

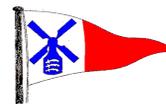
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June



2008

IYC Newsletter



Cadets Clean up at RYA RIB Challenge

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COMMODORES QUARTER DECK

For those of you who use the creek I hope you find the new buoys a true benefit when leaving and entering our creek, especially at night. On a brighter note those of you who use the creek must have noticed the improvements we are making and we will continue to maintain and improve Smallgains Creek, Lagoon and Oyster Creek. Lily Rapkin 2 will soon have some new equipment fitted which we believe will prove to be of even greater benefit.

I hope some of you have noticed the protection there is at the eastern end of our moorings to protect the boats from the swell coming in on an easterly winds. My thanks to Nick Ardley and Mike Edwards for their help and efforts in getting this project of the ground (or should I say in the mud) and close to being finished.

Well, this year's sailing season has started and so far the weather does not seem as bad as last year. Let's just hope that this is the start of what will be a good summer for all of us who venture out on the water. You will see by the our boating activities list that for those of you who have sailing boats or motor boats there are many cruising opportunities. Even the longer cruiser races give you the opportunity to cruise to the finishing point and enjoy the banter and socializing that always follows ashore. So have a look at the Sailing Activities in your Club Book or on the Notice Boards and join in. It is just one more way of supporting your club. There are also the short club races on one tide. These are fun and you do not have to have a sleek machine to take part, just the enthusiasm to sail and you will be back in the club for a beer before you know it.

I have had to change the date and venue for my Commodores Cruise this year because of personal circumstances and if you look at the Sailing Activities list there is a cruise to Ramsgate on the August Bank Holiday weekend starting Saturday, 23rd August. I now intend to make this my Commodores Cruise and hope there will a lot of boats on the cruise. A free wine and cheese party will be provided for all and the list for boats names to go on will be on the boards soon.

The construction of our new shower block in the compound is due to start very soon and I am sure this will provide a far better environment

for all our members to change and shower in whenever they wish to.

By the time you read this our galley will have reopened serving excellent food on Fridays, Saturdays and roasts on Sunday afternoons

and also breakfasts on Saturday and Sunday mornings. The galley will be run by Sheila and Beryl and I ask you all to welcome them to our club and support them and the club by using this service provided for you.

You can now purchase club regalia direct from the club as we are now keeping many items in stock form sizes small to extra large. In fact it is only the white shirts and blouses that will need to be specially ordered along with any of the other items that might be required in XXL or XS. If you require any items please see any available committee member who will be only to pleased to help you with your purchase by providing you with the regalia request form, of course taking your money and handing you the regalia straight away. So why not purchase some new club clothing for the summer before it's too late.

Finally here is a story that has caused me to be the butt of a considerable amount of joking but has provided many a smile on many a face.

It is the story of crows nests and do they pertain to the modern day cruising boat. Well, my boat was the subject of this discussion especially when this particular crow's nest was the real thing. On walking to my boat one morning Bill Leeks pointed out that he admired the crows nest on my mast. I returned a polite laugh, thinking what the hell is he talking about but he insisted on asking me again but this time pointing to my boat. I looked around with him and of course there at the top of my mast was a huge bundle of interwoven twigs, the beginning of a true crows nest. This had literally appeared overnight and I was a little peeved to say the least. Why me, why my boat, why my damned mast and there are certainly taller masts in the club. Well, those crows had worked in vain because the woodwork was coming down. Unfortunately I have an indescribable fear of heights but Dave Lane was the hero of the day as Len Dow, Kevin Rumins and I hoisted him up to get rid of the construction. With the job done we all had a laugh about it and turned our backs and walked away.

Next morning I returned to my boat only to find another bundle of twigs at the top of my mast. Either these crows were very determined or a member had gone up my mast in the night to play the ultimate joke. I gave our members the benefit of the doubt and conceded it must be those bl**dy crows. As I was considering going up the mast myself and my hands getting clammy and clammy another hero appeared on the horizon, well, ok along the walk way. This day's hero was young Andrew Dobbs. Being young and athletic he shinned up the mast rather than us really having to hoist him up and once again the potential love

nest was removed unceremoniously. With the job done we all had a laugh about it and turned our backs and walked away.

Now paranoia was setting in. They'll be back, probably with all their mates to make up for lost time and then the nest warming party. This requires drastic action. A high power air rifle, good telescopic sights and a steady trigger finger, that's what is required. Now for those who are thinking surely he would not shoot the crows I can assure you that was my intention as I had learned that crows are classed as vermin.

