

# WAVELENGTH

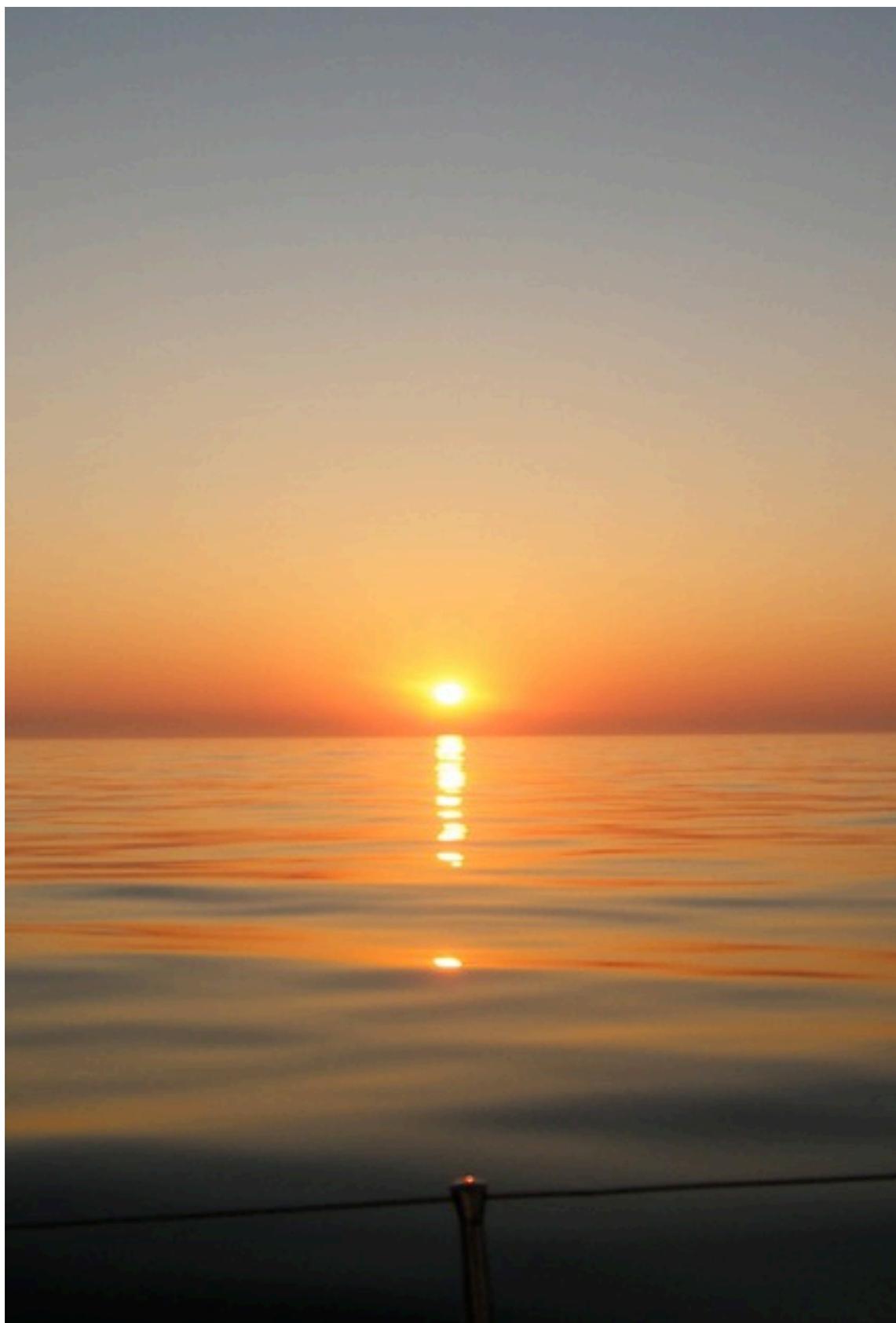


The official publication of The Channel Sailing Club  
Spring 2012

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# The Nav Table

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Members got writing for this edition and we have some interesting contributions in The Porthole.

The AGM was well attended as usual and there is feedback on some of the issues discussed on pages 9 and 10.

Andy Lear has made another creative contribution, this time about the Icicle Rally, but it is a different take on the event from previous *Wavelength* reports.

Keith Gibbs has been busy too, with letters and an article on the Experience Weekend.

Steve McCarthy, our Cruising Secretary, is giving advice for experienced and members new to sailing, on page 15.

Please keep sending your articles, photographs and letters .

Editor

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## Quiz

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### Word Search

No prizes, it's just for fun.

