 17th century Zuider Zee.

We sailed North to Hoorn, Enkhuizen, Stavoren, Medemblik - berthing in Pekelharing Haven! - to exit into the open sea (Waddenzee) at Den Oever thence to the modern naval port of Den Helder. Berthing here amongst the large Dutch navy warships and submarines was a jump of 400 years from the previous ports to 21st century Holland. All passages were kept short - two or three hours typically

to maximize time spent exploring on shore.

In Den Helder the weather deteriorated for a couple of days so we got out the oilskins, cancelled any plans to go further North to the Frisian Islands, instead heading South on the North Holland canal to Alkmaar, to Zaandam and back into the North Sea canal and Amsterdam. Memories remain of the passage through Alkmaar with it's many bridges all controlled from one central bridgmaster's office and watched over by CCTV, every bridge opened on your arrival and closed behind you as if by some magic, with no one in sight. On the passage from Alkmaar to Zaandam we passed through an area of chocolate manufacturing. Willy Wonkadam? The

smell was wonderful, so strong and all pervasive we had to leap ashore to stock up with chocolate bars.

The trip from Amsterdam back to Amsterdam took ten days. Very little distance was covered - only 135 miles but with four hundred years history.

The return was through Haarlem to Brasserie, (where the harbourmaster, on his bike, presented us with a large jar of pickled gherkins) Bruinisse, Vlissingen, Nieuport, Dunkirk, Ramsgate to Queenboro' (through Swale) and home to MYC.

In total it took 28 days to cruise 590 miles. At 21 miles per day this must set a record for slowest cruise ever but what sights, what memories.

Hammy & Mary Nixon

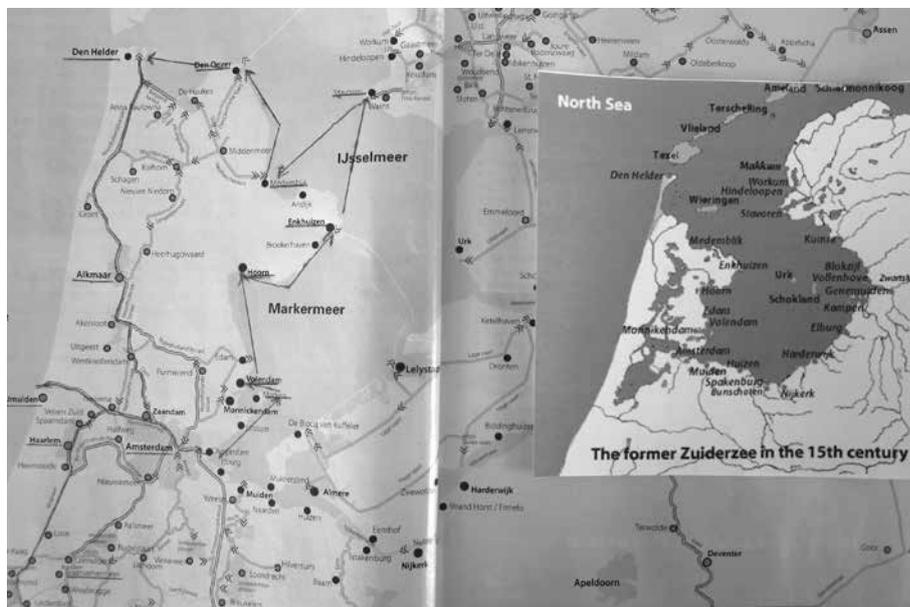


Illustration - provided by Hammy & Mary Nixon

Honda RYA Youth RIB Championship

On the last Sunday (25th September) of the Southampton Boat Show the best of the nation's young RIB drivers competed in the final of the Honda RYA Youth RIB Championship to win two new RIBs. Among them were two from Medway Yacht Club, George Pegram, in the 8 - 12 age group, and Bryn Glass, in the 13 - 16 age group, who had earned their places by winning in the London & South East Regional Final.

They tackled a course which consists of an "L" shaped slalom, a stop maneuver and a reversing maneuver,

all against the clock and with penalties for infringements.

There were fourteen regions represented, so twenty eight competitors lined up to pit themselves against each other and the conditions. The course was exposed to a blustery wind causing quite a chop, a challenging test of the competitors' skills. They took it all in their stride. In fact they all exhibited great confidence and ability in handling the Honda/Highfield



RIBs which most were not familiar with. There were many approving comments among the spectators on the quay.

George and Bryn drove very well to be placed 5th in a time of 1:25:88 and

(continued on page 11)

Cont'd from page 10 - **Honda RYA Youth RIB Championship**

12th in a time of 1:21:82 respectively in their age groups. The winners were Jamie Patterson [0:58:31] of Findhorn Marina, in the 8-12 age group and Kamila Czartolomna [0:56:19] of South Staffordshire Sailing Club in the 13-16 age group. Each is a past champion and their laps were impressive.

It takes a lot of time and effort to put in the performances that each of the competitors achieved on the day. For ours, this year's practice sessions started at the beginning of May. We held training sessions for a handful of young Ribsters, usually after Sunday cadet sailing. Some were old hands from previous years and others were completely new to the experience. In the weeks leading up to the London & South East Regional Final, they all came on in leaps and bounds, developing an appreciation of RIB handling on the river.

The London & South East Regional Final was held at the Medway Yacht Club on 23 July.

It was an ideal day to race RIBs, just a gentle breeze and hardly a cloud in the sky. Tom Busfield representing the RYA arrived mid-morning with the course and the competition boat. The course was laid just downriver of the jetty, the RIB was launched, guard boats and timekeepers were in place and the competition got under way. Unfortunately, there were no entrants from other clubs again this year, despite our efforts to attract more interest. Nevertheless, the children entered into the spirit and produced



Bryn Glass competing at the National Final - photo by Rebecca Glass



George Pegram competing at the National Final - photo by Rebecca Glass

some of their best times.

There was some drama when the results were compiled, with Harry Chung and Bryn Glass posting identical best times to tie for first. It was decided that there was to be a play-off with each going back out to do one more run.

Bryn went first going 3 seconds slower than his previous run. Harry went off at a blisteringly fast pace and looked certain to bag first until a mistake at the stop buoy led to him losing time which he was unable to recover. So the final positions in the 13-16 age group were: 1st Bryn Glass; 2nd Harry Chung; 3rd Morgan Glass; 4th Jake Forrest. In the 8-12 age group George Pegram was first, with Alistair Verrill 2nd



Morgan Glass competing at the Regional Final



Harry Chung competing at the Regional Final



Alistair Verrill competing at the Regional Final



Jake Forrest competing at the Regional Final



Lily Cameron competing at the Regional Final

and Lily Cameron a close 3rd. Well done to all.

It's very satisfying to be involved with organising the training for the Honda RYA Youth RIB Championship. 2016 is another year in which the club's participation in the event has introduced

and developed some of its young members to safe and competent RIB driving. It would not be possible without the help and support of the club and its members.

Thanks are due to all of those have helped, including:

Mike Spurgin who has been an ever-present source of advice and help, Steve the Bosun and his team for organising the RIB and the course ready for our training sessions and the regional finals, John and Matt Crockett as trainers, Paul Cameron and Rebecca Glass as time keepers during the regional finals, Sue and Kellie in the office and the owners of our training RIB "Champion" for kindly providing it for our use. We are also grateful for the support from the Commodore, Vice Commodore and MYC Flag Officers for allowing us to use the club facilities and making allowance for us around the club's racing and other activities.

Henry Chung & Ian Glass
MYC HRYRC Organisers

Welcome to NEW MEMBERS

Samuel Boniface, Christopher Boniface, John & Jenny Thorpe

Jack & Elaine Tilley, Philip Harris & Anne Lamming, Nicholas Wyver

James Staniland, Rachel Darnely-Smith, Russell Turner, David Nutter

William & Caroline Knight and children

Kevin Mooney & Louise Brown and children

Robert & Rebecca Ratcliffe and children

Matthew & Fiona Davey and children

Quentin & Nikki Straus and children

Peter McConnell, Lewis Wright, Ian Nunns & Nicky White

Ross Porter, Jon Smith & Randa Saab-Smith

John & Myra Arter, Louis & Clare Redshaw, and the Sailability Group

VR Topper SE Travellers Event and Coaching at Medway Yacht Club

sponsored by Pirate's Cave

The weekend of 3rd and 4th September was a busy one for young Topper sailors at Medway Yacht Club.

