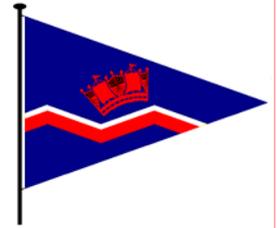


VOLUNTEER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE RNVR YACHT CLUB



www.rnvrc.org.uk

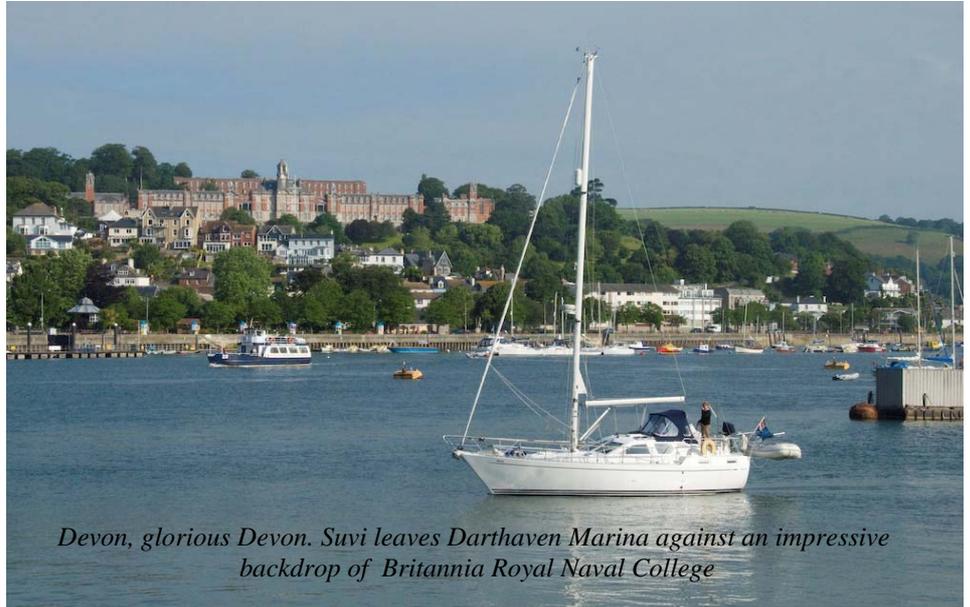
Autumn 2008

By the Commodore

After the awful weather of the 2007 sailing season I determined that I had had enough and would take my boat south for sun, sea and.....well, cheaper marina berthing. What a good decision that turned out to be! This summer has seen another washout here, although the winds were not quite on the scale of last year and both the Summer Cruise and the Deauville Rally managed to complete their full programmes. The weather did not prevent any club yacht from fully participating in both events and our thanks go to Past Commodore James Hanratty for organising the Club's participation at Deauville and to the Summer Cruise committee for their tireless work and organisation; also, special thanks to our Hon Port Officer Newton Ferrers, Past Commodore Christopher Powlett, who hosted a tremendous reception in Newton Ferrers.

Your committee has been hard at work, not only implementing this year's programme of events but also tackling important questions about the future direction of the club. One such was whether we should consider buying a small day-sailer or similar for the use of the membership. After considerable research and discussion, our unanimous view was that, as there was no significant pressure from the membership for such a purchase, and as we had experienced the declining usage of *Volunteer*, we should avoid getting into a similar situation again. We think that the considerable funds the club has built up are better used in subsidising club training and sailing events and, where appropriate, some of our social events.

A positive move has been our obtaining corporate membership of **Hornet Sailing Club**, based in the former Coastal Forces base in Gosport, adjacent to JSSTC. (see also p8) Hornet SC exists to provide sailing facilities to RNSA members in the Portsmouth area and our membership of it now provides us with the potential use of a clubhouse "on the water" in a prime sailing location. We have already based a club sailing weekend there with considerable success and we look forward to many more events with our new partners.



Devon, glorious Devon. Suvi leaves Darthaven Marina against an impressive backdrop of Britannia Royal Naval College

Two important announcements:

I am delighted to inform you that our honorary treasurer, Cdr David Whitby RD RNR, has been nominated by the committee to succeed Rear Commodore Tim Ware on his advancement to Vice Commodore at the AGM next year. David has been a very active club member and officer and has been particularly instrumental in the recruitment of young RNR officers into our club. Our congratulations go to him and the search for a new Hon Treasurer commences; anyone interested please contact me or any member of the committee.

The second announcement is that **Rear Admiral Martin Alabaster**, the newly appointed FOSNNI and FO Reserves, has accepted our invitation to be the guest of honour and speaker at our Annual Dinner, to be held in Armoury House, headquarters of the Honourable Artillery Company in the City of London, on Friday 28th November. R. Adm. Alabaster was formerly the commanding officer of BRNC Dartmouth and has commanded two frigates in what has been a varied and interesting career, all of which will no doubt make for an interesting speech.

