

The R N V R Yacht Club

NEWS UPDATE

July 2011

By the Commodore

How time flies when having fun! Midsummer has already sped by, when it only seems like yesterday that 63 of us (a near record number) and our guests were sunning ourselves in abnormally summer-like weather on the veranda of the RAF Yacht Club and enjoying our aperitifs before the Fitting Out lunch. The event proved a welcome return for the Club to that venue after some years of absence, and I look forward to further such occasions at the RAFYC in the future.

Much enjoyment too was derived at the two May Bank Holiday Meets, the first centred on Cowes and Gins Farm, Beaulieu River and the second at Hayling Island SC, followed by Itchenor. The rain largely held off and there was wind aplenty on both weekends - at times too much wind on the latter - but the sun shone on the motley gang of pirates that invaded Itchenor on the Sunday afternoon for a memorable and enjoyable treasure hunt. But in terms of wind strength, neither weekend compared with the first Club Sailing Weekend of this season just past, when 4 yachts braved 32-40 knot westerly winds to beat their way to the River Beaulieu for another enjoyable Saturday night supper at Gins Farm. My thanks go to the four skippers who made their boats available to enable other Club members to participate.

Fuller reports on these events and photos galore can be found in the Members' Area of our impressive, revised website, which was commissioned in mid-April thanks to the stalwart efforts over the winter of new Committee member Jonathan Otter. I encourage those members who have not yet visited the website to do so - Jonathan will gladly assist by providing user names and passwords and other technical support to get you up and running (website@rnvrc.org or 07747 865282).

Looking at the programme ahead, there is still just time to join all or part of the Summer Rally to Cherbourg, St Peterport, Carteret and St Helier during 11 - 17 July. For instance, attending the End of Rally Dinner at St Helier Yacht Club would suit anyone wishing for a short summer break to Jersey. If interested, please contact Richard Snell without delay on 01628 520161. Further attractions are the August Bank Holiday Meet in Poole, when we are repeating the most successful visit during the Summer Rally last year to the RNLI College for dinner, and the Autumn Meet, when we shall dine at the Royal Lympington Yacht Club.

Finally, if you have not yet done so, please enter into your diary the **Annual Dinner** at the *In and Out Club*, London, on 18 November. Our Guest of Honour will be Vice Admiral Rory McLean, an accomplished after-dinner speaker, and another guest will be Rear Admiral Simon Lister, Commodore of the RNSA.

Talking of other clubs, my predecessor, Mike Morgan, reported in the last News Update on the major refurbishment planned for the Clubhouse of the Royal Dorset Yacht Club. Their newly elected Commodore, Graham Castell, whom I met at the Royal Yacht Clubs' Golf Day in April, and in which an RNVR YC team participated for the first time, and with some aplomb, is thrilled with the result. I gather that the club has recruited one of the leading chefs in the area, so if you are in the vicinity do pay a visit and sample their fare.

Accompanying this News Update is a notice announcing the commissioning of a portrait of our Admiral, Prince Michael of Kent, to be hung prominently in The Naval Club. The Flag Officers and Committee are convinced that this initiative will enhance the prestige of the Club. Please do respond positively to the request for individual contributions to defray the cost to the Club.

Finally, many congratulations to member Commodore David Dickens OBE RN, whose appointment as CBE was promulgated in the recent Queen's Birthday Honours List.

I look forward to seeing many of you at one or more of our remaining events, whether afloat or ashore, this year.

In the meantime, I wish you fair winds and safe voyages.

Tim Ware

A letter from John Singleton - an addition to the Club Fleet

Dear Tom

Having enjoyed Sylphe for a number of years, we felt that a little more comfort was required. A newer beamier boat would provide this together with the advantages of wheel steering displaying information in front of you. A lift keel was essential to take advantage of our home mooring.

After much research a Jeanneau 32.2 seemed the best solution with its enormous rear cabin and wonderful traditional wood interior, being built before such finishes became too expensive.