On Saturday 3rd September, twelve Topper sailors including five of the home fleet enjoyed a day of coaching from International Topper Class association coaches, Andy and Ed. The session began with some shore based discussion on sailing in tidal

waters and exercises in small groups. The sailors then launched to put their strategies into practice on a small course upriver of the Club. The wind over tide conditions of 15-20 knots were too taxing for some of the sailors, and the fleet returned to the Club. After lunch, the fleet was divided into two groups, one of which worked on boat handling and boat trim in strong

winds in the water inside the trots, and one of which practiced upwind and downwind technique near Upnor Castle. The day's coaching ended with a debrief, and unanimous agreement that everybody had taken something from the day.

On Sunday 4th September, over twenty five boats competed in the open meeting with visitors from twelve clubs joining the local fleet. The visitors were strong with two of the sailors featuring near the top of the recent Topper World Championships and several other sailors with Championship experience.

With a WSW wind of 14-22 knots and a flood tide the race team set a windward leeward course between the Club and Upnor Castle for two races in the morning. The boat handling of the better sailors was outstanding especially in the gusts



(continued on page 13)



downwind which caused other capsizes for others. The first race was won by Scott Wilkinson from Rye Harbour SC and the second by Morgan Archer from Blue Circle SC. Other boats performing well in the morning were sailed by Liam Schiess from Chipstead SC and Coco Barrett from Island Barn Reservoir SC.

With sufficient water now in Hoo Bay and similar wind conditions, a triangle/sausage course was set for two more races in the afternoon, with the start line close to the houseboats. Scott Wilkinson took the third race after a race long battle with Morgan Archer, while the fourth race was won by Magnus Handley from QMSC. The strong wind continued to take its toll on the less experienced sailors and only seventeen boats finished the last race.

The overall results were dominated by visitors. The event was won by Scott Wilkinson, with Morgan Archer runner up only a point behind. Henry Townsend was the best placed home based sailor, in ninth place overall, although he was only a couple of points out of sixth. William Hudson, from Newhaven and Seaford SC was the best placed 4.2 sailor in tenth place. The day finished with a prize giving on the terrace.

This was a great weekend for MYC and put the Club back on the map so far as Topper sailors are concerned. The sailors who attended the training day benefited from top quality coaching, and the competitive fleet of sailors out racing on Sunday provided close racing from first to last and presented a spectacle for those on shore.

Naturally, the success of these events depends upon a lot of hard work from volunteers; in this case the organisation was led by Andrew Baker and Mark Breare, but the sailors also thanked the crews on safety boats on Saturday and Sunday, and the race team and mark layers on Sunday who laid the courses and turned the races round efficiently. We have to thank the staff in the galley for the catering too. Last, but not least, we are grateful as always for the support of the event sponsors, Pirate's Cave, who provided gift vouchers for the winners.

Tim Townsend

Looking For A Guest Family

My name is Luca Martin Röhrborn. I am a 15 years old boy from Dresden/Germany. At present, I am learning in the 10th grade at a protestant secondary school. I enjoy physics, maths, history and physical education most. My favorite sport is dinghy sailing. I regularly take part in optiboat sailing races that also include the maritime disciplines of throwing heaving lines and knotting. Once a week I visit an electronics course. In my spare time I also enjoy being part of the youth circle of my church community, fishing, building model RC boats and reading exciting books.

After finishing the 10th grade at my school in summer 2017, I would like to spend a school year abroad. I prefer to go to Britain because I like the country and want to improve my English language skills. Also, I am interested in getting to know the country, its people and culture and simply in making new friends. Therefore, my family and I are looking for a guest family.

Do you have own children that are planning a "gap year" or school year abroad? My parents Ines and Dirk and my two sisters Lotta (8) and Lina (11) would also be very happy to welcome an exchange student that would like to spend a year abroad. We live in our own house in the beautiful city of Dresden. Our home town is well known for its historic sites, art galleries and museums, the beautiful river landscape and the surrounding countryside as well as the vivid student live.

If you are interested we are looking forward to hearing from you. Simply write an email to dirk@roehrborn.info to get in touch.

Kind regards,

Luca Röhrborn



Thank you from Robert Munns on behalf of the Oceans of Hope Challenge

For those of you who attended the Commodore's Dinner in December 2015 you may remember that a friend of the Commodore, Robert Munns (pictured), spoke about sailing with multiple sclerosis (MS) and how his sail across the Pacific with **Sailing Sclerosis** had rejuvenated and inspired him and how he was putting together a project to give others with MS an opportunity to experience something similar. His plan was to put together a flotilla for those affected by MS. We held a collection raising a

credible £668 which contributed to the success of the project. Below is a thank you received from Robert earlier in the year:

"It's been just over three weeks since we hosted the first Oceans of Hope Challenge in Gocek, Turkey and I've had the chance to let the enormity of the project soak in.

The week of sailing for people with MS was a huge success. In the end we had

(continued on page 14)

Cont'd from page 13 - **Thank you from Robert Munns on behalf of the Oceans of Hope Challenge**

six boats instead of the proposed 5. Each boat had 6 crew and one skipper. So with two of the skippers having MS, 38 people had the opportunity to come away and be with others whose lives are compromised by this disease.

Together we achieved things that did not seem possible before.

People from 8 countries were given the opportunity to share experiences and talk together as well as sail together, but most importantly to work together to achieve some form of greatness again.

I could give you countless examples of how lives have been affected by the week of sailing but I'll just give you one or two along with some memorable photos.

Bill: Bill's concern was not being able to walk more than 20 yards without having to get into his wheelchair. As the week went on, I witnessed him slowly leaving the wheelchair behind as his spirit and strength started to soar. This is a guy who has relied on the immense support of his family and his wheelchair in order to just leave his house. Now, he has a new found awareness of what is possible. (It's more than just a new lease of life, it's a confirmation that normality

has not disappeared. In the right conditions, he can still look after himself. This is vital to his spirit.

Another example is a quote from one of the participants. "I arrived in my wheelchair; I managed to get in the boat. I got on my knees and helped sail the boat. I stood on my feet and I moved with the boat, I felt at one with the boat. I felt free"

To have seen these transformations was overwhelming to me. I wished you could have met some of these heroes and witnessed the sea-change and power within them.

It was late last summer that I first conceived this idea and it was shortly after that, you helped me realise the idea. Not only by your financial contribution, but also your faith in me. For both of these, I am thankful.

The founder of Sailing Sclerosis joined us for the week as a skipper and was very impressed by the spirit of empowerment that continued with such vitality throughout the week.

My journey with The Oceans of Hope Challenge has only just begun. I hope to continue giving others the opportunity to come sailing next year on the second Oceans of Hope Challenge. Without your faith in me, I would never have

Red Dwarf and Valkyrie win the overall Wednesday Evening Series

Despite discarding the final race Red Dwarf (Hunter Sonata) helmed by Rob Hill sailed consistently throughout the series and was overall winner and won the Barton Keelboat trophy.

Similarly Valkyrie (Dehler 34 Optima) helmed by Joe Bolton also discarded the final race and was the overall points winner in the cruiser division and retained the Cruiser Barton trophy for the second year running.

The last race of the 9 race series was held in a pleasant West/Southwest breeze with sunshine (at last) and shorts were the order of the day. Musical Express started well on the

(continued on page 15)

thought this possible.

Thank you.

Robert Munns

Robert is organising another challenge for 2017 and has chartered 10 yachts in Croatia. If you or someone you know is affected by MS why not join the 2017 challenge (see MYC website for details)

**Colin Weston
Commodore**



Bill



Robert Munns



All photos for this article - provided by Colin Weston

Cont'd from page 14 - **Red Dwarf and Valkyrie win the overall Wednesday Evening Series**

north shore and led the fleet away from the line until the longer waterline boats overtook in Gillingham reach. Seahorse (Hanse 291) also started well closely followed by the Dragons who seemed to be having their own private battles.

The course took the fleet down to buoy 24 with a beat back to 26 and a run back to buoy 24 again before the home leg. Fortunately despite a strong ebbing tide the wind held allowing all boats to finish well before the time limit.

Valkyrie took line honours followed by Seahorse and OCD. However on handicap Seahorse won narrowly from Musical Express with Whistle 3rd.

The prize giving followed with overall prizes awarded to all boats that had completed 6 races. The Barton Cruiser trophy was awarded to Valkyrie and the Barton Keelboat trophy awarded to Red Dwarf.

Thanks were given to the participants and crew for taking part and to the

organisers and trot boat drivers for turning out each week without whom the racing could not take place.

