



# Pottership

The Newspaper of the Royal Lyminster Yacht Club

Number 22 Spring 1999

**GOODBYE CHALKY**

Michael White (Chalky) retired in February as Vice Commodore of the Club, a post he has held with great distinction for four years. Michael put a great deal of effort into ensuring that the administration of the Club was carried out in a manner which encompassed the varying needs of our wide range of activities, and he brought discipline to bear when it was necessary. He also chaired the Membership Committee, whose perception as to the suitability of new Members is so important, with his usual tact and patience, and did his best to ensure that our high standard of membership is maintained.

His quiet comments, or questions, on any proposals that were being made in General Committee were very valuable in that his personal experience, which covers a wide range of yachting activities, usually made sure that a sound common-sense solution was forthcoming.

I shall miss his unfailing support and will know that when the telephone rings at 8.30 the call will not necessarily now be for me! I hope he enjoys a well earned rest from all the effort he has put into the Club's affairs and wish him, and his delightful wife Sue, happy days and good sailing.

A warm welcome to Andrew Tyrell, who succeeds Michael as Vice Commodore.

Gordon Simpson  
Commodore



## Junior Sailing - the next step

The RLYMJC's Wednesday Junior Sailing is acknowledged to be one of the most successful community sailing projects in the country, with over 3000 youngsters introduced to the sport in the last fourteen years.

The Cadet Squadron is recognised as another centre of excellence, with members in the National squads and the British team most years and more than its fair share of National Champions. The Optimist Flotilla is also renowned for producing excellent sailors, and has had more than its share of National Champions as well as numerous Squad and Team members. All three sections are active, vibrant, welcoming divisions of the Club with their own goals for the future.

However, there has never really been anywhere for juniors to go after Cadets at Club level. Those with great skill move into recognised classes and progress through the RYA regional and national training schemes, often to major National and International success. Those whose ambitions are more Club based have had little support or encouragement to continue sailing in the Club. This year we plan to change that. We have set up a new section of Junior Sailing for the recognised RYA Youth Classes, which Miles Butler has agreed to head. We shall run training sessions for those that want them and have organised racing for those that are interested.

We are going to open up the Saturday Afternoon Points Racing, which we have been running for Cadets and Optimists, for Laser Radials and 420s. This starts on 13th March and runs through until 23rd October and is divided into three series with over 70 races scheduled! The idea of this is to provide those young (less than 9 years old) Club Members who want it with a safe, well supported environment in which they can have fun and learn to sail performance dinghies in the company of their friends.

If you are interested in either training or Club racing please contact Miles Butler, who will be delighted to hear from you.

Roger Wilson  
Captain of Junior Sailing

## THE 1998 POTTER SHIP

William Westmacott with his brother Richard in the 1998 end-of-season Potter Ship race at the helm of *Xanthus*, the last X boat to have been overseen by their grandfather Alfred Westmacott (at Woodnutts, Bembridge, in 1935), who was the designer of the Class in 1908.

Paul Driscoll, Vice Captain of the X class is at the helm of Commodore Gordon Simpson's CQ2 for a change, coaxing her along in fickle conditions with Xceptional skill.

The race was won by Don Wood in *Red Source*



Photos: Paul Rawlinson



There seems to be some confusion about Distress, Safety and Calling channels. The following is the text of advice from the Maritime and Coastguard Agency.



Whilst it is true that Channel 70 is the designated DSC alerting frequency, Channel 16 remains the voice transmission frequency subsequent to the receipt of the DSC alert. Moreover, Channel 16 will continue to be continuously monitored as a designated distress frequency by the Coastguard until at least the year 2005. This should clarify distress watch-keeping arrangements following the introduction of GMDSS, which came into operation on 1st February 1999. Any further queries should be addressed to the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, telephone 01703 329100, fax 01703 329531. SO DON'T SCRAP YOUR OLD VHF YET!



# Wednesday Junior Sailing needs



# YOU!!

The last Wednesday Sailing season before the Millennium gets under way on 14th April this year. Those who are familiar with the set-up will recognise the organised chaos that seems to reign, and how much we rely on the help of those who slip quietly into their slots to keep it running. For those who are interested in what we do, but have no idea of how we work, let me try to explain.

Every Wednesday afternoon between 1400 and 1800 somewhere between 60 and 160 children from the local area come to learn to sail. Coming from a variety of state, private and special schools, or even no school at all, they are divided between two sessions, 1400 - 1600 and 1600 - 1800. They sail mainly Optimists and Scows, tie knots, learn sailing theory, go rowing, drink tea and eat doughnuts. The people who help with this venture are mainly Club Members; many are people who are not necessarily now active sailors but who can contribute something to the overall plan. (See cartoon above!)

This season we are trying the idea of section leaders - Jane Clegg will head the office/admin team, Martin Hird the rowing team, Tony Mount the safety boat team, Roly Stafford the Scow pontoon team and David Thompson the optimist pontoon team. The idea is that these people will oversee their section and try to ensure that we have sufficient volunteers to keep our army of children occupied and having fun.

That brings me to the point of this article - helpers. Although we have many dedicated

people who turn up regularly, we are always looking to increase the size of our pool of volunteers - the larger the pool, the less onerous for everyone.

## How could you help?

Can you row a Club dinghy? Could you teach some children to do the same? Are you a Scow sailor? Could you help by passing some of these skills on to the children? Perhaps you are not so good on the water but could help youngsters rig their boats, tie their knots or set off sailing.

What about helping to crew in the safety boat, learning ways to right capsized boats and keeping the children out of the path of the ferries? Perhaps you could only spare half an hour at the end of the afternoon to help with pulling in and packing up the boats.

If you feel that you could help in any way at all, why not sign up on the notice in the Club, or pop a note into the pigeon hole of one of the section leaders. We are looking forward to hearing from you.

Wednesday Sailing has been running now for some fourteen years. Founded and run by Dr Jonathan Rogers for nine years, continued by Roger Wilson for the last five years, and now passed to me - a hard act to follow. With the help and support of all the people who make Wednesday Junior Sailing so successful and such fun for all concerned, we hope to make the last season of the 20th Century a resounding success.

**Jenny Wilson**  
Head of Wednesday Sailing

## POSTMEN

*Postmen Please for Club mailings!  
Volunteers still wanted*

Response to the last appeal in Pottership for new volunteers was excellent - the average age has fallen considerably!

However, in January there was a shortage of regular deliverers and when someone has delivered in an area for a long time the organisers don't know who to call on to replace them. So if you are a regular and have to cry off please let us know in good time and try to suggest a possible replacement.

Volunteers are still needed to deliver in these areas: Lower Buckland Road and Marsh Lane; Harvester Way (north of Marsh Lane) and Burley.

If you can help look out for the call for volunteers which will appear on the Club notice board a couple of weeks before the next mailing. These happen about four times a year. Look out for it!

Volunteers please ring Jock or Katie Given, 01590 672661

## DEBENTURES

*Dig out those old Debentures*

The Club now expects to repay the last of its Debentures in the course of the next year or two. There are comprehensive records, but of course they stretch back many years and the possibility of error, or of loss of data at the time of the floods, cannot be entirely ruled out.

We must ensure that no-one is overlooked, so it would be most helpful if Members still holding Debentures would please send me a note, through the office, of the amount and if possible the Debenture numbers.

**Malcolm Raiser, Treasurer**

## JOHN DOERR TO CHAIR RYA RACING RULES COMMITTEE

Members will be pleased to hear that John Doerr, a Member since 1986 and a General Committee member for three years, has been appointed Chairman of the RYA Racing Rules Committee from 1st January. John is only the third incumbent, succeeding Mary Pera (an Honorary Member of the Club) who has done the job for twenty years

## ARE YOU REGISTERED?

If your boat is registered on Part I of the British Register, please note that the information on re-registration given in the Club's January information sheet is now out-of-date.