Besides, like many of us I have some expensive gear on my mast head, VHF aerial, wind speed and direction transducer, windex and TV aerial and I was not going let some mangy crows wreck them. Of course the thought did cross my mind that should I get a shot at these rats of the sky it might be me who blows the top of my mast away. Never the less I was determined. At 4pm I return to the boat armed and dangerous. Ah ha, no twigs, they must be coming back. At 8pm my paranoia was getting out of hand. No crows! Was there a crow communications network warning of the hazards of perching on my mast. I trooped of home head hung low but vowing to be there early in the morning. I was not going to be beaten or nested on. The next morning was sunny and at 6.30am, very peaceful. Peaceful except for my scream of despair as I saw another mesh of twigs at the top of my mast. My thoughts turned to such things as crow pie, crow chasseur and crispy crow but I was determined today would be the day of deliverance. I waited and waited and waited and waited. I drunk gallons of tea and ate my lunch on the boat, drunk more tea ever watchful at the skies above and finally, yes finally I gave up and went home. The next day I was advised to put some the plastic spikes on my mast, the ones which are used to keep birds off of CCTV's and the like. With this great idea, off I went purchased these spikes and then realized I had to go up the mast as I was the only one who knew where I wanted them. I gathered the trusty hoisting crew of Dave Lane, Len Dow and Kevin Rumins and ventured skywards thinking my next boat is going to have a mast no taller than 12 feet. At the top I realized I needed 2 pairs of hands, 2 to hang on for dear life and 2 to actually work with but some how I got the spikes attached even with my eyes closed. Back on the deck a beer for all was called for and with the job done we all had a laugh about it and turned our backs and walked away.

With an air of supreme confidence and a wry smile on my face I strolled to the boat next morning only to see 2 bl**dy crows perched on my mast head, big grins on their faces and yet another nest taking shape. Murder was on my mind and at that moment in time it was not

necessarily going to be the crows, any body walking by would have been sufficient. I needed to get to the gun. Softly, softly, please don't fly away, please, please, please don't fly away, they've flown away. Now this was getting very personal, me and these 2 crows. Well, there was nothing to be done but go up the mast again put more spikes up their even if it meant the top of my mast was beginning to look like a cheap Christmas tree. So with my trusty hoisting crew, just one pair of hands and eyes shut tight deposited more spikes at the mast head. I returned to the deck with a sense of despair and that sinking feeling of defeat. No beer, no celebration, no hope.

I woke the next day with dread in my heart. Should I go and check or should I just let these crows get on with it and have the last caw. As I walked on to the main walkway I could not raise my eyes to look at my mast but eventually I could not resist. Was I hallucinating, had I really woken up yet, was I day dreaming. No, no, there were no twigs; well there was one but only one and the next day still the same one and the next day. I had won. I was ecstatic. I had defeated these 2 crows. I had not won a World Cup or Wimbledon or an Olympic Gold Medal but I had beaten 2 crows and was euphoric.

If it appears that I was going insane, I was. If it seems that I was obsessed, I was. If I gave the impression I was becoming paranoid, I was.

However, I over came all these and I do not have to crow about it



This is a great Club! The envy of most! Be part of it!

*Good luck, good sailing, good motoring & good fishing,
& whatever you are doing on the water, be safe.*

Bill French

Commodore

IYC Social Section

(Summer 2008)

- June** 14th Quiz with Roy?
28th Private Function
- July** 5th Private Function
13th Quiz Night with Roy?
19th Private Function
- Aug** 1st Hurricane Open Weekend
16th Fun Day
23rd Commodores Cruise
- Sept** 6th Quiz Night with Roy
13th Private Function
20th Dance
- Oct** 4th IYC Birthday Bash (email [IYC](#) for Tickets)
11th Quiz Night
18th Private Function
25th Halloween Dance
- Nov** 1st Quiz Night with Roy
8th Bonfire Night
15th Gentlemen's Cruise
22nd Annual Dinner Dance
29th Dance
30th AGM
- Dec** 6th Prize Giving
13th Quiz Night
14th Children's Christmas Party
20th Christmas Dance
27th Pantomime
31st New Years Eve

RYA RIB CHALLENGE

What a result by our Cadets... Early on a cold wet May morning Andrew Dobbs and Aron Soderberg arrived at Paxton Lake near St Neots to compete in the E Region RYA Youth RIB Race. They had braved winter with many of the other cadets to come through our training / selection process triumphant and were there to represent the IYC. But they were not alone... Aaron Lowther and Jack Beverley who were very close runners up were there to support them along with other club members and Cadets.