The HAC is a unique institution and it is a tremendous honour to be permitted to hold our annual dinner in their magnificent Long Room. We are doubly fortunate in that we are being given members' rates for the dinner which, together with a small subsidy from the club, permits us to

reduce the cost. This year's dinner will be £60 per head and, as the Long Room can accommodate 160 diners, members **are very much encouraged to bring guests**. Last year's dinner at the Middle Temple was a great success and it would be marvellous to repeat the experience this year.

Finally, my thanks to the Flag Officers, all members of the committee and to all of you for making our club the success it is. I have enjoyed my time as Commodore and I know that Mike Morgan will bring a wealth of organisational skill and personal charm to this most privileged of roles. Fair winds and good sailing,

Jeremy Donne

By the Editor

My task in editing this Newsletter has been made so much easier this time because of the plentiful material our members have submitted to me, to the extent that I have had to carry some reports and articles over to our next issue. Apologies therefore to those concerned. May I mention the Bembridge Meet, so ably organised by David Whitby. We enjoyed the kind hospitality of Past Cdre Brian Wright who provided the venue for our Pontoon Party, a great meal at the St Helens Restaurant and a lovely BBQ provided at the Marina by Alison Child. Please keep your contributions and photographs coming in. Talking of photographs, a special word of thanks must go to Richard Olsen for his continuous supply of extremely high quality images TC

Windfalls and the Club

Mike Elton

John Spink's excellent painting of *Marabu* (opposite) reminds me of sailing in a splendid 100m² Windfall yacht in the mid-50s without an engine or radio. Real sailing!

Since some members, and particularly younger members, may not be aware of the history of Windfalls and the Club's earlier association with *Marabu*, perhaps a short account may be of interest to our wider membership.

The yachts, which were mainly built during the 1930s in Germany for the Kriegsmarine and Luftwaffe, were taken as reparations in 1945 and became known as Windfalls. Some of the yachts were privately owned and subsequently returned to their owners or, if not, the rightful owners were compensated in another way. Several Windfalls were sailed to England in 1946 and used for sail training by all three Services.

Besides those retained in Kiel, others went to Commonwealth countries and one to the USA. The largest of these Windfalls, excluding the extra large cruising yachts of between 125 and 300 m², were 100m². These were about 55 ft length overall and had up to 12 berths. They were usually made of mahogany on alternately oak and steel frames with pine decking. There were ten of the 100 m² yachts allocated to the UK Services.

The Royal Navy had two: *Marabu*, its original German name, and *Wal*, which was renamed a few times before becoming *Merlin*. *Marabu* was built in 1935 by Abeking and Rasmussen for the Luftwaffe navigators and used for sea training until 1939.

In 1947 *Marabu* came second in her class in the Round the Island Race. By the early 1950s *Marabu*'s forestay was moved forward to take larger genoas and spinnakers. A coach-roof was installed prior to crossing the Atlantic in 1952, when she became the first Windfall to cross the Atlantic to take part in the Bermuda Race. This was followed by the addition of a mizzen mast and wheel steering in about 1952/1953. These modifications transforming *Marabu* from a sloop to a ketch, were instigated by Captain John Illingworth RN, twice winner of the Fastnet Trophy and the first Sydney to Hobart Race in 1947.

Marabu took part in eight successive Fastnet Races from 1951 to 1965. In the 1955 Fastnet *Marabu*, skippered by Rupert Thorpe, Commodore of the Club, then known as the RNVR Sailing Club, was the first of the three 100m² Windfall yachts taking part. She came ahead of the Household Brigade and the 2nd Tactical Air Force to win the Inter-Services Cup.



Marabu also took part as the Royal Navy's entry in the first Tall Ships Race in 1956.

With the advent of more modern yachts, such as the Nicholson 55s, the Navy's use declined and both *Marabu* and *Merlin* were sold by the Admiralty in 1977. Last year, *Marabu* was lying in Ipswich. *Merlin* has been restored, renamed *Zeearend* and based in the Netherlands. The last 100m² Windfall in service in the UK is *Overlord* (originally *Pelikan*). She is actively operated by a syndicate and is based in the Solent.

As this is a general account covering only a small part of the history of the Windfalls and the Club's successful association with *Marabu*, it is hoped to have a future article based on the personal experiences of Club members sailing in *Marabu* and other Windfalls.



Editor's Note

A special thanks to Past Cdre Mike Elton for this succinct article. A few months ago the Club received a request from Jon Neville-Jones, (who is not a member), asking on behalf of his father who was, and is now in a Nursing Home, was anything known of *Marabu* in which he had sailed with the Club in the post war years. The request was circulated and the response was most gratifying.

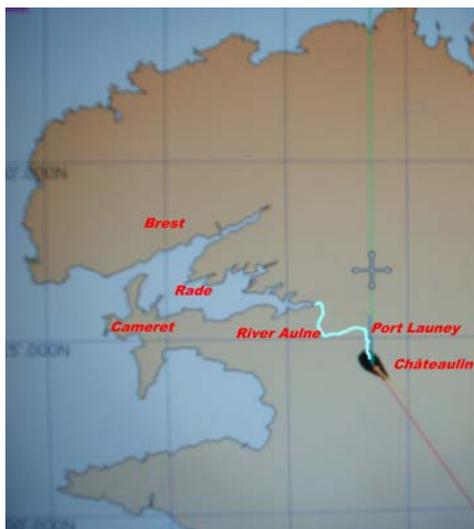
Past Cdre John Spinks remembers her well and produced this beautiful painting of her which is reproduced by his kind permission. The painter is unknown, perhaps it was our member John Stirk who also painted the first Volunteer in oils.