Please see the revised note on the information sheet with this mailing, the notices displayed in the Club, or telephone the Registry of Shipping and Seamen on 01222 768215.

**Ian Gawn, Secretary**

## JUMBLE FOR THE RNLI

The RNLI will have a stand at the Beaulieu Boat Jumble on Sunday 11th April at which out-of-date charts are sold. There is a strong demand for these charts, covering all parts of the World, raising about £1000 annually from this source alone. If you have any charts or pilot books you are prepared to donate, please contact Jean Whipp-Goode (01590 674764). The Club also supports the RNLI's stand by collecting any unwanted boat equipment which Members are trying to get rid of and storing it until the jumble sale. Contact the office or the boatmen.

## A TILLER AT THE TILLER



Avril is eighth from the right

never looked back. What a lot I had to learn, but what a huge amount of fun was to come my way.

At the beginning I thought that a fender was something you put around a fire, a tack something you nailed into the floor, and that a sheet was something you put on a bed. I thought that a painter decorated the house, stays were guests at my hotel, and that dodgers were always artful! I soon learnt otherwise. Having thrown away the high heels and invested in some sensible sailing shoes and gloves I started going out on *Racketeer*, feeling very unsure of myself. I was sick a few times, but soon began to enjoy the new life to which I had been introduced, and I became hungry to learn more.

The stamina and sense of balance that I had developed as a professional dancer came in very handy. I learnt to tie the fenders, avoid the boom, get in and out of the dinghy without doing the splits, and eventually the great day came when I was allowed to take the tiller - I was a Tiller Girl in the 1960s at Sunday Night at the London Palladium, so taking the tiller of *Racketeer* seemed rather apt! I was either 'too close to the wind' or 'off the wind', I hardly knew the bow from the stern and port and starboard had me totally confused. Despite all this I was determined to master my new pastime. I had discovered my idea of Heaven - a day on the Solent.

After serving a short apprenticeship I was invited to join David and his family on a trip to the West Country. Although I was delighted to have been asked, I accepted with trepidation. How would I wash for two weeks, what about going to the loo in such a small space - these are the questions that cross the minds of 'new' sailors. We left Lymington on a sunny day, the boat loaded with sleeping bags and provisions, and headed for Weymouth, our first port of call. There was no wind so we had to motor, and I couldn't believe how long it took us to get there. Five hours after leaving Lymington we arrived at Weymouth and moored alongside *Goose*, the boat of friends we had arranged to meet there. What a sigh of relief when I discovered that you could go ashore, have showers and go to the loo ... I needn't have worried after all! The next day we left Weymouth and made our way to Dartmouth, avoiding the Race. I was confused; where were all the competitors?

It was another beautiful day with clear blue skies, but alas, still no wind. The coastline was stunning and I wondered why people go abroad when there is such terrific scenery on their doorstep. We eventually arrived at the entrance to the River Dart. It had been a long haul. People were swimming, having fun in their dinghies and enjoying the sunshine. A silver streak shot past the boat, and to my amazement it turned out to be a basking shark.

Next stop was Salcombe. On the journey there we had the company of a school of leaping dolphins round the boat; it was so exciting, and yet another new experience for me. This was one of the most enjoyable holidays I had been on for a long time.

After our trip to the West Country, *Racketeer* was laid up for the winter. I couldn't wait for the Spring to arrive and the sailing season to start. I had forgotten quite a lot during the winter break, but after being shouted at a few times I soon started to remember! I decided to go on a dinghy sailing course to improve my skills. I was twenty years older than the other participants, but I became more confident as time went on although I seemed to spend a great deal of time in the water! Anyway, by the end of the course I had gained my RYA level 1 & 2, and was very pleased with my achievement.

The following summer we repeated our holiday to the West Country and I became a Member of the RLymYC and made many new friends. My sailing skills and knowledge were improving all the time.

At the beginning of 1998 *Racketeer* was sold and replaced by *Baloo*, a Maxi 1000. We sailed her back to Lymington from the Hamble on a cold and windy day in January. I missed *Racketeer*, I had learnt to sail on her, I knew her and was comfortable with her. Now I had another challenge and felt very nervous of the new boat - she seemed so much bigger. I needn't have worried, I have just enjoyed the best sailing season ever. I am still learning and still being shouted at (occasionally!). We have sailed *Baloo* in all weathers, and have found that we can handle her well together.

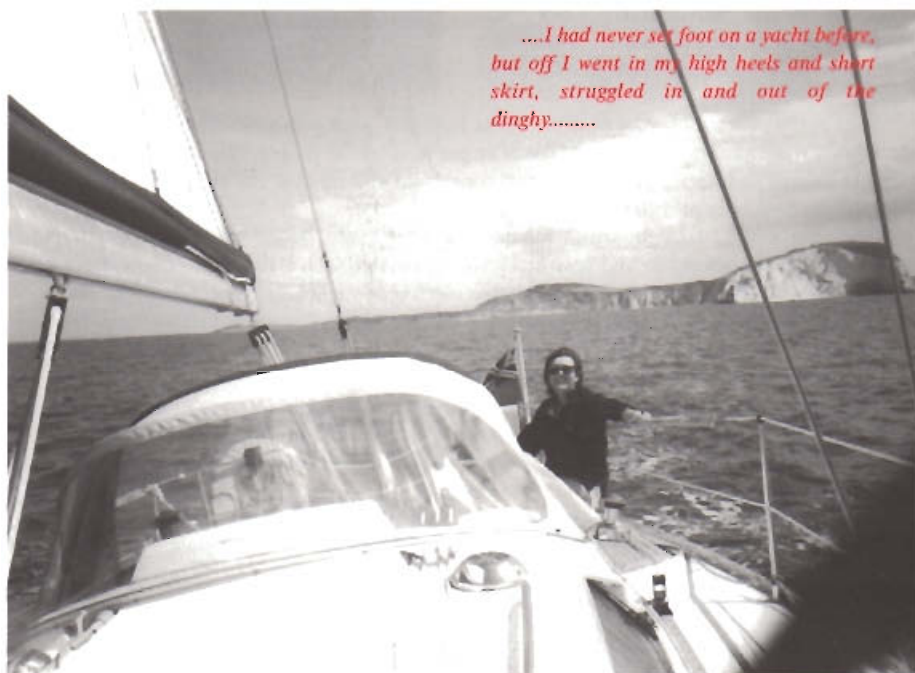
Sailing has given me a new lease of life, a new interest and new friends. It is challenging on a windy day, relaxing on a calm, sunny day, exciting when you're racing and cold and miserable when it's wet and windy. It's a wonderful way to unwind and release the stresses of everyday life. It gives you exercise, fresh air, fun, fear, respect for the sea, and a wonderful feeling of achievement when you arrive at your destination, especially after a hard sail.

I am already looking forward to the next sailing season and hope that we can go further afield. They say that out of a crisis comes opportunity. Thank you, David, for giving me the opportunity to learn how to sail. It has changed my life.

Avril Owton

**S**even years ago I was widowed very suddenly. Three years later I met a widower who had been sailing since he was six years old; he had owned several small yachts and his current boat was a Hunter 27 called *Racketeer*. My new friend invited me to join him at the RLymYC for a drink ... and that is where my love for sailing began.

