

Commodore's Corner

It is my sad duty to inform those of you who do not know already, that our Rear Commodore, Ian Sinclair passed away suddenly in the early hours of 10th September. A keen sailor and committed Club man, Ian will be sorely missed by us all, as clearly illustrated by the huge turnout at his funeral in the village. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his mother Shirley, son Matthew and daughter Charlotte.

Ian's family have asked that all donations made in his name should go towards the R.N.L.I and as such there is a collection point down at the Clubhouse. This will remain until the evening of the 16th October, our annual fund raiser for this worthwhile cause, (details in Dates for your Diary) when we hope to see you all in the Club to help celebrate and remember Ian's life.

Many people have rallied round, in Ian's name, to help out and cover his duties. Geoff Smith has kindly offered to supervise Cruiser Winter Parking this year and all enquiries should be directed to him, via the clubhouse.

With the summer nearly over now, it's time to reflect on some of the excellent sailing that has taken place so far. Pride of place must go to the dinghy fleet that have regularly turned up in numbers not seen since the halcyon days of the early 90s. The evening points series was hotly contested, both out on the water and in the club afterwards with food, good beer and some earnest chat about the racing. New Club members bring so much enthusiasm you wish you could bottle it and save it for later!

Talking of the Bar, you will have noticed our new bar steward,

Steve who has taken over full time from Derek. Our thanks go to Derek for stepping in so admirably to fill the breach when Margaret left last year.

It has been a quieter year for the Cruisers and racing has been harder to organise. We know that things go around and come around with boats, but if there is any creative input to be made then please give anyone on the Committee a call.

As the season comes to a finish we would ask you to kindly remove your dinghies as soon as possible and that no Cruisers be placed in the yard without first getting approval. We shall be placing boats at the bottom of the yard first and moving towards the Clubhouse in an attempt to create some winter parking area nearer the Club. Talking of Cruisers, for those of you wishing to have an input in next years events, please keep a lookout for the planning meetings due to take place very shortly.

Looking further ahead, all you trophy winners will experience a different walk this year. After many years at the Parish Rooms, we have decided to take the Laying Up Supper to The Officers' Club at Colchester. Those Club members who have attended recent Wallet Balls will know for themselves what a super venue this is. Transport will be laid on so please make every effort to support this great social event in the Club's calendar.

Our congratulations go to Club members, John (Strangler) Williams and Julia Hoyle, who have recently become National Hornet Champions. Everyone hopes that we can persuade them to give a talk down at the Club and enlighten us

as to the "black art" of championship winning racing.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all those Club members who have put so much into the smooth running of the Club. It just goes to show that you don't have to be on the Committee to make things happen. Trust that I will bump into you in the next couple of weeks.

Finally I know you will all join with me in bidding former Commodore Roy Chalk and his family all the very best as they leave Tollesbury for a new life in Spain. Quite how the regular Wednesday night crowd that get into the snug will survive I do not know! We wish them all the very best.

Regards, Geoff Vote.

If you are intending to lay up a cruiser in the boat yard over the next month or so, please could we ask you to contact Geoff Smith with your booking form and payment to arrange an allocated space. Geoff can be contacted via the clubhouse.

Dinghy owners are reminded that once the cruisers start to come into the boat yard, there will be limited space for dinghies. If you want to keep your boat in the yard for a while longer, please move it nearer the clubhouse as space permits. And if there are any outstanding fees for boat parking, please pay them to Steve over the bar.

Abandoned trailers and boats are likely to be moved to accommodate the cruisers – if you think one of them (particularly at the bottom of the yard) belongs to you, please move it before someone else moves it for you!

IN MEMORY OF IAN SINCLAIR

Ian first came to my attention when in typical Tollesbury fashion he was volunteered for a position on the Sailing Club Committee. It's true what they say, One volunteer is worth ten pressed men, or in Tollesbury's case about twenty. I am not sure if it was Peter Sheldrick or Steve Everitt who was responsible, they went around like the three musketeers in those days, but it was a good day in hindsight for the Club.

It wasn't long before Ian became Club secretary, which for those in the know is the most important position and carries a huge responsibility. Ian had the shoulders and the wherewithal to carry it off.

About this time I came into possession of an aged GP14 (a type of sailing dinghy to all you landlubbers) which rather impressively had all the bells and whistles (A bit like a dodgy car on a Romford car lot). I was looking forward to launching it and showing off my new acquisition. All I needed was a crew to make me look like the dee/bee's. Ian had impressed me when I had attempted to rig the dinghy in the yard. He knew not only the name of all of the fiddly bits of string (oops sheets) but how they were meant to be operated. Here was my man.

