



'The Premier Sailing Club on the East Coast'.

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THOSE OF YOU that have ever been to a Wallet Ball will know that for decades the Commodores of the Tollesbury Sailing Club have made it a point to get the first toast in by loudly proclaiming: "As the Premier Sailing Club on the East Coast (wait for the laughter and booing to die down), it is only proper that the Tollesbury Sailing Club is the first to take wine with the members of the host club, the (name of host club)"

Of course this is only a bit of banter and friendly rivalry but if you think about it, there is actually some truth in it. Maybe we're not exactly Premier (whatever that means) but we certainly have a lot to be proud of. Established in 1936 by a group of Tollesbury locals who were keen on sailing they had the foresight to actually purchase the building and the land it stood on. They later built the changing and toilet block and extended the original clubhouse several times. Later still, more land was purchased to double the car (and boat!) park in size.

They did not mortgage these assets to further their ambitions, nor did they turn the club into a Limited Company and run it like a business like other clubs did. Their ambition was to have a club that is run by its members for its mem-

bers, with every member 'doing their bit' and a little money in the bank (rather than an overdraft like so many other clubs).

This foresight is the reason that today we are enjoying what is our club. The club with some of the lowest membership fees and boat parking fees (less than half compared with some), and bar prices on the East Coast. Visitors such as those from the GP14 Association, the Smack and Classic Race crews, the Winkle Brig crews and casual fellow sailors frequently comment on how friendly our club is and what a great atmosphere there is around the place. So maybe we really are the Premier Club, to us, its members...

With all this going for its members, I for one am surprised and disappointed that there are still members that abuse (a strong word I know) their fellow members by trying to get out of paying their membership and boat parking fees or at least not paying them until they have received several reminders. This chasing for money and reminding people is a hard and thankless task done by volunteers in their own time that should not be necessary.

It is obvious that running, maintaining and improving the facilities we have costs and it is also obvious that those who do pay their dues on time are subsidising those 'club members' that don't.

So please, don't let the side down and pay your membership at the start of the year and your boat parking fees BEFORE you put your boat in the yard or on the renewal dates which are 1st April and 1st November.

Many thanks

Kees Spitters – Commodore

BOWSPRIT

I should have predicted my personal 'if only's' when I penned my first Windward leader last April, as Black Diamond stayed firmly rooted to her launching trolley, having a major face lift, until the 10th August, the day before Mersea Week. In fact, the first time her jib sheets were taught in 2011 was abreast of the Nass Beacon at the start of the Dabchicks Regatta Classic Yachts Race. We got a consistent 4th in the Classics for Mersea Week, with only the Thursday having poor weather. Maldon Regatta was a windy old affair, but we were in the chocolates again, and then Tollesbury Classics was the nicest day for a decade (there are some super pictures of the drifting match, from Olga Spitters on the TSC website), followed by a bibulous night in the clubhouse. The postponed King's Head Cup at the end of October was a most enjoyable wrap for the short season for Black Diamond, but as next year is her golden jubilee (and isn't it amazing that the Volvo Open 70s have rediscovered the hard chine?!), we are planning to take her further afield, hopefully Brest 2012 and maybe the Round the Island Race (swap Osea for the Isle of Wight!).

We also acquired a leaky but floating Stella

called Vreny, as Juliet had dreamed of two rooms and a lavatory, so we're hoping to do some cruising and Stella racing in her, but also have a hard winter's leak-mending to address.

Right, what have we caught in this issue's trawl? Good stuff. Bill Brannan's amazing trip to Britain's most northerly rock, Ron Laurie's wonderful archive on the Golden Rowlock, Nigel Butt's scary attempt at Channel swimming, Tony Smith's account of taking on epic pocket cruiser Shoal Waters, and Ralph Merry's astonishing pictures of the Saxon fish trap on the Nass. That, with all the regular features, makes this issue a thundering good read! If you have a story or an archive that you think would interest other TSC members, please send it to me via email (lgdpdunn@hotmail(dot)com) or hand it to Maz behind the clubhouse bar.

Big news for the club, Andy Beharrell has just unveiled our brand new website, and excellent it looks too. Martin Parker did a remarkably good job with TSC's first website, which won many plaudits, but these things have a finite shelf life, so this makeover is welcome and timely. www.TollesburySC.com

HATS OFF TO PAUL ATKINS for making the KHC happen this year, good effort, Paul (see his race report). However, Paul did have a difficult task trying to drum up a race officer to run the race, and it was well into the eleventh hour that **Simon Young** stepped up to the plate. Simon had to man Yellow Peril, sound the starting signals and record the finishers, not to mention bouncing round on the anchor off Shinglehead for a couple of hours while the rest of us went off and had fun flapping round Osea. You made fifteen crews very happy, Simon, thank you.

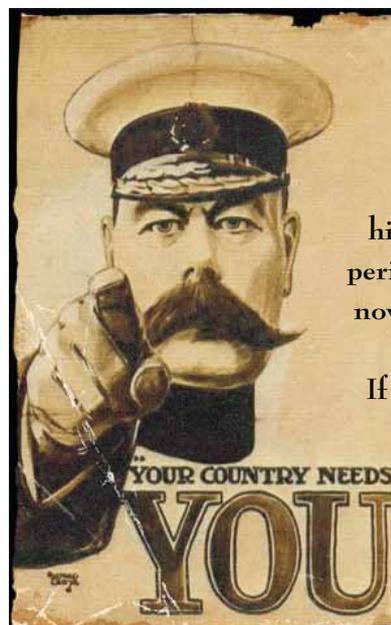
I gilded the lily a bit by asking Simon for some anecdotes from the day, but of course we competitors saw all the action and Simon just the start and finish. He did report a very orderly start, with all boats crossing the start line within 10 seconds of the siren, with no one over early. He also skilfully combined the

sound signals with VHF timing on Channel 6, single-handed, which was helpful as the committee boat was downwind of the start

line, in breezy conditions.