After our drink, instead of waiting on my own in the Club while he put *Racketeer* back on the mooring, I asked if I could go with him. I had never set foot on a yacht before, but off I went in my high heels and short skirt, struggled in and out of the dinghy, and I have





*So - what is the Millennium Bug? Most people have heard of it and most know it is something about computers and dates.*

In the 1960s and '70s, because memory space in computers was at a premium, computer programmers used only the last two digits of a date to represent a year. Writing 25/12/69 uses only 75% of the space used by 25/12/1969. This meant that 1983 would be recorded as 83, 1984 as 84, and so on. Although it was recognised that this was storing up problems for the future, the industry was fast moving and it was assumed that the programs being developed then would be replaced before the turn of the century. However, as new programs were developed, in order to ensure they sold they had to be either bolt-ons to existing programs or, if separate, completely compatible with an existing program. This of course meant that the original two digit date code was never changed.

Only very recently (in the last couple of years) has the nettle been grasped and programs written to recognise and use four digit years.

The Millennium Bug will affect computer programs (software), computers themselves (hardware) and some peripherals, and also other items which have date sensitive chips in them, such as tv video recorders (embedded systems).

We already know that at midnight on 31st December 1999, when computers click over to 2000, many computers will read only 00,

## The Millennium Bug at the RLymYC

which the computer will read as 1900, or 1980, 1984, or even 19100, and some will not work at all.

So how does the Millennium Bug affect the RLymYC? Members may not be aware that their Club is now highly computerised. The entire membership and accounting system is computerised; the tills in the bar, restaurant and reception are also linked to the Club's computer network. A breakdown in any of these systems, due to malfunctioning hardware or software, will have serious implications for the Club's ability to function. There are many embedded systems within the Club: telephone systems, passenger lifts, video recorders, etc. Other things to consider are the effects if one (or more) of the Club's major supplier's systems breaks down as a result of the Millennium Bug. If the Club's main drinks or food supplier should be unable to supply as a result of the Bug, then service at the Club could be seriously affected.

Like all businesses in the UK, the Club is affected by the Millennium Bug. To assess

the extent of the problem and to implement remedies so that the service to Members is not affected, a Year 2000 Compliance Team has been set up and has received training from Hampshire TIC.

To ensure the Club's readiness, the Compliance Team will draw up a complete and detailed inventory of everything which may be affected by the Millennium Bug and assess each item to see whether it conforms to Year 2000 compliance. Where items are found to be non-compliant, i.e. they will not function correctly after 31/12/1999, actions will be taken to ensure that each is made compliant, where possible, or else a recommendation will be made on whether to scrap and replace.

All systems and processes will be thoroughly tested and checked to ensure a smooth transition into the 21st Century with contingency plans just in case there are any hidden bugs which do not become apparent until after the New Year.

We do hope you will support the Year 2000 Compliance Team. During systems testing inconvenience to Members will be kept to a minimum but it is inevitable that some computer downtime will be necessary, which may occasionally disrupt services.

If Members have any queries or would like further information on the Millennium Bug, please contact me.

Happy New Millennium !

**Stephen Carden-Noad**  
Deputy Secretary & Year 2000  
Compliance Team Leader

## THAT SINKING FEELING

The real point of this somewhat embarrassing little story was the result of an incident which occurred on Saturday 5th December about 10 am. I was called by Melanie from the Club to say the *Southern Lady* was full of water and that John Turner, Kevin and Barrie had started to pump her out.

John, who was with Kevin, had been going up to his yacht, which is on the same trot, when he noticed that *Southern Lady* was lower than usual at the stern - amazingly observant of him. The smooth rescue effort began.

John and Kevin found a lot of water in the boat and quickly mobile-phoned Barrie to bring the Club's water pump and to ask Melanie to get hold of me pronto. By the time I got to the boat, in a panic of course, the job was half completed and all over bar the heart attack! I had been on the boat only four days before.

This little story I thought worth mentioning as it seems to me to demonstrate what an excellent Club we belong to, and how lucky we are to have such a staff and membership. And, dare I say it, *Southern Lady* is a mere humble old motor yacht and not a classic X.

Six months before this, in late June, she had taken on a lot of water, wrecking three batteries and wiring. This time we finally found the reason. It was an occasional leak on the port exhaust hose, which only happened when the boat was at a certain angle and load on the mooring, hence the intermittent nature of the problem. It was not the stern gland, as we at first thought. You would not be far wrong if you thought that this was a somewhat pusillanimous effort. Let's hope it's not exponential or even catching. However, the prompt action by the Club last December saved two of the three batteries.

For those interested, *Southern Lady* is a 35 ft CYTRA, German built in 1972 and fitted with Ford Sabre 210 diesels by the Royal Cruiser concessionaires. The engines were developed using Wellworthy technology in the late 60s, which transformed fast motor yachts. The main snag with these old engines is that when it is very cold you may need radar to get off the mooring.

Noel Hutchings



## RIB DONATION

Many Members will be familiar with *Furious*, Derek Beason's Fairey Swordsman, which is seen around the River and the Solent.

Thanks to Derek's generosity the Club now has a *Furious* of its own. Derek found that he only rarely used his RIBTEC 455, and he has offered it to the Club, together with its Yamaha 55 hp outboard, as an additional support boat.

The timing of his gift is particularly opportune, as it provides an additional RIB at a time when pressures on the existing fleet are increasing. We have the opportunity to try a 4.5 m boat, slightly larger than our three existing RIBs, especially when supporting Cadets and Optimists at regattas elsewhere as Derek has also kindly given the Club the trailer, before deciding on the size of boat to be purchased when we replace the 4 m boats. The RIB will be named *Furious* and carry a plaque recording Derek's gift to the Club.

Ian Gawn, Secretary



I was just about to ask, Cynthia, if it was to be your plaiice or mine

The Thames Estuary is rightly celebrated as a cruising ground. The determined small boat sailor can still find a peaceful haven among its muddy creeks and flats, with only the birds for company. But it is also an area of big, swirling tides and rock-hard sands. When the mist closes in, strange shapes emerge eerily from the gloom; deserted watch-towers, rusting gun platforms, massive buoys, the occasional wreck - reminders, if any were needed, of the need for careful study of the chart and the tide tables. This need was pressed home on me unforgettably one summer's day back in 1980.

In those days we kept our boat at Tollesbury, a charming yacht harbour set in a large puddle on a farm. At HW springs there is masses of water over the sill, but at LW the sea disappears; at neaps it was possible to be, well, neaped, in (or worse, outside) the marina. We had become accustomed to going sailing every other weekend, using the midnight-ish spring tide to leave our berth after the bar shut on Friday evening, and returning on the early afternoon high water of Sunday. This weekend, the yacht club planned to run its annual race on the Sunday, so the plan was to put in some practice on the Saturday and take part in the event next day.

We left the marina in fog on the Friday night and groped our way to a buoy in Tollesbury creek. On Saturday, the fog cleared and the barometer stood high; an anticyclonic haze proclaimed a glorious summer's day, with the prospect of more to come.

Practice went well, and after an enjoyable sail down the Blackwater we set a course back towards West Mersea, enjoying the afterglow of a good lunch and the continuing benevolence of the sunshine. The tide was high, the sea was wall-to-wall, the land looked miles away and a small bow-wave left a beautiful symmetric pattern in our wake. No need of chart or tide tables; it was all visible!

I was putting on the kettle when there was a faint scratching, followed immediately by a crunching sound from beneath my feet. On deck an instant later, I noted that the water was still flowing past and the land still distant - how could we be aground? Engine on, helm hard over: a glance over the side showed boiling water at the back and a

continuing bow ripple at the front. Came that awful feeling: it was the sea moving, not the boat. High water. Springs. High pressure. 24 feet to drop in six hours and ten minutes - four feet an hour - three quarters of an inch a minute - perhaps half an inch since we had touched.