The photograph, courtesy of Beken of

Cowes) is a scan of a rather faded sepia tint and shows *Marabu* sailing for the Club in the 1954 Poole Bar Race. Sadly I cannot identify the masthead pennant. As Mike says, no radar, no Eberspacher and I wonder what the heads were like! At that time I understand that on build these yachts were generally built engineless to better teach the art of sailing in the Baltic. It would be gratifying to hear from any member who had experience of sailing *Marabu* or *Rambowe*.

For those interested, "The Windfalls-A legacy of goodwill" has recently been published giving a most interesting history of these iconic yachts. It is full of photos and anecdotes, a good read! It is available from the RNSA Tel 02392 521100

**AVALON's INLAND EXPEDITION
RIVER AULNE
18 -20 July 2007**



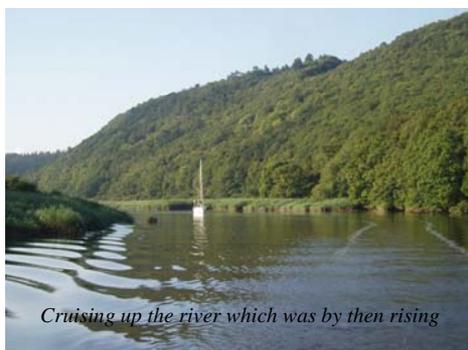
The River Aulne Expedition taken by *Avalon* last summer followed a recommendation by Michael Mayer, who had made the voyage several years ago up this beautiful river. After *Avalon's* weather-hampered and lumpy 2007 cruise to Van-nes good progress was made on her return voyage along the South Brittany coast. She arrived in Cameret with some three days to spare before her crew for this leg, Mike and Carole Elton, were due to fly home. It was decided to use this time to make the River Aulne Expedition starting the next day.

Tide table and pilots were studied in detail – we had to arrive at the River Aulne lock, which is some 37NM from Cameret, around 1 hour before HW ie: 1830. Looking at the depths in the river, this could only be achieved by timing the passage to pass the shallowest parts just as the rising tide provided sufficient cover. On the morning of Wednesday 18th *Avalon* set off from Cameret with the tide ebbing strongly as we passed through the Goulet de Brest. Once we were in the Rade the tide subsided and *Avalon* made progress for a while under sail in the Rade's vast protected open waters – perfection! However, time was pressing and we motored the rest of the morning to a leafy anchor-



age just below Pont de Térénez. (Above) During lunch *Avalon* swung at anchor as the flood tide started, but we waited until

1630 before lifting the anchor. This was the time we had calculated for making the final 12NM to the lock with the planned 1830 ETA. As the depth alarm was very active, we dodged from side to side of the river seeking the best depths. The bottom was not touched, but that would not have been a worry as the water was rising rapidly!



Cruising up the river which was by then rising

After two hours of incredible scenery, we arrived at the lock and with the assistance of some British holiday makers on the bank, we managed to get the attention of the lock keeper. By 2000, we had completed the 2NM



The Lock with the SNCF Viaduct behind

above the lock and *Avalon* was secured on the small public pontoon at Châteaulin. (Below) We could not go further without dropping the stick which was not in the plan!



The success of the passage was cordially celebrated in the company of crews from neighbouring yachts. Thursday 19th was market day in Châteaulin. Carole and Shân busied themselves stocking *Avalon's* galley with all kind of goodies, as may be seen above. After lunch, we slipped from Châteaulin and made our way back down the Aulne



to Port Launey which is a beautiful canal side village just above the lock. There was an *artisan boulangerie* in a cottage on the quayside close to *Avalon*, so on Friday 20th we had freshly baked baguettes on board for lunch. The lock operated on time and we entered the river as the ebb was starting. There was more



depth this time and the echo sounder was silent throughout the downstream passage.

At 1300, *Avalon* was safely berthed in Brest's Moulin Blanc Marina, close to *Kewetoo* which had been laid up there. Thank you, Michael Mayer, for encouraging us to make this expedition. It was very special – there are not many “stick up” inland 37NM passages, especially with such beautiful countryside!

Martin Alexander

The OUZO tragedy

Much has already been written about the tragic loss of life associated with the sinking of the yacht *Ouzo* off the Isle of Wight in 2006. Our member Mike Wadleton, himself an owner of *Sailfish 25* (as *Ouzo*) and a most experienced Off-shore Skipper, has re-examined the assumptions of her track that night and has conducted extensive trials in his boat to test the conclusions made by the MAIB. He has produced a most detailed and analytical account of his trials over an 8 page report which was used by the P+O defence team at the recent trial of the Master of the *Pride of Bilbao*. His full paper will be of great interest to Members and is available on the Club Website under “Members Notices” It is commended for your attention *Editor*

Eos of Mersey- part III. From Southsea to the Black Sea



To recap, in 2006 we crossed the Channel to join the RNVRYC rally, then sailed up the Seine to Paris and arrived at Liege via Epernay. After repairs in 2007, we went up the Meuse to Nijmegen and then via the Rhine to Mainz where we wintered in the Winterhafen.

