



Kessingland sea sailing club Sea Sailing Club

October 2011

Commodore's Comments

If you remember, I started writing the last report on "a beautiful spring day" This time it's a beautiful early autumn day.

The bit in between was, unfortunately, a cool, damp letdown as I'm sure you all know. However, sailing is often a bit cool and damp so I guess we all know how to make the most of it.

I had a really good week on Ploes in company with Harry, Ian and Debbie. The weather was hot, the sea warm and blue, the wind ideal and the food great. If you haven't been there yet, make sure you do soon. Provided there continues to be a good take up she could be in Turkey for some time.

Explorer has not had the amount of use that we need though. There are good thoughts for next year about Holland and maybe the Western Isles the year after. Both ventures need careful planning with co-ordinated crew takeovers as much as possible, but with some enthusiastic promotion, I think both are very probable. So lets hear from you about these ideas.

The AGM and Laying Up Supper are again on the same day this year.

12th November.

Please try and get to both of them.

The AGM is the ideal time to discuss your thoughts about our Club, and the Supper is always a good social evening.

So far, as there are no proposals or rule changes to discuss and vote on, there should be some time for general discussion at the end of the formal meeting.

I must at this point tell everyone that I am standing down as Commodore at the meeting. I've held the post for 13 years and feel it's time for others to take the Club forward. My Vice Commodore, John Bird will I trust, get your approval to become Commodore at the AGM and I know he will move the Club onwards to ensure its success in the future.

It's been a privilege and honour over these many years to have seen the Club expand its horizons and offer sailing to many, like me, who wanted to sail in warmer places on a small budget. We were fortunate to have the capital to buy the boats, but it only continues because there are people willing to offer their time and expertise to get things done. My grateful thanks go to all on the Committee and to everyone else who has helped over the years.

So, this is my last 'Commodores Comments' I hope to see as many of you as possible on the 12th and Keep Sailing Safely

Paul

“PLOES” - LIFE’S A BEACH – PITPROPS & PITBULLS

It was mid June 2011 – normally we lift-out and prepare “Ploes” for the ensuing season between March and April. This year however it was to be delayed by other commitments including of course our President’s 90th Birthday Party and, unusually enough, no early bookings. In fact the first booking was not scheduled until the 1st July to be taken up by the “A” Team of regular swashbucklers – Cap’n Peter (5 o’clock shadow) Girven and his *motley* crew of pirates!

The Commodore and myself met at Gatwick at the ungodly time of 5am and arrived Fethiye at lunchtime having taking advantage of a *cheapie* hire car at Dalaman Airport. It might be worth mentioning the name of Economy Car Hire of Dereham – www.economycarhire.com who obtained a *meet & greet* car for us for about £15 per day. It proved invaluable as the lift-out yard had no toilet or shower facilities except sand and sea, and Fethiye Marina was some 6 kilometres away around the perimeter of the Bay.

The day after arriving we moved “Ploes” out of the marina very slowly – not that we were particularly cautious, but we could only get about quarter of the full engine revs due to the excess amount of marine growth below the waterline and especially in way of the sail-drive.



Paul watching the Sea Monster surface with shorts in tact!



Paul looking proudly at his handy-work with shorts in shreds!

We had a local man aboard Gareth, who had arranged the slipping on our behalf and he prudently brought his RIB with him just in case we lost all steerage due to the low speed.

. “Aim for the white building on the beach” says he. “Where’s the lift-out jetty?” says I. “There is no jetty at all, just the beach” he replied. By this time I was getting very nervous! We draw about 2 metres and the beach looked gently shelving – “We’ll ground about 100 metres off at this rate” said I. “Don’t worry” said Gareth “There is a very, narrow, unmarked channel leading to the lift-out spot”.

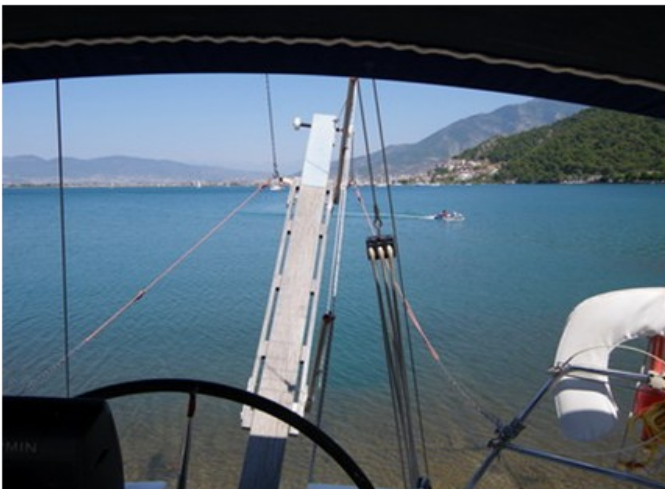
It was then that I realised there was no jetty, quayside or hard standing, just the beach and what appeared to be an amphibious travel hoist that had definitely seen better days! Three locals including the yard owner who was driving the *Sea Monster*, virtually disappeared in the surf with just their head and shoulders barely visible.

“Keep in the channel” they yelled. “What channel?” said I. With some trepidation we manoeuvred “Ploes” relatively easily between the hydraulic arms of the Sea Monster and out we came. Our home for the next four days was to be a filthy, dusty, sloping beach with wooden pit-props for support and pit-bulls for company.....

