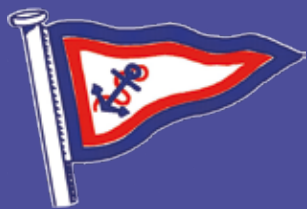


July 2020



# CIVIL SERVICE SAILING

*Civil Service Sailing Association*

[www.cs-sailing.org.uk](http://www.cs-sailing.org.uk)



CSSA members and Clubs should help delay transmission of COVID-19 during permitted activities by following government guidance for the territory and adapting as guidance develops.

- Maintenance and private use of members' equipment is acceptable, subject to compliance with government guidelines.
- Maintenance and use of Club equipment and premises is acceptable, subject to compliance with government guidelines.
- Members required to self-isolate (because of symptoms of COVID-19 in their household or because of their own susceptibility) must stay away from Club facilities.
- All CSSA events should be suspended until government guidance permits recommencement.

Clubs should establish arrangements to manage risks and prevent transmission through use, if any, of Club buildings or equipment.

RYA guidance is helpful – [https://www.rya.org.uk/training-support/Pages/coronavirus\\_guidance.aspx](https://www.rya.org.uk/training-support/Pages/coronavirus_guidance.aspx)

Disruption is likely to continue for some time.

Experts predict that many of us will require hospitalisation over the coming months – let's help those who help us. Stay safe and look out for one another.

CSSA Management Group (revised 20 May 2020)

## WANTED

### NEW CSSA TREASURER FROM APRIL 2021

I'm standing for election as CSSA Treasurer but if re-elected I will have been in the post for 15 years, come 2021. I think it will then be time for CSSA to have a rest from me - and perhaps vice versa - so I'm looking for a successor. The Treasurer has few transactions to deal with – although some are pretty large – and 4 committee meetings to attend each year. The role is mainly about the management and monitoring of CSSA finances and liaison with clubs and CSSC on financial matters, and preparing an annual Treasurer's Report and Accounts.

I'd welcome enquiries from would-be successors:

grubb64@hotmail.com or 01962 864246

Brian Grubb

## Flags & Bugees

Rectangular CSSA House Flags

Triangular CSSA Bugees

Large (30cm x 45cm approx) £16.00

Small (20cm x 30cm approx) £13.00

CSSA ties (polyester) £10.00

P&P included

Please send your requests and cheques  
(payable to Civil Service Sailing Association) to:

Brian Grubb  
64 Cross Road  
Winchester  
Hants  
SO23 9PS

**See  
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for  
Provisional Notices of  
Rescheduled  
CSSA AGM 2020 &  
Special General Meeting**

## Acronyms & Abbreviations

CSSA	Civil Service Sailing Association
5KSC	5 Kingdoms Sailing Club
CSD	Channel Sailing Division
CSORC	Civil Service Offshore Racing Club
ECYD	East Coast Yacht Division
IDOR	Inter Departmental Offshore Regatta
RCSSC	Rutland Civil Service Club
POG	Portsmouth Offshore Group
VC	Vice Commodore
AGM	Annual General Meeting
SGM	Special General Meeting

Welcome to the Summer edition of CS Sailing,

There isn't any news from what would have been the early sailing season but you will find tales of carefree days gone by and also about the perils of esailing! (page 13)

Congratulations to David Grundy of RCSSC, on his CSSC Merit Award.

Over the last few months our lives have been turned upside down and inside out, but the fog is lifting a little and we welcome the easing of restrictions.

Take extra care during these days while we must still be socially distancing and hope we get more positive news soon that will help float all our boats!

I hope you enjoy reading this edition. As always thanks to our contributors.



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## AGM 2020

Our postponed 2020 AGM may be re-scheduled for a Saturday or Sunday in November. Notice will be posted on the CS Sailing website <http://cs-sailing.org.uk/> and will be repeated in the October edition of CS Sailing.

The AGM will be held, at least in part, by computer video conference. If a face-to-face AGM is viable within government COVID restrictions, the venue will be accessible by personal transport, possibly Littleton SC.

## Special General Meeting

Proposed revisions of the arrangements for our General Meetings will require changes to our CSSA constitution. Notice of a SGM and proposed amendments to the CSSA constitution will be posted on the CS Sailing website <http://cs-sailing.org.uk/> and repeated in the October CS Sailing. If our rescheduled AGM goes ahead in November as is now proposed, the SGM will be held immediately afterwards.

The proposed changes to the CSSA constitution include: a more flexible time window for the AGM; providing the option for a computer video conference element to the meeting; and remote voting. Other changes may also be proposed, for example, removal of obsolete provisions for Associate Members.

## CSSA Annual Report 2019

### Membership

Overall membership grew during 2019 to over 2,500 registered members. We had 120 new members join over the 2019 summer season – a record. IDOR continues to be a major source of annual recruitment.

Proposals for increasing CSSA's appeal to dinghy sailors is in discussion.

### Finances

CSSA's finances remain strong.

The prospect of receipt of a bequest to help CSSA fund ocean going yachts has improved but an end date for legal proceedings is not yet in sight. Receipt of the bequest will provide CSSA with opportunity to review and restructure its funding of dinghy and offshore sailing.

### CSSA Clubs Reports

#### 5 Kingdoms Sailing Club (5KSC)

YNOT celebrated her 10th birthday with replacement of her standing rigging. An upgrade of the navigation equipment over the coming winter will make YNOT more attractive for club members. An early replacement of Ynot is being considered pending bequest funding.

The cruising year started in May with a month in Conwy – followed by a delivery cruise to Largs on the Clyde. June was spent on the Clyde, and then July and early August were busy with crews going to around and from the Western Isles.

Ynot raced on the Mersey in the Venture fleet with the Liverpool Yacht Club in January, February and again from September through to March 2020. These sessions are very popular despite the cold weather. Administrative errors in CSSC caused a hiccup in autumn taster sails and recruitment.

In September, a crew from 5KSC and Jumbles SC entered a ladies' race with Liverpool Yacht Club, coming 4th out of 6 but we felt a great sense of achievement after getting around marks against the wind and tide. With some CSSA funding, 5KSC became an RYA Recognised Training Centre. Plans are in progress for a 2020 RYA practical training programme on the Clyde.

#### East Coast Yacht Division (ECYD)

We sailed Freyja to La Rochelle via the Solent and the Channel Islands for a few charters and then back up to Brest before finishing along the South Coast from Falmouth through the Solent and back home to Shotley.

#### Channel Sailing Division (CSD)

Sea Essay had a busy season. We again held a successful summer cruise to France; this season as far as La Rochelle. Day Sails and Sea Times have again been well supported.

The CSD mentoring scheme continues to connect experienced skippers with members who would like guidance and support in developing their sailing skills. We hope this will continue to grow in 2020, details of how to participate can be found on the CSD website. The club's ability to consistently offer RYA training



continues to be a challenge in the absence of its own in-house sea school. CSD has made some progress in identifying a chief instructor, which is a pre-requisite to re-establishing the RYA sea school, and contact has been made with members who are already RYA instructors or who we know are interested and well placed to train as instructors.

The 2020 sailing programme will offer a mix of events and opportunities, with a return to the favourite cruising grounds of France, the Channel Islands and West Country in 2020.

2020 will be the sixth season for the Jeanneau Sun Odyssey 409 incarnation of "Sea Essay". We are working to identify a replacement yacht for the 2021 season.

## Portsmouth Offshore Group (POG)

John Ainsworth was voted in as POG Commodore at the March AGM. Our previous Commodore, Mike Childs retired from the post after 19 years of service to the Group. This very significant service to the club was recognised by a very well attended luncheon held in Mike's honour in May including a presentation by the CSSA Commodore Graham Dalton.

The new lift launch facility has proved to be a considerable success. We lifted the first group of boats at the end of November 2018 followed by further boat lifts and relaunches in early 2019. In addition, we undertook a short-term lift and launch for a few Group members in the Spring of 2019 with a further lift of 42 boats being lifted for the Winter 2019 period.

We had an excellent turnout by our volunteers for the Spring and Autumn work parties. These events are key to the success we have in keeping our mooring and other charges low and allow us to catch up on all those jobs that gradually accumulate over the year.

