



## Newsletter Autumn 2020

### Commodore's Comments.

This Covid year will be remembered for a long time. Like most of us the club has been affected dramatically.

First the good news, although Explorer's season started late, in mid-July, she has already had record bookings. At present 85 days and with the prospect of more as she will be afloat and in commission all through the winter. We have welcomed several new members and a new generation of skippers who are keen to get Explorer out on the water. We even managed a successful summer cruise to the Solent and back.

In contrast Ploes has had a dismal year. The almost complete cessation of international travel and then uncertainty over quarantine has led to very few bookings. To make matters worse, when being prepared for her first booking in September, severe galvanic corrosion was found necessitating an immediate lift-out and works (see Peter's report below). The net result is that despite Explorer's bookings we are facing a very heavy financial deficit compared to last year, at least £17,000. There may be further costs to achieve a full repair. Regrettably this means that we have to consider an increase in our fees and contributions next year.

Covid has also forced a change in the arrangements for the AGM and there will be no Laying Up Supper this year. I would like to say that we will weather this storm and look forward to a return to normality next season but, like many, I am shy of making such predictions. Meanwhile I hope you have managed to get some sailing in and may this Indian Summer may last.



James



## Explorer

Explorer is having a phenomenal second half of the summer with 85 days booked and expressions of interest for autumn sailing. We have also had some very positive feedback – many new skippers have praised her and one even described her as “a basic but charming boat and we look forward to our next visit”. She has also had some tough work. Anyone watching Explorer on the RYA SafeTrx (posted on the WhatsApp) will have watched Paul Newman and Chris Jones beating into a F6 off N Foreland will get a good idea!



Paul Newman enjoying a white water ride while the lock keeper at Eastbourne turns on the taps.

### Water tank

There were reports of contamination by bilge water getting into the tank. The tank was pumped dry and refilled a couple of weeks ago and was used by my crew and myself for four days last week. There is no longer any tainting to the water but we should always recommend boiling before use.

### Exhaust water trap

We found that the trap was resting against the Bull flex coupling on the prop shaft. We used some cord to tie it clear as a temporary fix. We should fabricate a permanent bracket over the winter. We discovered the joint between the exhaust

hose and the box was leaking. The Allen bolts on the clamp securing the exhaust pipe to the box were loose. We nipped them up to finger tight and the leak stopped. We need to investigate this joint further over the winter but in the meantime the rate of ingress of water into the bilge is significantly reduced. We should recommend the bilge is pumped daily.

### Raw Water Filter

Reports were received of the filter needing to be primed with water before sea water would pump through. There has not been a repeat of this problem in the last couple of weeks. The situation should be monitored and if necessary the filter could be mounted lower down.

### Sails

The tears in the genoa are in the sacrificial strip and can be repaired over the winter.

The elastic in the mainsail batten pockets has become stretched over time. This year the lower battens worked their way out and were lost overboard.

We can seek quotes for repairs from OneSails, SYH; Suffolk Sails, Woodbridge; ADM Sails, Heybridge and Jeckells.

### Depth Sounder

Last week it was apparent that the depth sounder was at times giving erratic readings. Danny and Gillian Heartshorne reported that the depth readings were constantly wildly inaccurate. I advised them to return to SYH today (Tuesday) and we would purchase replacement display unit. Paul Newman lives locally and agreed to collect the unit and deliver it to the boat. Meanwhile Danny had engaged Seapower Marine Electronics to inspect the old unit and install the new one. Danny and Gillian were in and out of the marina within the morning and we haven't had to cancel any bookings.

Needless to say, there will be many other jobs to do over the winter once bookings ease off.

Ian



## Ploes

This has not been a good year for Ploes, the Covid-19 outbreak meant that all spring and early summer bookings were cancelled and then in late August just before our first autumn booking severe galvanic corrosion was discovered on Ploes (this is where electrolysis eats away the metal underwater fittings). Claire had requested a diver to clean the barnacles from the propeller ready for the autumn bookings and the diver discovered the issue. (We clean the propeller twice a year as our top speed is about 1 knot under full power if the barnacles are not removed). Ploes was immediately lifted from the water (there was some sea water in the bow compartment) and work began to get Ploes ready for the booking 6 days later.

Claire and Levent did exceptional work to try to get Ploes ready in time but unfortunately it was not possible to get Ploes repaired in that short timescale. Claire kindly managed to arrange alternative yachts for Fergal and Julie to use for their two week booking. The situation now, mid-September, is that Ploes is back in the water, her sail drive has been repaired (as much as possible without replacing it) and the bow thruster has temporarily been taken out of service. This will allow us to assess what the original problem was when on her pontoon, and enable a survey to assess what we need to do for a complete repair. We will decide after the tests in October what we need to complete to have Ploes ready for an excellent season in 2021.

