

Christchurch Sailing Club News



Spring/Summer 2013

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Jim Mottram, Editor

AT THE HELM



Val Roantree, Assistant Editor

Our rivers are once more alive with our cruisers afloat, eagerly anticipating a more kindly season after the coldest crane-in period ever.

For the last two years early spring was unusually mild and dry, so it came as a bit of a shock to experience normal March weather when preparing our boats for the water. To get everything done in time for craning-in day was a bit of a struggle for many. Please spare a thought and give thanks to those intrepid workers who battled on in all conditions to prepare the moorings, buoys, launches, tenders and other facilities that many take for granted.

The weather reminded me of the pre-Easter weather on the East Coast in the sixties. A day might start fine and sunny and, after much preparation, the task of varnishing, painting hull or coachroof would commence. On many occasions that I remember, the skies would suddenly cloud over and there would be a downpour of hail, sleet or maybe snow. This meant many days' work ruined so, predictably, although the skies had turned grey, the air was definitely blue!

Another common problem with wooden boats was that, during the period between painting and launching, the cruel East Anglian winds would shrink the topside planks, spoiling all your hard work. There was also the danger of finding a spot of rot while antifouling. On the Mottram Scale this meant that there was seven times as much as detected, so it usually turned into a major job.

Fortunately these days our boats, being mostly fibreglass, are cosmetically fairly maintenance free, apart from the dreaded osmosis. For most owners the largest jobs are the cleaning and polishing of the hull, anti-fouling and coating the rubbing strake. Also, there is no more varnishing of masts and spars to deal with and cordage goes on almost for ever.

Like ageing, the Club changes almost imperceptibly year by year. As I embark on my sixth year as editor I do sometimes wonder if we are keeping pace with these changes. Over these years the volume of articles has increased despite the space available being the same. I wish to pay tribute to Val, for it is her enthusiasm that has encouraged so many of you to contribute.

In my very first editorial I said that the biggest problem I had encountered was to give a balanced amount of space to all the Club's varied activities. I do occasionally get criticised for not succeeding in this but I do my best to give a fair balance in the space available to me. I would point out that it is dependant on the amount of material you send me. Apart from the usual Officers and Class reports, I aim to make the content of the magazine as varied and colourful as Michael Portillo's shirts. Val and I are always pleased to get feedback and always welcome constructive suggestions or criticism.

I hope I have succeeded this time with all the contrasting articles. I found Alan's Stanpit piece so evocative that it prompted me to select this unusual cover for a sailing magazine.

By the time you read this, Conor and Marion on *Toucan* will have achieved their circumnavigation of the globe. This is a first for a Christchurch boat and we are all immensely proud of them and we look forward to their return to Christchurch this summer. I am sure they will receive a tremendous welcome from us all.

Another first made by a Christchurch boat is by Ian and Mel on *Jigsaw*, who have ventured into the Red Sea. Congratulations to them, too. We wish them well in such a difficult sailing area and a safe return to more friendly waters.

The debate over the wind farm rumbles on, so I thought it appropriate to include Adrian's article on wave energy which, to me, seems far more reliable and less costly without being a blot on the landscape.

With this change of weather patterns from recent years we can only hope that this heralds a better summer. I hope you will have many enjoyable experiences during the season and maybe convey these in articles and photos for the autumn issue.

Jim

Cover Photograph: *On Stanpit Marsh.*
See article on page 21
Photography: *Alan Crockard, Jim Mottram
and Roger Allen*

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COMMODORE'S COMMENTS

At the time of writing spring is obviously here as there are dirty men running around the Club. They appear from the long boat shed blue and red from painting racing marks; off the *Black Pig* looking black and from under the cruisers multi-coloured. Now even the Monday Club has been dipping in the emulsion. All this work being carried out by work parties creates long-lasting friendships and, something not necessarily appreciated by all, it keeps our membership fees low compared with other comparable clubs. Well done.



Our Club News is produced twice yearly, but not by magic. Lots of effort by Jim and Val goes into the collection of material and editing to produce a really first class magazine. Well done.

Val Roantree has been busy doing another job behind the scenes as our new Safeguarding Coordinator, up-dating the policy, having taken over from Chris Arnell. Implementing it does not just concern those involved with the Juniors, it is the responsibility of us all. Well done both of you.

I would like to thank all our Class Captains and coaches for keeping our number one rule foremost.

The number of races and training events crammed into the sailing season is staggering. Each event needs support boat crews and every aspect has to be considered to run such a full programme. My thanks go to Cruiser rally organiser Bridget who had a busy year, not only carrying out the planned excursions but also arranging alternative venues when the weather went pear-shaped.

Ian Wright has had the title of Security Officer for four years; his diligence has paid off and in his spare time he has led the Monday Club to new heights. Well done.

I do have regrets. Firstly, that we have not killed off the wind farm, but the campaign is gaining momentum. Secondly, we did not replace the clubroom ceiling this year as a first phase of clubroom refurbishments.

On a brighter note, I would like to convey thanks to all the energetic members who put together some super social events for us - your hard work was much appreciated.

I would like to thank Chris, our steward, for being welcoming to all; Carole for everyday catering and especially for putting on themed meals and also our very obliging office staff, Julie and Karen, who run our office efficiently even with their work load going up recently. Our

Club is kept spick and span thanks to Jane Arnell. Thanks also to Tory and her team for keeping our toilets pristine so that we may flush with pride.

My thanks go to the Committee, especially the Officers who each have their areas of responsibility and hassle. This has ensured all activities have run smoothly.

This year we have two Officers and a Trustee standing down, firstly Kath Whitehead. I was surprised to find that we have over five hundred boats on our register so no wonder our Sailing Secretary has been very busy. Kath has done a marvellous job for us over the past three years. Now retiring from secretarial duties, Kath has learnt how much support work is done in the Bosuns' department so she feels that there is only one thing for her to do, get stuck in and help.

Graham Woods, our Honorary Secretary, is also standing down. I would like to thank Graham for all the time and effort that he has put into keeping us legal in all departments. When our drink supplier went bankrupt Graham was soon on the case to sort out new suppliers at keener prices.

For over 30 years Ken Bolt has given outstanding service to the Club, as Honorary Treasurer for 20 years and then a further 12 as Trustee. His knowledge, experience and commitment are greatly appreciated and I thank him for all he has contributed to our Club. Enjoy your 'retirement' Ken.

Well done and thanks to you all.

Finally, thank you to all members for participating in the varied events that make Christchurch Sailing Club such a good, friendly and happy place.

Lawrence, Commodore



FAREWELL FROM KATH

The programme for 2013 has now been published and another busy year looms ahead. I keep hopeful that this year the weather will be more supportive of our plans and that we have a more fruitful sailing season.

My thanks go to Chris Arnell and the Class Captains for their tireless efforts in completing this programme and having it ready in time to go into the clubroom for a couple of weeks before

Kath

Christmas, which successfully allowed many of you to select your own preferred duties.

Hopefully, by the time this magazine is published we will have held some refresher training sessions in March and April for Race Officers. This is one duty where we are always struggling with numbers to fill positions. Hopefully the training sessions will help support this, as ideally we need some more individuals to come forward and take up Race Officer duties.

I did mention in my last article for the magazine that I would be standing down as Sailing Secretary at the AGM in 2013. I have found that the last three years have passed very quickly and the role has been interesting and enjoyable.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to all current and past members of the Sailing Committee for their work and support over the last three years.

Thank you to the bosuns and their team of helpers for all they continue to do for the Club. Thanks, also to members, Officers and staff who have given me their time and support during my time as Sailing Secretary.

Kath Whitehead



EXCITING PROJECT UNVEILED

The strength and vitality of our Club was again illustrated when almost 200 members attended the Annual General Meeting on 6 April.

Although not a year for moves of the top three officer positions, there were some changes in the management of the Club with Ken Bolt retiring as Trustee and the resignations of the Honorary Secretary, Graham Woods and Sailing Secretary, Kath Whitehead. In his address, Commodore Lawrence Crapper showed his appreciation of their work. He thanked Ken for his guidance and wisdom and Kath who, in her three years in office, had created a great rapport with the Bosuns.

Lawrence thanked Graham for his work and especially for organising alternative arrangements at the sudden demise of the bar suppliers. In response, Graham said that, upon taking office, he had considered several aspects of the Club's management to be in a poor state. He had encountered many problems and difficulties but believed he was leaving the post in good order. He thanked all of those who had given him support and encouragement and wished his successor, John Moss, every success in carrying the Club forward.

Ricci Cobelli was installed as Honorary Sailing Secretary. A former Hawk Class Captain, he is currently also Cruiser Captain.

In the continuing absence of a Social committee, Malcolm Selkirk was appointed as Social Co-ordinator. Addressing the meeting, he said that he hoped to find groups of people prepared to organise events. He could offer organisational experience, financial backing and other expertise.

He hoped that six or seven events could be held and requested that volunteers or those who had ideas for an event contact him

The proposed rules changes were then discussed and there was disquiet from some members that the liability clause did not fully absolve members from their liability for events held at the Club.

The assembly was assured that the wording was that recommended by the RYA and that any apparent anomalies were covered in other clauses. This still did not satisfy some members but it was generally felt that the whole package of rule changes should not be rejected over this. The amendments were therefore approved with the understanding that further consideration should be given to the controversial clause.

Ricci Cobelli then spoke of the Sport England Facility Funding which had only recently come to the attention of the Committee. This provided a maximum grant of £50,000 and many clubs had taken advantage of this to fund worthwhile projects. The Committee had felt that this opportunity should not be missed as it could help provide a room for

training and other functions that the Club so badly needed. As the application for the grant had to be submitted by the end of April outline plans were drawn up with consultation with Nigel Solomon and the sub-committee.

The proposed plan is to extend the area of the sun deck four metres from the existing outside wall. This would be supported by steel beams and pillars so the loss of dinghy space would be negligible. This plan is now on display in the clubroom. It was estimated that the project would cost in the region of £90,000 and, if full funding was granted, it was felt that the Club could well afford the balance of £40,000. If all went ahead, building work would commence in November. It was inevitable that this would lead to some disruption for the cruiser lay-up.

Support was sought from the meeting for the application to go ahead and most were enthusiastic about the project. Some thought that the room would be better sited at the front of the building or the site of the long boatshed. Both options had been investigated but rejected because of cost or impracticality. Other questions were asked about what would happen if full funding was not granted and the Club required to find the increased balance. Some were concerned about possible conditions required by the grant and if the Club would be required to open up to some outsiders.

The meeting was assured that before any final decision was made all aspects of the project would go for discussion and approval at an Extraordinary General Meeting. After these assurances the meeting approved the decision to make the application for funding.

Another point raised was the possible installation of a coffee vending machine as this facility was not always available. The questioner was informed that this had been discussed before but it had been difficult to find a place for it. He was assured that this matter would be reviewed again.

A request was once more made that CVs of applicants for committee be made available to the membership in advance of the meeting in some form as there was no opportunity to peruse these during proceedings.

Awards were then made:

Conor and Marion Wall, despite their absence, were awarded the Paul Reakes Trophy for the remarkable achievement of their world circumnavigation.

Pat Lokatis and Julie Marston jointly won the Tom Drew Trophy for their work behind the scenes.

The Commodore again deplored the fact that no entries had been submitted for the Aldridge Cruising Trophy.

Certificates for the photographic competition were presented although the overall winner, Garry Sibbald, was not present. Full results can be found elsewhere in this issue.

At the conclusion of the meeting the result of the ballots were announced.

There had been three applicants for the position of Trustee. Paul Moores was selected and congratulated by all. There were ten contenders for General Committee. The eight selected were Bridget Allen, Barbara Osborne, Tim Tyrrell, Nick Woolley, John Roantree, Ian Wright, Brian Horrocks and Richard Beasley.



