

The Club Trophies

A few years ago, when I held the office of Rear-Commodore, I had occasion to compile a list of the Club's trophies whilst preparing for the presentations at the Laying Up Supper.

With having nearly all the trophies in my possession for a short while I set about recording the information inscribed on each trophy, as well as photographing each one for possible insurance purposes.

This task took me to further explore the origins of some of these trophies. Fortunately, in addition to the donor, the year of presentation to the first winner has helped to identify the date of origin.

The earliest trophies, being the Ted Heard Challenge Cup and the West Cup, date from 1938. However, the first inscribed winner of the Ted Heard Challenge Cup is from 1946, being R. Pewter in "Colleen". The West Cup is clearly showing as presented to the Club in 1938 but the first name inscribed is from 1939, being J. Lewis in "Ranger".

In my opinion, the most elaborate trophy is the Ocean Maid trophy, dating from 1955. It is made from hallmarked silver, weighing 31½ ozs and was valued in 1981 at £800 (insured 1982 at £925). Coming a close second is the E.W. Gurton Memorial Cup dating from 1946. Also made from hallmarked silver, weighing 27½ ozs and valued at £700 in 1981 (insured 1982 at £790).

Currently there are 40 trophies recorded in the Club's records. This number

has grown from the 23 that were included in the insurance schedule for 1982, with a total value of £5000.

A "P.S. Taylor" working as goldsmith and jeweller, at "Edward P. Mayell" of Westcliff-on-Sea, made a valuation of the 9 silver trophies in 1981 at £2600. Within the Club's records is a copy letter dated 12th December 1984, that reads as follows:

"Dear Mr Taylor

It is my pleasure to be writing to you on behalf of Tollesbury Sailing Club.

The committee were shown by our Sailing Secretary Mr Adrian Thacker on Monday the very splendid trophy cup you have presented to us. This came as a very great surprise to us all, and all the more pleasant for that.

We have not decided yet if it is to be awarded for a dinghy race or a cruiser event, and of course there is keen competition between the two factions as to which it should be.

We understand that you will shortly be retiring from active business, all our dealings with you have been very good ones, we shall miss your efficient and helpful service. We hope that your retirement will be long, healthy, and very happy.

All our good wishes

Yours sincerely on behalf of TSC
Committee and Members

M.W. Vinnicombe Hon. Sec."

By simple reasoning (for I am but a simple person!), I deduce this trophy to be the Mayell Cup, first presented in 1985 to R. Chalk in "Lady Verl".

In 2004 I was presented with the "Mystery Plate" for winning the dinghy Summer Points series. This large trophy measures approximately 13/14 inches (I don't do metric!) in diameter. The words "Mystery Plate" are inscribed on the face, with winners' names and dates inscribed on the reverse. There are no other clues as to its origin.

Looking through some old records I came across a copy letter dated 28th May 1981, addressed to S. Harris, Esq. of Old Hall Lane, Tolleshunt Darcy, Essex, with the following text:

"Dear Souter

I am writing on behalf of the Committee and Club to thank you for your most generous gift of a silver tray to be competed for by traditional clinker boats. The trophy is a thing of beauty and a joy forever which is greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely

M.M. Gibson, Hon. Secretary"

The first winner's inscription is "1981 S. Harris Mystery".

Souter Harris was a club member from 1979 to 2007.

Mystery now solved!!

I would be very interested to receive any information relating to any of the trophies that the Club has in its possession. It is known that much of the old club records have been lost or destroyed, and now that we 75 years old it would be right and just to ensure that the history is recorded for those that come after us. If you have any records, recollections, anecdotes, etc., I would be most willing to formulate an archive for the Club.

Ron Laurie

Commodore's Corner

Welcome to this spring edition of "Windward" and thank you very much Greg for volunteering for the editor position and making this edition happen.

As I am writing this I am sitting in the cockpit of Colette in beautiful April (yes, April!) warm sunshine which has now lasted for almost two weeks. Just hope this lovely weather is going to last or at least come back when the summer is supposed to be upon us. It would not be the first time that we had a great spring and a decidedly iffy summer season...