A	N	C	H	O	V	Y	K	R	A	H	S
F	A	H	A	V	B	T	E	D	H	E	W
L	C	A	R	P	W	U	R	O	A	U	O
O	F	R	F	L	E	O	D	G	D	D	R
U	S	K	A	T	E	R	W	F	D	G	D
N	S	S	O	L	E	T	S	I	O	S	F
D	C	B	T	U	N	A	D	S	C	H	I
E	S	A	L	M	O	N	S	H	K	G	S
R	A	L	E	B	W	T	W	E	B	L	H
S	E	A	B	R	E	A	M	W	E	E	P
A	S	R	T	T	U	O	R	T	A	E	S
M	O	N	K	F	I	S	H	S	T	N	M

Find the following words in the grid. The words will be horizontal or vertical, backwards or forwards.

anchovy  
flounder  
monkfish  
char  
carp  
swordfish  
sea trout  
sea bream  
shark  
sole  
haddock  
salmon  
skate  
eel  
dogfish  
trout  
tuna

# The Commodore's Cabin

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The AGM is a time when we review the previous year and whilst we made some reference to future plans - the new IT system being one such issue, we took time to look back on what we had achieved and what signals we picked up on things we must think about for the future.

The major achievement of re-establishing the training programme was acknowledged by the AGM and it is pleasing that we celebrate the successful completion of our latest Day Skipper course. Whilst not all the students took part in the home-work club on Tuesday evenings, they were running to provide support to everyone going through the course. Thanks to all club members who helped fellow members through their homework.

I did mention that we would be focussing on membership development and partnerships with other sailing and dinghy clubs. Additionally, as part of the implementation of the new IT system, we will have to review the communications plan for the club. So there is a lot to be done as we move into 2012.

Some of you will have your boats out of the water, others still taking advantage of good days to get out. Whatever you have been doing over the winter, I hope you are looking towards our sailing and racing programme for 2012 and will find time to get involved.

Happy sailing.



**Editor** Diana Coman

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### **Club Night**

Channel Sailing Club meets every Tuesday at Epsom Sports Club, Woodcote Road, Epsom, Surrey.  
Bar opens at 2030 hrs.

We issue an **e-sailing brief**, which reminds members of up-coming club events and **emails** are also sent out with Club and member information. If you want to receive these, please give the Membership Secretary your email address. Don't forget, to inform the club if you change your email account.

Check out the **Club's Website** for more information and pictures of events.  
[www.channelsailingclub.org](http://www.channelsailingclub.org)

**Photographs** are taken at club events and may be used in Wavelength or on the Club's website. If you do not want to appear in published photographs please inform the Club Committee and the person taking the photograph if that is possible.

### **Cover photograph**

Photograph from the CSC Archive from Summer Cruise 2010.

Thank you to the RYA for permission to use material from the RYA Day Skipper and Watch Leader course book 2007/08.

The views and opinions of the contributors to this publication are not necessarily those of Channel Sailing Club. Accordingly Channel Sailing Club disclaim any responsibility for such views and opinions.

# A few thoughts on the year 2011

## Fastnet race

by Janet Sainsbury

I think this was the easiest race I have experienced, weather-wise. Not too much wind, only occasionally too little wind, not too hot and not too cold, and little rain. The start was the usual scrimmage, lots of shouting, “ your luffing “ boats criss crossing , shouts of “starboard”, boats rounding up and getting too close and there but the grace of god we might well have suffered the same fate as the other Club boat. Once out of the Solent all settled down and we divided into two watches with Keith the skipper also doing the cooking and navigation. We got sufficient sleep as there were not too many sail changes; in fact we only got the spinnaker up for the short trip from the Rock to Pantaneus.

We were not very competitive at first; C&C was not pointing up as well as our competitors but once our trimming expert realised that the trim was the problem and not the helms, we started to make our way through the fleet. A lot of boats had a big calm hole before the Fastnet, but ours was not so bad. Andy turned out to be a very good helm and all round good crew. Poor Will was very sick but was always up first for his

watch and probably last down, when he flung himself headlong into his bunk to keep horizontal. He lived on bread and water and vitamin drinks and ginger nuts, but was still alert enough to be the first to notice that the fleet in front of us was slowing down outside the Lizard, so we were able to make up some time on the inside.

By now we were starting to catch the other Club boat, but they were still many miles ahead. We acquired a racing pigeon and had to keep a torch shone on him to avoid stepping on him in the dark. As we were approaching Plymouth the wind died and for the last couple of hours there were 96 yachts in the Harbour, all drifting towards the line. On the AIS, it looked as though those on our inside were going the other way, as in fact they were drifting out on the tide. We had zero knots, but could see we were just making progress, It was very tense and quiet, and the most exciting part of the race. We were only 100 yds behind our rival, but it still took 30 mins at least to do that distance. It was the fastest time I have ever done, but unfortunately some other boasts went faster!

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# I happened to be looking through a periscope.....and what did I see?

by Nigel Barraclough

The periscope was at the submarine museum in Gosport and whose previous “owner” had been HMS Conqueror. The ship was HMS Ark Royal.

