

KESSINGLAND SEA SAILING CLUB

Newsletter



Autumn 2008

Issue 46

Commodore's Notes

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Where was summer this year? Certainly not where I live, or anywhere else in the UK, according to most reports.

But it was in Greece and it was most welcome. If you didn't get there this year, try and do so next year. I've heard some members are sorting their dates out already, so let John know your plans as soon as possible to avoid disappointment.

My week on Ploes was very enjoyable. With 3 other members we visited many beautiful places, and had some great meals as well as good sailing.

This included hooligan winds on our longest passage, across the Saronic, which eventually made us run for cover into the bay below the Temple of Poseidon.

The boat stood up to it well and proved very seaworthy, provided you didn't lose concentration going over or through the waves!

Ploes was used a great deal this year and proved to be a good buy.

During the year there were several problems but with the good will of members and excellent support from John Bird I hope they are now behind us. However, I expect that there always will be problems because we use Ploes so much, but as we are a self help club it's up to us all to sort them out so she is ready for the next crew.

One major thing which I know John would appreciate is that the bookings, payments and administration be done right first time. If things do have to change keep him fully up to date. He sometimes spends a lot of time chasing for boat fees and temp. member money, which should not be necessary at all. We are all volunteers and our spare time is limited.

He must also have a complete list of all on board. If the boat was lost we should be able to tell the search teams who to look for.

I'm pleased to say that Explorer was used more this year and it would have been more if the weather had been better. There will be quite a lot to do to her over the winter so please offer any of your spare time to help get it all done.

We will be repeating the March sailing evening next year as it seemed very worthwhile.

The AGM and Laying Up Supper are the next social events so please note the dates, 14th and 15th November.

June will be sending out details so please let us know who is coming asap. It's always difficult when many leave it until the last few days before deciding to tell us they're coming.

Hope to see many of you then

Paul

NOTICE OF AGM

The Annual General Meeting of our Club will be on Friday 14th November at 7.30pm. The meeting will follow the procedure on pages 19-21 of the yearbook.

After the meeting closes, usually about 45 mins, we will have a general informal discussion about anything you want, relevant to the club. This year we hope to follow this at 8.30 with a talk and slide presentation:-

Yacht "Pelagia" 2007/8 Transatlantic crossing & Caribbean cruising lecture and slideshow by Chris and Pat Richardson, which should finish by 10pm

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Explorer rounds the Farnes!

Last June, 2007, a voyage to Lindisfarne was planned but instead of turning north out of the piers at Lowestoft harbour, Explorer, and her crew (Ben Horwood, Kay Osler and Philip Spender), turned south and fetched up playing about in the Orwell and the Stour to let five days of northerly strong winds go through. As the winds began to blow from the south a magical spinnaker run from Felixstowe to off Happisburgh led to a GREAT ADVENTURE on the Humber but that's another story from another year!

This June, 2008, saw a fine but flat calm start to the second attempt, by the same crew, to anchor off Lindisfarne so this time Explorer turned north! Through Yarmouth Roads, leaving Cromer behind as she set course for the Race channel, past the Humber as fog banks came and went but never enveloping the boat, then, with visibility improving and the occasional porpoise back breaking the oily sea together with growing flocks of guillemots, razor bills, and the odd puffin appearing, the scene was set for the appearance of Flamborough Head rising magnificently and vertically out of the sea.

Speeding on towards Filey Brigg with the favourable tide, the wind began to make from the North. It was possible to lose the engine and have a reasonable beat with long starboard boards as we made for Scarborough. Tucking in behind the promontory upon which sits the magnificent castle, Explorer fetched up in 3 metres of water and anchored waiting for the tide to make. It wasn't long before the harbour master called from his office in the lighthouse on the end of the pier, giving details about access to the visitor pontoon. There's room for about 6 visiting boats of about Explorer's size in a very narrow channel which is dredged to about her depth. Taking the

ground against the harbour wall, opposite the pontoon, were 2 large and veteran, if not vintage, pleasure steamers for the day trippers.