The time for booking in passed and it became clear this was going to be a two club race as we were the only visiting club. (Possibly due to the horrid weather) So the RYA official decided he would allow reserves to compete as well and Paxton Lakes (who have won this event for several years – and have even won at the national finals) produced several spare cadets. Not to be out done Aaron and Jack stepped in along with Caroline who was also along for support.

In the Childrens group Aron appeared to be winning and put in a blinding run of 1m 30s which is the fastest time I had seen for the childrens group at the Eastern Region events. But when we saw the results a boy we thought was a junior had beaten him by just 4 seconds.

In the Junior Group Caroline put in a run of 1m 20s and that would have also won it at the previous events so that put the pressure on the boys. But then Aaron put in an incredible run of 1m 11s and on the right day that is a National Final winning time and he did that in horrible weather. To put this in perspective the National Final was won in a time of 1m 17s last year. Poor Andrew was being pushed now he throttled up and attacked the course even faster but just couldn't nail the turns at that speed and finished in a time of 1m 18s.

We took nearly all the medals. Junior Group. 1st Aaron, 2nd Andrew and 3rd Caroline. Paxton Lake won the Children's Group but we still had Aron in 2nd and Jack in 3rd. A brilliant result for our Cadets who have become very competent and competitive RIB drivers and are a credit to our club.

Now we have to start planning for the National finals on the last day of the Southampton boat show on 21st September when Aaron will be representing our club.

Well done to everyone, including the trainers, parents, the RIB owners who let the cadets loose on their boats, and the club and committee for supporting our cadets, you can all be very proud of them.

Hopefully we will see some of you there at the Southampton Boat Show to cheer them on.

Peter P.

Dinghies Summer letter

Please read this; If you sign on to enter a race, cruiser or dinghy, you personally undertake that you have third party insurance to the value of at least £2,000,000. If you are involved in an incident you could find yourself with serious problems, especially if injuries occur, bankrupt for the rest of your life, is it worth the risk? This also includes cadets.

The season started on a very cold Easter, with zero temperature's and snow flurries. We did manage to get a Race in on the Easter Monday, blustery conditions, and capsizes. One of these was to long to be in the water that is at its coldest in march. Another capsizes involved L.Turner and L.Bullock; they righted their cat in no time, this is down to being young fit and experienced. The race was won by Kevin and Sue Turner (tornado).

A late afternoon race was held, once again the tornado of Kevin won.

Saturday the 26th April we had a Cadet Topper's only Memorial race in memory of Paul Metson, John's son. This event was well organized and supported, and on one of the best days in April. Luke Bullock was the victor. It would have been nice to have seen a bit more support from the

Committee; this is what the club is about.

Sunday the 27th late start for a dinghy race and with very light winds it looked very doubtfull if we could race. We did and managed two race's albeit rather short. The event was dominated by Ian Cuthbertson (shadow).

Two of our catamaran's travelled over to france to compete in the Carnac Catamaran Event; I believe they had reasonable results, they were Kevin and Lloyd Turner, Mark Wood and Mark Mawditt.

The club racing is also going well with some of the cadet's now mixing it with us. When they join in we race on the Portsmouth yardstick number's.

This is the start of the season, will you please let me know if you cannot do your support boat duty; do not tell any other person as the message does not get back to me, I am your Dinghy Fleet captain, I organized the boat rota, please inform me.

Repair work on the walkway is ongoing, especially with Easterly winds, I would like to thank Fred Ellis, Bob Carr and Mick Flaherty for welding the ramp back in its place.

Brian

THE ALEXANDRA YACHT CLUB

CORDIALLY INVITES

THE COMMODORE, OFFICERS, COMMITTEE AND MEMBERS

OF

Island Yacht Club

TO PARTICIPATE IN

THE 1878 RACE

ON

SATURDAY 19TH JULY 2008

H.W. 14.12HRS. 5.5M
PROV. START 12.45HRS
FREE ENTRY
SLOW/FAST PY

REAR COMMODORE (SAILING):
RICHARD CARUZZI.



THIS EVENT WILL CELEBRATE THE FIRST EVER RACE FROM THE ALEXANDRA YACHT CLUB ON 18TH JULY 1878, 130 YEARS AGO. IN THE SPIRIT OF THAT RACE, WE PARTICULARLY WELCOME THE TRADITIONAL DINGHY AND HAVE THEREFORE DECIDED ON A JOINT EVENT WITH PRIZES FOR BOTH SLOW AND FAST HANDICAPS.