Alex Saward has designed the new club logo to commemorate the 75th anniversary and we are looking into the possibility of getting badges made for the members to sew on clothing etc. The logo will be used on badges, clothing and letterheads but not replace the stags-head-only logo on pennants, burgees and ties. Next year the '75 years' will be removed and the logo will continue to be used.

The celebrate the anniversary we

will organise one water based event, probably a BBQ on Osea Island and one land based event, probably a BBQ in the car park. More detail to follow through the usual channels.

There is a great buzz around the Club with cruisers in the last stages of fitting out, the dinghies having run the first few races of the season, the cadets sprucing up their fleet and everybody enjoying the great weather. The ladies' changing room extension is coming along great and on track with the completion target date of mid May. The new extension is now showing up the tiredness of the rest of the facility. In the interest of time (and money!) some repairs will be done on a temporary basis with more permanent improvements to be made after the season.

Most of you know that Maz Barnes, our bar steward, is cooking lovely and popular food almost every Friday and also organises some functions such as the Murder Mystery Night and the upcoming

Las Vegas Night. Not all of you know that the Club gets commission on the Friday food or that Maz also makes a donation to the Club on the income from the functions. This gives the Club an extra income of hundreds of pounds a year, not to mention the income from the increased bar sales, so well done Maz and please keep-on-cooking!

As usual there will be posters in the Club house and around the village to advertise the activities and of course there are always the emailed 'Signals' to keep you up-to-date. If you don't get them yet, you can subscribe to the Signals on the web site www.tollesburysc.co.uk

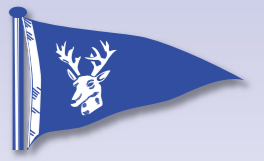
All of us are looking forward to the season to start in earnest and to the Club's 'flag ship' events such as the GP14 Open, Cadet Week, Wallet Shield, Smack & Classics Race, Anniversary Celebrations so let's hope for fair weather for all of them!

Happy sailing....

Kees Spitters

Commodore, Tollesbury Sailing Club

WINDWARD



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE TOLLESBURY SAILING CLUB

MAY 2011

Sailing Club editor found safe & well!



HELLO EVERYONE,

My name is Greg Dunn, and I have taken over the helm of Windward as editor. I am delighted to have been able to take up this challenge, as I am a proud son of Tollesbury, and am finally able to give something back to the village that shaped me.

My involvement with Tollesbury started 9 years before I did, when my parents, Gerald and Maureen (known universally in her latter years as 'Minnie') Dunn, bought Great Downs Farm from Major MacMullen in 1950. Not only did the farm include the house and land at the bottom of Station Road, but also Woodrolfe Farm, including the land that is now partially covered by the marina, so had life played out differently, I could have ended up editing the newsletter from the Cruising Club! Major MacMullen was a principal founding member and first Commodore (see TSC History article) of Tollesbury Sailing Club, 75 years ago this year, and he built many famous (and extreme) sailing dinghies at Great Downs, including the Rocket and the Doodlebug.

So, being lucky enough to be born at Great Downs, it portended well that I should have a life-long association with TSC. I became a junior member of

the Club in the early 70s, but lapsed as I moved away to work on the Thames barges and then Prior's sand barges (yes, Gooffie!) and then on to agricultural college in Nottingham. Since then, I have lived in Kent, Leicester, Somerset, Hull and latterly moved to the dark side, that island three miles to your east. I'll tell you why, if you buy me a beer sometime!

Whilst living away, I returned to Tollesbury and Great Downs on a regular basis, never more than a month between visits, and always kept my boat, the Natterjack, down the creek. I rejoined the Club in the 90s, justifying the annual membership cost by drinking more Guinness at club prices! Sadly, when my father died, in 2002, we had to sell Great Downs, so I needed a base in Tollesbury; enter the infamous 'Tollesbury Hilton'! I bought a 24' steel Dutch sloop (a Wibo 2) off eBay for £205, laying in Faversham. David and Mickey Weller towed me back across the Estuary on the coldest day of 2003 (February 15th, I and the Wellers will never forget it!) and it has stood in Mouse's yard since and done sterling service as my second home.

