

The Wagtail



December 2015



Autumn 2015 Edition

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Vice Commodore & Social

Rear Commodore

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Hon Membership Sec

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RYA Training

House

Health and Safety

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Greg Croydon

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Gail Ranford

David Bishop

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G Croydon Results
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A Vines Wagtale
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Vicki Rose
Mark Crowther
Don Recardo
Peter Riley

Editorial

AI Vines

Welcome to the Autumn 2015 Edition of the Redditch Sailing Club Wagtale magazine. Once again we have enjoyed a good summer with a very mild if windy autumn season, which has led to some exciting pictures.

The wind is both exciting and frustrating at Redditch, and one wonders if it was always like that? We have contributions from members from the very earliest years of the Redditch Sailing Club, so that you can compare the landscape then and now and be amazed.

We have another packed magazine for you with plenty of stories both of the dinghy and yachting kind - Enjoy.

Wishing you all a very merry Christmas & a Happy New Year.

A very warm welcome to our new members:

David Bishop

Thank you for extending a warm RSC welcome to our new 2015 members. Please continue to support the Junior and

Crewing members by offering opportunities where ever you can. I believe that it is very important that the established members of the Club, welcome the younger blood as well as the more experienced sailors who have also joined. Our sport can be enjoyed by a vast range of ages and abilities, but most of all it has to be fun!

Please welcome:

Junior Members: – Chloe Maybury & Mickey Marseglia; Mickey having completed his RYA Level 1 at Upton Warren and Chloe being a regular during the summer after joining on the Open Day.

Crewing Members: - Kath Smith & Sarah Duval, with Sarah having sailed in the not too distant past as a regular Merlin crew. Kath has crewed for a variety of people to gain experience.

Full Members: – Paul Bate as a novice with his son James Bate who already has his RYA Level 2, along with Mike Balenski who completed his RYA Level 1 at RSC in recent weeks.

Family Members: – Eddie & Caroline Lison sailing a Merlin, previously for many years members at Ragley, as were Chris & Diana Hurlston, both competitive Laser sailors.

The Wagtale

And finally, Jason Burford and his son Ethan, who we hope to see more of in 2016 when the weather improves and he doesn't have me to initiate him in the capsizing drill ...

Merry Christmas all.

Membership Renewal for 2016

Please note that the subscription renewal pack for 2016 will be slightly different to previous years. We will be asking Full Members to nominate any members of their family (spouse & children under 18) who they want to be included as active Club members.

This is in response to an HMRC clampdown on clubs abusing their status as Community Amateur Sports Clubs. We benefit from CASC status by receiving 80% off our Business Rates. In order to maintain this position, we need to demonstrate that more than 50% of our "members" participate in the sport 12 or more times in the year.

HMRC have stated that where Full Membership can be extended to all the family then they will include by default all members of the family in their base count of "members" including

babes-in-arms and spouses who only attend a few events a year - unless it is clear who should be included.

By taking this action we will ensure that the membership count and analysis will be relevant to our real activity. Any family members who aren't nominated can, of course, be signed in as guests as required (or upgraded to "members" during the year if they become active participants). Please read the Renewal Pack carefully when you receive it!

What's on?

Redditch Sailing Club - Forthcoming Events:

**Chinese New Year and
Race Night - 6th Feb -**
With Chinese food - £8.00 per ticket on sale from Boxing Day. Organised by Izzy and Andy .

Social Matters

Norma Jones

I would like to start with a very big thank you to Len for all the years that he has manned the bar.

The bar has been manned this year by some

excellent volunteers Elaine, Lyn, Roz and others for whose help is much appreciated.

Tuesday night suppers have again been enjoyed by lots of members and as ever we are all grateful to all the cooks who work so hard

We have had some enjoyable evenings from the skittles organised by Pete; a super Boules night run by Greg, with great food from Jane and Elaine. We also had a very successful games night run by Izzy and Andy which had great support, as did the fireworks 'Bar B Que' organised by Rob and Debbie with help from Ian & Gail.

Again Thanks to all who have helped.

During the year we have re-organised the kitchen cupboards and bar store and discarding all out of date or unnecessary items. We also have a new look clubhouse with refurbished chairs (thanks again to Debbie and her helpers) plus new window blinds.

Lets all look forward to a good 2016 starting with a Race night on 6th of February with Chinese food

The Wagtail Training Notes

Andy Beardshaw

The club organised the Spring and Autumn adult Level 1 and Level 2 courses as usual, however this year we were unable to run the Level 2 due to lack of students. This was disappointing, however we are hopeful that at least some will return this year.

On a positive note, we ran sessions for the Sea Cadets, a Redditch Scout group and Warwick School. In total almost 75 juniors were introduced to sailing and the report backs from the groups has been very positive. Encouraging juniors is something we have to do more of and I am sure that this initiative will gain at least a few new members. Seeing 22 juniors on the water at the same time was outstanding - see cover picture for some of the fleet.

To back up last years success, we already have a half term booking from Warwick school (and they are also returning in the summer), and a Worcestershire Cub Group.

Additionally we have Sea Cadets keen to sail more this year and an initial contact for another 3 scout groups.

5

2016 will also see us running First Aid and Start Racing courses so keep an eye on the calendar - if you'd like us to consider a course not listed, please let me know.



The Scouts having a training session



RSC Capsize Club for the Titanic Trophy

Mark Crowther

When on duty there is nothing quite like trying to right a boat that has its mast stuck in the mud, it is usually raining and windy. There you are trying to grab the boat while the rescue boat helm is shouting at you as they steer the wrong way, which leads to the dinghy helm shouting at you too as they sit quite happily on the centreboard. When the boat does eventually

right itself it has a habit of throwing water and bottom mud all over you. Because of this, starting in the New Year, we are introducing a 'voluntary' fee/contribution of 50p per capsized. Funds raised will be used for the upgrading of safety/rescue equipment.

Now for those of you who are regular capsizers, and a capsized already results in you having to buy a new burgee, there is the option of paying £5 per year to join the 'Capsize Club' which gives you unlimited rescues/capsizes per year.

The other point is what constitutes a capsized and what is a vigorous roll tack - if the end of the mast touches the water then it is a capsized.

Therefore from the New Year the following will happen:

- A board will go up in the Clubhouse with everyone's name on it.
- When you capsized you mark the number of capsizes that day against your name.
- There will be a box behind the bar for you to pay your voluntary 'fee'
- If you wish to purchase the 'Capsize Club' membership then you can buy this from the bar and they will give you a star to put against your

The Wagtail

name on the board.

- At the end of the year the person with the most capsizes will be awarded the 'Titanic Trophy'
-

Regalia

Alan Shirley

Available for sale:

Burgee - £6.00
RSC logo
Choice of base colours

Screen sticker – 10p
RSC logo – black on white background.

RSC 'Clobber' - All with RSC logo:

Cap	- £7.50
Ski hat	- £7.50
Polo shirt	- £9.50
Regatta fleece	- £21.00
Rugby shirt	- £22.00
Sweatshirt	- £12.00

House Committee report 2015

Ian Ranford

Another busy year for The Gentlemen's Working Group (GWG) and House Committee who look after your clubhouse and grounds.

Major projects for this year have been the replacement of the OOD's hut and front entrance door and frame, both in UPVC with double-glazing. This will improve security and cut down on maintenance.

In the spring, the GWG met to re-cover the pontoon using spare balcony decking. Work was also done to the wooden supports to give us a stable and safe platform for the crew manning the safety boats. A big thanks must go to Alan and Norma Jones for the purchase and installation of the new clubhouse blinds. Also thank you to Deb and Rob Eaves for re-upholstering the clubhouse chairs and to Alan Shirley for recovering the tables and fire escape step.

General maintenance to the club and grounds is always ongoing, but major scheduled works are carried out at the spring and autumn working parties. Once again both working parties were carried out in poor weather but this has not stopped the high number of members turning up to help, perhaps the refreshments and hot food supplied by Norma and Elaine have encouraged members to continue their support.

Extra emergency works had to be carried out by a few members who rallied round to repair and clean up after a number of break-ins. Luckily, we suffered only minor damage. Access for the intruders was through the fence hidden behind the mower store near to the rescue boat containers. Consequently we have removed the store. In a separate incident, one of the main entrance gates had almost been lifted off its hinges, so extra security to the hinges has now been put in place.