Later that day a friend happened to mention that at the weekend there was going to be the ceremonial march past through Pompey (her home port) and the ship would be open for a few hours. It was one of those occasions where I had to pay a “last visit” – after all I was never going to get the opportunity again. So please

allow me a little indulgence as I take a “nostalgic” and affectionate look at one of the greatest names in the Royal Navy.

“Ark Royal” is one of the oldest names in the Royal Navy and has been worn by five ships of varying sizes; all but one have been aircraft carriers.

### **The First**

The first one was wood, all 690 tons of her, sail powered and with 38 cannons. She chased

the Spanish Armada up the English Channel and her Captain was a man called Sir Walter Raleigh.

### **The Second**

The second was laid down as a tramp steamer in 1913 finished off as seaplane carrier with a complement of 7 aircraft and a tonnage of 7 500 tons. Renamed Pegasus in 1934 she saw service in WWII, was converted back into a merchant ship and was not broken up until 1950 - thus out living her successor! She was also the only aircraft carrier ever to be equipped with a sail to help weather cock her into wind.

### **The Third**

The third was break through in design – a truly modern ship: pneumatic catapults to launch aircraft, steam turbines fed by furnace oil boilers and a relatively large number of aircraft (60). Laid down in 1937, a tonnage of 27 000 tons she fought with distinction in WWII and was the only one to be lost due to enemy action, not surprisingly she earned the most battle honours. Sunk by a torpedo from a German U-boat she lies on the sea bottom off Gibraltar.

### **The Fourth**

The fourth was designed and laid down in the expectation of an on-going world war. It took the longest to build and was radically modernised during a long refit to include, amongst other things, supersonic aircraft and the removal of all her guns (when built she had over 50 mostly 20 and 30mm). She was also the biggest – 54 000 tons. Ark Royal IV was the only one not to earn any battle honours - perhaps it is politically incorrect to record “Cold War” and the brief episode “defending” Belize hardly counted.

### **The Fifth**

Finally, the fifth iteration; at the design stage she wasn't even classified as an “aircraft carrier”. Some bright spark (perhaps a Civil Servant) came up with the idea of a “through deck cruiser” - which was one way of getting it approved by the Treasury! Powered by a marine version of the gas turbines that powered Concorde (no boilers), she has no catapults but an upward curving (ski jump) forward deck. Her tonnage was all of 22 000, by some modern standards: a “tidler” and she did look small through that periscope!

On a personal note I had a special affection the 4<sup>th</sup> ship because she was a Devonport ship

and I was living in Plymouth at the time; I was there when she was awaiting disposal and only just missed seeing her go. I had also had the chance of meeting and knowing some of her crew.

Some would argue that she was probably the best known, mainly because of the fly-on-the-wall series “Sailor” which was made by the BBC in the '70s. I still cannot help but think of the ship whenever I hear “I am sailing” (Rod Stewart) and yes, it gives me a twinge every time I hear it.

### **If they could only talk**

Like so many things that float on water – be they ships or yachts, if only they could talk they could tell a few stories and that should include the various ship's cats that have also been on board! Some of you will recall the wardroom piano was buried at sea by firing it off the bow using one of the aircraft catapults!

There will be a few stories told about her aircraft. On one occasion a US Navy ship reported “an unidentified aircraft” and sent a couple of modern jets up to investigate. The pilots found an odd looking propeller driven machine, with one engine turned off, the wings bent in two places and funny bulges everywhere being flown by someone in a leather helmet – a Fairey Gannett from Ark Royal. When his controller asked what he had found the US pilot is reported to have said “God”!

The brand new supersonic Phantom jets (designed in America) caused the odd comment. A Royal Navy matelot took a glance at one that had just arrived - a plane where the wings pointed upwards and the fuselage downwards at both ends and then asked if it had been delivered the right way up!

### **Cold War**

During the Cold War, while launching aircraft the 4<sup>th</sup> ship had a collision with a Russian destroyer hitting it just above one of the missile magazines – had they gone off then that would probably have been the end of both ships!

Finally to coin a phrase worthy of Henry VIII's wives their fate has been: sank, renamed, torpedoed, scrapped and scrapped (probably)! One wonders what will be the fate of Ark royal VI – but I doubt if I will be around to find out!

# The Porthole

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Highlight an issue that you think the Club or fellow sailors should be thinking about, or get something off your chest, through The Porthole. Send your letters to The Editor. For contact details check out page 3.

## Dear Porthole

This is the question that I was unsuccessful in asking as the tiebreak to the quiz at the Wine Tasting.

Which French appellation has a law that forbids the landing of flying saucers in the region's vineyards?

- A. Bordeaux
- B. Cotes du Rhone
- C. Burgundy
- D. Chateauneuf du Pape

Extra Credit Question:

The answer is D. Chateauneuf du Pape. The law was passed in 1954 during the beginning of the UFO craze. To the best of my knowledge, there's never been an arrest made.