Everyone was watching as the latest addition to the Club's GP fleet slipped quickly off the Hard. I must confess to being caught out as Ian, showing an expertise that had hitherto been a black art to me, decided to roll tack and I was caught out on the lee rail, frantically trying to reach the "high" side and comparative safety. Yes, sure we shipped some water but Ian, in that calm reassuring way of his, insisted that "All will be well" when we finally made it out to the Fleet. Suffice to say that the weakness that I had failed to spot in the hull had resulted in a steady incoming stream of water, which coupled with that coming over the side meant that we capsized by the Sill! (see the web site for the damning photographic evidence!)

I am only too sorry that I never fixed the boat and tried again. I could have had Ian as a crew for a series and no doubt learned a lot more about sailing and less about swimming.

Ian then moved onwards and upwards and became the Club's Rear Commodore (that is in charge of all matters sailing) a position he was ably suited for. During the past 3 years he has been responsible amongst many things, for the very popular "Tollesbury Smack and Classic Yacht Race" which attracts competitors from near and far. Perhaps because of his ability to "Break" items on dinghies, Ian was better suited to Smack racing where everything is that much bigger and more

robust. I guess you could say it was Ian proof.

His broad knowledge of Smacks gave him a valuable insight into the staging of this popular event, no doubt brought about by his formative years in Maldon and the subsequent racing aboard "Charlotte Ellen". The extensive refit of this local boat was chronicled by Ian on camera and featured to this day on the Club's web site. You just knew with Ian that his "steel trap-door mind" was absorbing all the relevant data which no doubt would have given him the edge to get every last ounce of speed out of the boat. Ian was always first to get a hand on the windlass or the halyards to bend on the sails. He just wanted to get the boat moving and loved nothing better than to mix it in a good blow.

He was responsible for getting the race committee to look beyond the Fleet for their dinghy racing and was always "Pushing" the envelope in all matters sailing.

Ian also found time to help set up the current Cadet section in TSC with James Evans and Arthur Mullin. I will always remember his infectious excitement when he started to talk about boat drills, racing tactics and variations with regards teaching new skills to the kids.

Hearing Ian's name mentioned on national radio (on the Terry Wogan Show) made me realise just how many people's lives he touched and in so many ways. His work with BT put him in the front line when it came to those televised fund raising evenings for Children in Need, Sports Aid etc. Ian was responsible for making sure that all those viewers on the night could get through and make their donations. He will be sorely missed and I for one am going to miss his ability to tell a good sailing yarn usually down the Club on a Wednesday evening after a few liveners – of course I had heard it countless times before, but it would be told with such animation. Naturally he would be crewing aboard his beloved Snipe, racing up the Blackwater River in a cloud of spray doing about warp factor ten! The rigging would be screaming in the wind under the strain and the boat would be teetering on the edge; Ian by now would be demonstrating (a) the amount of weather helm and (b) the boom crashing over like a pistol shot. Of course, it would always end in a spectacular capsize, but it ably demonstrated Ian's passion for all aspects of sailing, his ability to bounce straight back from adversity and to reflect his outlook on life, never stepping back from a challenge and always living life to the full.

Geoff Vote

A Dinghy Sailor's Guide to Mersea Week – or, Roger Palmer's Eventful Day

Given half a chance to sail with no staff holidays is a great opportunity. The reality is always different.

Instigated by Hazel (not my mother), the Round The Island was suggested. Discussions and meetings produced indecisions and uncertainties about start times and logistics. Trailing boats by road was unattractive, so most of us dispatched our boats on the tide the day before, prepared for battle.

Imagine the disappointment of Wednesday morning, finding a freshening wind and the race abandoned. Instead of intensive activity on Mersea Hard, we were left with a consolatory drinks voucher. Not allowed in the clubhouse in wet boots, we turned our attention to the ever-increasing windy shore. 'Home' was the cry as we tried to set flogging (and noisy!) sails. George and Jilly in their GP14 were away first, as usual, Tim on his Laser set off like a train, Alan and Jenny in another GP14 with ear

plugs, Hazel (not my mother) in crew position accelerates, I scramble in, no time to 'ship the rudder', moored boats appear, try to turn, gybe instead, oh no! All over in seconds, floundering in the tide, Hazel (n.m.m.) nimbly up on the hull, drifting up towards the Strood.

Maze of ropes, some mine, some collected en route, tangle around buoys and other boats. A friendly motorised dinghy passing by tied us to a moored inflatable craft. Not knowing what to do with us, or us with him, we drew breath.