Most importantly, please keep the open area below the stairs free from clutter, as this could be a fire hazard.

Please be vigilant and be advised not to leave any tools or sailing equipment including clothing in the grounds or clubhouse.

Other work still to be completed will include painting the wooden frames to windows; staining the wooden facia; installation of the flag mast to the balcony and replacement of railings to the OOD's hut.

Once again thank you for your continued support for keeping our club house and grounds in such good order.

The Wagtail Blue Sails on the Water

The 2015 Enterprise Midland Double Chine Series

Steve Orme
Enterprise Fleet Captain
& Midland Area Chairman

On the 3rd October this year a small, but competitive, Enterprise fleet assembled at Redditch for the sixth event in a nine race series. With 3 home boats out, we were pleased to greet three visitors from both Midland and Sutton Sailing Clubs – these included the boats of Paul Young and Mike Cossey, strong supporters of the fleet at area level as well as being ever-present annual visitors to Redditch.

When it came to the racing I think it would be fair to say that the overcast sky and lack of wind made for conditions that were both difficult and frustrating.

With three races in total and the best two results to count, racing got underway just after 11.00am with Mike Cossey, crewed by Christine Barron, creeping away from the start with Greg and Gail in 'hot' pursuit; Ian and I held on

to third for a while but with the wind filling in from behind the next three boats were soon closely bunched. Greg and Gail did manage to get away from the pack and were ably assisted in their escape by Mike, who decided to hit a mark – Paul, crewed by Aimee Allsop, passed Ian and myself on the second lap and these positions were then held to the finish.

After a short break the second race started on a new course, and despite pressure from Greg and Gail, Mike and Christine managed to get ahead and then to hold on to the end; Paul held his nerve to finish third just ahead of Phil Harrison and Emma Coleman.

Lunch was then taken and consisted of a most excellent cottage pie (that goes without saying - as I made it myself?) and a very acceptable slab of trifle courtesy of Mr Sainsbury.

With the meeting wide open the third race was sailed on another new course, in the lightest wind of the day. Mike and Christine did, however, soon escape from the rest of the fleet to win this race with Greg and Gail in second place. There was, though, somewhat of a battle for third place which was only decided on the

last leg as Paul and Aimee crept ahead of both Ian and myself and Dave Bishop and Alan Shirley (sailing the club Ent); right at the death Dave and Alan edged ahead of Ian and myself to snatch fourth! (cue an outburst of 'exasperation' on mine and Ian's part).

Overall honours therefore went to Mike and Christine, with Greg and Gail in second place and Paul and Aimee in third.

During 2015 a total of 53 boats have participated in the series with the final event held at Rudyard Lake at the end of October; Mike Cossey has been crowned area champion with Paul Young second and Phil Harrison third.

2016 witnesses the 60th anniversary of the class and with a number of celebratory events planned around the country it would be great to see all those Enterprises languishing in the boat park spruced up a bit and back out on the water! The boat is well suited to waters like Redditch and in a decent breeze can provide a more than exhilarating ride.

If any of the newer members at the Club would like to give Enterprise sailing a go

The Wagtail
then just let me know and I'll get something sorted.

Bart's Bash 2015

Greg Croydon

The Bart's Bash fundraising race was held globally in 62 countries and 472 venues on Sunday 20th September. At last year's inaugural event an Official World Record was set for the largest sailing race in the world with 31,000 competitors. This year's winner benefitted from seriously strong winds in South Africa, allowing Alex Schonn to power his Nacra 22 catamaran around a course at about 6 times the average speed of Andy Beardshaw, who won the Redditch SC event! We had 22 boats racing on the day and close to £200 was raised for the charity. Greg Croydon was second with Ross Crawford third. Last year's Redditch winner, Dave Jackson, was the OOD.

Andy may have been 1st at Redditch but he was 5,051st out of 14,500 overall... Next year (on 18th September) we will have to hope that Arrow Valley is the only place in the world with any wind on the day. That way we could have a chance to get on the podium!

Bala Regatta

Andy Beardshaw

Another year and another long weekend of racing in North Wales!!

This year we had James in the Streaker, Paul & Vicky in the Vago, Colin & Hayden in the Merlin, Pete in the Aero 9, Mark in the Solution and Myself in the Phantom.

With limited entries, fast and slow handicaps raced together, so that left only Paul & Vicky in the asymmetric fleet.

With last years successes (Colin 1st fast handicap, Paul 2nd asymmetric) we were going to be up against it to repeat or get close.

The regatta was shared with the Flying Dutchman Nationals (only 3 entered!!) and a sizeable Supernova open, in addition to usual Lasers, Solos, Merlins, Scorpions, Mirrors etc

Saturday dawned somewhat windier than forecast and after a gentle drive over to the sailing club from the town (most arrived Friday night this year) we rigged in building wind conditions.

Race 1 and out on the start line, flat out and hang on were the order of the day. The race was going

well for most until Pete shattered his tiller extension by falling onto it and causing him to retire.

James was loving the increasingly wild conditions, the rest of us struggling to keep flat and not capsize too many times!!

Race 2, Pete 'splints' his tiller extension courtesy of a twig and some gaffer tap and is on the water. Everyone else is ready - I realise that the last capsize has cracked the tiller extension mount and can't repair in time.

Lunch followed by Race 3, we're all out again (my tiller is now 5cm shorter than before, Pete's 'split' is still holding) and the wind is easing a little. James still a demon racer and is well up in the fleet; Colin is also in touch with the leaders although wishing that Hayden was 3rd heavier!

Sunday much quieter - in fact nothing at all! OOD predictions spot on and we all head out for 2 races in very calm conditions.

Left, right or centre on the beats was critical and reading the conditions and the shifting gusts very challenging. Pete borrowed a Topper tiller extension and was back to full speed, with Colin and

The Wagtail

Hayden now in the zone and scoring well.

Monday is perfect, good f2 - f3 and fantastic racing conditions. We are now spread across the fleet and apart from Izzy 'making a hole' on the start line between the committee boat and myself – the face of the OOD was priceless as she cannoned off their transom, proved to be the most consistent conditions.

2 races now completed and all returned to shore in various states of exhaustion.

Prize giving was interesting (1 - 7 places in fast handicap, 1 - 2 in slow) meant RSC came away with nothing this year (James the closest, 3rd in slow handicap).

Thanks to all who sailed, and those that supported, for another fantastic weekend of socialising and racing.

Nautical Trivia – Ian Ranford

As the Crow Flies:

Crows are not sea birds and will head for land by the most direct route. When unsure of their position in coastal waters, ships would release a caged crow. The crow

9

would fly upwards until it spied land and then head straight for the shore, giving the vessel a navigational fix of land. The best place to follow the crow's progress was from a platform near the top of the mast called The Crow's Nest.

Hunky Dory

If everything is Hunky Dory you know there is nothing to worry about, although you might not realise exactly where the saying comes from. Sailors were certainly carefree when they visited a street in Yokohama, Japan called Hunky Dory. This street was at the heart of the city's red light district and where every seaman's pleasure was catered for.

Round the Island Race

Every summer the waters of The Solent are virtually obscured for one day by hundreds of yachts that compete in a race around the Isle of Wight. First sailed in 1931, the competitors still compete for the GOLD ROMAN BOWL, the legendary trophy presented by the races founder Cyril Windeler. Little did he realise what he was starting. Today, there are thousands of yachts, from maxi-yachts to the smallest off shore boats and from speedy multi hulls to sedate old timers. With Admiral's Cuppers

and crew alongside families having fun, the race is a multitude of races within a race. The start line is nautical chaos as the weekend cruisers get in the way of the hardcore racers and with nimble sport's boats flying past. Once beyond the rocks and wrecks of The Needles, things can calm down a little, though if the tide is not kind and the wind not strong, the stragglers may find themselves still at sea whilst the fastest crews are snug in the beer tent. (Sailing Companion - Miles Kendall)

Sea Sickness

The dreaded Mal de Mer can strike even the hardest yachtmen. Even one of our great skippers Tracy Edwards, has problems for the first 36 hours of her voyage, feeding the fish before she finds her sea legs. There are numerous cures, some work, some don't! Ginger biscuits are meant to help, as is scanning the horizon. There are numerous tablets you can take, but one of the main remedies is to take the Helm and stay concentrated. If all else fails, stay on shore and sit under a tree - Never fails!

