

# The R N V R Yacht Club

## NEWS UPDATE

Summer 2010

### By the Commodore

We are now halfway through the sailing season and have been lucky so far. Too much sun, not enough wind, and no rain – you can't have it all! The Summer Cruise for the first time in many years, ran its full course with no weather induced changes. The number of cruisers was down on recent years for a variety of reasons but was more than made up for by the quality of those that did make it.

We were pleased to support the RNSA 75<sup>th</sup> Celebrations at Hornet and Portland. Like minded people and good to be with. We offer the RNSA our congratulations on their Anniversary year.

I would like to express my thanks to all who participated in the Rally in whatever capacity and supported the Club in what is the premier afloat event in our calendar.

To those of you that could not make it this year, could I exhort you to put next year's cruise dates in your diary as soon as they are confirmed and plan the rest of your other activities around it?

Whilst on the subject of dates and diaries, *I trust you have got the Annual Dinner on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> November at the Royal Thames Yacht Club inked in your diary.* It promises to be a sparkling affair and our Admiral Prince Michael of Kent hopes to attend. Our principal guest *Vice Admiral Charles Montgomery* will by then have stepped into the seaboots of Second Sea Lord. A Yorkshireman by birth, he has been at the heart of manpower planning for several years having been until recently the Naval Secretary and prior to that had command of HMS *Beaver* and HMS *Collingwood*. This latter appointment was particularly

appropriate because he graduated in Electronic and Electrical Engineering before going to sea as a Warfare Officer in a number of frigates and a minesweeper. He also served in HM/Y *Brittania* as the Royal Household Officer.

We still have much to look forward to in the rest of the year. Do please make an effort to attend one of our Club functions.

Several of our longstanding committee members have indicated that they will be stepping down "Time Expired" at the AGM in January when they come to the end of their current three year terms.

There will be vacancies for up to 4 members to join the committee so I would like each of you to seriously consider stepping forward and help plan the course of our Club for the future.

I wish you all continuing fine weather for the rest of the season and look forward at seeing many of you at our remaining rallies and social events of 2010 and especially at the Annual Dinner

*Mike Morgan*

### By the Membership Secretary

6 months into my job as Membership Secretary and I hope you approve of the move to a more electronic means of communication. A new Club membership database is up and running based on Microsoft Access and for the first time, the Blue Book was produced directly from extracts taken from the database. So, if your entry is incorrect in the Blue Book, it is also incorrect on the database – please let me have any corrections. Calling notices are now sent out by Martin Alexander using e-bulletins. The email addresses used are also extracted from the database so if

you're not getting them, we have probably got the wrong email address! Again, let me know. If you are not on email, please contact either the event organiser or Martin to get a paper copy of the relevant calling notice.

'Snail Mail' is used for the Newsletters and News Updates and these are sent out directly by our printers using labels extracted from, you've guessed it, the database.

### IMPORTANT – PLEASE READ

After many requests, it is hoped that the 2011 Blue Book will include members' telephone numbers and email addresses where held.

If you would prefer that your details were **not** published, please contact me well before the end of the year so that this can be noted on the database.

*Sue Walker*

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### A final plea from the Editor

I will shortly be compiling the Autumn Newsletter and I need your contributions, your news, views, salty stories, letters to the Editor etc.

Photographs are worth a thousand words .....

*I cannot publish what I have not got so if you have a tale to tell, let me have it in any format, even longhand!*

Tel: 01606 883697. Mob 07771 365 427  
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**Ron Francis**  
**1921 – 2010**



Ron Francis who died on 21 February, joined the Club in 1967 and was Commodore 1975/1976. He was an active and colourful individual who left his mark in all that he did.

He joined the Navy in 1940 and made use of his previous training to employ him on photographic aircraft surveillance and interpretation. He left the Navy as a Lt Commander RNVR at the end of the war and moved with his family to Camberley, Surrey where he set up a photographic business and joined the local Round Table. He was active in the local scene, particularly charity fund raising.

His sailing began in the 1960's with his restoration of an old steel centreboard boat, *Cloverleaf*, which he moored at Hornet. He sailed extensively with his family in Normandy and Brittany as well as nearer home, often meeting other Club members in their boats. Later in the 1960's he bought *Gaivota*, a classic 43ft Gaff Yawl built in 1923, complete with with a long bowsprit, bow and stern carvings which together with his equally colourful crew became a regular feature in harbours in most of the ports on both sides of the Channel.

*Gaivota* took part in offshore events including the 1977 Fastnet Race. Ron frequently joined other Club members in offshore races and events when the Club had use of the ex German windfall yachts and many who took part will have photographs taken when weather permitted. (I would love to see some of these Ed)

Later, when *Gaivota* became too much of a handful Ron acquired other smaller craft the last being *Aquila*, a lovely timber Laurent Giles Vertue, which is still alongside in Hornet.

Ron was truly a man who managed to couple his extrovert nature with being a good family man and a sound sailor.

*John Spinks*

### **Robert Paice 1921 – 2010**



*Robert at the Annual Dinner 16 Nov 2007*

Robert (Bob) Paice, Founder Member of the Club, Commodore 1958/9, a recognised authority on the early years of the Club and a most faithful supporter of it, died earlier this year and, clearly, will be missed by many of us.

He came to the Navy via an accelerated scientific degree at Cambridge early in WW2 and subsequent training as an RNVR radar officer. In HMS *Liverpool* under, unusual for the time, a radar enthusiast Captain, he became the first to direct a ship's AA action by radar. After torpedo damage to *Liverpool* and repairs in the US, Robert saw action in support of Arctic convoys and transfer to the aircraft carrier HMS *Vengeance*. As the European war ended, she was sent to the Far East - just in time for the Japanese surrender.