The crew made its way to the Scarborough Yacht clubhouse, co-founded by Albert Strange and complete with his boat designs on the walls, for a shower and a beer then a quick stroll around the town. Scarborough has, rather like Ramsgate, its high as well as low spots!

During the night Regal Lady, one of the pleasure steamers, lost its stern mooring and swung, closing off the exit from Scarborough old harbour! Fortunately there was a burst of activity and Explorer was able leave in the morning to beat into a northerly 4-5 with a reefed main. Tacking into Robins Hood bay the wind eased and the reef was shaken out. With the wind to her liking it wasn't long before she was making her way between the outer piers of Whitby Harbour with the cliff top to port dominated by the ruins of the abbey and the church. The entrance to this, the only north facing, harbour in the area was not yet compromised by the northerly wind as it had not long blown from that quarter.

Entering Whitby lives up to all that might be expected from Captain James Cook's home port, complete with motorised replicas of ships of his era taking the unsuspecting trippers out into the Whitby Road and back! Explorer joined the queue to go through the bridge and tied up to the pontoon in the marina, leaving the crew to go ashore and sample the delights of the Magpie cafe where the fish and chips are deep-fried in proper Yorkshire dripping!

Leaving Whitby at the first bridge opening of the day, Explorer again turned north with a lovely hot and sunny day but no wind! As she continued past the magnificent green cliffs and bays of North Yorkshire, including the small and very picturesque drying port of Sea-houses, it seemed as if all the professional and amateur sea-going fishermen in their traditional cobbles, and not-so-traditional boats, were set to clear out the mackerel from this part of the North Sea!

Now the time had come for the final stage but, as luck would have it, the forecast was for west 4-5 occasionally 6 which put the lid on any hope of anchoring at Lindisfarne. The only option left was to round the Farnes and return to Amble. Explorer set off into a murky day with reefed main and reduced genoa, passing Dunstanburgh castle, a magnificent ruin set on a naturally defensive site. With the wind picking up to a 6, as well as a tidal effect, sail was shortened further as the amazing Farnes became more and more visible. A waypoint was set northeast of Longshore to avoid the rocks. Approaching the waypoint the overfalls plus wind against tide caused even Explorer to move about a bit! Heaving-to calmed everything down, allowing the crew to lunch on cup-a-soups (ASDA Ainsley Green highly recommended) and cheese and pickle sarnies whilst options were considered. Decision: Carry On Round the Farnes!

There followed a favorable beat into shore, aiming for Bamburgh Castle to round Swedman, a starboard can close to the beach. As Explorer closed the buoy, and the beach and the castle sharpened in focus, the murk cleared and the wind then increased out of a clear blue sky. Lindisfarne was in sharp relief to the northwest as Explorer turned to the south, clear of any danger. Surfing downhill at 12 and a half knots, in what was developing into a full blown gale, with overfalls and wind over tide meant the decision to douse the mainsail and ensure a thorough stowage by a secure lashing to the boom was not hard to make! Reducing the genoa, Explorer did what she always does and settled down, taking the following seas in her stride.

The tripper boats to the Farnes from Craster were looking decidedly uncomfortable with this change of circumstances as Explorer passed over a drift net abandoned by one of the local boats. Fortunately there were no snaggings and Explorer continued an uninterrupted return to Amble marina and a celebratory pint at a local pub.

Now came the time to return south at, hopefully, a more leisurely pace. Next morning, setting out from Amble in the sun, rounding Coquet Island a course was set for Sunderland. After a good sail Explorer enjoyed a welcome stay at the water leisure centre with its petrified waterfall. The crew took a tour of the glass museum plus a demonstration of glass blowing, which was fascinating, but the exploration of the city left a growing realisation that there was a better example of urban regeneration to be had elsewhere. That was to be found at Hartlepool. Following a hull down trip through a northwesterly swell, which had built up over a number of days of wind from that direction, Explorer rounded the headland, found calm waters and a comfortable berth in Hartlepool marina.