Limerick

There was a young sailor named Bates,
Who danced the Fandango on skates.

The Wagtail

He fell on his cutlass,
Which rendered him
nutless
And practically useless on
dates!!

Ten Tips to Improve Your Racing

Greg Croydon

Apologies to our more senior members but we have suggested these tips previously.

1. Get to the start on time and try to have the boat rigged properly.
2. Make a good start – this will get you going with the right attitude for the whole race.
3. Don't argue with your crew / helm – or get uptight about your "bad luck".
4. Try to anticipate what the other boats are going to do and where they will be in 30 seconds time.
5. Watch how other boats are setting their sails and learn from them.
6. Try to see where the wind is on the water and how it is affecting other boats.
7. Don't just follow other boats if you want to get past them.
8. Plan your mark rounding ahead – where are the other boats, will you be

10

- tacking or gybing at the mark, how should your sails be set for the next leg?
9. Try not to sail too close to other boats – it will slow you down and limit your options.
 10. Never give up – sailing at Redditch is all about making the most of the wind when you have it. The winners are those who react fastest to the changing conditions.

Alternative tips: (They seem to help some people):

11. Mutter quietly to yourself all the way around the course.
12. Don't use your own stop-watch – distract other boats by asking for the time.
13. Make sure you arrive last at the windward mark then overtake everyone as the wind fills in from astern (this really upsets the opposition).
14. Keep so still in your boat that people worry if you have passed out.
15. See how many times you can hit the marks (at least this gives you an excuse).
16. Even better – set yourself a challenge to hook the mark with your main sheet and see how long you can stay upright whilst attached to the mark.

17. Pick the most exciting place to capsize – either in front of the balcony or by a busy mark.
18. Throw jibsticks, bailers, sponges, hats etc. out of the boat to distract the opposition or give the safety crew something to do.
19. If you find yourself with your own private wind (I mean filling your sails) make sure everyone knows that this is down to your technical ability and nothing to do with luck.
20. If things go badly make sure that you have a list of excuses as long as your arm.
21. As a last resort stand up and sing a song to the opposition. This works every time!

The Wagtail

been noted that OODs have been using their common sense and use different ways of making this adjustment depending on the circumstances. Rather than being prescriptive, and forcing a single method on everyone, the Sailing Committee is happy for common sense to prevail!

Here are a couple of methods that are being used and make sense...

1. If the finish line is close-ish to the start line, it is simple enough to divide a lapped boat's corrected time by the number of laps it has completed and multiply by the number of laps completed by the leader.

2. If the finish line isn't close to the start line, then the OOD can estimate the proportion of a lap between the start and finish and count the first "lap" (i.e. the first time a boat passes through the finish line) as that proportion of a lap. For example, if the OOD estimates that first "lap" is 2/3rds of a full lap, and the leader is finished having passed through the finish line say 5 times, the leader's distance is 4.67 laps and a lapped boat will have completed 3.67 laps. The portion of a lap can be estimated by timing a leading boat from the start

Tips for finishing Handicap Races

The Sailing Committee

Grand Prix Finishes:

As you are aware, for the last few years we have operated a "Grand Prix" finish for boats that have been lapped during a Handicap Race in order to prevent slower boats and beginners being put off by very long races. It is then necessary to adjust the corrected time for these boats so that the results can be calculated. It has

11

to the finish and dividing by the boat's full lap time.

3. Another way is to make a note of the approximate lap time for the slower boats (i.e. the boats which are most likely to be lapped) and add this time to their final elapsed time to make the correction.

General Finishing Tips:

1. If the OOD chooses to finish the race at a place other than in front of the OOD's hut, this should be done either using a safety boat moored by a mark, or using transits set up on the bank closest to the finish area. For example, finishing boats between the islands when heading from the Council End to the Hospital End, should be done with transits on the far bank, rather than on the club bank, to avoid confusion regarding where the finish actually is. In any case, it makes sense for the duty crew to be advising all boats if the finish isn't in an obvious place.

2. If the course takes boats through the finish line in both directions (e.g. passing from the Council End to the Club Mark then back towards the Council End) then plan to finish boats as they pass through the line the first time (or on rounding the mark), rather than on their

return. A number of times people have thought they had finished because they heard a toot for an earlier boat passing back through the line. It may seem obvious to people on the balcony, but it isn't always as clear to those concentrating on their own race!

A Windy Day in December Photos – David Day



Ben showing how to do it!



Chris having a real blast



But...there is no gain...



...without pain (or a soaking)

The Wagtail



Peter Gale nearly in control



Phoar! That was close...Chris and Mark find a novel way to slow down.



..."Are you ok chaps?"...



..."Just a bit damp thanks!"...



"Here let me give you a hand"



..."Ah no! – had ya fooled!"...



Going...



going...



Gone! – and Paul is such a gentleman to let the ladies wash first!



Vicki – being hung out to dry!



Margot has it all under control



...before a cheeky little capsise in the distance!

Up The Creek

A flashback to the late '70s / early '80s.

How things have changed – scenery, boats, people....look how few trees there are!



1979 Redditch Advertiser – RSC one of the largest Miracle fleet, Alan Jones sailing an International 14



1979 Shakespeare Bank – no trees



1979 Shakespeare Bank – check out the view through to factory units.



The Enterprise and the Merlin - two other popular classes - running downwind.

No trees on the island



1979 – Alan Jones



Charles Owen



1979 Alan Jones



Paul Hillman



1980 lake view



1980 Club house view – look how little vegetation

'Foyle' Dehler 36

Greg Croydon

First season on my big boat!



'Foyle'

Towards the end of 2014 and after a number of months of searching, I eventually found the right boat to ease me into my retirement! I chose a nine year old Dehler 36 ft cruiser / racer - with a good compromise of "go faster" bits, comfort, good looks and short-handed sailing ability. She had been kept on the Hamble in excellent condition by her original owners.

Having spent quite enough on all the bits and bobs you need such as a tender, safety gear, bottle opener etc, the task was to sail her to Portland for the winter accompanied by Dave Jackson, Ian Ranford and my son, Matt. After a swift and enjoyable passage she was hauled out and made ready for fresh anti-fouling and winterisation. By the Spring, she was in her new home in Weymouth

The Wagtail

Marina and ready for the season.



Ready for the season

Sue and I enjoyed a number of day sails and a long weekend in Poole with Ian and Gail during the first half of the season.



Fair winds in Weymouth



Enoying Poole Harbour

In July I entered the Weymouth Regatta crewed by Andy Beardshaw, Dave Jackson, Chris Hurlston and Mark Crowther. I managed to pick up a 720 penalty right at the start of the first race by barging in and threatening to sink the Committee Boat (I am sure that my Enterprise would have fitted in that

14

gap!). The remainder of the racing on the Friday was dominated by strong wind and torrential rain! At least Saturday's weather was drier - but Sunday's sport was blown off by a near gale. We finished around 10th overall but had hoped to do better. I suspect that our cruising sails were over twice the average age of most other boats' racing sails and it was the first time we had flown the asymmetric spinnaker (and the hull was dirty, and the boat had never been raced before and, and.....!). However, we learned a great deal and had a lot of fun in wind gusting up to 28 knots (and the BBQ was excellent!).



Preparing for the tack

In August Foyle took us to Brittany for a week accompanied by Phil Farlimoe's Oceanis 47, 'Heaven 47'. I was joined by Matt, Mike Squirrell, Paul Ridgeway (ex RSC member) with a university friend called Rob. Phil and his son Jon had Dave and Mark on board. We made a twenty hour crossing in glorious conditions to Lézardrieux and met up

with Heaven 47 there. We also visited Tréguier and St Cast before stopping off in Guernsey for a couple of nights on our way back. We sped back from there to Weymouth in eleven hours, again in great sailing conditions. It was a very enjoyable trip with plenty of eating and drinking!



Leaving Portland Bill astern



St Cast in the sun



Matt in Lézardrieux estuary



The skipper relaxing off Ryde

The Wagtail

Foyle's Autumn outing in mid October was a week back in the Solent - visiting Newton Creek, Gosport, Cowes and Poole with my sister and her husband plus a couple of old friends. We met up with Rob Eaves in his yacht, "Naughty but Nice", over the weekend and enjoyed a night out in Cowes with them. We were lucky with the weather and I sailed in shirt sleeves for the first two days. Just when we needed it the wind swung around to the North East to help us home!