**Peter Thomas**

## Dog Bowls

Dog bowls are essential on off-shore boats and larger the better as they retain a good heat in most conditions when only a spoon will do to eat with.

Even a sandwich will slide off a plate at sea.

I am surprised Diana has forgotten eating off such bowls on 'Farthing' on our aborted Biscay crossing and Brittany cruise (aborted because of no wind).

**Keith Gibbs**

I remember bowls that looked like large soup bowls, or mixing bowls - not the type that have rubber trim round the base,

with a scooped-out centre. But agree, bowls rather than plates.

**Editor**

## Summer Wavelength

Peter Denning's letter in the Summer 2011 *Wavelength* is well borne out by AA/RAC surveys which show that younger drivers (under 50) are so reliant on their Sat-navs that when confronted with traffic hold-ups, the majority are unable to cope other than wait, as they do not carry a map and if they did could not read it.

Back on boats I believe most skippers in the club keep a log on passage and I record position, log and course etc at least once on each watch. If there should be a failure of equipment, for any reason, it is easy to bring your EP up to date.

The main failure today is the lack of an alternative system when close to land - there are few radio beacons and who carried a RDF today making it even more important to practice and be aware of the traditional navigation practices.

How about a no GPS navigation rally?

**Keith Gibbs**

## Thank You's

Having recently taken on responsibility for the CSC social events from Trish Heywood, I know I have some big shoes to fill. Trish had a great band of helpers and they never failed to

deliver. So, a very big thank you to the outgoing catering team. My first challenge was the mince pie & mulled wine evening on 13th December last. I planned well in advance (but, you cannot plan for everything). Having purchased the pies 2 days previous, I stored them in large bags under my kitchen worktop, close to the window where it is cool. The night before the big event, a horrendous storm passed over Andover and found its way into my bags of pies (this was not part of the plan). I discovered the pool of water the following day (the day of judgment). The first thing I did was panic. The second thing I did was panic. Then, as there was no audience present, I phoned a friend, this usually works. On further investigation, phew, only 25% of the pies were ruined. This disaster was easily remedied, I quickly purchased more pies.

Fast forward; My fantastic band of helpers that evening, were Dorri Parker (inherited from the outgoing catering team), Lorna & Stephen Wetherell and David Surman (volunteers from the Day Skipper Course), and at the eleventh hour Clare Ridgers offered to help serve. I did not have to coerce anyone. Thank you, you are all stars.

Peter Thomas deserves a huge thank you for organizing the raffle and for making announcements on my behalf

regarding the quiz. This prompts another thank you to those who collected in the quiz papers, you know who you are. Thank you also to all those (you also know who you are) who donated the raffle prizes, without these generous people, we would not have had a raffle.

As I am not a keen or willing participant in any kitchen, including my own, I cursed the day our leader asked me to take on this role, thank you Diana. But having accepted, I am determined to follow it through, and will endeavour to deliver a quality culinary experience as good as my predecessors.

Thank you

**Jo Brady**

ps Thank you Jamie Oliver

## Boat Maintenance

If anyone would like some help - almost anything (other

than computers) from tricky stuff to antifouling get in touch with me on 020 8668 4797

**Peter Horat**

## Check your outboard

It is better to service now than wait till the spring. Here is a maintenance list I picked up.

Flush engine in fresh water or operating temperature tank or earmuffs.

On last use, turn off at tank and clear carb/fuel lines.

Spray fogging oil into carburetor until it stops.

Remove plug and spray cylinder with fogging oil.

Change gear oil.

Four strokes - change engine oil.

Clean and grease controls.

Spray powerhead with WD40 or similar.

Store upright.

**Keith Gibbs**

## Change of Course

I am planning an Atlantic crossing in June 2012 with Janet Sainsbury.

I would like to hear from anyone (member or friend) who would be interested in crewing or skippering the return trip from Newport Rhode Island.

This is a minimum three week trip and a crew of four is sufficient.

Dates are July/August but slightly flexible as some maintenance may be required at Newport.

It is possible that I may sail back if required. Call me on 020 8394 0546 or email [keithgibbs@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:keithgibbs@hotmail.co.uk) .

Thank you

**Keith Gibbs**

## Dear Club Members

It is almost a year since Pam and I enjoyed the hospitality of the Channel Sailing Club when we were invited to talk about our sailing on the coast of British Columbia and show our film "Mystic Journey". Some members talked to us about the possibility of sailing with us in future and I am writing to let them know we are planning a series of co-op cruises this year starting in April. Our planned cruising dates are 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 30<sup>th</sup> April, 19<sup>th</sup> May, 16<sup>th</sup> June, 9<sup>th</sup> September, and other dates are possible.

