

The R N V R Yacht Club

NEWS UPDATE

February 2015

editor: newsletter@rnvryc.org

By Ed: I am a new editor! I plan to maintain the traditions of a Spring and Autumn Newsletter and an interim December and June Updates. This catches up with the missing December Update. Please email me (newsletter@rnvryc.org) your ideas and sailing snippets with photos for the edification of all. I am looking for stories from Northern and overseas areas initially. - Peter Stonestreet

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RNVRYC Commodore's Blog

Happy new year to all members and good sailing for 2015. Since taking over as commodore I've decided to write a blog to keep members more informed as to what is going on. I've taken over the role as commodore with a yacht club that is in, I feel, good rapport and hopefully will only need a bottom scrub and antifouling.

We have put together an interesting program of sailing and social event which I hope will meet the memberships approval. The **Fitting Out Lunch** has been changed this year from the South Coast to London with the view that more members will have the opportunity to join in this event at HMS President.

I will be looking forward to my first event as commodore which is the **North Dinner**. This is a most important event in our calendar as it brings the Southern members to the North and as we promote ourselves as a national club its very important to hold event in different parts of the country.

The **committee and myself** will be working hard over the coming year to keep the club on a straight course. We have quite a few changes this year in the rolls of committee members which I will update you on at a later stage.

I also hope that **Volunteer** is going to be used by as many members as possible and that the yacht is enjoyed. We already have good bookings for this year which is very encouraging. The yacht is also going to be used for the fastnet races by some of our serving members. The team will be headed up by Joseph Macdonald and I'm hoping Joseph will give us regular updates on this progress, on the qualifying races and finally the fastnet races itself.

There was a proposal for the AGM to change the **club name** to reflect what we represent today, as most of you are aware this was withdrawn. The committee has been discussing this issue for some time and at the last flag officers meeting it was decided to leave it until

later so full consultation with members can take place and an understanding of why some members feel we should update the clubs name.

I can confirm that the **Blue Book** will be issued this year in the manner of previous years. It will be presented as a 2 year edition with an update for changes in one year. During this year there will be a continuing discussion for additional methods of making the detail available to suit the requirements of different members and available modern communications.

Also we agreed that there will be a **review of the RNVRYC rules**. Jeremy Donne (past Cdre) has agreed to chair this with 4 members, one of whom will be a committee member. [*ed: an invitation is included below*]

Nigel Collingwood – Cdre 13 Feb

Haul Down Report (by the Past Commodore)

It has been both an honour and a privilege to have served as your Commodore for the **past two years**, although not always easy as my baptism of fire at the 2013 agm proved. Following a year of debate, 2014 finally saw the **yacht Volunteer** become available for the use of club members at very competitive rates. The introduction of this yacht has proved timely in providing a much needed platform for those members who do not have their own yachts on the South Coast and she has participated in all the South Coast sailing events during the year usually with a crew of 7 or 8. Able to offer up to 10 berths, she has the versatility to provide for comfortable cruising as well as being suitable to participate in racing events as is evident with the 2015 bookings.

Our sailing season in 2014 started off with a very successful and well attended **Caribbean** rally to Antigua where your Commodore made a "sperlash" not once but twice. The next very popular event was our Fitting Out lunch at Royal

Southampton Yacht Club, where we were delighted to welcome their **Royal Highnesses Prince and Princess Michael of Kent** as our guests, and were honoured that Princess Michael was “Godmother” at the naming of *Volunteer*. To avoid the elements interfering with our plans, the main UK South Coast event, the **Five Harbours Cruise** took place within the Solent area. It was a very well attended week of events and congratulations are due to all the team who were involved in organising it.

Our other major event in 2014 was our participation in the **70th anniversary** commemoration of the D-Day landings in Normandy. This historic event was thoroughly enjoyed by all who were able to attend, and was much enhanced by the thousands of enthusiastic re-enactors, bands and historic vehicles which were present at the time. This rally, like our Northern and two East Coast meets, was held jointly with the RNSA, further building our links with that organisation.

