

1908



2008

TRIDENT



News and views of Greenwich Yacht Club

Winter Edition 2008

And the compliments of the season to
all our members



Editorial

or,

reflections from the waterline

I realise I'm preaching to the converted, but what with the credit crunch and with Argos not selling outboards any more, if it's budget sailing you're after, there's never been a better time to belong to GYC. Despite the recent swingeing increases in club subs we still manage to confound those who insist that "budget boating" is an oxymoron. Let's hope that continues, and that income from members never has to be increased in order to subsidise non-sailing activities.

So, in these days of mend and make-do, here are some ideas for recession-friendly boating:

Used wipes! String a load together, dye them red, white and blue and you can be dressed overall at the next regatta. Need locker lid hinges? Don't buy expensive stainless steel ones. Drill holes in sardine-tin lids, crimp over the edges and cover them in Vaseline. Just as good! Who needs expensive oillies? Bin liners with holes for arms and legs, & carrier bags with holes for your eyes; all over an Oxfam jumper or three. Poncey deck shoes? Pah! Carpet slippers - perfect for the job. Oh and by the way, items in the "boats and watercraft" category of E-bay have risen from 11,000 a year ago to over 20,000 this month. So *there's* a place for a bargain!

I've been musing on the fact that there are now only two members of the committee "without portfolio", and one of *those* is supposed to be I/C Communications. So how about going the whole hog roast and finding a role for the last committee member? I've a few suggestions:

Minister for Mud. They can keep an eye on the Thames Clippers, be responsible for digging out anyone who gets stuck in it, and organise an annual mud race. Perk of the job: a free mud mooring;

Equal Opportunities Czar. The brief would include ensuring that Portsmouth Handicap Rules be correctly applied, having regard henceforth not just to class of boat, but to gender, race, religion, ethnicity and ability. They would also be tasked with ensuring that by 2012 the GYC committee would be 50% female.

Lord High Everything Else. Many's the time in committee that the Commodore will say "Well, who's going to take this on?" And everyone then stares hard at their agendas. Whenever one of those jobs comes up on committee that no-one wants to take, it can be given to Lord High Everything Else. They can be reminded should they object that nobody *forced* them to stand for the committee in the first place.

Carol O'Shea

Front cover picture: you must remember this... GYC foreshore mud just three years ago. It was deep enough to swallow a horse, and it was pretty good at caulking when you lifted a wooden boat into it.. Photo by Ray Sharp. See Tony Norwell's item on p.11.

Commodore's

Report

**Don Duane tells us
in his own words
his thoughts on
becoming Commodore.**



As you are aware this is my first report as Commodore, thanks to all for having confidence in me, it is a great privilege and honour and I endeavour to undertake my responsibilities with pride and dedication.

Our PAST Commodore, Frank Lerner, has served our club well and with great skill and enthusiasm, a steady hand at the helm through ebbing and flowing fortunes and has chartered a sure and steady course to ensure a secure future for our club. It has been a great pleasure working with such an accomplished and knowledgeable helmsman. Thanks, also, to other Council members and particularly those retiring, for their tireless work and dedication.

I have served on the council of management for over sixteen years and worked with seven different commodores through some turbulent and testing periods, but mainly through great and very rewarding events and we have now emerged as probably the most successful and envied boating club on the river. We have emerged from our mutations under the old oak tree and Neanderthal habitation to a modern and dynamic organisation with the confidence and skills to project us into a very exciting and challenging future.

I would like to welcome the newly elected Council of management and especially the freshmen, I look forward working with you and I'm confident your contribution will enormously benefit the members and the club.

At the earliest opportunity I will convene my first council meeting to establish the Role of Duties and responsibilities for members of the newly elected council .

We have to undertake a considerable programme of investments to improve conditions for the membership and ensure our facilities are adequate and sufficient for purpose, regularly inspected and maintained including HSE compliant. To this end I have initiated the purchase of an excavator and prioritised a programme of refurbishment and set targets for the deep water moorings by March 2008. I am seeking to establish a more permanent solution to our deep water moorings, i.e. piling, however funding is our greatest obstacle and I would appreciate proposals for financing and sponsorship.

Our inter club activities for the coming season is yet our most ambitious, including, once again, the London

(Commodore's report continues opposite.)

new events. I will encourage and expand these inter-club activities which are the life blood of our club and so necessary for the expansion of sporting facilities on the river.

It has been somewhat disappointing to note that not one of the officers' positions has been challenged this year. I would appeal for greater social integration and participation of all those members we see on so few occasions throughout the year. We need all members, including family members, to support our events and activities and contribute to maintain our low and affordable ethos which is inherent in our philosophy.

Please remember that most elected council members are fully employed in their respective professions and there-

fore we would appreciate any contribution from the membership to support us and the many activities in the club.

Finally, this year has been a great celebration of what we stand for and our founders had the great insight and inspiration to provide us with such a great and rich legacy which now rests with us to ensure it continues into the next century and perpetuity. To complete our centenary celebrations, next March, I have asked our Social Secretary to draw up proposals to see the old year out and welcome the dawn of a new century for the Club. I would appeal again to all members to make their contribution to the continuing success of our great club.

The GYC Yahoo Group

You *know* you keep meaning to join it. It's fast becoming the only way to know what's going on once you've chucked Trident away.

Sign up: GreenwichYC-subscribe@yahoogroups.com
email to: GreenwichYC@yahoogroups.com

For those of you thinking of going aground up the East coast in 2009, indeed, on the crazy assumption that the summer of 2009 may actually bring us some decent sailing weather at all, members may like to know about the PLA Notice to Mariners on the right here, picked up and forwarded to the yahoo group by Tony Norwell.