That's more than enough history, back to editing. What we are hoping to do is publish 'Windward' on a twice-

yearly basis, this May issue, anticipating the coming season, and an autumn issue, revisiting what went right, what went wrong and the if onlys. I have been well-supported for my first three-line whip, with some good reads from El Presidente, El Commodore, Ron Laurie, Scott Edwards, Robert Laurie, Billy Whizz, Roger Palmer and Kim 'No Tilt' Stephenson, my thanks to all these for providing copy without thumbscrews. My greatest thanks go to Alex Saward, in anticipation, as Alex has produced these pages, done the layout and got it printed, by far the hardest task of creating 'Windward'.

So please, if you would like to submit an article connected with the Club, sailing, cruising, racing or just plain messing about in boats, or even a letter, send it me at gdpdunn@hotmail.com (but remove the spaces either side of @; writing it thus prevents webcrawlers harvesting my address and deluging me with yet more offers of Nigerian fortunes, Thai brides or todger tablets) and it'll go in, the laws of the land notwithstanding. If you don't do email, please hand your copy to Maz in the Club.

Happy sailing, all!
Greg Dunn – Editor

The Presidential Address

It's good to know that the Good Ship 'Windward' is afloat once again. The new skipper, Greg Dunn, is to be commended, and thanked, for being responsible for the re-launch, and I wish him all the best as he steers a tricky course in the search for 'Copy', the life-blood of any publication.

I have known Greg for many years, as have many of you. He is a man of many talents and I am sure he will do his utmost to make this re-launch a success, which will be difficult without our help, so I urge you budding journalists to come up with the necessary stories, reports, 'calamitous incidents' while sailing or fitting out, views on anything 'sailing' or the strange people you have encountered during any of the above. Greg will be most grateful for anything useful and readable.

Good to report that the Club is functioning very well at present, thanks to all who give of their time to make it so. We have enjoyed some good social evenings and interesting talks during the winter

months (thanks Garry), the last event being the Fitting Out Supper, for which we thank Jill Atkins, our Chief Cook and Bottle Washer, for the night, plus all her willing (?) helpers and advisors!

Friday night has become 'Nosh Night'. Maz, our very able Steward, has brought this to a new level of excellence, with wonderful, reasonably priced meals,



served well in a very friendly atmosphere, and I take this opportunity to assure some cynics that the agreed percentage of what small profit she makes goes into the Club coffers. Dave tends the bar very well while Maz is otherwise engaged and the Friday night bar takings have increased profoundly.

The sailing season has started well with some agreeable weather, let's hope it continues. The rescue craft are all in good shape, ready to perform their ongoing duties, including during the GP14 Open Meeting this year. For that event, efforts are being made to give the female crews better facilities than previously. More thanks to all those who crew and maintain our rescue craft all season, we could not function without you.

This has been a hurried few lines as Greg is anxious to get Alex Seward operational once more. Go for it, Alex! I wish you all good things for the season, and thereafter.

Graham Elcock

President – Tollesbury Sailing Club

Tollesbury Sailing Club – Origins

Letter addressed to M. Bell, Esq., Hon. Secretary, Tollesbury Sailing Club, dated 20th November 1974

"Dear Michael

Sometime ago I was asked to set down the history of the Tollesbury Sailing Club, but as you know the old records of the Club have been lost over the years, and memories have had to suffice.

However, I have received valued information from Walter Bibby, Reg Pewter and Sid Frost, and have been able to produce the enclosed narrative of the origin of the club, not to be confused with a "history" as I realise there are a number of omissions. From my records it would appear that the following were respectively Commodores of the Club from its inception:-

1936	Samuel Heard
1946	Edgar Heard
1950	Charles Pewter
1957	Sydney Harrington
1968	Walter Bibby
1970	John K. Locke
1973	Capt. Lance Hill

The Commodores served for a number of years, but there may be omissions in the above.