The boat is called *Flying Swan* on the cockpit dodgers but interestingly across the stern is written *Vol de Cygne*, which stumped the surveyor! Her large cockpit and cabin await the inspection of RNVR members together of course with suitable refreshment.

John

John - the Club looks forward with unabated joy to taking refreshment on board "Flying Swan"!! Ed.

Marine Diesel Fuel and Bio Diesel

Further to the brief note in the Newsletter, your Editor has been doing a little more investigation. In a nutshell, EU legislation requires road fuel to be of 1 low sulphur content and contain a quantity of Bio Diesel. There are various reports in the Yachting Press which rightly or wrongly attribute engine failure in some yachts to the use of marine diesel complying with this requirement.

Premier Marinas sell high sulphur biodiesel free fuel (i.e. what we have been buying for ages) at their UK Marinas EXCEPT for Chichester Marina which the Department of Transport has deemed “*not at sea*”. Here “Advanced Marine Diesel 10 is sold. This contains only 10ppm of Sulphur, as against 1000ppm and has 2% Biodiesel; normal road fuel has up to 7% biodiesel.

Southsea, Swanwick, Gosport and Port Solent Marinas sell Advanced Marine Diesel 1000 which contains “Soltron”, an enzyme which aims to neutralise bacterial growth from Diesel Bug. Brighton and Sovereign Harbour Marinas supply diesel with 1000ppm sulphur and no biodiesel. Premier advise that this high sulphur low biodiesel fuel may not comply with legislation outside the UK. Fuel at Yarmouth is high sulphur /no biodiesel. Indeed the fuelling point is now on a pontoon in the harbour

As the Channel Islands are not in the EU the duty free fuel purchased there **should** be high sulphur biodiesel free. The moral is “let the buyer beware”. Owners are urged to check what they are putting into their tanks.

Paul Davies and *Lutra*

Paul’s passing was reported in the last Newsletter. His lovely Fisher 34 *Lutra* has been passed to his family who attended the Hayling Island meet in her. After the meet a number of Club yachts proceeded to an area off Gillkicker Point where John Singleton in *Lutra* conducted a brief service prior to committing Paul’s ashes to the deep.

RNSA Gosport to Yarmouth Rally

Alouette took part in this Annual RNSA function as her owners are RNSA members. The “Racers” completed the course under the Racing Rules whilst the “Rallyers” sailed the same course from Darling Associates off Gillkicker to Yarmouth Harbour Entrance via Norris and Berthon buoys taking their own start, finish and elapsed time.

Alouette had not competed previously and was warded a handicap which was grossly flattering to her skipper! Although on the outward leg on the Saturday we sailed well, we mistook the Berthon buoy for another and lost some time on the final leg.

The return on Sunday was under a modified course on account of the Force 8 westerly which was forecast. *Alouette* sailed this under a full jib only, this partly on account of losing the luff tension and seeing the jib slip down the foil by about half a metre. This gave the jib the appearance of Norah Batty’s stockings and could not be rectified at sea-neither was reefing much of an option. We surfed along at a vast speed, broaching a couple of times and were alongside our berth in Gosport some 2 hours 40 minutes after leaving Yarmouth!

Despite our best endeavours our entirely creditable performance was set to nought by our handicap and we finished on corrected time propping up the results table!

On the Saturday night we dined at the RSYC along with a “Toe in the Water” rally, an organisation who are committed to the rehabilitation of wounded Servicemen.

A good time was had by all. The (almost inevitable) after dinner auction raised some £1,500, aided no doubt by the presence of Di Caffari.

Club Members who are “double hated” RNSA members might like to consider participating in some

RNSA Solent sailing events, they are great fun

Round the Island Race 25 June.

At least four of our Club Yachts took part in the race which was sailed under boisterous conditions. Others may have taken part and we wait to hear from you if you did so.