Tony monitors all the PLA notices for the club and publishes them on the yahoo site.

NOTICE TO MARINERS No.L16 of 2008
RIVER THAMES
SEA REACH
MAPLIN SANDS

Establishment of radar reflector targets.
On or about 14th November 2008, two groups of radar reflectors will be established on the Maplin Sands immediately to the east of the Shoebury Boom in positions (WGS84) :
51° 31.816 N 000° 48.854 E and
51° 31.650N 000° 49.274 E
as part of the Shoeburyness range infrastructure.



GYC ARTISTS

Saturdays @ 1400hrs, come and paint and draw in the club house. Bring your own non-messy materials and enjoy making art.
Details from Carla Pengilly any Tuesday evening.

Seawise Powerboat School

We offer all levels of powerboat tuition from beginners to advanced including safety boat training.

Own-boat tuition; CEVNI testing;
International Certificates of Competence;
VHF/Dsc marine radio courses
Give Andy Maybury a call on 07944 092072 or email seawise@rya-online.net

For All Your Boating Needs ...

DANSON MARINE

TONY CHARGE
(Proprietor)

ROBIN DESMOND
(Manager)



264, Sherwood Park Avenue (Off Blackfen Road)
Sidcup, Kent DA15 9JN
☎ 020-8304-5678 • Fax: 020-8298-9128
www.dansonmarine.co.uk

CALLING ALL MEMBERS
YOUR NEXT WORK PARTY DATES:

24th January
28th February
28th March
25th April
Always Saturday
Always 0930hrs



Always a big cooked breakfast.

Cruisin' News

Lionel Willis hangs out his fenders as Cruiser Captain

This is my final piece for Trident as Cruiser Captain; an enjoyable and challenging three years, with a few rocky moments but mostly a lot of fun. I don't want to hark back, but rather set my face to the future and as my recent jaunt to the Canaries on a super Cat has revealed, there *are* other things in life.

Building on the spirit of interclub co-operation engendered by the Duke of York Challenge, we've held the first joint planning meeting with our neighbours at Gravesend, Thurrock and Erith to share sailing programmes and pool handicap data for all our boats. Two exciting initiatives have sprung from this.

The first is that we have taken over the annual Thames Frostbite Race, to be run in conjunction with Erith Yacht Club. It will be running on February 8-9, from Greenwich to Thurrock, with an overnight at Erith as before, then a Sunday return to Greenwich for prize giving. I'm delighted that we have managed to revive this much loved event (especially as we've won all the trophies) The Cruising Association has kindly agreed to publicise it on their

stand at Excel in January. We might even persuade Sir Robin Knox-Johnston to give away the prizes if he's in the country.

The second is a new interclub Travelling series for cruisers, following the original concept pioneered by the dinghy section. The four clubs will each host a leg of the competition, with courses best suited to their waters, for a Club and individual trophy. Most events will involve an overnight stay at the host club, with lots of opportunities for jollity and merriment, together with a chance to sail against some different craft. The Greenwich stage will be in July.

Stirring stuff, and I look forward to taking part. Your new Captain will have the challenging task of making all these things come to pass and I hope you'll join me in giving him all your support for next season.



and Hal Andrews takes over the helm

Well this is my first report as the new cruiser captain. As you will have read, above, Lionel has stepped down and I have taken over, with a degree of trepidation. On pain of repeating the few words of introduction I posted on the Yahoo group, my real sailing addiction is racing, so I hope to carry on the fine job done by Lionel in organising a varied programme of racing.

Winter seems to have set in with the start of the winter series. I was interested to see the mixed fortunes in that race which (happily for me) suggests that the handicap system doesn't need a major overhaul.

So to the future... due to initiatives by Lionel and Nick Fossey, 2009's programme will include some open events. The Frostbite race, run until now by the Cruising

Association, has been handed to GYC to organise in February. There is much organising to be done first, and I would like to thank Lionel for offering to continue his work while I learn the ropes. Also, following a meeting with the Erith, Thurrock and Gravesend clubs, a series of cruiser races open for all boats in the four clubs for a series trophy has been organised, rather along the lines of the old dinghy Travellers series.

In the meantime, the winter series continues with hopefully the same large fleet that sailed the first race turning out to continue the contest.



GYC Spring 2009 Racing Calendar



<u>Date</u>	<u>Brief</u>	<u>Start</u>	<u>HW</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>C/D/Open</u>	<u>comments</u>
Sun 11.Jan			1326	Winter Series race 3	D	Round cans
Sun 25.Jan	1100	1200	1317	Winter series race 3	C	Round cans
Sat 07.Feb		1200	1113	<i>Frostbite Race part 1</i>	O	To Erith
Sun 08.Feb		1000	1222	<i>Frostbite Race part 2</i>	O	To GYC
Sat 21.Feb	1000	1100	1113	Winter series race 4	C	Round cans
Sun 22.Feb	1000	1100	1211	Winter series race 4	D	Round cans
Sun 08.Mar	0900	1000	1109	Winter series race 5	D	Round cans
Sun 22.Mar	0830	0930	1032	Winter series race 5	C	Round cans
Sun 29.Mar	1400	1500	1621	Winter series race 6	D	Round cans (BST)
Sun 12.Apr	1400	1500	1616	Winter series race 7	D	Easter Sunday
Sat 18.Apr	1000	1100	0801	Lady's Cup	C	Greenhithe and back
Sun 26.Apr	1330	1430	1521	Livett Trophy	D	Team racing

Dinghy Racing matters

Brian Harrison signs off in (his capacity as Dinghy Captain, anyway)

The first race of the winter series has been run; despite the cold and rain all week we got 7 boats out for a good race. Which shows, you've just got to get out there and ignore the forecasts! Overall, despite some atrocious winds we've had a good season.