We tried all the usual instant remedies, without avail. By the time we got the dinghy inflated to try laying out an anchor, the ship was already heeling several degrees and the tide was visibly gathering speed. So, belatedly, we got out the tide tables for the first time in the weekend. We had piled on about twenty minutes after the highest tide of the current spring cycle; the next high water would almost certainly not be high enough to refloat us. Slowly it dawned (no GPS or Decca in those days!) that the generous expanse of water between us and the land was

We dug in relays, using the ship's two buckets. It soon became clear that the buckets were taking more damage than the surrounding gravel, and the pile of shingle grew almost imperceptibly. Despair was beginning to creep over us at the thought that we should probably have to walk home some time the following day, own up to our families and come back for the boat in a fortnight. My son grinned once too often. 'Why', I said to him tartly, 'don't you go and get a shovel?' So he did. He was away for some time - Essex was quite a long way away - but he found a holiday camp, sought out the proprietor, and borrowed a shovel - just like that. So much for Dartmouth's training.

After that, it was nearly all downhill. The shovel was returned in the gathering dark just before the returning tide cut off the messenger, by which time an impressive (but

uncharted) gravel bank had arisen on one side of our ship, and a shallow channel lay open to the sea on the other. Of course it would disappear beneath the returning tide, but two anchors from the bow and some bearings took care of that. It remained only to await the top of the tide, which we did by pretending to sleep - not easy with the ship still on her ear.

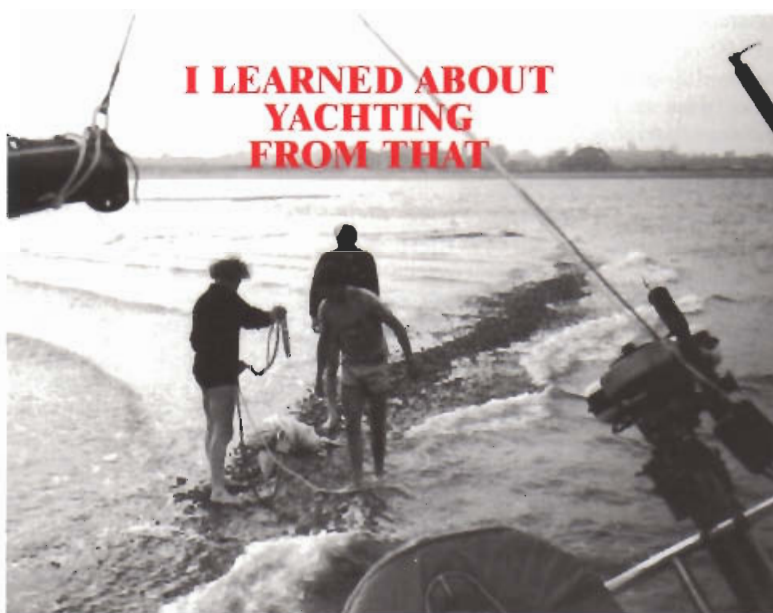
At last, very close to the predicted time of high water, she floated and swung to the tide. We inched our way cautiously down our line of bearings in the dark, and when in safe water crept back into Tollesbury creek to pass what remained of the night

in exhausted sleep.

That was how we came to the start line of the annual race haggard and unshaven in a mud-stained boat, surrounded by jolly sailors in pristine yachts smelling strongly of bacon and eggs. Happily, the wind died and nobody finished.

Some wag gave me a stainless steel folding spade for my next birthday. It has lived aboard my yacht, happily unneeded, ever since.

Jonathan Hutchinson  
Zia Maria



covering the lower parts of Mersea Island rather than the higher parts of the seabed. Desperate measures were going to be needed, but not yet; for now, we could only stuff fenders and sailbags under the turn of the fast-descending bilge, drink tea and try to see the funny side. At least the sun beamed down and the air was calm.

Three hours after we had grounded, we had become a feature of the Essex countryside, and the sea was almost out of sight. We had grounded on a gravelly flat, and the nearest indentation in its surface was about 30 yards away, giving us perhaps another foot of depth and a chance of reaching deeper water if we kept to an exact course for a 100 yards or more. The sun was going down and there was no-one to be seen.

## SCOW OUTING

Thirty Members of the RLymYC Scow Division went on a conducted tour of the Southampton Oceanography Centre. This comparatively new branch of scientific research involves 600 scientists and 400 students in an impressive new building where we saw, amongst many other things, ultra modern diving equipment used in the deepest oceans. Moored alongside, where this picture was taken, was one of the research vessels, in for a refit.

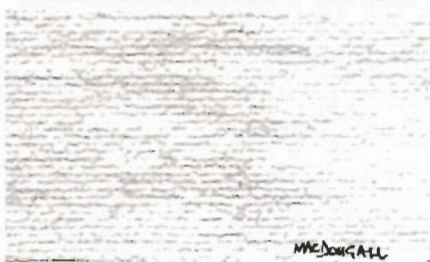
Martyn Hird





*Foggy, Foggy, Fun for Some.* The 'Dash' commemorates the past annual Christmas Relief of the Needles lighthouse by the RLymYC when the lighthouse was manned. Now the event has been replaced by a race which this year, its second, was on 12th December.

## NEEDLES RELIEF DASH



The Dash is a light-hearted yacht race, partly commemorative, but for most competitors also a means of enjoyably proceeding to Yarmouth, for merrymaking in the best traditions of Christmas terminating in Carol Shouting in the King's Head.

The Saturday forecast gave south to south-westerly Force 5 rising Force 6. In the event the Committee boat was on station with Force 1 and visibility down to 100 or 150 yards. Course A was set initially (to the Needles), hoping for the forecast wind to arrive; it didn't. A quick course change to the short, light weather course, sending the fleet to Hurst and Black Rock. This race uses a pursuit type start, with the results based on corrected elapsed times.

Early starters found little wind but with the ebb running getting down to Hurst would not be a problem. Finding Hurst, with 100 yards visibility, would be difficult, to say the least. During the early start sequence matters were enlivened by the Wight Link ferry attempting to enter the River to the east of the Starting Platform and coming to an undignified halt. We resisted the temptation to sail over and say 'Lymington's that way'.

With the ebb and a southwesterly wind the game plan was obvious - a strong starboard tack out into the stronger favourable tide. With the ebb under the lee, hit the port tack lay-line into Hurst. Easier said than done. I assume most yachts did this.

*Highlander* was the last yacht to start. No GPS, just basic mental DR and the use of a chart and depths. Following plan A we

proceeded on, in a little world of our own surrounded by fog and silence with a nice little breeze kicking us along at 5 - 6 knots. The possibility of large commercial traffic in the main channel was a worrying threat; not

another yacht in sight. After about 20 minutes I guessed we must be near the port tack lay-line. This was confirmed from our chart and depths by our navigator and tactician in consultation. We tacked on to port and shortly afterwards came in sight of yachts running under kites from Hurst. We had undershot Hurst by about 100 yards, pretty good in the circumstances, with Seat-of-the-Pants navigation by *Highlander's* afterguard. We did have an advantage - other yachts to show us where Hurst was. It must have been very difficult for the early starters.

The run down to Black Rock and the finish line was straightforward, with visibility improving on the island shore. *Highlander* passed a few yachts on this leg, including *Flying Boat*, which had just headed us at Hurst. *Highlander* crossed the line second on line honours, with *Flying Boat* third. We had seen a smaller yacht ahead which crossed the line first; this turned out to be *Viking*, a Hallberg Rassey 31, which had done very well for a cruising boat with little racing pretension. *Highlander* seemed to be doomed to be bridesmaid for the second year running. We were all pleasantly surprised to find that we were placed first on handicap; fifteen yachts finished.