Our cruises are typically seven days with co-op crew accommodation in a comfortable aft cabin on our

centre cockpit 37ft Seabird cutter Mistress. Lots of information, stories, and photos are found at our website [www.sailcuise.net](http://www.sailcuise.net). Our home port is Gibsons on the Sunshine Coast just a short distance from Vancouver This will be our 28<sup>th</sup> year of cruising the B.C. coast and we invite Channel Sailing Club members to consider sharing a Pacific Northwest sailing experience with us. Thanks

again for the wonderful hospitality we received and our best wishes for a great sailing year,

**John & Pam Roper**

Email: [jerooper@telus.net](mailto:jerooper@telus.net)

Phone: 604-886-0540

Postal: P.O.Box 692, Gibsons, B.C., V0N 1V0, Canada



# Close Quarters Practical Weekend

Skippers Keith Gibbs, Janet Sainsbury and Ken Wright hosted an experience weekend for club members.

The first weekend in November saw eight members take part in a club experience weekend, organised by Keith Gibbs. The event covered two days, but the Day Skipper theory course held on the Sunday, meant that some only took part on the Saturday.

All had plenty of practice helming and mooring-up.

On 'Change of Course' all successfully picked up buoys single-handed under power and they all helmed to pick up under sail.

'Knight's Challenge' devised a slalom course both with and against the tide. Tacking at every mooring buoy upwind and gybing whilst running with tide underneath. Very quick cockpit work required.

We finished off with a night entry into Portsmouth using the almanac and leading light only.

After seven hours sailing, we adjourned to the Old House at Home for the best meal deal ever - steak followed by apple crumble for £9!

The following day after a few more manoeuvres we transferred to 'Knight's Challenge', 'Gilken' and 'Change of Course' having gone back to moorings, for a spinnaker practice and passage to Gilkicker from where David Garcia took over to conduct a blind navigation (fog 50m viz). Using dead reckoning from below decks he took us safely to the monument transit channel and safely through on the transit turning on the small boat channel direct into Portsmouth entrance. The only observations were one ferry and two yachts but was as accurate as any eyeball passage, passing the red pile at the entrance within 50 feet.

After lunch Aleks piloted to Port Solent where we then returned to our moorings and home.

## Quiz Night tested our skills

A big thank you to Michael Holden and Tony Sparling for organising the Quiz Night in November.

Eight teams of 4 took part, with some of the answers causing controversy.

The event raised just over £57 for the Commodore's Charity, The Solent Sea Rescue Organisation (SSRO).

## Raffle raises money for Commodore's Charity

Thank you to those who donated a prize for the Mince Pie and Mulled Wine evening raffle. Around £100 was raised towards the Commodore's Charity, the SSRO.

## Congratulations to Day Skipper Students



Eleven club members passed their Day Skipper Shore-Based Course in January. Congratulations to Sian Oram, Andy Lear, Debbie Wiffen, David Surman, Paul Matthews, Stephen and Lorna Wetherell, Ian and Trish Emery, Jo Brady and Matt Toogood.

Thanks to Instructor, Bob Hammond for getting them through the programme and club members, including Martin Hewett and Steve Cole, for helping out with the Home Work Club.

# Club News

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## AGM

The AGM took place on 17 January and was well attended as usual.

Approval was given for the committee nominations and accounts and the formal part of the meeting concluded fairly swiftly.

## Commodore's Charity

The meeting discussed the Commodore's Charity and the Commodore reported that around £700 has been raised this year for the chosen charity The Solent Sea Rescue Organisation.

## Club finances

The meeting also discussed the financial challenges facing the club. With membership lower than budgeted and costs increasing, there, plans are in place to supplement this year's expenditure with funds from reserves.

The meeting again discussed the level of reserves and the Commodore invited members to submit their ideas for how this money could be invested. To submit an idea to the Committee, please send an email to

[Wavelength@channelsailingclub.org](mailto:Wavelength@channelsailingclub.org) or leave a note in an envelope for the Commodore on the Club Notice Board at the Club House.

## New Club IT System

Members were briefed on work the Committee has undertaken into a new Club IT management system.

Steve McCarthy, who is the lead Committee Member on the project, took members through the features of the system and the website access that the system provides.

Commodore, Diana Coman, set out the reasons that the Committee were considering this new approach which included, the fact that some of the software being used to manage membership is not fit for purpose, that the administration of the club is heavily dependent on members personal skills and doing things is very labour intensive and the website could do with updating.

The IT system that the Committee has looked at is a full membership and event management system, with a website front end. With the facility to enable event organisers to have access to the site, updating events with new information will be easy. The Calendar format for events, makes displaying events clear and simple and removes the

need for the programme to be produced in spreadsheet and word documents.

Members will be able to register to attend events and the whole process of keeping members updated on events is easier, as emails can be sent from the site.

The big benefit is around the way member information is held. Members will be able to manage their membership on line and pay their annual subscription electronically. The system will provide email reminders for subscription renewal.

The meeting received the presentation and some questions were raised. The discussion concluded with most people attending the meeting giving your Committee a positive response to go ahead with the investment.