Our yachts and their corrected times are:

•*Talisman*, Skipper Simon Harwood - 8hrs 26mins 24 seconds

•*Amoret*, Skipper Robert Searle - 8 hrs 58 mins 50 seconds

•*Volante*, Skipper Tony Harwood - 9hrs 7 mins 22 seconds

•*Moody Blue*, Skipper Mike Price - 10 hrs 18 mins 51 seconds

Moody Blue enjoyed some adventures additional to sailing; perhaps we will read about them in the Newsletter?

News from Eos of Mersey

A brief note from Mike Tomkinson

Gillie and I flew out 10th May, arriving early on the Wednesday morning so had a relaxed hour or so in the morning. That was all. Our contract finished with the marina on the 15th so we had to move fast. Various works still hadn’t been completed and so there was a bit of chasing. Got rid of the bicycles- fed up with trying to stow them- see all the pictures over the years. Sold one, gave one. Said goodbye to everyone and finally departed Monday morning for Pithagorion Samos.

We were lucky to get a prime spot in the harbour opposite Gregory’s Bar and they had to put up with the sight of us for a whole month. Gillie went back to UK to sort out her Mum’s house and I was left with a list of things to do.

One item of interest was the arrival of a very pretty black launch with racy lines- about 17 metres. This is a tender (40 knots) to a new flush decked superyacht *Aglaia* (66m long 82 m rig) which does

18 knots under sail- only 13 under power. Norwegian owner keen on sailing. Launch crew Ben and Megan- what a super job for a year at that age.

Thank heaven, Gillie finally returned. We stayed one more day in Pithagorion, then went round on a trial run to Marathokambos. All well except one of the batteries had died, so found one at a garage- only just big enough.

Then to Arki (22 nm), which is quite charming and welcoming with at least two good tavernas. The forecast predicted 6 so planned to stay in port. Spoke to skipper of local ferry who said it was calm in the channel to Patmos- so we went- and it was. We now have a better anti-rolling technique- just go faster and the swell is no longer a problem.

So arrived Patmos (10 nm) to water and store; stay the night and leave in the morning early (Gillie's birthday) to catch a good journey to Levitra (25 nm) where there was nothing except laid moorings, a path up to a farmhouse and fish or goat for supper. Not even the telephone worked and it was so quiet it reminded me of the bar at the Squadron!

This morning's assessment of the weather proved good and we set off before colours to do 37 miles to Amorgos, where we pulled in just before lunch after giving the AIS a good test on an oncoming tanker, it predicted, accurately, a CPA of 1.1 miles even at 13 miles range- didn't say which side though- I must look into that!- it is fascinating looking at the various vessels around and where they are going- the gap we have just crossed seems to be a major shipping route. Also saw a cave which looks like a U boat shelter but did not stop to investigate.

We are now in the Southern Cyclades having left the usually windy Dodecanese via an island or two in the Sporades.

Mike Tomkinson

A Crew View of a Trans Atlantic Passage from the Caribbean

An extract from Peter Stonestreet's article on his trip in Susan Ayu

“Well, say Yes” she said. “You’ve been going on about it. Now’s your chance”.

(I took that as Permission Granted). The sub-text is “Now I can get out on all those girlie visits, new curtains, shopping and things, I’ve wanted to do all these years”.

That was long back after I had been tipped off on the possible opportunity to crew a member’s boat back from Antigua to the Azores after his year cruising the islands following the RNVRYC cruise of February 2010 and the Antigua week racing.

Master of my own vessel, but I soon recognised I was in the hands of a capable organisation to be followed. All Naval guys and retired so at least the edges had been rounded off. Packing with advice of our crewmaster and “can you just include this & that?”, my old kit bag wavered on the 22.5kg line. Should I include my life jacket or not? In my enthusiasm I slung my kit bag in the traditional fashion on the shoulder – and collapsed. Sue2 as she was soon to be known made sure I would not miss the flight and drove me all the way to Gatwick as a fond farewell!