This year was very different, but in spite of the conditions everybody seemed to have enjoyed themselves.

There was some embarrassment in that the chap who organised the event won the race. Most people politely chose to ignore this - it was not my handicap system!

Mac MacDougall



## A FAREWELL TO ED AND ICA

*Over the years Pottership has received a number of reports of cruising events in verse; this farewell seems particularly appropriate.*

For three long years when Charles was King and Pepys was just a Clerk

The tide of fortune ebbed away  
The future looked quite stark.

The plague had ravaged all the land  
and London was in ashes

The Naval crews had little food  
and suffered many lashes.

So when in Sixteen Sixty Seven  
the Dutch sailed up the Thames  
and Admiral Ruyter sank three ships  
it really was the end.

But then in Ninety Six  
another Dutchman came.

He won an even greater prize:  
Ed Vogelzang's his name.

Instead of taking just three ships  
He captured all the fleet

of cruising yachts two hundred strong  
and led them Meet to Meet.

He's led us into waters new  
ashore and out to sea.

In Club affairs he's had no doubts  
where Cruising ought to be.

The Meets he has extended  
to cover all the year

and our boats are blessed in springtime  
so no summer storms we fear.

New winter talks he's organised.  
They've been a great success.

And many a famous sailing man  
has given an address.

No effort has he spared himself.  
He's gone to every length

to make quite sure that all went well  
and moved from strength to strength.

As Captain of our Cruising fleet  
his time is nearly ended.

In all respects he's served us well;  
His leadership's been splendid.

But greater than his victories -  
a sum of many parts -

he's won the greatest prize of all:  
He's won our grateful hearts.

So thank you Ed and Ica  
for all that you have done.

You've left us many memories  
of happiness and fun.

May your every tide be favourable  
and every wind be free.

And may God bestow his blessings  
on your new *Merieke Three*.

Ted Hawkins

## Eating and Drinking at the Club



Some of you will have noticed that one of the long tables in the River Room and one in the Dining Room are sporting new signs saying 'Club table'. These have been designated for Members who are on their own but who wish to have lunch/supper/dinner in the Club in the company of other Members. Many Members feel uncomfortable eating alone and therefore avoid the Club unless they are meeting friends. We hope Members will feel welcome at these

tables - who knows, you may make new acquaintances and renew others!

At its meeting in January the General Committee decided that the bar will no longer be open on Sunday evenings during the winter months - so few Members use it. This is for the winter only, and the bar will again be open on Sunday evenings when the clocks change (March 28th).

The bar will, however, now regularly stay open until 2300 when there is a function at the Club, or later if an extension has been applied for.

Did you know that Michael and his staff provide coffee in the mornings? Why not come along to the Club for morning coffee, read the newspapers and magazines, or just enjoy one of the best views in Lymington. Michael is looking at 'coffee machines', so that we can provide fresh tea and coffee throughout the day.

There are still a few 75th anniversary wine coolers for sale. These have the Club burgee painted on the side; to clear stocks they have been reduced to £25. The few remaining T-shirts have also been reduced.

Jenny Collyer, Rear Commodore House



## A BUSY YEAR IN MATCH RACING

1999 is the 25th anniversary of the Royal Lymington Cup. The concept of the event was brought to England from California by Bill Green in the mid-seventies and for a number of years it was held in Contessa 32s generously loaned by their owners. The biggest milestone was in 1989 when the Club was honoured to host the second ever World Championship of Match Race Sailing.

The sport of match racing has developed considerably since the early days when matches sailed in Christchurch Bay lasted about 45 minutes over one mile legs. The results of each day were usually not confirmed until the protest committee had deliberated until the early hours. Today the racing is held in the Solent, each match lasts only 20 minutes around a very short course of up to three laps, and the on-the-water umpires ensure that the result is not in doubt by handing out instant penalties faster than the most prolific football referee.

The skippers now have to contend with intrusive low flying helicopters and on-board TV cameramen; they used to race for honour, today it is for money! We have sailed the Royal Lymington Cup in six different classes of yacht, and have had eleven different title sponsors. We have had only three committee boats, and four Principal Race Officers, but we have had hundreds of Club volunteers who have given up their valuable leisure time to ensure the success of each event; to them we are truly grateful.

In addition to the 25th Royal Lymington Cup, to be held from 8th to 12th June this year, we will be running a National Match Racing Championship Qualifier over the previous weekend on behalf of the RYA. We are also honoured to be asked to host the British Women's Match Racing Championship on July 3rd and 4th. All our events this year will be held in our newly discovered venue a few feet off the Solent side of Hurst beach, and will use the RYA's fleet of brilliant First Class Eights.

We hope to be able to celebrate our Silver Jubilee, which will be attended by our patron HRH The Princess Royal, in an appropriate way, and hope to see as many of you as possible on the water.

Tony Blachford, Rear Commodore Sailing



*Top and left* The 1998 World Championships were sailed in First Class Europes *Below:* Right back in 1979 the Royal Lymington Cup was sailed in Contessa 32s loaned by Club Members



## Peter Andreae Trophy

Seventeen Junior sailors turned up for this year's Peter Andreae Trophy on Sunday 27th December. The event was once again sailed in Scows, which are proving a very suitable boat for the event. As usual there was no shortage of adult hands to ensure success both on and off the water. In fact the onshore team, who were co-ordinating the results and working out a fair distribution of the Peter Andreae monies, were as hard pressed as those on the water.

The racing in all three fleets was tight and tough; the race officer was heard to demand penalty turns on a number of occasions. The weather forecast was not promising but as it turned out the rain cleared, giving an excellent morning for racing in a moderate southerly wind. This made the race officer's course setting a doddle with a windward/leeward course up and down the River.

Despite the wind strength, which should have suited the bigger competitors, it was the Junior Fleet sailors who dominated the final.

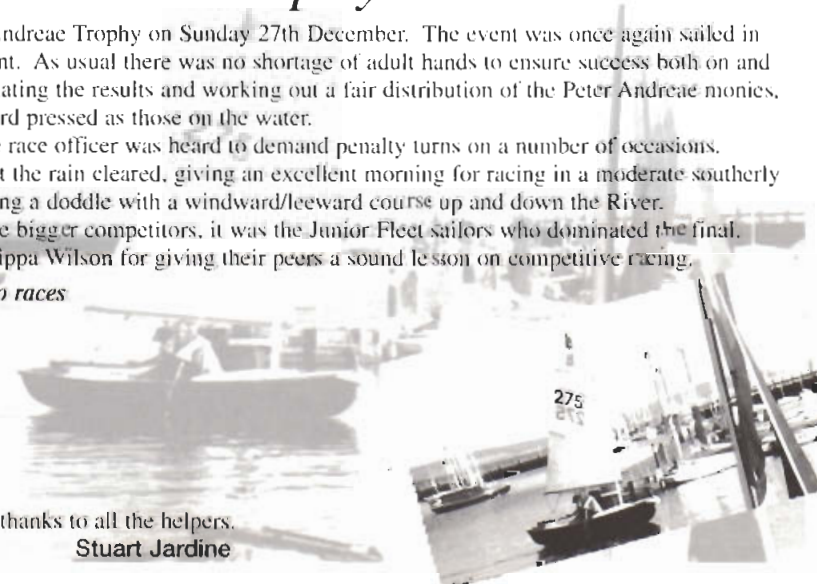
Congratulations go to both Nick Thompson and Pippa Wilson for giving their peers a sound lesson on competitive racing.