We have continued our programme of club rallies and races, the "Folly Jolly" rally in June continuing to be as popular as ever with a turnout of 16 boats and 42 crew. Our ever popular "Nab and Back" race became a "Not the Nab and Back" with a course amended due to a prediction of high winds for many days beforehand.

Early in the year, entry to our Wicor moorings through the Fleetlands Aerospace site was under threat. Considerable effort from a few of our members negotiated a way forward so this risk has been considerably mitigated.

CSSC and POG are continuing discussion of an early replacement of the current Land Lease.

A new series of winter talks have been very well attended and included guests from RNSA and Gosport Cruising Club.

## Inter-Departmental Offshore Regatta (IDOR)

Fifteen crews gathered in the Hamble on Sunday the 9th of June for the 2019 IDOR. The event continues to be well received, despite the challenging conditions on Thursday. The only incident was a man overboard during the passage back to the Hamble on Friday highlighting the need to remain alert at all times.

A marked increase in entries on previous years is a positive sign, a number of individuals from various new departments allowed a second CSORC entry to be filled. Hopefully this will lead to new Departmental and Club entries in the future.

The main prize is the Eric Seal Memorial Trophy which was awarded to the overall winner of the combined "Inshore" and "Offshore" races. This will be presented to the Diamond Light Source B team at the CSSA AGM in April. The 2019 top three were:

1. DLS B: 10 points
2. HASSRA B: 18 points
3. NCA I: 20 points

In common with many other sporting events and all CSSC activities in spring 2020, the IDOR will be postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

We have not been able to set a date just yet, but are looking at options with Fairview and the Island Sailing Club for September or October, a time when this situation hopefully will have passed.

Feedback and ideas from this year's event will be applied and increased CSSC funding makes a large reduction in the entry fee an option which will hopefully lead to more entries.

## Civil Service Offshore Racing Club (CSORC)

CSORC entered two boats in the IDOR and won the CSORC Shield awarded to the best placed Club entry.

The club entered the Fastnet aboard a chartered a First 40. The required 300 miles of qualifying was completed despite retiring from one race. The Fastnet itself went well, although an injury and diversion to the Scillies meant the final result was not as good as it would otherwise have been.

We have arranged a charter for the RORC Caribbean 600 early next year.



## Rutland Civil Service Sailing Club (RCSSC)

The Rutland Sailing Club (RSC) Cruiser Fleet organised a series of racing dates for the first time this year to include all Fleets. Some RCSSC members participated and really enjoyed themselves and did well. There are plans for this to become an annual event. All races are followed by tea and cake at the Cruiser Park with friends and family.

Each year our members and some RCSSC boats participate in the popular RSC Public Open Day. Members were able to help with the 2019 event, which was well supported by the public; for some it was perhaps their first time at Rutland and the opportunity to sail on a keel boat.

Rutland Civil Service Taster Days held in conjunction with CSSC Sports and Leisure once again helped make a successful summer. They take a lot of organising and rely on approved helms generously donating their time too.

RSC is a premier sailing club with a busy schedule of racing events each requiring volunteers for duties. Many RSC Club and Affiliated Club volunteers help. Our club volunteers for rescue duty, committee racing duties, gate duty or whatever is required.

## Hooe Point Sailing Club (HPSC)

Membership numbers have remained broadly stable in 2019, although the Club dynamic is changing with several less active, non-boat owning members leaving and being replaced by active dinghy sailors.

The Club now has a small but versatile fleet of Club dinghies with which members can learn to sail and participate in a weekly race series. We have an embryonic but enthusiastic training team, fully authorised by the RYA, who can offer dedicated RYA courses to the membership. The challenge for the Club is to grow the use of both these valuable assets by attracting a 'new to sailing' membership as well as already experienced and boat owning new members.

The Club's 2019 Open Day attracted new members who are now confidently sailing their own boats and actively participating within the Club.

The highlight of the year was the CSSC Dinghy Championship held in September. 22 boats took part and many visiting sailors enjoying both the excellent racing and the social events that were laid on over the two days. The event was a credit to the club and its volunteers.

The majority of club moorings were utilised

throughout the year, with a waiting list in place. More than 60 vessels are accommodated on deep water and drying fore and aft trots, and mud berths

Additional pontoons were installed to replace the worst of the old wooden units. The ladies changing rooms were completely refurbished. Plans and budget are being put in place for a revamp of the male changing facilities in 2020.

## Jumbles Sailing Club (JSC)

Jumbles is a club for the community, welcoming the Sea Scouts and Sea Cadets and acting as a hub for separate walking and running groups. Two of our teenagers recently qualified as dinghy instructors.

Welcome collaboration with 5KSC will supply a crew for Ynot for an upcoming ladies' race at Liverpool YC.

2019 was a season of reinvigoration for Jumbles Sailing Club. A CSSA loan enabled us to build a new pontoon. Our members dug out and laid an enlarged concrete slipway, with everyone chipping in to do their bit. Brian Hoy, one of our previous Commodores, had fun trying out the hired digger. Hard graft though and very grateful we all are at the club for those who hauled wheelbarrows.

Among other things, we now have a new double oven to cater for socials and events, new CCTV cameras and a freshened boat park. Jumbles is truly a club run by members for members.

## Littleton Sailing Club (LSC)

2019 sees Littleton continue as a successful inland dinghy sailing club. Our membership has remained at the same level as 2018, and our junior section goes from strength to strength. Youngsters Afloat is a parent led activity with enthusiastic leaders supporting a great initiative. The junior squad represented the club at the NSSA in Weymouth which was a great learning experience for those who made it. We continue to see strong racing sailors at the club represent us at national events.

On the adult training side, we ran 4 RYA level 1-2 courses with over 16 successful new sailors eager to continue their sailing activities.

Our lease negotiations with the CSSC continue. There is a small adjoining area of 6-8 acres of water with shorelines that border our main lake, which has been put up for sale to the highest bidder. We have excellent relationships with our fishing friends in the Civil Service Angling Society; we are in the process of making a joint offer for the lagoon.



## Sadly, most of our 2020 events and our AGM have had to be postponed ...

We live in challenging times. As we go to press single-handed and family dinghy sailing is gathering pace and the rumour is that many sailing Clubs will have the option to re-open during July. How practices to slow virus transmission will develop to accommodate our wide range of CSSA sailing remains to be seen. A return to yachting for scratch crews seems to be a long way off. Our CSSA policy and any changes are posted at <http://cs-sailing.org.uk/story/coronavirus/> Let's see how government guidance evolves.

Our General Committee is considering re-scheduling of our 2020 AGM for a weekend in November. We will make provision for a totally electronic meeting but we hope that COVID restrictions will relax sufficiently for us to have a face-to-face component. Details of what and where will be posted on <http://cs-sailing.org.uk/> and in the October edition of CS Sailing.

Thank you to all those who responded to my invitation for ideas in the last issue.

We've made most progress with revising the arrangements for our General Meetings. Our General Committee is considering the possibility of relaxing the scheduling for our AGM from within April to between 1st April and 30th June. We are also looking at the possibility of providing options for an electronic element to the meeting and for remote voting. These changes will accommodate some of your proposals for holding the meeting away from London and aligned with CSSA or other events of interest to many members. Its early days but if the ideas are found viable and our postponed AGM goes ahead in November as is now proposed, an SGM is likely be held immediately afterwards to agree changes to our CSSA constitution. Proposals will be published online at <http://cs-sailing.org.uk/> and in CS Sailing.

Ways of providing increased support for dinghy sailors is under discussion but there is nothing



sufficiently developed to share just yet. We've noted your requests and we are working on them.

Ideas for a CSSA yacht in the Mediterranean have had cautious support. There is a strong call for a pilot to demonstrate the viability. One suggestion is to book an extended commercial charter. Another is to adopt the next CSSA yacht that comes up for sale for operation by a provisional Med Division. A commercial charter can be arranged once COVID travel restrictions are relaxed – so possibly in 2021. Plans for replacement of the current Sea Essay are already in hand so a provisional Med Division might be possible from 2021 or 2022.