Paul Moores



Past and present Honorary Secretaries



Julie and Pat with the Tom Drew Trophy



Malcolm Selkirk



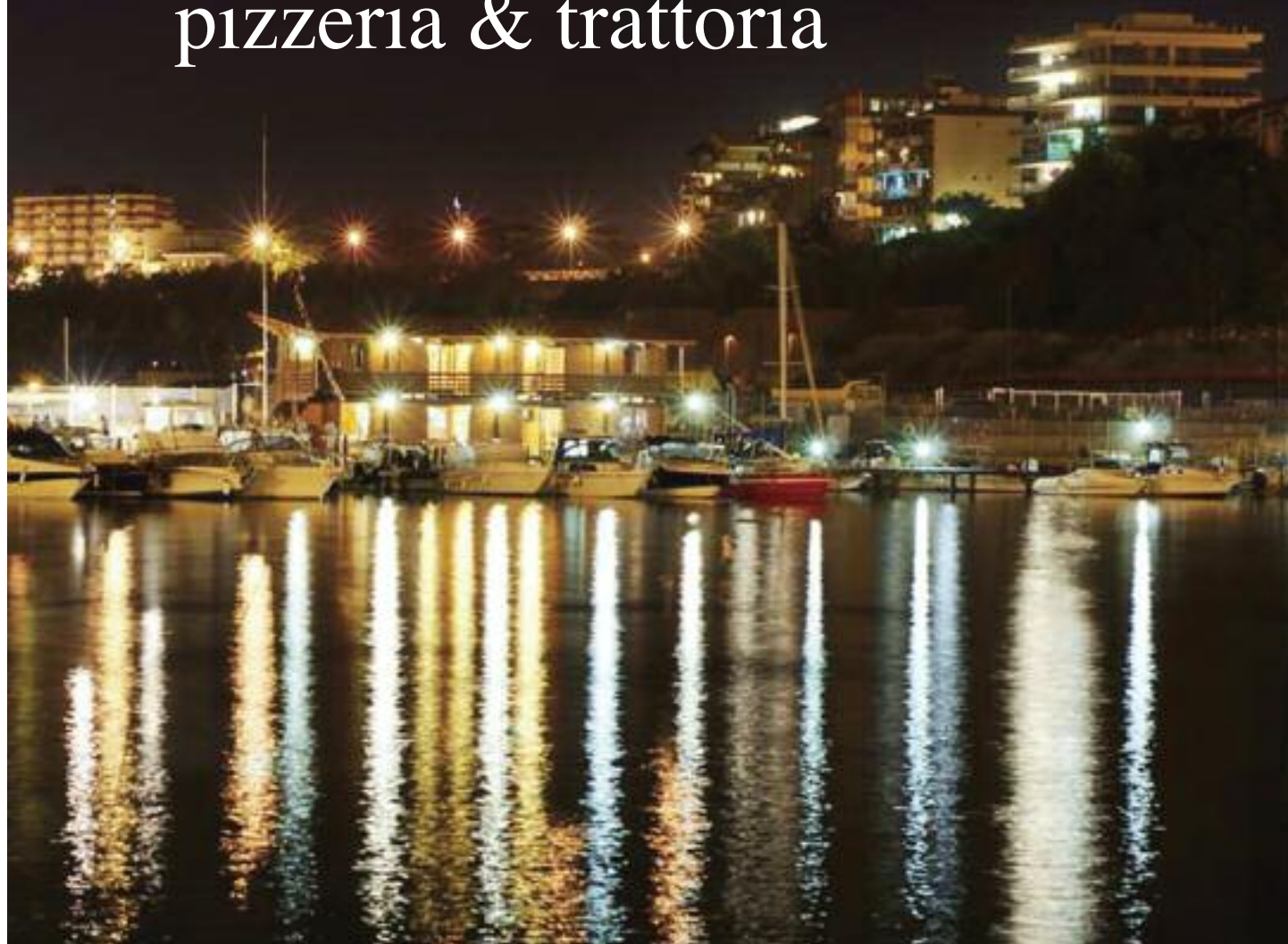
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THE MOORINGS

'Oh dear!' or something similar was said in the autumn when we found that our E trot moorings were breaking up. On further investigation it was decided to replace the whole length. We measured up, got some quotations, then ordered and soon we had 3.5 tons of new chain sitting on the quay.

With the river being so high, it was very hard to raise the existing anchors. After three sessions before Christmas and only 5 of the 22 anchors on the trot recovered, we were a little depressed and realising we needed more help and lower water levels.

Early in the New Year we learned Jenkins Marine had their work barge in Christchurch doing some piling for more moneyed people than us. A phone call to Jenkins soon confirmed that they were here for two days, but if we wanted it they would delay their next job at Marconi Quay, Poole. A quick word with our available Officers confirmed it would be worth hiring because we would only pay for time used. We would save a day's travelling each way and associated cost with tide and possible weather complications.

That day we put out an email asking for volunteers to do some chain pulling on the quay so as to measure and mark boat lengths. The next morning we had some eager members to pull out sufficient chain to make a start. After such a good turn out and the job done I felt they were disappointed that there wasn't more to do. 'Next time!' I thought.

The following day Jenkins' barge came at midday with Stewart at the helm, known to me as he had operated it when our quay was reconstructed in 2005. The plan was to recover all the remaining chain



Oh dear!

attaching buoys. It was a case of many hands make lighter work. Thank you all who got involved.

With the river remaining high it has been a struggle to finish all the other mooring inspections.

Our section leaders have been out on the river whenever the tide and daylight allow. As I am writing this, just before craning-in, it is noted that we still have at least 3 more sessions to finish this year's maintenance.

*Lawrence Crapper
Commodore*



New for old



Buffalo at work

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REFUELLING TECHNICIAN

Weekly diesel topping-up, ensuring that no air gap is left in fuel tanks allowing water condensation and propagation of diesel bugs.

BILGE MANAGEMENT

Regular manual pumping-out to avoid flattening starter batteries and the sorting-out of electrical components e.g. starter motors, caused by splashing bilge water.

COOLING COMMISAR

Cleaning-out inlet filters of weed, sand and mud to ensure free flow of raw water cooling flow.

ENGINE MECHANIC

Checking and topping-up oil levels, starting engines and testing gearbox and controls.

MOORING MASTER

Checking and re-attaching mooring lines in the prescribed manner.

These are not individual jobs but some of the aspects of being a member of the Summer Bosun team. This variety makes the job interesting and fulfilling. Gossiping and moaning about other Club members who use and abuse the escort vessels provides the entertainment element.

The present Bosun's Mates are cracking on in years and we need fresh blood. So, if you are recently retired, are available on Monday or Tuesday morning and are still fit and well, you could be ideal.

Having an interest is more important than experience as on-the-job mentoring is available. Common sense and reliability are more important than technical qualifications. This is an opportunity to learn the skills that will stand you in good stead when looking after your own boat.

Sea trials, rescue and escort duties provide opportunities for more time on the water and boat handling experience.

So if you are interested and available, put your name on the Bosun's Mate Reserve List in the office.

Graham Begley, Summer Bosun



LEAVING THE HOT SEAT

Welcome to spring and, with the boats all ready, we look forward to a busy year. The winter seems to have dragged with such poor weather and not even a few barmy days in February or March.

Fortunately I have been in Australia and the Far East for a few weeks. Some of you will know that I have been working on a project in Australia that involves a new State Carriage for H.M. Queen Elizabeth. www.royalcoach.downau.com/. I was hoping to tell all in a winter talk on Jewels for the Royals. Maybe I can do this later if members wish.

I am now back from my business trip, getting into full swing at the Club and find that the ladies in the office have done a great job in looking after you all.

As you read this we will have had our AGM and the Club will have voted in a new Hon Sec. Despite a huge amount of support and encouragement, I have decided to stand down. It is not often that we get a volunteer for this post and with threats around my standing and some worried at what I might say at the AGM, I thought it was in the Club's interest not to oppose them. The Club's staffing and administration is in a much better situation now and unless legislation throws anything else at us, employees, officers and members are well represented.

Despite trying to wind down at work, I seem to be busier than ever. I have various important company projects which affect a lot of people if I do not give 100% commitment. Over the years I have run many varied, successful and completely different businesses alongside my main company. It has given me an in-depth knowledge of a wide cross-section of international commerce, which never seems to assist me much at the Club quiz evenings! When I took over the Hon Sec's job there were many issues which had not been addressed either because of not wanting change or just not wanting to upset friends! Club committees are always difficult and most clubs are run by a few forceful personalities; it is certainly easier handling a board meeting of entrepreneurs than working the politics within a club.

Christchurch Sailing Club is at a cross roads. We are not a small club, nor are we a Royal club! We are, however, a thriving club with a strong membership and now with the freehold of the moorings we have assets and a balance sheet envied by many. The next step, I feel, is for the Club, or certainly parts of it, to become incorporated to protect those assets and to protect your volunteer Officers and Trustees who are



The Royal Coach

responsible. Clubs are for members and it is my opinion that the members should become share holders in a club which has serious plans for the future that members can debate.

As Chairman of the Bar and Catering Committee, I know we, again, have had our challenges over the last couple of years and particularly this winter. I am very grateful to have had a great team who have been very positive in all that we have done; new suppliers, new beers, new wines all sorted. Chris, your Steward, is now ready to advise you on the wines on offer and we hope you all enjoy these and spend lots over the bar this summer. We really need more socials to keep the use of the Club and its bar at a break-even/profitable level. I know many of our younger members are busy with work, children, etc. but please make the time to assist whoever takes on the Social job to organise events that you will enjoy. Please make an effort to use the Club more, even if only for a Friday night nosh with Carole - after all it is one of the best spots in the country!

A big thanks to all the members and to my supporters. Have a great season and be involved. It's your Club!

Graham Woods, retiring Honorary Secretary

TRAINING NEWS

Last season got off to a cracking start with two RYA Safety Boat courses in early April. Not only were they well attended but also blessed with beautiful, blue skies. These courses provided members with an opportunity to practise rescue skills in a variety of Club escort boats. Much fun was had and new friendships forged with wide ranging age groups sharing boating experiences that will be talked about for many years to come!

The first aid courses were equally well attended with 14 members in total updating their skills and improving their knowledge of how to deal with medical emergencies afloat. Probably the highlight of these courses was the bandaging competition held between two well-known Club characters. It was comforting to know that even first aid could be made competitive if you try hard enough!

Sadly, the sunshine enjoyed in April did not last long and by June many of our Powerboat training courses were not blessed with good weather. Wet, windy and wild was the experience most often talked about at debriefs but, despite the weather, the number of members involved in RYA Level 2 Powerboat training was up on last year – well done you hardy souls!



By popular demand, this season there will be an RYA Day Skipper Theory course later in the year. It will run on Tuesday evenings starting in November and it is hoped to provide a progression from the Basic Navigation course.

Details of the 2013 training programme can now be downloaded directly from the Club website at www.christchurchsailingclub.co.uk or can be found posted on the Club notice board. Bookings are taken directly at the CSC office so contact office@christchurchsailingclub.co.uk or call on 01202 483150 for further information.

Finally, the training department would like to say a big thank you to all who helped provide courses last year; the Bosun team for their support with keeping the escort boats available for use; the office team for taking bookings and dealing with enquiries and the many others behind the scenes working tirelessly to ensure the courses are well-resourced, actively promoted and provided in a safe and pleasant environment.

Sally Davison





WINTER BOSUN'S REPORT

As usual it has been a very busy six months for the winter work party, carrying out the maintenance on the five escort boats, six Club tenders, seven racing sea marks, eight harbour marks and the mast derrick.

Nannie was the first boat out and was back on the water ready for service in January for the mooring repair gang and the winter sailors. This was a very successful period with a new Beta diesel engine fitted, parts of the wiring and all the fuel lines replaced. All the standard maintenance work was completed as well as the propeller being reconditioned.

Chris Austin then led his willing gang of helpers, Eric Davies, Norman Peppercorn, Graham Begley and Brian Horrocks to *Nymph*. The engine was given a major service and some of the fuel lines were replaced. A new propeller shaft and bearings were fitted and the propeller reconditioned. She was completed in good time enabling us, for the first time ever, to bring all the escort boats into the long boatshed for annual maintenance, ensuring all were ready by craning-in day despite it being one of the most difficult winters of recent years.

Meanwhile, other members of the work party had not been idle. They were Mick Ellis, Peter Gimson, Paul Greenwood, Tony Powell, Carl Matton, Colin Bungey, Harry Shelley and John Pickard. By Christmas all the tenders and buoys had been thoroughly cleaned and ready for sign-writing.

Snug under cover, the technical lads, Mike Gardner and Peter Flook, had made good progress. The previous signage system of using individual characters was no longer working due to adhesion difficulties on the weathered surfaces. This year, all the identification signs and sponsor details were commercially produced as complete words and logos on a single sheet with a yellow background. We wish to thank all our sponsors.