The main initial conclusion is that Ploes did not have a galvanic isolator fitted. Explorer has one so is protected, we did not realise that Ploes did not have one. (The galvanic isolator isolates the boat from stray electrical currents from any third party sources, other yachts and the marina electrical earth). We have heard of other yachts in marinas being eaten away in a similar manner and often there has not been an obvious reason for this. Ploes has been on that same pontoon F45 for 10 years and she was in perfect order when she went back into the water in early April 2020, it is a mystery to everyone at the moment why this corrosion has occurred?

We have contacted our insurers and they have said we are not covered. We suspect the cause lies external to Ploes but we doubt the marina or another yacht will accept liability, though we are exploring this.

To summarise we have had very little income from Ploes this year due to Covid-19 and we have had the normal expenditure for the marina berth and annual service. Like many clubs and businesses around the world the cost of Covid-19 is severe and it is not yet over. We now also have possible extra outgoings from the galvanic corrosion that are not yet fully costed. We may not know until early next year the expenditure required, this is on top of the loss of expenditure for lost bookings this year that we have already endured.

The important thing is to get Ploes back in use and reliable, that is so that we can start regaining good income from her next year. We already have good interest for bookings on Ploes for the future and it could be a bumper year, we need her repaired and reliable so that we can start regenerating lost income for the club.



Peter



## **Membership and social**

### Recruitment

We have had 5 new members join since April bringing our total memberships back to 52.

Welcome to Fulvio Dobrich, Suzanne Pountney, Arthur Newton, David Holland and Rob and Ann Holland

### AGM

We have been in discussion with the RNSYC and it is not possible within the current “rule of six” to have an AGM as we normally do. The committee has considered this and in the next few days James will write to you asking if you agree to not having an AGM this year, but instead to have a “postal/e-vote “ on the resolutions needed for the effective running of the club. In addition a Zoom meeting will be offered to all members to engage with the committee at the same time as the AGM would have been i.e. 6pm on the 7<sup>th</sup> November. Help will be offered to those who cannot access zoom.

Laying Up Supper I am afraid the Laying up Supper arranged for 7<sup>th</sup> November has been cancelled. However, I would like to arrange a social event after the current restrictions – more information in due course, whenever that might be....

Rose



## Financial Report

It is not usual to include a financial report in a newsletter but in the current circumstances we feel that it would be useful to members to understand the challenges we face and set them in a context which explains where we are and how we plan to move forward.

At the outset we need to state that the club does have sufficient resources to deal with this year's deficit, which is primarily due to not receiving the usual amount of income from Ploes and the costs of repairs done so far. At present this is likely to result in a deficit in this year of approximately £17,000 compared to last year. This includes mooring fees for Suffolk Yacht Harbour.

This can be covered by our reserves which last year totalled £52,000. However to lose such a large amount of our reserves is of significant concern. In recent years we have tried to maintain sufficient surplus to allow for the depreciation of the boats and to put by a reserve to replace the boats should that be necessary and the wish of our members. The current deficit has diminished our reserves and thereby our options for the future. It needs to be recognised that failing to have sufficient reserves to replace the boats is an existential threat to the club as it will result in diminishing quality of the boats, and consequently a lower member experience leading to a reduction in demand. In this way the club could fade away.

We do not expect to recover the position within a year and it may take 2 or 3 years to get back to the position we were in 2019.

These are the "knowns" we know about (to borrow from Donald Rumsfeld). The galvanic corrosion that Ploes has suffered from is a known unknown. We know the costs of work done so far but as yet we don't know how much the final amount will be. The temporary repair may be sufficient but, if not, the costs of replacing the sail drive and bow thruster are very significant and could be as much as £20,000.

It is for this reason that we have no option but to ask members to accept that there is going to be an increase in membership fees and contributions for using the boats, and to see this as an investment in the future of the club.

We are the beneficiaries of a remarkable legacy of those original KSSC members who have bequeathed to us 2 first rate sailing vessels and a great club. We think it is for us all, as current members to ensure that this legacy is sustained and passed onto the next generation.

Ian Walker and James Parnell



## Media

We have active social media accounts, new members are using them more these days and they are available for everyone to use in the future.

The website is our main presence and it shows the calendar bookings on the yachts in an anonymised manner. It also gives very useful information about the club. Our number of visitors peaked in July with 240 visitors, dropping back to 100 visitors in mid-September. During 2020 we have had 648 unique visitors, 1078 visitors and 2,747 Page views. (Incidentally more and more for convenience I am using the short website address to connect of [www.kssc.uk](http://www.kssc.uk)).