All ideas for improving our CSSA are welcome via your General Committee rep or direct to Brian Stevenson [csgensec@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:csgensec@yahoo.co.uk)

I look forward to a time when we can discuss your ideas on all the above and on other issues either on the water or in a bar.

Fair winds

Paul

VC



John with his two children Edward and Georgina

## John McIlwraith

I am very sad to report that John McIlwraith, a friend of mine, a long standing member and an approved skipper of the CSSA passed away on Easter Sunday.

My sympathies to Victoria and his family.

John was a member of CSD and had his own boat a 27ft yacht, Chaser

I first met John in the mid 1950s when we were apprentices together at Handley Page Ltd., building Victor bombers.

There are many nautical stories of John and I but I have chosen the one below.

by Colin Smith

## The Day We Went Fishing For Cockles

One of the painters in the company had a converted 27ft naval whaler with cabin and bunks which he kept on a mooring at Leigh-on-Sea, near Southend-on-Sea.

John and I would offer our dinghy sailing “expertise” from time to time when the tides were right. We went to the boat one weekend but for some reason or another, our sailing trip was cancelled. Never mind, time for a pint in the local where we got chatting to some of the local cockle fishermen who, after several pints later, agreed to take us out the following morning to show us how they caught cockles in commercial quantities.

We met at the landing at some ungodly hour about high water and went out to the fishing boat moored in the stream. Breakfast was taken underway to the fishing grounds on Foulness Sands. At this time the sands were used as a target for firing explosive shells from Foulness which was an experimental centre run by the Ministry of Defence. The sands were a strictly prohibited area where nobody was allowed to transit. However, as it was such a fertile

fishing area the cockle fishing boats were allowed onto the sands once in a while at specified dates and times.

The fishing boat was grounded on the sands and, after the tide had ebbed so that it was high and dry, we all climbed onto the sands to start the fishing process. We were given a wooden framed net and a wooden rake and shown the cockle shell edges just above the sand surface. The instructions were to rake the cockles into the net, wash the sand off in the sea, empty the net into woven baskets, and, when full carry two baskets using a wooden yoke back to the fishing boat.

To describe this as hard “yakka” \* would be an understatement.

After about two hours of this, despite being reasonably fit teenagers we needed a change of occupation. One of the fishermen suggested that we collect the bits of copper rifling bands which were fitted to the outside of the explosive shells so that it rotated when fired up the barrel of the gun.



Once the shell exploded the copper band pieces were scattered over the sand surface. Being fairly thick, the pieces had value to be sold for scrap.

During our search for copper John came across a cylinder about 4 inches in diameter with the copper rifling band still attached. Pleased with his search he called me over to admire his find and passed the object to me which, taken by surprise of the weight, I dropped it onto the sand. We picked it up and started to take it to one of the baskets to be met by one of the younger fishermen to whom we proudly showed our find.

As well as being a regular member of the crew he was also a member of the Royal Naval Reserve (RNR) and he had just returned from a gunnery course. He took a step backwards and said "Put that down very, very gently and walk away."

Don't make any sudden movements. That is one of those experimental shells they told us about on the course and it has not gone off". We followed the instructions and went back to the net and rake with occasional finds of copper.

With the boat full of cockles and the tide returning to float us off we returned to Leigh-on-Sea, wiser and chastened teenagers. As has been often said, "There is always something to learn when you go sailing"!

Colin Smith



Cartoon courtesy of: [www.fact4today.com](http://www.fact4today.com)

#### \*Yakka

The word is used especially in the phrase hard yakka. Yakka first occurs in the 1840s as a verb meaning 'to work', and it derives from yaga meaning 'work' in the Yagara language of the Brisbane region. Yakka found its way into nineteenth-century Australian pidgin, and then passed into Australian English.

## Dismasted at the 2-minute gun

by Ken Pavitt

I used to race a 25ft yacht 2 handed outside Chichester harbour with the owner. One time he invited another friend and his wife as passengers for the day. When the committee boat put up the course flags I went below and did the nav preps. I then heard the crew in the cockpit discussing their pet dogs. As I thought "A BAD IDEA" there was a loud bang, the yacht stopped and tilted bow up. We had rammed another yacht on starboard. But not any yacht, a brand new first outing of the Club Commodore's new yacht. We hit its starboard shroud plates and dismasted it. After exchanging pleasantries we looked to ourselves. There was water aboard so I emptied the forward sail locker and found a hole just below the waterline with water flowing in. I reported and we moved everything of any weight to the rear deck which reduced the flow. The next idea was to stuff the hole so we got the friend's wife who was lightest

and smallest to squeeze into the sail locker with a bunch of rags and some spare clothing. We then had to motor back against a full ebb tide into harbour, and decided to go right back to the home marina at the top of the harbour. On arrival there was a queue waiting for the lock, so we jumped the queue shouting "SORRY WE'RE SINKING" to everyone. Back on berth we found some cement blocks nearby and piled them on the stern deck. When we asked the friend's wife to come out she wasn't able to, she was cramped and jammed into the sail locker and had to be prised out and carefully straightened out. We then found an old rubber tyre and some plywood, got a bolt from the chandlery and made a sandwich patch over the hole now above the waterline. It lasted a week OK with no water getting in. Moral, no dog owners aboard if racing.

# Dot-Dot-Dot-Dash-Dash-Dash-Dot-Dot-Dot

by Colin Hurd  
Channel Sailing  
Division

SOS: sailors on shore. Landlocked, stranded  
Not yet for us going down to the sea again  
Beached, high and dry, grounded and boat less  
Castaways searching the horizon in vain

Fair winds and fine weather for home use only  
No sunshine reflected from rippling waters  
Spring tides ebbing and flowing without us  
Not there to give way to coasters or trawlers

Remember, ponder, focus on great times past  
Greek islands, Channel crossings, Solent adventures  
Runs ashore. Teamwork in the Galley  
Heavy seas, biting winds, those berthing nightmares

Pretty harbours, tavernas, sun soaked strolls  
Moules et frites, olives, Souvlaki, wine and beer  
Waves gently lapping on a sandy shore  
Idyllic thoughts to render good cheer

Clear skies reflected in Azure seas; dolphins  
Swinging at anchor, diving, swimming, fishing  
Attractions and distractions. Remember?  
Many memories to be reminiscing

Neptune and Poseidon beckon to their realms  
Mediterranean, old Blighty? Ours to choose  
Shipmates, we will sail the seas again  
Plan, prepare, anticipate our future cruise

Sea Essay  
under way in the  
South West



Channel X  
June 2019  
Colin Hurd



Sunset in the Solent 2016  
Chris Hubbard



Greece  
2016



Ade Lumb, Chris Hubbard,  
Tony Hinton, Nigel Taylor 2019



# A Coronavirus Contemplation

by Colin Hurd

Channel Sailing Division

Musing in a spring garden, dreaming of Halcyon days  
Of Greek islands, sunshine and swimming in emerald bays  
Of sailing through blue water under cloudless big blue skies  
Of moon setting; of new day dawning with warming sun rise

A fragrance on the air triggers thoughts of cruising times past  
Of magic moments in new lands beyond the sail clad mast  
Of French coasts with huge tides and sultry summer Solent seas  
Of crossing La Manche and newfound gulfs with a fine fresh breeze

Wind teasing the trees; Beaufort scale four? Memories now flow  
Of rolling moderate seas offshore, white horses on show  
Of heeling, befriending the wind, keeping the canvas trimmed  
Of cresting the waves that albatross and dolphins have skimmed

A lunchtime Greek salad reminds of culinary treats  
Of Breton fare, Solent seafood and taverna grilled meats  
Of lunch with Acropolis views. Of freshly baked baguettes  
Of meals at sea and drinks in the cockpit as the sun sets

Wine, beer, gin and tonic; all remind of being together  
Of bonding ashore and on board in all kinds of weather  
Of wet weather oilies and, best of all, tee-shirts and shorts  
Of our future when we venture to sailing grounds and ports





## Strange times indeed!

And for many of us at Littleton the closure of the club since March has meant a physical separation from our friends as well as from the lake.