84 attended our **Annual Dinner** at the Royal Thames Yacht Club where Commodore Richard Farrington CBE and Commodore Peter Melson CVO CBE were our guests. It was interesting and apt to hear the Commodore reiterate how supportive the Royal Navy are in encouraging their personnel both RN and RNR to participate in sailing activities. Our last event of the year with 104 members and guests present, was the Christmas Party at The Naval Club with an opportunity to reminisce on the events of the past sailing season and discuss plans for the next.

During the year we have been delighted to welcome **29 new members** to our club and hope that they have an enjoyable and rewarding future with us. Many of these have been encouraged by the access to a competitively priced racing cruiser, and we also hope that there are some potential committee members amongst them.

In the early days of the RNVR SC and RNVR YC it was relatively young persons who joined “their club”. As time progressed the membership has progressively aged and the club’s activities have mellowed accordingly. It is of course the responsibility of the Committee to look after the existing members, but also to **encouraging new**, whilst maintaining the ability to run events which all members feel are rewarding. It is important that those serving or recently retired from the

service today, readily recognise that this is a club which could be for them.

Over recent weeks there has been much discussion about **the club’s structure and the direction** it should go. It is hoped that in 2015 we will be able to have some rational discussion with briefing papers circulated and members encouraged to participate in the debate, and give due consideration to all views with particular attention to the club’s future.

I would like to express my heartfelt **thanks** for the ongoing support of your Officers and Committee, without whose resource and hard work we would not have had the organisation which has enabled us to enjoy the events which have made 2014 such a successful year. Also I give my thanks to all those members who have supported your club events, both afloat and ashore, during my term as your Commodore.

David Whitby 9 Feb 2015

Members for the Club Rules Review Sub Committee

Members of the club are invited to be members of the rules review committee. See the commodore’s Blog. Please contact the Hon Sec: honsec@rnvryc.org

Survey of Members - Results

As part of the Recruitment and Retention Sub-Committee work we recently surveyed the membership electronically (hence only 379 were emailed as this was our total number of current email addresses for members!)

The purpose of the survey was to try to obtain some background information on the influencing factors which propelled members to join the Club, to get some view of the profile of those responding to determine whether there were any significant patterns emerging and to gauge reaction to some events which might lead to members ceasing to enjoy membership of the Club.

Of the 379 emailed 66% opened the email but only 33% responded – this, whilst being a low response was nonetheless a majority of those who opened the email (and any members who feel they have been disenfranchised by not responding are welcome to email me at warrants@rnvryc.org and I’ll forward the survey for their completion.

The overwhelming majority of respondents (77%) are List 1 members (may say something about amount of paperwork in the RN!) and in age groups the majority were aged 60 or over (may say something about having time to complete online surveys!)

Some interesting details are that only 4% of respondents joined whilst still serving as a Regular (which perhaps shows a resistance to joining us compared to RNSA if a keen sailor and still serving?) and that the top rated prior experience of the Club before joining was to have sailed with an existing member (39%) whereas the No. 1 influence to join was the Service connection as stated by 64% of respondents.

Amongst the many interesting suggestions on how to improve our recruitment (and which the Recruitment and Retention Sub-Committee are now working on) are:

- Use videos on social media e.g. Facebook, YouTube, Vimeo etc. to ‘speak’ to younger audience
 - Serving RNR Club members as liaison officers with Units listed in Blue Book
 - Make presentations at RN/RM/RNR/RMR events
 - RN/RM/RNR/RMR Unit noticeboards
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Volunteer – Governance

There is a full 2 sheet document on governance of Volunteer Yachting Ltd (VYL), which owns yacht Volunteer. It is in the Members area of the website above ‘programme bookings’. Download the link.

Volunteer New Berthing:

Volunteer has now moved to Port Solent which seems to be a destination in its own right. It is beside M27, with a railway station (Portchester) and direct trains to London, it has restaurants and cinema amongst other attractions. any charter can berth at other Premier Marina’s for free up to 42 nights per season & unlimited in Premier Gosport. This gives you 5 Marinas in the Solent plus Falmouth, Brighton and Eastbourne at no cost.