AS A SAD RESULT OF STORM DAMAGE TO OUR SLIPWAY DELAYING THE START OF OUR SEASON, RACING AT AYC BEGINS WITH THIS EVENT AND WE ARE HONOURED AND DELIGHTED TO INVITE OUR NEIGHBOURS ON THE FORESHORE TO HELP CELEBRATE BOTH 130 YEARS OF RACING AND THE INAUGURATION OF OUR REFURBISHED SLIPWAY.

THE CLUB WILL BE OPEN ALL DAY FROM 12.00HRS - MIDNIGHT FOR FAMILY AND FRIENDS TO WATCH THE RACE AND THERE WILL BE HOSPITALITY AND PRIZEGIVING IN THE EVENING.

JETTY STORAGE AVAILABLE IF REQUIRED.

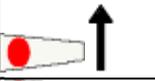
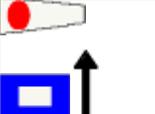
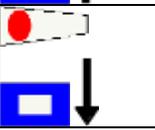
FREE RACE ENTRY ON THE JETTY, OR
REGISTRATION:
THE SAILING SECRETARY
MR. TERRY MATON
EMAIL: ALEXYC_SOUTHEND@HOTMAIL.COM

Cruiser Racing/Cruising & Dinghy Races

IYC BOATING ACTIVITIES 2008

Adjusted for BST					
Date	HW	HT	RACE	CRUISE	DINGHY
JUNE Sun 1	10:59	5.4			Dinghy Race
Sat 7	15:59	5.6	RAY DAY	RAY DAY	RAY DAY
Sun 8	16:48	5.5	Ellen Rapkin		Dinghy Race
Sat 14	10:23	5.0	Harty Ferry Race	Harty Ferry	
Sun 15	11:15	5.1			Dinghy Race
Sun 22	15:36	5.4			Dinghy Race
Tue 24	04:48	5.3		S.Coast Cruise I.O.W.	
Sun 29	09:18	5.1	Nore Race		Nore Race
JULY Sun 6	15:48	5.7	Ladies Race		Ladies Race
Sat 12	08:21	5.0	Interclub Cruiser		
Sun 20	14:48	5.5			Dinghy Race
Sat 26	06:33	5.1	Blackwater Race	R. Com. Maidstone	
AUG Sat 2	14:04	5.8		Com. Brightlingsea	Hurricane Open
Sun 3	14:47	5.8			Hurricane Open
Sat 16	13:16	5.4	FUN DAY	FUN DAY	FUN DAY
Sun 17	13:51	5.6	Norton Novice		Forw'd Hands Race
Sat 23	17:21	5.5		Ramsgate	
Sun 24	18:14	5.2			Dinghy Race
Sun 31	13:46	5.9	Koningstein Pursuit		Koningstein Pursuit
SEPT Sat 13	12:06	5.2	Upnor Race	Upnor	
Sun 14	12:44	5.5			Dinghy Race
Sun 28	12:43	5.8	Greene King Race		Whitbread Race
OCT Sun 5	16:42	5.2			Dinghy Race
Sun 12	11:22	5.2			Gin & Rum
NOV Thu 13	11:54	5.9		Gentlemans	
DEC Sat 6	05:20	4.8	Prize Giving		

Starting signals used in IYC & CCCS Cruiser Racing

	5 minute Preparatory	1 sound *  or  Class flag (No 1) Raised
	4 minute Warning	1 sound *  or  Code flag (P) Raised
	1 minute Warning	1 sound *  or  Code flag (P) Lowered
	Start	1 sound *  or  Class flag Lowered

Please note if you have either a Dinghy, Tender, RIB or Speedboat anywhere on Club premises.

This year stickers were issued to all of those members who paid the fee for either a Dinghy, Tender, RIB or Speedboat. In the case of Dinghies and Tenders the sticker must be displayed in a prominent position on the boat. In the case of a RIB or Speedboat it should be displayed prominently on the boat or the trailer.

A check has been carried out in part and when completed it is intended to move all craft for which payment has not been made or are not displaying a sticker to a secure compound. There are a number of tenders in particular for which no payment has been made and a number which do not have the name on them nor of a vessel currently on a club mooring. All Tenders are required to have the name of the vessel clearly marked on them.

If you have a craft on Club premises for which payment has not been made you should promptly ensure that payment is made to the Assistant Treasurer. No payment is required for one Tender from those with moorings in the Centre Creek, Fishermans Creek or the North Bank."