Signed (Douglas J. Gurton)"

The narrative read as follows:-

THE ORIGIN OF TOLLESBURY SAILING CLUB

In 1936 a meeting of interested parties was called at Mr. Jim Chaney's electrical shop at 8 High Street, Major McMullen was appointed President, Capt. Sam Heard (father of Frank Heard) was elected Commodore and Walter Bibby, owner of "Firefly" one of the first 18 footers, was nominated Secretary, but owing to his absence at college, Norman Brand acted in that capacity for the interim period. The list of founder members was most impressive, including among many others, the names of the Countess de la Chapelle, Edgar Heard (brother of Sam), also Capt. Ned Heard of "Endeavour" fame.

The newly formed Club was unique inasmuch as the greater parts of its members were professional yachtsmen or fishermen. The annual subscription was agreed at 2s/6d per annum and the emblem of a "Stags Head" was adopted as the Club's badge, thus ensured the continuity of the crest previously used by the old-time Tollesbury Regatta of pre Great War days.

Permission was obtained for the erection of a "starter's hut" on the saltings near the Gridiron at Rickett's Hard, and was readily granted by the Tollesbury Yacht Berthing Company. Races became a regular weekend activity. From the start the Club was recognised by the old established Clubs of the Colne and Blackwater, also the

Y.R.A., now the R.Y.A. Mr. T.O.M. Sopwith (later Sir Thomas) donated a handsome silver trophy; local firms and members followed suit; and the

Club today possesses a valuable and handsome array of trophies for all races.

The Club prospered and under the able and strict guidance of its Commodore, and the valuable and meticulous care of the Secretary, Walter Bibby, became an institution to be reckoned with in sailing on local waters. It is stated that some of the fishermen members were so keen, that after spending a week or so on the "Cant" off Sheppey; they would return to Woodrolfe but before proceeding home would launch their craft for a trial spin.

Alas by the end of autumn 1939 there was a curtailment of activities. Peter and Hubert Heard were recalled to the Royal Navy Reserve, as was also Frank Pettican. Frank lost his life with two other Tollesbury men in the armed merchant cruiser "Rawalpindi"; Hubert was lost in the "Jervis Bay" and Peter suffered a similar fate in a R.N. trawler. Hubert and Peter had been two of the keenest members of the Club.

By 1946 most of the surviving younger members of the Club had been demobilised and activities were re-started. An old paint shop and boatshed together with a portion of the Little Marsh were purchased and with the able and willing help of members was established as the headquarters of the Tollesbury Sailing Club. The Countess de la Chapelle, who for many years had resided and taken a great interest in the village, donated a magnificent Stag's Head mounted on a plaque and other items of club furniture.

Membership of the Club widened and embraced many in surrounding parishes in all walks of life. The new incumbent, Rev. Leigh B. McCarthy recently demobilised from the Forces, took up sailing in his leisure, and several yacht masters also plied their skills, notably Capt. William Drake Frost in "Agatha" and Capt. George Brand. Under the auspices of the Club the ancient ceremony of "Gooseberry Pie" festivities on St. Peter's Day, linked with the annual fair, and

visits by Brightlingsea and West Mersea sailing club members were revived, and the first Fishermen's Service was held at Rickett's Hard, later to be held in the Parish Church. With the decline of fishing in this locality these services were discontinued, but seafarer's services are held periodically at the parish church usually supported by a chaplain from the Missions to Seamen.

Over the years changes in the hierarchy of the Club inevitably took place, but tribute should be paid to those who played such a great part in the establishment of the Club, principally Major Kenrick McMullen, Sam and Edgar Heard, Walter Bibby, Syd Harrington, Charles Pewter, B.E. Wilkinson, Dr. G. James, Ned Heard, Derek Leavett, Dick Frost, Jack Farthing, Laurie Hardy-King, Capt. Nelson Rice, and many others too numerous to mention.