This is the third year we have run the series using the RYA National Cruising Handicap system and whilst not everyone's favourite handicapping system we did have 5 different winners out of 9 races. Boats that sailed consistently well ended up in the top positions. If you have taken part and enjoyed the relaxed racing and social occasion tell all your friends and make 2017 a bumper turnout.

Overall Results:

- 1st Red Dwarf;
- 2nd Valkyrie;
- 3rd Zephyros;
- 4th Seahorse;
- 5th Gandalf;
- 6th Whistle;
- 7th Tender Touch

Mike Harrison
Race organiser



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Cadets' Class Report

We've had a really good summer this year packed with the new schedule of activities, both racing and team events. As you know, this year we've managed to cram all the racing into 10 Sundays and filled the remaining days with a number of team events and training days. The summer got under way with the pre-season BBQ on 10th April for all cadets and their parents where we welcomed several new members.

There have been so much happening that it's not possible to go through everything but here are some of the highlights as far as I am concerned:

Team relay races: This was the first of the team activities. The four teams each had to get their teams round a short course in a combination of toppers and Oppies. Tactics were the key to success but a couple of teams were undone by the inability to board and untie a topper attached to a buoy without capsizing it. Righting a capsized topper tied to a buoy in a strong current is not easy, particularly when your team mate tied it on with a strange and "special" knot.



Photo by Amanda Eldred

Mac 'n' back: What a day! The Macdonald's next to the Medway tunnel has not seen the like of it before or since; 17 young sailors emerging from the marsh in wetsuits and muddy boots, trapesing in and ordering lunch before disappearing back into the creek, confused many of the patrons.



Photo by Amanda Eldred

Two person boat series: this year

we've introduced the two person boat series into the team events. It's a series of 8 races over four Sundays and currently, after 6 races Alistair Bolton's



Team Surprise is in the lead.

Cadet week: we had 33 cadets this year. It went really well and we were able to sail every day. A few days in the middle of the week were a bit windy and tested the mettle of some of the cadets, particularly Marathon day where the award of "Fish of the Week" went to Espen Laurie for 38 capsizes in one race.

RYA training: Additionally Chris Parish has run an RYA training course at intermediate level for 5 cadets this summer. Thank you Chris.



And don't forget to put Cadet week into your diary for next year: 6th to 11th August. This event remains open to non club members and we can accommodate some novices too. So invite a friend and show them what they are missing.

And still to come is the remainder of the Autumn series racing, the team yacht race in the middle of October, the Everyone race (which should be really great fun) and the end of season presentation lunch on the 30th October.

This year is my last year as Cadet Administrator. I've really enjoyed it and I'd like to thank everyone who has helped this year and last and in particular Andrew Baker, Mark and Joanne Breare, Sessie Raw as Class Captain and the 4 team leaders, Raymond Pearson, Bath Gilmore, Alistair Bolton and Amy Eldred. And, not to forget a really big thank you to my wife

Amanda who has put a huge amount of effort into the shore side activities, in particular Cadet week. Finally I'd like to add a special thanks to Simon and Shane Raw who have been really supportive throughout the last two years. Andrew Baker is taking on the role of Class Administrator. I'm sure we would all like to welcome him to the role and I hope that we will all give him as much support and help as I have enjoyed.

Ross Eldred
Cadet Class Administrator



Oppies' Report



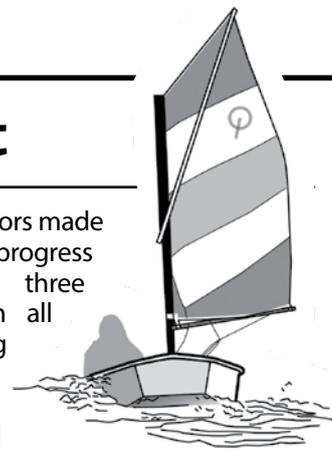
Oppies have had a really good season this year with plenty of good weather, light winds and good fun. We have had a good number of new sailors who started learning in May and by July were able to sail around a triangular course in light to medium winds.

We made Mutiny an RYA course this year, run by Chris Parish our RYA Principal and Senior Instructor. The

young sailors made fantastic progress over the three days with all achieving either RYA Level 1 or 2 and having lots

of fun too. Some did so well they quickly progressed onto training at the Cadet Regatta in Toppers and are now sailing Toppers regularly.

We are now ending the season recapping the skills we have learnt over the summer and adding some new ones, finishing with the Oppie lunch. We have had some fantastic support from parents, grandparents and helpers and I would like to thank them all. We could not run Oppies without them.



I have run Oppies for two years now and it has been great fun with some brilliant young sailors but as I will be running Cadets next year I will be handing over to Brett Lewis and I wish him and all the new sailors at the club good

luck for the future.

Andrew Baker
Oppie Administrator

53rd Medway Marathon

Early on Sunday morning the various weather forecasters were checked and all agreed that 6/10 knots from the SSW. After a hearty full English it time to set off for the Wayfarer 10:40 start and the 26 mile race.

With a reaching start line on an ebbing tide there was the temptation for the Wayfarers to try flying the spinnaker. The Neil and Angus Collingridge boat was first off and flying the kite, closely followed by Obsession without the kite, but within a mile it became quite obvious that kites were a handicap, with No Problem helmed by Charlotte Penny now moved into second followed by Fleeced Lightening.

As we cleared the wind influence of the Medway Towns it was apparent that the wind was southerly meaning a long fetch to the turning point at South Kent buoy. Obsession now had a comfortable buffer from Fleeced Lightening with Happy Ever After in

touch. After turning into Otterham Creek F.L. had to cover H.E.A on the beat up to Otterham Creek buoy.

The wind now picked up a couple of knots as we headed to buoy 13 and it was apparent this would suit the fast planning boats, and true to form the International 14 sailed by Andy Peak and Graeme Oliver shot passed us in a flash to go on to be home 1 hr ahead of the next boat.

Racing continued in a fairly uneventful

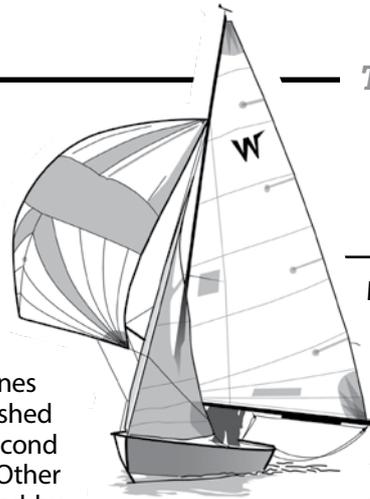
fashion with the main problem being one of navigating in the slightly gloomy conditions and with legs of about 2 miles. The Marathon is a challenge of endurance over the 26 miles and congratulations to Marie and Trevor Cox in India for completing without incident.

Richard Stone

All photos for this article - provided by Keith Pat Slater



Wayfarer Class Captain's Report



2016 has been an incredibly busy season for the Medway Wayfarer Class so far. Class racing began as usual at the end of April on Saturday and Sunday afternoons with encouraging numbers of boats competing.

At the beginning of May we held our first event of the year, a training day led by Michael McNamara, sailmaker, coach and Wayfarer legend. This was a very successful day with perfect breeze and plenty of water in Hoo Bay for us to practise the exercises which Michael had set us. We concentrated on improving boat handling and everybody felt they took something away from the session. In the afternoon we had a short race, observed by Michael and we finished with a debrief in the library.

At the beginning of June Simon Winn organised a windward leeward race afternoon just for the Wayfarer Class. We enjoyed three short races over a well laid course with incredibly close racing. Chris Parish and Rob Crockett were consistently fast during the afternoon and won the day overall.

By the third week of June we were hosting the Wayfarer National Championships and welcoming 31 Wayfarers to the Club for three days of close competition. Three days of racing became two, when a thunderstorm with heavy rain sucked away what little wind there was and caused the cancellation of the first day's racing. The second day saw the fleet complete four races in light and shifty winds just downriver of the power station. The third day made it all worthwhile with sun and moderate winds and three fantastic races in Pinup Reach. Michael McNamara and his crew, Simon Townsend, were the stars of the show as they won the National

Championships for the umpteenth time. The best placed home boat was sailed by Len Jones and Jamie Lea who finished as runners up for the second year in succession. Other local success was enjoyed by Richard Stone and Catherine Gore who finished in the top ten, while Tim and Jacqueline Townsend were the best placed husband and wife team, Jonny Hewat and Charlotte Penny won the silver fleet and Tony Alexander and Jon Moon won the bronze fleet.