Later with a westerly 4-5 pushing her along, she took the ebb down the Humber and out to sea, passing through the gas and fuel ships anchored for the next flood into the river. Good visibility gave views of the Lincolnshire coast, not seen previously due to either murk or night sailing. Explorer was sailing at her best when, inevitably somehow, the wind began to fade as she entered Race channel. She approached the Norfolk coast under power with the shore lights of Sheringham and Cromer appearing as dusk changed to night. In retrospect, anchoring close inshore in Hemsby hole was the better option but early dawn saw Explorer slipping across the banks from the roads to anchor off Yarmouth to wait for the tide to change. A quick breakfast before a short sail and Explorer was returning through the piers at Lowestoft to tie up in the berth she left 609 miles earlier, having yet again proved how sea kindly and sympathetic boat she is.

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Explorer in Hull



Approaching Whitby

S.I.P.R. –A BIRTHDAY BASH WITH A DIFFERENCE



It's 02:00 hours and it's dark. Not pitch black, as there's a moon behind the scattered clouds, but all I can see are the distant lights of Ayr and Girvan 15 miles away, and a single white light a mile or 2 ahead flashing 3 times every 30 seconds. The light marks the dangerous rocks off Pladda, an islet at the SE corner of Arran. Will we pass a safe distance off the dangers? Concentrate! I'm tired and I want to go to sleep. How did I get talked into this?

The Scottish Islands Peaks Race (SIPR) is an insane combination of yacht sailing and fell-running for teams of five. Our team comprised Richard Snowden (a former colleague) and Mark Buskwood as runners and Tom Rodgers, Charlie Smallwood (HSBC) and me as sailors. (Full details of the event can be found on the web site: Google SIPR). I chartered a 36' yacht from Crinan and we sailed to Oban for the start. At noon on Friday 16th May (my birthday) the event started with a 7km run around Oban. As the runners completed the course, they ran straight down the beach to where a team-mate was waiting in the dinghy to ferry them to the yacht.

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Tom, being an accomplished canoeist, was our ferry-man, and he quickly brought Richard and Mark to the yacht, where they all scrambled aboard, hauled the dinghy onto the foredeck and lashed it down. Then the engine was cut, sails set and we were off on the first sailing leg, to Salen on Mull.

Once clear of Oban harbour, our course put us on a beat, with the wind 45° off our port bow. When we turned into the Sound of Mull, the wind came right on the nose, so we tacked to and fro, sailing at 45° to the wind first on one side then the other, and so beat a zig-zag course to Salen. Tom rowed the runners ashore while Charlie helped me anchor the boat. Once Tom was back aboard, we did a bit of boat maintenance on the steering, then cooked our evening meal, leaving plenty for Mark and Richard.

It was dusk when the runners returned, and as soon as they were aboard we set sail for the next island, Jura. With a gentle breeze behind us, we hoisted the rather lurid red, green and yellow spinnaker, and as darkness enveloped us, picked our way between a series of flashing buoys marking dangerous rocks. We turned South into the Firth of Lorne and I snatched a couple of hours sleep until the next tricky bit: the Sound of Luing. This is a narrow stretch of water between the islands of Luing and Scarba. The tide rushes through the narrows at 3 or 4 knots, and there are rocks hidden just below the surface to catch the unwary. We passed through safely and pressed on in the morning light to Craighouse on the Isle of Jura. We put the runners ashore and after a welcome breakfast, collapsed into our bunks.