Our main WhatsApp group has been very successful with numerous interesting postings, we have 28 active members and unfortunately 2 members that left the group. Many of the newer members are active in this main group and it is very good to see how successful the group has been. We also have some smaller groups focussing on the individual yachts, all are opt in if people are interested and focus on individual subjects like say the maintenance of Explorer.

Our Facebook group has been relatively quiet but it does have links to all our recent photo albums, it is a private group and is available for members to join if they wish. (Some of our ex members like Rick Asker also regularly comment on posts). We do also have public Facebook accounts to enable potential new members to find us if needed.

On Instagram we now have 54 followers and we follow 8 individual accounts, we have published some photos so people can find us and see our activity. On Twitter we have 5 followers and 12 people follow us, both accounts mean that we are ready for the future, but we have not yet discovered reasons good reasons to use them more. (Big groups like the RYA and manufacturers do use them all the time, to me I we are too small to need to advertise our presence all of the time.

Peter Girven



Peter



## Family Sailing - Summer 2020

### Paul and Kate Ylioja

We joined KSSC as at the end last year and we thought we would write up our thoughts on what it's like to sail on Explorer. We are a family of four with 7 and 1 year old daughters. Paul is the keen sailor but we all enjoy being carried along by his enthusiasm for boats.

Our trips on Explorer would be our youngest's first experience on a yacht but our eldest has vague, fond memories of a flotilla holiday in Greece when she was three. I have come to enjoy sailing but carry the fear all mothers acquire when going in to unknown, difficult, possibly dangerous situations with her children. One day I will sail without the children on-board and really get stuck in but until then these trips are a way of Paul involving his family in his passion and to address my uneasiness about our capabilities to sail with the kids.



To familiarize us with Explorer we booked a Sunday, just the four of us, not long after the easing of the pandemic restrictions. Eve, our elder daughter, was keen to get on board and help out in her brand new life-vest. However, as Paul went through the checks and Eve and I got our belongings in the right place we quickly discovered



that Anna, only 12 months old, was much more keen to discover what was in the bilge under the floor boards than she was to wear her life-vest - but Anna, it has dolphins on it! She screamed whenever we went on deck to see if we could get going and we thought we might just have to pack up and go home. We persevered and by somehow managing to breast feed with us both wearing our life vests she finally fell asleep and we took the opportunity to leave the marina. With the baby asleep in the bottom of the cockpit we had a slightly embarrassing 5 point turn to make in the marina and later we discovered I had forgotten how to tie any of the knots so we had a jolly motor up and down the river. We got back in to harbour without any serious incident, Paul was getting used to manoeuvring with the unfamiliar prop walk but we all felt happy to spend an overnight trip on the boat now that Anna was looking about in fascination at all she could see from the cockpit. We did however decide that if we were ever going to get any sail out we needed another adult to make it easier with a tiny yet capable cockpit climber.



We excitedly prepared for the 2 days on Explorer and found some willing crew! First Paul's father would come with us on the first day and then we would be joined on the second day by Paul Newman from the club. Paul's dad was hoping to join in sailing but quickly became the babysitter as Anna was so happy to just be on his lap, asleep or awake, for most of the duration of our sail. This was a boon for me as I got to practice tacking, my knots on the fenders and Paul and I could really learn to work together as a team again tacking our way back toward SYH. It was an incredibly hot day and Eve helped to steer in between her continuous eating and apparent boredom only alleviated by watching on her tablet down below. What Eve really needed was to be able to do more but the cockpit was full with the three adults and the baby and she was always being told to sit down, I don't think 7 years olds are meant to sit and watch the world go by - she needed more action and she was willing but was not quite strong enough to tack efficiently yet.

It was also hot; really hot. Eve could escape her life-vest below deck but Anna had to stay with us and sweat it out in hers. I was getting worried about her by the time we came back in to SYH in the afternoon and after getting her vest off and getting a

good drink in her I quickly made the decision that she and I would go home with Paul's Dad that evening after dinner seeing as the next day was forecast to be a record breaker. This also secretly swept aside my concerns about how on earth I was going to sleep with Anna on the yacht in the berths considering how much she wanders about in her sleep. If anyone else has slept with a baby or toddler on Explorer I would love to hear how you did it! We had a delicious dinner at the Light Ship and we went home. Paul and Eve had a wonderful evening enjoying the lovely showers at the harbour and watching the sunset on the boat, I was jealous but felt I had made the right decision for Anna.