Cocktail time in Cowes

I have logged around 1,000 nautical miles this year and hope to exceed that in 2016. Planning for next year starts shortly! I am very happy with my choice of yacht. She is swift and elegant, not too big for short-handed sailing but a comfortable size for cruising.

15 **Streaker!**

Ross Crawford

The Comet is a great little boat - so why a Streaker?

Well, a change is as good as a rest they say and sailing something different has got to be good, a new challenge, a new test, a new opportunity to dip into the waters of the Arrow Valley Lake.

The debate went something this: Solo? Streaker? Solo? Streaker? Solution? - Not the answer....Miracle? - Unlikely.

In the end it boiled down to this - a boat as light (in fact lighter) than a Comet and James's superb salesmanship.

"The acceleration is amazing - you'll really fly - just a puff of wind and it's off....".....Sold!

Our first acquaintance, when it was still a P&B demo boat, had ended with a T-bone job on Ian's Solo and a capsize, so I was very much hoping that November 22 would mark a new dawn for the two of us. You know what, it wasn't too bad; okay, the first tack had nearly ended with me flying overboard (the Comet has natty handles to push off when tacking, alas, the

Streaker doesn't so my hand slipped off the deck, into the water, tipping backwards, legs in the air, and only just saved from an early bath by clutching onto the mainsheet). That drama over and now some familiar problems: - a knotted mainsheet at the block, all too familiar from Laser days, though thankfully not as bad. That block didn't prove too comfortable to sit on either! Couldn't remember which bit of string did what, put my foot through them anyway and got it stuck. Is that the rudder come up? Luckily the boat soldiered on while I stumbled around, surprisingly well mannered (although I may regret saying that).

One of the 'issues' of the Streaker - that the shrouds stop the boom from going out too far - reared up early on, but that shouldn't be a problem - in a Comet in a breeze gybes are only undertaken when absolutely necessity - so I was looking forward to doing some practice in something a tad more stable.

And on the wind? What a delight to pull on the downhaul when beating and see the sail change shape as if by magic and yes, pick up too.

The Wagtale

Still not sure what to do when drifting - a Comet can be sailed, with some success, on its ear, but the Streaker looks like it should be sailed more upright, and dipping two chines in the water might be a chine too much.....

Otherwise, well, it's a learning curve, and I'm sure the two of us will get along fine.

To do list:

- 1) Get the mainsheet organised.
- 2) Find out what the different coloured bits of string do.
- 3) That raking daggerboard - what's all that about?
- 4) Sail, sail, sail.
- 5) Have fun.

'Woody the sieve' aka 'Arctic Roll'.

Alastair Vines

The many lives of a wooden Freddie (Firefly)

To quote the National Firefly Association registrar ..."and if the Firefly in the garage has the hull number 3070, then from the records she seems to have the sail number F3040 - another kit, collected by a Mr Lockyer in April 1965.

16

Sadly no address recorded for the purchaser, and even more sadly, no trace of her in the RYA or NFA records either"....

When I was still in short trousers this Firefly was an unfinished, unpainted wooden boat kit in my Dad's barn down near Ashford in Kent. I have no idea who Mr Lockyer was or how Dad came to have it in his possession, but 50 years later this same boat would be found 'resting' in Paul Fuller's garage doing sterling duty as a...shelf!

That boat had always been in Dad's barn – I don't remember it arriving – it was just there! Dad built boats as a hobby – Fireflys, before moving onto Albacores, Mirrors and others . It seems this one got left behind as the world moved on to newer things.

I had been amongst racing dinghies since 'knee high to a grass hopper', and already experienced as a (rather small) crew in Fireflys, early Albacore, Heron, and single-handed in my mothers ageing OK. In 1969 Dad set about building me a Mirror Dinghy #15159 in our conservatory (much to my mother's consternation) When I was just eleven years old the 'Kipper Box', as it was rather unkindly

named (by a Shearwater cat sailing Cornish fisherman) became my first boat.

Dad and I raced our separate boats often and hard all the year round; in summer at Herne Bay on the north coast of Kent and in winter on Westbere lakes at Sturry near Canterbury. The Mirror went well and I enjoyed the learning curve, eventually pushing through to the front of the handicap fleet results. "Kipper Box" died spectacularly in a January storm – one of those days when racing is called off due to high winds, but the (fool)hardy go out for a 'jolly' to show off their planing and swimming skills! My confidence had grown to the point where I too wanted to go for a 'jolly' and take my right of passage to dinghy sailor maturity – or at least give the rescue boat crew something to do! This was in the days before wet suits had been invented, so wearing just woolly jumpers and shorts (er! nothing much has changed then) and mildly out of control, flat out on a broad reach with full spinnaker flying, we ran out of sea room, ditching the thing in the drink before collecting the bank in a potential shower of match wood. The ensuing tangle of sails and general

The Wagtail

chaos culminated in the bow tank splitting along the keel band almost back to the centre-board case. She pretty much sank there and then, so Dad sawed her in half and 'Kipper Box' became a goat shed on the farm thereafter.

The redundant Firefly was brought out of storage from the depths of the barn where it had lain for nearly ten years and we spent the remainder of the winter of 1973/4 varnishing, painting and fitting out. She looked positively resplendent in the Vines family colours of I.P. Red 040 with wooden deck and cockpit. Dad was a scratch builder, making everything himself – rudder blade, stock, tiller and extension – all fashioned from beneath a black donkey jacket, a single 100 watt bulb, in a cold damp barn amid the gentle perfume of Esso Blue paraffin if ever there was glue or paint to be made go off.

Dad used to take the National Geographic magazine, as he had a thing about forests (he was a Forestry Commission forester) and the Arctic Circle. He called his boats Arctic this or that - the Albacore was Arctic Stream, and the Firefly was named Arctic Roll – a reflection of its tippiness perhaps. She had Mk2

decks with lovely dark and light wood striped laminated side decks, buoyancy bags fore and aft, side tanks, a old fashioned rotating wooden topped mast with spreaders and diamond wires, heavy steel centerboard and original Ratsey and Lapthorn sails. A dinghy designed in the mid '40s, and boat of choice for the 1948 Olympics, the Firefly was one of the more successful designs of its time with over 3000 boats registered by the mid 1960s. Ours was 1965 and we bought new sails - number F3039.

By now I was 16 years old and it is with some regret that I reflect on the fact that I was not able to match the success in the Firefly that I enjoyed with the Mirror. Arctic Roll was quite tippy so I got wet frequently and ruined a few of those old fashioned wooden-top masts. I never quite got to grips with how to sail her quickly and grew tired of retiring after a swim owing to the boat becoming waterlogged.

My parents soon separated and divorced. Dad moved to Yorkshire, and I to college in Chelmsford, but not yet able to drive. Moving the boat around became exceedingly difficult. Sailing took a natural decline and Arctic Roll

became parked up for 3 years or so.



1974 christening 'Arctic Roll'
F3039.

In 1979 still in Kent but with college out of the way and now with job and car, we enjoyed a few years sailing out of Whitstable Yacht Club. Whitstable is a well known club just along the coast from my previous Kent club at Herne Bay. In those days Whitstable was a rather rundown seaside town with a struggling fishing harbor and a staggering oyster industry. These days it has picked up becoming very fashionable and full of DFLs (Down From Londons).

By 1983 I was heading up to the Midlands to a job in the car industry and soon joined Midland Sailing Club in Birmingham. Importantly there were

The Wagtail

other Fireflys to sail against, but try as I might my racing results continued in the shade. I was thrilled to participate in the Inland Nationals, but remained frustrated by middle order finishes. More swimming, another broken mast, lost glasses and a centreboard case that came detached from the thwart were included some of my adventures in the big City.



1986 'Arctic Roll' racing at Midland Sailing Club



I bought a house in Redditch in '84 and discovered Redditch Sailing Club. My memory

is now fading, but I most likely joined RSC a few years after when I tired of the journey up to the centre of Birmingham. I don't remember any Fireflys at Redditch in those days (although it is almost certain there were some), but I could at least walk to the club from my house.