You possibly know the rest –



Ceri and Pete flying at Mersea

distress and call-out flares (I thought they were practice runs for the firework show!). Upright by the time the lifeboat reached us, I realised they were not on a practice run. Hugely embarrassing, but enjoyed by everybody else, we ended up in the coastguard's log!

The next day a rumour was heard in David's, the butcher's: "What on earth was Roger doing out at sea in such wind in a small boat, with his mother?"

Ed's note: Such a hairy sail, that George and I didn't even hear the maroons! However, after negotiating the waves off Mersea, those of us left afloat did have the best planing reach of the season back past the Cobs to Whale Point. And Roger didn't save us any oysters!



Roger having a spot of bother at Mersea

Lobster Cruise to Pyfleet

The Cruise Gastronomique in July was a great success. The day started off with a bit of rain, but this cleared by 14:00. The cruise to Pyfleet, even in the rain, was enjoyable; about 8 boats attended, with others coming by road.

Graham Larkin, manager of the fishery, opened the facility at about 17:00 for a tour and oyster tasting. We were shown the oyster purification area, and the lobster packing and crab rooms. After the short tour we were shown how to open oysters and most of us had a go at it, eating them as fast as we could. Even those who said they had never tried an oyster joined in and were surprised how nice they were. A few people had a go at picking up a live lobster. I found a 5lb native lobster, and a few people

had their picture taken holding it. Others ran in the other direction.



Olga and a new friend

After the tour and the tasting session, we moved outside onto the quay and a makeshift table was set up to serve the lobster and crab. The evening was going great, loads of food and plenty of drink and everyone was having a good laugh with the usual stories. The sunset was beautiful. Just as everyone

seemed to be fully relaxing and enjoying themselves, the heavens opened up and did it rain! We all ran for cover, some on boats, others in a van parked on the quay, a few under the makeshift table, even under a tree – better than nothing.

However, this did little to spoil the evening, even though we were all a bit wet. I must apologise for not having the BBQ as promised, all the gear was on a few boats moored in the creek, the tide was out and it was impossible to get through the thick mud and back to the moorings.

I do hope this will become an annual event as we all had a great weekend. Next year we will provide cover, so let the rain come!

Bill Hallinan

Dates for your Diary:

Saturday 16th October 8.00 pm – R.N.L.I. Fund Raising Evening. Christmas cards, calendars etc. for sale and a Plate Supper will be served.

Wednesday 27th October and Wednesday 3rd November, 8.00 pm (sharp) – meetings to discuss the cruiser, dinghy and sailboarding programmes for 2005. Please try to attend if you have an interest in the organised sailing.

Saturday 13th November 7.00 pm – Laying Up Supper at the Officers' Club, Colchester Garrison. Coaches available from The Square.

Sunday 12th December – AGM

Sloe Gin, cont ...

You may remember in the May newsletter that there was a question as to what happens to sloes once they have been removed from the gin. Well, just to prove that this newsletter has global appeal, I received a letter from Stella Vote (mother of the Commodore), who lives in Busselton, Western Australia, enclosing a recipe for Sloe and Crab Apple jelly – see below. Stella says that unfortunately she cannot produce a sample for us, because (a) it would not travel well from Australia, and (b) because crab apples are not available out there (minor problem – I'll send her some seeds!). Many thanks, Stella, and I hope someone will be motivated (and sufficiently sober) to produce a pot or two next year.

Stella's Sloe and Crab Apple Jelly

2¹/₄ – 2¹/₂ lb. tipsy sloes, as juicy and plump as you can find

³/₄ – 1 lb. crab apples

Granulated sugar

Chop apples into very small pieces if they are very hard, or they will take forever to cook. Put them into a pan with the sloes and just enough water to cover. Simmer gently until the fruit is very soft. Tip the contents of the pan into a jelly bag, suspend over a bowl and leave to drip overnight. Measure the juice and reheat gently adding sugar at the rate of 1 lb. sugar to 1 pint of juice. When the sugar has dissolved, fast boil until setting point is reached. Pot in small, warm, clean jars.

Dinghies Update

In spite of a very mixed bag of weather the sailing programme has been almost completed as planned. It is encouraging to see new members and different boats getting involved and hopefully enjoying themselves on and off the water. Jenny, Hazel and Bill all bought Bytes within a few days of each other – I wish the GP or Solo fleet grew that fast! The racing and sailing in company events have all been well supported and even with some of the 'regulars' away we seem to get a fleet of 10 plus on the water.