Today sees the Club on the threshold of a new era, instead of handicap classes with the exception of the "cruiser class", there are the three recognised classes of "Flying Dutchman", "Fireball" and "Enterprise", also efforts to construct a new Headquarters more in keeping with similar sailing clubs. In these projects the Club is ably directed by Capt. Lance Hill, Commodore, and an enthusiastic and capable band of helpers on the various committees.

It is regrettable that over the years old records of the Club have been lost, and the writer of the foregoing narrative apologises for any omissions.

Douglas J. Gurton
November 1974

Tollesbury Open – 11th September 2010

Thank you to all those that helped on the day, the support of the cadet parents was greatly appreciated.

Many of the 22 competitors at Tollesbury found the conditions quite a challenge! With the wind gusting to 25 knots, the beats were certainly hard work. However, the long reach from the windward mark was superb for those crews with enough bulk to fly their spinnakers. Race Officer Derek Burchell had to set the beat across the strong tide and cleverly offset the windward mark to allow for this. The line bias seemed to favour the pin end, but nevertheless there was a lot of bunching at the committee boat and a few collisions did occur.

Richard Lord and Norman Brown from Seahorse SC gave their usual faultless display in all 3 races. Competition was much closer for the lesser places. James Ward and Richard Whitehill were impressive in 2nd place and as a result of them overtaking the Beharrells right at the end of the final race, Ben Kaplan and Roberto Serra claimed 3rd place on count back. Steve Corbet and Steve Browne finished 6th and won the Prize for Series 1 boats in spite of breaking their jib halyard in race 3.

The youngest helm was Annabel Jones-Laurie, crewed by her grandfather, who finished in 10th place, which was an excellent performance in these conditions. After about 3 hours on the water and having shortened the final race out to the main Blackwater estuary to a single lap, the fleet returned to the club for some food.



Tutak Comes Home

I had looked at a few, one had been sunk, another had had so much stuff added and taken away that there was not a lot of original boat left. One gentleman purchased from new and now considered himself too old to sail, so was buying a motor boat. It was this boat that I eventually agreed to look after for posterity, and parted with vast sums of cash for the privilege. Noss Mayo (down Plymouth way) was the location of this fine example of a Fairways Fisher 25, ketch-rigged with small sails and a heavy, robust hull and a shed sorry, wheelhouse.

I borrowed the work's Volvo estate and loaded gear. Extra anchors, rope, spare sails, fire extinguishers, starting batteries, water and food, to name but some. Along with the gear, two crew were loaded along, with a driver to bring the car back. So, one dark February night, after work, the four of us set off for the ferry pontoon under the Yealm hotel. Typically, the M25 and roads west were busy and the winterish weather was wet and cold.

The long drive left me tired before I'd even organised the crew to unload the gear. The idea was to leave two to unload, and me and James to inflate the dinghy and find Tutak and bring her back to the ferry landing for loading. I had only been twice before, both in daylight. Now it was black, very black, in between the sides of the ravine but we found the rotund form of the Fisher eventually. It was one of the last moorings before the bar and sea and, with James as look out on the bow, I fired up the engine to return for the Hotel landing. Most of the moorings had been vacated for the winter and little was there to show us the way, except for a port hand mark which sadly appeared to starboard, which James spotted as we felt the bottom of the sand bar off Warren point. We were going to be there for a while until the tide returned to lift us off, so we put the anchor out and returned cap in hand to the others.

In order to facilitate the transfer of the mountain of gear on the landing to the boat, we conscripted one of the tenders that were tied up. With three in the small inflatable and James on the heap of gear in the tender, we set off again for Tutak. Poor loading made the towed boat veer alarmingly but the water was calm and we lost no gear or crew. Tutak was already starting to swing to her anchor as we swarmed over the sides like a "cutting out" party. All of a sudden, there was a pop, closely followed by a loud hiss. Barry, in the inflatable, started flinging gear into the cockpit like a man possessed. Alan was

salvaging as much gear as possible before the craft foundered. The only person doing nothing during the panic was James who stood motionless in the rigging of the mizzen mast. With the boats empty and still afloat it soon dawned that the hiss was not the compromised tubes of the inflatable but the life-jacketed James. He was pinned quite firmly with his body and inflated jacket on opposite sides of the wire, the firing lanyard having caught on something, leaving him pinned in the mizzen lowers.