Our Club magazine, the regular 3-weekly e-bulletin and our WhatsApp group, have all been invaluable during lockdown in keeping our members entertained and abreast of developments. Our committees have been using video conferencing to hold regular meetings from home.

### A Thief's Paradise

As if the club's closure was not enough to deal with, we were visited at night by thieves who seemed to know exactly what they were doing. As a result three outboards were forcibly removed from rescue

boats moored at an island and a fourth engine was damaged. They returned later to take the fourth engine but were no doubt disappointed to find it had been removed (by us!). They also stole a member's boat and another member's trolley from beneath their boat.

### Wildlife Wonderland

With the lack of people the wildlife has been enjoying the peace and quiet, resulting in both our diesel boats becoming gull nurseries. They are being left alone till the chicks have flown the nests. Broods of young ducks and geese have also been more plentiful than we are used to seeing.

### Annual Subscription Renewals Delayed

With our annual subs being due on the 1st April there were fears that some of our members may resign, and with our open day and taster sessions cancelled or postponed there would be little chance of replacing resignations this season.







After much discussion our Committee decided to ask members not to pay their subs and that they would be considered members until such time as the club could reopen. At that time we would offer a discount on this year's fees in recognition of the lost on-water time. A number of members voiced their appreciation of this sympathetic approach.

### Virtual Racing

That still left the challenge of keeping our members engaged during lockdown. As many other clubs did, we registered for the eSailing Virtual Regatta free VIP account, and after a couple of weekend trial sessions we ran a club series for the month of April.

In all about 25 members registered for an eSailing account, and 14 took part in the series which ran on Saturday and Sunday mornings – not unlike our usual racing.

We also registered to take part in the RYA eSailing Spring Club Championships, with the first heat being run at club level and the winner going on to

represent the club at the regional heats.

Competition for both series started with everyone behaving quite gently, though as the weeks went on it was realised by most that eSailing rules really don't take 'time and opportunity' into account, so without gelcoat being an issue, tactics became ever more aggressive as time went on.

Our club champion, Jonathan Jowett, then went on to compete in the London and South East regional heats. It was at this point that Jon realised just how much disregard for the 'real' rules of sailing there really was in this game. However he survived the next heat, scraping into the regional finals by the skin of his teeth. The final made the previous heat look like child's play and probably needless to say, was where Jon's journey ended with a 19th place overall in the region. He is now in therapy and doing his best to unlearn the dirty tricks of eSailing before heading back onto the water for real!



# Lockdown Littleton (continued)

## Quiz Nights

Meanwhile our Commodore, Tim Hore, started a Tuesday evening quiz night, using Zoom to communicate with the teams. Each team was asked to come up with 6 questions and be the quiz master for a round each week. This proved very popular with up to 13 households taking part on a single evening, and around 20 households competing at some point over time. Participants especially enjoyed the challenge of thinking up unique questions on chosen subjects ranged from Scientific to the colour of Thomas the Tank Engine and an array of anything in between. We now know more “stuff” than ever which may be useful!

## Planning the Way Back

A Response Team of key members has been set up and have met via Zoom from their respective homes every Monday evening to review the situation and plan the way ahead. From the weekend of the 16-17th May when the lockdown became less restrictive, we have allowed people to ‘buddy sail’,

meaning they must have someone there to watch out for them and sailing is at the individuals own risk with no organised safety cover being provided. The clubhouse remains shut for the moment and people have been asked to come changed and adhere to the social distancing rules. We have run some very informal DIY races using gate starts and then latterly with one person on the shore with a whistle. A reduced number of club boats are available for hire, with the hirer expected to wash the boat thoroughly after use.

We have had several enquiries from potential new members, keen to get out on the water after lockdown, though currently as we are unable to offer any training courses, it is only feasible to accept new members who are able to sail already. So little by little we are trying to return to some sort of normality, and for those who have gone back on the water it's been a very welcome break from the limitations of lockdown, good for the body and mind, sparking hope for a full recovery in the coming months ahead.

Vanda Jowett  
Littleton Sailing Club





# CSSC Merit Awards

## David Grundy



## Congratulations, David!

### One of ten CSSC Merit Award winners

Here's what his nominator had to say about him...

"Dave literally turned Rutland Civil Service Sailing Club around. Since 2009, he's continually put his heart and soul into our sailing club; dedicating many hours of his own personal time, effort and money by promoting our Club and CSSC. He has a "can do" attitude and ability to multi-task whilst undertaking several key Club roles at one time. He continually raises the bar as a volunteer, making sure everyone has a good time; whether that be that at Rutland Sailing Club or at a CSSC event."

"His reward is to see people leave any organised event with a smile on their face. A first class volunteer in every respect. RCSSC is where it is today because of the efforts David has put into the club. He's a great ambassador for CSSC, undertaking voluntary roles with exceptional drive, commitment and enthusiasm. We are proud to have him as a sailing buddy and friend."

Just look at all the different volunteer roles that David does for the Rutland Civil Service Sailing Club:

- Commodore RCSSC
- Treasurer RCSSC
- Public Relations Officer RCSSC
- Committee Member RCSSC
- CSSC sailing taster day events organiser



## Cherbourg Rescue

by Ken Pavitt

We were leaving Cherbourg in the outer harbour when we saw someone on a foredeck raising and lowering both arms. We motored over and lashed alongside. They had got a fishnet round the prop which ripped the P bracket off the hull under the engine. We took some of their gear across to our yacht just in case, then set to work. Two men bailing up the steps with buckets is faster than any bilge pump so we could cope well with the flow. We took them into Cherbourg Marina and continued bailing, there was no way of getting to the leak. It

was Sunday lunchtime so I ran to the bar and said we need a crane or hoist at once. It took a bit of effort to make us understood but after a few phone calls it was arranged and they got lifted within an hour. They gave us their duty free and we resumed our way.





Dear fellow members of CSSA,

I am writing to you now to firstly put you in the picture about ECYD, thoughts on sailing this year and next; and secondly to ask for help in getting some new members on to the ECYD Committee.

## 2020 programme

According to the RYA there is no certainty that yachting will be possible for another few months. At present we have little information on if or when yachting can again take place this year, although the latest from the “experts” suggests twelve months!! My hope is that there will be a relaxation in the lock down rules and that we may be able to resume some sort of programme in the late Summer or early Autumn. The rules coming out from No 10 seem to change quite regularly.

This is assuming that UK marinas will be open for visitors - I doubt that there will be any chance of overseas travel. If that is the case and if we have interested skippers and/or crews then we could plan for trips up to 7 days out of Shotley to the Thames Estuary or the Solent.

When restrictions have been lifted, I envisage Freyja's first few weeks of activity will be around the Shotley area – a shake down ironing out wrinkles, familiarisation, boat handling and taster days. There could possibly be short Seetime trips.

We will need to keep in mind that even when the current restrictions are reduced, we may still be constrained in the manner to which we can assemble crews. For example how do we manage social distancing whilst a co-habiting family group would be able to live shoulder to shoulder on Freyja, but others who are only occasional ship mates or even close friends may not have the same freedom, or even if they did, might nevertheless have some anxiety about doing so. Also, if as is suggested, there will be some easing of restriction in stages, I am sure that older persons will be near the back of the queue – and we do have a number in that bracket.

Obviously, we will have to wait for the all-clear and then devise a programme according to the amount of time left. When we have some idea of this date we will contact our skippers to see what the take up might be and their preference of location.

In the meantime, however, I would appreciate it if we could receive expressions of interest - they cannot



be firm bids as we cannot put dates to anything at the moment. Please let the Yacht Secretary - [yachtsec@ecyd.org.uk](mailto:yachtsec@ecyd.org.uk) - and/or Crew Secretary - [crewing@ecyd.org.uk](mailto:crewing@ecyd.org.uk) - have your thoughts on what you would like to do if circumstances allow. It would be particularly helpful to know what minimum length of cruise you would sign up for.

I would think the Solent would probably be our best bet, it is within easy reach of most crews, though keeping Freyja at Shotley would reduce possible marina costs if we have periods without a charter. So, if restraints are sufficiently and suitably removed, and we have enough interest, we could aim to organise a cruise to the Solent and back. Legs would be limited so as to increase the number of opportunities for crews. It really depends on how much time we finally get – if any.