Richard said on his return that the run over the Paps of Jura had been very hard; jagged rocks underfoot and a cold mist shrouding the mountains. Now came the longest and hardest sail; around the Mull of Kintyre to the Isle of Arran. The Mull has a fearsome reputation among mariners: the strong tidal currents around the headland cause large breaking waves. For two hours we bounced and crashed through the waves, frequently taking spray over the cockpit, until we clawed our way clear of the Mull and set a course for Arran. There was a long way to go still, and Tom volunteered to cook chille con carne and rice for us all although the boat was heeled over at about 20°. The cooker is gimballed so that it stays horizontal at sea, but the cook still has to brace himself against the motion of the boat. We ate in turn so as to leave two men always sailing the boat. Midnight came and went, and still we pressed on towards the flashing light on Pladda that marked the turning point for the final run into Lamlash.

As we turned into Lamlash Bay the wind all but died away. Crews with more experience of this event had brought long oars. This was

the time they came into effect. I reckon we would have gained half an hour if we had been equipped with oars at this stage. We had to use only sail power, as we ghosted up to the pier on a breath of wind. Like a well-oiled machine, we landed our runners and tied the boat up to a visitors' mooring buoy. With just five hours before they were expected back, we lost no time in getting our heads down. All too soon it was time to rouse ourselves, eat and send Tom ashore to wait for Mark and Richard.

They arrived on schedule and quite exuberant for having finished the last run well. It was a beat into a light North-Easterly breeze, so great concentration was required on the helm. We were 8th boat to leave Arran, and passed another boat on the way to finish 7th overall at Troon. Better still, we found we were 2nd in Class 2, the 'cruiser/racer' class. We celebrated with, in strict order, a cup of tea, a shower, a sleep, a large meal and a few beers.

Francis A. Ursell
(Skipper, 'Thalia')

An excellent week aboard Ploes – The Girven family.

We had booked Ploes for a week in early June, and with hindsight we should have booked her for two weeks, our holiday was so enjoyable. It was Angie's first sailing trip, also it was my son Jon's first sailing trip, Andy Seal and myself made up the experience in the crew.

We had initially planned two days sightseeing in Athens and seeing that Ploes was unexpectedly available the week before we arrived, we booked her as an excellent live aboard, cheaper than the four of us staying in a Hotel in Athens.

We were very impressed when we arrived, she was in excellent condition and very well provisioned by John Bird a few days previously. I emailed John Bird to say how impressed we were and he said you wait until you sail her, and how right he was!

On Saturday we collected some last minute provisions and set off for our first days sailing, we had decided to follow anticlockwise tour of Islands, as recommended and detailed by Jeff Heath. We started with a leisurely trip of about 15 miles to Kea, arriving in Yourkari anchoring easily off town waterfront. We swam around the harbour, had a light meal on the boat then it was a very lively and expensive Saturday

Tuesday we motored the 10 miles to Paroika on Paros and arranged for the sail to be repaired at Alfros Chandlers in the morning. I made a third trip to the top of the mast and we got the Halyard down by rotating the furler at base while trimming the plastic furler sleeve at top. While I was up the mast Andy had to move Ploes along the wall slightly to allow a 60 foot Motor boat and then a 150 foot motor boat to moor beside us.

We spoke to the skipper and he said that the 60 footer cost £3500 per day plus fuel and food to hire, about £30,000 per week I would guess all included. I shudder to think what the 150 footer would cost as it had a Jacuzzi on the top deck, plus a 40 foot tender travelling with it, carrying the provisions and support crew. Andy negoti-

ated a slab of beer for us after we had to move the boat while I was conducting delicate surgery at the top of the mast. Paros was our favourite place, very relaxed and peaceful in spite of the money.

Wednesday we had the straps on the sail repaired plus several small tears on the luff and re-fitted it to the mast. The neighbouring yachts were warning us of Force 8 Northerlies forecast for Friday, we decided to set off as soon as possible before the strong winds hit us, for Kithnos 40 miles to the north mooring up on the end of the harbour wall in sleepy town only to find loud music blaring out again until 4.30am.

Thursday we had a 20 mile close reach Force 4 to Cape Sounio arriving for a cuppa and a swim at 5pm near the Posiedon Temple as shown in the photo, but we also had force 6 winds in the bay while we were at anchor. At 8pm we then motored the 5 miles back to the Olympic Marina for a quiet and safe night out of the wind.