There will be more information issued on this new system as your Committee looks at transferring existing membership information into the new format.

There will also be support provided on Club Nights to help members use the new system who are not so familiar with internet sites.

## Volunteers Thanked

During her presentation, the Commodore thanked all the volunteers who support the Club

in so many ways, as event organisers, helping with the social programme, organising fundraising for the Commodore's Charity and bar duty.

"Its the volunteers that make this club. People give their time, creativity and effort making sure that events are fun and run smoothly. All contributions, however small, make a difference and make the club the friendly place it is," said Diana Coman.

## Two new committee members elected

The AGM elected two new members to join the Committee: Jo Brady and Alick Fraser.

Jo has already started working on the social

programme and Alick on the racing schedule.

## Trophies

Winners of this year's club trophies received their awards from the Commodore.

Congratulations to all who won club and racing trophies.

Don't forget, Club Members get to nominate members for trophies, so keep a note during the year of people you think deserve a trophy next year.

A full list of the trophies and the qualifications are available on the Club website.

Seamogs Trophy - Trisha Morris for undertaking two legs of Round the World Clipper Race.

Sally Jennings Trophy - Mac Keight for taking on the leadership of the Training Group, for getting the training

programme going and for contributing as a new Committee Member.

Commodore's Trophy - Martin Hewitt for excellent administration of the training programme.

Miranda Trophy - Keith Gibbs for his skills as a skipper on a range of long distances racing and for the experience weekends.

Jacqui Silance Memorial Trophy - Martin Shott for organising the Bembridge Rally.

Mizzen Trophy - Andy Lear for participating in the most sailing events in 2011.

And the following Racing Trophies went to:

Gliding Kestrel - Knight's Challenge.

Turner Prize - Knight's Challenge.

Harlequin - Celestine.

Genghis Kan't - Celestine

Wooden Spoon - Caressa.

Pursuit Trophy - Eagle.

Round the Island - Tucana.

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## Nearly 50 years service

Six committee members retired at this AGM. Tony Sparling, Trevor Barker, Trish Heywood, Martin Owen, John Kirby and John Lindsay all stepped down from the committee this year, after collectively serving the club for an amazing 49 years.

The Commodore gave each a thank you gift.

*Top Row: Martin Owen, John Lindsay and Tony Sparling.  
Bottom Row: Trish Heywood, John Kirby and Trevor Baker.*



# A perspective on the Icicle Rally

by Andy Lear

Executive summary: My fellow Andrew shins up the mast, Southampton to Cowes via Ireland? Captain Simon throws a six-foot Christmas tree overboard and we all get drunk.

The icicle rally is my favourite rally of the year. This is partly because it is the ideal opportunity to have a nose around everyone else's boats and partly because it is unarguably the most alcoholic event in the club calendar, (Presumably it is entirely coincidental that the event is organised by Trevor). The format was that there was a question put on every boat so you needed to go on every boat to find out what these questions were. Whilst trying to get your clue you were pounced on and forced to have a drink so with seven boats to visit that was at least (the very least) seven drinks to be drunk before we even got to the bar. It would have been possible to send different members of the crew to different boats but that would be to defeat the alcoholic object of the exercise.

This year I had been billeted on Papillon and had arranged to go straight from the icicle to my day skipper practical in Gosport so rather than meeting up in Ripley which is what we did last time I sailed with the Papillon posse I met them up in the moorings in Bursledon. Prior to that, however, there were all sorts of emails flying about party to arrange the preparations for the

boat and partly because having got wind of my upcoming day skipper the de facto 'Papillon' navigator (and fellow Andrew) had 'requested' a passage plan from Bursledon to Cowes, ideally one that did not involve going over the Bramble Bank at low tide. The other part of the preparations involved organising the drinks and decorating the boats with Christmas lights, another icicle tradition. As for the drinks I suggested that since I was one bottle of Pussers rum to the good, courtesy of Yachting Monthly, we might try to revive the tradition of splicing the mainbrace with a tot of grog to all who ventured onboard. As for Christmas lights the only ones I had to hand were actually attached to a six foot plastic Christmas tree, so I brought the whole tree.

I was a bit early getting to Bursledon so had a peruse round the shops before the others arrived where I got a splendid sou'wester from Swanwick Marina returning to meet Simon and Andrew who were followed shortly by the fourth member of the crew Doctor Dave. 'Papillon's' mooring is unique in that you get there via what they call a 'floating bridge'. They have a proper pontoon mooring with power and water and suchlike but to get on to it there is a boat on a rope. You get on the boat and pull yourself across on the rope and when you get off it then the rope on the other end which is attached to a weight on a pole, automatically pulls the boat

back to where it started. It is a splendid system when it works (which is most of the time) but there have been reports of the rope jamming and people getting stranded six foot from the shore. Get stuck there for 227 days and add a Bengal tiger called Richard to the mix and you might have a Booker prize winning novel on your hands but (fairly obviously) that didn't happen to us



and we soon made it to the boat.