Keen to take what was left of the east going tide, we were now rather late, James took Barry and the borrowed tender back to the landing whilst Alan and I made ready, well, sort of. When James returned, we lifted the outboard aboard and double lined the tow, and weighed anchor. From between the steep sides of the river Yealm, the bar opened out somewhat and gave light from the stars for the bar. Avoiding the rocks and shallows, Tutak felt her way into the deep water and took the east going tide towards her new home. Once enough offing had been made to avoid the dangers off Prawle Point the course was set eastwards and I turned in, slaughtered after the hassle of grounding the boat in the first few minutes and the drive down.

I left word for the crew to wake me at six in the morning. I woke to one of the crew retching into my favourite bucket, not a pleasant first sight of the day. Greeting the crew I said "first one, eh?" "No" was the reply, as the other crew rushed out of the wheelhouse to prostrate his body over the lee rail. Puke, an empty stomach and still pretty tired, despite a few hours sleep, I woke up not feeling too well myself. By mid morning, one crew was dehydrated and very ill and confined to quarters, the other was getting on that way, leaving me to steer clutching my (now cleaned) favourite bucket. I began to wonder if this was the boat for me with its rather roly hull form. I had taken off my nice watch and put it to one side so it didn't scratch me as I wiped my forehead dry from beads of sweat. We were well offshore, in the middle of Lyme Bay with a gale up the chuff. Tutak was misbehaving like trawlers do, heave up to port, whip roll to starboard and drop like a stone leaving your stomach in the last century it you're lucky. The long three metre swell made me feel very ill but I had no choice but to carry on as I was on my own. One particular wave caught me up-chucking whilst trying to broach me. Out of the corner of my eye I noticed my (lovely) watch bounce off the ledge and fall below,

strangely into the sick bucket of the comatose crew in the quarter berth. "I will sort that out later" I said, making a mental note to sift the carrots for the sunken watch (that does sound like an 'off watch'! – ed)

I was on course for the Bill of Portland, laying well offshore to avoid the overfalls. I was in no state to work out tides or strategies for rounding close inshore to avoid the race. I went round the bank and headed back northwest for Weymouth taking hours longer than I should. Amazingly, upon reaching the breakwaters of the harbour the crew suddenly, as though redeemed, made a recovery. By the time the town quay was reached both of them were running about with fenders and warps as though nothing had happened. After I had placated the harbour master with wads of cash, I enquired after the sick bucket with my watch in it. "Oh, I emptied that when we entered the harbour," a sad loss. In reality, one of the crew was sent home on the train, he was really too weakened by the experience, despite having recently returned from Iceland on an Open 60 racing yacht. The other one was considered to have some use, being younger and plumper.

After some food and a short rest, Weymouth receded into the distance and the outside of the Isle of Wight was layed, Dungeness passed along with the North Foreland. It was dark by the time Tutak reached the Outer Fisherman's in the Thames Estuary. The wind had gone round to the Northeast and was puffing a bit. I couldn't get a bearing on the buoy, one minute it was ahead and the next it was almost behind. Totally confused I decided to call it a day and run back to Ramsgate. The shallow water of the estuary was kicking up some nasty little seas. Out of the corner of my eye, I could see the 6kg dry powder fire extinguisher break loose from its bracket and roll about the saloon floor. I was making a 180 degree turn in awkward waters and could do nothing to sort it out. In a flash there was a crack and a fizz followed by mist. Realising what had happened, I rushed below to capture the recalcitrant extinguisher. Once caught, I rushed up the companionway and tried to open the wheelhouse door. For some reason, this was jammed, the white powder continued to gush forth. James, asleep in the quarter berth, thinking the boat was afire, exited with remarkable dexterity for a plump bloke. I breached the wheelhouse door and deep-sixed the cylinder, despite the monetary cost.