Editor

King's Head Cup 29th October 2011.



**TALKS ORGANISER –
IT COULD BE YOU**

Garry Crees has decided to give up his Talks Organiser role after this winter period - for no other reason than that he has now done it for six years and feels it is time to give someone else the opportunity. If you think you may enjoy doing this job for the Club and want to know more, contact Garry direct on 01621869730 or any other committee member.

Shoal Waters

WELL, THE SAILING SEASON has come to an end again, all too soon for most of us I'm sure. For me, 2011 began with the purchase of what is for the cruising sailor perhaps one of the East Coast's most iconic little sailing vessels, the 16'6" wooden gaff cutter Shoal Waters. Taking on any boat has its responsibilities but a wooden boat does have to be tended to that bit more, especially the older they become.

Shoal Waters was home-built by the venerable Charles Stock in 1963, after purchasing the ready formed Fairey Falcon hull which were made of cold moulded agba veneers.

Charles went on to sail her for 47 glorious years covering over 75,000 nautical miles, all without the use of an engine or modern gadgets such as depth sounders or GPS systems, before his retirement from sailing in 2010, due to progressive ill health.

The previous season, I had explored every creek in the Blackwater with my 16 foot pocket cruiser, also gaff cutter rigged, Huffer (now gone to a new owner). This culminated in the publishing of my book which describes my type of creek sailing, called 'Ready About on the River Blackwater' back in July.

During the very first cruise I took in Shoal Waters, it had dawned on me the sheer magnitude of Charles' achievement in covering all those cruising miles in such a tiny little boat without the auxiliary back

up and the other modern gadgets that many of us have come to rely on.

After a season sailing her, I can confidently say that each time I got down to my mooring in the creek, to go cruising, she had not been away somehow magically sailing more sea miles but was sat still, awaiting her skipper's next command, for although a boat may be capable of covering a fair coastal passage it is only the enthusiasm and energy of the adventurous skipper that makes it happen. Exactly what Charles did during all the memorable years he had with her.

Since her launch through the 'Hatches' at Goldhanger Creek I have cruised to most of the creeks inside the river, my current favourite being Mell Creek, right up beside the old dock. Like many of my other haunts, I never see another boat in here. As well as the farm on the picturesque hill beside the creek where pretty white cows moo contentedly, and the wildness of the nearby wick marshes from where I have seen an owl fly over the creek in broad daylight, Mell Creek is especially handy for a trot up to the village to gather fresh supplies of bread and milk at Fred's Stores in Mell Road.

When the weather has allowed I have made passages out of the river and over the mudflats to squeeze through the Rays'n and visit the rivers Crouch and Roach where a myriad of moody, evocative creeks and desolate islands lay waiting to be explored.

The River Colne also has some interesting creeks that I have visited three or four times this year and one of the

highlights for me has to be reaching the top of Fingringhoe Creek, under sail in little more water than a heavy due. This pretty little waterway is better known as the Roman River and is set in a delightful valley. The sight of the former tide mill as you round the last tight bend is reward indeed for one's efforts. I have also ventured up to the Walton backwaters, where I spent a wonderful couple of nights, out of 33 nights spent on board this season, beside a group of seals. Other enjoyable trips were visiting old navigation marks, such as the Buxey Beacon or the Wallet Spitway.

On the 15th of October, the day after a mini cruise inside the Blackwater that can only be described as a creek sailor's dream. I took her back through the Hatches for her layup which will no doubt be a winter of much TLC.

We are truly fortunate that the Blackwater estuary has so many creeks, waterways, inlets, beaches, islands and historic maritime villages which make it an ideal base for the cruising sailor. I hope you have all had an enjoyable season at Tollesbury Sailing Club. You certainly have your fair share of magical creeks close by.

All in all I could not have asked for a better first season with my new boat Shoal Waters. I have got to know her subtle little ways and already she feels like a part of me that I could not do without.

Let's hope for some good sailing in 2012.

Tony Smith, *Creeksailor, gaff cutter Shoal Waters*
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Ancient Fish Trap on the Nass

A FEW SUMMERS AGO, when we used to have summer during the summer, I was on passage in Black Diamond from Tollesbury to the Alde, when I went aground on the shram hill in thick fog, on a falling tide. Destined to spend the rest of the tide canted over, I went for a row round the Cobs in the flubber to kill time. I saw this chap rowing towards me in a sleek pale green pulling boat, and hailed him. His name was Ralph Merry, who I was very surprised not to have met before. Ralph has been knocking round the same river for considerably longer than me, and is even more passionate about it.

Ralph is surely the most active waterman on the Blackwater, if he isn't rowing his gig blister-inducingly long distances, in considerable seas, he is sailing his little 18' tan-sailed gaffer, also in pea green with a white cabin. When I spoke to him today, a cold, misty November day, he had sailed up to Old Hall from Mersea and back.

Ralph and Tollesbury go back a long way. He was in the Solvig (a beautiful old Baltic Trader that used to grace the Blackwater, that was also skippered by our own Dudley Padgett) with Rodney Hucklesby from Mersea, and also did several trips with Rodney in the Peter P, the Prior's sand barge that I briefly did time as mate on (as Guffie well remembers).

When I saw Ralph's name come up in the Golden Rowlock article by Ron Laurie, I consulted the good man, and the upshot of that conversation was that he dropped a considerable photographic archive into my office, on the rapidly changing ecosystem of the Blackwater, presumably exacerbated by the man-made shingle banks deposited in the closing years of the 20th century.



This shot is of the end of the fish trap. It is out on the Nass spit, on the Blackwater side, below the shram hill, and is only exposed on the very lowest of spring tides. It is reckoned to be approximately 1500 years old, possibly even predating the departure of the Romans. It has only been exposed by erosion, and is unlikely to survive more than a year or so, with trawling and oyster dredging.



This is a quite remarkable shot, capturing the wattle hurdle that was used for the wall of the fish trap. It is almost unbelievable to witness something so ancient, yet so destructible, that we have been gaily sailing our boats over, a few feet above.