Many Thanks, Malcolm

We Have been contacted by the British Red Cross,

First Aid Training by the British Red Cross

"There could be quite a delay in getting medical aid while sailing on the open waters, so having a trained First Aider on board is always a good idea.

The more people trained in Life Saving skills the better prepared we will be in times of crisis.

Courses can be tailored to the needs of the group, and where groups have suitable venues we can provide on site training."

I don't have any details on costs (this will probably depend on numbers) or dates as yet but if any member is interested please contact Mike Edwards sailing@islandyachtclub.co.uk

Down on the waterfront...

We've had some high tides of late: our marsh fringes are literally littered with flotsam and jetsam. In this day and age the water should be virtually free of debris, but unfortunately, this still isn't the case.

Over on the Medway and Swale, the local clubs collectively carry out an annual beach combing session along the shores. Locally too, it is understood, 'The Benfleet' do a sweep down to Two Tree Island. Whilst not envisaging anything so grand, a small group could make short work of our patch...A fun task for the cadets, and some adults, perhaps?

Jetty building once again has been taking place. Two sets of frames were made up by the midweek gang. A day or two later they were towed by *BJ* into the lagoon – the old waterman was in charge...

That Saturday, the how to do was colourfully described: the workmen had not been around when the last staging moorings had been built on the run along past where the old dinghy racks had sat... The boss had been a nipper of eight or nine then, and had remembered! They all trooped off, a crocodile, raring to get stuck in. Some suitably dressed others not so... Men that have spent many years mudlarking throughout their boating lives found out about real mudlarking - jetty fashion – mud wrestling was a more apt description – but they won. And had fun! See the Mooring Chairman for a session for yourself... It's good for the complexion too – the mud that is!

A man was on the look out for metal – to repair the floating dinghy slip – just a piece of old angle iron... Steely eyes swivelled in the man's direction as he searched the 'scrap' pile... Battle lines were being drawn in the sand, it seemed. Up piped a lone voice – “come on guys, we're all in the same club.” The battle stopped: the point had been made. A good job was done too: the team were at it all weekend. The job would have been made easier: welding that is, if a broken bit of kit had been fixed by the person who had said at the time, “I'll do that...”

The big work boat, *Lily*, has been busy ploughing a lonely furrow – yet it has not been uneventful. The rake broke - twice. The first time it was repaired by backing the boat into a vacant berth and craning the assembly to the area outside the workshop. The crane did a grand job: it reached comfortably over the parked boats. The second was more exciting. The incident occurred out in the creek... it meant the operator, not being content with being a closet motor boater, became a fisherman too. It, the rake that is, well the head any way, had done a runner: it had escaped its hook. Some time was spent trawling – but alas no fish! Undaunted, it was later buoyed; a merry band assembled for the rescue

on a later tide and soon had all the parts back together. If you've not looked recently – please do so: the difference that has been made by these efforts is staggering. And inside the lagoon too!

Enjoying a Sunday lunch time 'lite bite' from our superb galley recently, it was a joy to see a tribe of cats (and other hulls) being worked on: the young and the not so young were hard at it preparing their craft for the coming season. Rudders, masts, halyards, terminals, pins, stays, (older men will remember... a different slant on this...): all needs checking. Grand stuff – dinghies – whether they're for racing or pottering they're all part of our diverse and eclectic club!

Moving into March, 'compound life' increased dramatically as the whirl of power drills, polishers, sanders and pressure washers reverberated amongst the marooned craft. One guy, fresh from the South Coast, came to take his new pride and joy away. Moments before the launch, a leak was found, and then, rotten wood was seen flying in all directions. The buyer has not been seen since. An Old Sage, with a grin, chirped, “Burn it mate...” The Old Sage likes a fire... his eyes had definitely lit up at the thought! Another boat went in. Some time later a rather urgent call, “I'm sinking,” was heard. A gasket or something: gravity was the clearly seen to be winning! Mopping his brow, he relaxed only as the frame took the strain... Ah! You can't beat life on and around the water... can you?

Water Gt

I'm trying to find out a little more about the vessel that was broken up by the moorings adjacent to the outer/eastern end of the compound.

I'm told she was the schooner, Mary Miller, but the club handbook notes her as the, Merry Miller. The Mary Miller can be found on an Internet site - but was last known to be a houseboat on the Mersey.

I'm told that the vessel was cut up c1970. A section of her mast and part of the roller gear connection can still be seen in the open area where she sat - to the east of Ray Chuter's mooring.

Can any one help me please?

Nick Ardley
Whimbrel

Seen out in the Ray recently...