Next year's programme contains more dinghy races, cruiser races and links with other clubs. Sadly the Travellers Trophy for dinghies is no more; the logistics of getting our boats to Gravesend proved too hard for us; but we are running a new "Thames Open" at GYC and Erith which will have all the thrills and spills of the Travellers.

GYC dinghy sailors are a great lot, mucking in with the background work needed to run a good sailing programme. Races run smoothly even if the dinghy captain's not there (some say smoother!) I have just got one criti-

cism of them - clearly they are all paid too much, as they insist on going off and buying yachts, then having the cheek to win cruiser races! I am only joking as to my mind, this is one of the purposes of club dinghies, to encourage new blood into the club. If you now look at the GYC race crews, many are both dinghy and cruiser people.

Congratulations to Steve Wilson on becoming the new Dinghy Captain; I will give him all the help I can. As the club activity grows, the jobs grow and Steve, like me and Geoff before me, rely on the support of the members.

My thanks to everybody that supported me and especially those who finally learnt my ultimate Collision Reg: "NO OVERTAKING THE DINGHY CAPTAIN".



And it's "Goodnight from him" and Hallo to our new Dinghy Captain, Steve Wilson.

(We'll get another mugshot, without the shades, for the next edition. Might try for one without an outboard in it too; seems bad taste for a Dinghy Captain! Ed.)

"What's the plan?" More of the same, making sure the GYC dinghy fleet are out sailing with as many members as possible, enjoying the experience and excitement of sailing small boats safely on the River Thames.

After this summer can the weather get any worse? - yes, it probably can ! However the winter series started with 7 boats on the start line. That's 14 people on the water, plus safety boat support to start what's always a popular series. I'll be posting sign-up sheets on the notice board as before and a duty list for race officers and safety crews. Our sailing can only take place if everyone helps out and makes it happen.

Beyond winter, there is a packed programme for 2009 thanks to Brian and Lionel, who have been busy with this over the last weeks. There's something for everyone - Club racing, Bosun Open, the new Thames Open, Richard Baker Cup, Team Racing, Cruises, Training Days and the London Regatta and that's just the Dinghies !

To keep the boats sea-worthy for all this, we'll still be running maintenance sessions; first one in January, date to be announced. Some sails need attention and some minor hull repairs are needed. *Yellow Peril* is up and run-

ning and more of our safety boat drivers have been trained how to start it, drive it, and bring it back afterwards. Meanwhile the dory lives on thanks to Mick Mitchell sorting out the steering cables. Also thanks are due to Geoff Williams and Jim Four for their continued support and help in running the safety boats.

I'm keen to develop the club's youth sailing and have some ideas to take forward during 2009. Safety boat training will be on-going throughout the year, to develop drivers' skills and competence before putting them up for the certificated power boat courses. So get involved folks, your club needs you.

Finally, this is the paragraph where the incoming Captain realises what he's let himself in for, while reflecting on what the outgoing Captain has achieved. It's a cliché, but it's going to be a hard act to follow. I know that everyone will join me in thanking Brian for the energy and enthusiasm he has given to GYC dinghy sailing since March 2006. So, Brian, "hoist your colours"! See you on the water during 2009.



What range can you expect from your radio antenna?

Start with the height in feet above the water of the antenna. Work out the square root of the height then multiply the answer by 1.42. This will give you your antenna's range in miles. Remember to perform the calculation for the other vessel, and then add the results together to get the range between your two vessels.

Dave Homan

Since their boss was a keen yachtsman, everyone in the office chipped in to buy him a sextant as a retirement present.

Brian volunteered to make the purchase, and when he found out the local chandler's was sold out, he phoned the local sports shop. When he burst out laughing and hung up, a colleague asked him what was so funny. "When I asked the woman who answered if they had a sextant," said Brian, "she said they had all kinds of tents and what I did in them was my business."

About the House in 2009

with Peter Waugh, Chair of the House Committee



With most of the yard and workshops now clear and working, what should be our focus and programme for our lovely buildings next year? It's time to think of a rolling programme with a view of what lies ahead of the immediate horizon but being willing, good navigators as we are, to change our ideas as the scene ahead emerges.

My tea-leaves suggest a bigger club, with a membership of around 800 by 2013, with diversified boating but still our being very much a club for having fun on the river. Lots of new members living nearby, with no workshop space at home and not much time to spare, less money to spend and fewer fit older members retired from full-time work able to spend lots of time on your Club; more boats but usually less demanding in upkeep. The workshops are the 'sleeping giants' of our facilities; we have nothing else we use less. New and imaginative ways of promoting and supporting the workshops need to be thought up and discussed.

For maintenance, with our teething troubles almost over, we should now be expecting the trouble-free years

of youthful buildings. We do need to adapt and up-date them as we go, to respond quickly and to keep up a good fund to enable us to do this. Bits of equipment and buildings will need to be taken out of use for upkeep (normally with notice) from time to time. Your patience and participation in this will be needed. I believe the cost of this should be about £15,000 a year. I shall be putting more details on the web-site.

We spend too much of your money on water and on energy; these need attention in 2009 or it will get worse. We have recently been inspected and advised on both water and energy efficiency.

Monthly Work Parties will go on throughout 2009 with a mixture of routine clean-up jobs and fresh projects, such as the slipway extension. Some members have taken on responsibility for helping to look after specific tasks through the year instead of doing work parties. This is very helpful and it's easy to arrange.

