



Pin Mill Sailing Club



MARCH 2010 NEWSLETTER

For all the very latest information, visit the website at www.pmsc.org.uk

Commodore's Corner

I thought I had escaped the winter weather when Sue and I fled to California in January for a winter break. Alas no such luck, the thoughts of returning to some early spring sunshine have been dashed with the continued freezing weather taking its toll on all of us. Never mind, having seen the Snowdrops out in the Woolverstone woodland and one or two bulbs breaking the surface in the garden warmer days are just around the corner and of course for the boaters amongst us thoughts will turn to fitting out. With that in mind the Club will again this year host the fitting out lunches. A list of available dates is currently on the notice board for those of you who are prepared to do a turn in the galley. Further details and advice can be obtained from Catherine Abbott, our Hon. House Secretary. Please don't be shy in coming forward, new faces are always welcome.

Turning the clock back a little, in early February we were treated to a wonderful talk given by Paul and Ute Jeffries. As you may know Paul and Ute have spent the past four years sailing to Australia via the Panama Canal and we were lucky enough to listen to their adventures from Panama across the South Pacific to Brisbane. The talk was supported by some impressive photos and film which I suspect rekindled the cruising dream of one or two in the audience. Our good wishes go to Paul and Ute as they continue their circumnavigation back to the UK.

Coming up on March 6th is our second winter talk, this time given by Club member and local resident Laurie Mayer. Laurie will give us an insight into his world of journalism as a BBC presenter and press spokesman for Mohammed Al Fayed. Should be an interesting evening.

Another interesting event coming up is the trip to Chatham Historic Dockyard, although I understand not by coach but by a fleet of cars. If you have not been to the Dockyard before it is well worth a visit. Further details can be obtained from Val Stone, Hon. Sailing Secretary.

On the back of a successful Rummy and Port evening the second Friday fun night takes place on the 26th Feb with the Scalectrics race night. Everyone is welcome to come and have a go. Who will be Club Champion?

Diary



Saturday 6th March

Talk by Laurie Mayer on his career in Journalism

Saturday 13th March

Trip to Chatham Historic Dockyard.

Friday 19th March

Nintendo Wii night

Saturday 27th March

New Members' Evening with Mexican style Buffet

Friday 2nd April

Working party and Grindle Dig
Hot snacks for the workers.

Saturday 24th April

Fitting out Supper
Tear-off Slip included.

Saturday 15th May

4CRS Race 1 (RHYC host)

Saturday 29th May

Bank Holiday Cruise

Saturday June 12th

4CRS Race 2 (SSC Host)

*The next newsletter will be in May.
Contributions please by 23rd of
April to;*

*circular@pmsc.org.uk or by post
to: 14 The Chestnuts, Wrentham,
Beccles, Suffolk, NR34 7EZ*

The final Friday fun night for the energetic members amongst us will be playing the Nintendo Wii taking place on the 19th March. Again everyone is welcome to have a go but please warm up beforehand!

Other events on the horizon are New Members' evening with Mexican Buffet and of course our annual plea for help to spring clean the Clubhouse and dig the Grindle on Good Friday.

Finally a little reminder to members bringing guests to the Club, could you please remember to sign them in on each of their visits, and also, with the weather being so wet and the ground muddy at the moment, would members please remove their Wellington Boots before entering the Bar area. Thank you for your co-operation.

**Jon Humby
Commodore**

Good Friday Working Party and Grindle Dig

Our annual Good Friday event this year is very early in April so hopefully the sun will shine without too many of those showers! Last year we had a good turnout of members making the event a success, and despite the untimely tide a few very early risers could be seen battling with the Pin Mill mud on the last section of the Hard. Again this year the tide time will mean an early start for any digging to be done!

(The Grindle has silted badly this winter and Gus and Phil at King's have been re-engineering the small tractor that has a mud scraper attachment which is used to keep the concrete reasonably clear throughout the season. Without this additional help the concrete would soon become difficult to access.)

However there are the usual range of tasks that are necessary to keep our Clubhouse and environs in shipshape order. For new or recent members to the Club it is a good opportunity to join in and meet other members; it's a family day, so if you have youngsters bring them along - lots to do!

Talking of things to do it's sanding, painting, wood preserving, gardening, clearing valleys and gutters, launching trolley repair work, flag-staff overhaul, major plumbing in the male facilities etc. etc.

With the help of Rick I shall be compiling a list of projects, but if there is something that you feel we need to give special attention to please contact Rick or myself. I will be putting a form on the notice board for signing up if you wish, but not necessary, just turn up if you can! I do believe that a rewarding pint and hot dog or similar will be the ration for all volunteers!!!