Around our locale a welcome return to the high seas was witnessed recently: Derek Durrant's classic motor yacht, *Pasudo*, was seen departing the creek and then disappear off in the direction of Southend Pier. Fortunately I had my camera in 'the boat bag' so later on that tide I ensured that I was in the vicinity of the creek entrance to get a shot of her, inbound, as she serenely made her way back into the creek. It was good to see her out – well done Derek!



Nick Ardley
Whimbrel

One traditional yacht curtsies to another: *Pasudo* captured under *Whimbrel's* jib on a fine April afternoon.

Please could you add this request to club members.

I am in need of pictures for possible inclusion into a forthcoming book.

1. Chapman Sands Lighthouse.
2. Sailing Barges in Smallgains Creek.
3. An old picture showing boats on the creek.

Many thanks,

Nick Ardley
Whimbrel

Motor Boat Section

The motor boat section had it's first Cruise of the year along with the social section who arranged a cruise and BBQ to Hoo on the May day bank holiday weekend. There were 5 motor boats and one sailing boat. Elaine Chuter took most of the crews on walk through the woods to upnor (She had done this walk a few times before how many years ago we are unsure of but times do change and memories are not as good as they were) but a good time was had by all.

The fishing comp there we two winners this year Peter Kimba and Garent Helps-Fursse Well done gents and thanks to everyone that took part.

The second motor boat cruise of the year was to St Kathrine's the weather was not the best On the morning we left Canvey those club members who were going to Gravelines decided to postpone their departing until later that day.

Two boats braved the weekend Castaway Bay 2 and Topaz. A good weekend was had by all with a visit to the science and history museums China town for dinner and an eveing walk along the embankment . I think all will agree that the return trip was a bit up and down as well as side to side and the crews handled the weather quite well.

The next motor boat meeting is wednesday 11 June 08 at 20-00hrs (8pm) All welcome

Best regards Martin Dobbs

Rear commodore motor.

ISLAND YACHT CLUB

COURSES AND TUITION AVAILABLE

OWN BOAT TUITION

SAIL OR POWER

DAYS DESIGNED FOR YOUR OWN NEEDS

ICC AND CEVNI

ASSESSMENTS CARRIED OUT ON YOU OWN BOAT

VHF AND DSC RADIO

1 DAY COURSE TO OBTAIN THE OPERATORS CERTIFICATE OF
COMPETENCE REQUIRED TO USE A SHIPS VHF RADIO

DIESEL MAINTENANCE

1 DAY COURSE DESIGNED TO ENABLE YOU TO SERVICE AND
MAINTAIN YOU INBOARD DIESEL ENGINE

THEORY COURSES

DAYSKIPPER AND YACHTMASTER

EVENING CLASSES

26 WEEKS THROUGH THE WINTER MONTHS

FOR MORE INFORMATION

PHONE 078903 89003

EMAIL islandyachtclubRYAcourses@msn.com

I was recently contacted by two of our ex club members. Firstly Rodney Bye, he phoned and asked how the Cadets did at the RYA RIB challenge this year. He did a lot for this club and was a strong supporter of the Cadets and I was more than pleased to be able to tell him of their terrific result. The other person to contact me was Roy Martinson who had written an article for the PBO involving my Father, I think you will all find it interesting especially those of you who knew them.

Sixth Sense by Roy Martinson

Some years ago I sailed to Norway and back as crew aboard a 26' bilged-keeled Kingfisher which was owned by a good friend of mine, Fred Powell. We set sail on a trip which would take us 7 days non stop from Canvey Island, in the Thames Estuary, to Mandal, Norway. An outward leg of 500 miles. Fred took everything in his stride, never letting bad weather influence him into making a mistake in his navigation or judgment. It was comforting to know when I was off watch asleep in my bunk. Fred was on top of it all.

He never showed any signs of being Mal-de-Mar, although it was constantly blowing F7. Westerly. Me! Well, I was absolutely fine until I was subjected to puffs of St. Bruno



from Fred's pipe. Its effect on my well being was instant and the ability to sit at the chart table and work out our position after taking sun sights was completely beyond my capabilities. I had to leave the sight workings for Fred when he relieved me from my watch two hours later. Once outside though, sitting wrapped up against the elements, that awful indescribable feeling gradually passed with each breath of North-Sea-Air.

I loathed the thought of asking Fred not to smoke his beloved pipe below decks as I thought it would cause conflict between us, but I threw all caution to the wind and approached him on the subject.

He surprised me when he agreed to my request, and I never suffered again throughout the rest of the voyage.