Gary and James continue to do sterling work with the Cadets and a high point must be their joining Mersea Cadet Week. All the cadets did brilliantly; Jack deserves special mention as he has been out a lot with the main dinghy fleet, the sight of his Topper beating up the river to M3 with a sailing barge as backdrop was quite impressive (and probably very alarming to his father). The day in the river (The Green Man Cup) was curtailed to a Bradwell Dash to the pub for drinks (7 dinghies plus 2 rescue boats). We finally made it to Mersea for breakfast (4 GPs and 2 Ents) at the second attempt. A small group also attempted to get to the very top of the Salcott Channel – lack of wind and the pig farm eventually defeated us but Roger laid on a good picnic spread (on his foredeck) and Jon supplied gin and tonic. Fortunately John, Erica and Gary were on hand with the Ribs to tow us home.

You will be pleased to hear that it is now club policy that the bar will be open if possible after rac-

ing. Obviously I have to remember to ask Steve to open up early to accommodate us. This is a sensible decision because apart from sustaining thirsty sailors it does get people into the club early in the session when usually it is very quiet. Food or BBQs after racing has continued to prove popular, a highlight was definitely Jon's Chilli which was quickly sold out. A lot of money has been raised for club funds and the bar takings boosted – thank you everybody involved. The Changing rooms have been improved and are being used, the ladies however needs a shower as for some reason they won't use ours! Access keys are still a problem that we need to sort out.

The racing has taken place in a wide variety of conditions, the Bank Holiday Monday (Legerton Memorial) was wild with the GPs flying, however, David and Andrew's YW Dayboat looked superb and clearly handled the conditions very well winning by 2 seconds from Allan's GP. On the previous day we sailed the Green Man Cup in the

river, the beat up to M3 was very wet and the run back to 5 exciting with the Lasers doing a lot of swimming. Megan and Dan's RS400 was nearly airborne at the start with its kite up, however in the end Jilly and I (GP14) just won by 8 seconds. After both these races the smack race left-overs (curry and beer) were consumed very enthusiastically – thank you Gill. Tim (Laser) won the Shingle Head Cup after sailing very well on another windy day. The Gurton Memorial was won by Jon and Jenny (GP14) in a rare sunny moment (pictures in the club of this race). The summer points (with 17 competitors) was well won by Bill (Enterprise) often sailing with his young grandson Jacob. Ben (Kestrel) was second and Ron (Solo) third. The Sunday points series was also hotly contested, with Ron (Solo) coming out winner and the Autumn points was won by Tom Frost in his Kestrel – congratulations! We were all sorry when Round the Island race was cancelled, the correct decision, as we discovered sailing back to Tollesbury, the waves off the quarters were huge. Roger and Hazel made the best of it by taking over Dabchicks for a huge oyster feast.

Finally several club members travelled away to events with varied degrees of success. Club member John Williams and Julie Hoyle won the Hornet European championships at Teignmouth – congratulations. The Essex Chronicle pointed out that this was T.S.C.'s first National/ European champion. So you know who to ask if your boat goes slowly or you want a helm for the Ladies' race.

George Rogers
(01621) 869729



Rachel and Anna getting up speed in their Laser 4000

A QUESTION – to all members from Graham Elcock

To paint the container had become a priority, also the rusty iron to the gas tank cage and the front fence. A work party was considered, no-one wanted it done this year, and no, I don't know why the iron to the cage was not painted when it was erected. I managed to find someone to do the work for us, and he had to spend the first half day clearing away rubbish and cutting back the splendid growth of weeds and grasses that we seem to encourage, so he could actually get near enough to carry out the work. The rubbish, weeds, grass etc. you will notice are not confined to just the areas I have mentioned, they are everywhere. The Park is an overgrown rubbish tip. I know that earlier in the year the sea wall was strimmed, thanks to one of our members, Ben Frost, and a few stalwarts, and we thank them, but that was only part of the problem. The oil drums, tyres and old trailers are everywhere with weeds growing through. I decided to write something, telling you all you should be ashamed to allow such a thing to happen to our prime asset, but then thought, no, everyone can see this mess, no one seems keen to do anything about it and no one has complained to the committee, so why should I bother myself. I'll just assume you are all okay with it. Very sad. So instead of condemning and complaining, I will ask you all a question, and I really would appreciate



***Psyche and Rumpty (aka Judy and Erica)
fighting it out at the start of the Aunt Bessie's Cup***

an answer.

Some while ago a group of us visited Bradwell Quay. A couple of weeks before, they had held a work party weekend. They had painted, planted, strimmed and oiled their splendid decked balcony. Twenty six members had spent the weekend doing all this and only one of their members actually lives in Bradwell, all the others come from far and wide. They were all named and thanked in their newsletter.