This is a hard made up of sizeable chalk boulders, inside Tollesbury Fleet, just below Shinglehead Point. This photo was taken about five or six years ago, when it was first revealed by erosion of mud covering it. No one knows how old it is, or who put it there, but it was a considerable effort whenever. It is now covered with gigas (Pacific or rock oysters) and not easily identifiable.



Ralph has some other interesting shots of the way the riverbank is changing up towards the site of Tollesbury Pier. This one shows the legs of the pier, still discernible after 70 years



The old pillbox that was built on the end of the remaining pier fell into the sea long ago, but this shot looks as though it took a direct hit from the Luftwaffe recently!

Another recent phenomenon has been this amazing mud sculpture on the north bank of the Blackwater, that is eroding faster than in living memory. Deep water extends well inshore for much of the stretch from Shinglehead right up to the Pier. BUT, beware the spit it comes out like a sheer wall, and don't I know it (I planted Black Diamond on it so hard in the Tollesbury Classics Race in 2009 that it took 20 minutes to get off, on a swiftly rising tide)



I put this one in for my sainted mother, as she did a archaeological dig on the red hill down near the reservoir below Great Downs in the late 70s with Kay de Brisay, a world authority on historical salt manufacture. This clearly shows the burnt clay, which was the result of the fire that was essential to evaporate the water, and leave salt crystals for consumption or curing meat and fish.



Ralph also promises me some pictures of Major MacMullen's extreme sailing dinghies, so all being well, I'll run that story in the next issue, and if any readers have some archive photos of that era, I'd greatly appreciate them for publication.

by **Greg Dunn**

Dinghy Captain's report for 2011

2011 HAS BEEN a fairly decent season for the dinghy sailors. The Spring Pursuit was weathered off, but since then it has been mostly kind. We were caught out in a couple of downpours, one which killed the wind and caused the race to be abandoned. The other was during the GP14 Open, when it kept blowing and came down in stair rods. It was bouncing off the water so hard that we were sailing through a layer of white foam and there was hail in it at times. Happy days!

Scott Edwards was Dinghy captain for the year, until September, when I took over. His innovation of awarding PPY trophies as well as PY ones has been well received and will continue.

Our year started before the sailing season opened, with Club subsidised PB2 training courses run by Derek Burchell in what felt like arctic conditions, though we were thankfully spared actual snow. With plenty of people qualified, we hoped for more safety boat and OOD support via a volunteering scheme. Although initially well supported, the numbers stepping forward dwindled in the latter half of the season. For 2012 I will have to force the issue by publishing a rota. People are free to swap duties but if you sail or have benefited from a club subsidised PB2 (or both), then we expect you to support either the Dinghy or the Cadet fleet. I strongly believe that more safety boat support will make for more attractive racing and so benefit everyone. I must put on record a very big thank you to our Boatswain Bob Wilkinson. He has done a sterling job serving as safety boat as well as OOD, week in, week out and racing would have been much poorer, if not impossible, without him. There are opportunities for people without a PB2 qualification to enjoy some time on the water by providing an extra pair of hands on either a RIB or on Yellow Peril.

We enjoyed plenty of sunshine in the early and late season and usually plenty of wind. Numbers do appear to be down a bit as we only had nine people into double figures. Doubtless difficult economic times are having an impact but I would welcome comments from anyone about what has kept you away this season. In all we had 32 different helms racing across the year, not including the GP14 Open. Most active was George Rogers with 31 races, then Martin Smith (30), Scott Edwards (28), yours truly (27) and Roger Palmer (25 races).

A number of helms are desperate for a regular crew, so don't hesitate if you fancy

giving it a go. Get in touch or just turn up and we'll pair you up. However, no crew won't disqualify helms from race series honours as I have sorted out handicaps for GP14s, Enterprises and Mirrors when single handing. These are based on other clubs' practice but we will of course keep it under review.

My daughters weren't the only ones very glad to see the Ladies' changing room extension opened at last and we look forward to further improvements next year, including the Gents.

We gained a number of new sailors, the most active being Liz & Hugh Rayment-Pickard. We were all delighted to have a group of Cadets sailing on Sundays: George Barber, Arthur Brooks, Harriet Mays, Will Porter, and Dan Spindler. They have introduced a new class to the handicap fleet in the form of a pair of Hobie 405s. I had a go on one myself, only to prove that fat old blokes might keep them nicely flat in a blow but aren't nimble on a trapeze and don't fit between mainsheet, kicker and daggerboard. The cadets' performance in the races is testament to Derek and his team's excellent job of training and coaching. Looks like I'll have more boats finishing ahead of me next year!

The other new class for 2011 was Jon and Arthur Brooks' Shearwater cat mixing it with the monohulls. It offers pre-race interest when tacking against the tide up the creek and goes well (when helmed by Arthur). In fact it's lightning fast in a straight line with one hull flying and shall we say entertaining when rounding the marks.

Everyone enjoyed the 75th anniversary away day to Bradwell beach, which was particularly well supported by cadets. It inspired me to try to set up a Potterers' group. The idea is to provide safety boat cover for a group who want to sail on a Sunday but don't fancy mixing it on the start line and it has gained a lot of interest. Even if you don't

have a boat, the club Mirror and Toppers are available. So we have the tools - Tango is almost never out of the container on a Sunday and Stag 2 usually remains moored. What will make or break this initiative is a supply of volunteers.

The race season may have closed but there will be informal winter dinghy sailings, e.g. to Mersea and Bradwell, when weather and tides permit. If you want to join in, you can stay informed via the new website news feed; via the facebook group (Tollesbury Dinghy Sailing) or by direct e-mail (let me have your details). If all else fails, give me a ring. On Boxing Day the tides are perfect, we'll make a decision when we know about the weather. In these events we will provide each other with mutual support; there will be no safety boat cover due to insurance restrictions and winter maintenance. Please note that this means any under 18s will need to be sailing with their parent or guardian, or escorted by them if they have their own powerboat.