## The 2021 programme

In 2019 when we were planning for this year it was the Committee's intention to have the 2021 programme follow along the same lines. This would allow crews to explore more of the Baltic and quite importantly keep the costs down for charts and pilot books. The cost of a set of charts to cover from Holland through to Denmark and Sweden is huge and quite wasteful financially if we only use them for one year.

So, again it would be useful to know if you would be interested to take the same slot as was intended for 2020. Whatever your views, please let either the Yacht or Crew Secretary know.

I leave it to Skippers who might want to charter next year to decide whether to start consulting their potential crews at this point, or whether to wait and see how things work out. We could give thought to the idea of leaving for the Long Trip earlier than was planned for this year. Similarly, the programme would include Taster Sails, Boat Handling, and possibly short Sea-time trips of 3 or 4 days at either end of the Long Trip.



## The ECYD Committee

At the 2020 AGM, which is on Saturday 21 November, we will be looking at some changes to the membership of the ECYD Committee.

In the past the Committee have met in an evening at Littleton Sailing club, but I believe in the future we can all get together through the magic of Zoom or some other form of social media. That would mean we can have people on the committee who don't have to live within a reasonable drive to Littleton.

These volunteer roles are summarised below.

John Garside as editor of the ECYD News has said the magazine now needs a fresh look and someone younger to instil that freshness. John has done a wonderful job over many years and has said he would be on hand to assist the new editor. 'If you can use Word you can do this'

Similarly, we need a Web Master; Tony Lewis, our current post holder, is standing down. He has recently made great improvements to the web site, but thinks there is now scope to make it more modern. However, the immediate requirement is for someone to keep it up to date when there is new information that needs sharing. This is not difficult for anyone moderately familiar with a PC or Tablet. Tony will provide written guidance on how to do it using the existing hosting service and software.

David Crofts the Membership Secretary is also standing down. He is another important cog in the ECYD wheel. David acts as the link between Skippers and the Yacht Secretary, helping to keep the Long Trip on course.

If you are interested in any of the above (or perhaps you'd just like to chat about what's involved), please make contact with John or Tony or David, or with any committee member. And do bear in mind that these committee positions would enable you to participate in the future management of our club.

## Alan Dransfield

Finally, I have to tell you of the sad news that Alan died peacefully in early May this year. Here are a few words about his sailing life supplied by Gill, to whom we send our condolences and deep sympathy.

"Alan sailed with ECYD and Channel Sailing for more than 30 years as crew, mate and finally skipper from 1982 on many versions of Sea Essay, as well as Saoirse, Callisto, Triton, Pegasus and Freyja. He also served as a member of the General Committee of CSSA for several years. He taught himself to sail in a dinghy which he used to tow down to the south coast, before he decided he would like to be able to go further afield. Alan was always keen to see new places and went to the Baltic and Holland as well as Croatia, Turkey and Greece. However, he liked returning to the Breton coast and down the west coast of France. La Rochelle was perhaps his favourite port, both for sailing and for land-based holidays. A great deal of the pleasure Alan got from sailing came from the preparation and planning of the trips and the navigation side on the trip itself. He was able to sail up until 6 years ago when he needed to have hip surgery and unfortunately at that time he was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, but right until the end of his life Alan enjoyed looking at pictures of his sailing trips and talking about the people that sailed with him."

To everyone - best wishes and stay safe.

Brian Barnes Captain, ECYD



*The way it ought to be!*



# Mediterranean Moments

I was introduced to sailing through my friend and former workmate Chris Hubbard by way of two day-sails and a weekend sea-time in 2012 with Channel Sailing Division (CSD). By April 2013 I had my Day Skipper ticket. I wanted to go further but realised that much more experience was essential.

So far there had always been an experienced skipper on board as a backstop when we sailed. It was time to skipper a boat and to be that backstop. And to get the log entries necessary for advancing to YM Coastal. What better than a Mediterranean flotilla. No tides, warm waters, safe sailing, a lead crew to sort out the berthing, and of course, rather more exotic runs ashore.

And so it was in May 2014 that CSD members Chris, Tony Hinton, and I headed for the Greek South Ionian with our "Three Men in Boat" tee-shirts. We would each skipper for two days and be very disciplined about who was in charge. We'll take the azure seas, stunning scenery and sunshine as read.



The Three Skippers

This article focusses more on the more challenging Mediterranean Moments; getting to grips with skippering.

I was skipper on day 1: Nidri (Levkas) to Vathi (Meganisi) 16nm. This was a gentle introduction with a bit of boat familiarisation to see how Notos, our Dufour 34, handled under engine forward, astern and manoeuvring. Anchoring at lunchtime was the first real test of putting training into practice. All was well since the anchor went down and came up and we didn't float away between times! The mid-afternoon breeze got us sailing properly making around 6 knots. Mooring stern-to with a lazy line wasn't too much of a trial. We'd practised as best we could during boat handling coaching back in the UK.



South Ionian Sea

The one thing I learned quickly was that the flotilla lead crew's berthing support came into the category of advice. They could wave and send radio instructions as much as they liked but the skipper on the wheel is the decision maker and needs to maintain concentration.

Vathi to Fiskardo (Cephalonia) 22nm on day 2 with Chris in charge was our first experience of a significant afternoon breeze. We slipped the lazy line easily and after another lunchtime anchoring session we found ourselves in a F4 gusting F5.

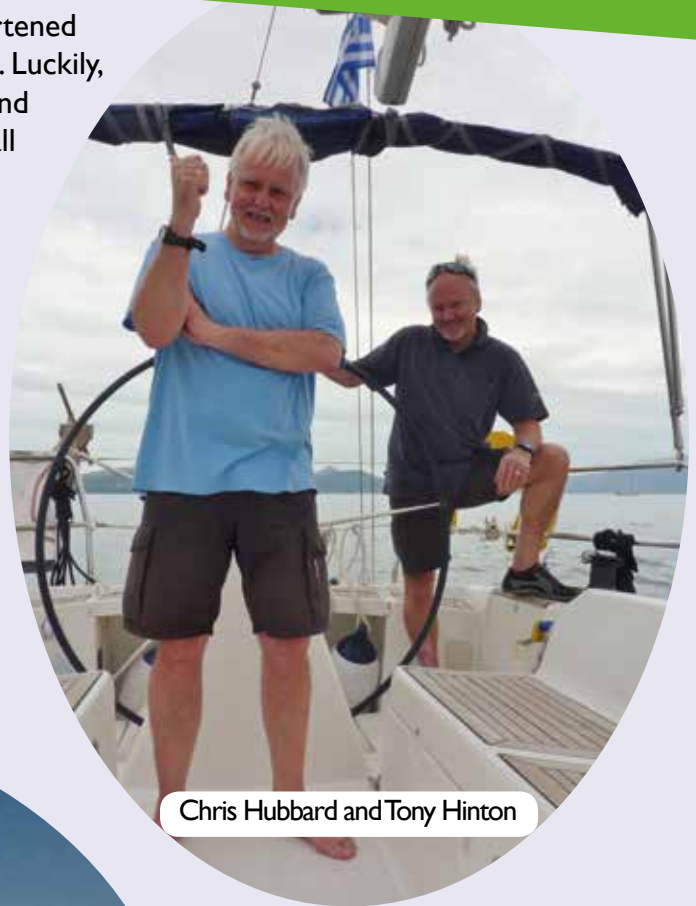


Notos

This felt like proper sailing with the first reef in and a shortened headsail. Fiskardo was bow-to and our first use of a kedge. Luckily, the lead crew deployed this from their tender. Lazy lines and anchor cables abound with boats being crammed into small spaces. We soon learned what fenders are for.

Thence 22nm southwards on day 3 to Ay Eufimia, where skipper Tony had to deal with a remarkably busy harbour along with strong gusts of winds being funnelled down the mountains. It meant starting the run a long way off to position for stern-to. Earlier that day we'd had a good morning breeze but by midday we were goosewinging to our lunchtime anchorage.