Julie Sephton had coordinated a good response from sponsors, some of whom have special, enhanced logos which look very smart indeed. Pat Lokatis played an important role in keeping the supply of signs from the printers available as needed. In previous years, Pat and her husband Tony used to cut out over 500 characters for the buoys.



Splash! For another season

SECURITY PATROL 2013

The new season has started, bringing with it the familiar risk of crime affecting our highly valued boats whilst on their moorings. Over the past four years the security patrol has been successful in providing the necessary deterrent.

The season is two weeks longer than last year due to an earlier Easter and a later crane-out because of the tides, so the team of patrollers has had to expand to fill the 223 patrol nights. This has given me the opportunity to invite new members to join in and, after the training session in March, undertake a patrol each.



Mike Gardner's artistic touch

The servicing and maintenance of *Juno* has always been a problem because of its difficult shape and total weight. Thanks to an idea from Chris Austin, we temporarily modified a RIB trailer, enabling her to be towed out of the water and worked on in the long boatshed. This ensured a much better job done and also saved the expense of hiring a crane. Mick Ellis, Denis Daly and Peter Gimson worked hard at cleaning up the hull and Eric Davies manfully applied the antifouling to the underside, working in very cramped conditions. Denis and John Waller supported the team by ensuring all available rescue boats were serviceable throughout the winter.

As well as working on the escort boats, Graham Begley completed many outstanding repair jobs and modifications on *Juno* and the RIBs. Following damage to an electric bilge pump in one of the RIBs, he designed and fitted a substantial protective cover. He has also built up a very good relationship with RIBS Marine who gives the Club a great deal of support.

Nannie was then moved into the long boatshed thanks to the cooperation of the *Ianthe* syndicate and Class 4, who gave up some of their winter storage space. From that time on, complete and thorough winter maintenance work was possible. Previously, the work party had difficulty in efficiently completing the service and maintenance of the escort boats when sited out in the open on the hard. Past Commodore Rick Thompson and Commodore Lawrence Crapper have always identified themselves with the work party activities and recognised that improvement in the working conditions was required to meet the ever-growing demand for more escort boats and their maintenance.

After craning-in day, Romilly Meager with his team, Mick Ellis, Peter Gimson and John Pickard set forth in the *Black Pig*, driven by Norman Morris, to lay the harbour racing marks.

Finally, our Quarter Master, Geoff Snook, ensures that all the materials required during the winter are always available and a meticulous record and control of expenditure is kept.

Stan Evans

Most members' boats are now fitted with anti-theft measures which alert the owner in the event of a problem and, in some cases, video the intruder. Also, most owners mark their equipment with DNA marker, which makes stolen goods worth nothing and enables prosecution of perpetrators and the return of the items to the owner. If you need advice on such measures please contact me.

I hope patrollers enjoy the balmy, moonlit nights, if it is their good fortune to experience this, and my thanks and admiration go to those who have to contend with cold, rain and wind to keep us protected.

I hope you have a crime-free and happy sailing season.

Ian Wright



WHAT ARE THEY UP TO NOW?

Yet once again, while outdoor activities rest, the winter session of the Monday Club continues in the effort to improve and maintain the Club facilities and clubhouse.

Mayhem in the sailing equipment store, caused by exceptional high tides with flooding to more than a foot. This, combined with careless storage by some individuals, caused a total mess and restoring this meant a full morning of hard work and careful tidying. The oar store has the reputation of being a monster which devours our treasured, if well-worn, oars. The problem is that oars fall between the supporting slats with ease. We have added more slats to prevent this problem, although more are needed on the inaccessible side of the rack to complete the job.

'A place for everything and everything in its place' is a useful guide which I try to instil in people. It is one of the Monday Club's aims to provide a 'place for everything' and hope that all members ensure that this is maintained for the benefit of all.

Outside, the bollards got a new coat of fluorescent paint.

The clubroom refurbishment plan has been deferred until next year so the Monday Club devoted a morning to removing all the fan filters and scrubbing them to remove the dust and tar residue which accumulated from the bad, old, smoking days. All the light tubes were checked and replaced where necessary. We have painted the white surround where we were allowed and I would have liked to paint all the walls. Even so, I believe we have a much brighter clubroom.



Stuffing envelopes

The starter's hut has been cleaned, the accumulated sand round it cleared and the outside Sadolin coated. Inside we have a new table in place and kettle. We still have much to do but that will have to wait until the end of the season.

An extra session took place in March to pack all the AGM papers ready for posting. Soon we will be packing your Club fees' invoices, you will be glad to know! You are always welcome to help at the Monday Club and this does not need regular commitment.

Ian Wright



JUNIOR SECTION

This winter has been reasonably quiet for the Junior Squad, although the Oppie Squad has been in full action. Six of these sailors braved the cold, rain and snow and have been out and about, bobbing around during race training.

Once again, the Junior Squad has a fun-packed programme planned, which includes all the favourite events. We have added some coached races to encourage all of our sailors to participate in Club racing with some help from the coaching team. Our faithful Friday Pirates and Junior sessions start up once again on 3 May and we all look forward to seeing our Pirates and Junior sailors on the water once more.

The Junior Squad's most eagerly awaited events, the Junior and Pirates' Weeks, are again in the programme and preparation for them has already started. Junior Week will be between 12 – 16 August and Pirates' Week will be from the 27 – 30 August.

I felt very proud when Christchurch Sailing Club's Jack Arnell was presented with the RYA Southern Region Young Sailor of the Year for 2012 by Bob Fisher. Jack has worked hard in all aspects of his sailing over the last year and, at only 15, I am sure we will see great things from him. Well done, Jack!

I am now hoping the weather is going to improve upon last year and that we will see more and more Juniors out on the water. Let's hope for a great season and see you all out there!

Richard Beasley



Bob Fisher congratulates Jack



Class captains Stuart Percival, Julie Sephton and Ray New at the all-dinghy presentation evening

JUNIOR MEMBERS' SPONSORSHIP FUND

Are you aware that the Fund has enabled a number of Junior Club members to attain higher personal standards?

Would you like to assist?

All donations should be sent to the Club Treasurer clearly marked 'Junior Sponsorship Fund'.

MID-WEEK SAILING

The Mid-week Sailing Group convenes most weeks in the season to enjoy a sail either to Yarmouth or Studland as the tides allow. Formed by the late Phil Baker, the intention was to allow retired people to sail with others. In recent years this has been extended to include any member, whether they have their own craft or not.

You are assured of an interesting day out spent in friendly company. If you are interested, please contact June Cooke (01202 485236) in good time to ascertain dates and availability.



CRUISER CORNER

If you are like me, you have left the cleaning and antifouling of your hull until the final weeks before crane-in in order to enjoy the balmy spring mornings and warm temperatures - bad luck! As I write this, another hail storm passes overhead and night temperatures have plunged below freezing and March is already half finished. Fortunately, last autumn, I invested in a decent dehumidifier and background heater, so *Dougal* has been drier and sweeter than for the whole of summer. In fact, the boat has probably been somewhat warmer and more comfortable than home. My other investment has been an exhaust temperature gauge and overheat warmer for just £90. It seems to work well and will give peace of mind during short-handed cruises when engine checks are not always what they should be.

The big event over the winter months was the replacement of most of the ground tackle and risers for the trots at Steepbanks. Fortunately, Lawrence managed to secure a substantial barge to help with laying the new chain and all seemed to go smoothly with plenty of willing volunteers helping with the heavy lifting. The old chain had rusted through in patches although, in other places, looked like new. Many thanks to all who helped.

The January Cruiser Dinner was well attended and Gill Crapper kindly presented the 28 assorted trophies awarded for the 2012 season, which were shared between 14 skippers. The full results are listed in the 2013 programme but, for the record, Nick Woolley, with five trophies, won the most events with Tim Tyrrell winning four, including the most improved handicap.



Allegretto goes prestissimo

For the 2013 season, the plan is to maintain a full racing and rally programme and improve on providing various refresher courses and training for those more interested in the cruising side. There will be another navigation seminar, this time focussing on local cruising and pilotage and, hopefully, a full RYA Yachtmaster shore-based course later in the year. The 2012 crew overboard event was well supported and seemed popular, so we will run that again as a short, shore-based seminar followed by some practical work at the quayside. Volunteers to act as the overboard victim gratefully received.

A warm welcome to any new members reading this. Please do not be afraid to try a bit of racing around the buoys or joining in one of the many rallies. Even if you plan to stick to cruising, the odd race is great for sharpening-up sail trimming and general crew performance, so give the rules a quick read and see you on the start line. Likewise, if you don't have a cruiser, there is always room for crew, so stick your name on the 'crew available' slot on the forum or Club noticeboard or just pitch-up on the day and bag a trip.

*Ricci Cobelli
Cruiser Class Captain*

Some of the trophy winners with Gill

PERSEVERE AND HAVE FUN – GO OUT AND ENJOY IT

In May 2010 Christchurch Sailing Club became an RYA Volvo Champion Club and the official plaque was presented by Helena Lucas. Those of us who heard her inspirational talk were convinced that anything is possible if you go for it, persevere and have fun. Our own Stacey Herring and Jack Arnell, plus many more of our Junior Sailors, took the message to heart and have amazed us by their achievements. Helena, herself, turned her words into actions and in last summer's Paralympics, competing against a fleet of male helms, she became the first British sailor to win a Paralympic Gold Medal and richly deserved the MBE which she was awarded in the Queen's New Year's Honours List.

Our congratulations go to Helena and also to Sir Ben Ainslie, Honorary Member of our Club, on his knighthood.





Round the Island race

RALLYING CALL!

This is now my third season as Rally Organiser – where did the time go? I am, therefore, looking for a willing person to take over from me next year. Please let me know if you would like to have a go; it is fun and very rewarding. The rally fleet participants are great and very supportive.

Several of you asked for information on participating rally yachts and crews so, if everyone is happy, I propose to compile a 'Who's Who in the Rally Fleet' and circulate it to the cruiser fleet.

The season will have started by the time you read this so hopefully you are all ready to enjoy this year's rally programme. You will find the outline details listed in the cruiser race programme in your new Club book, also as a download on the Club website. Some members of the cruiser fleet are again kindly assisting by leading one or two rallies. If you would like to help, please contact me. The advantages are that you get to choose where you go and also get to know who is who in the rally fleet.

The full details and sign-up sheet for individual rallies will be displayed two weeks beforehand on the cruiser notice board in the Club entrance. The CSC fleet has a reputation for carrying out the planned rallies. Not a lot stops them, but be aware we may have to resort to Plan B on occasions and this is usually held at the Club.



Rally update information:

- Please note, the weekend rally on May 4 – 6 is to Portland, kindly arranged by Jim Atkins. Berths have been booked in Portland Marina. On the Saturday we will be having a tour of the Olympic sailing facility at approx. 3.30pm, followed by a BBQ at 'The Boat That Rocks' in the evening.
- This year CSC is going to Redclyffe YC on August Bank Holiday weekend (24-26) where we always enjoy a great welcome. Hopefully there will be a BBQ at Studland on the Sunday and the Passage Race back to CSC on the Monday.
- Flotilla week is now later, from 27 Aug – 2 Sept, following the Redclyffe rally weekend.

Please note the dates. Look out for update emails and try to attend these rallies as a lot of work goes into organising them for your benefit. Also please let me know if you are changing your email addresses. Thank you.

Again, I would like to record my thanks to those who give me tremendous support: our Commodore, Lawrence Crapper, the volunteer members assisting with individual rallies, Roger, my husband and skipper and not forgetting all you cruiser rally participants who make the rallies so successful. We always welcome new members, so sign up and join us.

Bridget Allen, yacht Cassida

ALL-WEATHER SAILING

Sailing in Class 4 is now well-established as an all year round activity. Our Winter Series finished just before Christmas with Chris Arnell winning the Class 4 trophy, Vicky Nyenge the Ladies' trophy and Simon Percival the Finn series. After Christmas the eight-race Highcliffe Sailing Club Icicle Series was supported by 37 boats from five different clubs, the overall winner being Ray New, who also took the Harry Shivers' Trophy.