“Life’s a Beach” which it was on a sandy, dusty foreshore with creaking wooden pit-props our only support literally and after dark, a mean-looking guard dog for company – it was in fact an alsatian not a pit-bull, but just as ferocious. The dog was a bitch and gave birth to 3 or 4 pups while we were there, which might have accounted for her very unfriendly behaviour!

The first incident was Paul getting pole-axed by a falling pit-prop – luckily “Ploes” remained upright although Paul had an added feature on his head – a nasty lump! Who said *Health & Safety* – not a hard-hat in sight! The second incident could have been far more serious. The guard dog which was restrained on a long chain leash, saw her opportunity to take a lump out of Paul’s posterior when he was bending over looking for something lost in the sand, just within the scope of the leash. The result was a shredded, crotchless pair of shorts, but luckily for Paul, his dignity remained in tact! A very near miss.....

Apart from the inconvenience of having to commute back and forth at least a dozen times a day between the beach boatyard, Fethiye marina and the chandlery shops in town, all jobs were accomplished without further incident and on time. Not only was the bottom cleaned and painted with effectively three coats of anti-foul, the holding tank skin fitting was made watertight and the



Leaving the beach riding the Sea Monster and feeling more comfortable getting wet!

topsides were polished to a mirror finish. All was looking good but we still had to “get wet” being swallowed again by the Sea Monster and then negotiating the unmarked channel going astern and this time without the benefit of local knowledge. Actually it all went very well and both of us had a very liquid lunch in 40 degree midday temperatures back in Fethiye Marina, metaphorically licking our wounds!

Would we use the same lift-out facilities again – probably not but it was a valuable experience.....

John J Bird
Vice Commodore

Explorer 'n' all that Jazz!

Richard Oliver has pre-booked Explorer to enable him to get to and enjoy the Dutch jazz festival to be held in and around Rotterdam next year. This is the text of his e-mail:

"The actual jazz fest start on Friday 6th July 2012 and finishes the early hours of Sunday 8th. The fest runs from about 4 pm each day to about midnight for the 3 days and its nice to have a bed close by for afternoon relaxation!."

The actual venue (Ahoy, Sydplein) is 2 or 3 trains stops south of the Erasmus bridge which very close to the Veerhaven Marina. I couldn't get a close hotel this year which made me think that sleeping on Explorer would be both convenient and economical. Overall I am very flexible how this is done. The minimum for me is that Exp is there for me (and poss some others) to sleep on. If she also gets me there and or back, so much the better."

Richard's e-mail prompted the following response from Peter Johnson who, together with Annie Smith and Bob Mann, had had an exciting trip to Holland this year:

"As a starting point for development of a possible back to back program

** Suggest you book Veerhaven for the period that you need.*

** Also book Explorer for the length of holiday that you want.*

** For now, assume that the boat will be in Holland before and after your time.*

** We should also plan to use Sixhaven (AMS) or Veerhaven (RTD) for exchanges,(they are both easily accessible by plane or ferry).*

** To avoid doubt, exchange should normally be at noon on the specified days.*

Having said that, the berthing cost of any "gaps" should be paid 50/50 by both parties.

The next step would be to invite participation in building up a programme. I am sure that there would be interest, especially if the boat was already over there ! We are flexible but would be interested in taking the 10-14 days prior to your period (or earlier if someone else wanted that slot)."

Skippers and crews need to start planning together now to make this venture a success. So, as Delia famously urged on the Norwich City fans, "Let's be having you"! Here's an opportunity to make plans for Explorer's use in Holland and, did I hear you say, "How about the Baltic?"! To quote another famous phrase: "Use it or lose it" so let's start using Explorer again.

Ben Horwood

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Web site

Don't forget to check our own website.

<http://www.kessingland-sailing.co.uk>

WEB Watch

Podcast : Radio Solent produces the H2O programme. Sir Robin Knox-Johnson and others give a weekly update on water sports. It majors on the racing scene but has other items too. In Summer it is a replica of the broadcast programme and in winter a shorter podcast.

Yachting monthly has podcasts from Libby Purves and Tom Cunliffe. Downloadable for free.

Most Sailing magazines have really good web pages including content not in the Mag! I am unaware of any sailing magazine that has gone fully digital –if you know different let me know.

The Cruising Association website has quite a lot of information on its open pages—much more of course if you are a member.

The Volvo Ocean race sets off in November—great stuff on the website they even have their own YouTube channel which has some great footage on it—and the race has not yet started!

If any member comes across a great website/ podcast

Paul and Rachel Chandler

I had the good fortune to listen to Paul and Rachel give a lecture at the Cruising Association in Limehouse last week. They gave a very full and frank account of their kidnap ordeal. They were clear that there was nothing they would have done differently as they were still in Seychelles territorial water at the time of the kidnap. They were understanding of the Navy position and revealed that an SBS rescue mission was on the way but the distances were too great and they had not arrived in time.

They had no “Stockholm Syndrome”, they had not identified with their captors at all. Amazingly they let Paul keep his camera so he was able to sneak a few pictures of the places they were held. These ranged from camps in the desert to houses in towns.

There is no law and order and the only times the pirates showed fear was when aircraft flew in an apparent search formation and when Al Shabab, the radical Islamist group, were in the vicinity.

Perhaps most fascinating was the key role played by a Somali living in this country, who apparently of his own accord, went back to Somalia and campaigned amongst the local clan elders for the Chandlers release.

Although they were clearly a tough pair, emotions lay just below the surface as they told their story. Their book is out and from what I have heard so far –it is a must read.

James Parnell