Thanking you in anticipation, even if you can only spare an hour or two it helps!!

**Paul Hand
Hon. Property Secretary**

Sailing

Yes it will soon be that time again! Our programme kicks off on the 15th May with the first of the 4CRS races and then continues with the late May Bank Holiday cruise starting on the 29th (would someone – anyone - please volunteer to be host boat for this occasion??).

We now have a 'Group MMSI' number:

023200092

Set the above number in the 'Group' setting menu on your DSC enabled VHF. When a DSC call is initiated to the group MMSI all programmed receivers within range will be activated, allowing the caller to address all the stations called and for the stations to reply. Very useful for Club cruising events!

Work is in progress on finding berths on a sailing barge or two for our match on the 19th June. Those of us who raced last year had the most exciting experience, so let me know if you would be interested in one of these places.

The full sailing programme is included with this newsletter but I would like to draw your attention to this year's Club cruise starting on August 14th. We have decided to do

something often talked about but never achieved, namely visit Heybridge Basin on the Blackwater. This unique little spot is accessed via a lock into the Chelmer and Blackwater Canal. If you are intending to join us please let me know and I will book you in.

You will soon be receiving your Almanac for 2010 and the more eagle-eyed of you may notice we have tweaked some of the sea courses on the sailing pages, so please check them carefully on race days.

Val Stone
Hon. Sailing Secretary

In the Library

Many members will have enjoyed Arthur Ransome's stories especially those about local waters but what is not much known is the dramatic events of his early life. In 1912 he went to Russia, learning Russian, he became foreign correspondent for English newspapers and stayed there over the war and the subsequent revolution.

He was well received by top Soviet officials and formed an association with Evgenia Schelepina Trotsky's assistant and secretary. In 1919 they made the hazardous overland journey from Moscow to Reval in Estonia where Arthur's interest in sailing appears to have begun. His first book 'Racundra in the Baltic' describes early cruises. Divorcing his first wife Arthur married Evgenia in Reval to return to England in 1924.

'Ransome in Russia' by Ted Alexander & Tatiana Verizhnikova which tells the whole story in detail is now in the history section of the library

Thanks to Tim Fenton for a new edition of The Missing Centimetre by Leon Schultz. An account of a cruise from Sweden to the Caribbean and Bermuda.

Tony Cowley
Librarian

Volunteers Please for Fitting-Out Lunches

Fitting out lunches will begin on March 14th and continue through 'til the end of April. The idea is for volunteer teams to provide a hot meal each Sunday lunchtime. It can be anything you like - soup and a roll, bangers and mash, something more exotic? It is as well to cater for about 30 people but expect to take some leftovers home, and charge a price which will cover costs.

If you would like to have a go then put your name on the list on the notice board against the date you would like. For further information/advice contact Cathy Abbott.

Give Her 48 Hours and She Will Take Up

At the end of the previous season we had sailed Galaxy, Stella No 10, non-stop from her mooring in the Thorney Channel to Burnham on Crouch. It had been a good passage up Channel until the visibility clamped right down as we approached Whitaker No 6. We felt our way in a little way using Decca and the echo sounder but as darkness fell the visibility got worse and we dropped the hook somewhere near the Buxey No1. Next morning, in the clear, we made our way to Burnham Marina where Galaxy was going to be put in the shed for some planks to be replaced.

The great plan was that on a particular weekend in April, when there was a big spring tide, we would return to Chichester Harbour using the Havengore Passage. Why use the Havengore? Well it was there to be used wasn't it? All was set. We had the weekend to get down to Thorney Island but of course had to be back in the office on Monday morning to continue the Cold War. The yard had promised that Galaxy would be ready and the weather forecast was OK. On the Friday afternoon Ted and I slipped out of the office, using the fire escape stairway to avoid passing the Group Captain's room, and by tube and train arrived at the marina to see that Galaxy was in the water, but that on the pontoon there

was a large fire pump busily replacing the Crouch into its proper place,

The yard foreman said that they had only just launched her and that as she had been in the shed all winter she was making a bit but give her 48 hours and she would take up.

My reaction was oh well that's that then. Ted, the press on type, said "Come on we're going". The foreman suddenly found that he was needed elsewhere, the large bore suction hose was flung aside and away we went.

The Havengore Bridge was negotiated successfully and then we were on that long stretch across the Foulness sands. Ted steered while I watched the echo sounder. Well that was a waste of time because shortly after leaving the bridge the two little red dots merged together and remained firmly attached to one another. So instead I perched on the pulpit in the belief that this would reduce our draught at the stern. After what seemed an eternity we reached the main channel and altered course for the overland route via the Kentish Flats.