A group of us also visited Wivenhoe. Their work parties happen more often, with a turnout of approximately forty members. Their work parties have produced a super purpose built boat shed with a workshop attached for the members to use when fitting out, and also they have produced their own facilities for lifting out the cruisers.

If we have one at all, our work parties muster the usual 6/7 same faces. We have to spend your money to get anything done these days. There are, of course, certain individuals who are constantly working for the benefit of others; apart from your Flag Officers, John Clarke and George Rogers spring to mind, and we have to thank them, but none of the above have the time to do the clearing up bit as well as everything else.

So, my question is – What gives the Bradwell and Wivenhoe members such a degree of club pride and spirit to achieve what they have, while the majority of our members do not even notice the state our premises are in, and probably would not do anything about it even if asked (Answers in an envelope, please, together with a five pound note so we can pay someone else to do your work for you).

I was given one reason – 'people have no pride in something that comes so cheap' – meaning our subs and boat parking fees. Could be, could be. I suppose one would look after an expensive car more so than a cheap old banger. One last dig. I would remind you all that the condition of our premises as of now reflects very badly on our club as a whole.

Yours with pride,
Graham

Ed's Bit

Space is becoming a bit short, so the entire race results for the season will be published in the next newsletter.

A reminder that the AGM will be held at the Club on Sunday 12th December. If any members have any issues they wish to be raised, please let the Secretary, Frances Cairey, have details in writing by 31st October (this can be left for her at the Club).

Geoff and Ali Smith had a dinghy and trailer stolen from the boat park on the weekend of 11th/12th September. If anyone saw anything suspicious, perhaps they could contact Geoff and Ali c/o the clubhouse. Also, be aware that there might be thieves about and security mark your property if possible.

Anyone with copy for the next newsletter, please leave it in the clubhouse, marked for my attention. Remember, it's your newsletter, so let's have those articles!

***Happy sailing,
Jilly Wilkinson***

TOLLESBURY SAILING CLUB LAYING-UP SUPPER

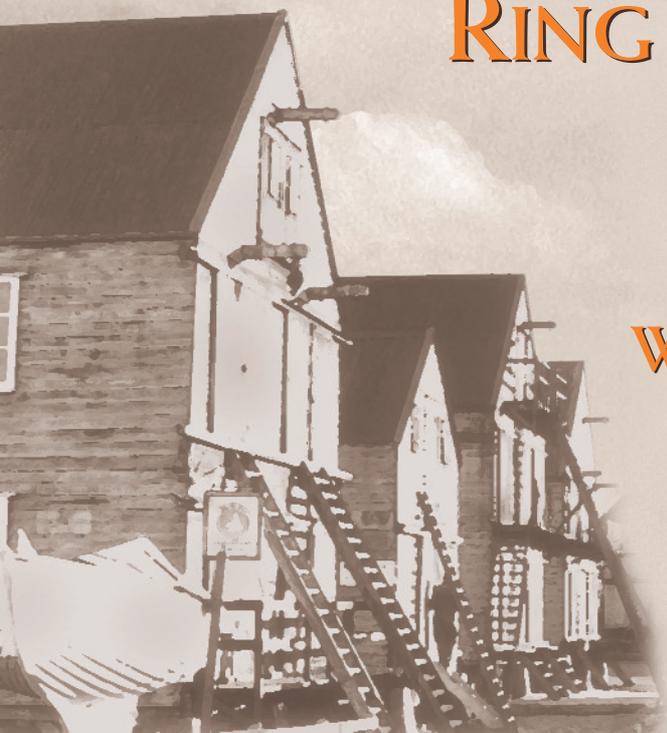
SATURDAY 13TH NOVEMBER

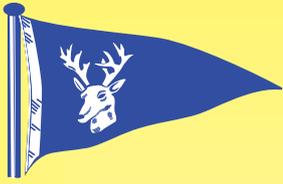
AT THE OFFICERS' CLUB
COLCHESTER GARRISON

FOR TICKETS & INFORMATION
RING GILL WILLSON ON
01621 868245

NON-MEMBERS AND GUESTS
WELCOME – MAKE UP A TABLE
DRESS: BLACK TIE

COACHES AVAILABLE FROM
THE SQUARE, TOLLESBURY





**Tollesbury
Sailing Club**



**R.N.L.I.
FUND RAISER**

**Saturday 16th October
8.00pm onwards**

**Buy your Christmas Cards
calendars, gifts etc.**

Food available

**Handover of donations
in memory of
IAN SINCLAIR
to RNLI**