Plans for 2012 include some Laser-specific stuff, provided that I can get enough support. With more Lasers than GP14s in the dinghy park, that ought to be possible. The GP14 open will be held in May and for August Bank Holiday we will race to Brightlingsea, picnic or pub lunch and race back. Other ideas in development are timed pursuit races, a training day, a Friday evening series and more away days.

I would like to thank everyone who has helped me find my feet in this new role and to wish you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Right, I'm off to give this year's Sloe Gin a shake.

...Rik

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The Saga of the Golden Rowlock

A SHORT WHILE AGO, during one of those moments when someone decided to have a tidy-up in the club, a rather strange object came to light. This object was a brass rowlock mounted on a wooden block. There was no plaque or inscription to indicate its purpose, other than it was obviously a trophy of some sort.

Then it came to me. I recalled that in my earlier spell as a member at the club back in the 1970s and 80s there had been some rowing races; some sort of challenge with another club. This was worthy of some further investigation, and what follows is what I managed to find out. I am sure other members will have their own recollections of these events.

It all started in 1976 with a challenge from Wivenhoe Sailing Club. This came about because Tollesbury regularly beat Wivenhoe at darts. Wivenhoe decided to challenge Tollesbury to something they considered they were more likely to win. That did not leave them with much scope, but they came up with a rowing race.

The race was to be from Tollesbury to Wivenhoe, approximately 14 miles, and they even came up with the rules; build your own boat, minimum beam 3 foot, maximum length 22 foot, two rowers, a pair of oars per man. Somehow Tollesbury accepted, probably to do with drink. The date was fixed for 24 July.

Time was against the Tollesbury men and the build took longer than anticipated. Six sheets of 4mm ply with joints stitched and taped, hard chine hull, decked fore and aft to give part buoyancy, and she was ready. The first round was lost. Wivenhoe had done this sort of thing before. Three sheets of 4mm ply and a simple construction produced an ultra lightweight two-seater skiff type craft weighing less than half the Tollesbury boat.



What of the 2 crews. Ralph Merry and Les Meadows represented Wivenhoe, both experienced oarsman, and the main

instigators of the whole affair. Graham Elcock, Tollesbury's Commodore at the time, stated he would fill one place and Derek O'Brien volunteered to fill the other.

Help came from all quarters, from designing the boat, advice on rowing technique and training. John Goldie from T.C.C. donated two beautiful pairs of oars.

Came the day, the race started at 4.30 pm from the Leavings on the last of the ebb. A number of boats followed the race and the whole event was rounded off at Wivenhoe with a barbeque. Oh! Wivenhoe won by about 20 minutes.



The next year, 1977, two younger and fitter members took up the oars. These were Ian Lagden and Dave Duncan. Wivenhoe stayed with their winning formula.



The local newspaper reported as follows: "It was row, row, row all the way for the two gallant pairs battling it out for more than two hours over 14 miles in the annual oars contest between Wivenhoe and Tollesbury Sailing Clubs. Wivenhoe were the winners for the second year running. The victory margin was not quite as convincing as 1976, for their time of just over two hours was barely two minutes ahead of Tollesbury, compared with about 20 minutes last year."

Tollesbury were not about to give up, and for 1978 they came up with a cunning plan. Not one boat, not two boats, but three boats. The crews this time were to be last year's pairing, Derek O'Brien and Stuart Baker in a second boat, with Graham Elcock and old friend A.N. Other in a third boat. This turned out to be Trevor 'Mouse' Green. Ian and Dave built their own new boat; Derek and Stuart rowed in the original craft, with Graham and Mouse in another new craft.

It is unclear who finished where; suffice

to say Wivenhoe won for a third time.

In 1979 there was to be a change of fortune for Wivenhoe Sailing Club. After years of trying they finally overcame Tollesbury in the annual Talent Contest and won the 'Ballet Trophy' following Tollesbury's 3-year successful run. Next up was the annual rowing race!

This time around the rowers were Derek O'Brien with Lance Clapton, and Graham Elcock with Trevor Green. They rowed all their hearts out for the 14 miles. With a new record of 2 hours 13 minutes for the course, Graham and Trevor came in triumphant. Sweet revenge!

For 1980 it was back to a straight two-boat contest between Tollesbury and Wivenhoe. Our intrepid heroes of 1979 were out to repeat their success.

There is a very entertaining article in the club's 1981 Bulletin by John Austin that recounts the whole day's event. It was to be a very gruelling and close race between the boats. At the finish there was only 20-30 yards between them, but Tollesbury triumphed again.

John's description of our two victors is worth repeating; "Tollesbury wins again, said Graham as we met up ashore. It sounded like a joke but if he could have seen the dried white salt-caked face of himself in the mirror and Mouse sitting on a seat staring into space they both would have known that we knew how much effort, sweat and maybe even tears had gone into that fantastic row. Not just by Tollesbury but by Wivenhoe."

A date was set for a race in 1981 according to the club's programme, but it seems never took place. And there the saga appears to have ended.

What of the Golden Rowlock. It has been cleaned, re-varnished, and resides in place of honour behind the club's bar.

Ron Laurie

Addendum

I was 'jorin' with Ralph Merry whilst I had the Diamond up on the scrubbing posts in Mersea, to get his perspective on the rowing matches between the clubs, which he remembered very fondly, and he wrote us this piece as a Wivenhoe rejoinder –

"Because of both weather conditions and plywood fatigue, the final race was to see which boat burned fastest in a 'pyre' on WSC's hard. Result: - Inconclusive!

The 3 x 8' sheet of plywood for the 22 footers developed from the earlier 2 sheet rule, which was for single-handed race from WSC to the Colne Fishery Buoy and back. This race had evolved from a private duel between Les Meadows and Ralph Merry several years earlier, which was rowed in ordinary dinghies. The second race attracted a large entry from far afield – both Mersea and Heybridge." – Ed

Apologies to Lewis Carroll

President's Paragraph or Two

*Of sailing boats and pints of ale
and times when we all sing.
The time has come, the Editor said,
to speak of many things.*

I try to cover all these things in this, my offering for the second issue of "Windward" under our new Editor. Words of Wisdom, I doubt it, offers of thanks, yes, of condolence, unfortunately yes.