Sailathon news *from Paul Woodhead*

The RNLI has approached GYC Sailathon UK to extend its potential. I met with them in December to look at how they can become involved with our concept of boats raising money for charity. GYC Sailathon have been enormously successful and I believe they want to use our contacts around the UK.

I recently put to the Medway clubs at their AGM that the RNLI want to support anyone willing to use their boat for a charity. So with extra support and publicity the RNLI can use their undoubted resources to help

other charities. This will be the basis of the meeting. As you know Sailathon has been a prime mover for getting charities to work together.

I am giving up my involvement at GYC as chair of the Sailathon Society at the AGM.

I hope GYC keep up the good works. However Sailathon will continue from the Medway through Maritime Volunteer Service, Rochester which has raised for Sailathon nearly £2,000 to print our latest book "GALE WARNING." (See below)

The Nick Day Database

Nick Day is compiling a database of people who want to crew on GYC boats. The contact database is intended for the GYC web-site but you may elect NOT to have your contact details published if you so wish. (If you really want to be asked to crew, then obviously it's better to have your contact details available.) Please send your details to Nick either via the club most Tuesday nights or by email:

nick@nickday.com

and state:

Name; Landline and/or Mobile; Email;
GYC Membership type; Experience; RYA Qualifications;
Cruiser/Dinghy/Motorboat preference;
Publishable? Y/N

GALE WARNING out now!
Published for Leukaemia Care by Sue Gay,
a book of East Coast Tales inspired by
GYC Sailathon to Scotland in its
CENTENARY YEAR
A must for every GYC member.
Suggested donation price £5
(£6 if ordered from Paul Woodhead for
p&p).
Excellent reviews PLEASE SUPPORT IT.
Author Paul Woodhead whose previous
GYC books include
The Yacht Club and Devils Demons
Dragons & Angels of The North which is
now
attracting high prices on Amazon world
wide!!!

The 2008 Greenwich Yacht Club AGM

Sunday 7th December was a stunningly beautiful blue day; no wind, and the Thames was like a mill pond, so no good for sailing, but the day was nevertheless one of those gorgeous ones, just right for a spot of winter gardening or a stroll in the park; which made the sacrifice of the seventy eight full members who turned up for the 2008 GYC AGM more than usually heroic. For once, too, maybe because the weather was making everyone a bit mellow, the whole thing was over in a GYC personal best of 3 hours. Those who recall the horror of the last two AGMs will be impressed.

First we rattled through the reports:

Frank Lerner made his farewell address as Commodore and announced that he was inaugurating the "Isle of Sheppey Cup" Race. He was vague as to the details, but was sure the Cruiser and Dinghy Captains could work something out.

Don Duane reported that he had been exploring alternatives for the moorings. Currently we are required by the insurance company to lift our moorings and inspect them annually. Doing this in-house would be cheaper. Piles would be less of a problem but would be a huge capital expense. He would continue to explore the possibility of grants or sponsorship for this. Questions were raised from the floor as to insurance validity if we lifted the moorings ourselves, and as to public liability insurance cover for the moorings, *and* for the newly acquired barge and digger.

On the accounts, Irene Catchpole told us that separate accounts for SSGYC would be issued at the next GYC AGM. Although this had been agreed at the last AGM, they had not been able to set up a bank account for SSGYC until September this year, which is of course within *this* current club financial year. Fees to members would be being increased by the rate of inflation over the next few years. A motion to approve the accounts was proposed: Roger Hibbitt; seconded: Nick Day. Carried.

Then we rattled through the eleven resolutions!

1. Work parties should no longer be mandatory for any members over 65; agreed.

2. Our accountant Clement Lam should be made an honorary member; agreed.

3. Frank Lerner should be awarded honorary life membership; agreed.



4. Proxy voting rules should be changed; lost.
5. Future Commodores should have served as Rear Commodore first; lost.
6. GYC should buy a tug fitted with a Hiab and winches; withdrawn.
7. Create a duty roster of people to deputise for the yard/harbour master; with-

drawn.

8. The committee should train more members to helm the trot boat; agreed.

9. A committee member should take on responsibility for the machine shops and yard equipment; withdrawn.

10. The membership secretary could henceforth draw on full members other than current committee members to help with new member informal discussions; agreed.

11. The Council of Management structure be changed; withdrawn on a point of order and referred to the committee for in-depth investigation.

Then, as 14 of the 16 committee posts were uncontested, Frank stood down and at the invitation of ex-commodore Tony Roberts, Don Duane stood up, followed by the thirteen other uncontested appointees, and we all adjourned for the start of "Happy Hour" while the votes were counted for the remaining two contested positions.

All pretty painless really.

Carol O'Shea

Your new committee for 2008-9 is as follows:

Commodore: Don Duane;

Vice Commodore: Brian Harrison;

Rear Commodore: Nick Fossey;

Hon. Treasurer: Irene Catchpole;

Hon Secretary: Andy Maybury;

Yard Master: John Catchpole;

Harbourmaster: Stan Mitchell;

Cruiser Captain: Hal Andrews;

Dinghy Captain: Steve Wilson;

Chair of House: Peter Waugh;

Membership Secretary: Jane O'Connor;

Bosun: Jenny Scarfe;

Motorboat Captain: Geoff Cooper;

Social Secretary: Andy Pledger;

Members without portfolio:

Nick Day; Trish Montemuro.