Departing this year on May 9th, we arrived in Varna on the Black Sea on July 11th having covered a total of 4401km through the water, 4679km (approx 2650nm) over the ground and 12 countries. For simplicity all dimensions are metric.

We approached this year's voyage with some trepidation- the mystique of the Danube is well recorded and we imagined being beset by whirlpools, floating trees under the water and beserk barge skippers. In the event, almost all the barges, except some hotel barges, were manned by professional seamen, the number of trees was small and the whirlpools did not cause a problem.

9th May 2008 dawned and we were ready. We had on board additional crew in strength- Jim Nicol, an old RNR chum who flew from Australia to take part, and for one day only, Guido and Petra, our friends from the Zur Kanzel restaurant, certainly the best in Mainz, who knew the river. In warm sunshine we went up the Main to our first stop in Frankfurt. The river is some 381 km to its junction with the Main-Donau canal at Bamberg and has numerous locks.

Of course one of the things about inland waterways which makes them challenging is the size of the vast locks and the equally vast barges and hotel boats.

We had previously had little experience of large barges, but soon made up for that on the Meuse and then the Rhine, with double and triple barges in a train 190m long.

The Main, though, tended to have only one barge at a time, the locks are "only" 290m x 12m and the speed was a bit lower with there being less stream.

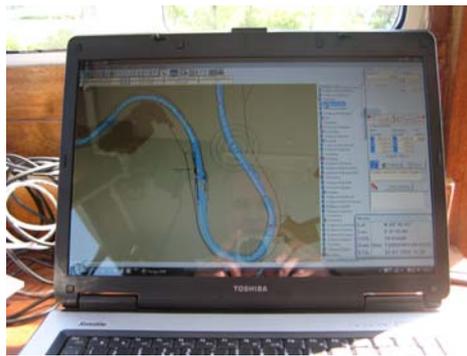
Our stops on the Main were: Mainz, Frankfurt, Aschaffenburg, Miltenburg, Wertheim, Lohr, Karlstad, Wurzburg, Kitzingen, Schweinfurt, Bamberg. Most of these river cities were bombed, controversially, in March 1945.

Between Wertheim and Lohr, the river performed a superb and tranquil meander, best shown by the photograph above right.

We used electronic charting for most of our journey and it was very good- PC Navigo-



(below) specially designed for inland waterways with all the data you could want. When the electronic chart finished, it was replaced by scanned A4 images of hand drawn charts of unknown provenance! The plot was run on a basic laptop from Staples which doubled for e mail, and general PC work.



At Bamberg we left the river and turned up the Main-Donau Kanal. This long sought link across the watershed, 160 km in length, was only completed in 1992 and in general is excellent. The first part is a canalised river but the remainder is new canal although it is said you can see remains of the previous attempts. Seeing house rooftops below you is quite novel and makes you wonder about the banks!

The depth of the locks is impressive, 18 metres being the standard, generally with floating bollards. When they are missing you have plenty of work to do. Generally there is a lack of facilities for leisure sailors and travellers after the river section; however, the Canal Authority is helpful and stopping at their depots and asking will normally elicit an offer to moor up at no charge- maybe with electricity and water available. Just after Hilspoltsheim we passed the highest point on an inland waterway in Europe at 410 metres above sea level. Makes you quite giddy!

Stops on the Canal were:

Forcheim, where we spent 3 days in delightful surroundings. We visited Nurnburg to look at Third Reich architecture, Hilspoltsheim and Riedenburg.

Finally we passed into the Danube itself just above Kelheim and could immediately see the boundaries between the white water colour of the Alt and the brown of the Danube, but they soon mixed up. A good current of about 6kph made progress rapid. Within a few minutes we were given a hasty baptism of fire by a close packed group of barges but no worse than OOW manoeuvres!

It was now 28th May and we had done 2430 km to date from Southsea with another 2518

km still to go.

Next stop of consequence was the lovely baroque town of Regensburg. After this we met our only serious problem. The echo sounder stopped working. Jim went for a swim, impressively disappearing into the Danube and determined that the transducer was still there and free of weed or anything that might stop it working. The makers were not over helpful, but thought it might be the display head. Local chandlers do not exist in that area, so daughter Emma was tasked to bring one out with her in two weeks time. Just hope that the barges going both ways will have found any shallow spots before you do!

After Regensburg, Deggendorf, Hofkirchen, we reached Passau where Jim departed. Tom and Madeleine Cunningham arrived having flown from Manchester to Frankfurt that morning then by Inter City Express to Passau. Tom made up a lead line using an engine lifting bracket and observing how short I was of lengths of suitable cordage and lumps of lead. (he proved excellent at swinging the lead, but then he always was!)