**FINALS: best two from each of the fleets, points on two races**

1st Nick Thompson (Junior fleet)	3 pts
2nd Pippa Wilson (Junior fleet)	4 pts
3rd David Putt (Middle fleet)	5 pt
4th Catherine Putt (Senior fleet)	8 pts
5th Frances Wilson (Senior fleet)	11 pts
6th Matt Bailey (Middle fleet)	11 pts

Well done everyone who competed, and once again many thanks to all the helpers.

Stuart Jardine





*Lymington Harbour Commissioners want to dampen the wave action on boats moored at the mouth of the River where, with the wind in the south-west, it is difficult to board from dinghies in anything stronger than a F3. The Commissioners would like to hear from anyone who has seen a floating breakwater (other than a pontoon-type structure) and to learn where it is located. Members may have some useful information; if so phone Colin Wise at the Harbour office on 01590 672014.*

### **It was windy, wasn't it?**

Exemplifying how windy it was last summer, as if any sailor needed reminding, this picture of Sika's airborne dinghy was taken by John Hines last June in Camaret. Arthur and Una Flanagan were unable to get ashore from their buoy for several days.



## **Swipe Me!**



Members who have been around the Club during the recent cold, wet months may not yet have experienced the new security arrangements. Your Club card (no longer issued annually) is now also your key. When the ground floor of the Club is quiet, such as during a lecture or formal dinner, and at some times of day, particularly at weekends, the Club doors are now usually locked and the security system is in operation. Access is gained at the main door by swiping your Club card from left to right through the card reader on the shelf on your right. If you have forgotten your card, or can't make it work, there is a buzzer which will alert staff who can operate the lock remotely and let you in. A camera shows who is at the door so that we can exercise control over unauthorised visitors - the whole point of the system.

There is also a buzzer and supervising camera, but not a card reader, at the north door (under the River Room fire escape) for those in wet clothes or needing wheelchair access.

In case of emergency, all the 'locked' doors can be opened easily from the inside, either by using a push bar or turning the catch. However, most of the time when the Club is busy there are staff and Members about and all doors will generally be left unlocked with, it is hoped, no compromise to security and no inconvenience to Members.

Andrew Tyrrell, Vice Commodore

## **ON THE WATERFRONT...**



**Kevin Smith**



**Barrie Smith**



**Philip Baker**

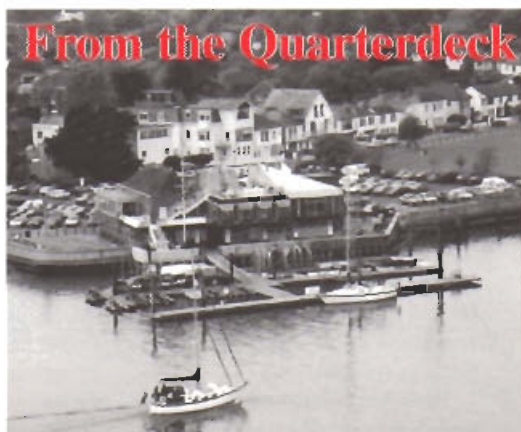


Nickname	Moose	Brum	Teabreak
Occupation	Senior Boatman	Boatman	Boatman
Age	31	30	25
Height	188 cm	183 cm	170 cm
Weight	89 kg	79.5 kg	73 kg
Joined Club	1984	1985	1990
Lifeboat Crew since	1984: Senior Helm 1996	1990: Helm 1992	1991
Hobbies	DIY, Cycling, Boating	Anything Mechanical, Walking (usually to the pub)	Weight training, keep fit, clothes shopping (beauty contests?Ed)
Favourite Food	Chinese	Curry	Chinese
Favourite Drink	Rum	Mount Gay	Guinness
Favourite Read	Military & Naval History	Sunday Sport	Fiesta
Dream Holiday	Universal Studios, USA	Booze Cruise	Caribbean
With?	Cindy Crawford	Denise Van Outen	Pamela Anderson
Scariest moment	Almost capsizing the lifeboat	Rolling his car	Finding a body on a lifeboat call
Funniest moment	See Philip's most embarrassing moment	Almost sinking one launch with the other	Seeing the old Secretary (JDH) with half a fender stuck to his head
Most embarrassing	Falling off the Club pontoon in full view of the bar	Being collected from the staff Christmas party by dad	Falling overboard in the Solent in full view of the Princess Royal
Hero	James Bond	PC 183 Lyndhurst Police Station	Forrest Gump

**Editor's note:** The extra picture of Philip shows him winning the Miss SAR prize at a Solent Coastguard social event at Lee-on-Solent



**A**s I come to the end of my first year as Secretary, it is a good time to reflect on twelve very interesting and enjoyable months. Having already been at the Club for two years, I might reasonably have expected to know the ropes; the reality has been very different. A Service background is certainly valuable - what an RAF colleague once described as the ability to nit-pick in depth - but, as Stephen Carden-Noad has proved, it is not a prerequisite. The role of the secretariat in this as in other clubs has changed over the years, but the requirement to help the Club retain its essentially relaxed atmosphere remains. However, behind the scenes we have to be increasingly businesslike, albeit as what is known as a 'not for profit' organisation. The first part of my job, therefore, is to lead the team of more than thirty employees to deliver the wide range of services which the Club provides as efficiently as possible - hopefully with cheery faces. The staff seem to do an outstanding job, be it on the water, in the



restaurant and bar, cleaning the Clubhouse or in the office. Contributions to the staff fund show Members' appreciation in a tangible manner, and I am asked to convey the thanks of the staff to those who contributed. I can only repeat publicly my thanks to all the staff for their efforts during the year.

As most of you will know, the greatest part of our programme on the water would

not happen were it not for a veritable army of Member volunteers. The jobs which they do vary from driving the support boats, sometimes in very uninviting weather, through race officering on the platform or committee boats, running the race office and calculating results, organising barbecues and rallies, training RIB drivers and dinghy sailors and even putting up officials and competitors in their homes. Others make a major contribution serving on committees and working parties. Finally, let us not forget those who take part in events, be it racing or cruising. I once tried to make a rough calculation of the number of people afloat on the Solent in events organised by the Club over one weekend early in the season. I was staggered by a result - in excess of a thousand, which did not take account of those 'just' out for a day's sailing - which I think shows that this is a very active Club with a wide range of activities.

Ian Gawn  
Secretary

**T**he Club has been asked to host the next Etchells World Championships in August 2001. The class, well supported in the Solent, attracts world class sailors, and some 60 boats are expected to participate. Past Etchells World Champion include America's Cup winners Dennis Connor, John Bertrand and Russell Coutts;

### Etchells World Championships

Club member Chris Law was Etchells World Champion in the mid 90s. This will be the most prestigious fleet racing event the Club has ever run. On a smaller scale, some 35 Etchells are expected at the Club this year for the class's National championships in mid June, and the Club will host the RYA Women's National Match Racing championships in early July.

Tony Blachford, Rear Commodore

### SAILABILITY SPONSORED SWIM

On January 17th thirty-three of our Optimist and Cadet sailors took to the (warm) water of the Lymington Recreation Centre for an hour long sponsored swim. Their aim was to raise money for Sailability, the RYA charity that promotes sailing for the disabled and is one of the two Club-supported charities.

In the 55 minutes available 2156 lengths were completed, an average of just over a mile per child; good going for a group whose average age is 11 years old.

Children are normally typecast in the role of disproportionate consumers of resources and attention. It is therefore wonderful to report that our current junior sailors are so motivated to help other people to enjoy the sport of sailing - it is also good to know that they can swim!

Geoff Stock

## I'M GOING SAILING...

**So what?** Isn't that what we all do? But this time it's your editor, and I hope to be in the Caribbean for the first two or three months of the next Millennium, which means, unless some other si... oops! I mean keen person, can be found to take on the job - **no Pottership. Disaster!** There is no other outlet for Members' salacious stories, educational essays, libellous limericks ...not even for John Ryley's apt and beautifully drawn cartoons, or Jo Mooring Aldridge's sketches of boats. And what would Andrew Salanson do without hours and hours of effort to put in twice a year on the design?