*Top: GYC members concentrating hard.
Bottom: outgoing committee member Jim Four, demob-happy, wouldn't you say? Photos by Ray Sharp.*



There are times when everyone needs first aid! Hurry, hurry, hurry, as places are going fast on our in-house GYC free First Aid course Saturday 31st January 2009, 0900 to 1730 light refreshments will be provided. Venue: GYC. Course tutor, John Donaghy

Just *plane* depressing

Boris Johnson has appointed Doug Oakervee, Executive Chair of CrossRail, to conduct a feasibility study into locating a new airport on an island in the Thames Estuary. Mr. Oakervee was involved in the construction of Hong Kong's offshore International Airport. The British Air Transport Association believes "Boris Island" is a non-starter. The proposed airport would be built two miles off the north coast of Sheppey, and the cost of such a project is estimated to be at least £36 billion. At the moment. Not only would you have to build 2 pairs of parallel runways, and a 4-track high speed railway to link with London and Essex; there would also need to be road links under the shipping lanes to Essex, and up to the M25. Environmental

experts say that as well as this, there will also be all the other infrastructure, i.e., housing, schools, offices, which would have to be built in Kent. A new mega-town or several smaller towns could be needed, with new reservoirs.

Of course building in the Estuary is already constrained as there are planning restrictions on it, and huge flood risks. The estuary is a special wildlife area. Many reports over the past 20-30 years have come out against the idea, however, Boris is keen, and the pressure from West London environmentalists who would like to turn Heathrow into somewhere nice for a picnic may just swing matters against the poor old estuary.

Carol O'Shea

Rochester Sails

The Sail Loft, 1 Old Cottages, Backfields, Rochester, Kent,
ME1 1UH



- Traditional & Cruising Sails
- Sail Covers, Sprayhoods
- Complete Cockpit Covers
- Biminis
- Winter Valeting
- Repairs & Alterations
- Upholstery
- Tonneaus & Enclosures

For a Personal Service Please Contact:

Paul Martin

Tel/Fax: **01634 407557** Mobile: **0779 2579210**

e-mail: paul@rochestersails.freeserve.co.uk



GYC's roll call of the great, the good and the not half bad: the Trophy Winners for 2008

Dinghies

Icicle (Winter series 2007/8)	Toby Denham
Commodores Jubilee Cup	Nick Fossey
RNSA	Brian Harrisson & Aileen Ryder
Meridian Trophy	Brian Harrisson & Aileen Ryder
Summer points	Brian Harrisson & Aileen Ryder
Richard Baker Trophy	"The Winning Team"
Livett's Centenary Cup	Team Orange
Traveller's Trophy	Alan Soper

Cruisers, racing

Bosun's Bowl (Winter series 07/8)	Kim Sturgess
Lady's Cup	Kim Sturgess
Ovens Buoy	Kim Sturgess
Winston Churchill Trophy	Tim Jeffrey
Bob Walker Trophy	Tim Jeffrey
Thurrock Cup	Tim Jeffrey
Mayor's Trophy	Hal Andrews
Sea Reach Trophy	Dave Homan
Westerley Challenge Cup	Lionel Willis
Meridian Trophy	Ed & Sue Bowness
Fletcher Rose Bowl (first to Holland)	Ed & Sue Bowness
Belgiun Cup (first to Belgium)	Ed & Sue Bowness
Commodores Trophy (Summer Series)	Martin Sewell
Ladies Challenge Cup	Trish Montemuro

Non racing prizes.

Blue water trophy (first to Ramsgate)	Terry Naude
Juppy Cup (first lady past Garrison Point)	Annie McCombe
Pin Mill Tankard	Don Duane
Jack Kerr (furthest from GYC)	Ian Palmer
Persistence Award (for trying to get round the UK)	Ian Palmer
Presidents Cup (Outstanding cruise)	Charlotte Ashburner
Nore Trophy (furthest distance sailed)	Charlotte Ashburner
Worcester Trophy (best kept boat)	Mick Sadler <i>BLUE MOON</i>
George Doman Trophy (best novice)	Louise Weight
John Page Trophy (best contribution)	Colin Robson
Chain Strain (not moved off mooring)	Richard Williams

Peter Waugh reports on the Great River Race 2008

The GYC entry was the *Great South Eastern* ship's lifeboat kindly lent for the occasion by Stan Mitchell. We had a crew of thirteen for the race but there was plenty of rowing to do for everyone. We were honoured to welcome aboard Cllr Steve Offord, the Mayor of Greenwich, who tjoined in the proceedings with gusto and rowed a good section himself.

Club members aboard were Andy Pledger, Rowing Captain, Fiona Smithers, new members David Iveson, Michelle Wall and Marco Marta; and myself as Cox. Andy brought along Jim Kerwick, Jimmy Delee, Simon Moore and Michael Thomas. I brought Tom Sawyer and Jake Veasly. Our guests added some useful weight to the admittedly challenging task of moving this commodious craft the 22 miles from Richmond to Greenwich.

The race was a blur of hundreds of boats, from around the British Isles and the North Sea propelling themselves with paddles and oars and two-by-fours. We had a good race against the *Duck a L'Orange* (one time *Great Harry*) but failed to catch her this year.

That tumultuous applause for us as we thundered under through Tower Bridge, told us we were the last boat in sight of the crowd. We came 289th. This arithmetic apart, we had a great race in glorious weather, got to know each other better and disposed of two bottles of Asda's bubbly at Island Gardens. We had, after all, survived and we clocked a time a little quicker than that of the London Lifeboat crew in the same boat the previous year.

What should GYC aim for next year ?

Paddlers beware!