Many things have happened since the last issue, wonderful, social evenings, including the Club's 75th Anniversary. I will not go into detail as I am sure these happenings will be covered by the appropriate "scribblers" elsewhere in this issue. I would add my thanks to our wonderful band of helpers who work so hard to keep us fed and entertained in all manner of ways. Of personal time given freely let us not forget the many hours given by our long-suffering Committee Members, Flag Officers, Subs Secretary, Talks Organiser and, making it possible for you to read this, however reluctantly, Greg and Alex the Producers. On your behalf I thank them all.

On the sailing front the Dinghy and Cadet Fleets have been charging about including the GP14 Open Meeting which enjoyed a good weekend with favourable weather and run in proper fashion by the man,

Derek. A very well-run Smack and Classic Race had all the ingredients for what else a "Classic" but the main participant failed to appear - the wind, damn it. Consequently there was a late finish but the festivities on the hard (two barrels drunk dry) and, later in the Clubroom were up to the usual standard. That's my Boys! Well done everyone!

So, a good year so far but there has been some sadness. The passing of friends and Club Members is, as the years pass, something we have to accept as inevitable but when it does happen it is a terrible blow nevertheless. This year alone I have attended



four Services of Thanksgiving, sharing two of them with many of you; Clive Stevens who worked so hard for the Club in years past and the lovely Pearl Leavett wife of the late David for many years our friendly Village Butcher and a long-standing member of the Club. Both greatly missed. Several weeks ago Commodore Kees and I attended the Thanksgiving Service of a former Commodore of the Wivenhoe Sailing Club, Don Smith. I befriended Don during my Commodoreship in the late seventies when he also reigned. Between us we formed a lasting relationship with several inter club activities which were, in those days, something special. Included were Talent Contests held at their old Clubhouse on the quayside, (the word talent was used purely in a descriptive manner), darts matches in various venues, rowing races from here to there and all carried out in a general "esprit de corps" manner. Their Commodores were often guests at our Laying Up Suppers as we were to theirs'. Why the presence of Commodores at Laying Up Suppers was discouraged in past years I will never understand.

That will be enough I reckon. No words of wisdom, but words, I hope, that will relay the feelings I have for this super little Club of ours. I wish you a happy laying up season and hope to see you all at the Laying Up Supper.

Happy Drinking,
Graham – President

King's Head Cup and Cruiser Racing

THE KING'S HEAD CUP eventually took place on the 31st October after postponement earlier in the season due to bad weather. This is not normally a good time to hold this race as the weather can be very changeable at this time of the year, and many cruisers are already out of the water, tucked up safely in the yard. This was the first weekend where the time and height of tide was right, in fact the massive tide made it perfect. Then, after a week of the usual Met Office forecasts for the weekend of 3-4 possibly 5-6 or maybe 2 or 7 or even 1, on Friday the prediction was 6 knots of wind and sunny for Saturday. This meant that we would be warm and comfortable but probably only make it as far as Thirslet. Fortunately on the day of the race, forecasts had changed to SW4 gusting 6 – perfect, encouraging 15 boats to make their way to the start line, and it was warm and sunny. Basically, the race was a beat upriver to the western end of the island, with most boats reefed, and a run back with the brave hoisting spinnakers or cruising chutes. (The forecast proved right and we can say

the Met Office is good at forecasting 4 hours ahead (*–steady on!* – Ed)). There has always been a certain amount of inter-club rivalry in this race, which has become slightly confused because of the number of people who are joint members, but I think it is important to point out that the first three places were taken by **Sailing Club members**.

The winner of the King's Head Cup was **Black Diamond** (skipped by Greg Dunn), 2nd **Cygnets of Arden** (Trevor Green) and third **New Tricks** (John Hall).

As the wind strengthened at the start of the race and most boats started to reef, I turned around and saw a fleet of cadets heading out across the Blackwater - and there I was thinking of reefing in a cruiser (am I a wimp, I thought, but next year I know where to look for a crew).

As I was racing (or attempting to), it is difficult to report on the details of the race, only to say that from what I saw of the first three they deserved their places and the winner was either going to broach (he

probably did many times (*you don't know the half of it, mate!* – Ed)), go aground, lose a crew member, split his spinnaker or win.

It was a great day's sailing in ideal conditions, and everybody seemed to enjoy it. No major mishaps with no one going aground, which is good, for with that tide they would still be there. It was good to hear Cruising Club members radioing Simon, thanking him for his Yellow Peril duties, and as we are sportsmen we should wish them better luck next year, but we won't!

As a footnote, cruiser racing has almost died over the past few years through lack of interest (*full marks to Clive Church for keeping some cruiser racing active in the club* – Ed), although whenever anybody takes part, they think it is great fun. This year the weather was not good and we do not have a Cruiser Captain, which did not help, but I would like to know whether anyone is interested in racing next year. It would be good if we could run even two races in addition to the KH cup with a reasonable number of entries. Please e-mail me ideas/thoughts for racing next year. e-mail paulatkins121@btinternet.com.

Paul Atkins – Rear Commodore.