Just before dawn, exhausted and very hungry, Ramsgate Port Control was contacted. "Enter" they said, so I entered until a darkness, blacker than the night we

were in, enveloped us. I crashed to emergency astern and held off, not knowing what was going on. The shore lights has disrupted any sense I may have had left, I had nearly hit the outer mole. Not wishing to try again in my hallucinogenic state, I called up and said I would hold off for daybreak. Dawn saw us into the harbour for a welcome slumber before we set off in a fit state on the next tide for the estuary crossing and a home berth.

Extract from "Bill and Doug's most excellent adventures"

Bothy Press.

©Bill Brannan 2010.

Why a tri?

Why a tri? – 'cos my tea will sit level when I tack!

That's probably the only logical explanation I can give when people ask me about the boat at the Club bar. As a few people know (actually, anyone who is stupid enough to ask), I bought a wreck of a multihull in August 2009 and at the time, I had a lot of helpful advice:-

"a match and a gallon of petrol"

"what's she called ----Sponge BoB?"

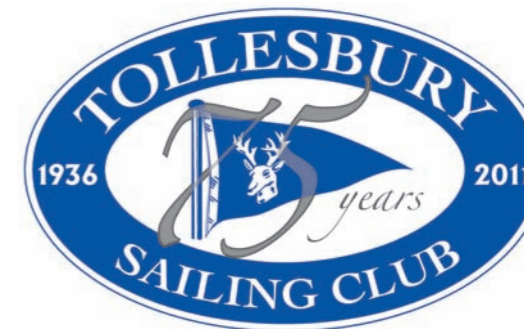
"wouldn't the Pilot Jack be easier?"

Well as time has gone on, attitudes have changed from "Can I help you burn it?" to "If you need a hand, just call" to now "I would love to come for a sail!"

I suppose looking back at the pictures, I can now see what other people could see, but being pig-headed and skint, I bought a mast, boom, a shape and a lot of compost. She was floating in the creek more by habit than anything solid.

Well, she is not as classic like Charlotte Ellen, but she does have a pedigree of sorts; she is a Hartly design Lively 28 plywood trimaran and was the first multihull design to circumnavigate Australia. Monksfoot (that's the name carved into the tiller) was built in the docks at Tilbury in 1970 and finished in 1971. She was then sold in 1972 to someone I know from Bradwell. She did the Round the Isle of Wight in 1974 then sold in about 1982 and had a succession of owners, who managed to bolt on more metal than can be seen at a gothic wedding.

She turned up in the creek 6 years ago and sat there waiting for



*The new logo commemorating
Tollesbury Sailing Club's 75th Anniversary
(see Commodore's Corner)*

the owners to rebuild her as they wanted to. Like a lot of things, this never came about until I managed to contact the owners and bought her for the scrap value of the metalwork. Well, 20 months later and having replaced approx 75% of the plywood, I have hopefully given this old lady a new lease of life.

OK, let's get things straight, she is an old design, which means she is a deep v design. This means her wetted area is quite high so in light weather she will suffer. She doesn't have dagger boards, so again lot of wetted area, so NO she won't be that fast, just comfortable cruising UPRIGHT! See---- tea cup remains in place when I tack and the stove does not need gimbals!

Now I can hear you all thinking- "ahhh, but she won't point. Multihulls don't go to windward. They capsize. Dangerous things" – well, you will have to

wait until the next newsletter to read about her sailing performance as she is now in the water, but time and the small fact I don't have proper sails for her (minor point, I know) has conspired against me so far.

Some people are suggesting that I have a trimaran, as really it's a mono hull with training wheels bolted on. Well, when I get good at this sailing lark (Is this likely? – Ed), I will take them off!!

Last thought, if the UK had been colonized by the Polynesians, we would all be sailing multihulls. So just imagine, stood at the bar of the yacht club with a jug of mead and one chap says "Hey guys, I have had a brilliant idea, let's take off the outriggers, and to keep the boat upright, we will add a huge lump of metal so we lean over and go SLOWER "hmmmm wonder if that would catch on?"