We had a short day and after an even more dramatic meander- the Schlogen Sling – arriving at the town itself in a downpour.

Our next stop was at Linz, whence we left to shop at Mauthausen with its haunting memories. The river became very narrow and rocky with lots of current. (below) Then to Spitz,



and the next day Vienna with its horse drawn taxis and glorious monuments. Vienna was special and well worth a visit anytime.

The town was full of Croatian supporters for a European Cup match and all seemed very jolly and well behaved.

From here on, the kilometre posts that locate you on the river were sparse and often overgrown making an "eye ball" fix of ones exact location difficult, especially as the buoyage was sparse as well!

Just past Bratislava, the first of three excellent stops in Slovakia was at "Milan's Treff," a



The Danube Gorges

well known bar cum restaurant cum mooring;



Vienna, worth a visit any time

we saw the entry left by Bill and Laurel Cooper in 1995 and left RNSA and RNVRYC burgees to go up on the wall. The proprietors of these "havens" set great store by their visitors. One is expected to make an entry on a new page in their visitors book (*below*) and



have to hand a photograph of your vessel to paste in. There were some fascinating entries.

On to Komarno and another lovely evening in a berth opposite a shipyard- with a 1 metre depth sign at the entrance! However, it was a pleasant spot. At Estergom

the harbour master, Attila, was excellent. We had to turn the ship in its own length to get out.



Attila and Mike discuss the broader issues

At Budapest (*below*) Tom and Madeleine sadly had to leave us.



Budapest

We were joined by daughter Emma and two of her boys, William and Adam, who were delighted to find all the secret hiding places in the boat.

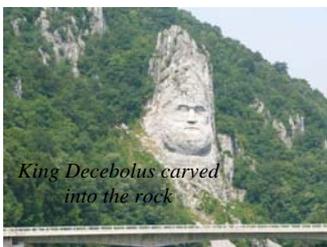
We went up river to Szentendre, a lovely spot, for a couple of days and then back to Budapest so they could go home.

We fitted the new transducer for the echo sounder on a temporary mounting and it worked so it was not the display head at all!

On to Ercsi, then Baja and Mohacs, where we went through the Customs /Revision routine out of Hungary. After booking into Serbia at Bezdán, we moored at Apatin, where there is about to be a new marina. Lots of money coming from somewhere! Next day we anchored in a bay at Backa Palanka and had a lovely two idle days. We proceeded to Novi Sad for a haircut and then Zemun/Belgrade to the Marina Bond- only for "rich and famous people". We met some wonderful people (but none rich or famous), particularly the owner of the Internet café.

Next day we watched the Serbian SBS training their recruits, but were not boarded ourselves, and arrived at Kostolac where a pontoon/ferry terminal was unlocked for us and we ate ashore. The next night, after checking out of Serbia into Romania, we anchored in a lovely spot for the night. In the mist of the next morning we had the transit of the Iron Gates, formerly a fearsome place but now quite eerie in the stillness. Gillie thinks it should go on for longer! There are depths of around 80 metres as the river has been dammed at this point.

Arrived at Drobeta Turnu Severin and had two more nights at anchor with lovely sunsets in idyllic surroundings. Our next stop was Giurgiu. Our mooring here was the most interesting of all, between a series of scrap vessels, but well guarded and pleasant in spite of the sound of it! We wondered if the numerous stray dogs had rabies, but none ever bit us. We had a day trip to Bucharest by bus, which was fascinating. We then were joined by Kevin and Anne Kinsella, another RNR chum who would help with the last part of the journey.



King Decebalus carved into the rock

the channel was difficult to pick out, with the marks moving and lots of fresh sandbanks.

Then to Ostrov, where we went up a 2 km unbuoyed channel, and fortunately stayed afloat the whole time to an anchorage for the night.

The next day saw end of our trip on the Danube at km 300 which marks the entrance to the canal at Cernavoda, where we spent the night before going through the "Canal of Death" to Constanta.

We subsequently had a rough and windy ride to Mangalia in the short Black Sea swell. Kevin got a dip from the Romanian mine-sweeping squadron. Next day was still rough but the following day was calm and on to Balchik and then to Varna. Although the weather was still calm, we were put off going on to Istanbul by the cost of the marinas there- 2600€ till September as opposed to 380€ in Varna. So to cut a long story short, we left the boat in Varna, next to the 8 metre of the proud owner of the "Three Lions" pub just down the road (a staunch Liverpool fan) and hoped that the combination of interests would ensure that when we returned we would still have a boat. Finally all the paperwork was tied up and we caught the bus- 9 hours to Istanbul and a flight home. Cruising is like that!

We consumed a total of 4300 litres of diesel over the two month trip and 8 litres of oil excluding changes! (*Ouch!Ed*)

We do not have an outboard engine for safety reasons so pulling power in a mahogany tender is needed when you have to go ashore for a beer!