We wish to add our congratulations to Jack Arnell, for winning the RYA Regional Young Sailor of the Year, and to his coach, Rover. This award was made not only for Jack's sailing activities during the year but also his help and support to Junior sailing within the Club.

Class 4 trophy winners for last year were:

Jack Arnell – the Junior Easter; Top Sea Interclub and the Harbour series; Ladies' Challenge Cup; ODM Trophy Race; Eric Barnes' Cup; Albacore Silver Paddle and Evening 2 series.

Luke Ridout – Easter; Autumn Saturday and Sunday series; Founder's Folly (Eagle) and Olympic Cup.

Simon Percival received the Ringwood Boar; Finn Winter series and Stoneage Cup.

Joanne Arnell won the Ladies' Easter and Summer Saturdays and the Sea series.

Jim Newman took the Evening 1 and Summer Sundays series awards.

David Evans won the Olympic Sea Series and Tony Lock was top CSC sailor in Interclub races.

Andrew 'Rover' Rushworth won the Norman Cummins Captain's Choice cup for his work with Jack and his support for the Splash Nationals and Finn Southern Area Championships.



Andy Rushworth: Guiding hand behind success

This season will include a ten-race Sea Series as well as the usual trophy and harbour series races. We expect the Club to be represented at this year's Finn World Masters in La Rochelle and the Finn National Championships in Torbay as well as other national events.

Ray New, Class Captain



HAWKS – SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

As another season looms, the Hawk 20 fleet wakes from its winter slumber. Happily, the 2013 season will welcome four new Hawk owners to Christchurch Sailing Club, all of whom are keen racers. With an average of six boats per race last year, could 2013 see double digits? We wait in eager anticipation.



Once again the programme for 2013 includes an agreeable mix of racing and rallies. There will be an attempt to thread the Needles thrown in for the adventurous and the destination for the Summer Solent Rally, organised by John Lilley, will be the ever-elusive Bembridge. It appears not even Poseidon himself can break the 'Carpe Diem' spirit of the Hawk 20 fleet when it comes to the vagaries of the British summer.

In previous years, racing within the Hawk fleet has been close, fair and competitive. Last season no less than eight different helms took home silverware and I see little to suggest that 2013 will be any different, with over 30 races scheduled over the next seven months.

Finding crew who can participate in every race can be exceedingly difficult so, as a class, we would like to take the opportunity to invite any new members, experienced racers or bar stool bloggers to get in contact and experience the competition and excitement of one design racing. Anybody interested should contact me by email: simonbarnett@reidsteel.co.uk

One of my duties as Class Captain is to attend the monthly meetings at CSC, chaired by Kath Whitehead in her role as Sailing Secretary. As I am sure most of you are aware, Kath has taken the decision to stand down this year. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to thank her on behalf of all the Hawk 20s and members for her outstanding contribution to the running of the Club.

To keep up with the Joneses (or more accurately Philip Whiston and Richard Beasley, who have done such a good job redeveloping the CSC website) the Hawk 20 website has also been refreshed by our very own Nick Watts. Please do head over to WWW.HAWK20.CO.UK to view the videos and testimonials.

That just leaves me to wish you a safe and successful sailing season. I hope to see you soon, either on the water or at the inner reef

Mine's a Guinness.

Simon Barnett, Hawk Class Captain

Congratulations to Simon and Suzi on their recent wedding.



Trinity House vessel Patricia laying buoys during last Yarmouth Rally. Future replacement for Black Pig?

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SCOWS: MORE LUCK THIS SEASON?

The final racing of last year, the Winter Series, started at the beginning of November with eight races planned. However, the 2012 weather still had a sting in its tail so we only managed two races out of the eight. The previous year we managed seven out of the eight!

One was in the Saturday Series, won by Graham Fairbrass, second Brian Crocker and third Alex Atkins. The other was for the Sunday Series, also won by Graham, second was Alex Atkins and third Steve Crocker. This year we have arranged the Saturday and Sunday dates for the Winter Series into a combined Winter Series of eight races.

We desperately hope we will have more racing this year following a record year of cancellations. I am sure you are all readying your vessels to a high standard, with polished hulls, simplified rigging, more buoyancy, new sails, new oars, an appropriate anchor, etc. etc.

We start with the traditional Easter Series on Friday 29 March with four races over the Bank Holiday. New for this year will be the April and May Series. This will include Saturday, Sunday and evening racing lumped together, with prizes down to third place.

Chris Arnell, Ray New and I met last year to plan this year's programme with a view to arranging race starts prior to high tide to avoid racing on a falling tide. We hope this will be to the benefit of all.

I would like to encourage Scowers to race in the Interclub Harbour Racing against Mudeford and Highcliffe, which is towards the end of the season. I have arranged prizes down to third place for the Scows who enter the six race series.

Scow owners have a very strong and able Scow Class Committee which has been looking at a number of issues over the winter period. A sub-committee has drawn up a Scow Class Escort Boat Safety Review in the shape of a discussion document which has been presented to the Club Sailing Committee.

Also, there have been dates set aside for training on the water and an update on the Race Rules. We have Peter Ridley to thank for his enthusiasm in this quarter, plus the team who manage the escort boats to make it all happen. Keep an eye open for dates on the notice board.

Wednesday Capers are all set for fair weather and Peter Flook, again this year's Race Officer, and his team will be on hand to provide enjoyment for all who take part in this unique Wednesday pastime. I would like to see at least thirty Scows racing in this popular event this year.

Many years ago the Club hosted a Presentation Dinner Dance for all cruiser and dinghy classes to get together and enjoy the season's presentations to the capable winners. Ray New (Class 4 Captain) and I thought we should at least have an all dinghy presentation evening. On Saturday 12 January this went ahead. It was a great success and a good chance to get together with all competitors in other classes to see their achievements. We have pencilled in this event again for next January.



Presentations at the all-dinghy event were made to Vic Deschamps, Dick Jobbins, Linda Bedford, Peter Ridley, (receiving for Brian Crocker) and Stuart Percival

The results of last year's Scow Racing Programme were in the last issue except for one item. Each year we present a Lifetime Achievement Award. This went to Victor Deschamps for his contribution to Scow sailing over many years, as well as his success in Club cruiser racing and the early days of winning the World Championship in 505s. Once Victor gets the bit between his teeth there is no stopping him. He finally retired last year from racing his Scow. He is now very successfully involved racing the CSC's Model Boat Club's America Cup vessels on Setley Pond. Victor's presentation was an original painting of a Scow, 'Hard to Windward', by Ian Wright.

This year's traditional Fisherman's Team Race, scheduled for Friday 5 July has altered and will be raced in Hawks rather than Scows. We felt it was a time for a change and Pete Dadds of the Fishermen agreed it would be a refreshing one.

Ray New (Class Four) has suggested it may be fun to try and put together a team racing event later this year, with teams of three such as Scow, Class Four, Topper..... Watch this space.

I wish you all a very successful season racing your Scow. I am always on hand to discuss any aspects you wish to raise, with a view to you enjoying racing one of the most difficult, pesky, racing dinghies ever invented! We all love them really. That's why we still have 70 in the Club, so let's see them all out on the water this year.

*Stuart Percival
Scow Class Captain*



Vic Deschamps in his Flying Dutchman 1971-72



Vic and Brian battle it out



Preparing for the Fishermen's race



SCOW SAILING OVER SIXTY YEARS

In 1952 I was introduced to Scow sailing at the Club – what a very civilised activity for an innocent young lad like me! A grey-haired gentleman in a clean, white, sailcloth windcheater top and white-topped yachting cap tried to teach me the rudiments of sailing in his immaculate, varnished, wooden clinker-built West Wight Scow which he kept on the wooden slip in front of the old clubhouse. It was called *Juno* and I recall it had a cream, sand-painted, canvas-covered foredeck with a rope fender all the way round.

The ‘old boy’ was my grandfather, Carlton Cook, who had moved to Christchurch for his retirement and had had the Scow built by Elkins for his genteel sailing around the harbour and, on days with suitable conditions, out in the Bay. Little was either of us to know that, due to family events, within two years I would have moved in with him and shattered his peace! However, it did mean plenty more lessons in his Scow. That boat got sailed, rowed, fished from, and generally formed a significant part of my growing up.

The years since have seen other dinghies come and go in my back garden, including a Wildcat, a 505 and a Merlin Rocket. These have all been ‘basket cases’ which I have enjoyed returning to sailable condition. However, some ten years ago, I went with the flow and bought a Scow, ostensibly ready to sail. This is not such a different boat to old Carl’s *Juno* except for a smooth, fibreglass hull and terylene (or similar) sail instead of cotton, with no reefing provision. How it sails by comparison I cannot say, as too many years have passed by. What I can say is that it is an easy boat to sail, but tricky to sail ‘well’.

In the Scow class at the Club are some excellent and very skilful sailors. As the years pass, I find that I have improved my performance but come no way close to challenging our regular winners. This does not really matter in our Club, though, as there are two types of Scow racing activity. There are the ‘series’ and ‘trophy’ races which are sailed by those intending to win. And, boy, do the winners deserve to win – they are the experts. All we can do is watch, admire and hope to learn! Then there is the Capers racing on Wednesdays. Initiated by now-retired Scower Alan Ford, it allows racing against boats and helms of similar

HOW TO OF-FEND YOUR WIFE!

Picture the scene – a glorious summer Saturday afternoon; a raft of CSC cruisers on the pontoon below the bridge in Yarmouth. A group were drinking in the cockpit of one boat. Suddenly, the peace was shattered by the sound of an agitated man shouting on an incoming boat. He was standing on the foredeck of a small family cruiser yelling a torrent of conflicting instructions to his wife at the helm. The boat had no fenders and – it was heading our way. Four of the group abandoned their drinks and leapt to defend the outside boat.

‘Were you trying to join this raft?’

‘No, but it will do.’

‘Haven’t you got any fenders?’

‘Of course I’ve got fenders they Oh!’ Then, to the wife, ‘Where are the fenders? Where are the***** fenders?’

Eventually Captain Bligh was quietened down and the CSC men returned to their drinks. Several wives leaned towards their husbands’ ears and declared quietly but firmly, ‘If you ever speak to me like that you’ll be sailing on your own.’

Certainly, previous generations of yachtsmen did largely sail on their own and their wives often seemed glad to see the back of them. Many years ago the Boss and I were greeted with surprise by a Belgian couple on the next boat in Fecamp. The wife declared, ‘English boats are usually sailed by gangs of men.’ How times have changed, on rallies if not in racing fleets.

Baggywrinkle



ability and performance for the pleasure and individual challenge of doing so. I believe it is this informal competition that has maintained the popularity of the Scow in our Club.

So, what of the future? We have produced a Class Handbook which, amongst other things, states the aim of trying to keep our type of Scow close to a one-design ideal so that older and brand new boats should be able to race against each other competitively. Hopefully this will ensure that a healthy interest continues in the Scow, giving many sailors of all levels of ability an opportunity to sail for fun, or compete against others, at pretty low cost.

Old Carl probably looks down on Christchurch Harbour on a Wednesday, seeing regular fleets of 20 to 30+ Scows in disbelief that so many of us continue to enjoy these odd little boats.

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THE MAYOR GETS HITCHED

For The Worshipful The Mayor of Christchurch, or as we know him CSC member Councillor Peter Hall, it has been a very special year of office incorporating the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, the London Olympics and his and Sally's Golden Wedding Anniversary. It may come as a surprise, therefore, to hear that he recently also got himself hitched to CSC Committee member Barbara Osborne! Our Assistant Editor captured the moment on camera.

The venue was not Gretna Green, as you might suppose, but the Mayor's Gala Charity Dinner where 40 Club members joined other guests to support Peter and Sally in fund-raising for his chosen charities, Lighthouse Youth Club, Age Concern and the District Scouts. Barbara's dress and the mayoral chain became well and truly caught up and it took the Mayoress's deft fingers to separate the two.

It has been an eventful year with many highlights, as Peter recalls, 'I started my Mayoral term in the middle of our International Food Festival so taking part in "The Christchurch Bake Off" was my first engagement and my next was to travel by train to Christchurch station to attend the 150th Anniversary of the railway coming to Christchurch. We were greeted by a large group of very attractive belly dancers and during their vibrant performance Sally remarked that I looked as if I had died and gone to heaven!'