Kim Stephenson





Party in the Park 29th April 2011



TSC cobbled together a dynamic team of waifs and strays. Most of them did not turn up, so the likes of Graham, Alex and Roger were press-ganged in to give the opposition a chance.

Bloody Hell! We won our opening bout against a Tollesbury 'fighting' team! Our collective age was too much for them to calculate, but years of hauling mainsheets paid off.

Best of three? 2-0 to TSC!

Getting serious now and fresh blood appeared (see pic) Some weightier members took their chances but flip-flops and bad backs were no match for heavy bootied psyched-up Firemen.

Oh well, at least it was no disgrace.

The semi-final of the Tug of War against the Tollesbury Firemen (eventual winners)



Roger Palmer

Earlier that day the real breakfast took place.

Light rain, crack of dawn start (well it felt like it). An armada of three boats and support vessel headed out to open sea.

Nerves failed and we turned left into Mersea Quarters, breakfast calling.

No queue at the cafe, no sailing boats to avoid on the water, all peaceful for a bank holiday. Picture shows our absolute pleasure (not sure about the dodgy sunshade though!)

My crew, 'Irish Dave' was heard to mutter on the return leg that he "should live here". He is spot on!

Thanks, Will & Kate, for a Royal Sailing Breakfast.

Brekkers on Mersea hard

So what did your kids do last Winter?

These days, getting kids away from the TV, laptops & Facebook or the games console can be as hard as removing superglue, especially during a very cold and long winter; to get them to want to sail during this time, well near impossible.

That said, two Tollesbury Cadets have been busy sailing and training throughout last winter, even during that lovely snow and ice. Surely 'Child Abuse' I hear you say – far from it, they did so of their own free choice, dragging us poor parents away from the warmth of bed.

Having competed successfully during 2010 at both local and national events within the Topper Class, Richard Bettles and Annabel Jones-Laurie were both selected to be members of RYA Topper Squads for 2010/2011. It is this grass roots squad system, which having been set up for some years now, is successfully producing sailors who are competing at both national and international levels, and ultimately becoming world beaters.

Richard joined the Topper open meeting circuit last year, initially at local club events in Essex, Suffolk & Norfolk, and from the training he has received via our own Club's dedicated Saturday team of coaches, he immediately made an impact and gained good results. This led him to being selected for the RYA's Eastern Zone Squad, the first rung of the squad system.



With his other squad members, they have received high level coaching at various clubs across East Anglia throughout the winter.

Annabel, having competed for a number of years in both the Oppie and Topper classes, has been part of the squad system for a while, and this year was selected for the RYA's National Youth Squad. This has allowed her access to top quality coaches, and as a national squad has meant training during the winter at various venues across the UK, including the new Olympic Sailing Centre in Weymouth.

As well as coaching on boat handling, race techniques, studying the finer points of the rules, all the Squads are also taught about mental tactics, fitness and

nutrition, helping them to be athletes as well as sailors. In addition to sailing, they make many new friends from different backgrounds and places, and being part of a Squad is a goal for the majority of kids racing at events on the open meeting circuit.

Whilst there are plenty of positives for the kids, for the long suffering parents it does involve many weekends away, travelling many miles around the country, and all the expense that involves. Ultimately, you do have a choice on how far you are prepared to support your child in progressing with their sailing, and achieving their goals.

Having completed a tough winter's training, both Richard and Annabel have already started to put their well-practised skills into action at regional and national events, and competed at a very, very cold Datchet Water in January at the Topper Winter Championships – Annabel finishing 61st and Richard 116th in a fleet of 221 boats.

So for our GP14 senior citizens, a warning; when these two cadets are wiping the floor with you in the next club race, now you know why!

There must be some more undiscovered gems within our Cadet fleet, and if you want to know more about the local or national Topper events, or how the squads system work, have a look at the Class website www.gbtopper.co.uk or call Sally Dugdale, the regional class rep, on 07786 08518, or speak to Richard and Annabel when you next see them at the Club.

Robert Laurie