GP14 Open Meeting 2011

THE FORECAST F6 AND HEAVY RAIN depleted the fleet for the 2011 Tollesbury GP14 Open, on Saturday 17 September. Visitors were just outnumbered eight to six by locals. The challenging conditions – a blustery force 3 to 4 south westerly with occasional gusts at 5 – were evident when Parsons & Parsons managed to go over before the first race preparatory. They sorted themselves out and set off with the rest of the fleet for the first and most exciting race of two laps on a figure eight course. There was a good clean start and it quickly became clear that the visitors from Seahorse, BTYC and Papercourt were making the running. Mark Wolf and Alex Dotsch were the winners of the sprint to windward off the start line. Richard Lord and Norman Brown tucked in behind, having approached the mark on starboard and took right of way through the port tack throng. The leaders bore away on to the spinnaker reach to the second mark with a few lengths lead. Those who worked hardest gained most, and Richard and Norman did just that to win the overlap while taking their spinnaker down at the second mark. A bunch of boats followed, fighting to get their spinnakers set. Two boats lost that fight and capsized; Lesley Kaye and Riccardo

Chacon were soon up and off, but a spinnaker that refused to come down forced Ceri Rogers and Ed Coates to accept assistance and then retire.

Wolf and Dotsch kept company with Lord and Brown, Ward and Whitehill just behind, though Lord pulled out a 100m lead going into the penultimate leg. On the final downwind leg, a grin started on Wolf's face as he watched Lord foul up the spinnaker hoist half way down. It spread to ear-splitting as the wind headed 30 degrees and spinnaker troubles persisted in front, allowing the chasing boats to catch up. Upon rounding the leeward mark, Lord fluffed his tack and allowed Wolf to go smoothly round and off in the freeing wind to win the race. Ward and Whitehill sailed consistently well to take third. This was despite teasing by Richard Lord over their 'vintage' boat, though he did acknowledge its immaculate preparation. Doyen of the fleet was in fact Chris Parsons' No 1365 'Fancy Pants', now superbly converted to Series 2 specification.

The breeze dropped dramatically for the second race, which started in similar fashion, though the three leading visitors had more company for most of the race. At the end of an exciting spinnaker reach, Mark

Wolf had a gear problem which forced his retirement, so the results were Lord first, Ward second and local father and son Ron and Rob Laurie in third.

The final race saw early tussles in which Ward and Whitehill briefly led before Wolf and Dotsch took the lead. The third and final lap began just as the heavens opened and was sailed planing through rain so heavy it bounced off the sea, creating a white foam. Lesley Kaye excused her performance by saying that her contact lenses filled with water so she couldn't see where she was going. Benjamin Kaplan reckoned crew Chris Lomax and he had to endure hail mixed in with the rain. Mark Wolf and Alex Dotsch held on to their lead throughout to win the race and the overall meeting.

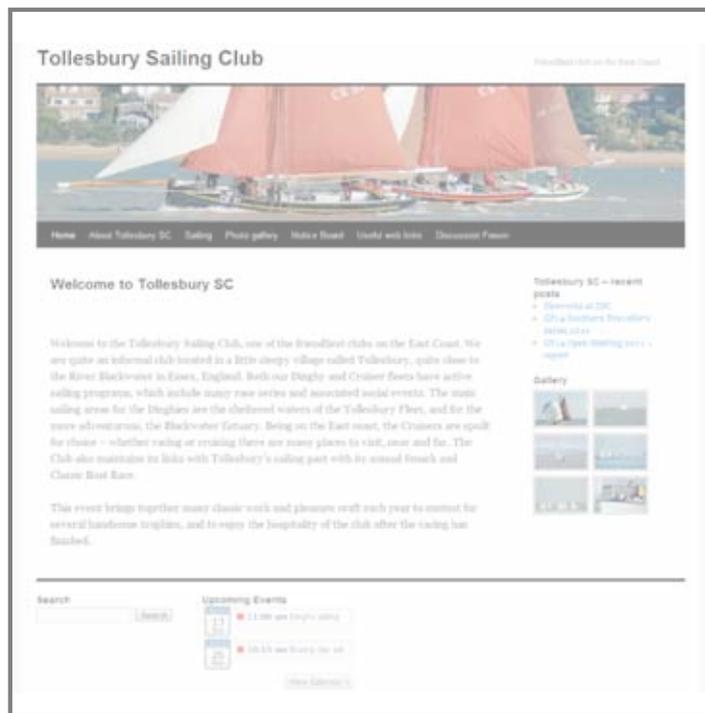
James Ward thanked Tollesbury for proving the usual combination of generous hospitality and efficient race management, whilst Lesley Kaye noted that it is unusual to have a ladies' prize, nevertheless it was very well received. Tollesbury's Nick & Val Lynn were awarded a prize for fastest Series 1 and Ron and Rob Laurie were the highest Tollesbury boat overall.

Mark Wolf's win confirmed him as the 2011 winner of the London and South East Traveller's Trophy, with Lord and Ward close behind and set to fight it out for second at Frensham on 9th October.



Tollesbury SC Website redesign

THE CLUB WEBSITE has always been an excellent tool for communicating with members and we now want to enhance this with an updated design with some new tools and new functionality. The new website will be formally put live during November this year and as the screenshot shows, it is a modern updated design but with a unique Tollesbury and East Coast feel to it. Each time you access pages the header image will change, so watch carefully, you never know when you might see yourself or your boat!



The new site has a calendar, photo galleries (just click on the thumbnails to view the full photos), dinghy, cruiser and social blogs, details about the club, useful web links and also a discussion forum with cruiser, dinghy and general discussion areas. The forum will only be available to members and you will need to register to be able to use it. Just fill in the details on the forum page on the website to register yourself for the forum.

To access all the various pages, just hover over the menus in the main menu bar and the menus will open up – just click away at what you want to look at.



The website will in future be available from the usual web address:

<http://www.tollesburysc.co.uk>

and also from:

<http://www.tollesburysc.com>

You may see both websites available for a time while we change them over, but we will shortly move to just the new one being available from both these web addresses.

Most importantly of all, please get involved. There are places on the site to suggest additional useful web links, add comments to pages, register for the forums or send us through anything you might like to suggest for the blogs. We will be adding to the site a lot during the winter including the 2012 events calendars and any suggestions will be gratefully received. You can contact Andy Beharrell on: andy.bharrell@gmail.com.