Think twice before you leap over the side of your dinghy to pull her up to the beach. Seems falling Thames pollution levels (a good thing) have attracted a poisonous foreign fish (a bad thing). The Greater Weaver Fish, usually found only in the Atlantic and the Med., is now being found in the Estuary. The fish is very poisonous (so don't eat it) and its venomous spines can cause victims weeks of intense pain. It is the sixtieth new species to be found in the Thames in the last two years.

Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson were on a sailing trip. They had gone night sailing and were lying on deck looking up at the sky.

Holmes said, "Watson, look up. What do you see?"

"Well, I see thousands of stars."

"And what does that mean to you?"

"Well I suppose it means we shall have another nice day tomorrow. What does it mean to you Holmes?"

"Well, to me it means someone has stolen our cockpit tent!"

It's not good news from the *Cutty Sark*

The man leading the *Cutty Sark* restoration project warned a few weeks ago that work may halt very soon unless a rich donor comes forward.

A year on from the mystery fire which gutted her, repairs are on schedule. The ship is stripped down to its skeleton, with work due to be completed in March 2010.

But the cost of repairs has risen to £35 million and, despite a public appeal and £10 million extra from the Heritage Lottery Fund, £3.72 million is still needed.

Richard Doughty, chief executive of the *Cutty Sark* Trust, is reported as saying: "It may seem churlish to appeal for funding after the £10 million grant, but the future of the project is not guaranteed. We desperately need someone with deep pockets to come forward. At the moment we can't make a commitment to work after September. We can't raise the sort of money we need from a community appeal. We've had pensioners sending postal orders and children sending pocket money. It shows how remarkably fond the public is of the ship." Renovation was already under way when the fire broke out on 21 May last year.

Mr Doughty said: "The extra 20 to 22 months added

by the fire have had a huge cost impact in terms of inflation and renegotiating contracts."

A police report into the cause of the fire is expected within the next two months.



Above: work goes on for the time being on the Cutty Sark

MAIN DEALERS FOR:

**International & Blakes Paint
XM Yachting and Plastimo
Raymarine
Holt Allen fittings
Whale & Jabsco Pumps
West System
Crewsaver Products
Silva Compasses
Spinlock
Humminbird
And MANY MORE**

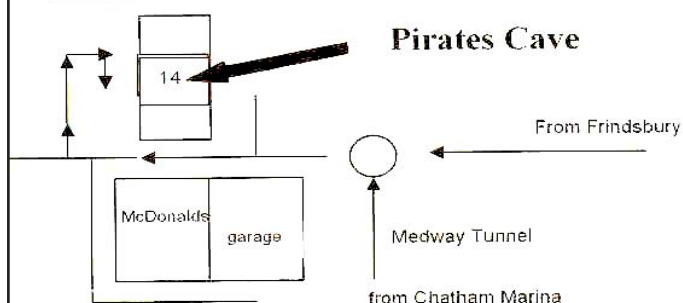
Pirates Cave Chandlery

Tel: 01634 295233

Fax: 01634 722326

e-mail: piratescaveuk@yahoo.co.uk
www.piratescave.co.uk

Unit 14 Northpoint Business
Estate
Enterprise Close
Medway City Estate
Frindsbury
Rochester
Kent
ME2 4LX



Altogether now....

Mud, Mud, Mysterious Mud, *by Tony Norwell*

At a meeting convened at GYC in October, interested parties and river users discussed the question of the mud disappearing at places along the river bank – including from the beaches by our club moorings. The Environment Agency and the PLA were represented. As well as GYC members there were representatives from rowing clubs and sailing centres.

The consensus was that during a recent period – perhaps the last eighteen months or two years – in fact since the time the Clippers have been fully and commercially operating – the mud had been steadily retreating - resulting in a loss in some places of up to 0.7m. The effects of this was that our mooring barrels (the ones filled with concrete and which should be covered by the mud) – were being exposed such that at low water they could clearly be seen. The concrete blocks anchoring the lower trots near to the clubhouse were also being exposed. Boats had been damaged as a result of settling on these blocks. In some places boulders/rocks and other features were appearing that previously had been covered with mud.

Another concern raised was that the loss of mud was harmful to the food chain of the indigenous wildlife. The family of swans who used to feed on the banks by the Club had not been seen this year. Many present were also concerned at the type of wash created by the Clippers and its effect both on people and craft. Rowers from local clubs said that launching and using rowing craft – which are both vulnerable and expensive - had been increasingly difficult since the Clipper service had started. There had been instances of damage allegedly caused by the wash to their craft. It was suggested that the wash increased risk of personal injury, and that this was why in some parts of the world these types of Clippers were restricted or banned.

Don Duane presented photographs showing the ero-



sion of the mud. He argued that it was of recent origin. Steve Chantrell spoke of the damage caused to his boat and to the anomaly in our having to be sensitive to the wildlife in the design of our slipway while other river users appeared to cause the wash in question which significantly affected wildlife and the consequent food chain. He questioned the viability of GYC if the mud erosion continued.

Speakers were generally not opposed to the use of the river by passenger-carrying vessels, however a majority felt that a speed restriction was a possible solution. The PLA Harbourmaster (David Foster) said that a speed limit would have to be legally generated and could result in changed timetables and reduced profitability for the Clippers. He added that there had been no evidence in recent surveys of significant

build-up of mud in other parts of the river and that known local shoals were similar in height/depth to what might be expected. So where was our mud going? Perhaps it was being dispersed naturally, having been agitated to cause it to go into suspension and then carried away down- or up-stream with the tide. Colin Robson pointed out that several jetties on the River that he himself had taken commercial craft into

are now silted up such that no such craft could possibly presently use them. Captain Foster agreed to visit the club to see for himself the extent of the mud erosion. Let's hope this starts the process by which a solution acceptable to the majority of river users is arrived at.