I sailed on and off at RSC, in between the distractions of classic car restoration and girlfriends until the mid '90s, before finally committing myself to family life, moving house and getting properly stuck into classic car rallying. I don't remember the date or the circumstances, but after more than 20 years of ownership poor Arctic Roll was becoming seriously neglected and had to go.

The late John Lavin became the second owner, and spent some time fixing her up, mending leaky buoyancy tanks and repairing rotten wood sections, before giving her a good varnish and re-paint in bright yellow. He named her Woody, but sadly I understand he was taken from us before having the chance to sail her.

Woody (eventually nicknamed the 'Sieve') found her way to Paul Fuller who continued to race her hard and fast.

Paul mastered the way to make this boat go quickly and enjoyed considerable success in her. At long last he had cracked whatever it was that was holding her back (me, most likely) although she leaked terribly, most likely having never recovered from the floppy centerboard case episode at MSC.



Paul Fuller with 'Woody'

Paul drove 'Woody' hard for 15 years or more before the boat's aspiration to become a submarine necessitated serious repair. The glues and joints along the keel band for the hull planking had deteriorated badly and nothing short of a major re-build was going to fix it. Paul had become very fond of 'Woody' and planned to fix her up. A short spell for repairs in his garage became several years, before ultimately becoming a rather exotic shelf. A new boat arrived and Woody's permanent incarceration to the garage was complete. Paul's wife threatened that its next assignment would be as a coffin within which to bury him when the time came.

The Wagtail



Hull planking had come adrift from the keel band requiring surgery. Note original red paint

Back in the Vines household around 2013 we thought that it would be a good idea to start sailing again in order to teach our 9 year old daughter to sail. I enquired at Redditch Sailing Club in vain hope that the old boat might still be a survivor. There were Fireflys at the club, but all were glass fibre. The possibility of an old wooden boat residing in a member's garage was mooted, but the likelihood of it being my boat felt remote in the extreme. I made a few calls but they came to nought, and anyway I had another nearly new Firefly in sight and was keen to close the deal before I lost the opportunity. So I went out and bought a beautiful 3 month old ex 2013 Dinghy Show Rondar/Thresher composite boat with glass hull and wooden decks in a very attractive tiger stripe Sapelle wood. This was the 'business'! – a MK4 deck design that banished terminal capsizes, and the boat

19

seemed to go OK too.



'Threshdar' – Rondar / Thresher composite Freddy – Ex 2013 Dinghy Show boat

I re-joined RSC and before long was introduced to Paul Fuller. We talked together about the wooden boat in his garage – his description made it possible for me to believe that it might indeed be my old boat. Arrangements were made and a few weeks later I went round to have a look.

The boat was well buried with quite a few things to move in order to get to see it. At last we could see enough. The aluminium knees I fitted to the centre-board case when it came adrift were still present, the hull number 3070 could clearly be seen, the laminated side decks, and jib sheet tracks – here the boat that Dad built – and 50 years on.



'Woody the shelf' as found in Paul's garage



Exhumed – Crickey! – It really is my old boat!



Cheerio Paul – Hello Al

Now I had a dilemma - got new boat and now found the old one I owned for 25 years. What should I do?

Buy it back of course!

With the deal done I spoke to Tony Thresher in Oxford who had built the new boat and asked him if he could recover 'Woody' to an as new state so that 'Arctic Roll' could sail again. I was very pleased with the way 'Threshdar' was performing and so with the feeling of 'unfinished business' in Arctic Roll I requested

The Wagtail

Tony to fix her up to be 'properly competitive'!

She was gutted out completely to a bare hull and transom. The refit converted her to a MK4 deck design so that in heavy weather we could cope with a swim and then quickly carry on racing after. Beautiful Sapelle wooden decking, high sided tanks and Sapelle floor panels were added, with new foils, rig and sails.



Gutted – Rotten wood under the old centre-board case.



Original 1965 hull – but everything else new.



All decked out! A horizontally planked 1965 hull



Beautiful MK4 deck layout eliminates terminal capsizes.

In the Spring of this year “Arctic Roll” was ready for collection. Red once more in the family tradition, it was an absolute joy to sail her again. Whilst I have not been able to sail very regularly this year, I can feel that this boat will go well, especially up the beat in a stiff breeze. Sadly ‘Threshdar’ had to go to help me pay for the rebuild, but then there are only so many Fireflys you can sail at one time!



‘Arctic Roll’ returns to RSC

I was extremely pleased and proud that Paul was soon on hand to view the transformation of his old boat “Woody”.



Paul standing with his boat of c.15 years – now fully restored and here sporting its original 1974 Ratsey sails.

There is a slight twist in the tale. The NFA say that the sail number F3039 was issued in the 1960s to a Firefly living happily in Wales. So how was it that we bought sails with that number on in 1974 when we had finally completed the new build of the boat?

The NFA historian and record keeper Peter Lanham identified that the hull number 3070 should carry the sail number F3040 which had been so far unclaimed.

The manufacturer’s (Fairey Marine) brass plate that should be present on the transom would have answered many of these questions – it is unfortunately missing today and I most likely lost it during a re-varnishing activity years ago. I do remember it being there, but I don’t remember any concern that the sail

The Wagtail

number inscribed on it was different to that on the sails. Was I too young to worry about it? Did my Dad have a lapse of concentration when he ordered the sails through domestic strife? I will never know.

So 50 years on the National Firefly Association and I are settled on 3040. Long live ‘Arctic Roll’ or ‘Woody the Sieve’ depending on where you stand!

‘Nauti but Nice’

Robert Eaves

January 2012 we had just returned from a fantastic new year in Cowes on ‘The Other Woman’, where we decided that if we were to get a bigger boat, now was the time to do it. Later in January we had a trip to North Wales to view a couple of boats but we found that going from a new small boat to a larger older boat was a bit of an anti climax. Both were well used and some 30 years old with lots of work to get them to be how we would like. We came away a little dismayed and then one evening while browsing the dreaded eBay a project was found.



The following morning I made a phone call to find that the said project was only 1/2 mile away from home we paid a visit and ended up buying her.

We arranged for friend to tow her to the factory where she spent the next 3 years. The boat we had purchased was a 27 foot bilge keeled sailing cruiser. The glass-fibre shell had been laid up in 1981 and stored in a barn for 30 years. The previous owner had only managed to cut the holes for the windows so a major task was now on my hands.

The next three years saw a complete fit out to how we wanted the boat to be with all new fittings.



The beginning of 2015 saw a mad race to get her into a state where we could get her floated and then to finish off at our leisure. In April 2015 we named here 'Nauti but Nice', had all the relevant surveys done and booked the transport for 7th May. 'Nauti but Nice' was loaded on to the low loader on a Thursday night and we said our farewells as she began her journey down to the Hamble.

The following morning we were up bright and early so we could drive down to meet the low loader at Sutton Scotney services. The driver could then follow us to her berth at Deacons marina. The marina staff were great when we arrived, getting 'Nauti but Nice' off her trailer on which she had spent the previous 30 years.



She was launched later in the afternoon and placed

The Wagtail

in her new home. Since May we have only missed 4 weekends from going down and now most jobs are complete. She sails like a dream and we are looking forward to actually sailing next year and not working.



'Naughty but Nice'

Voyage to the Isle of Wight and back, twice)

Richard Irwin

Boating with Bromsgrove Boaters (October 16-18)

When I saw a place available to sail with Bromsgrove Boaters I felt a strong urge. Pat Lloyd seduced me with tales of adventurous sailing and crewing with Bromsgrove Boaters. I joined the end of season voyage on a Beneteau Oceanis 37

(bateau) for a weekend out of Hamble in the Solent. Pat introduce me to the skipper Jane and together with the Mate Alan we sat around Jane's dining table, voyage planning.

It's all in the planning. Jane and Alan clearly knew this. Every meal was discussed with some detail - Thursday evening in the pub; Friday evening on board (a specialty from Pat); Saturday evening dine out and Sunday lunch on board before departing for home. Special diets and health also considered; showers available at all the overnight berths; bring your own booze; share mutual expenses; hire oilies from the charterers etc.

The boat had 3 cabins, 8 berths, galley and diner (saloon), heads, shower, engine, television, mast, sails, life-raft and navigation toys.

What to pack? Would I need blazer and flannels for meals ashore? Apparently not!