Andy Beharrell

andy.bharrell@gmail.com

SOCIAL REPORT

As usual the club has had a busy year with a variety of social events. The regular attractions such as Burns Night, The Fitting Out Supper, The Gooseberry Pie amongst others, were great successes and enjoyed by many. If you have never been to one, please come next year, you don't know what you are missing! A one off event was the 75th Anniversary of the Club - this I have to say was a resounding success, despite several date changes, and deciding what exactly we were going to do. Thankfully I had started a social support group at the beginning of the year, which has worked extremely well, and I am very grateful for the help & support of all the group - YOU KNOW WHO YOU ARE - A BIG THANK YOU. We decided to make it a bit of a 'tea' party with a TSC cake which was cut by Terence Green, and served over 100 meals to a full & exciteable club.

What has started to be a yearly challenge is the Sail For Cancer 'Tea by the Sea', day which was held on August 28th this year, thanks to a lot of hard work from Val, Charlotte & Maz we made £624, our biggest donation yet. If you have ideas of how to beat it for next year, please get in touch, and if you wish to help with ideas or just generally help with events, please contact the social secretary. By the time you read this it is possible that we have just had the Laying Up Supper which is on the 19th November in the Community Hall. I'm sure it will be a great evening. If you have not made it to many events this year, why not come to our Christmas night of music & carols on Saturday 17th December, 7pm at the clubhouse. Mince pies and mulled wine available to help keep out the cold.

Best wishes to all from Sue and the galley staff.

Home from Portsmouth – Mayday, Mayday, Mayday



COMING HOME was totally the opposite from our journey out, the weather can only be described as atrocious, with strong gale force winds at times. Malcolm, Peter and myself being the crew, I was helming as we reached Beachy Head and the wind had grown so strong we decided to take down the little sail we were using and just motor. We achieved this going head to wind and I then steered Sunbeam back to our course, this manoeuvre would temporary make her broadside to the waves.

A huge wave swept across the deck and I was washed overboard, all in a fraction of a second. I can hear the noise of water in my ears as I go under, thank goodness my life jacket self-inflates and I shoot to the surface and am held rigid like a Michelin Man on my back, facing the sky.

My mind had silly, absurd thoughts along with its proper assessment and reaction to my plight. I clearly remember thinking, “The water’s warm, nice day for a swim to France”. Then reality sets in and I think, “No

pain anywhere, so nothing broken or hurt, metabolism fine and working well, so far so good”. What’s this?! There’s a rope just above my head, I grab it, and it can only be the painter (tow rope) to the dinghy.

With my hood still up and my life jacket tight round my neck I have restricted vision, I cannot see Sunbeam or the dinghy. The pull on the painter is from the left, the dinghy must be to the right. I go hand-over-hand and reach the dinghy’s port side, “That’s funny, I was swept over Sunbeam’s starboard side?”. A wave lifts me up and I roll effortlessly into the dinghy. The whole episode could only have taken very few seconds but my mind seemed to have had minutes in which to react.

All three of us know it is highly dangerous and virtually impossible for me to get on board Sunbeam again in the prevailing conditions. I wave ‘I’m O.K.’ and wave to keep going as we are. I can see Malcolm has a serious countenance sitting on Sunbeam’s stern looking back at me. I

give him a smile and a cheery wave; he waves back, but his countenance does not alter.

It crosses my mind that perhaps the incident has been more traumatic for Malcolm and Peter as onlookers than for me participating. Malcolm tells me later his worried look is because the dinghy is silhouetted against the bottom of huge waves which give the appearance that they are going to engulf it at any moment. I ride the dinghy like it’s a bucking bronco, holding on to short rope from the bow, I am to spend nearly two hours in the dinghy, which gives fear time to appear now and again, I drive it off by thinking that if something goes badly wrong, a Mayday call will be sent and I will get a

Old Gaffers Association
MEASUREMENT/BOAT ARCHIVE FORM

In order to enter Old Gaffers you must have a valid membership card. Please complete the form below and return the form to: The Skipper, The Skipper, Victoria Road, Portsmouth, PO1 2PW or to your club. Please contact the club if you have any questions or queries.

Boat Name: **SUNBEAM** (Club No. of Boat): **2338** Year Built: **1981**

Skipper: Name: Filling None Construction Material: Year: No Yes

Hull Measurements:
 LOA: **5.0** LWL: **4.0** Beam: **1.5** Draft: **0.7** (to top of keel)
 (LOA is full length including spars and rigging. LWL includes the keel and stem in the widest part of the hull. Beam is maximum beam at the widest part of the hull.)

Mast:
 Mast: **10.5** Mast Top: **10.5** Mast Base: **10.5**

Deck:
 Deck: **10.5** Deck Top: **10.5** Deck Base: **10.5**

Other Measurements:
 Height (to top of highest forestay): **5.5** Length (to aft of mast): **5.5**

Construction:
 Hull: Wood Fibreglass Metal Other



Pictures from the book showing various stages in the rebuilding of Sunbeam

helicopter ride. We make the calm waters in the outer basin of Eastbourne; a feeling of joyful deliverance comes over us, hell into heaven, and safe harbour from perilous seas.

Within a minute of tying up, we were off for Peter’s usual drink for a safe arrival. We set off in silent reflective thoughts of what might have been, my legs were a bit stiff and shaky as we made our way to the nearest pub, but it was to be a very satisfying and poignant drink.

Nigel Butt

This is an extract from “Last of the Colne Racers” written and compiled by Nigel Butt, one of the owners of the local smack Sunbeam. The book contains a detailed history of the rebuilding of Sunbeam and is full of fascinating photos. Copies of the book can be purchased from The Lighthouse.

Tutak goes North

THIS YEAR THE LITTLE FISHER 25 had 100 days to make trouble and attempt to reach the Shetland Isles. The trip took me and the old boat up the east coast to circumnavigate the Shetlands, taking in the Orkneys, Cape Wrath and the Caledonian Canal before returning back down the east coast to Tollesbury. This and other logs are available on http://tutak-ii.blogspot.com/2011/09/tutak-goes-north_15.html

Shetlands - Muckle Flugga and the Out Stack

Well the bits for the exhaust arrived and I rushed off to pick them up and by late afternoon I was on my way again. This time headed for the Out Skerries, three islands almost land locking a harbour in the middle. One of the uninhabited islands was up for sale a while back.