On day 4 it was my turn to take Notos 19nm to Vathi (Ithaka). No wind today so steaming to our anchorage, where I noted that we all swam and it was "idyllic". Goosewinging again after lunch until the wind disappeared although mid-afternoon change of direction got us sailing again.



Chris Hubbard and Tony Hinton



Chris on the helm

No anchoring today but stern-to in the little fishing harbour of Kioni with a lunch of sardines and Greek salad: plus alcohol of course. We knew that it was going to get breezy once we had left the lee of Ithaka. There were seven miles of open water and there was nothing to stop the westerly winds coming from Italy. Skipper Chris duly directed two reefs, a shortened headsail, and lifejackets.

It was as predicted. As soon as we came into the open we were met with F6 winds gusting 35knots

Sailing in light winds is a definite challenge. This said mooring in Vathi was alongside a three-boat raft in strong local gusts.

We managed to get some sailing in on the morning of day 5 on route to Sivota in the south of Levkas, another 19nm leg.



Three men in a boat



with moderate to rough seas. We were on a beam reach and Notos moved quickly through the water as the mainsail and headsail were trimmed as necessary. It was a great sail. As we took the sails down in Sivota inlet, I think that we rightly shared a sense of achievement.

On the last sailing day, it was Tony's job to take us the remaining 19nm to Nidri. On route we found a bay to anchor in, which needed a stern line.



Chris and Tony prepared



Tony at the helm

Happily, an adjacent boat had her tender in the water and the lady of the boat kindly deployed and recovered the stern line for us.

The day and our sailing trip ended with stern-to mooring at Notos' home port.

As recipients of "The Too Many Skippers Award" from the lead crew, we had achieved what we set out to do. Clearly it wasn't on the scale of an Atlantic crossing

but we had tested our confidence and competence in an area where idyllic conditions should never be taken for granted. We had done what we had

been trained to do and these were experiences that could be built upon.

And of course we experienced all the enjoyable aspects of sailing and going ashore in Greece.

## Buses and trains are quicker ...

by Ken Pavitt

You may know I am terrible at remembering people's names, but OK remembering places.

We were in St Vaast on Sea Essay and had to leave soon after breakfast to get out of the lock on the tide (note, cruising in North Brittany go from West to East to get best tide/lock times). We had not seen Dilly from the forecabin so we let her sleep in and set off. Half way to Grandcamp we decided to wake Dilly, and the forecabin was empty !! She had gone out via the forehatch to ablute (navy language). We had told her where we were going for the evening, so we decided to continue and ring back to the harbour at St Vaast on arrival, to sort it. But LO as we came to Grandcamp, who was standing on the

end of the pier but Dilly in minimal clothing waving her towel. She had blagged a bus fare from the harbourmaster at St Vaast. Several lessons here I think.



The impact of the virus and the lack of water due to a very sunny spring, has made life at Jumbles sailing club interesting.

Thanks to the really helpful RYA forums and very hard working Covid 19 sub-committee, we are open for recreational buddy sailing.



Low water level at Jumbles

Planning is well advanced to put safety on the water and to start some fun racing

on 5th July, all at a safe distance of course. In the meantime, our sailing secretaries put on eSailing every Sunday morning until we re-opened. Lee Cunningham our club champion was equally as good at virtual sailing as he is on the water...

Some of our members turned their skills from repairing sails and sail bags to sewing scrubs and scrub bags for the NHS. New staff at Royal Bolton hospital benefited as did those working in a local hospice. Our membership secretary Roger Marks

(see photo) proved an admirable model for his wife Margaret. "Eat your heart out David

Gandy" said one committee member....



Membership Secretary Roger Marks models scrubs



Jumbles scrubs 'production' line

One of our committee members, Brian Hoy, has come up with the idea of a sailing Marathon (when conditions allow) around all the buoys on Jumbles. Brian said "I was unable to take part in 2.6 during lockdown but it gave me the idea to do a marathon in my Wayfarer when lockdown was over.

I am a trustee of a charity which has built and funds a school in the Goderich district of Sierra Leone for children who would not normally have an education, to try to break their cycle of poverty. All charities have suffered during the pandemic so I guess it's up to people like me to help make up the shortfall.

I hope others will join in as well to help raise money either for us or their own causes. I'm sure it will be a challenge no matter what the weather conditions". If you would like to support Brian his charity can be seen at [www.extra-mile.org](http://www.extra-mile.org) or he can be contacted via the club email address [info@jumblesail.co.uk](mailto:info@jumblesail.co.uk)



Brian Hoy working at the Extra Mile School Sierra Leone 2016



The confluence of Zwicky II's fortieth birthday and the 75th anniversary of VE Day has triggered a bout of nostalgia which readers may come to regret.



Let's talk masts.

While no-one has yet discovered a more reliable way of holding sails up, they can at times be a bloody nuisance.

One such case was when I took my previous boat, not surprisingly called Zwicky, up to the Pool of London to pick up a PLA mooring off Traitors' Gate and close to Tower Pier. The night before the fascinating passage up river was spent in Upnor on the Medway. Tide wise, everything went to plan and we arrived at Tower Bridge at high water and picked up a large commercial buoy to wait for the tide to fall sufficiently to pass under. My calculations proved to be sound and we duly passed under the bridge and picked up our mooring. We could have asked for the bascules to be lifted but, for a pleasure trip, it seemed unreasonable to temporarily halt traffic in a busy part of London.

During the following ten days I reverse commuted to Farnborough while my family explored hidden parts of London. While I would row ashore early to catch my train, the police boats based just down river at Wapping seemed more than happy to provide a taxi service for my family.

Upon my return one evening, I was so keen to check the mooring lines that I didn't make the dinghy properly secure and it set off down-river

on its own. I couldn't set off in chase because of the wretched mast. I had no VHF (the height of extravagance in those days) so I set off a white flair to get the attention of people on Tower Pier, just within hailing distance.

A police boat came up from Wapping and we set off in chase. The dinghy had entered a forest of piles which support the roadway access to the Tower Hotel and there was no way the launch could enter. I was put on a relatively light cross-member to crawl my way into this forest, with a torrent flowing underneath, to retrieve the tender who's outboard had caught on one of these beams. I never admitted to the coppers that I could not swim, though I did wear a life-jacket.

When we came to leave London, it was neap tides and I didn't even bother to do the calculations. Zwicky could clearly pass underneath: a confidence that quickly evaporated as we drew close. I put the engine hard astern in panic, which slowed us down but did not stop us before the burgee stick went chink, chink, chink on every beam.

Which brings us to the connection with the VE Day celebrations: the Red Arrows. Watching them on the television reminded me of another incident. I was single-handing Zwicky II on one of many passages to the Netherlands. I had just cleared Dungeness and was relaxing on a beautiful July afternoon when I looked around to see a line of fast jets heading straight for me below mast height.



It was the Red Arrows presumably transiting between shows and they passed frighteningly close. The leader gave me a puff of blue smoke to reassure me that he had actually seen me. It could even have been that they deliberately decided to put the frighteners on me. Some years later, I was recounting this story to an RAF fighter pilot colleague who told the tale of a friend of his who was serving in the Red Arrows. They were performing off Brighton when, fortunately heading out to sea, this friend's aircraft hit the mast of a boat in the marina. He ejected safely and the aircraft plunged into the sea. They had introduced a 35 ft minimum operating height and he only avoided court-marshal because the mast was about 38 ft high. Most of us have never considered jet aircraft as a significant hazard. The IRPCS do not offer much guidance.



## Trains and boats...

by Ken Pavitt

Chris Malone (Rear Commodore, Offshore) and I both lived in flats overlooking the moorings at Hardway in Gosport. I had met the owner of a fast slim 30ft trimaran moored there and I got a call from him saying I need to return the yacht from Poole at the weekend, do you want a ride. So, I said 'Yes please, and can I bring another crewman'. I rang Chris and he said yes please too, but added that he had to be back by teatime Saturday for somebody's birthday. We all agreed and went to the yacht on Friday evening on a mooring off Brownsea. However, on Saturday morning it was blowing F7 and the owner wanted to wait. At lunchtime Chris said that he had to go, so we ferried him ashore so

he could get a taxi and then a train. As we returned to the vessel the wind was already dropping and we soon decided to go. We had a fast-broad reach back (mainly 10-11 knots). I discovered that at that speed the heading is very sensitive, a few degrees off and speed drops. The owner was watching me, and whenever it was not completely optimum he lost his smile and started to fidget, so I began steering just by watching his expression instead of the instruments it was quicker and more accurate! In the Solent he took over and showed how well he knew his yacht. When we arrived back at the mooring Chris came out on his balcony and waved at us, he had only just got home.