They attended the Queen's Garden Party at Buckingham Palace, where the Duchess of Cambridge, who looked stunning, was present for her first garden party.

To celebrate the Diamond Jubilee, the Mayor and Mayoress purchased and planted an oak tree in the Druitt Gardens; unveiled a commemorative plaque on the outside wall of the Mayor's Parlour with celebratory music from the Band of the Royal British Legion and an impromptu performance by the Aalen Pipe Band from Germany then finishing the day at the British Legion for a special Jubilee Concert. It was a wonderful way to celebrate, as our Queen is only the second monarch to reach her Diamond Jubilee.

Other highlights for Peter and Sally were a reception and guided tour of HMS York during the Bournemouth Air Festival; the Christchurch team beating the Bournemouth Mayor's team by 1.6 seconds when pulling a fully loaded, 43 ton Boeing 737 for a distance of fifty metres in the Dorset Plane Pull and the Olympic Torch coming through our town,

which certainly had the 'wow' factor. Then there was the Commodores' Reception at our own Christchurch Sailing Club, where the company and the canapés were deemed 'excellent'.

Peter shows obvious dedication to and pride in Christchurch, where he was born and brought up. He worked for many years in the aircraft industry both here and abroad, including on the Mirage and European Airbus, before qualifying as a teacher and working in secondary education locally. He has been a Borough Councillor since 1995 and is keenly interested and involved in local affairs, serving on committees and supporting initiatives. Young people are among those who have particularly benefitted from his support.

Peter's lifelong passion has been sailing. He bought his first dinghy at the age of 14, met Sally through sailing and they keep their Westeryl Konsort, *Louisa*, here at the Club. As their time as Mayor and Mayoress comes to a close, we thank them for their service to Christchurch and hope that they have the time and good weather to enjoy a happy summer's sailing.



SHIP SHOP

So, where have they spent the winter? Hall? Spare bedroom? Loft? Garage or shed? Or perhaps they are all still on the boat. Of course, I mean the things that some of us spend half the winter tripping over and the other half of us are working on – boat bits.

I am not sure what is more annoying, the amount of time spent cleaning them up so that they work properly when you need them or the amount of money you have to spend on replacing those that are worn, broken, lost or stolen.

You must have noticed that all things marine cost far more than they should do, which is why the Skipper haunts In Excess during the winter and caravan shops in the summer when they have got their shelves full of interesting gadgets, gizmos and useful lengths of water-quality hose.

Beaulieu Boat Jumble has become my birthday 'treat' and if I am really lucky the Skipper may even buy me a present I can wear! It will probably be cut-price thermal long johns or sailing gloves but that is better than the radar reflector which serves as a summer-long reminder of the romantic streak in my Captain Romeo. If I can't persuade Lord Montagu to move the Boat Jumble to October I shall, like the Queen, have to have an official birthday in the summer. If I did, there would be the possibility of enjoying an evening out at a harbour-side pub on the Dart or a bistro in Brittany instead of watching TV alone because he still hasn't finished getting the boat ready to race.

Well, craning-in's happened, the dinghy park is full and the racing programme's underway so all we need now are fair winds and a bit of sun. Happy sailing.

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ADVENTUROUS ARTISTS

The art group had another good and pleasant winter session with a few interesting changes in the medium used by some of the artists.

The newest technique was the use of ipad brushes by Graham Begley to produce David Hockney-style pictures. Other changes were the use of non-paint media such as plaster of Paris with oils.

It will be interesting to see the reaction of viewers when we have our annual exhibition in the Regent Centre in May this year. We will be showing many different styles of paintings so we do hope Club members will visit the show.

It is a little too early to talk about next winter but we will welcome anyone who wants to have a nice, relaxed afternoon in pleasant company. No painting experience is necessary.

Stan Evans

MARINE ART IN CHRISTCHURCH

There will be a feast of marine art to interest our members in Christchurch this spring.

The Club's annual exhibition, held in the Regent Centre, commences at a later date this year. Again, it is of three week duration and is from 3 – 24 May. Both the Art and the Photographic Groups have worked hard and produced some excellent work and, hopefully, the later date will see more visitors to the town and exhibition.

Some other interesting works by two renowned, contemporary artists can also be seen at the Hatch Gallery. Although of entirely different styles, both express works of extreme intensity and passion.

Anthony Garratt is a keen sailor so many of his seascape paintings reflect the atmosphere of rough seas, endless beaches and dramatic skies. Last year he was commissioned to paint the Diamond Jubilee River pageant. He has exhibited at the R.A. Summer Exhibition as well as other prestigious venues and galleries throughout the country.

Jeremy Houghton is Artist in Residence at Highgrove and creates work on a wide range of subjects. He has had many notable achievements and commissions and did an official portrait of the Queen inspecting the Horse Guards. He was also one of the official artists for London Fashion Week and the last Olympics. Among his varied output are marine works connected with sailing and in these he has been especially successful in capturing the interplay between motion, spray and waves.

Works by both artists can be viewed at the Hatch Gallery in Church Street from 3 May until the end of the month.

The eagerly awaited annual exhibition by the Hengist Group of Artists at Priory House is from 25 May until 8 June. With a large number of our members belonging to this group, we can look forward to many marine and local scenes to view.



Thrash to windward; Jeremy Houghton



Towards Samson, Isles of Scilly; Anthony Garratt

BRIDGE BUILDING

The Club magazine always features non-sailing activities within the Club, such as the Art and Photography groups and the Ladies' Keep Fit.

Less frequently mentioned is the reason why twenty or so members meet each Thursday evening to play with their dummies, get as many tricks as possible, try to finesse a queen or pre-empt the lady on their left.

Yes, this is the CSC Bridge Club in session, a happy band of ladies and gents trying to defeat each other, in the nicest possible way, under the watchful eyes of Brian Horrocks (01202 480849) and Ken Abbott.

We try to maintain a dignified, cerebral atmosphere but rejoice in making a game or sadly wonder how it all went wrong when we go 'three off'.

Although a league table is kept and updated each week, this is essentially a pleasant, social evening to which any newcomer is warmly welcomed. Amazing prizes are offered at the end of term, plus drinks and nibbles all round.

If you would like further details have a word with Ken Abbott – or would this be a bridge too far?

Jack Stayman



STAR FUND-RAISERS

There was an excellent contribution of over £850 to RNLI funds when the Christchurch branch of the RNLI, aided by CSC members, sold Christmas cards last year. Those members were Chris Austin, Norman Peppercorn, Colin Bungey, Geoff Snook, Brian Bartlett, Pat Lokatis, Eric Davies, Ian Wright and David Scrivener.



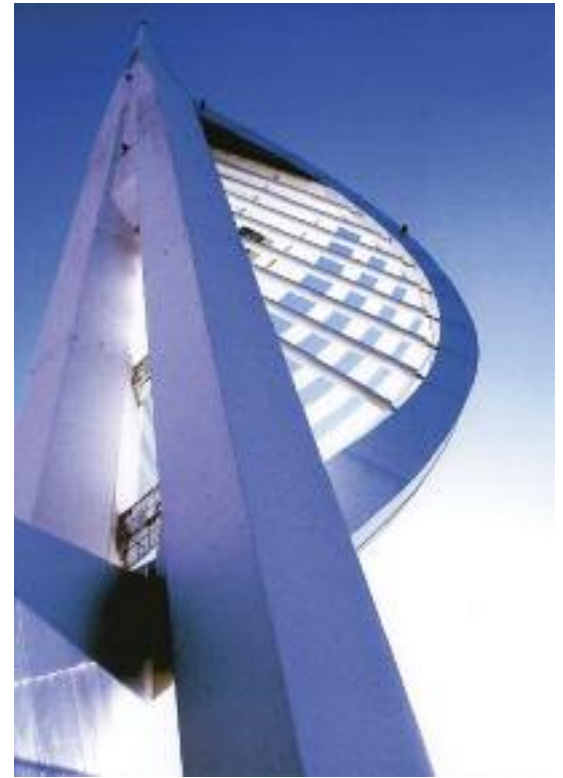
Organised by Chris Austin, the Christchurch and Southbourne sections held regular coffee mornings in the Club every third Thursday of the month last year, raising over £500.

These coffee mornings will continue to be held this year until June and restart in September. Everybody is welcome so come along to the Club, support the RNLI and enjoy a pleasant, relaxed morning.

Stan Evans



Overall winner



Unusual viewpoint winner

CSC PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION 2012/13

Congratulations to the winners of each category and particularly to Garry Sibbald, the overall winner, with the image of crowds 'Celebrating the Moment', which captures the mood so well.

Overall, the standard is very high with some stunning images making judging very challenging. Each entry is obviously improved and much higher than the first year of the Club photo competition. What is a shame is that we do not seem to get many Junior entries. Come on, we know you can do it.

Some images could have been improved by better 'post-production' processing and printing. If you want to know more and can attend, join in the Tuesday afternoon winter photo group at the Club. Carole kindly does lunches and the bar is always open between 1pm and 2pm (available for any Club member wanting a bite and a pint).

All the images can be viewed on the Club web site.

The full list of winners:

- Jubilee/Celebration: Garry Sibbald – 'Celebrating the Moment'
- Garry is also the **Overall winner** taking home the Trophy – well done Sport: Phil Whiston – 'The Start'
- Unusual Viewpoint: Phil Whiston – 'Spinnaker Tower'
- Junior: Joanne Arnell – 'Sunset Over the Purbecks'

The themes for the 2013/14 competition are:

Sailing; Black and White; Abstract and Junior, so get out the camera, dust off the lens, get shooting and have a go.

Remember the old adage, 'always carry a camera'. How often have you seen a great scene and wished you had a camera on you. Don't forget that phones have cameras and images from these are just as acceptable.



Sport Winner



Roger Allen



Junior Winner



Some entries that caught the editor's eye. He particularly liked the image by Philip Whiston of Jubilee day spent on a damp and gloomy Avon beach.



SNAPS AND SNACKS

The CSC winter Photo Group continues to flourish and attract new members, including Liz and myself. Inspired by an Exhibition preview at Highcliffe Castle last autumn and encouraged by Frances York, we turned up each Tuesday hoping that we would be able to keep up with the pace. Our expertise was only 'auto' setting so not exactly 'Exhibition' standard. However, Frances' weekly email summaries are great memory joggers and Bridget's tea breaks soon provided opportunity to share experiences with others in the room, some of similar background.

Roger explained the intricacies of various technical aspects and terms such as 'levels' and 'noise', encouraging us to experiment with other settings. Alan Crockard gave us a very enjoyable presentation showing what could be achieved with a little ingenuity, even when using a simple compact camera or iPad. Phil Whiston did a session on HDR Photography, whilst Burl Solomons gave us tips on how to make a movie and a visit from James Coombes, of Castle Cameras, showed us what was currently on the market.

We visited the RNLI headquarters in Poole; experimented with Roger's 'Six Point Challenge' around Christchurch and, on Portraiture, put

unassuming Club members at the receiving end. Thank you Lawrence and Nick for your patience.

All are encouraged to go at their own speed, turning up when one feels able. We were beginners but, seven months on, we have become confident enough to exhibit our works at the Regent Centre with price-tags to match; who would have thought it!

Thanks to Roger, Bridget, Frances and all who have made these winter sessions so enjoyable.

Mike Dickinson



Mike Dickinson at work

WINTER TALKS

The talk programme filled up slowly this winter but we ended up with a very good mix of subjects.

The Hawk Class introduced local historian Mike Andrews who gave us a whistle-stop journey through the development of Christchurch from the Ice Age to the Space Age.

In early November the Keep Fit Group brought Kathy McNally along to talk about the life of Commander Fleming at War. We heard how some of his experiences helped him create the world-famous James Bond. Later in the month, the Scow Class talk was about pre-war and war time airfields in the New Forest. John Leversley brought back memories to our senior members, many of whom are Scow sailors.

In the New Year, on behalf of the Cruiser class, Jim Mottram told of his season's adventures. Plan A for his annual cruise failed due to an engine breakdown. Once fixed, a trip to southern Ireland was plan B but, the weather being poor, he did not do as much as he had hoped. However, the trip was achieved but the 2012 season was not one of his best.

Dr Chris Elfes gave a most interesting and amusing talk on behalf of the Photo Group entitled 'Trying to Stay Afloat'. This described coping with

breakages to the boat and human bits and pieces whilst crossing the Atlantic. We all learnt a lot.