Of course there is a lighthouse and the sun is reflecting off the reflector, it's not actually on as it is still too light.



After a restful night I headed north again bound for Bala Sound but not before I was disturbed by the inter island morning flight. I was anchored at the end of the grass strip runway and talk about short take off and landing!



Bala was a massive place in the herring times and the remains of the many quays can be seen. This was just a sleeping place before the next jump to Harold's Wick where Tutak could have a rest whilst I went ashore.



The reason for this stop in the very north of the isles?



Remarkable stuff they have here, local boats and ones from Norway. They used to import them way back from Norway as flat packs and we thought Ikea was modern!



Sadly a fishing boat was found near here with the engine running but the fisherman was

not aboard. Opinion has it that he launched his creel and went over with it, caught in the line. Rather roly and unpredictable, the sea round here. The coastguard asked us to keep an eye open for a body and there were quite a few boats looking.

These are the overfalls or Roost (race). Today was very calm and benign and still it was here. You don't come this far inshore on a bad day.



And here in the distance is the reason for the trip, to round the most northerly point of the British Isles before it becomes Scotland. Muckle Flugga and the Out Stack.



And here we have it, the Out Stack well and truly rounded. Apparently Mrs Franklin came here looking for word of her husband from the whaling ships out of Shetland. Why she went to the Out Stack I don't know unless she was looking for the ships.



Tutak goes North,
© Bill Brannan, *bothy press.*

Tollesbury's Travelling Toppers

– A year of either too much or too little

HAVING UNDERTAKEN a long & good winter training programme in their various squads, both Annabel Jones – Laurie and Richard Bettles, were looking forward to a successful 2011 season. Unfortunately unknown to all, the weather gods had different ideas!

The first major event, part of the National Series, took place in April at Rutland Water, and a fleet of 210 Toppers were treated to unseasonably warm sunny weather, but with it very light winds. Three races were held on Saturday in fickle and trying conditions, but Sunday was no better and by lunchtime with no hope of some wind appearing, proceedings were brought to a close. Results throughout the fleet were mixed with almost everyone having at least one bad race and with no discard available.

Annabel 116th
Richard 131st

The sun continued to sparkle in early May, but the Inland Championships at Grafham Water, was a very windy affair, with gusts up to 26 knots. Of the 245 boats entered, not surprisingly many found the going tough, and there were many retirements both days due to gear breakages and tiredness. Annabel, who likes windy conditions (easy to say when you are 16 and no longer 11) was doing well with top 30 results, until the penultimate race on Sunday. Whilst going round the windward mark, she was hit over the head by another competitor's mast which decided to snap – yes, it was that windy! Although she finished the race, the effects of a bang on the head took hold, and she doesn't remember much else thereafter. A trip to hospital (not her first time due to sailing – indeed the nickname Accident Annie is well known to her friends) in an ambulance ensued, and with no serious injury, was released later that night. Richard was away and so missed the fun and games.

Annabel 91st

A trip to the Olympic Centre at Weymouth in late May for the 2nd part of the National Series saw the wind gods decide that Toppers must be game sailors, and turned up the fan even more. Average speeds of 20 knots and gusts over 30 knots were recorded, with the added conditions of big waves, meant no sailing on Saturday. This allowed the 211



entrants time to greet the training Olympians from many nations, all eager for autographs on life jackets and rashtops, even if they did not know who they were – well, do you know who the Japanese 470 sailors are? The biggest prize, though, was to get our British Olympic Heroes', and they happily obliged for over an hour, and must have suffered writer's cramp!

With the wind not dropping on Sunday morning, only half the fleet ventured out, many reefed. Annabel became detached from her boat whilst attempting to get to the starting area, so did not start, but Richard battled bravely in the only race held, finishing 98th.

The trip to Derwent Water, near Newcastle, in July was too close to Annabel's



exams, and Richard had other plans, which was just as well, as the weekend was subjected to very light winds and only 2 races were completed.

The National Championships held at North Berwick, Scotland, in August was a very long trip for most of the 324 competitors (yes, that many!), but they were greeted with sun and a good breeze on the Saturday. This was perhaps the best day, just a shame it was before the event had started!

The rest of the week was dominated by light to nonexistent winds, rain, sea fog, and two days abandoned. Results were tipped on their heads, with many small lightweight sailors qualifying for the Gold fleet, and more experienced but heavier sailors relegated to the Silver or Bronze fleets, including last year's World Champion.

Richard did extremely well in his new boat and at his first ever Nationals, and qualified for Gold fleet, and finished an excellent 85th.

Annabel who is not renowned for her light wind expertise, slipped to Bronze and finished 39th. The long trip home was very quiet!

A trip to Pwllheli, North Wales in September for the final National Series event, saw another wild and windy weekend with no sailing possible and a long wasted trip for Richard and family. Annabel had by then decided to move out of Toppers and step up to Laser Radials – much to the disgust of our Tollesbury Laser adults – hey boys!

In between National events, the local opening meeting circuit has been underway all year, and due to exam year, Annabel missed these, but Richard has flown the flag for Tollesbury, and had some notable successes, and finished an excellent 5th overall in the Eastern Area series. In addition he finished 2nd at the RYA East Zone Championships, and has been rewarded by selection to the National Junior Development Squad for this winter.

So all in all, another year for clocking up the mileage, and unfortunately a lot of sitting around due to the weather extremes, and limited racing, but that's sailing for you.

Not to be out done by the kids, yours truly has competed in the Solo Eastern Area series during the year, finishing 4th overall.

Now we are all off to Alton Water near Ipswich for their Winter & Frostbite series – come and join us, and experience some big fleet racing.

Robert Laurie