Unfortunately, some years later Fred Passed away. I'm sure his beloved pipe was cremated alongside him as they were inseparable in life. He was to leave a huge gap in all our lives and his friends and family miss him to this day.

Some time after Fred's funeral I was fortunate enough to be asked if I would help a friend sail his yacht, a 35' Hallberg-Rassy back to the UK from Gibraltar with one other crew whom I had sailed with on several occasions in the past in local waters.

It was early June when we arrived at the yacht in Marina Bay, Gibraltar. The owner was already on board to greet us, having arrived two days previous to prepare putting to sea.

Over a cup of tea and a cheese roll, my friend and I discussed 'The Voyage Plan' in detail, while the crew sat and tried to absorb as much of what we were planning.

We made the decision, weather permitting, to sail non-stop to Bayona. N. Spain.

We knew we had more than enough fuel and fresh water to get us to Bayona, and once there, knew we could replenish our stocks before setting out to cross Biscay.

Early the following morning we visited the marina office to pay the mooring fees and get a weather update. The staffs in 'Marina Bay' were extremely helpful, printing out the latest weather-fax and duplicating the recent weather forecast for us to take on board. "Well". I said. After studying both the printouts "Tide permitting, we will be able set sail within the next couple of hours".

Old Fred, told me often. "When planning your trip, remember it's not a test of endurance, but should be enjoyed by everyone on board. Take into account the experience level and work out a contingency plan for adverse conditions." I've never forgotten his words, and always, prior to setting sail, run through all the safety equipment with the crew, making sure they know where every item is stowed in an emergency. And that's what we did prior to setting sail.

The journey out through the Straits of Gibraltar and up to Tarifa was a sailor's dream. We found ourselves powering along with a reefed main with a preventer and a half furled genny boomed out with the spinnaker-pole. Our speed hardly dropped below six knots.

On the afternoon of the following day, we were visited by a school of grey dolphins. They appeared by magic, screeching as they propelled themselves out of the water a few feet in front of our bow-wave. There were masses of them, tearing along the side of the yacht at breakneck speed, all, it seemed, trying to get prime position at the bow, nudging each other as they sped through the water, leaping out of the sea to land in belly-flops some distance ahead of the yacht's bow.

Our course line kept us 5 miles away from the TSS. Although, one ship came quite close to us the following morning after we had been at sea for nearly 24 hours. It prompted us to check our position with the GPS and that of our waypoint on the chart. I logged our position 36-32' N 08-50' W. and entered the ships name in the log.

Cape St Vincent slowly appeared from the slight haze and within a few hours we motored under her sheer face with its world famous Nautical Training School perched on top like a royal crown.

Once rounding the Cape, the wind became a whisper of its former self, forcing us to resort to the iron sail, motoring past well known landmarks such as Cabo Espichel and Lisbon. We wanted to call into Figueira da Foz and altered course to do so, but as we came abeam of Leirosa, 5 miles from the entrance, the wind piped up from offshore and began to blow between 15-18 knots. After motoring all that way, we decided it was an opportunity not to miss so unfurled the sails and continued our trip sailing at 5 knots up past Cabo Mondego. It wasn't to last long. No sooner had we come abeam of Cabo Mondego so the wind left as quickly as it came. Neither of us wanted to turn back, so on went the engine and stayed on until we reached Bayona, N. Spain early the following morning.

Here we spent two days provisioning, checking fittings and equipment. It was also decided to change the oil and diesel filters before setting out to cross Biscay. The evening before we left we managed to get an excellent weather forecast for the next three days.

We departed Bayona in the early hours before sun up. Again, we found ourselves motoring with a hopeful drooping mainsail hoisted in a sky void of cloud and a mirrored-sea; which, was in a tranquil mood.

The three of us sat in the cockpit and discussed crossing Biscay. Our crew member was apprehensive and pointed out that it would be his first time and voiced his feelings quite openly, explaining he was unsure of how he would react if we were to encounter bad weather during the crossing.

He sounded genuinely apprehensive in crossing Biscay, so gave him the opportunity to diverting into a fishing port in Finisterre where he could either come to terms with carrying on, or leave the boat. He agreed with our proposal and we set a new course and waypoint just east of Cape Finisterre in 30 metres of water.

At 1000 hrs local time, Finisterre could be seen quite clearly. We plotted our position on the chart and it was noted we were approximately 25 miles from the harbour entrance.

The owner turned to the crew and myself and enquired if we would like to go below and get our heads down for an hour, explaining we would not be arriving at the port until 1500 hrs.