Following the meeting I and other GYC members wrote to the PLA with a view to our views being included in the consultation process.

Photos from top: where once a man had to be rescued from the mud, there's now gravel: boats on mud moorings no longer have any mud to sit on; an exposed sinker. Photos by Don Duane.

The 2008 GYC Annual Dinner Dance

our man in the tux, Nick Day reports

I really must try and remember to hang up my DJ the morning after I've used it, and not sling it in the wardrobe as I take it off after a tiring and emotional night out. It's at that last minute check hall mirror before flying out of the door (without my ticket) that I always spot the souvenir from the suit's last outing. You can see why it's called a dinner suit – there's always a little bit of dinner somewhere on its satin lapels.

Even though most of us bought our dinner suits in earlier adulthood when we were at least two sizes smaller and are bursting out of them like badly wrapped Christmas parcels, a bunch of blokes trussed up in their tuxedos always looks rather splendid. And so we did at the Annual Greenwich Yacht Club Dinner. As for the girls—they looked simply gorgeous. From oilies to doilies? From Musto to gusto? No? Sorry . . . I'm struggling to express the sheer delight of it. I'll move on.

Beaming Frank was clapped into the dining room by an already well-oiled crowd. Barbara was on his arm, also smiling beatifically – perhaps at the prospect of a soon-to –be-less-occupied husband. Dream on, I think. Then we fell upon our food. Not face down in the soup – I mean with knife and fork. Well . . . spoon. The dinner was damned fine. Simultaneously plating up that number of meals in a tent on the deck was a feat in itself. The soup brought back fond nautical memories – it looked remarkably similar to one I had triumphantly served up to crewmate Keith on a rocking boat somewhere off the Essex coast. But the basil oil had the edge over the engine oil that had dripped into mine. We were some way through our four courses before we had to replenish the

table's supplied wine stocks. It's always a good idea to be well into our cups before we get into our cups, if you know what I mean. We laid down stores for the long haul. Actually a new challenge race was established this night—getting through the presentation in record time. It deserves a new cup in itself, for which Brian looked to be a serious contender.

Frank threw down another gauntlet: the Frank Lerner cup? A race to, and round, the Isle of Sheppey. Blimey! If I ever do it I won't be overtaking in the shallow Swale. As for the lifting bridge – that could scupper the strategic pilotage!

Brian, Lionel and Barbara entertained us with their own version of the cup and trophy trick. It goes like this: Brian picks up a cup; he hands it to a winner; he snatches it back; he gives it to Barbara; she gives it to the winner; Lionel snatches it back; Lionel gives Barbara another cup; Barbara gives the correct cup to the winner; Jim takes a photograph; Jim swears; Jim pulls Brian out of the frame; Jim takes another photograph; repeat.

It was great to see Jane and Charlotte collect a cup for a 13000 mile trip; that awesome achievement will be part of Greenwich Yacht Club history. It was also lovely to see Colin Robson, possibly the most helpful man ever to walk this earth, collect a trophy for being so. Kim Sturgess might have to bring an assistant next year to carry his cups back to the table. Perhaps Colin will help. The list of winners is published on page 9. I was thoroughly impressed. Some were first, some were best, some were fastest, some were bravest, but all of them beacons of achievement for GYC.



So, here you are: a cross section of the GYC celebs and wierdos and one or two photos just for the hell of it. This page, l to r, Annie McCombe, Colin Robson, Trish Montemuro. Opposite page: top: Brian Harrison and Geoff Williams, Kim Sturgess, Louise Weight; 2nd line: Charlotte Wilkinson & Jane O'Connor, Jenny Scarfe, Mickey Sadler; 3rd line: Tim Jeffrey, the assembled diners.



*And left:
here's the
2008 tradi-
tional dinner-
dance line-up
of Greenwich
Yacht Club
glitterati.
Would you buy
a used boat
from any of
them?*

At GYC it's Art for All, says Oona Chantrell

If you missed GYC's Art Show in September, you never saw Jo Wooding's monumental charcoal drawings of horses, standing over ten-feet tall. 'Eye-bogglingly good' raved the 'Greenwich Times' review.

For the first time ever, the annual show was held in the Sail Loft which everyone agreed made an inspired venue with an Indian summer sun bursting through the open sliding doors to spotlight over a hundred separate art exhibits.

Members' paintings, prints and photos covered the walls (nice landscape, Galina!). Free standing sculptures and installations ranged from 'Nelson's Bed' to Micky Sadler's gravity defying assemblage of 'Bike-Bits', lashed to the rafters and representing the very cutting edge of contemporary art. Forty-four GYC members exhibited this year. They were joined by a guest artist specialising in beach sculptures made from found materials along the Thames. The 'Archer Fish'

which he constructed on the beach and donated to the club, can still be seen next to the slipway.

As always, the show was paired with London's 'Open House' weekend, so hundreds of visitors from all corners of the capital saw the club at its vibrant and cultural best.

Thanks go to members who cooked and served food and drinks, who guided visitors around the club, and to those who came to appreciate the fabulous art collection and stayed to share a drink and chat with the artists. Thanks also to the House Committee for finding a place for us in the Sail Loft when we had nowhere else to go this year, and for hours of work cleaning up the premises beforehand.

(And Oona herself is due a huge thank you for the great amount of work she always puts in to make the Art Show one of the nicest land-based days of the club year. Ed.)



Above: Mickey Sadler's inspired bike sculpture. Pictures from the Art Show by Annie McCombe and Jim Four.