Friday the wind developed all day, Saturday saw a force 6 wind howling through the Marina entrance, we were glad not to be out at sea still. However, even in a force 6 the sea in Greece is quite calm. My impression is that it is not like a force 6 around the English Coast with confused seas.

Monday we sailed on to Naxos again about 30 miles. We were again on a broad reach until 1530 when we noticed that the mainsail was falling down? We tied it to the boom and motored into Naxos Marina for repairs. The straps attaching main to the halyard carrier had worn through, the thin plastic tube around the furler was also damaged and preventing the halyard carrier from coming down. The Chandler was unable to sew the sail and recommended we went to Paros. Naxos was quite a big town with many excellent restaurants, the biggest and busiest port of our trip but not our favourite

Andy negotiated a

slab of beer for us

after we had to

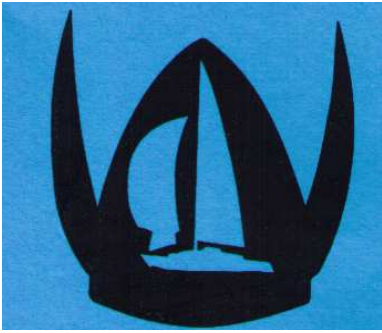
move the boat while

I was conducting

delicate surgery at

the top of the mast





URGENT WANTED

We need someone to look over our annual accounts as our usual member will be out of the country at the required time

Our current treasurer, Jeff Heath, will have them done in early Nov and they will be presented at the AGM on 14th Nov.

They do not have to be properly audited so we don't have to have a qualified person do it, just someone who understands accounts.

Please contact me or Jeff, on his new tel no. 01603 709128

Paul

Social Diary

Laying up supper Saturday 15th November usual time details to follow.

Crewing Opportunity Swansea to La Coruna

We are taking our Boat (Nicholson 38) to the Med. for a year in July 2009. We are looking for crew to help us on the initial leg from Swansea. It will be a delivery trip and anticipated to take a week. Crew will be responsible for getting to Swansea and from Spain, meals and drinks ashore. All meals on board will be provided.

There is a comprehensive list of safety equipment but bringing a life jacket and foul weather gear would help.

If you are interested give us a call on 020 8506 1090

James and Rose Parnell

Notes from newsletter editors

James and Rose Parnell

We hope you like this Edition. If you have any suggestions or comments please let us know at

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To save on the postage, paper and the environment and we email the newsletter to all Members with email addresses.

Web-Watch

Podcastaway is back!

After months ashore in Australia Martin Lane-Smith continues his periodic podcast from his catamaran currently in the south Pacific. So if you want to hear the sound of the pacific lapping against his topsides in the small hours as Martin gives his erudite account of his travels then check it out at : www.saildosgatos.com

Or search for podcastaway in the itunes podcast directory.

What must it be like at the coast?

Have you ever looked out on a stormy night and wondered what it is like at sea? A new facility is being installed on some sailing club websites giving a real time account of wind speed/direction etc. So now you check conditions on the coast.

For the Blackwater try :

www.dabchicks.org and follow the weather link

Or Walton on the Naze:

www.waltonfrintonlifeboat.co.uk

The best is at The Royal N&S www.rnsrc.org.uk/livewind

Artists

www.eastangliangroupofmarineartists.org.uk

Out bid on your latest Damien Hurst acquisition? This website has useful links to individual artists websites and lovely paintings, plus details of galleries exhibitions etc.

Mike Golding

Follow his progress in the Vendee Globe on

www.mikegolding.com

Pete Gloss

Latest adventure replicating the voyage of Cornish men in 1854 who could not afford their passage to Australia –so sailed there.

Follow the trip on

www.petegloss.com/mystery

Shanties

www.traditionalmusic.co.uk has history of shanties and even some that you can download!! **JP**