Working Party for Volunteer

There are always 2 parts to the story:- Volunteer is now out of the water in Port Solent and is due to go back into the water late March. We will

need some artistically minded people to help with the antifouling. If members could advise of any days in March they might be able to spare some time (even half a day would be appreciated) then we will put together a schedule accordingly. The new berth in Port Solent has very good access to M27, M3 and A3.

Volunteer Programme 2015

Volunteer has had a good start to the season with **bookings** filling most of April and May. In addition she has been chartered for the **Round the Island Race** in June. Most excitingly a team mainly of Club members led by Joseph Macdonald has confirmed entry into the **2015 Fastnet Race** (16th August). This will entail a series of training races during the period prior to August followed by the Fastnet itself.

In addition, as part of the regular club programme she has been chartered for the August **"Five Castles" cruise** is still available for the "East meets West" summer cruise in June.

There will be more familiarisation days in the coming months and we will be looking at a Yacht Master course later in the season.

RNVRYC 2015 Programme. Sundry notes:

The Northern Dinner 21st February. The books are now closed for this well attended function with about 70 diners at the Liverpool Yacht Club. The one regret is that the RNSA moved its AGM to the same date in Dartmouth and so causing a choice for some attendees.

South West Cocktail Party: Sat 28th March

Registration is now open for the very first "South West Cocktail Party". Those wishing to take advantage of the balmy weather forecast for the South West in March and banish the winter blues without having to spend three hours checking in at Heathrow (no baggage restrictions either), should take advantage of this opportunity to meet old friends and discuss the sailing season to come whilst looking out on the sub-tropical waters of Plymouth Sound.

Talks (and optional dinner) at the Royal Thames Yacht Club

- 24 February Tuesday "Clipper Race." Speaker: Simon Talbot..
- 12th March Thur. "Maritime Crime and Piracy: Avoidance Tips for the Cruising Yachtsman" Speaker: Christopher Ledger.
- "Cambria." Speaker: Chris Barkham. Thursday 19 March.

Training: - Sea going

Aboard Volunteer, a training trip to HMS President – RYA Qualifications & to get your log book up to speed ahead of YachtMaster exams

We have to use the trip for a RYA **Competent Crew Course** and **Coastal Skipper Practical**. The trip from Gosport to London can also be used for mileage building (especially useful for anybody needing night passage time as qualifying miles). The courses will run from the evening of the 6th April to the 11th of April for the outbound leg and from the evening of the 12th April to the

17th April for the homeward leg.

.Opportunities for a Training passage aboard Volunteer to arrive at HMS President for the Fitting Out lunch on the 12th April. This also has very favourable costs.

The cost of £530 per person with the possible members subsidy. Note that Volunteer is being provided free of charge for these courses. Marina & victualling are extra.

Email to:

petercostalas@btinternet.com

Training: Shore-based

Vortec have advised that they can offer the following courses.

- 19 March. First Aid Course. This is a one day course at £110 per person.

14-15 March and 21-22 March. RYA Sea Survival with ISAF add on (needed for offshore racing and recommended for anyone going further afield). The course will include Fire Simulator training. These are two day courses and include pool based practical use of liferafts, class room instruction and time

RNVRYC 2015 Programme

DATE	EVENT	VENUE
12 th Mar	Lecture by Christopher Ledger "Maritime Crime and Piracy: Avoidance Tips for the Cruising Yachtsman"	RTYC
28 th Mar	South West Cocktail Party	Royal Western YC
9 th Apr	Royal Yacht Club Golf Day	
12 th Apr	Fitting-Out lunch	H.M.S President London
2 nd -4 th May	Bank Holiday meet	Sat – Buckler's Hard (Rotating Supper) Sun – Gin's Farm (Dinner)
8 th -21 st Jun	East Meets West Annual Cruise	12 th Jun Dinner RTYC Ramsgate/ 17 th Jun Dinner In Dunkerque
27 th Jun	Round The Island Race	Solent & IofW
4/5 th Jul	East Coast Meeting – RNVRYC/RNSA	Bradwell
31 st Jul - 10 th Aug	Baltic Revisited	British Kiel YC
22 nd -31 st Aug	Five Castles Cruise	Solent Area
19 th - 20 th Sep	East Coast meet with the RNSA	Brightlingsea
10 th Oct	Autumn Meet Dinner	Hornet SSC
11 th Oct	Laying-up Lunch	RNC & RAYC
20 th Nov	Annual Dinner	HQ Wellington Temple Stairs
7 th Dec	Christmas Party	To be advised
13 th Jan	AGM	Naval Club