The next morning Eve and Paul woke to very little wind and plenty of heat but well rested and excited to go out again. Paul Newman arrived and with just the three on board, Explorer felt relatively palatial. Destinations were considered and with a weak SSW wind they decided not to head out to Walton Backwaters and to go up the Stour instead. We attempted to sail but ended up mostly motoring to Erwarton. After dropping the hook, Paul N inflated the dinghy at lightning speed. Eve and Paul Y headed to shore leaving Paul N to enjoy the peace and quiet on anchor watch while they had a swim and messed about on the beach. It was a motor back with no real wind but a great day was had and Eve is keen to get out again on Explorer soon.



With a baby on board, sometimes I wondered if it was worth all the hassle and preparation, screaming and life-vests but when we actually got going out on the river, everyone got that calm that comes from just moving along quietly in the water - it felt amazing to have the experience together. There is plenty to Explorer [sorry!] on the East Coast that is only accessible by boat so we are glad to be able to do it with KSSC.



## Explorer Summer Voyage 2020

First Leg – Suffolk Yacht Haven to the Solent – 9<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> August

Following the successful 2019 delivery trip from home waters to the South Coast, Cliff Pountney (skipper) and Colin Wardell (myself) headed off to repeat the task of getting the voyage under way. The weather forecast over the preceding couple of weeks had indicated Easterlies, but these became less certain as the time approached. While it is tempting to plan for the optimum weather, in practice the best rule is to leave when you are ready, allowing for the tides which can at least be relied upon.

We set off on Sunday evening, aiming to pick up a fair tide to carry us round the South Foreland in the early hours of Monday morning. There are a variety of well marked routes across the Thames Estuary from Harwich to the North Foreland which during the day can be interesting to navigate but, for the overnight passage, we chose to go east about the banks but inside the Sunk gyratory traffic highway. Estimating vessel movements at night from lights and bearings can be exciting but the display of AIS receipts on a tablet (ipad and iSailor in this case) sent over Explorer's WIFI link does make the situation much clearer.



Explorer track from Harwich to North Foreland, Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> August, with alternative AIS plots

Monday morning saw us heading past Dungeness in the hazy mist and diminishing wind, through which the power station loomed, looking like a washed out water-colour painting.



Dungeness Power Station

Towards Monday evening we decided that, in the absence of a sailing wind, it would be better to call into Brighton Marina rather than continue to motor through a second

night. A VHF call established that, officially, the harbour master did not recommend us entering as the route in was being dredged and not yet re-marked but, should we wish to disregard this advice, there was a berth waiting for us. Taking our lives in our hands we entered and survived. We had a peaceful night in the enormous marina.

Tuesday weather was calm, with the occasional rise in wind to raise our hopes of a sail. We wanted to round Selsey Bill shortly after the tide set westwards at 16:00. A mixture of motoring and sailing achieved this. However, use of the engine over a period resulted in an increase in the drip rate from the stern gland of the prop shaft, enough to raise the bilge water level above the fresh water tank opening, resulting in a pair of the strangest tasting glasses of orange juice you could wish to meet. We entered Chichester Harbour along the narrow channel to the far west of the entrance, and glided up to anchor in a beautiful spot just below Itchenor.



Stern Gland

Tuesday evening entertainment involved tightening the stern gland using the pair of spanners built for the purpose. I am fairly sure that there is no new idea that hasn't been tried on Explorer before, but just possibly holding the body of the gland with one spanner through the port locker engine bay hatch on the end of the pump handle, which exactly fits the spanner, while the locking nut is tightened from the depths of the pilot berth on the starboard side just might be novel.

On Wednesday we dropped down from Itchenor and into the Solent proper, calling at our usual spot on Trinity Landing in Cowes, which I have visited in a range of dinghies and yachts over the last few years and where it is always sunny. The friendly harbour master said that we could use the facilities ashore on his authority, which we did, together with a clean out of the water tank. May need to stay away for a while now as we were chased down the street after failing to pay our café bill.

We sailed over to Beaulieu River and picked up a visitor's mooring just below Bucklers Hard. Wednesday evening involved entertaining my daughter, Catherine, to dinner. She had cycled over from Nettley (near the Hamble) to join us – quite a marathon.

As a wayfarer sailor, I get great satisfaction from sailing hither and yon without ever bucking a foul tide. We had formed a plan to visit the Needles on Thursday, a masterwork of opportunistic use of tides. We dropped down Beaulieu River, turned West along the Solent, out past Hurst Castle and into the anchorage at Alum Bay.



Explorer at anchor in Alum Bay, Isle of Wight

After a stiff climb (ie. Cable car) and walk over the heads to see the Needles from above, we took the very last of the ebb out to the Needles from the side.



Needles in calm weather

We then took the first of the flood which carried us all the way up to Port Hamble Marina, where I took my leave.

Thank you to Cliff for his planning and skillful skippering and to everyone who has contributed to overcoming the hurdles to get Explorer on the water this year.

Colin Wardell