**So who will volunteer?** Job description: must be able to nag potential contributors, especially Flag Officers; to type (it is now too big for the Office to help); have access to a computer, or know someone who would do this part of the job; be around for a week or three, on and off, in January/February and September/October. A working knowledge of grammar, ability to spell and proof-read, and to read unreadable handwriting would all be great advantages!

Seriously, tho', after fourteen issues it is time I handed over. The number of hours involved per issue, including the typing, is about 40, spread over a three, maybe four week period. It involves spending some time at Andrew's Avalon Printers, watching, and occasionally helping him to work magic on boring pages, restore faded pictures and even put poor ones into focus. It's fascinating stuff.

The job helped me enormously to get to know lots of people in the Club, and all about its activities, at a time when I hardly knew the Old Sail Loft from the Chart Room.

**Offers please!**


Marilyn Holmes  
Editor until the end of the Century



It was the 175th Anniversary of the RNLI on March 4th. Doug Baverstock, then the Club's Boatman, was one of the founders of the rescue service that went on to become Lymington Lifeboat Station, with which the Club has had a long association. The links between this Club and the Station are still extremely strong: apart from the many Members of the Club who are members of the Guild or the Branch, or are personal members of the RNLI, all three boatmen are members of the lifeboat crew and are qualified helmsmen, with Kevin Smith as Senior Helm. Michael Webb, our catering manager, is Hon Sec and Launching Authority, with Tony Blachford, Rear Commodore Sailing, as Deputy Launching Authority. Other Members fill roles in the Station organisation. Over the years many Club Members, along with others sailing in the Solent, have had cause to be grateful for the skill and dedication of the Lifeboat crews. We acknowledge with gratitude their contribution to sailing.

Ian Gawn





**I**t has been a busy year; I spent Christmas '97 in Bangkok with my brother John and his wife Paddy - he is on his final posting there as Military Attache. We had a quiet but very enjoyable time. A highlight was a visit to the original Bridge on the River Kwai - a memorable and moving experience.

Kinsa had a major refit in New Zealand. It is a wonderful place to do this as enthusiasm over the America's Cup coupled with the fact that almost everyone sails means that

there is an enormous amount of willing expertise to help the cruising sailor. Prices too are very reasonable. In fact, I was so busy that time slipped away and there was none left to cruise and see friends in Auckland and Wellington. I did however fly over to Melbourne where I spent a wonderful fortnight with Colin and Jane Turple - Colin and I were dental students together in the '60s and were able to pick up exactly where we left off. I was also delighted to meet Roger Tomlinson again, Joan's cousin, who is now living in Australia.

Early May found me in the Bay of Islands intending to spend a couple of weeks cruising in that superb area, but two days after I arrived a good weather slot came so I left, alas without saying goodbyes, for New Caledonia, 960 miles to the north. It was as well that I did as boats leaving a week later were reporting south-west winds around 50 knots and having a horrid time. Kinsa and I however had a fast, comfortable passage and tied up in the marina in Noumea eight days later. I then had a wonderful month cruising the southern lagoon, some 40 miles square, with a wealth of islands, reefs and quiet anchorages and wonderful swimming and snorkelling. I am very glad I did because it was the last good swimming I was to see for months.

Patrick Grove-White, who had been visiting family and friends in Tasmania, flew up to join me and we left for Cairns, Queensland, some 1300 miles to the west, on June 10th. For the first three days there was precious little wind and we spent long hours

motoring with what little breeze there was blowing the exhaust smoke back into the cockpit - definitely not the nicest introduction to ocean cruising for Patrick. However by the 18th we were under three reefs and a storm jib enjoying 30/35 knots of reinforced Trade winds. We continued running through the reefs of the Coral Sea for the next three days with huge steep seas coming up astern and sliding dramatically forward. It says much for the design and construction of the Rustler 36 that others nearby were reporting damage and difficulty whilst we were running easily under just a storm jib, and I felt no need to stream a drogue. We finally reached the entrance to the passage through the Great Barrier Reef at 4 am on 21st June, where we hove-to for six hours waiting to escort another boat with broken gear and a doubtful engine into Cairns. We finally tied up that afternoon, having covered 1312 miles in eleven days. Patrick left me there a couple of days later, but we managed to fit in a flight in a seaplane before he left. It sounded fun and I thought that a view of the Great Barrier Reef from the air would be informative.

David Strang, my sister Gilly's husband, then joined me - I had invited him to help with the navigation up this difficult stretch of coast and 'across the top' to Darwin. We again had reinforced Trade winds for much of the trip north, which meant that the water was cloudy and conditions quite unsuitable for rock-dodging among coral reefs, so we used the inshore passage, making good time. The lack of swimming was disappointing, but estuarine crocodiles are a protected species, large, plentiful and very dangerous, so swimming was pretty well out anyway.

We finally berthed in Darwin on July 29th after a 1346 mile passage which included the 'Hole-in-the-wall' in the Wessell Islands and a night passage through the Clarence Strait, which is far from straight, doing 10+ knots at times through coral reefs. The passage is very well lit, but I was very glad to have David's help on it.

Darwin is a very friendly city. It was devastated by cyclone Tracey in 1971, so any two stones still standing are antiques. There aren't many! David and I had a wonderful trip up to Kakadu national park; the highlight of this for me were the hundreds of rock paintings in the area. They are quite amazing; some are of animals which have been extinct in the region for over 10,000 years, and yet

**KINSA**  
**CARRIES ON**  
**ROUND THE**  
**WORLD**





...swimming was disappointing, but estuarine crocodiles are a protected species, large, plentiful and very dangerous...

the paintings, which are contemporary, remain fresh and clear. Nor are they in some dim cave or overhang, but right out in the full tropical sun, a quite extraordinary feat. They have a wonderfully dramatic sense of life and awareness. There are apparently thousands of these paintings in the area, much of it in Aboriginal Homelands which are not open to visitors; most are unrecorded and many must be unknown.

I was surprised to learn that Darwin was quite heavily bombed during the war, and the maps in the excellent little War Museum show that this was done with surprising accuracy and effect; surprising that is until one learns that the Survey Department before the war was largely staffed by Japanese! The major exhibit in this museum is the huge concrete emplacements for 7 inch naval guns for Coastal Defence. The only problem is that there aren't actually any guns there; they were all sold for scrap after the war - to the Japanese!

David having left for the UK, Kinsa and I were on our own again for the 2050 mile leg to Cocos Keeling Island, almost exactly half way to Mauritius. It was a rough trip and I was glad that I had had a boom gallows fitted in New Zealand which allowed me to rig a trisail easily at sea. I wish I had realised earlier what a good sail it is in heavy weather. This leg took exactly sixteen days.

Cocos was a wonderful refuge. Direction Island is small, covered in palm trees, with a secure anchorage. There is a barbecue sight, a telephone - solar powered, so it doesn't work in cloudy weather - two water tanks and a long-drop loo which, as one cannot dig down, was built up. It proved a happy place and a welcome break before carrying on for the next 2073 miles to Rodrigues, which we fetched also in sixteen days.

Rodrigues is remote, unspoilt and very beautiful. I was particularly pleased to be there since I did my National Service almost 50 years ago in the Suez Canal Zone with Mauritian troops, and I remember with gratitude the professionalism of the Rodriguees in my Company. The anchorage is small and was filled by three British yachts, all showing an anchor ball by day and light by night and following correct flag etiquette. My stay there was made more enjoyable by the hospitality of James Waterstone, a local man who makes a point of meeting the crew of every yacht visiting his delightful island

and showing them something of its beauty.