In July, four went to Holland (this is not an Enid Blyton story) for the World Championships which were held on the Heegemeer in Friesland, which is a pretty area, not unlike the Norfolk Broads. The travellers were Tim and Jacqueline, Mark and Gail Penny, Brian and Liz McKenzie and Stewart and Catriona Coltart. We stayed in holiday chalets close to the Sailing Club which was a great success. Nearly 60 boats competed from Canada, Denmark, Ireland, Netherlands, South Africa, United Kingdom and the USA. The Heegemeer was not a large expanse of water and there seemed to be some reason why the race team could not race all the entries in one fleet. So the first day was taken up with seeding races and the rest of the week was spent racing in two fleets, Gold and Silver. The wind on the first day of points racing was a healthy force 2-3, but, apart from one isolated race on Thursday afternoon, the races took place in decreasing wind strength as the week wore on until we ended up sailing in breezes that were lighter than we would be able to in the tidal River Medway. This was not to our advantage it seemed. Nevertheless, the Townsends, Coltarts and

McKenzies qualified for the Gold fleet with the Pennys just missing out, and we all continued to do our best throughout the week against strong opposition. The

Championships were won by a two time Olympic sailor, Mogen Just, from Denmark, by just one point from Michael McNamara and Simon Townsend, while third place was taken by former world champion Peter Boje and his son. The Townsends were best placed MYC boat in ninth place. The Coltarts finished in fifteenth place and the McKenzies in twenty first, while the Pennys came twelfth overall in Silver fleet.

Since the Worlds, domestic Club racing has continued apace. The results on handicap for both the Saturday and Sunday series racing will be very close at the end of the season. The Open meeting circuit has also resumed with Len Jones and Jamie Lea finishing runners up at the Southern Area Championships at Shoreham. Jon Moon and Tony Alexander competed in the Round Sheppey Race and came fourth in class.

What of the future? Racing will continue on Saturday and Sunday afternoons until the end of October. Some of us will attend other Open meetings at Upper Thames SC, Datchet Water and Bough Beech SC. We have a guided tour of Canterbury Cathedral, our Class AGM and Prize Giving Dinner scheduled for November. Stewart Coltart is preparing to take the helm as Class Captain in 2017. I'm sure that will be another successful season for Wayfarers at MYC.

Tim Townsend
Wayfarer Class Captain

Photo - provided by Colin Weston



Wayfarer National Championships 2016

Medway Yacht Club was delighted to host the Wayfarer National Championships over the weekend of 17th-19th June. A small team put in a great deal of work in the preparation stage and were hugely supported over the long weekend by the Rear Commodore, Neil, the Club Steward and the staff in the galley. The shore team led by Chris and Joan Sayers, Ollie and Liz Hulf and the Squib fleet put in sterling work each day. On the water, the visiting PRO, Dave Ellis, was well supported by Philip and Alex Clarabut on Eleison, which was the

displayed ashore while the race team went downriver to look for wind and the sailors finished their preparations. The race team must have found some wind because the AP was removed but this was only the cue for a prolonged and heavy downpour accompanied by thunder and lightning at Lower Upnor. The sailors at first found shelter in the lower marquee but as the rainwater ran in torrents down the hill, better shelter was found in the Clubhouse and under the terrace marquee. There was drama in the clubhouse too as the drains were unable to cope with the

by race 4 some sailors were caught out by it as they strived to get a good start. Consistency was really hard to achieve as even some of the best sailors got double digit results in their scores. The sail back to the Club was typical Medway with a failing wind and strengthening ebb tide making the last few hundred metres a real slog.

A consolation for everybody after the frustrating sailing conditions was the Saturday evening Drinks Reception and Championship Dinner where over seventy people sat down to an excellent meal. On everybody's lips was the question "what will Sunday bring?"

Sunday duly arrived. The forecast was mixed depending upon which website you were looking at. The optimistic forecast was for sunshine and a south westerly breeze of force 3-4. The optimists were correct as this was pretty much what we got, with the wind occasionally at the top end of the forecast. Racing took place in Pinup Reach which seemed to be incredibly busy. Aside from the Wayfarers, there were racing yachts, cruising yachts, motor boats, racing dinghies from Wilsonian SC and even a ship sharing or passing through the race area. One race was required to allow a discard and three races would allow two discards. The conditions favoured the heavier and/or fitter crews but the cream still came to the top with the leaders overnight holding off all opposition. Michael McNamara and Simon Townsend were deserved winners of the Championships. All the fleet needed to do at the end of racing was have their traditional sail home via Hoo Creek, pack their boats away and enjoy the prize giving where many trophies and prizes were handed out by the Commodore.

Simon Winn chaired the protest committee which fortunately wasn't too busy, having only a request for redress and a couple of arbitrations to attend to all weekend.

And what about the Medway boats? How did they fare? Several boats had good individual race results but putting together a consistent series was a different story. There were some successes however.



All photos for this article - provided by Colin Weston

committee boat, and the many club members who helped out in the mark laying and safety boats.

The schedule was to have nine races over three full days and competitors started to arrive with their camper vans and tents on Thursday evening. This included one crew which had travelled from Dublin via Derby where they had collected a brand new Wayfarer. Local sailors were at the Club to welcome the visitors, the bar was open and everybody was able to enjoy a chilli con carne and a convivial evening.

Friday dawned with a forecast of lightish winds and some rain. The Vice Commodore welcomed the competitors on behalf of the Club and this was followed by a briefing from the PRO. The wind appeared to be lighter than forecast and the AP was

volume of rain and there was flooding in the galley. Fortunately, there was a small army of volunteers available to help clear away the water and mop up.

Sadly, the storm sucked away the wind, and there was no racing at all on Friday which would mean a wholesale change to the racing schedule for the rest of the weekend.

Saturday's forecast was for a north westerly wind of force 2-3. The PRO scheduled four races to try and catch up some lost time from the day before. Racing took place in Long Reach in shifty overcast conditions. A triangle/sausage course was laid but the PRO struggled in the conditions to lay an unbiased start line. There was so much pin end bias that virtually the whole fleet was at one end of the line at every start. The black flag was used to discourage impetuosity, although

(continued on page 22)

Cont'd from page 21 - **Wayfarer National Championships 2016**

Len Jones and Jamie Lea were the most successful local crew, finishing 2nd overall for the second year in succession. They were awarded the Plymouth Trophy for winning Race 4. They won Race 5 as well and were awarded the Fairway Trophy as the first placed Medway boat. Richard Stone and Catherine Gore finished 10th overall. Tim and Jacqueline Townsend finished 12th and won the Pert Platter



as the first placed husband and wife team. Jon Moon and Tony Alexander won the Bronze fleet. Jonny Hewat

and Charlotte Penny won the Silver fleet. For full results, please see the MYC website or YachtsandYachting.com.

As always, we cannot name everybody who was involved in putting on this event but we thank you all. We also thank our generous sponsors, Chesley Storage, Pirates Cave, Craftinsure, Hartley Boats, Hyde Sails, Energy Solutions and Shepherd Neame.

Tim Townsend
MYC Wayfarer Class Captain

Squib Fleet Captain's Report



How quickly the season proceeds, we now have the Autumn edition of Sailing Scene calling for copy and are faced with the end of the racing season followed by the usual round of maintenance to keep us busy through the winter.

The beginning of the season saw the usual dribble of boats slowly coming to the moorings until we had the full complement of 7 boats, yes I know it is small compared to other fleets



but we are hoping for an improvement in numbers during the closed season. For one of our races this year 85% of our fleet came to the line. We in the Squib fleet like to boast about this sort of number although I know some people will laugh a little when I have to admit that it is only 6 boats. In spite of the small numbers, we remain a happy and contented fleet. Indeed, I can't remember one protest since joining the Squib fleet 13 years ago, if one was looking for a Squib protest you would need to be something of an historian.

We hosted the Squib East Coast Championship in May, the first time since 2011. 7 visitors and 5 home fleet boats were came to the line and we sailed 4 windward/leeward races on the Saturday in a N/E 3-4 in Pinup reach and 2 W/L races on the Sunday in a N/W 3-4 at the far end of Long reach. The visitors mostly being open meeting winners in the past sailed away from the home fleet. The highlight for us was watching some of the visitors briefly sail on to the Medway mud which allowed us to close them down a wee bit. The first Squib home was Black Mark in seventh place. Well done to Mark and Stan for getting in front of one of the visitors.

After some discussion and exchange of emails earlier in the year, the threat from the seaplanes did not materialise. On the 13th August while on our way down river we had the spectacle of watching one landing and taking off several times in Half

Acre creek, this disturb a few ducks and gulls but nothing more. Other than this, we have not seen any others and they do not appear to be causing any problems.