Michael Tomkinson



This is an abridged account of a tremendous voyage made in an elderly and largely self refitted wooden boat. Total self reliance is an absolute must, no "Sea-Start" or Channel 16 to call up. The logistics are impressive. Twelve countries, several different languages of which English is not one the more East one sails. Easy supplies of fuel and food became scarce the further east one went.

Eos has now reached Istanbul and is crossing to Turkey (photo and e mail sent from Mike yesterday)

We wish her well on his onward voyage across the Sea of Marmaris to find a winter harbour to lay up in and hope to see him and Gillie at the Annual Dinner where he can recount his travellers tales.

Editor



The Grand Mosque Istanbul

The West Country Cruise 28 June – 6 July

It would be fair to say that the Weather Gods have turned their face against us this year! Nonetheless 14 Club Boats gallantly battled west to Falmouth with *Amoret* going further to Ireland. As last year we were delighted to have 5 RNSA boats in company.

Our first stop was at Weymouth where we enjoyed a delightful, if somewhat boisterous Buffet supper in the Royal Dorset YC with some of their Flag Officers as our guests. Weymouth was as ever, busy and bustling.

The passage across Lyme bay with the wind dead from the West was long and

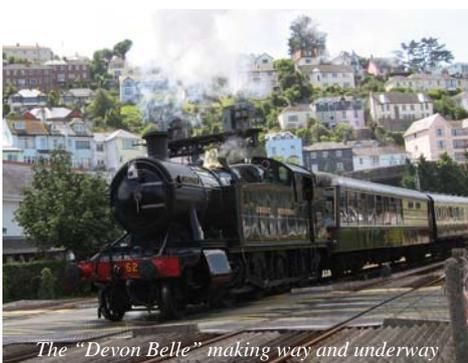


Alana 111, Alouette with John Philip's (new member) Minimum outboard, Sylphe and Avalon astern

uneventful, most people motor sailed directly but *Lioness* and *Mikonda* (RNSA, *Tony Wardale*) sailed much of the way in long tacks. Heroes!

The venue for our "Welcome Dinner" was the Royal Dart YC where we have been previously. We enjoyed the Pimms on the terrace, a lovely meal, the ambience and good fellowship.

The "Railway Children", (aka the skipper and crew of *Alana 111*) amused themselves by taking the "Devon Belle" to Paignton ,returning via Totnes where they thoughtfully re-victualled with Devon delicacies prior to hosting *Alouette* to dinner that night.



The "Devon Belle" making way and underway

And so we headed West, the weather growing cooler, wetter and windier. Past Cdre Chris Powlett (Hon P O Newton Ferrers, *Miss Boomerang*) had kindly arranged moorings and set up a BBQ Party for us in aid of the local branch of the Samaritans. The moorings were crowded, the rain was unremitting and the general scene



Smiling through, Chris Powlett, our host

not photogenic, besides which I was wet and tired! Nonetheless, here is where our fortitude showed through. Despite the rain



Dick Wright, Kit Fleming, Stephen Norris

and the wind we landed by dinghy or water taxi and in full foulies walked up the hill to the party which was held in a large

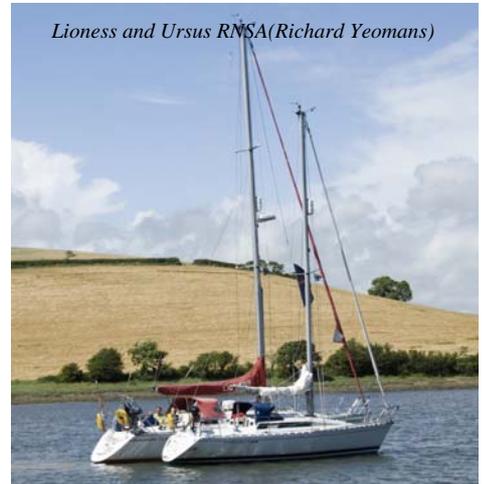


David Niven and Richard Yeomans



Peter Stonestreet,

open sided Party Tent. It was absolutely marvellous! The rain compelled party goers to coalesce under cover, dodging the seams from which rain water would pour at random into one's beer! The weather brightened somewhat for our joint Raft Up Lunch in Dandy Hole on the River Lynher just above Plymouth . It was one of those occasions where it did not pay to "get fell in previous" . Access to Dandy Hole was strictly limited by tide



Lioness and Ursus RNSA (Richard Yeomans)

as several of our boats discovered. It was only soft mud anyway but provided an opportunity to calibrate the echo sounder! The event was a great success and provided opportunity to meet and greet old



A happy man, John Phillips

and new friends . After a long lunch it was time to sail back to Plymouth, Queen Anne's Battery. After a couple of days of dank weather, the

hot showers at QAB were most welcome and allowed us to smarten up in preparation for Dinner at the Royal Western YC the following night .

Dinner at the Royal Western YC was a splendid affair. Panoramic views, a lovely meal and a great evening. *Mikara* arrived in time for dinner en-route from L' Aber-Wrac'h to home .