in the Yacht Fire Simulator. £340 per person

For anybody who has not been in a Fire Simulator recently (or not at all) the Fire Simulator is a salutary reminder of the yachtsman's worst nightmare. You will never look at your fire extinguishers as hat racks ever again.

The Club subsidy of £25 per course may apply.

Email to:
petercostalas@btinternet.com

Remembrance

It is always sad to report the passing of a member. Vic England from Kingsbridge in Devon particularly recorded that he would like to be remembered to the members of the RNVRYC.

Recent New Members

You will see from the following list that The club is in vital good health with an unusually long list of 29 new members in 2014

Adamson, Peter
Barnes, Tosca
Benyon, David
Bowen, Oliver
Coates-Walker, Roger
Connors, Liam
Dace, Kate
Dutt, Trevor
Edgley, John
Edwards, Matthew
Farrant, Crispin
Furminger, Simon
Graham, Richard
Hamlyn, Helena
Howard-Pearce, Tamar
Howeson, Charles
Ledger, Christopher
McKenzie, Gary
Mitchell, Mark
Morgan, Eugene
Myatt, Chris
Peers, Anne
Pike, Richard
Smith, Bob
Snoswell, Jane
Trefny, Rob
Waters, Alan
Wilkinson, Douglas
Woodward, Guy

And so to the Caribbean or not, 2016?

Every other year for the past 12 years, club members have been undertaking group charters in various Caribbean

locations to lift spirits (usually rum) and top up their tans in the depths of the British (and Canadian) winters. February 2016 will be the next opportunity if there is a group willing to take a punt (a catamaran is more comfy though).

St Martin, the Grenadines, St Lucia and Martinique, BVI twice and in 2014 Antigua have all been venues and some had talked about Guadeloupe as a possible venue in 2016. Eileen and I spent a day in Guadeloupe in January this year whilst on a cruise and spent a few hours sussing out the pros and cons.

The principal charter base is the large Point-a-Pitre marina on Grande-Terre (the westerly island) which is about 2 km from the international airport. There are several hotels in the area and the marina has all the support services and a Carrefour supermarket close by. There is a good selection of charter boats available at prices comparable to Antigua and the currency is the euro. The town of Pointe-a-Pitre is unremarkable and security outside the main tourist areas is questionable (Death in Paradise? – the film). We did not have time to get further afield and see the supposed glorious beaches you see on the TV but we were told that the offshore islands were particularly spectacular.

On return, several hours on the internet and conversations with travel companies revealed that travel to and from Guadeloupe from Europe is confined to Air France via Paris. With no competition on the route, air fares are higher than to Antigua or Barbados and in February the fares are in the region of £950-1000 although deals can sometimes be done. Another option is to charter from Antigua and sail the 35 nm across to sample the delights of the islands of Le Saintes and Marie Galante.

Would we go there in 2016 ? In a word- Non! We didn't feel entirely comfortable in Pointe-a-Pitre and after Antigua we had provisionally decided that in future Eileen and I would be seeking to travel to other places on our bucket list whilst we have the ability to do so. However if **there are others wishing to continue the Caribbean charter option**, both Martin Alexander and myself will willingly give guidance and advice and I do have a small cache of Guadeloupe maps and leaflets to pass on.

RNVRYC Committee



Nigel Collingwood Peter Costalas



David Whitby Peter Culver



Jonathan Otter Peter Creasey



Tom Burroughes Chris Jones



Peter Stonestreet Tim Clark



Mike Morgan Tim Ware



Melvyn Newel

Other committee members: Richard Snell, Robert Aitken-Sykes, Catherine Fearon, Bob Helsby.