On demobilisation Robert joined the City discount house, Caters – and the RNVR Club (now the Naval Club), both of which institutions became life-long interests. The RNVR/Naval Club, of which he became eventually a Vice President, led to him becoming a Founder Member of the Yacht Club. Caters, of which he was eventually a well respected and very professional Managing Director, led in the early years to his friendship with Timothy Bevan (now Sir Timothy) of Barclays Bank and with whom he has been for many years a regular sailing companion, both racing and cruising, and a close family friend.

Speaking at Robert's memorial service, Sir Timothy said that "Robert had three great attributes in a boat. First, he was never seasick: second, he was the best ocean racing cook in the business and third, he was a good light airs helmsman – for that you need patience and he had loads of it." That, other remarks and the present writer's own observations indicate Robert as being a careful, precise and thoughtful man whose opinion could be valued, as it clearly was by those he met in private and business life.

*Colin Harvey*

*At a Club Dinner some years ago I sat next to Bob and he told me how, as new S/Lt RNVR he arrived with sundry cases of radar equipment on board HMS Liverpool. His task was to set up and get the kit working and instruct the four ring regular RN Captain on its use. He said that over the following months the learning curve was quite steep - for both of them!*

*Editor*

**Club Sailing week-end  
16-18 July**

The programme called for a Club Sailing Week-end and that what was delivered in spades! A brisk SW wind and sunshine dominated the week-end which saw 21 club members and 5 boats ( *Alouette*, *Avalon*, *Kiano*, *Lioness* and *More Majgik*) strutting their stuff with a spirited sail to Chichester on the Saturday morning. On a rising tide, the flotilla rendezvoused in the Thorney Channel and two rafts were formed for lunch. Entertainment was provided when the raft of *Lioness* and *More Majgik* (below) started dragging under the combined effect of the wind and fast making tide.



The gathering was enhanced when the newest and smallest addition to the club fleet, *Tango*, (below) a 17ft pocket cruiser crewed by Liz Barker and friend Julian sailed down from Bosham to join the raft-up.



The afternoon saw the flotilla have a further lively sail back to Gosport having negotiated the usual Chichester Bar chop. Fieldhouse Jetty at Hornet provided the safe haven for the night except for *Avalon* who was drawn back to the comforting facilities of Haslar marina. The evening was spent as all good sailing days should be spent, with big eats and drinks and much chatter in the welcoming Hornet Clubhouse.

Sunday dawned fair and conditions were ideal for a further brisk Solent

sail with the first reef close to being taken before a lunchtime raft-up in Priory Bay. This time *Lioness* was not taking chances, dropping anchor before nestling alongside the anchored *Kiano*. The rest of the flotilla then joined the anchored pair and lunch commenced. The entertainment of the day was provided by Camilla Preece deciding to abandon her post onboard *Avalon* and swimming around the assembled raft to much acclaim and encouragement. Conditions were perfect for an afternoon fast beat back to home berths after a most enjoyable and stimulating Club week-end.

*Mike Morgan*

### **The Club Program for the remainder of 2010.**

A fabulous week end was enjoyed on 24/25 July centred on Island Harbour with a trip to the open air "Last Night of the Proms" concert at Osborne House, but, as they say, that is history and it is time to look ahead.

**The Channel Dash** (or dawdle) to Cherbourg is planned for the week end of 28-30 August. An e-bulletin has already been sent out regarding this. Whilst Cherbourg is the main destination participants may care to extend their cross channel time with a visit to St Vaast or elsewhere on the Normandy coast. Some are considering going to Deauville and possibly Honfleur. These additional visits are not part of the Club program and will be made entirely at the whim of the skippers concerned.

**The next Club Sailing week end is** September 10/11/12. The precise format of week end has yet to be decided. This will depend on the number of boats and members who are available and wish to participate. The Calling Notice with more details will be issued shortly.

**Keep free the week end of October 2-3** for the last afloat function of the season at the Chichester Yacht Club which comes highly recommended for the excellence of its catering, bar

and general ambience. It promises to be a great meet.

**Novemebr 30 sees us at Hornet** for a laying up supper which if last year was anything to go by will be just as enjoyable. Come and have some fun!

The Commodore has already spoken about the **Annual Dinner on November 19**, our premier and most prestigious social event of the year. For those of you who have never visited the Royal Thames Yacht Club in Knightsbridge, why not make a special effort to come this year? The Royal Thames is offering diners a special overnight rate. Book directly with them, mentioning the RNVRYC dinner. Tel: 0207 235 2121 or visit [www.royalthames.com](http://www.royalthames.com) for a web tour of the oldest Yacht Club in the United Kingdom. The Naval Club in Hill Street usually offers an attractive two night package for those who wish to spend a week end in the West End.

To round off the year, the **Christmas Party** is on 13 December, at the Naval Club. This always a good, convivial thrash which is held to be bad for the waistline!

It is planned to run the **Northern Dinner** on Saturday May 7 2011 at HMS *Eaglet* to coincide with the Liverpool Boat show. You don't know about the Liverpool Boat show? Keep your eye on the yachting press as it promises to be the place to be seen in 2011!

**RYA Radar Courses** will be run in a convenient location in the North West in the Autumn/Winter period. Initial expressions of interest please to me. Address on page 1. *Read this Newsupdate in colour on the Web Site*

*Tom Cunningham*

*Editor*