The weather was forecast to deteriorate to a S/SW 7-8, *Calandra* left before dinner to get back to Carentan before the storm broke. At about 0600 on the Saturday *Alana 111* left for home ; *More Majgik* a Cornish Cruiser with John Hanratty and Nigel Collingwood on board, sailed for their home port of Helford by passing Fowey . A wise decision as they arrived after a hairy 7 hour passage with 35kts of wind about their ears. A plucky ship and gallant crew!

In the morning we sailed for Fowey and some vile weather. *Alouette* and *Matawa* beat SW to clear the Dodman in company with some other yachts. It was slow, chilly and not altogether fun. We listened to *HMS Cornwall* advising of gunnery serials in the area and thought how interesting. In the distance we could see a Navy Lynx hovering about talking to the Safety Boat.

After a while the Lynx overflew us and the others yachts and the next thing we knew we were being politely invited to clear the area forthwith. No problem, it just meant that to clear quickly we had to motor North and lose all our hard earned progress to windward.

When all the excitement had died down we chose not to weather Dodman under sail alone and motor sailed to Fowey. The wind was rising as we entered and were directed to the mid stream visitors pontoons, these being two large articulated floating pontoons. Coming alongside was fun- ever tried securing to a rising and falling pontoon in heavy weather? Below *Alouette*, *Amoret* and *Avalon* bouncing about on the pontoons. The crews of *Alouette* and *Amoret* proceeded ashore in foulies and finished up



taking Cornish Cream tea in the Fowey Hotel. It was the best way to keep out of the rain. Despite our attire the management were pleased to see us! Eventually by late afternoon we were all in, albeit *Lioness* with a blown out and a totally ruined main and *Minimum* with engine problems. We all had a super buffet supper at the Royal Fowey YC and returned onboard at about 2300.

The wind was rising, the pontoons were heaving and great attention was being paid to lines and fenders. Saturday morning dawned and the Harbour Master decided that the pontoons



Wiseman's Reach, the tranquil upper reaches of the Fowey river looking towards Lostwithiel

were untenable. The Polruan dinghy pontoon had already broken free, complete with dinghies! Some lines had parted on *Susan Ayu*, *Suvi* had snapped two deck cleats and *Minimum's* engine was dodgy Deep joy all round!

With the help of the Harbour Master's launch all the berths were vacated and we were directed to Wiseman's Reach downstream. A different world (*below left*) of calm and tranquillity, gin could be poured without risk of spillage, food could be prepared. Sadly, the Water Taxi could not operate because of the weather so we were really well and truly stuck on board. Our planned excursions to the Lost Gardens etc were all in disarray. It must be



HM Customs viewed from the Royal Fowey YC

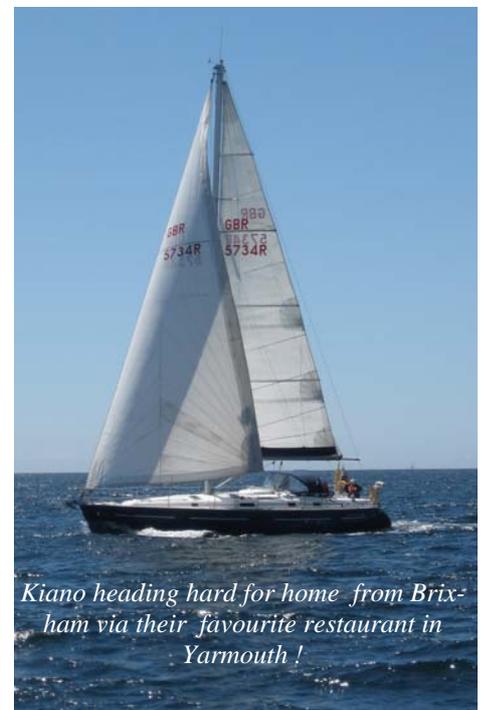
said that the Royal Fowey YC were hospitality itself despite all our late changes. Some returned there on Sunday for a traditional Sunday lunch at a bargain price. *Enigma* went to a mooring and her crew left her there for week or three while the weather moderated.

The port was visited by a Customs cutter which proceeded well upstream whilst her RIB paid close attention to all who



Jane Singleton and Tom Cunningham have a laugh!

were in port boarding at least one yacht. Proceeding Westward *Blue Rider*, (RNSA) *Amoret*, *Alouette* and *Avalon* arrived in Falmouth to revisit the prospect of a trip to the Scillies. It was not on. Carol Elton, who was born in the Scillies, was made of sterner stuff and the *Avalon* crew proceeded by helicopter from Penzance to spend a few days there. The weather had



Kiano heading hard for home from Brixham via their favourite restaurant in Yarmouth!

the last laugh, on their return fog had descended, flying was off and all returned to the mainland by the *Scillonian*. *Amoret* went to Ireland but it took them 44 hours. *Alouette* went no further West and set course for home via QAB, Brixham and a very busy Weymouth at the end of their Regatta Week. In Brixham, *Alouette* and *Kiano* dined at the Berry Head Hotel run by our member Edward Bence and very good it was too. Weymouth Harbour (*below at night*) was packed, with berths at a premium. The Royal Dorset YC on the other side of the river was full to the gun'ls with a very good time being had by all as prizes were distributed.