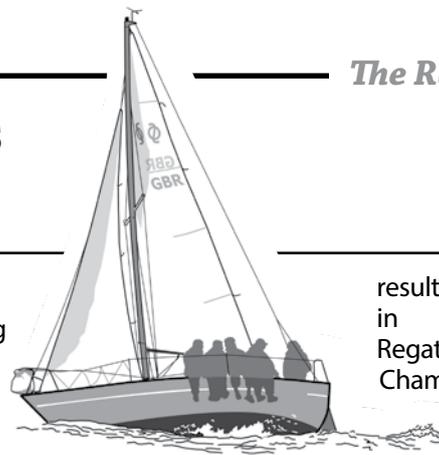
As I mentioned in my Spring report, my wife Christine is the helm on our boat, I therefore as crew tend to operate under her instruction, so it was unlikely that we would venture too far down river this year, so it came as something of a shock to the Squib fleet when a course was chosen including No 15, now, this is foreign territory for Squibs and sent some looking for their passports, as we do not go this far very often and some were not certain of where it was, however, all was well and we may well look to go as far as Blackstokes now it has been repainted and is much easier to locate.

The Spring series was won by Avocet from Monkey Business and the Summer series was won by Black Mark from Monkey Business, again beaten into second place. For the Harvest series Monkey Business has reversed the roles and won the series with Avocet in second place. This gives a different winner for each of the series which is a healthy situation for a small fleet. Monkey business was the first

(continued on page 23)



Sonata Class Captain's Report



In addition to the usual club racing where we enjoy a 4 series racing calendar, this season has been full of events giving Sonata owners and crew the opportunity to race at Club and National level with boats attending the Eastern Championship, hosted by M.Y.C and the Sonata Nationals held at

Poole Yacht Club.

The Sonata Early Spring Series saw some varied winds changing weekly between South Westerly and North Easterly and wind strength between F2 and F5. Musical Express won races 1 & 2, Red Dwarf II won races 3 & 5 and Watersong won race 4. After discards these boats were within 1 point of each other with Musical Express winning the Series, Watersong in 2nd place and Red Dwarf II in 3rd place.

Cont'd from page 22 - Squib Fleet Captain's Report

Squib home in both the Marathon and the Regatta, in fact, the only Squib in these events, sorry lads.

A Squib has been donated to the club but needs work, hopefully this will be carried out during the winter and will provide a boat for anyone wishing to try out keel boat racing, albeit a small keel. We are hoping that this might tempt some to join our fleet.

Rondar Boats in association with the NSOA are to produce a modified Squib with self draining cockpit and a new ergonomic cockpit mould on the existing hull, I think the members who race at the top end of the open meetings are keen but at grass roots level of the membership the feeling is somewhere between luke warm and apathy regarding this. To try and equal things up there is a proposal to fit solar powered electrical bilge pumps to existing boats etc. Watch this space for further information.

We scrubbed Avocet on Friday 16th September, 5 weeks after she was last scrubbed, normally, we would scrub every four weeks at this time of year and just remove some slime. I have never experienced growth like this over a 5 week period; there was 3-4" of weed hanging from the bottom, it just shows what a spell of hot temperature at the end of the summer can do. We all need to be vigilant to stay competitive, even at this stage of the season.

When this edition hits the newsstands we will be well into the party season so hope to see you all at the AGM, prize giving, Trafalgar night or the New Years Eve party.

Graham Halliday-Saddler
Squib Fleet Captain

The Late Spring Series saw Watersong off to a good start by winning the 1st race of the series. Race 2 was abandoned due to lack of wind and races 3, 4, 7 & 8 were won by Musical Express. Red Dwarf II also managed 2 wins taking line honours for races 5 & 6 and Munchkin achieved their best series result with a 4th place overall.

Watersong were back on form for the Summer Series by winning 4 out of 6 races and taking the Barton Trophy. Whilst this is a good achievement, the result doesn't count to the Sonata overall table of results.

Outside of club racing, it was good to see 7 boats hauled out onto new road trailers and travel to Poole to support the Sonata Nationals. I am pleased to say that M.Y.C had the largest travelling fleet to this event. A total entry of 21 boats, including Steve Goacher, took to the waters in Poole Harbour over 4 days to compete in Windward/Leeward's, around the cans and long distance racing. Against some very good competitors, Watersong managed the best results for M.Y.C with an 8th place overall with White Noise not far behind achieving an 11th place with BFG in 12th place. Their efforts undoubtable paid off with reports of good times on and off the water.

Next Year's National event has been confirmed at Strangford Lough in Northern Ireland so with all the new trailer equipment in place it should be another good turnout by M.Y.C. I was there for the Nationals back in 2013 and highly recommend this event.

Back on home water, Red Dwarf II have managed some perfect sailing

results with 1st place in the Medway Regatta / Eastern Championship and the M.Y.C Wednesday evening series organised by Mike Harrison from Musical Express.

Time seems to have flown with the Early Spring, Late Spring and Summer Series racing now behind us. At the time of writing this, we only have a few races left in the Autumn Series before the season comes to an end and we start thinking about the AGM and Class dinner & Awards in November.

This is followed by winter storage and all the chores of maintenance and repairs in preparation for next season.

Enjoy the rest of the season and good luck to the top 3 boats who have now broken away from the rest of the fleet to battle for the podium positions.

Steve Ellerby
Sonata Class Captain



Medway Regatta and Sonata Easterns Report 2016



Friday 8th July bought the first serious racing of the regatta and the Sonata fleet were ready for a windy few days racing for the Eastern Championship Title. The event promised to be competitive with White Noise being reigning Eastern Championship holders and Red Dwarf II holding the regatta trophy from last year. Some boats were also keen to use this event as a warm up for the Sonata Nationals in a few weeks' time so everything was all to play for. The Friday was a long distance race incorporating some buoys in the Thames Estuary, not somewhere the Sonatas often get the opportunity to venture so there was an air of nervous anticipation through the fleet as the course was read out. The fleet started well with 3 boats rounding the windward mark as close as 3 boats could be. With spinnakers up it was a long race towards the mouth of the river. The Thames Estuary provided a challenge to the fleet to navigate their way to the buoys (some interesting methods were used including charts, co-ordinates and trying to google images of the Thames!) whilst trying to maintain speed with the waves catching the boats, the lead two gave the rest of the fleet something to watch as they were picked up on waves and quickly after broached. The fleet were split at this point on whether Spinnakers were still manageable or white sails. Rounding the first mark in Thames saw the lead boats settle into positions which ultimately completed the overall finishing positions. Day 2 again saw breezy conditions which were due to build and with 4 windward leeward races planned the fleet had another busy day. The first race saw a port/starboard collision which left two boats sailing without wind instruments and Spring Sonata also experienced equipment issues which hindered their progress for the days racing. There were close battles

for positions throughout the fleet with Munchkin managing to secure 2nd in two races just in front of White Noise. As the breeze increased boats made changes to their sail plans with Cry Havoc scoring 4th place as they managed the conditions well. Red Dwarf II and White Noise showed their consistency with scoring 1st and 3rd places respectively for all races so far in the series. With the wind building, the committee decided to abandon the last race of the day and the fleet made a very wet journey back to the club for the shore side evening frivolities. Day 3 again brought the breeze and a shorter round the cans race. Red Dwarf II were leading the fleet and just needed to finish the race to secure overall victory and took a cautious approach to the race and start line which White Noise capitalised on to lead the fleet from start to finish. Spring Sonata bounced back to finish 3rd after completing some much needed repairs, however it wasn't enough to reclaim 3rd in the overall series which went to Munchkin, with Red Dwarf II winning the Eastern Championships trophy and the Cinder Plate, and White Noise finishing in 2nd.

Zoe Hill



Medway Dragon Fleet Captain's Report

It's now almost 30 years since I started racing Dragons on the Medway. The format has changed a bit over the years but the original concept of long distance racing has been retained for one of the three days.