With the purr of the engine in my ears and the slapping of the waves on the bow, I soon found that place where deep dreams are dreamed and fell into total oblivion.

Something woke me. At first, I just lay there not knowing where I was for a few seconds. Then, for some unknown reason, I began to cough.

Smoke! I looked around the cabin to see if someone was smoking. There was no-one there. I sat on the edge of the bunk and looked up to the main hatch. It looked murky out there, but nothing untoward from where I was sitting.

Once again smoke filled my nostrils. Only, this time, I realised it was pipe tobacco! It was making me feel quite queasy.

I quickly made my way up into the cockpit to discover the owner fast asleep at the wheel.

What's more, we were travelling along at six knots engulfed in fog!

Cape Finisterre's fog horn sounded all round us! It was a frightening, terrible sound. I quickly disengaged the Auto-pilot and brought the vessel to a full stop. At this, the owner woke up quite startled as to what was going on. He stood up looking about himself for a few seconds, taking in the fog and my being at the helm, then; the gravity of the incident quickly brought him to his senses. More so, when we both heard the sound of breaking seas just ahead of us!

It was suggested I should steer a slow reciprocal course while the owner went below to plot our position from the GPS. The echo-sounder was reading 2 metres but soon increased in depth the further we travelled on our new course. Once we were in 20 metres of water I stopped the vessel.

While all this was taking place, our crew was sat in the main cabin wondering what all the fuss was about. He had been awoken by the noise of the engine as I had increased the revs to bring the vessel to a halt. We never ever did tell him how close we came to becoming a total loss!

The owner came up into the cockpit to inform me of our position. He explained that on our chart, we had just been on the rocks at the foot of FINISTERE!

I'm totally convinced to this day that my old sailing companion, Fred Powell, somehow warned me from the other side that we were in imminent danger, because I'm certain it was his pipe tobacco I could smell!

I wonder. Is this what they call a sixth sense, or is there more to it?

Lessons Learned.

1. Under the circumstances, we should have taken the vessel off autopilot and steered a physical course to the waypoint. Especially when the crew's tired.
2. Also, as it was only a short while before we arrived, one of us should have stayed with the helmsman on watch.
3. Perhaps it would have been a good idea to have put the echo-sounder alarm on. I will certainly do so under the same circumstances in the future.
4. It may have been a sensible idea to have called Finesterre Radio for a weather update. They might have had pre-knowledge of the impending fog.
5. We should also have checked to see if we were in fact steering the course we had set on the GPS, and not assumed we were.
6. It was also known of an anomaly which affected compasses N. West of Cape Finisterre. Maybe we should have checked to see if it had any effect for the area we were sailing in.
7. Or, like me, have a warning spirit on board!

Treasurer's Report

Having been the Treasurer for three months now I am beginning to get "into the swing" of things. The Club's accounts are quite complex and precise and I have taken some time to get to grips with but, with the help of Pat our former Treasurer, I think that am beginning to understand how everything fits in.

I would also like to mention that, after considering our financial position, the Committee agreed to allocate the money for the commencement of the works for the long awaited new shower block. This is to be our major project for the year .

ISLAND YACHT CLUB GALLEY Tel: 01268 510360

Opening times: Friday 13.00 - 21.00hrs.

Saturday 0900 - 15.00hrs.

Sunday 0900 - 16.00hrs

Sunday Roast please phone Sheila to book in advance.

STARTERS	JACKETS
Chicken & Bacon Salad	Chilli
Baked Camembert with Cranberry Sauce	Prawn
Soup and Crusty Roll	Tuna
Prawn Cocktail	Cheese & Beans
All £3.50	All £3.50
MAIN	OMELETTE
Ham Eggs & Chips	Cheese
Scampi & Chips	Brie
Sausage & Mash	Mushroom
Chilli Nachos	Onion
Ploughman's	Sausage
Mediterranean Veg Pasta	Beans
Chicken & Bacon Salad	Ham
Tuna & Prawn Salad	Prawn
Cheese Burger & Chips	Tomato
Chicken Burger & Chips	All made fresh to order
All £5.00	All £4.00
HOT BAGUETTE	PANINI & SALAD
Sausage & Onion	Cheese & Onion
B.L.T	Brie & Bacon
Brie & Bacon	Cheese & Tomato
BBQ Chicken & Bacon Melt	Cheese & Ham
£3.50	£3.30
CHILDREN	SIDES
All Dishes Available in Children's Portions	Chips, Onion Rings, Garlic Bread, Bread & Butter All £1.00