The dockyard is where I found *Susan Ayu*, a Wauquiez 43 designed by Dubois. She was berthed stern-to in front of the old officers’ accommodation. The skipper owner and wife Peter & Susan Costalas, well known RNVRYC members with a friend Elizabeth. The other crew were pitching up. Bernie Steed a member and clearly in control of trip logistics, Rodney Price, ex Fleet Airarm, Civil pilot and repeat crew. Fifth crew and RNVR YC member, Colin Laight, a retired banker from Vancouver added to the dry wit and international flavour. The ladies had gone, we all turned-to and converted the boat into a passage maker. The skipper, became P1, hence Susan, Sue1, while me as P2 and my wife you have seen as Sue2. P1 clearly had a plan which worked, so in about a day all was done and we left Antigua to finally store at St Maarten giving an opportunity of an overnight ‘shakedown’ and ‘get to know the ropes’. I was glad to be on our way, though one or more enjoyed the runs ashore at the local sailors bar with entertainment.

I learnt a lot about passage making. Bernie, our Dusty had developed a near professional computer stores model and at least he knew which locker, hold, space the spag and the bol were hidden.

The rest of us thought we knew where our kit was, but that had changed. There

was fresh meat and veg. for at least five days, fruit throughout. Various other possibilities included bread making as a source of amusement. (Bernie couldn’t get it to rise). The strategy was a 20 day trip, 30 day rations for 5 lusty lads.

We need at this stage to understand what shipmates are. Concentrating on the ‘mates’ bit. The guy you have recently met, and is very pleasant etc is allocated the space at the pointy end of the boat with you. A lea-cloth alone separates you while trying to sleep in temperatures starting at 28°C. On about day 11 we hit the contrary swells and the rough weather. Imagine trainer shoes in two pillowcases in a spindryer. That was us at sleep. The other crew (first class passengers) had been graced with the master saloon. Also a leacloth, but separating full size mattresses and running hot and cold shower in their own bathroom.

By day 4 a quote from the blog; “Still no wildlife to report and no fish caught. We see about one merchant ship a day. We are truly in our own little world. We have no idea what is happening in the wider world and have no wish to. That is part of the enjoyment of ocean passages – the isolation. This gives a good sense of the enjoyment of isolation and the intrigue of possible news with modern gadgets. We had a Canuck onboard, Colin, determined to educate us to the whiles of Ice Hockey – I am not sure?

Certain language developments took place: Emails were signed FONGS (Five Old Naval Geysers), I prefer Fine Old Naval Gentlemen. We have covered P1, S1, P2, S2 names already. Finally, Cutty-Uppy things – Scissors, Uppy-Downey – halyard, ticcy-on-wristy – watch, clicky-sparky – gaslighter.

I am not sure if the arrival time had anything to do with me winning the arrival time sweepstake, or whether I chose the slot after the skipper, and he just missed it! We were all amused and I did not see the winnings for long before the barman had his hands on it. Perhaps this is the way to make passage in a well found and equipped boat with an experienced trained skipper.

Peter Stonestreet

A note to all our members I am now looking for articles, letters, opinions, news, views, pictures etc to be incorporated into the Autumn Newsletter. Any format is acceptable. Many thanks .Tom Cunningham Editor

New Website for the Club

The new Club website has been up and running for nearly three months. It has a new address of www.rnvryc.org

Why Have a New Website?

The old website was built with then current, but now dated, website development tools that meant updating it was cumbersome. A clean break would enable the website to be developed from scratch, exploiting the very latest website Content Management Systems (CMS), and delivering useful functionality to members.

A Website Sub-Committee was formed who worked on the objectives and specification of the website. Some objectives or terms of reference for the website:

- Promote the Club to new prospective members to encourage them to
- apply for membership
- Provide useful functionality to current members to give them value
- and satisfaction from their club membership
- Be efficient to update and manage for the administrator and content contributors
- Be secure, robust and performant to both meet members' expectations
- and the requirements of good governance

How it Was Built

Happy to plagiarise other peoples good ideas(!), I sought inspiration from other sailing clubs' websites, especially our peers with Royal status, as well as from other, commercial, websites. I am pleased to say that, in my opinion, we have drawn ideas from the best prestigious sailing clubs!