## Sailing Lingo Quiz update

There has been several responses to the Sailing Lingo Quiz featured in the last edition, in particular about Q9 the bowline question, for reference it's repeated in next column. The answer was given as D.

However, several people have been in touch and suggested the following:

- if you have ever tried to undo a bowline under strain you will know it is nigh on impossible
- one reason why it is such a reliable knot, it tightens on itself the harder it is tensioned
- of the other answers A. B & C could all be correct
- C is the correct answer as an exclusive merit for the bowline is that it will not slip

**9. As an experienced sailing yachtsman, you know the most useful knot on a sailing boat is the bowline, but why is it the MOST useful?**

- Because it is easy to untie in the dark
- Because it can be used to tie almost anything together
- Because it never slips
- Because it is easy to untie when wet or under a strain

**Answer: d - Because it is easy to untie when wet or under a strain.**

Because the bowline is used to secure the sheets to the sail clews and are almost always under strain, and, of course, it's always wet on a sail boat, it's considered the most useful knot. The other answers are true but not the main reason to use the bowline on a sailing boat.



# Boating in the Baltic

In the absence of any long trip CSSA happening at the time of writing I thought you might like to share some of my Baltic experiences from a trip I made last June.

I'm an avid collector and reader of old books on sailing and having read Arthur Ransome's stories of sailing in the Baltic I was taken by the romanticism and mystery of this place of sand dunes, pine forests and maybe secret policemen in trench coats; so, when long-standing sailing buddy Tracey Hindmarsh told me about a chance to sail in the Baltic last June I jumped at it.

And so it was that a flight to Hamburg and a bus ride to Kiel found me joining the good ship Starling - a Clipper 60, one of the original Clipper round the world fleet, now run by Rubicon 3 who specialise in adventure sailing. She had already passed through the Kiel canal with her previous crew and was now on her way to St Petersburg. I was to be on board for 12 days, disembarking at Gdansk.

After the usual introductions and briefing the crew of 11 I set off to find somewhere to eat. Somehow, we ended up in a "restaurant" where serving ladies with tattooed décolletage served us massive portions of meat with potatoes and other carbohydrates, in various shades of orange. So far, so stereotypical.

Kiel – Heilighshafen (35 NM)

The following day we set sail across the large, sheltered bay north of Kiel, a pleasantly clean and modern port. It is well known to sailors for Kiel Week, a major regatta which takes place in this bay.

After being shooed away from a military area by a patrol boat we headed for our first stop at Hieleghenhafen, 30 odd miles east along the low-lying north German coast. It was a pleasant uneventful sail and we arrived early evening and followed the



Gdansk centre

long channel towards the harbour, all the while looking for somewhere where a 60 foot yacht drawing well over 2 metres might berth. German is not best-known for its pithy succinct words and it was a challenge trying to decipher words like Kopfliegeplatz on the sign at the end of a pontoon but we did eventually find a spacious quayside in the more industrial part of the harbour, though once again it was clean and smart. It was a short walk to the town and a bar with tables outside suitable for a thirsty crew.

Heilighshafen – Rostock (60 NM)

Departing Hieleghenhafen we needed to go the long way round the island of Fehmarn as we were too big to go under the bridge. All the coast here is low and sandy, with pine trees in many parts and it's not ideal for a deep draught boat. Next stop was Rostock, a town with a long-sheltered river entrance and a number of yacht harbours and marinas along the approach. We wanted to be central so held out for the Stadthafen (town harbour) and tied up alongside a suitable pontoon.

Once settled, our skipper led us, pied piper-like, through the city and most of the suburbs to find a bar, which we eventually did. I wouldn't like to give the impression it's difficult to get a beer in Germany, we just seemed to go the wrong way.

We had a lay day the following day and spent it looking round Rostock. There are some very picturesque and colourful old streets as well as some grand squares with the large public buildings typical of the Hanseatic League towns, and of course plenty of outside cafes. These reflect the wealth of an era when trade between coastal towns across the Baltic was at a peak. We were blessed with a beautiful evening and watched the sun setting over the river while we drank beer and ate snacks from the vans.



Rostock town marina

## Rostock – Stralsund (60 NM)

And so off on the next leg of our journey. We stopped at the marina just outside the river entrance for fuel and then turned north-east. The wind piped up in the latter stages of this passage and sent us powering downwind towards the low smudge of white sand and pine trees that is the island of Hiddensee. Gybing a boat the size of this one is no trivial matter. A preventer is always used downwind and she is well set-up for these. The yankee and staysail are pretty meaty as are the sheets and winches. As we approached the dunes we entered a channel and headed up 90 degrees to starboard to reach along the channel towards Stralsund. Stralsund is a particular gem of the North German coast. Still in the former West Germany the town has many beautiful buildings, good bars and restaurants and two museums of sea life! The harbour is home to both modern hi-tech racing boats and classic wooden boats.

The next day was Sunday and after a wander round the old town I met up with some of the other crew for lunch at a fish shop/restaurant by the harbour, that specialised in all sorts of smoked, pickled and fresh fish with not a tiger prawn or farmed bass fillet in sight. You had to pick your fish at the counter and inevitably there was quite a lot of pointing and signing going on. I had smoked eel stew – cockles at Leigh-on-Sea will never be quite the same again.



Peenemünde mooring

## Stralsund – Peenemünde (30 NM)

We set off later that day for our first taste of the former East Germany. First, we had to wait for the Rugen bridge to open after which we raced the locals down a narrow and shallow channel between Rugen and the mainland. The surrounding land was low lying with reed beds and woods. The channel is well-marked but this is a place

where a shallow draft boat would be in its element. Constrained by our draft we were unable to sail, unlike some of the local boats. On the plus side a big boat like ours certainly eats up the miles and we made the 30 miles to Peenemünde before dark and entered a natural harbour via an inlet and tied up alongside what could have been a Staithe in Norfolk were in not for the Soviet submarine across the “broad”.



Stralsund inner harbour

Peenemünde is where the V-2 rockets were developed during the Second World War. The area is naturally beautiful but has a spooky air, overlooked by the weapons factory which now houses a museum. The next day most of the crew visited the factory and the Russian submarine, while I wandered off to enjoy the natural sights. That night a stage was set up across the water and we were “treated” to a concert from a rather sinister heavy metal band. This place was nothing if not interesting.

## Peenemünde – Ystad (80 NM)

And so to Sweden. A day's sailing north, still in fine weather, took us to Ystad on the southern coast of Sweden. Once again Starling was too big for the marina and we found a berth in the commercial harbour, a short walk from the town centre. Ystad is a small town with some pretty architecture and a huge church (pretty much a Baltic staple it seems). At certain times of the day a man appears from a window high up in the church and blows a horn, then repeats the process at each of the four sides of the tower. The other attraction of the town is simply the best chandlers I've ever seen. It is part normal chandler with the usual clothing and hardware, and part museum with a fantastic collection of nautical bric-a-brac. It's worth a visit for this alone.



We had one day in Ystad and didn't even change money as most cafes and restaurants won't accept cash. Sweden is pretty expensive so we did most of our eating on board. Beer from the supermarket is only 2.8% or 3.5% alcohol, so pretty bland – no wine or spirits from normal shops. I'm sure most boats visiting will be well aware of this and arrive sitting quite low in the water. Our Swedish sojourn was short-lived and coincided with a grey patch in the weather but I'd like to go back and see more.