However all good things come to an end and on 24th October I left for Mauritius, a short 450 miles to the west, arriving in Port Louis on the morning of 27th. Mauritius is modern and very beautiful. They have targeted the upper end of the tourist market, and I spent a happy ten days there preparing for the last leg to Richards Bay, South Africa.

This 1560 mile leg took me twelve days of pleasant sailing, even if it was a bit frustrating as the favourable currents I had expected were running the wrong way. I arrived on 23rd November and found a secure berth in Tuzi Gazi marina. Whilst I was there John and Pat Driscoll on *Moonlight of Down*, with whom I had left Falmouth three years ago, arrived and we managed to have two days in Phinda Game Park, which is a very up-market reserve. It is new, on old farm land on which all game was shot-out in the '20s (to control Rinderpest and Tsetse). The animals have all been introduced in the last nine years from other areas, and are completely indifferent to Land Rovers. To be able to watch a pride of lions with cubs from a few feet away was a remarkable experience. I made some comment about tame pussies, and was told in unmistakable terms that these were killers. In fact all the lions in southern Africa carry human HIV virus, so if you should survive an attack by one you will then get AIDS! Apparently it doesn't affect the lions, but they also have TB, which is threatening the entire lion population in that area. We also saw a cheetah with cubs, a two-day old giraffe, rhino, various antelope, warthog, zebra, and on the river some wonderful birds - malachite kingfisher, jacana and a fin-foot. The lavish meals, luxurious beds and limitless hot baths were a gorgeous contrast to life on board! I finally flew home for Christmas on 6th December.

I expect to return on 21st January, and then to move south to Capetown in preparation for the passage north to the Azores, Falmouth and Lymington, so completing the circumnavigation in May. I shall then be at home until September, when I leave for the Caribbean again, joining the Ocean Cruising Club's Millennium Cruise to the Caribbean. New Year 2000 will be seen-in in Prickly Bay, Grenada .....thereafter, who knows? Perhaps the eastern USA, or perhaps back into the Pacific.

Mike Thoyts

## NEW GENERAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

At the Club's Annual General Meeting in February Andrew Tyrrell was voted the Club's new Vice Commodore; Mike Urwin retired from the General Committee by rotation, and Jane Pitt-Pitts retired to become the new Captain of Racing. The vacancies were, by ballot, filled by John Bence, Nigel Thomas & David Wansbrough.



John Bence, Lymington based and a Member since 1985, has sailed in dinghies and cruiser/racers, currently competing in *Box Clever*. He cruises a Halberg Rassey 29, *Chatterbox*. He has held a number of committee and Flag post in other clubs, and states that he is 'keen to promote keel-boat racing in the Western Solent and cruising-in-company in the Channel area'.



Nigel Thomas, a Member since 1992, is a Yachtmaster Instructor and a member of the RIN. Associated in the past with the RAFYC and the Sadler Association, he was part of Jimmy Cornell's World Cruising Management Team. He has been racing in the Solent since the '50s, first in dinghies and most recently in X boats.



David Wansbrough, also a Member since 1992, has sailed since childhood in dinghies, XOD, SCOD and Class 1 cruiser/racers, competing in Cork Week, Cowes Week, and 10 Round the Island races. He now cruises a Swan 40 as well as racing an Etchells.





## Prizes for Optimists

*Where there are Optimists there will be prizes. Thanks to the prize-gathering efforts of Pete Sanders and John Claridge we were able to present 108 different prizes and trophies to the 33 children present! We try to reward progress and achievement equally, and our prize giving was structured to show how a beginner can progress to become a world class sailor.*

The first measure of progress is the Class Association training syllabus. Grades 1, 2 and 3 cover basic boat handling skills. After these the 'Coastal Bar' includes an element of experience and self-sufficiency - you must 'log' at least 20 hours sailing in tidal water; in Lymington the 20 hours must be in at least F4. Grades 4 and 5 cover advanced racing tactics: compass work, tracking windshifts etc. At the end of 1998, the 39 sailors of the Lymington fleet were graded as follows: six sailors at grade 1, eight at grade 2, sixteen at grade 3, five at Coastal Bar, one at grade 4, and three at grade 5. Each sailor gets a badge to wear and a sticker for their logbook.

Another way of measuring progress is to look at the level at which a sailor races. Newcomers generally start in the Bronze fleet at the Salterns; nine beginner Optimist sailors were presented with T-shirts. The next stage is Junior Regatta and local Open Meetings; eleven sailors reached this stage last year. After local regattas there are the three major National Championships; prizes for everyone of course. Beyond that are International regattas - both Dominic Hutton and Nick Thompson were selected for the European Championships in Croatia. Finally we congratulated Jonny Marshall who had qualified for the UK World team. On behalf of the Class Association we presented him with the OCRA shield, for becoming only the second British sailor ever to win a race at the Worlds. The learning curve is steep, but there is a well defined path: within three years Jonny had progressed from a newcomer to success in the hottest of hot fleets, sailing against the best young sailors from 44 different countries. Ex-Optimist sailors won medals in every dinghy class at the 1996 Atlanta Olympic regatta; today's Optimist Worlds fleet is tomorrow's Olympic fleet.

Having categorised all our sailors in these two ways, we moved on to reward those who had shown the greatest improvement over the year. At Bronze fleet level the 'Jason Cup' was presented to

Izaak Pardey. At Gold fleet level the 'Cross Trophy' was won by Matthew Bailey, and for being the sailor who had most improved his national ranking, Jonathan Clegg won the 'Hutton Trophy'. We presented prizes to winners of the Saturday Points series: George Minors and Robbie Claridge in the Bronze fleet, Bethan Carden, Rupert Stock and Nick Thompson in the Silver and Gold Fleets.

The Sargeant Cup is presented to the sailor who we believe has most enjoyed their sailing during the year. We take the opportunity to remind everyone that enjoyment and fun is what the sport of sailing is all about - in 1998 Jenny Bates was our choice. As well as the cup, her prize was a very large tin of sweets which (after a moment's hesitation) she generously shared with us all. There was a prize for each of the eighteen sailors who took part in the Children in Need Race, and a prize for the three youngest participants in a very rough Lymington Open Meeting. Richard Mason won The Marshall Trophy for seamanship and sailing potential, and Jonny Marshall won the 1998 Tar Barrel Trophy.

The final prize of the evening was 'Strew's Bench', a hiking bench that used to belong to Nick Rogers. This goes to the sailor with the highest National Ranking. Having won everything that a 12-year old Optimist sailor can win, Nick Thompson is now ranked number one in the country. He dominated the Nationals, becoming Junior Champion by the largest ever average margin; he is National Under 13 Schools Champion, was 2nd at the Eric Twiname, and was top British sailor at the Europeans. After such success, a hiking bench seemed harsh reward - but these Optimist sailors are a dedicated bunch, and he seemed pleased with it!

And that was the end of the 1998 season. Six weeks later the 1999 season began. You may have seen the Gold Fleet out on Sundays throughout January and February. Why do they train like this? Because nowadays the Lymington Optimist Fleet has a reputation to live up to.....

Geoff Stock



### Pottership

Edited by Marilyn Holmes  
Designed by Andrew Salanson  
Cartoons by John Ryley

Pottership ©1999  
The Royal Lymington Yacht Club  
Bath Road Lymington Hampshire SO41 3SE  
Email: [sail@rlyc.org.uk](mailto:sail@rlyc.org.uk)  
Web site: [www.rlmyc.org.uk/](http://www.rlmyc.org.uk/)