Eventually a specification for phase one of the website was agreed and development commenced in November. Part of this exercise was to select the Content Management Tool mention earlier. Thanks to an earlier tip-off from Martin I had been evaluating amongst others a CMS tool called Wild Apricot, which is the one we are using now. If you look carefully, you can see the Wild Apricot name buried in the footer of the website.

Here are some of the things that I did when building the new website, some of which may not be obvious at first glance.

- Designing a layout. One that is reasonably tasteful and fits in with our blue/red colour scheme.
- Deciding on pages and navigation. Which pages to include and how they should link to each other.

- Writing copy. You will noticed that all but two pages on the website are completely new, so this content had to be written, which including getting input from the key stakeholders, for example, Flag Officers for their profile pages, and pages from the Training and Sailing pages (Nigel and Hugh, respectively).
- Finding images. Everything from the banner at the top of the page, to the various photos of Flag Officers.
- Uploading PDF documents for members to download and read, for example the *Volunteer* newsletter.
- Setting up a new website domain with the brand new name www.rnvryc.org
- Making a Google map to embed in the Contact Us page.
- Writing a help page
- Making new events in the Club Programme (an on-going process throughout the year)
- Setting up and maintaining a Flickr account (the photo sharing website) which hosts all our photos of past events, which reduces the Club's online storage costs.
- Setting up all the fields in the website's database of members, then importing all that member data provided by Sue.
- Creating "friendly" URL's, which means they look like www.rnvryc.org/flag-officers-and-committee, instead of gobbledegook, which makes them easy to use and helps the website appear higher in the search engine rankings, for example, on the first page of Google.
- Making and deploying a favicon. For those that don't know, a favicon is the tiny flag you can probably see at the top of your browser page.
- Setting up email addresses for some Committee Members e.g. commodore@rnvryc.org
- Setting up Google Analytics so it counts the number of times people use the website and how they reached us (whether they found us by clicking a link or searching in a search engine such as Yahoo!, etc).

What The Website Gives You

- Write-ups and photos of all the Club's sailing and social events, within days of them taking place
- On-line registration for Club events, with automatic email notifications of registration and payment.
- A noticeboard for skippers to post details of sailing opportunities so interested crew can know about them all
- An online directory of members including their contact details and a place to add a photo and to write a profile of themselves

Who is Using the New Website - Some Key Statistics

45%. The percentage of the members * that have used the new website.

100%. The percentage of event participants that register through the website (no more forms!)

18% The percentage of members that log in to the website at least once per month.

100% The percentage of Committee members that log in to the website at least once per month

90 The number of members that created their own password.

60 The number of members that I created a password for.

3% The percentage of members that have updated their personal profile to let other members know about them (such a useful facility, it would be good to see more use of it)

100% The percentage of e-bulletins now sent from the website CMS instead of Martin having to manually do them in Outlook.

5799 The number of website pages viewed during the launch month of April.

100% The percentage of new members that receive their login and password in the welcome pack sent out by Commodore Tim Ware.

What's Next

As you will have noticed there are a few pages that haven't been migrated from the old website. These will be done over the coming weeks and include SLOPs, and the Club in Photos plus others in course of development.

BUT..... do YOU have any suggestions for the website? Is there a feature you would like to see? Or perhaps some information about the Club? Have you seen something impressive on another website - whether another sailing club or not - that you think the RNVR Yacht Club site should have? This is YOUR opportunity to have a voice. Please make your suggestions by sending an email to website@rnvryc.org or by phoning me, Jonathan Otter, on 07747 865282. All suggestions will be most welcome and will be considered.

*** You need your own, unique username and password to access the Members Area of the website, to see event write-ups and photos, register for events and access the Member's Directory. If you have an email address, then you have already have your username and password (the latter you either set yourself or one was emailed to you).**

However, if you don't have an email address but would still like to access the Members Area, then simply contact Jonathan Otter on 07747 865282. He will issue a special username and password to you.

Jonathan Otter
Website Manager
website@rnvryc.org