Despite all the afflictions of wind, wave and weather morale remained high and a good time was had by all. On behalf of all the participants, grateful thanks are extended to Mike Morgan and his sub committee whose sterling efforts made the rally the great event it was.

It was pleasure to have the RNSA with us again, you will always be welcome to join us in the future.

Tom Cunningham

Left: Defining points to and from the West Country, Start Point and Bill of Portland.

Members News

Congratulations to Nic Williams who



was married to Ana Neves in Cheshire in May. The Club was well represented.

Congratulations also to Shaun Cameron (Lt RNR *HMS Eaglet*) who was married to Suzetta Billington, daughter of Cdr JE Billington lately of *HMS Eaglet* and Mrs Billington.

New Members

Over the last couple of years it has been apparent that we have not seen as many of our new members as we would have wished at our Club functions.

This reminder is for those new members who have joined the Club in the last two years or so and who have not attended any of our events.

When you join the Club, it is most important that not only do you get to know us, but that we get to know you and your attendance at Club functions helps this process enormously.

It is customary for new members to attend their first informal Club function as a guest of the Club where you will be met and hosted by a nominated Committee member and introduced around. (*by Informal is meant not the Annual Dinner or the Autumn Meet at the Squadron, to which you are most welcome but on a paying basis*).

How do you do it? When you receive the Calling Notice return it marked "*First function, new member*" and do not include a cheque on your account. You will have to include a cheque for your guests however.

Those convenient to London will find the Christmas Party at the Naval Club on December 15 an extremely convivial evening, or for some the laying up supper at Hamble (*not now at the RAF YC, alternative venue to tbc*) may be convenient, next Spring there is the Fitting Out Lunch in Southsea or the Northern Dinner for those who live in those parts. Whatever you do or however you do it, please make an effort to come and join us.

RNVRYC CLUB MEMBERSHIP OF THE HORNET SAILING CLUB, GOSPORT.

The Commodore of Hornet SC, Captain David Symonds RN, has formally welcomed the RNVRYC as a "Corporate Member" and hopes to meet our members at their clubhouse at Gosport in the future. RNVRYC members are welcome to use the clubhouse and bar either when visiting locally in Gosport or when alongside at Hornet. There is a function room and a restaurant, both of which may be used for meetings or meals for groups provided they are booked in advance.

When attending at Hornet, which is on MOD property, RNVRYC members are requested to take their RNVRYC membership card (the back of the current Blue Book) with them for identification, both at the gate and when on site. If car passes are required, they may be obtained by prior application to the Administration Manager Mr Jim Fraser. Members are invited to visit the website at www.hornetsailingclub.org.uk which has an interesting variety of information about the club, including the Constitution and the Rules. There is a General area as well as a Members' area. Access to the members' area is by the user name 'hornet', and by the password from page 32 of this year's Blue Book, 4th entry. All in lower case, it is the first word after Cosnett (and no; the password is not 'josh').

If members would like to berth alongside for short periods (less than a week), they should contact the Marina Manager beforehand, who will allocate a berth subject to space availability. Please read the requirements in the rules beforehand. We do not, as Corporate members, have any berth holders' rights or lift out rights. To qualify for these benefits, members would need to be a member of Hornet SC in their own right. The Constitution on the website identifies those who are eligible. Martin Alexander

Program 2009

At the time of writing the program is in the final stages of preparation. The following dates /events however may be considered firm .

AGM Naval Club 11 Jan @1900

Northern Dinner RNHQ Liverpool
Late March

Skipper /Crew meet Naval Club 15 April

Fitting Out Lunch 10 May @Royal Naval Club &Royal Albert YC Club
Southsea

Spring Bank Holiday BBQ 23-25 May
Island Harbour

Club Rally, Brighton,Fecamp,St Valery
area 4-12 July

Deauville Seahorse Rally 24 -28 August

Autumn Meet 3-4 October Venue tbc

Laying Up Supper 31 October Hornet
SC

Annual Dinner 20 Nov RAF Club
Pall Mall LONDON

Christmas Party Naval Club 14 December

Sea Horse Rally Deauville

August 2008

Five Royal Yacht clubs including the RNVRYC led by Vice Cdre Mike Morgan took part in this year's rally.

We enjoyed an exhibition Polo match with top international players, a day of Horseracing including the RNVRYC sponsored race, a Reception with the Mayor, a pontoon party and "*diner campagne*" jointly with the Royal Southampton YC held at the Deauville YC, a formal dinner at the Casino, a combined dinner at Les Vapeurs with the Royal Southampton YC where Pam Hanratty celebrated her birthday , two days of yacht racing in J80s and a golf tournament. Phew!!

The programme was exciting and great fun. We were represented by *Alouette*, *Avalon* and *Alana III*. Please note the dates for next year are **24-30 August** when more clubs are due to participate. A full report with pictures will appear in the next issue. *James Hanratty*