In mid-February Ladies' Sailing introduced a new member, Terry Sankey, who gave us a very entertaining talk, 'Life on the Inside'. Terry was on the management of Dorchester Prison for many years.

The Art group thanked Ken Gordon for putting together a talk on Malta, 'An Island under Siege'. It covered two periods; one 900 years ago and the other siege at the beginning of the Second World War.

Our last talk, introduced by Class 4, brought Peter Sanders and his son Chris of Sanders Sails from Lymington. Peter gave a very informative talk about sailcloth and design and, more importantly, tips on sail trimming. We all felt that we had picked up something useful.

It is time to fill next winter's programme now, so please help your leader with any talk you come across that may interest our members. We would like to thank all the hard working Class Captains and group leaders for their efforts in making it another successful season, also our thanks to all attendees who make it worthwhile.

Lawrence and Gill Crapper

FROM THE CLUB LIBRARY: THE RELUCTANT MARINER BY JOANNA HACKETT

From the first few passages you know that this will be a cruising yarn with a difference.

This Australian author proclaims, 'I never wanted to go sailing. Given half a chance I would have taken the landlubber's course, spending days in the garden and nights safe and snug at home in a comfortable bed.' However, she married a man who wanted to go sailing, in her words, 'making a monumental error early on in life, one of those indiscretions that can only be excused on the grounds of my youth.'



After twenty years of rearing children and running a business, her husband's attentions once more turned to sailing and they bought a 40ft steel ketch with the intention of sailing round the world.

They then had a lengthy period gaining seamanship experience and learning by their mistakes whilst sailing Australia's east coast.

Joanna then embarks on a discourse mainly about the attitude and behaviour of male skippers towards their lady crews. I am sure many will cringe as they find themselves portrayed in her comments. For instance when anchoring, (I think also mooring),

she says that if the operation is not carried out properly, 'The skipper will, without fail, become apoplectic....He is quite capable of swearing sotto voice at his incompetent crew while simultaneously waving and calling jolly salutations to other cruisers around.' This chapter I found particularly entertaining and I think this theme could have been the subject of a whole book.

They sail north on their adventure, firstly to the fascinating islands of Indonesia. She describes all these places vividly and they take many interesting trips inland throughout the voyage. By the end of the Indonesian chapter I wondered how she could maintain the descriptive detail, history and their many exploits as I was now a fifth of the way through the book. Miraculously, she manages it throughout, with much devoted to the Mediterranean especially Israel, Greece and inland Turkey and, sensibly, each chapter deals with a particular country or area.

Equally interesting was the passage going through the Panama Canal and cruising the South Sea Islands. Although the experiences and anecdotes are well recounted, I think by then she had come to realise that she could not continue with the same standard of expansiveness.

The book is peppered with humorous experiences, customs incidences, meeting people and discovering their life and culture as well as the rigours and good times at sea.

Although there are obviously gales and difficult situations to contend with these are generally stated fairly briefly. I think that this is why so much of such a voyage had been packed into 330 pages and it was hard to grasp that the voyage had lasted five years.

And was she an enthusiastic sailor when they returned? Well, no. She concludes, 'I was not a sailor when I left, but I managed. I am not a sailor still, but I tried. And I'm glad that I tried.'

This fascinating book is as much a travelogue as a sailing adventure – but none the worse for that!

J.M



TOU-CAN DO IT!

By the time you read this article Conor and Marion Wall on *Toucan* will have completed their circumnavigation and be enjoying the Caribbean. They had the fastest sail of their world circuit on passage from Brazil to Tobago. They did just short of 2000 miles in less than 11 days; the best day covering 210 miles, helped of course by the South Equatorial Current.

They write;

Since our last article we have travelled from Mauritius to South Africa around the Cape of Storms and spent some time in Cape Town taking in the sights and meeting up with family and friends. In Cape Town, where Marion and I started our sailing career some 36 years ago, we met up with the Royal Cape Yacht Club member who took us sailing all those years ago and, as you can imagine, our arrival at the RCYC was an emotional time for us both. The last time we were in South Africa was in 1975/6 when we drove from Dublin to Johannesburg in a Citroen 2CV van/car. I am not sure which journey was the most difficult. We were, of course, much younger then and you cannot compare the luxury of a 43 foot yacht to an egg van, although the end result was still the same.

Our crossing from Mauritius to Durban was, again, a very difficult one for us with weather and currents of mighty proportions to contend with. The powerful Agulhas current that runs down the East African coast can sometimes be 100 miles wide and can run at speeds of up to 6 knots in some areas. With wind against tide, waves can be so big that they sink ships. Luckily, we chose a reasonable weather window and the biggest worry for us was the anticipation of what might happen. In saying that, we were flying the storm sail and fully-reefed main (four reefs) for three days and nights before arriving in Durban. Boy, were we glad to arrive safely! Some yachts ahead of us got a real pasting and others ended up hundreds of miles from their intended landfall.

A friend of our extended family joined us in Durban for the sail down the African coast. Places visited were East London, Knysna and Gordon's Bay. You can read more and see more photos of our entire trip so far at (www.blog.mailasail.com/wall).

Son Christopher, girlfriend Emily and a former CSC member Jon joined us in Cape Town and, after taking in sights such as Table Mountain and the vineyards of Stellenbosch and Franschhoek, we set off across the South Atlantic bound for Brazil. However, the very special island of St Helena was on our route and, as this is one of the most remote inhabited islands in the world, we had to visit it. It is where Napoleon ended his days and the visit to his house and tomb was a real education to the entire crew.

St Helena is one of the most charming, oldie-worldy islands that we have visited and, surprisingly, it still does not have an airport so the only way in and out is by boat. The population all speak English but some of the locals might as well be speaking a different language, which was most peculiar to the ear.



On the way to St Helena, happy crew celebrating a birthday

With no natural harbour and no beaches, this island rises up from the bottom of the sea some three or four kilometres down and up to about 800 metres above sea level. The terrain and landscape are mostly mountainous, with small winding roads. Our driver, Robert, told us that it was almost impossible to get out of second gear on any road on the island. We spent three delightful days and nights exploring before setting off for Salvador, Brazil.

Our total distance from Cape Town to Brazil was 3600 miles, which took us just over four weeks to do. This was quite a contrast to the Indian Ocean. I believe the strongest wind we experienced during the crossing was 29 knots and that for a brief time. Sailing the South Atlantic was a dream and our most relaxing and rewarding ocean sail so far in our circumnavigation.

We arrived in Salvador just in time for the Carnival – and how the Brazilians like to party. Forget Health and Safety, forget decibels, the music was constant for seven whole days and nights. The costumes were fantastic; I wish I could say the same for the music. No matter which street we chose to visit there was float after float or band after band marching with a myriad of different music all with the same beat. Nonetheless, it was a delight to experience.

The special crew flew home from Rio and *Toucan* will be in St Lucia in time to meet son James and partner Natalie in April.

Don't forget, if you wish to see more photos and stories you can tune in at: www.blog.mailasail.com/wall



First catch for the new crew – note the home-made lure



Toucan at Royal Cape Y.C. Capetown



Carnival in Brazil

*Whitethroat*

STROLL AROUND STANPIT MARSH

Stanpit Marsh has been important to those who live here and those visiting for millennia; a flood plain protecting the surrounding habitations and provider of food for a myriad of creatures that are resident or which visit each year. Walk around it at sunrise and you are a million miles away from traffic queues and the rush to work; only the distant chiming of the Priory clock giving a link to our normal lives. Looking at the ever-changing birdlife is a fascinating pastime - as absorbing as sailing - and, like sailing, it is different things to

different folk. For me, it is about eyes wide open and, hopefully, reasonable bird pictures with a story to tell - some local and some of which have flown thousands of miles.

One glamorous local is the egret, now increasing in numbers. How does it keep its feathers so white? It shares a 'high rise' with the herons in the Douglas firs on Hengistbury Head - unlikely roommates. So hard to reflect that in Victorian times egrets were hunted almost to extinction for their plumes to adorn ladies' hats, a trade which was to lead to the establishment of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB). Watch them hunt, stirring a muddy pool with their yellow 'boots' and a lightening dart of the beak for a fish snack, or dancing and flapping their wings to herd their prey into a tight corner.

And visitors? There are migrants from the four corners of the compass. Some come year after year to the same part of the Marsh and others

*Brent Geese**Kestrel*

are blown off course from North America. Red breasted geese sometimes join the wrong migrating flock of Brent geese and end up here instead of the Black Sea. The Brent is another species which was close to annihilation thirty years ago and they now return to Stanpit in hundreds to enjoy the winter grass. Watch how they move together on the ground or air, sometimes silent or with loud warning calls at others and small groups 'gossiping' as they forage. Two years ago, on our summer sail to the Baltic, we were thrilled to see these winter visitors, like the geese and fieldfares, on the nest and raising chicks.

*Egret*

Summer visitors come from sub-Saharan Africa, the wheatear maybe from Kenya, having successfully navigated across that immense desert, surviving the heat and drought to get to the Mediterranean and then Northern Europe; some then cross the Atlantic to Greenland. You can see them in April and May, about 9 am, a little tired having departed the Cherbourg peninsula at sunrise that morning. Much, much smaller are the whitethroat (about 15 grams) which spend the winter in places like the Gambia and returns to the same scrub bushes on which they lived the previous year. Listen to their powerful song and watch their erratic display flights from the top of a gorse bush.

There are also the east/west migrators like the avocets, though some now are resident. These, also, we watched raising their chicks on remote, sandy areas of south east Sweden.

Occasionally, an unusual interloper, the glossy ibis, touches down for the delights of a Stanpit fish supper - its usual habitat is around the Black Sea and Eastern Mediterranean. It may have arrived via Holland and some get as far as south west Ireland.

Migrants come to feed and some to breed but to others, such as the local family of kestrels, these are meals on the wing. For them, a young chick is a welcome change from beetles and voles. Look along the sandy cliffs on Hengistbury Head in June and you will see one riding the updraft, awaiting young sand martins emerging from their burrows. Observing them from hatching, learning to fly and then hovering like the adult birds is fascinating.

Early on a warm morning watching the sunrise on Stanpit is a wonderful experience. But even of a dark, damp day, when it seems that bird life is absent, stop, watch, listen and you may see the curlews in the water-filled cuts in the peat, the dunlins scurrying along an edge, or maybe a 'domestic' between two gulls.

Alan Crockard*Glossy Ibis*



THE POWER OF WAVES

When a Government department asked me to review a 'wave barrier' project I can't say I was that thrilled, medical devices being more my cup of tea. Indeed, on meeting the inventor the first adjective that came to mind was 'mad'. His invention, a Heath-Robinson structure that had consumed not inconsiderable amounts of tax-payers money, could quite accurately be described as little more than two barn doors, floating in the sea parallel to each other, connected together with a couple of beams. The inventor's claim, and this is where I confess to a rolling of the eyes, was that this simple structure could attenuate waves by 90%.

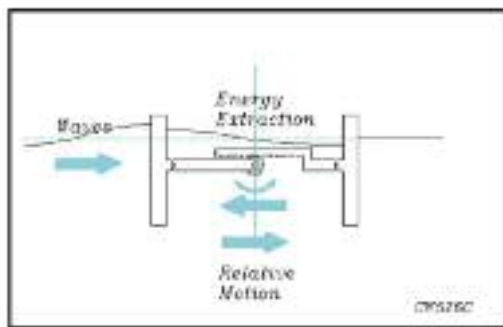
Now having messed about in boats all my life I like to think I know a little bit about the sea, so a reduction of wave height by 90% struck me as ... well let's put it kindly – improbable. Consider standing chest-high in the sea off Highcliffe Beach - would the wave that crashed into you be significantly lower *after* it had passed you?

So, not wishing to dismiss a life-time's work out of hand, I expressed a personal view that anything more than a 10% reduction in wave height would be ... well, let's be honest, quite remarkable. But the mad inventor would have none of it, adamant that two 'barn doors', swinging in the waves, could significantly reduce wave height. So started a quest to uncover the sunken error.