Now my mind was free to join in with talk about weather, tides, tidal flow,

departures, courses, set and drift, channels, buoys, compasses and the depth of water under the keel (or the potential lack of which seemed to be a primary concern).

Thursday came, I put dust sheets over the furniture and cancelled the milk. At 12:00 I drove with Pat and Gary to the Hamble boat yard run by Fairview Sailing who were to charter us (3 Bromsgrove Boats) their Beneteau Oceanis 37's for our sailing fun on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Gary, who skippered another boat, filled the car with 3 huge boxes of food and water for his crew.



The boats we sailed

On arrival we met with the other Boaters and took our kit to the boats on trollies. I hired oilies and wellies, followed by 'boat handover', stowing food brought by our skipper and Pat. The boat had a freezer, fridge and many, many, lockers and

The Wagtail

cupboards along the sides and under the benches.

Next, safety talk, tides, calibrate the echo sounder and walk to the town centre for a meal in The Victory - schoolboy memories of 'Howards Way' and Kate O'Mara.

The 8 berth boat had three cabins. I was told I could not just pick and choose where I slept. We put our names in a sou'wester...joking! I was allocated a berth in the saloon with my feet under the chart table. Not at all as uncomfortable as it sounds. The skipper on the other side of the dining table. Two ladies (Pat and Alison) in the forepeak, and the two 6 footers (Alan and Ralph - plenty of headroom in this craft) in cabins each side aft. The heating was nice but too noisy to let it run through the night.

Thursday morning we had breakfast early and sailed (motored off the berth and down the channel) at about 08:30 to make the best of the low water slack. Leaving the Hamble we turned left (to port. Ed), put the sails up and sailed west for Bembridge (IoW). Plenty of sailing,

23

steering, watching the scenery, tea and biscuits.

At the entrance to the channel up to Bembridge, we took in the sails, put the engine on and circled the tide gauge. High water was still 30 mins away but by now there was enough water to cross the bar at the entrance. The channel was wiggly and shallow at the edges. Just before we got to the visitors jetty a crab with a big claw grabbed the keel. By carefully increasing the revs, the skipper eased the vessel into deeper water away from the 'crab' and onward toward the jetty.

To cut a long story short, we came alongside and sent one man ashore with a head line and stern line that were a bit longer than planned. The wind was blowing briskly so it was difficult for him to pull her alongside. By 'stoppering' the warps and winching furiously, we inched in alongside.

We had a magnificent lunch on the berth, washed down with tea, cake. Following the washing up we set off again. After motoring out of the wiggly channel we

set sail and tacked off towards Portsmouth. Lots of shipping, forts, hovercraft, ferries and fast cats.



Every meal was like this!

At the entrance to Portsmouth we sneaked in amongst the busyness of it all just outside of the LHS of the channel entrance. To the right we passed the hover port, forts, historic dockyard (HMS Warrior and Victory), the Spinnaker Tower, Ferry docks, Naval Dockyard and many more sights.

Here there are two channels, one leading to Fareham and the one we took to Port Solent. On our arrival the lights at the lock gates turned green and we went alongside inside the lock. This very quickly filled and we slipped into the quiet pool inside and berthed

The access number to the luxury hot showers was 7829#, but that has most

The Wagtail

likely changed by now to get all cleaned up for Pat's lovely Lasagne. There may have been enough for the other boat's crews too but I am glad we kept it for ourselves.

The next day, there being no urgent tidal reasons, we got up late and left after a leisurely full English breakfast. Skipper deftly manoeuvred us into the lock with four other boats and we held the boat alongside by the easily grab-able green tails provided.

Down the channel (plenty of steering practice by the way, both under power and sail) and out through the busy Portsmouth entrance we started sailing down wind for Cowes, anchoring in Osbourne Bay for lunch.

Epicurus suggests that to lead a happy life we are to eat well and share our meals in good company. I think he was right. This contentedness prevailed with some crew members, who enjoying the gentle motion, I think, fell into some afternoon naps!

We gave way to the big red fast cat as it left the Cowes channel and found

our berth almost hidden, behind two other boats. More fun with fenders. An hour later we were hemmed in by another Bromsgrove Boat (rafted alongside) and two other boats astern.

Good showers ashore, Fish and Chips on board and then to the pub.

Next day after breakfast, the 'piggy in the middle' astern of us departed followed by the rafted Bromsgrove Boater.

Pushing against the forward back-spring, the stern swung out and skipper took us stern first through the available gap. We refuelled, gave some more space to that pesky fast red cat again and headed out.



Sailing

As soon as we cleared the channel out of Cowes we set the sails and started beating towards Hamble. Arriving off the Hamble river entrance in good

time we practiced RYA 'crash tacks' and 'man overboard' manoeuvres. There were no volunteers, so a weighted fender was used instead.

The slack water at the top of the tide was used to have our last round of 'Fun with Fenders', squeezing the boat into what looked like the last available spot, more suited to a sailing dinghy.

Then we had to say our goodbyes and to the vessel which had been our home for the last 3 months I mean 'nights', taken us to 4 ports, 1 anchorage and numerous meals, tea breaks and nibbles.

Pictures of the Beneteau Oceanis 37 are on this link.

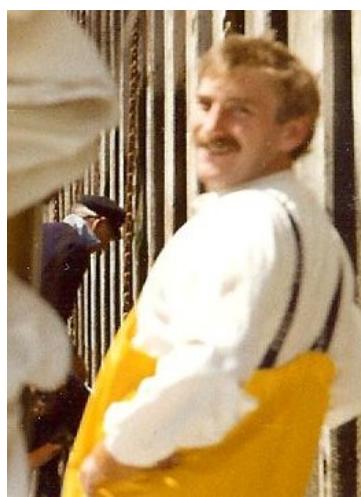
<http://www.fairviewsailing.co.uk/Bareboat-Charter/215-/Oceanis-37>

The Wagtail East Coast Sea Adventures.

Graham Timmins

This article is only one of many that could appear in subsequent issues of the club's magazine. They will generally describe the early sea sailing adventures of four sailors and a small yacht by the name of 'Dylan'.

Those intrepid sailors were:



Richard Little.

A member of RSC for many years and an ex Commodore.



Tony Howlett.

Known as Tod, also member of RSC for many years who pops into the club occasionally now.



Me - Graham Timmins.

I have been a member at RSC since 1980 and Commodore twice.



Chris Evans

Who is my brother-in-law and not the DJ. He was the owner and skipper of Dylan.

'Dylan' was a Leisure 22. She was well-built and sturdy with bilge keels and four berths for sleeping. She was very small but comfortable below.

As far as electronics were concerned, they weren't installed straight away. She only had a VHF radio, an echo sounder, a trailing log to measure the speed, and a hand held piece of equipment which was used for position fixing. It identified the electronic

signals given off in turn by a group of lighthouses so that position bearing lines could be drawn on the chart. The engine was a 6 horse power Johnson long shaft outboard which was mounted on a bracket attached to the transom.



'Dylan'

The sailing scene begun when with our families we spent camping holidays in Tenby during the late 1970's. Chris would bring along a small car-topable sailing dinghy which we sailed off South Beach each summer. This continued for around three to four years. The dinghy's name was Zebedee. On the foredeck was a picture of Zebedee from the television's Magic Roundabout series. The make of the dinghy was a Swallow. We were told that this type of dinghy was the forerunner to the Topper and Laser type dinghies. From these

The Wagtail

meagre beginnings Richard, Tod and Graham joined RSC and bought and raced their own dinghies. Chris, who moved to London, was on the lookout for a small sailing cruiser to fulfill his ambition to sail the seas far and wide. In the early 1980's Chris bought a Leisure 22 and in keeping with the Magic Roundabout theme named her Dylan.

After realising that neither Chris nor any of us lads knew anything about sea sailing it was decided that we would learn enough to make sailing Dylan safe before we took along our wives and young children. As you can imagine this took a number of years.... So Chris was the skipper and the rest of us were crew.

There are many tales I can tell which are absolutely true. I hope you enjoy them....

First Time Foreign Cruise.

I am not sure in which year the following adventure took place but we would have already been sea sailing for a couple of years beforehand.