There are those (and I am now one of them) that say that before you hoist a foresail you should make doubly sure that the halyard is attached to the top of the sail properly. If you don't then the halyard goes up the mast and you can't get it back down again. Before we could set off therefore there was an hour's extra faffing about with bosun's chairs, safety straps, halyards, topping lifts and other nautical expressions. As my fellow Andrew was the



nearest to the 'scene of the crime' (as well as being one of the lighter members present), up he went. Eventually we set sail and my passage plan was put to the test. We didn't end up on the Bramble Bank (always a bonus) and we did make it to Cowes but there was one worrying moment when I was forced to check the chart as we passed a rib clearly labelled Irish Coastguard.

Unsurprisingly after all the shenanigans with the jib halyard we were the last to arrive. We quickly set to installing the lights and the tree and to the credit of one and all I think 'Papillon' was the best dressed boat in the fleet. Simon was in charge of the grog and that also went down splendidly as well. In fact there were several other boats that had had the same idea, which was probably a good thing. Last year we were mixing mulled wine with gins and tonics, single malts, rum punches and lord knows what else. Returning to the present, I distinctly remember drinking plenty of grog on 'Papillon', a similar concoction on Skyline but it gets a bit hazy after that. I spent some time on a 'guest boat' called 'Isadora' that I had not seen before but I can't

remember what I was drinking. I also seem to recall Andy Struthers on 'Celestine' issuing tots of white spirit but I might have been mistaken on that front.

We never really caught up on lost time and it was a bit of a rush to get shaved, shat, showered and squeezed into our tuxedos, well for me it was. Simon, Andrew and David had booked rooms in the Island Sailing Club and were proposing to get changed there. Personally I could not see the point in staying anywhere other than onboard, particularly since I was going to spend the following week onboard a different boat doing my Day Skipper (in winds gusting to force ten but that's a different story) so I left them at the Island Sailing Club and went to the Royal Corinthians 'toute seul'. The 'starters' were served whilst we were chatting (and boozing) at the bar. They were just standard finger food but some were delicious. Because the rest of 'Papillon' were still struggling into their dinner jackets at the Island Sailing Club I felt obliged to eat enough starters for the entire boat.

Eventually everyone was there and dinner was served. I won't go through the menu in great detail (primarily because I can't remember any of it). After dinner was the traditional singing of the 12 days of Christmas. There were 12 tables and every table had to stand up and sing its own bit of the song. Everyone starts off by singing "On the 12 days of Christmas my true love sent to me.." and then table one would stand up and sing 'a partridge in a pair tree'. Next time round table two would stand up and sing 'two turtle doves', and sit down and then table one would stand up and sing 'and a partridge in a pair tree' etc. There will always be one table that could not carry a tune in a bucket. Last year it was Peter Denning's. This year it was the table comprising The Commode herself, Conway (the skipper of 'Isadora') and wife, Gaye, and Mr and Mrs Clive. I am trying to enhance the tradition somewhat by pointing, jeering, barracking and haranguing the table that sings the worst. After that was a funny sort of game involving coffee beans and a straw.

When the shenanigans were over I headed back to the boat. The other Papillonians apparently ended up in a pub that was still open, carrying a bottle of scotch and a teddy bear. I

found myself walking back to the pontoon with Jo Brady and a bloke that looked a bit like Martin Clunes. Since there was no one trying to sleep on 'Papillon' and there was still tons of grog left onboard we had a mini three man party (well two men and a woman party really, but not in the way you are thinking!). This went on till about two in the morning.

Next morning on my way back from the showers I noticed the bloke that looked a bit like Martin Clunes (who was staying on 'Skyline') was groaning and holding his head and seemed to be blaming me for something, I can't imagine what. I phoned the other Papillonians to see if they were breakfasting in the Island Sailing Club or the Watchtower café that they had been speaking of the night before. Simon, who was a little green around the gills from the previous night, was not breakfasting at all but my fellow Andrew, Doctor Dave and myself enjoyed a splendid fry up at the local café before returning to the boat to try and remove the lights. One of the chains of lights had got stuck in the mainsail track and it looked possible that we would need to get the bosun's chair out for a second time that trip but we managed to flick them out eventually. It was whilst I was flicking the Christmas lights out of the mast track that Simon lobbed the tree over the starboard bow. Me to the rescue! and I managed to grab it before it floated too far up the Medina.

Because we were running late (as usual) and I needed to be at Gosport by two, I was exempted from boat tidying duty when we got back so I owe a double helping of thanks to the captain and crew of 'Papillon' for being such excellent shipmates.



I would also like to thank Trevor for organising the event whilst also implicitly inviting him to join me in the Commodore's bad books for confirming my recollections of various events, not least the 'can't sing for toffee table'. I would also like to apologise to the bloke that looked a bit like Martin Clunes for not remembering his name, apparently it is Mark.