The first day of this year was full-on perfect wind and tide conditions, providing a short beat start in Pinup reach, followed by a 12 mile run past Sheerness and out into the Thames and Medway Estuaries to Sea Reach 2 (in the Thames channel). This in Dragon terms was just off the Belgian coast! Wind strength kicked up to top twenties and gusts to mid-thirties making the first proper 5 mile beat to Mid-Swath a bit of a tough one. Dragons OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Dragonistas) and Gandalf went to Essex but had no time to stop off at Southend for ice cream. The fleet was down to 6 boats at this stage, the Commodore's boat COY (Colin's Other Yacht) having lost a backstay on the long run. The reach to No.10 was epic, the usual suspects had some interesting horizontal moments. FLOS (Fat Lads Out Sailing) certainly won the prize for the best broach of the day and there are some great pics on Marine Photographer – Nick Champion's website recording it for posterity. Now at this stage most Race Officers would have taken pity on us poor dragoners and directed us back into the safety of the river. Alas no! in the absence of flags from RIB guard boat Blue Movie, the fleet headed off in search of more Belgian chocolates back out again to Sea Reach 2. The comments on Blue Movie concluded that RO – Richard Stone, probably didn't like Dragons anymore whereas most of the dragoners thought that he should try this stuff with his Wayfarer (that would certainly fill up his bespoke green wellies!). The 13 mile beat back to Gillingham Reach and The Committee Boat was a classic with Suti taking line honours just ahead of Fit Chick.

(continued on page 25)

Cont'd from page 24 - Medway Dragon Fleet Captain's Report

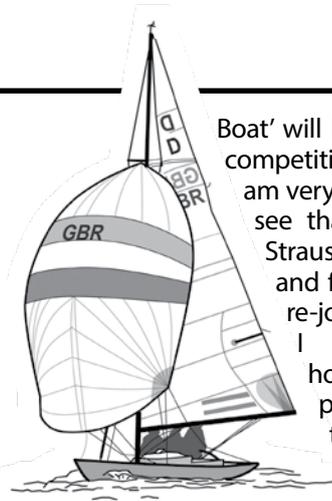
In the MYC bar afterwards, the thirty-seven-mile race was already being considered by some dazed dragoners for The Guinness Book of Records while others were a bit concerned about what might happen for the rest of the Regatta.

Eight Dragons participated in 5 races. No injuries and some great racing left some very satisfied racers. The Medway is still the best kept secret for Dragon Sailing (especially with its proximity to London) offering some superb long and wide reaches that also provide virtual lake sailing conditions (with a bit of tide thrown into the mix!)

The most significant change since last year has been the fruition of my predicted increase in turnouts on Saturdays. Wow what a difference a year makes, it has been great to see our weekly numbers move up from the 2015 lows of 5 or 6 boats to current ranges of 8 to 10 on the MYC line. The highest was six weeks ago when Race 15 saw 12 of our current 13 boat fleet cross the line.

So what's changed? We still have a great level of enthusiasm and competitive spirit with the hard core of five or six boats and this has been enhanced by the return of Gandalf and Royalist, the arrival of Anarchy and the re-launching of Ithaca (who actually won the race on her first outing this year!).

So can we continue the growth? Well there are a couple of opportunities. Firstly, I can welcome Ben Hancock, an ex Solent member and Class Captain who has recently brought his boat Asa from Northern Ireland. She currently resides in Jaspar's barn to undergo some work and hopefully start racing with us next year. Asa is a wooden boat so it looks as if 'The Right Royal Red



Boat' will have some competition! Next I am very pleased to see that Quentin Strauss a.k.a. 'Q' and family have re-joined MYC. I sincerely hope we can persuade Q to race at national and international events under the MYC burgee as we go forward.

Attention has also been focussed on Heiko who is rumoured to be looking at a serious upgrade to another more recent boat, this might leave the possibility of GBR 494 being used as a development boat (with a bit of help from The Class and MYC) to encourage others to try and join in the action and have a go at racing a Dragon.

The attraction of spheretex boats - (spheretex was used by Petticrows about 25years ago, outlawed by the IDA and subsequently grandfathered) has caused one or two of our members to look at a couple of likely targets for buying and upgrading. One is at Burnham and the other is in Belgium. Watch this space for further developments. We have observed the performance of FLOSS this year with great interest. Having joint-owned and raced White Lightning (another spheretex) 15 years ago I'm certain there is a good case for speculation.

On the travelling front we have seen OCD and Anarchy at La Baule, Fit Chick at Ostend, and FLOSS in Holland.

There's been less travelling this year which may have contributed to our higher weekend numbers.

Results for the year so far: - The Proton Cup, The Dragon Flagon and MYC Regatta were won by Fit Chick. The John Field Trophy won by OCD. The MAD weekend salver by Suti and as I write this on the morning of Commodores Day - The Commodores Cup is still up for grabs.

The East Coast Dragon Championship is almost upon us and it looks as if we will have 16 or 17 boats racing. We expect to be getting entries from Burnham, Abersoch, Belgium and Affiliated Dragoners with a good mix of abilities. My personal thanks go to all of the ECDC Committee for their great support in getting this event organised and a special mention of thanks to Colin Weston for doing such a great job with the ECDC website pages.

This will probably be my last report before I step down as Class Captain in January 2017. The last four years have been good fun and at times very demanding. I struggle to remember how Pepita and I managed to do so much in my previous captaincy without emails and the internet. David Harris hopefully will be taking over from me and I wish both he and Susan good luck and every success in 2017/18. It is fascinating to see the continuation by our younger members of the enthusiasm and fun of being a Dragon owner and/or racer, long may that continue!

Bruce Boyd
Dragon Class Captain

medwaydragoncaptain@gmail.com

All photos for this article - provided by Champion Marine Photography



Cruiser Class Captain's Report



2016 has certainly been a year of two halves with regards to the weather. Cruiser Class members were battered by strong northerly winds during both the May bank holiday weekends.

The first, a trip to West India Quay was well attended. Ten boats braved the trip up The Thames hoping for the best rather than worst of the forecast NE 5-7. A good tide weekend meant a leisurely departure at 11.00 and arrival late afternoon. Fine dining on Sunday evening at The Gun in a private room overlooking the O2 dome rewarded the brave.

Our scheduled trip to The Orwell over the second May bank holiday weekend



drew the short straw with the weather; a solid 25 knots of Northerly breeze meant Ramsgate was the only sensible option, though in fairness the change of plan was made during the crossing to Blacktail Spit! While weather bound in Ramsgate's outer harbour for a few days the only vessel spotted coming or going was the lifeboat, which will give you an idea of the conditions.

Thankfully the weather improved dramatically and the regular 'Second Saturday' of the month meets in Queenborough were well attended. We've finally struck gold with the catering arrangements on the island. A recently refurbished hotel at the top of the High Street is our current favourite destination; trust me - you'll be surprised! These Saturdays have been a great success and will continue in 2017.

Another well supported Cruiser Class activity this year was the Wednesday evening race during Cadet Week. With around 30 knots of SW breeze the conditions were yet again challenging. The Cadets thoroughly enjoyed themselves and remained dry, some of them experiencing boats that don't capsize for the first time! Thanks again to the Cruiser Class members who made the effort to come and help out; you know who you are and your efforts appreciated.



Our Annual Montgomery Fun Race had the opposite problem and suffered from a complete lack of wind. This became the annual buoy #15 and back race when any hopes of taking the tide to the Montgomery faded, 6 hours of 'sailing' later the 14 yachts taking part made it back to MYC for a BBQ...just as the wind filled in.

On the social side Tom Cunliffe was an excellent after dinner speaker at our annual Fitting Out Supper in

April. The only problem we may have is arranging someone as good next year...I have some ideas for other speakers but I might just book him again, he's certainly got plenty of stories to tell! Tom's story of spearing an occupied fisherman's shed with the bow sprit of what he described as a 'serious vessel' on the river Hamble was excellent.

Some of you may have heard of Dylan Winter and his excellent 'Keep Turning Left' series. In case you haven't he's a retired cameraman and journalist who is sailing what he describes as a '4 knot shoe box' (I've substituted a word for our more sensitive readers...) slowly around the U.K. He started in the Solent about 5 years ago and is currently in Scotland, he's been up the Medway, on the forts, in all the creeks and with his mast unstepped to Aylesford lock.

He's booked for a film night and fork buffet at the club on the evening of Saturday 21st January; all club members are welcome to join the Cruiser Class for this event.

Commodores Day and the Cruiser Sail Past, complete with a generous prize fund courtesy of our friends at Pirates Cave Chandlery, was another success. Two categories 'Traditional' (won by Brian Corbett on Yankiss) and 'Contemporary' which went to Matt and Dan Crockett on Diligaf. Well done to everyone that took part for making the effort and supporting your class.

The biggest surprise of Commodores Day for many came when Cruiser Class absolutely spanked the other class captains and flag officers during the Class Captains dinghy race in Toppers!