The name of the cruise was 'First Time Foreign'. It was organised in conjunction with the Yachting World magazine

and Bernard Hayman their former editor. Chris attended a seminar about the trip in London where he met other skippers who would be taking their yachts across the channel for the first time. For safety the cruise was to take place in the company of those other yachts. The whole thing would be overseen by Bernard Hayman and an ex-army major by the name of Jim Webber. They would be in their own yachts making sure no one got lost or into trouble. The only problem as far as Chris and Dylan were concerned was that Bernard Hayman thought Dylan too small to make the journey safely and he didn't want the responsibility of having such a small boat on the cruise. He therefore refused Chris's application to attend. A meaningful discussion took place and Chris explained that he and Dylan were going any way. Jim Webber took Chris aside and asked about the experience that both Chris and his dinghy sailing crew had in regard to sea sailing, ***it wasn't much at that time.*** Anyway Jim told him to take no notice of Bernard, and that he would make sure that Dylan and her crew were safe during the crossing.

So we were to meet the rest of the flotilla in

Ramsgate on Saturday 2nd June. Continuing from Ramsgate to Calais on Sunday 3rd June, run along the Belgian and Dutch coasts, before arriving in Vlissingen and Middleburg on Friday, stopping at different ports along the way. Unfortunately we were unable to take full advantage of the whole cruise because we needed to be back in Gillingham marina where Dylan was normally berthed by the Wednesday.

On Our Way.

Richard, Tod and I left Redditch on the Friday evening and arrived in Gillingham marina around 22.15hrs. After stowing all the gear aboard Dylan that was to be the smallest yacht on the cruise, it was time to adjourn to the pub for some Dutch courage. High Water was at 02.20 and Dylan was underway at 01.15 to tackle the 9 miles of the river Medway to Sheerness and along the coast of the Isle of Sheppey in darkness. Tod and Chris took the first watch while Richard and I retired to our bunks. It was hard to fall asleep because of the excitement of the trip, and the chitter chatter on the VHF radio. Eventually we must have drifted off only to be woken by heavy rain at about 04.00. Fifteen

The Wagtail

minutes later I was out of my sleeping bag, plotting a course, still half asleep, cold and feeling a little sick. I wasn't sure whether sea sailing was in my blood after all. A cup of rum coffee and a homemade ship's biscuit did the trick and I soon felt a new man.

With the new course Richard and I were on watch. The sea looked rather grey and menacing, but at least it had stopped raining. Dylan was now on a broad reach with the wind off her starboard quarter, force 4 to 5 pushing her along at around six and a half knots. The tide was with us and we were making excellent progress. Dawn was at 06.00, the wind remained steady and we were now well along the north Kent coast. Our navigation was working well and we were easily finding the channels and buoys.

At 08.00 we arrived at the North Foreland and conditions were as we had feared. Whilst in the lee of the land the sea conditions were slight, but as we rounded up on to a starboard close hauled course, the wind that was being funneled up from the English Channel was showing itself as force 5 to 6 with steep and choppy seas. It was a little

frightening at first for sailors with our limited experience, but after a while it became enjoyable and even exciting. After an hour and a half's beating Chris contacted Ramsgate harbour for permission to enter. Upon receiving the go ahead the engine was started. The Johnson 6 horse was found not to be the best of engine to have in these conditions, so there was only one thing for it, and that was to enter the harbour under sail! The engine was left on tick over as we sped through the harbour entrance. Once inside, Dylan was spun round into the wind and the sails dropped - impressive I can tell you!



Ramsgate harbor entrance on a calm day

The harbour was crowded with Belgian and Dutch boats which rafted out from the pontoons on either side. We had to look for a boat at the end of one of the pontoons that was carrying a board that read 'Yachting World Cruise'. There was so much confusion that this board must have got lost somewhere. Dylan was

eventually tied up to a Dutch racing machine which didn't resemble Dylan in any way apart from length. Its skipper was courteous but kept mentioning something about 'springs'. Eventually we got the message! It was now around 10.00 and time to clear up the debris below decks and to have breakfast.

The morning went quickly as Dylan was made presentable. We chatted with a few of the other crews and found out which yachts would be making the crossing to Calais with us. Later Dylan's crew fell into a complete state of doziness until there was a shout from the pontoon of ... "Ahoy Dylan - is Chris Evans aboard" ... It was Jim Webber the retired army major who was now the Commodore of the Royal Temple Yacht Club in Ramsgate. You may remember that Chris had met him in London when the trip was being organised.

Greetings and comments were provided by Jim such as - ..."So these are your ruffy tuffy dinghy sailors are they. Brought your wet suits have you?. Force 6 to 7 forecast for tomorrow. Put the washboards in. Three feet of water in the cockpit and it will feel just like home" ... Well after catching our

The Wagtail

breath he invited us on board his ketch a Sailor 46, not a new yacht by any means, but very nice. Over drinks he told us where to go for duty frees whilst in Calais. You would have thought that he only had his boat to nip back and forth to top up with duty frees from Spotty Decker's the duty free suppliers. Definitely not the case as he had sailing trips planned to Gibraltar, the Azores, Holland and the Baltic. He asked us about our experiences and we chose to omit to tell him about our last trip when the outboard engine fell off Dylan's stern.

After four or five beers we retired to the pub for a couple more, and the afternoon was spent catching up on lost sleep. In the evening we attended a reception at the Royal Temple Yacht Club. Bernard Hayman gave a short address and added that there was a force 8 forecast for the Sunday so the crossing would be delayed until Monday. That seemed good enough for us. So we finished the night off in the pub and had a nice lie in the next morning.

Breakfast time came and went. We found ourselves filling the rest of the day with nautical things like hoisting the radar reflector to the crosstrees and

ensuring it was in the rain catching position; checking both the standing and running rigging etc. It was quite a novelty to spend a day in port, safe and relaxed.

A meeting was held during the afternoon to discuss our plans for departing on Monday morning. With reducing wind strength it was agreed that we should leave at 06.30 in order to catch the appropriate tide. Once again the pub seemed a good place to ponder the forthcoming event. We wondered what the rest of the fleet were thinking of the ruffy tuffy dinghy sailors who were to cross the channel for the first time in the smallest yacht in the flotilla. After a few beers it seemed quite funny especially the pig in the stern locker story. From then on and for this trip only, Dylan was renamed The Flying Pig - only for the crew of course. I think it could have been the beer talking.

The fleet was ready for sea at 06.30 and we filed out one by one. Through the high walls of the harbour entrance the brilliance of the morning became apparent. The sun had just lifted off the surface of the water, an orange ball in a blue and mackerel sky. The wind had dropped very light

causing only small ripples. Before long the wind fell away completely. We had to lower the sails and use the engine. The course was due east for about six miles as far as the North Goodwin light vessel, and then to turn to the south skirting the Goodwin Sands on their east side. Visibility must have been over thirty miles. We could see both Dover and the French coast. The sea conditions were now flat calm and it could have been a pleasure trip on a lake rather than the English Channel.

The fleet was now strung out and Bernard Hayman was keeping in contact with us all by VHF radio. He would call each yacht in turn every hour. A position in accordance to the grid map would have to be supplied.

It was all quite peaceful until we entered the shipping lanes. There was one very large ship in particular that we came very close to. The consensus was that we should pass her stern. With this in mind Dylan's course was set. By the time we were close we realised there was a problem. The ship was moving very fast, probably more than 20 knots and creating an enormous bow wave. As Dylan leapt off the first wave and was half way through the next we

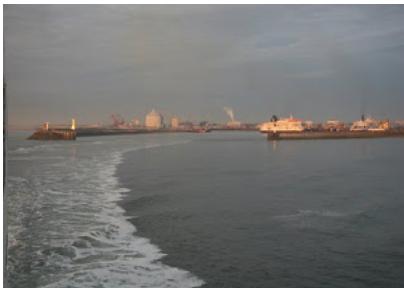
The Wagtail

realised we shouldn't have got so close. Never mind, we came out of our close encounter unscathed, and a lesson well learned for the future I think.

The rest of the journey was uneventful. The sea remained calm with that silky glass appearance. The ferries, hovercrafts and jetfoils went back and forth, but best of all the sun was shining and a small amount of beer was being drunk.

After we had left the shipping lanes on the French side, Jim Webber in his Sailor 46 called us up and came quite close. We imagined to see if we were all OK but he said this wasn't the case as it was just to see if the dinghy sailors were throwing buckets of water over each other to stop the boredom.