## Ystad – Hel (180 NM)

We set off in the morning and by-passed the delightful island of Bornholm. The winds were a little light so we didn't do much sailing, then they fell away completely and the day and night passed with a sense of



Peenemunde mooring

pleasant monotony that accompanies

long calm motoring passages. Morning brought us back to the southern Baltic shores – white sand beaches, pines and all. In a flat calm we hooked round a long sand spit and into the harbour of the delightfully named resort of Hel – we had arrived in Poland. Once the boat was put to bed we headed ashore for brunch and were happy to find a menu of fishy delights for very modest money. Hel is the only place I've eaten turbot twice in one day – that sounds completely wrong. In the afternoon we bought ice creams and walked through the pines to the endless white sand beach on the outside. It was very hot (I'm resisting an obvious pun here) and not at all what I was expecting of my first visit to Poland.

## Hel – Gdansk (15 NM)

The following day was our final sail, we made the short hop across the bay to enter the river leading up to Gdansk. The approaches to Gdansk,

scene of the great Solidarity events that ultimately led to the end of the Soviet bloc, were much as expected. Huge shipyard cranes, warehouses and other industrial features lined the banks.

Approaching the city centre the surroundings changed. Gdansk has a beautiful and historic heart, reflecting its prosperous past as a Hanseatic League city, sometimes German, sometimes Polish and as an independent city state. The city is built on a network of river branches and islands, joined by bridges. There are pedestrianised streets and squares, with the huge churches and secular buildings that were becoming so familiar in the Baltic cities. Our marina was right in the centre so a group of us took the dinghy and explored by water. Later the crew picked a restaurant for our final meal. I hadn't expected a Baltic trip to major on gourmet experiences but Poland came up trumps. The low cost of living is a factor but both Hel and Gdansk were great places to eat out.

And so inevitably the trip had to end. Looking at the map I saw I had only seen a small part of the Baltic but every journey starts with one step. There will hopefully be others, if not this year. We were extremely lucky with the weather. Our trip in early June coincided with a spell of poor weather in Blighty and a bit of a heatwave in the Baltic and



Peenemunde

sailing conditions were excellent.

Best of all we had almost no rain, making for more comfortable sailing.

This year may have been a bit of a non-event so far but I've ear-marked the Baltic for a return at some time in the near future and can definitely recommend it. Freyja's Baltic trip this year has been cancelled but I think there's a good chance it will be on the menu for 2021, and if not there are chartering options.

# A Cautionary Tale

Following the loss of Cheekie Rafiki in 2014 (See the MAIB report available at [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/55408664e5274a157200005b/MAIBInvReport\\_8\\_2015.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/55408664e5274a157200005b/MAIBInvReport_8_2015.pdf) ) there has been a focus on inspecting the keel bolts of yachts for damage, we have been doing this in liaison with our yacht inspector.



He had advised that when our yacht Ynot was lifted out for annual maintenance that we check that there was no wobble when the keel was tensioned. This year we noted that water dripped out between the hull and keel, the seal was incomplete. The boat yard advised dropping the keel, checking and cleaning the area and checking the bolts for damage before replacing the sealant. The inspector said we could just observe but perhaps needed to get this repaired before Ynot was sold on.

The committee had to decide whether to incur the expense and whose advice to follow! By this time (end of March 2020) the country was in lockdown due to Covid-19 and it was looking as though this might be a good time to have repairs done as there was no urgency to get Ynot back in the water. The other reason was to ensure the yacht was safe for use by club members.

The yard then dropped the keel and discovered a much more serious problem that a section of the matrix was detached from the hull, this can be hidden by the tension in the keel bolts holding the layers together. This separation was also highlighted in the Cheeki Rafiki report. It is difficult to check for this problem without removing the keel although the experts can find it by tapping with a hammer and noting a change in the vibration.

The yard and inspector suggested that this could have happened following a grounding, several had been reported during our ownership and it is likely there were some during her time as a school yacht on the Solent. The hull and keel had been inspected by a diver or the yacht had been lifted out following the two incidents and no external damage was noted.

We were able to review these groundings by checking our skipper feedback forms and CSSA accident report forms and were able to write a comprehensive report for our insurers. Fortunately, the insurers accepted liability so most of the expense of the repair will not have to be paid by the club.

The MAIB report covers opinions on groundings which were thought by some to be a normal part of sailing. Awareness that the impact can cause serious damage that could later lead to loss of the keel is very sobering. The difficulty in checking for the detachment of layers of the hull is something we need to consider when buying a second-hand yacht and should discuss with our yacht inspector during the SCV coding checks.





## Round the Island Race

rescheduled to  
26 September  
2020

## Southampton International Boat Show 2020

11 - 20 September  
A decision will be made by  
July 1 as to the format  
and date of the  
show

## RYA encourages boaters to share training memories

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the RYA's world-leading training. RYA want to hear how RYA training has impacted you. Please send your images, anecdotes and favourite memories to: [50years@rya.org.uk](mailto:50years@rya.org.uk) for the chance to win a special commemorative glass

## Cowes Week 2020

cancelled  
back in 2021  
July 31 to  
August 7

## RYA

Applications for  
Club of the Year 2021  
will open in August  
2020

## Isle of Wight Marine Mammal Sightings

The University of Portsmouth is conducting a research project investigating the locations that marine mammals (ie whales, dolphins, porpoises and seals) have been sighted around the Isle of Wight. This information is important for developing a map that will contain the possible areas which marine mammals may visit.

The more survey responses acquired the more accurate the final map of marine mammal sightings will be. This will provide a much clearer picture of marine mammal occurrence around the Isle of Wight, which will then inform future fieldwork by telling scientists the best places and time-of-year to look for these animals. If you would like to take part in this survey.

Please follow the link below to complete the survey which closes on 26th July 2020  
<https://bit.ly/iowmarinemammals>

## NOTICE to the YACHTING and MARITIME COMMUNITY

FROM  
THE ROYAL SOUTHAMPTON YACHT CLUB and the  
ROYAL NAVAL VOLUNTEER RESERVE  
YACHT CLUB

In recognition of the 400th Anniversary of the departure of THE MAYFLOWER and SPEEDWELL You are invited to join with the Royal Southampton and Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve Yacht Clubs in a



## GRAND PARADE OF SAIL - SATURDAY, 15 AUGUST 2020

Vessels/yachts will muster between Marchwood and Mayflower Park at 1030h departing at 1100h sailing to Greenland Buoy. Together with the ASTO sail training fleet, Tall Ships, Historical Vessels, VIPs and a myriad of other vessels sail and motor, the spectacle will be a feature of our Maritime History and recognition of the valuable world-wide contribution Southampton has given over hundreds of years. Saturday's Parade of Sail will be a significant reminder of the link between the south coast and beyond to the historic Mayflower voyage of 1620.

All arrangements are subject to COVID-19 Government Regulations at the time but we anticipate a successful launch to the event.

Spectators on shore will find Mayflower Park, Town Quay, Weston Shore and Hythe will be good vantage points to view the spectacle.

To register your vessel, please email [RSYC Capt. of Cruising](mailto:RSYC Capt. of Cruising) [lauriebates@mac.com](mailto:lauriebates@mac.com) 023 8084 7852 and sign on to the Parade of Sail.

Alternatively contact [mayflower400@rnyrc.org](mailto:mayflower400@rnyrc.org) /07932 674894. Full instructions will be forwarded to you upon registration.

Ask about the flotilla following to Dartmouth and Plymouth.

For more information about Southampton's Mayflower 400 celebrations visit the official website at <https://visitsouthampton.co.uk/mayflower-400>

Following the Parade of Sail there will be an M400 Rally 15-26 August 2020 linking Southampton, Dartmouth and Plymouth



## What are your thoughts on the future of boating and the topic of boat insurance?

Have your say and chance to win with the MS Amlin Boating Marketplace Survey 2020

The survey is open until 31st August 2020 and should take around 10 minutes to complete.

The survey can be accessed by visiting: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/LGFHNTM>

The Boating Marketplace Survey 2020 provides you with an opportunity to share your opinion and be in with a chance of winning a prize hamper of boating goods worth circa £1000 for yourself and a £1000 cash prize for your chosen club and/or association.

If you have any questions about the survey please email: [yachtmarketing@msamlin.com](mailto:yachtmarketing@msamlin.com)



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