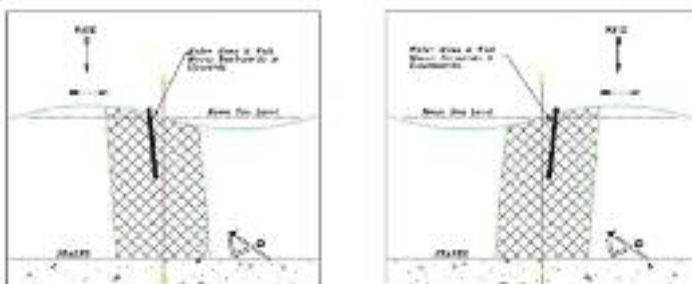
The device had undergone exhaustive trials in the test tank buried underneath the city of Southampton, a damp dark dungeon of a place where I had previously spent many a happy hour running a variety of hull forms up and down. To validate the testing technique my search for the 'error' turned to the instrumentation, the way in which the reduction in wave height was being measured.

The two 'barn doors' were connected by a rack and pinion linkage – think of turning the wheels of your car resulting in the rotation of the steering wheel – and in this test the wheel was actually connected to an actuator, a small electric motor. As all first year students know, an

How it works

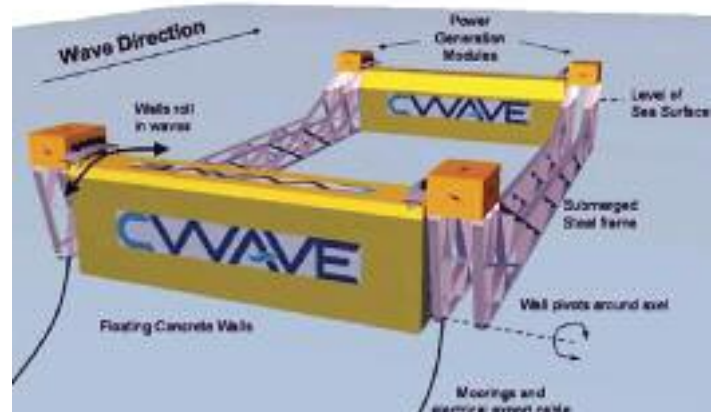


Device extracts wave energy by controlling the horizontal motion between 'floating walls'



- Water bends back and forwards as well as up and down during the passage of waves.
- The back and forward motion combined with the visible waves is called "irrotation".

Layout and Function of C-Wave Prototype



electric motor in reverse can generate electricity, so a measure of the reduction in wave height could be measured by the amount of electricity that was being generated. Elegant in its simplicity.

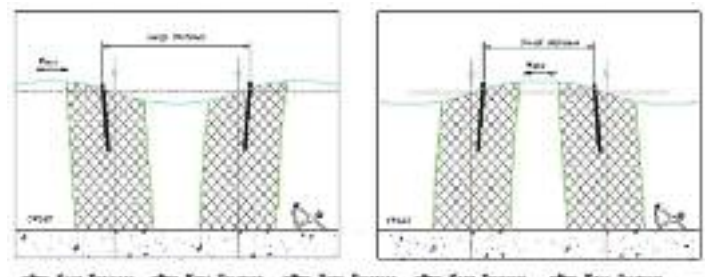
At this point in the conversation my attention turned not to whether the attenuation was 5%, 10% or even 80%, but what was happening to the electricity and I remember, with the clarity of the water the device was being tested in, the inventor's disinterested reply, "The electricity is simply burned off on a resistor." An energy source we crave for, an energy source that costs billions of pounds to produce, an energy source that involved huge risks in harnessing ... was simply being burnt off.

After metaphorically picking myself off the floor, further investigation revealed the device not as a half-baked concept to reduce the height of waves, the demand for which has yet to be found, but the simplest, cheapest and least environmentally imposing wave energy device on the planet!

Two 'barn doors' connected together in one of engineering's simplest known couplings, constructed from low-cost easily available materials such as wood or concrete or steel or even old tyres, sitting almost entirely below the surface, is the very antithesis of a wind-turbine. Unlike the sub-sea turbines that are being proposed around Alderney, this device is not adversely impacted by ingress of weed, marine growth or abandoned fishing gear. It is many, many orders of magnitude simpler and cheaper than Pelamis, the much heralded 'snake-like' leader in wave energy.

However, the fact remains, if wave energy had received a fraction of the money that has been invested in wind turbines, who knows, we could have had an array of 'barn doors', invented by a Dorset man, that we *wouldn't* have seen from our shores.

Club member Adrian Dwyer advises UK and Chinese Universities on the commercialisation of innovative technology



- Two walls spaced apart will move backwards and forwards in different directions as the waves pass and the distance between them will be continually changing.



THE AILSA CHRONICLES – EXPLORATION

Travel south for warmth or winter in Paris? The decision was made when we did not get a mooring in Paris, also I had committed to a rally in Strasbourg, as far east as one can go in France.

Our departure was delayed because we could not antifoul in the rain and when we did leave, found our new prop had entered the Eurovision Song Contest - the singing was unbearable. We returned to the yard where the stern was lifted as the front floated free. The crane stopped. Gruffly, the yard owner called out, 'I hope you shut the stop cocks,' and without waiting for an answer shot into a dinghy. Passepartout handed him his weapon of choice, a 9 inch angle grinder, and manoeuvred the dinghy as I climbed high above the quay on *Ailisa's* stern to control the dangling mains cable and avoid a group electrocution. Demented screaming began, three prolonged screeches, then encores. During our test drive we celebrated with madeleines and tea, marvelling at the approach to Health and Safety.

Moving eastward we travelled the Canal de Bourgogne (242km, 189 locks) within two weeks. Water levels were rising as we traversed the Canal du Rhône au Rhin (236km, 115 locks) so we only tarried a day in Besançon (fine Vauban fort), and Montbéliard (Peugeot museum) as the River Doubs has a reputation for quickly changing from benign to challenging. By Mulhouse the risk had abated so we visited Colmar and Basel by train and saw the Rhine running at 4-5 kts, glad not to slog upstream with *Ailisa*.

It was then northward and downstream to Strasbourg on the Grand Canal d'Alsace (mixed large gauge canal and the Rhine). At Kniffer we locked onto the Rhine, passing the 1960s Corbusier-designed control tower. Embarrassing, I had only thought of him as a chair designer. With minimal revs the speed over the ground rose to 8-9 kts. The locks were big, 185m long by 23m wide, typically with a 25m descent. We enjoyed a couple to ourselves using 100,000 tons of water each time for our sole benefit. Most were shared with 85m to 135m barges; one carried three cars. Advice was to avoid the passenger cruise ships as they travel fast and leave you in a maelstrom of wash echoing from bank to bank.

Alsace and Strasbourg were new to us and abiding memories are of timber-framed buildings, nesting storks and Gewurtztraminer. Strasbourg would make an interesting place to over-winter with its Christmas markets, Germanic wines made in the French style and the opportunity to learn German. Leaving on the Canal Marne au Rhin (East), we enjoyed a grandstand view of the European Parliament building with its acres of glass.

Continuing westward we used the Arzviller boat lift, built in the 1960s when canals might yet be a serious transport mode. The lift replaced a flight of 17 locks, doing in 15 minutes what previously took 6-7 hours. This is an impressive piece of civil engineering for its audacity to raise boats 45m sideways in a trough of water up an inclined plane. The



Boating with a difference



trough, water and counterbalance weights total 2000 tons and impress one with the acceleration and precise positioning.

Nancy, a significant city along the canal, is a gem of a find, famous for its art nouveau architecture. We took delight sipping our aperos in Place Stanislav which resembles a piece of classic, ornate Versailles. The French use Nancy as a holiday location and, refreshingly, we heard little American, Australian or English spoken.

A short hop upstream on the Moselle took us to the start of the Canal des Vosges and the watershed to the Mediterranean, thereafter south and downstream on the Petit Saône, Saône, Rhône (through Lyon and Avignon), to the Canal Rhône à Sète where we enjoyed a bizarre beach holiday as the canal runs within 300m of the Med. Finally, we went across the Étang de Thau and up the Canal du Midi, crossing the watershed

to the Atlantic and our winter mooring in Toulouse. Log for the year: 2000km, 380 engine hours, 130 genset hours, 590 locks.

We have stayed south for over a year and conclude this area is to a barge as the Bermuda Triangle is to aircraft or sea going vessels. It is no hardship as the climate, produce and cycling are all 'séduisant'. For those interested in general barge-life happenings, whereabouts and photos, we tweet at www.twitter.com/bargecat

Mike Alexander



This is the life!



Cruising the Canal Du Midi



LIVE-ABOARD LIFE

Three years ago we set sail from Christchurch on an indeterminate voyage as live-aboards (LAs). You may have considered a similar venture and if so (or even if not!) you may be interested in some of the practical considerations.

First and foremost there is the question of what type of boat. I won't get embroiled in the catamaran v mono debate other than to observe that many marinas charge double for cats!

Size matters, of course, and the consensus seems to be that, for a couple, around 12 metres is about the best compromise. Larger offers more accommodation and is a bit quicker and a bit more comfortable in heavy weather. Against that, they can get hard to handle, require more gear e.g. electric winches, electric furling and, hence, generators and cost more to maintain. Berths are harder to come by – there are quite a few places where they just won't fit. But smaller boats can be cramped, especially if you are a permanent LA. All that said, we have met LAs in boats from 8 to 18 metres and they all seemed happy!

Most production boats are not designed for LAs as they have lots of berths, huge cockpits but have relatively little storage space. Obviously it depends on where you are going, what crew you have etc., but our main considerations were: seaworthiness; ease of handling; a decent bedroom (important for long term occupation); a pleasant saloon and a decent galley. Other points are the ability to reverse in a chosen direction (we can – many boats won't) and how it behaves at anchor. We do roll and veer more than some – but an anti-flopper and use of a kedge help address these matters.

The budget and the actual availability of a boat are also critical and we ended up with a 1996 Moody 38CC which had had a very easy earlier life. This met the basic requirements being a very solid boat, having a large aft cabin (thanks to centre cockpit) with a centre-line bed and it was in very good condition for its age. We also sought out a shallow



Jigsaw in the Red Sea (before dawn)

draft as we particularly wanted to go south via the French canals and rivers where depth is limited. In the longer term this also allows us to anchor in better sheltered places others cannot reach but it does result in more leeway than most when on the wind – a situation we try to avoid anyway!

This model also comes with two heads/showers and ours had a fair amount of built-in gear and equipment. For us, in the Med, the windlass is vital and chart plotter, auto-helm and fridge are important. The smart charger and battery monitoring system, life-raft, radar and roller-reefing on genoa and main are good to have but we can live without the diesel heater!

Selection of cruising areas is very much a matter of personal preference. Wherever we are, we pick the brains of other LAs for advice on where to go.

Just a few generalities concerning places that we have been in the Med. France is expensive, as is much of Italy. Corsica/Sardinia and Sicily are highly variable – some ports are very expensive, others are cheap or free. Marinas can be avoided for long periods by anchoring elsewhere, often just outside. We have met LAs who never go into marinas or paying harbours in the summer.

Greece is generally inexpensive for mooring but commodities are no longer cheap. The Ionian is a popular cruising ground but gets very crowded with flotillas in the school holidays. Then you can head south to the Peloponnese and the Gulf of Corinth – both nice and quiet even in high season. Turkey is still relatively cheap. Over winter, weather is an issue and the basic rule seems to be to get well south. Malta, Tunisia, Crete and the southern tip of Turkey are favourites.

IAN BRAY



In the Suez Canal



In a Suakin market



Fuel station at Osief



THE ADVENTURE CONTINUES

Readers of Practical Boat Owner may have read about Ian's practical projects to improve *Jigsaw's* suitability for long distance cruising. The latest news is that he and Mel have been exploring the Red Sea coast of Egypt and the Sudan this year in company with five other yachts of different nationalities.

They left Hurghaga, the second biggest Egyptian city on the Red Sea, on 3 January fully laden with supplies and after a stop in the upmarket 'ghost' resort of Port Ghalib, where they were the first yachts to visit for a year, they headed south anchoring in marsas (natural harbours) and small islands.

The coastline is a mass of coral reefs which provide wonderful snorkelling but challenging navigation. The German yacht *Cici* had to be towed off one reef and *Jigsaw* had problems with the anchor fouling in a coral garden and the trip line cutting through. Near the Sudanese border there is an area surprisingly rich with wildlife but remote from civilisation where they enjoyed a trip a shore.