At this stage there was no wind and while she remained upright the leak remained manageable. Anyway, the bilge pump was situated so that the helmsman was able to steer with one arm and pump with the other.

Galaxy was equipped with a "Vire" engine that, when it chose to work, consumed petrol at a great rate. We had several cans but with no wind we needed to go into Newhaven to refuel. It was late evening when we berthed alongside the tumbledown pontoon and Ted was ashore and away into the hinterland clutching his fuel cans.

I thought that he would never find petrol at that time of night and that we would have a nice rest and get away next morning. How wrong can you be? Here he was back in no time. "Come on Roger we're going before they charge us for this dump."

Now a Stella really gets a move on and with a fair breeze on port tack we were making good progress down Channel when Ted emerged to announce that we were taking on water in a big way. Closer inspection revealed water

cascading down the lands of the clinker planking for the whole length of the cabin. It looked very pretty but rather frightening. It seemed that every plank was leaking and at around 0200 hrs, when morale is not at its highest, our prospects didn't look too rosy. We pumped.

As the initial panic subsided we discovered that a finger applied to the top land stopped the ingress of water downstream of said finger and we realised that the leak came from further aft. Further scrabbling about in the starboard locker showed the main source of the leak to be one badly corroded copper nail. Great relief all round.

With Ted as skipper and the Stella going like a train there was no chance of a diversion in to Brighton for a rest. Anyway, Ted doesn't do marinas so we were cheered by the sight of the Isle of Wight rising over the horizon. We were lucky to catch the tide through the entrance to Chichester Harbour and now that the boat was upright we could stop pumping!

The yard foreman was quite right. All she wanted was 48 hours and she would be alright.

Roger Evans

More on Bill

Carola Beevor

Bill has been lost to us for several years but it was still very sad to hear he had died. Known as "Popular Bill" (after his Ford car) the nickname was strictly true and I am very pleased to be able to write a small tribute.

As a long term member of PMSC and eventually Commodore, Bill and his boat "New Years Gift" took part in most Club events. She wasn't exactly built for speed but ideal for canal cruising and I remember crewing her for a very enjoyable inland passage from Goes to Den Helder.

Bill had earlier crewed my "Isla" when we accepted the first invitation to Goes. All East

Coast sailing clubs were invited but only two arrived – both from Pin Mill Sailing Club.

There followed a series of parties and I think Bill returned every summer that he could. Parties were, of course, Bill's forte and I was there on many unforgettable occasions – such as when I had to make my first speech as a flag officer at the Walton and Frinton annual dinner and Bill kindly came as my partner. This was fine until some of his fancy footwork on the highly polished dance floor led to my returning to the top table on the flat of my back.

It's all a long time ago but virtually all my memories of Bill are happy ones and I hope his family realise just how much we all liked and admired him.

John and June Weatherall

June and I were first aware of Bill at Goes in the early 1980s. New Years Gift was lying across the end of a pontoon quite close to the bath house. Bill and his crew Norman Cockayne were discussing progress with one another as part of the NYG engine lay in pieces on the cabin floor. Being an Engineer too, I joined in and probably offered some unhelpful advice. I was not aware of Bill's background.

At the time his was the smallest cruiser in our fleet to have an Optic (gin) so securely bolted to the main bulkhead. The time came for he and Norman to leave Goes. The bridge opened and to commands of 'Let Go Forward, Let Go Aft' New Years Gift chugged away as Bill's tape recorder played 'Anchors Aweigh' at full volume.

At the supper Bill, attired in his best (if a little damp) Reefer Jacket and flannels, would sing the Hippopotamus song. A member of the Goes committee would respond with a patriotic Dutch solo. The two Items were very different in content so I always had the feeling that the Dutch had failed to understand Bill's tune came from a Flanders and Swann review. First World War Flanders mud perhaps.

At the time June was travelling to Liverpool Street and from time to time would meet a very dapper Bill at the station. He was of course invited to join her for coffee at the Bistro before proceeding to their respective offices.

Later still when I became Commodore Bill would provide a bed for me so that I did not have to travel home after meetings that sometimes finished quite late. Frequently his comments on the way the business had gone were very helpful if discreet. He looked after Nigel Monckom in the same way when he was Commodore.

Whilst still a Naval Officer Bill lectured on Engineering matters at Greenwich. Among his pupils was a very old sailing friend of mine. We had met at a sailing club on the Thames when we both raced National 12 Dinghies.

His civilian job included project managing the introduction of a carrier-borne Jet fighter. He was very proud of the fact that he had introduced the aircraft on time and on budget; no mean feat in view of the MOD's normal reputation.

It was with great sorrow to his many friends that he resolved to distance himself from all of us before moving to join his daughter in Coventry.