*Photo captions:  
Page 11*

*Left to right: Roger Roberts, Gaye Urquhart, Conway Urquhart, Skipper of 'Isadora'.*

*Page 12  
Donna Anderson, Skipper of 'Skyline' with Diana Coman, Commodore.*

*Page 13:  
Donna Anderson & Mark Hitchin (our Martin Clune's look-a-like)  
Left to right: Nicky Painter, Mac Keight, Angela Walsh, Jane Shott.*

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## Survey into future of Icicle

During the autumn of 2011, your Committee conducted a survey into attitudes towards the Icicle Rally. This was prompted by a concern that attendance at the event had reduced slightly over the past few years and some non-sailing members felt that the destination made it difficult for them to take part, particularly in the dinner.

An earlier survey conducted in 2010, revealed that members would be prepared to consider something different for the Icicle, but there was no clear sign as to what that might be, so we used this new survey to give us a bit more information.

Sixty-three members took part in the survey of which nearly half respondents took part in the Icicle in the past three years.

The results of the survey highlighted that concerns about the weather in December and too many other seasonal commitments were the main reasons that members did not attend.

In answer to the question 'what needed to change in order for you to attend the next Icicle', a more informal event and a venue on the mainland came out on top.

There was support for the idea of an informal Icicle Rally with a more formal Commodore's Dinner at a different time of the year at a venue closer to Epsom. A similar number of members supported the idea of keeping the format of the event the same but moved to a mainland port, although of those who attended the Icicle in the past three years, 90% said they enjoyed the dinner at the Royal Corinthian YC.

The Committee considered all the comments and the overall survey results and agreed to make a slight change to the 2012 programme.

The Icicle Rally will be brought forward a few weeks, so it avoids seasonal events that people may be going to with work or family and introduces a formal Dinner during the year.

There are no specific plans for the Icicle event, it is up to the person who takes on the organisation of the event, to determine destination and activities.

Your Committee will be interested in hearing how members feel about the new approach to the Icicle. Your feedback will affect the 2013 programme.



# Preparing for the season

Here are a few reminders for everyone as we start the new season, from Steve McCarthy, Cruising Secretary.

## Information on our website

Did you know there is a document on the Members page of our website called

### **Notes for crew?**

It suggests various things to think about particularly relevant to inexperienced crew members.

## Lifejackets

Good practice these days suggests we should always wear lifejackets.

Crew will generally have their own automatic lifejacket with integral harness and a separate safety line for hooking onto the boat.

Lifejackets are ineffective if they don't have crutch straps so make sure yours has them. Sprayhoods and lights are also recommended as well.

For inexperienced crew members it is best not to rush out and buy equipment until you

are sure you are committed to sailing. However don't expect that all boats will have spare equipment you can use. Please check with your skipper at the event briefing if there are things you can borrow.

## Wet weather gear

Even if you don't have specific sailing gear most people have some sort of windproof and waterproof clothing these days. For those new to sailing this will initially suffice.

However it is only after you have experienced getting soaked and cold that you can appreciate how good things like modern sailing boots really are.

## Photographs

Other Club members like to see pictures of events, so why not take a few and send them to [webmaster@channelsailingclub.org](mailto:webmaster@channelsailingclub.org) and to [wavelength@channelsailingclub.org](mailto:wavelength@channelsailingclub.org) as they can be used in the Club magazine.

Please note that there are some club members who do not want their photographs to appear in club publications. It might be worth checking before you take the photo, whether there is someone in the shot who doesn't want to appear; it would be a shame for a really



good picture to be rejected because it contained someone who has refused permission for their picture to be used.

## Event write ups

Did you enjoy your last event and would like to share it with other Club members? Then why not write a few paragraphs and send it to [wavelength@channelsailingclub.org](mailto:wavelength@channelsailingclub.org)

## Application forms

Please remember if you want to go on an event you must send an application form to the organiser by about 10 days before. This applies to every single person involved and is there to help the organiser. Not doing this is showing a lack of respect for the organiser and just makes their job more difficult when it comes to crewing boats and organising berths and meals.





Lifeboats

# 'A lifejacket buys you vital time – but only if you're wearing it.'

On average, RNLI crew members rescue 22 people a day. So they know what can make the difference to being rescued alive. The fact is, wearing a lifejacket will more than double your chances of survival in the water.\*

Wearing a lifejacket can buy you vital survival time, but only if you wear it. Why not switch your way of thinking? Our advice is to put a lifejacket on the moment you board your boat. And should you want to remove it, think carefully about your decision.

For advice on choosing a lifejacket and how to wear it correctly, call us on 0800 328 0600 (UK) or 1800 789 589 (RoI) or visit our website [rnli.org.uk/wearone](http://rnli.org.uk/wearone)

\*Based on the findings of Professor Mike Tipton, world authority on immersion-related death.



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