It wasn't long before we could see Calais harbour entrance quite clearly. The wind increased a little and we managed to put the sails up again. Turning the engine off was a delight after listening to it running for hours. We made a nice 5 knots with full main and genoa right up to the harbour entrance. Of course we had to be wary of the ferries moving in and out of the harbour and within the deep water channel.



Calais harbor entrance

As Dylan entered the harbour we felt so proud until Richard noticed that the Dutch courtesy flag had been hoisted instead of the French one. (*An easy mistake. The red, blue and white lines go the opposite way that's all*). There was a mad scramble below decks and out popped the French flag. It was changed in no time at all. When we entered the inner harbour it became apparent that Dylan was the fourth boat to arrive. We hadn't done so bad for dinghy sailors had we.

It wasn't long before we were tied up alongside a floating pontoon in the marina. It also wasn't long before we were ashore and heading into Calais town. Of course we ended up sampling the local beer to start with. Then we wandered down to the town hall and the park opposite to visit the main German wartime control bunker, which is now a museum. In the park on our way back a young boy along with his friend asked Tod for some money. (French centimes.) Tod

not realising thought they were asking for the time, so he told them in English and they ran off laughing. We were curled up laughing as well, so much so that we couldn't tell him what he had done. All of a sudden Tod ran off after the boys shouting the time. We found this hilarious. It was only when he came back that he explained that he had told them the wrong time in the first place because he hadn't moved his watch forward one hour to French time and perhaps they would be late home because of his mistake. How we laughed!



Calais marina pontoon

On our return to the marina we found that most of the other crews were in the yacht club because all the food and drinks were all free. As you can imagine it didn't take long to off load our small amount of shopping and for us to join them. Apparently Bernard Hayman whilst waiting outside Calais for the leading yachts to arrive had anchored on top of a French fisherman's lobster pots. The fisherman, not being very pleased had

The Wagtail

rushed out of the harbour and shouted a lot of abuse at Bernard. Bernard shouted back at the fisherman and it all got out of hand. The fisherman bought his boat in close enough to rip off Bernard's ensign on the first pass. On the second pass the fisherman actually rammed Bernard's boat. By this time the police and the Commodore of Calais Yacht Club were involved. All this happened before we arrived in Dylan. So we knew nothing about it. Apparently Calais Yacht club wanted to calm things down quickly so they invited everyone on the cruise to the bar and provided all the food and drinks free of charge.

Later in the evening we went to a restaurant just across from the marina. The weather had closed in again and now it was windy and raining. We had to don our wet weather gear to make the journey. As we entered the restaurant the crews from the other yachts stood up, cheered, and congratulated the crew of the smallest boat to cross the channel on this first time foreign cruise.

Although the weather continued to be inclement we did make our way back to the Gillingham marina by Wednesday as planned.

For Sale & Wanted:

Crewsaver drysuit and undersuit - £150

Excellent condition as new – **Never Used**

Crewsaver Hyperdry Pro Neo – Large – Euro size 52. Includes a Crewsaver fleece undersuit, neoprene neck with wrist seals and latex socks. Re-inforced knees, shins and internal braces. Front mounted zip.
Tel: Chris Jackson 01527 454149.

Typhoon man's dry suit.

Offers?

Size MB (Chest 46" & up to 5'1" tall) breathable fabric, front metal zip, internal braces, blue/black colour, fabric in good condition, original seals and boots look ok, but will need replacing at some stage.

For sale via Alan Jones.

Laser PICO - £650

Excellent condition throughout, includes trolley and cover.

Contact Peter Gale – 01527 877599

Comet - #382 – £500

Tel: Adrian Shepherd – 07756 717487

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Windsurfer - £50 ono

Includes a spare sail.

Tony – 01527 402121 or 07817372815

Mirror Dinghy - #17202 - £150

Good condition, colour yellow, alloy mast, spinnaker, mast down boat cover, trolley, oars, anchor, dry stored, Genuine reason for sale. Buyer collects.

Tel: 01527 454166

Solo - £300

2 sails, spare centreboard.
Alan Shirley 01527 40218

Enterprise sail #18643 - £500

Good condition & ready to sail. GRP construction, Millanes centerboard, trolley. Available to view in RSC dinghy park.

Tel: Greg Croydon – 07802 562301

GP14 Sail #11563 - £600

Lovingly restored by Tony Gibson. GRP Construction, trolley, cover. Sails – Main& mid sized genoa; fly away jib stick system; ready to sail. Boat available to view in RSC dinghy park. Tel: Greg Croydon - 07802 562301

Merlin Rocket - £200

Full set of sails
Colin – 07813955930

Racing Results

Winners in 2015 - so far...

	<u>Winter</u>	<u>Spring</u>	<u>Summer</u>
Gold	D Day	A Beardshaw	P Fuller
Silver	P Gale	P Anderson	D Recardo
Bronze	P Anderson	M Matthews	A Shirley
Gold	P Fuller	G Croydon	P Fuller
Silver	D Day	M Matthews	D Recardo
Bronze	R Harrison	I Sykes	A Shirley
Crew 1st	V Rose	G Ranford	M Bishop
Crew 2nd	S Dunnage	V Rose	G Ranford
Crew 3rd	G Ranford	S Dunnage	V Rose
Lucy Appleton Trophy		G Croydon	
Mid-Summer Trophy		R Crawford	
Tuesday Night Series		1. R Harrison 2. P Fuller 3. P Gale	
Family Trophy		M&S Cranmore	

REDDITCH SAILING CLUB - DUTY ROTA**Winter series 2016**

Race	Date	OFFICER OF THE DAY	ASSISTANT OFFICER OF THE DAY	DUTY CREW NO 1	DUTY CREW NO 2
1	03/01/16	Paul Fuller	Don Recardo	Vicky Rose	Andrew Jackson
2	10/1/16	Dave Day	Ross Crawford	Peter Riley	Richard Rose
3	17/1/16	Graham Timmins	Dave Bishop	Bruce Amos	Maggie Timmins
4	24/1/16	Greg Croydon	Roger Harrison	Alan Jones	Gail Ranford
5	31/1/16	David Jackson	Peter Anderson	Sea Cadet 1	Hilary Farmiloë
6	7/2/16	Mark Crowther	Terry Hobbis	Becky Sidlow	Martin Woods
7	14/2/16	Chris Hurlston	Adrian Shepherd	Malcolm Acton	Sue Cranmore
8	21/2/16	Colin Anderson	Richard Irwin	Mike Matthews	Sea Cadet 2
9	28/2/16	Steve Orme	Grant Petford	Ian Sykes	Peter Wilson
10	6/3/16	Rob Eaves	Ian Ranford	Robert Elmer	Sarah Duval
11	13/3/16	Andrew Beardshaw	Margot Bish	Isabel Langman	Pat Lloyd
12	20/3/16	Peter Gale	Jason Ind	Eddie Lison	Stan Dunnage
13	27/3/16	James Dawes	Alan Shirley	Alistair Vines	Mike Squirrell

Bromsgrove Boaters

(bromsgroveboaters.co.uk)

33



We are an RYA affiliated offshore cruising club whose aim is to encourage as many people as possible to share our passion to get out onto the water and take up offshore sailing. We meet up socially every 3rd Wednesday at Bromsgrove Rugby Club, to listen to guest speakers (Tom Cunliffe is booked for the New Year).

As a club we welcome everyone from experienced sailors who want to do more sailing to people with no experience at all who want to get into sailing.

As sailing is what our Club is all about, we organise club sailing weekends in the Spring and in the Autumn as well as longer cruises over the summer months.

Although some Members have their own boats, as a club we charter high specification boats through reputable companies in the Solent, the South West, the East Coast and Scotland, providing an inexpensive and highly sociable means of getting onto the water.

All Skippers and Mates will be highly qualified and experienced. And crews will be made up of Members with a range of experience.

As part of the Club's policy of on-going improvement in members' skills, we also organize and facilitate various RYA Approved courses. You can obtain your VHF Radio licence, take part in a First Aid or RADAR course, learn about Diesel engines or do the Sea Survival course. In particular, you can do a Day Skipper or Yacht Master Navigation course.

If you would like any further information please contact Pat (Trish) Lloyd (Membership Secretary for Bromsgrove Boaters).

You will find me at Redditch Sailing Club most Sunday Mobile 07709 960838
patricia.lloyd@hotmail.co.