Still to come this year are the ever popular Autumn Series starting 30th October and of course our Laying Up Supper and AGM on Saturday 12th November. This is your chance to offer your help, opinions and help shape the Cruiser Class for 2017.

If you'd like to get involved or learn more about our activities please get in touch by email david.boakes@outlooklofts.com or call on 07718 732451.

David Boakes
Cruiser Class Captain

All photos for this article - provided by David Boakes

Cruiser Class Racing

The Medway Yacht Club Spring series was competed for over four races in April and May with one discard to count. Sixteen yachts made it to start line for Spring 1 with the fleet being split into two classes with dual scoring under IRC and NHC in both.

Fair weather was the norm for all races, and no rain at all whilst on the water! The Works (Projection 762) and Full Tilt (Arcona 40) performed well under both handicaps in class 1, with The Works scoring a first under IRC, and a second under NHC, and Full Tilt a winning NHC and taking second place in IRC. Third places in Class 1 were taken by Zephyros (Dehler 34) in IRC and Valkyrie (Dehler Optima 101) in NHC. IRC Class 2 was won by Goodbye Mr Chips (Impala) with Reefer (Robber 3E) in second and Spring Sonata in third. Under NHC, Reefer was first to Goodbye Mr Chips in second place and Nimbus (Hunter Formula 28) taking third place. Trophies were awarded at the cruiser class lunch in May.

June saw the first of two double handed races with thirteen boats out on the water competing for this new format to the Medway cruiser class, which we hope will become more popular over time. Red Dwarf II (Sonata) sailed an excellent race taking first place on handicap by almost 10

minutes and crossing the line in second place. Valkyrie took line honours by over eleven minutes and placed second in NHC. Reefer placed third. The second double handed race sailed in September was blessed with a decent breeze with ten yachts making the start. Special mention has to go to Ian Foxwell sailing his new boat Seahorse (Hanse 29) single handed and placing first under IRC and second in NHC. Reefer took second in IRC with Samuel Peypes (X-102) in third, and won NHC with father and son team bringing Valkyrie home in third.

Over the summer a new format was tested with five trophy races being held instead of a race series in the hope it would entice crews out onto the water. Each race featured two classes, with both being dual scored. The jury is out on how successful the format has been. Trophies were awarded to the NHC classes only (IRC results are on the website), and crews should be sure to attend the Autumn series prize giving lunch where the silverware will be handed out to the following boats:

-
- Dauber Trophy (NHC1, race 1) won by Scorcher,
 - Limbo Cup (NHC2, race 1) won by Reefer
 - Bolton Tankard (NHC 1, race 2) won by Valkyrie
 - Jubilee Trophy (NHC 2, race 2) won by Amberjack
 - Seabird Cup (NHC 1, race 3) won by Zephyros
 - Trafalgar Trophy (NHC 2, race 3) won by Suntrek
 - Cooya Bowl (NHC 1, race 4) won by Surfeit
 - Jade Cup (NHC 2, race 4) won by Nimbus
 - Strood Plate (NHC 1, race 5) won by Surfeit
 - Willis Bowl (NHC 2, race 5) won by Red Dwarf II
-

As this edition goes to press we are in the early stages of the Medway Cruising Club's Burton series which is enticing MYC yachts out for some good racing over five weekends. After that we will have the 'King Of the River Race and are looking forward to the MYC Autumns series which is keenly contested by yachts from the club.

Paul Goodman-Simpson



Medway Yacht Club Keelboat Regatta



Big winds, big waves and the occasional big wipeout! 9, 10, 11 July 2016.

With a very punchy looking forecast, 28 cruisers turned out across four classes, ranging in size from "Festina Lente", a tiny but tidy Limbo 6.6, all the way to the smartly turned out Arcona 39 "Full Tilt".

The weather started as it meant to go on, and with regular gusts above 20 knots on the Friday, there was no chance of a gentle bedding-in period for the fleet. Race 1 saw classes large and small head out to the Thames Estuary where wind over tide conditions had created some challenging waves. Race 2 was more of the same and some pretty tired crews stepped off their boats to enjoy a very welcome slap-up meal at the club house that evening.

Saturday was windier still, with many



of the sportier boats hitting double figures for long periods. The tough conditions also led to a few retirements and some swift trips home to raid the garage for spare sails and gear. MYC again did competitors proud with some quality entertainment in

the evening.

If conditions on Friday and Saturday were testing then Sunday was something else, with regular gusts over 30 knots and the added phenomenon of the Admiral's Cruise to contend with, a spectacular convoy of hundreds of powerboats making their way out to the wreck of the SS Montgomery and back.

The IRC class was won in some style by Robbie Stewart's newly refitted quarter tonner, "Hellaby". Second went to Ian Foxwell's recently arrived Hanse 291 "Sea Horse" and third place was claimed by "Zephyros", Tim

French's Dehler 34.

In NHC2, Keith Lennox's J80 "Jemini" took full advantage of the planing conditions to win the class convincingly with a 1,1,2,1. Mike Wilkinson's Contessa 34 Nazca II revelled in the tough conditions to claim second and Roger and Julie Griffiths (racing shorthanded) gained a well-deserved third place in their Dehler 35 "Sulis".

In NHC3, Aaron and Paul Goodman-Simpson's well set up and sailed Robber 3E. "Reefer" was unstoppable in the heavy conditions and took the win. Mike Wood's Limbo 6.6 "Festina Lente" from Greenwich Yacht Club claimed second place with Phil Clandillon and Dulcie Ireland's Beneteau First 235 "Amberjack" rounding out the podium in 3rd. The conditions were particularly tough for the small boats but to the credit of the class there were only two DNFs (due to gear failure) all weekend.

The NHC4 (white sail) class was won emphatically by Philip Clarabut's Feeling 32 "Eleison", with Timothy Andrews' very well sailed Bavaria 33 "Astral" coming in second. Ian Pearson's Beneteau Oceanis 411 "Fleet" sailed well against a tough rating to claim third place.

Phil Clandillon



The Voyage of Quien Sabe

It is with great regret I have to inform you that former member of Medway Yacht club and internationally acclaimed musician Roger Cotton died suddenly on 1st June 2016. BBC Radio Two broadcast an hour long programme of his music as a tribute to him and his work.

The story herewith was published some years ago but perhaps you can find room to re-run it?

The Regatta Party mentioned made over £1000 profit on the night, not since surpassed.

Roger Best

(A tale of two Rogers and an old wooden Boat!)

Like many an adventure this one started innocently enough with an excited telephone call from Roger, my old sailing buddy. "I have bought a new boat, it's like a Blackwater Sloop, 18 feet long with a bow spit and she is ashore in Rye. Do you fancy sailing her home with me?" Always game for a laugh I signed on, the plan being to prepare her and sail her home as soon as work and wind permitted.

I did ask a few pertinent questions, "Are the sails any good?" "Erm, there is an old main, can I borrow some headsails from your boat?" "Yes. Is the engine sound?" "Erm, it's in a box, it needs some work. Can I use your outboard? Really I need to borrow everything from your boat?" "No problem". In due course my boat was stripped out and Quien Sabe was equipped with all the bits and bobs we deemed necessary for a coastal voyage. A friendly local welder fabricated an outboard bracket from scrap and no skip in Rye was safe from us as we sought out other missing essential equipment.

Came the great day and Quien Sabe was lifted in. This was the first time in ten or more years that her keel had tasted salt water and I was alarmed to see how much water poured in. "Don't worry, she will take up in a day or so" said Roger, "these boats need a bit of water in the bilge to keep them sweet". I thought I could see daylight through some of the seams but what did I know about wooden boats?

We settled her down in a mud berth and went ashore to fortify ourselves for the forthcoming voyage. We had checked with the Met. man at Manston Airport, a light northwest wind should persist for a couple of days before going southwest and freshening a little. Almost perfect and so without a care in the world we set about fortifying! So well did we fortify ourselves that getting back on board was a bit tricky but we were able to turn in and ignore the crazy angle the Quien Sabe had adopted.

We awoke with a start, the tide had been in and was now away, we were touching bottom again, "quick, over the side and push her off!" Into the muddy waters we plunged and with much heaving and swearing she slid out into the fast running water. We were away! Yes we were, straight into the path of a small coaster also heading seawards, luckily my old Ailsa Craig fired up and we squeezed by and without more ado we were at sea. Sails up and on course for Dungeness.