Some miles off the border there was a shot across the bows of the lead boat, then a military escort into a small harbour. The Sudanese soldiers proved friendly, however, and provided a lift to the local village for currency from the shanty-housed bank, fresh produce and diesel from barrels outside another shack. There was even a mobile phone shed selling SIM cards.

Jigsaw escaped the near disasters experienced by two other yachts (fire and reef damage) and sailed on to Suakin, 30 miles south of Port Sudan, 3000 years old and the last slave-trading post in the world, operating till the 1940s. This was their final destination before starting northward towards the relative sophistication of Egypt as soon as possible!



COMMANDER JAMES STRIDE, MA, BSC (HONS), FRGS, R.N.

A great number of our members learnt to sail in Christchurch Harbour, many in the dinghies hired out by the Strides of Fisherman's Bank.

In the eighties they would probably have seen the two Stride boys 'messaging about in boats'. James and Luke are the sons of Brian and Stella, both from generations of local fishermen, so it was probably inevitable that, with such a background, they were always on the water.

Both have attained remarkable success, with Luke becoming Senior Design Engineer and Conceptual Department Manager at Sunseeker and the elder, James, recently taking command of the Royal Navy Type 45 Destroyer, H.M.S. *Duncan*

James joined the Navy in 1991 as a University Cadet and spent the next three years at Southampton.

Following further training he joined HMS *Bicester* as Navigating Officer and in 1999 became a forecaster for the Type 25 Frigate squadron. He later joined HMS *Scott* as the Navigating Officer and, as one of the Survey Managers, spent the next 18 months surveying in the Indian and Atlantic Oceans and the Mediterranean.

A further two busy years were spent as Flag Officer to Admiral Sir Jonathan Band, Commander in Chief for the Eastern Atlantic.

After a Warfare Officers' course in 2005, James joined HMS *Exeter* as Gunnery Officer and later as Operations Officer. During his time aboard, the ship conducted operations in European, North African and South Atlantic waters.

Two years were then spent at the Permanent Joint Headquarters which included working with the military as Liaison Officer to an Infantry Brigade in Helmand and Assistant to the Brigadier in charge of overseas operations. James joined HMS *Gloucester* as the Executive Officer in 2009 with two deployments to the South Atlantic before she returned for decommissioning.

James completed the Advanced Command and Staff Course and was appointed to HMS *Duncan* as her first Commanding Officer in December 2012. HMS *Duncan* is the latest and last of six Type 45 Class destroyers which are often considered to be the most powerful air defence warships in the world. The total cost of the six-ship project is £1 billion but the ships are expected to be in service for over 30 years

and are designed to be as future-proof as possible, utilising 80% new technology throughout. The ships' capabilities centre on the two radar systems which, between them, can detect about 1000 targets within 250 miles as well as ballistic missiles in the outer atmosphere. This allows the ships to not only protect other naval forces such as the future carriers but also forces operating ashore. HMS *Duncan* can undertake a variety of roles, not just air defence. Her sister ships have already operated throughout the Middle East and the South Atlantic.

The ship is armed with 48 anti-air missiles of both short and long range capabilities; a medium range gun capable of engaging targets almost 15 nautical miles away and can operate a variety of helicopters up to Chinook size. Normally, though, she would operate with either a Merlin Maritime Patrol Helicopter or a brace of Lynx Maritime Attack Helicopters which can be armed with Sea Skua missiles, torpedoes or depth charges.

We wish James well with his new command. Unfortunately, he is unlikely to bring her into Christchurch to show her off as she displaces 8000 tons with a length of 700 feet and a beam of 70ft.

Sadly, Brian Stride did not live to see this, but it is certain that he would have been proud and elated by his sons' achievements and success in their chosen careers as is Stella, her family, relations and, indeed, all of us at the Club.



H.M.S. *Duncan*

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FAMILY SAILING: IT'S CHILD'S PLAY!

Having spent practically every weekend and summer holiday as a child on board our family boat, naturally I wanted the same for my children: the freedom of messing about on boats and everything that goes with it.

So, when the kids were just about old enough, we decided to buy a boat. We were determined that we wanted it to be a fun experience for us all and we did not want to put them off by going out in bad weather or strong winds. We wanted a boat we could trust and something that would look after us if the weather turned.

Content was the first boat we looked at and we fell in love with and bought her straight away. A 28 foot Contest, almost the same age as me, but in pristine condition having been owned by a pilot who had an obsession for polishing.

Winters' evenings were spent talking about trips to France and the Channel Islands for the summer holidays. However, as spring came and we introduced our 18 month old son and four year old daughter to sailing for the first time, we quickly realised that sailing with children was going to be a little bit different to how we had envisaged, especially as our son refused point blank to be strapped into a car seat in the cockpit, instead preferring to sit on the topside holding on to the dodger, looking out to sea.

I warned my husband that he could not be too precious about our immaculate yacht – we had to have crayons and colouring books on board and to expect the usual mess and devastation children leave in their path. Surprisingly, he coped remarkably well, even though he was probably twitching inside!

Now, with two summer seasons under our belt, lots of spilt yoghurts and a few more dinks in the woodwork, sailing on board the good ship *Content* with our young crew is definitely getting easier and far more enjoyable.

To our amazement, the children have learnt the drill: being on deck means lifejackets on; no standing in the companion way when we are sailing; be careful of the fish hooks when the mackerel line makes an appearance and not to put their fingers near the winches.

Last year, luckily, we had no more man-overboard situations, unlike the previous season when our eldest, who was four at the time, bounced out of the rubber dinghy whilst singing Abba's 'Mamma Mia' on the way to the Folly Inn. The excitement of a lemonade and packet of crisps was obviously too much to take.

Typically, we did not have an easy start to the season last year as we were cursed with strong winds and rain for weeks on end but, in the spirit of adventure, we made the decision that it would not deter us.

Even if we stayed put in the marina a few times, the kids still found it exciting to be on board and in their bunks.

We quickly realised that the sailing bit is not the fun part for them, it is all about getting to the destination and pumping up the dinghy in order to go exploring, Swallows and Amazons style. If we sail with friends who have kids, which we often do, it is even more enjoyable for both them and us.

So our lovely yacht, for now at least, resembles a floating caravan most weekends. You can spot us a mile off (and avoid us if you are sensible!), towing a Mirror dinghy, as



The Rayner family

well as an Avon, flying pirate flags and adorned with fishing nets, crab lines, drying washing, inflatable beach toys – you name it.

To keep everyone happy we invariably make a dash from Lymington on a Friday night towards Studland or Poole Harbour, where we set up camp for the weekend and the kids can have the freedom of the beaches or the adventure of exploring Brownsea Island. We are not complaining, both are beautiful spots and we usually reward ourselves with a pint or two at the Bankes Arms or, if we are very lucky, lunch at Shell Bay.

It is funny because it feels like history is repeating itself; as a child, Poole Harbour was a firm family favourite and, thirty years on, it still is and it feels like nothing has changed - only I am older and now the children are my own.

Not surprisingly, my childhood memories have come flooding back: swimming off the boat at Studland; picking wildflowers on walks out to Old Harry; my sister and I being taught to row by my Dad in the shallows at Studland Beach; visiting the Bankes Arms for a promised lemonade; finding peacock feathers and having a family picture in front of the Baden Powell memorial stone on Brownsea. Exactly the same things we are doing now with our own family.

So whilst the kids are happy, we are happy with our little jaunts on our floating caravan. Falmouth and France can wait until we have two useful crew, who can tie a bowline and reliably steer a course!

Lindsey Rayner



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IN MEMORIAM



CHARLES PEEK

As many of you will know, Charles Peek passed away peacefully at the age of 91 on 26 November 2012.

Charles was a very popular and active member of Christchurch Sailing Club for so many years. He and his wife Betty were regulars at hundreds of the Club's social events which Charles often used to help run.

He was born in 1921 in Bournemouth and, following his parents' split, he lived with his mother who died later in childbirth. He then lived with his stepfather and was educated at Malvern College thanks to a mystery benefactor who, he learnt when he was 16, was his real father.

At the outbreak of the war Churchill decided to move the country's

fledgling satellite research centre from Dorset to Malvern College.

Charles and the other members of the college's sixth form were invited to continue their studies at Blenheim Palace.

After leaving Malvern in 1940 Charles joined the RAF to train as a navigator and in 1941, at the age of twenty, he was transferred in secret to Canada via South Africa where he was involved in the clandestine arrangement with the U.S. to transfer aircraft via Canada to Britain.

At Bomber Command he became a Squadron Leader and flew all over Europe and to Africa, South America and Canada, mainly flying in Hudsons and Lancasters. Later he became a Bombing Leader.

Charles met Betty during this time and they were married at Christchurch Priory with the bells being rung for the first time since the start of the war.

After the war he started his company, Peek Trading, in a very small shop in Tuckton. The company moved to the old Tuckton Farm site where he was later joined by his son John and son-in-law Robert at the renamed Peeks of Bournemouth. Eventually the company moved to Reid Street in Christchurch where it is now.

Charles lived for his family and was very proud that two of his grandchildren, Nick Peek and Liz Waite, subsequently joined the company. His grand-daughter Emma lives with her family in Australia and his grandson, William, works at Sunseeker International in Poole.

Charles had many hobbies and interests which included shooting, skiing and snooker. In addition to being a member of Christchurch Sailing Club he was an active Freemason and a founder and Chairman of Pokesdown Youth Club, which he helped to run for nearly 40 years.

His favourite place in the world was Mudeford Sandbank where he and Betty had a beach hut. There he was a keen water-skier and windsurfer well into his 60s. He was the Chairman of the Mudeford Beach Hut Association for many years.

His funeral, held at Christchurch Priory on 5 December, was packed to the rafters and demonstrated the great affection and respect in which he was held by so many people. He loved people and people loved him.

Charles leaves behind his wife Betty, son John, daughter-in-law Gay, daughter Joy, son-in-law Robert, four grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

THE LAST WORD – CONFESSION IS GOOD FOR SOUL

Now there are things you wish you had not done and there are Confessions. These are things you really should not have done, really silly things you should have seen coming and were lucky to get away with.

Argo is a Virgo Voyager, triple keel with a two cylinder diesel and 2.4 tons or so, 23 ft long and 30 years old. I sail single-handed, as *Argo* rolls somewhat and this does not promote domestic harmony.

The passage plan, yes, there was one, called for *Argo* to leave Christchurch to make for Studland on the falling tide, leaving Studland to arrive off St Alban's Head at or about slack water and carry the ebb tide across the bay to Weymouth. The inner sea danger area was not in use, so it was possible to keep in close to St Alban's Head. The intention was to approach the Ledge, assess the situation and, if necessary, turn to the south west and run along the disturbed water until it was safe to turn towards Weymouth.

As I approached, it was clear that the overfalls were building rapidly and the conditions would be very rough if not downright dangerous. The safest course of action was to turn to port and run to the south west. I should add that, in this sort of situation, I prefer to run under engine.

I was just starting to turn away when it all went wrong. In slow motion, or so it seemed, a huge breaker raced towards us and caught *Argo* broadside. The height of the breaker was such that I had the impression of looking up underneath the breaking crest. *Argo* was pushed over, right on to her beam ends. I slipped down to the bottom of the cockpit, keeping a tight grip on the tiller. Going through my mind was, 'Oh chum, you are in trouble now!'

Despite wearing an immersion suit I knew that there was no chance of surviving in the water, conditions being as they were at the time. I was not troubled by any feeling of worry or fear; just no feeling at all. As for *Argo*, she pulled away under full power, rolled upright and we headed south as planned. A brief inspection found no evidence of water aboard or damage.

Now, what went wrong? I have thought of three reasons. The first was that I had been going slower than planned, so the ebb tide was gathering strength as I approached. *Argo* does not have a log. Second, I allowed myself to become too close to the overfalls before starting to turn away. This was possibly caused by the increasing ebb tide and, thirdly, I was too far out from the cliffs.

Local advice is that if you can see the old Coastguard Station on the top of St Alban's Head, you are too far out, which means you have to be close, very close.

During years in the Merchant Navy, I remember advice given to me by one of the Captains I served with. 'Every now and again you have to frighten yourself.'

How very true.

Ken Gordon



Argo

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