Time for our first meal at sea. Leaving the skipper blissfully at the helm of his new command, I went below to prepare breakfast. I was acutely aware the gas cooker was under the main (and only) hatch so in the event of a fire I was surely doomed. Fire extinguishers? Fire blankets? Don't ask! During breakfast we were joined by a school of porpoises. What a fine start to the trip, we were proud of Quien Sabe and agreed that once fully worked up she would take us anywhere.

The day wore on and the old boat made a steady 4 knots, well an estimated 4 knots, there being no log or other means to determine our speed. Before long we rounded Dungeness and headed into our first port of call, Dover. These days Dover welcomes cruising yachtsmen but not then. We made our approach like old salts flying our homemade flags (thanks Mum) requesting entry and were directed to the anchorage in the harbour, the harbour launch circled us a couple of times and her crew suggested we make for Ramsgate as soon as possible.

Safely anchored Quien Sabe exhibited

her ability to roll and roll and ROLL! As she did so a solid lump of bilge water would slosh up one side of the cabin bounce off the deck head and then slosh up t'other side gradually soaking the cabin, its contents and crew. There was only one solution, rum, vast amounts of the stuff. Before long we were oblivious to the rolling, to the bilge water, to everything!

The next day saw us proceeding out through the Dover roughs and on course for Ramsgate. Our friendly north-westerly made for pleasant sailing. A deficiency in cleats became apparent. The irrepressible Roger rummaged about below for a while and emerged triumphantly with a huge cleat, two nails and a hammer. He gazed about the cockpit, muttered "About here I think" and nailed the cleat in place! Many years after these events a German yacht builder invented a Central Winch System with all lines coming into the cockpit to one powerful winch, we were decades ahead of them with our Central Cleat System.

It took only a few hours to reach Ramsgate and soon, homemade flags aflutter once again more, we entered harbour and made fast to the single pontoon below one of the vertical wooden ladders on the harbour wall. Feeling very pleased with ourselves we went for a well-deserved shower followed by a sampling of the delights of a run ashore in that fine old port. So well did we sample the delights that when it came to turn to descend the ladder I carried on descending until up to my waist in salt water, I didn't care, it made crawling into my wet sleeping bag less of an ordeal.

We discussed the passage plan for the next stage at some length and considered it of the utmost importance to be at Longnose buoy at slack water to give us a chance of a flat sea around the North Foreland and so, next morning, carrying the last of the north going tide, we cleared Ramsgate. The wind had gone round a bit and freshened more than a bit but we were in a stout vessel, ready for anything. We were almost up to

(continued on page 30)

Longnose before the first knockdown, after the third or fourth we decided to seek shelter in the lee of the North Foreland, somewhere near Joss Bay. It was considered prudent to fall back and regroup in Ramsgate. Oh yes, and to try and remove some of the water from the boat. Looking back now we should have reduced sail but reefing points? What are they?

By now the wind had really got up. The sea was lumpy and progress was slow even aided by my Ailsa Craig. The motor was not happy at being dunked under the waves and when we were only 100 yards from the harbour entrance, it stopped. "Get the hook down Roger while I sort the motor". I must point out that Roger was and still is a professional musician and as such needed all his fingers, nevertheless it had to be done so he dragged anchor and chain forward and let go, in a few moments I had the engine sorted, "get it down again" "Ok, up with it" "Sorry, down again" how many times I cannot remember but each time threatened a promising career. Then salvation hove into view in the form of a large motor yacht, "Give us a tow please" we yelled, "sorry, we don't have enough power for that" came the reply from a truly miserable bxxxxxd before he wound up his 500hp motors and disappeared into the harbour (and to hell I hoped!).

We had to persist and eventually made it alongside the pontoon again. There was an ancient wooden boat ahead of us flying an unusual ensign; I hailed the skipper, "where from mate?" "Argentina" came the reply and I thought from Rye was good going!

After regrouping which involved the consumption of a certain dark and strong liquid, we altered the sail plan from cutter to sloop and rigged a crude form of reefing for the mainsail and when the time was right we once more set sail. Soon we were round Longnose and bowling along up the North Kent coast in fine style. What a difference a bit of thought-power makes! The day wore on and gave way to dusk; we did have some battery powered nav lights, clutching the green one in my right hand and the red in my left I scrambled forward. Reaching the pulpit I turned around,

wedged myself in and clipped the lights into place. I will leave it to you, dear reader, to work it out, it took the pair of us an hour or two before the truth dawned.

We sailed on into the night, had a near miss with Herne Bay pier, never saw Hook Spit or East Last or any other mark for that matter until, somewhere off Whitstable, we lost the tide and had to anchor for what remained of the night. It was a bit bumpy and the boat very wet, we had to do a lot of pumping to lower the water level in the bilge. The over worked bilge pump went on strike necessitating a strip down and removal of various nails, screws and other detritus that had hereto been happily residing in the bilge. Morale on board was low, only one cure, "Neat Spirits" I cried and another bottle of Captain Morgan's finest was dealt a blow. We turned in wet but happy, just a bit puzzled by an irregular flashing amber light seen on distant Sheppey. It never penetrated our brains that cars display flashing amber lights when turning corners!

The dawn crept up, grey, windy and miserable. We decided it might be easier just to motor round the inside, up through the Swale. Not a bad plan had the motor been on form but with my outboard still suffering from the ingress of salt water, it took a full day to limp slowly round to the Medway.

We had two buckets on board, a red one for washing and so on and a green one for more personal and serious matters. During this long day, I observed my skipper empty the wrong bucket over the side and vowed not to wash up for the rest of the trip!

We managed to carry the very last of the tide to Gillingham where we picked up a vacant buoy and turned in, tired, wet but euphoric.

The following and final morning saw the last comic act, Roger awoke, gasping and choking. "I can't breathe, my chest feels tight, I must have something wrong with me." I looked at him struggling for breath, reached over and undid his safety harness, "That a bit better?" "Ah yes, fine now thank you"

And so the voyage of the Quien Sabe came to its end. These days we sail far and wide in our modern yachts with our electric nav gismos, diesel engines, radar, super reefing and headsail rolling systems, hot and cold showers, fridges etc. and anywhere between Harwich and the Looe Channel is regarded as home waters. As we slip along in comfort and safety, perhaps sipping a G and T with ice and lemon, are we having as much fun as we did all those years ago?

Roger Best

P.S. Roger's fingers did survive this and many subsequent adventures and he went on to enjoy a very successful music career performing around the world. He has agreed to make time to perform for us at the Regatta Party on 18 July. He will bring a fantastic band and a memorable evening is in prospect. DO NOT MISS IT.

Roger Best

SEAGULL OUTBOARDS

Do you have an old Seagull outboard motor gathering dust in your shed?

If so, Joe Menhams could be interested.

Mr Menhams's hobby is restoring old Seagull outboards for exhibition at regattas and shows.

If you wish to get rid of your Seagull, please contact him directly.

British Seagull Exhibitor/Collector

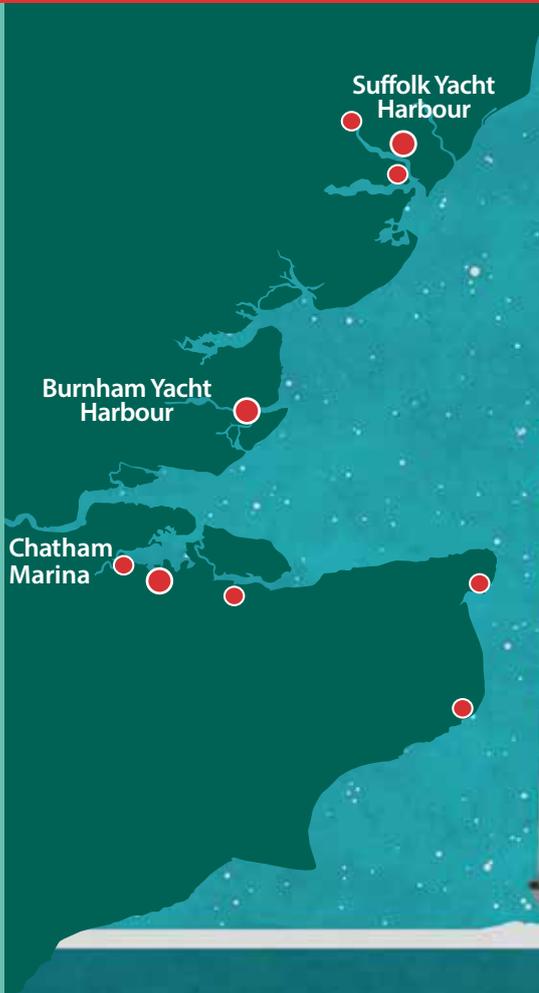
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