The 2008 London Regatta

This year's event on the 28th September was another large scale one for attendance and logistics. 71 able bodied and disabled sailors from sailing centres along the Thames from Westminster to Erith enjoyed a sunny day of racing on a course laid between the barrier and the O2. It was a barrier closure day, thus eliminating the tidal dangers for novice racers. This event continues to grow and is now a firm fixture in the London dinghy sailing calendar.

The clubhouse was an ideal vantage point for spectators to view the assembled fleets with continuous refreshments on hand to lubricate parents and friends who enviously wished they were sailing with everybody else. Our pontoon also provided the perfect platform for attaching and securing Sailability's ramped floating pontoon device; this enabled one wheelchair user helm to literally throw himself into his boat! Others more sedately used the hoists.

GYC started planning with the RYA and sailing centres not long after the 2007 event had ended. However trying to get the wind to turn up is something we're still working on. The morning races consisted of a 'strictly come drifting' session that saw the competitors' finely honed racing skills disappear at the first mark as all three fleets (based on the size of boats) attempted, quite successfully to sail in slow motion, some attached to each other. Fleet 3 successfully completed one lap with a lucky wind lift whilst Fleets 2 and 1 had to be content with a shortened course.

As the dinghies moored up, safety boats ferried the crews back to the pontoon to refuel and discuss tactics for the afternoon session. With the GYC galley operating at full pelt, the long queue was soon watered and fed and ready for the afternoon race.

With the wind filling crews soon became focused as the afternoon races got underway and all three fleets came out for a competitive sail. Mindful of the time the Barrier was to reopen all the races were concluded after one lap. While boats were being de-rigged and crews landed ashore, our intrepid race officer, Lionel Willis,

displayed an outward calm that disguised the frenetic inner turmoil of number crunching that was only just beginning....

The results were soon forthcoming however and our Commodore, Frank Lerner, awarded the winning teams Gold, Silver and Bronze medals to remind everyone of Team UK's brilliant performance at the Beijing Olympic Games as well as their own achievement in the Regatta.

The winners were:

Fleet One. The White Star Trophy.

- 1st Surrey Docks Watersports Centre
- 2nd Westminster Boating Base
- 3rd Surrey Docks Watersports Centre

Fleet Two. The Greenwich Trophy

- 1st The Ahoy Centre
- 2nd Team GYC
- 3rd Team GYC

Fleet Three. The RYA Trophy

- 1st Tideway Sailability
- 2nd Tideway Sailability
- 3rd Tideway Sailability

So there goes another one.

The RYA gave special thanks to Greenwich Yacht Club for hosting the event and to all the GYC volunteers who made it happen again. Funding and Trophies were provided by the London Summer of Sport project and London Nautical School.

For some competitors this event was the first regatta they'd ever taken part in and it

gave them the opportunity to sail against sailors from other clubs on the Thames. It gave a real sense of occasion and personal achievement for all the crews whose ages ranged from nine to seventy plus. Not many events can claim to have able and disabled sailors competing together in one event. There were lots of positive comments so I think there's a good chance everybody will want to come back and do it again in 2009.

Steve Wilson



Photos, top: Ed & Sue Bowness show how to make the best of light airs; bottom: a little bit more wind in the afternoon. Pictures by Ray Sharp.

Charlotte and Jane finish the story of their epic journey in little *Pouncer*

(For those of you who don't know, Jane O'Connor and Charlotte Wilkinson set off from Greenwich Yacht Club in *Pouncer*, a 28ft Twister in May 2007, sailed to the Arctic Circle, then down to Portugal, then to the Cap Verde Islands and then on to the Caribbean. They sailed back home across the Atlantic and up the Thames to GYC in June this year.)

This is the final instalment of *Pouncer's* transatlantic adventures – do I hear you breathe a sigh of relief that the journey is finally over? Today, travel tales from Charlotte and Jane are somewhat less intrepid and involve the Northern line and moving around London on a bike!! However, despite the possibility of GYC member 'Pouncer journey fatigue', here is the final account of the last four thousand nautical miles, from Jolly Harbour in Antigua back to GYC via the Azores in our gallant little Twister 28.

Our month in Antigua was the highlight of our stay in the Caribbean so it was somewhat reluctantly that we started to plan our journey east. With the arrival of the hurricane season looming, the yottie talk at Nelson's Dockyard in Antigua was "To go via Bermuda or go direct and follow the rhumb line to Horta in the Azores?" The discussion was intense with everyone having an opinion, but it seemed to me to boil down to a choice of gales versus calms. The likelihood of gales on the Bermuda route is high (plus an extra 400 nautical miles) due to depressions blowing off the coast of the USA and making their way across the Atlantic. Sure, the wind would blow aft or on the beam but some of those depressions are deep and can be nasty. This is fine if you are crossing in your 60ft steel mega-yacht but much harder work in a little 28-footer. The alternative was to travel direct but with the possibility of having light head winds and the calms of the Horse Latitudes. We chose the latter, and planned for 30 days at sea.

Preparations involved provisioning, fuel planning, servicing the engine, checking the rigging and replacing a stay, and posting any excess kit back home as space on board was at an absolute premium for a passage of this length on a small boat. We had a hectic ten days getting ready. Our main anxiety was where and how to store enough water

for the trip. We made a calculation of three litres of bottled water per day for each of the three crew (Jane, Charlotte and Karen) on board for this leg. We filled the 90 litre tank and then set about stowing 270 litres in every nook and cranny. Jane was now a real expert in what was needed for provisions on long distance passages (without a fridge), with green tomatoes, cabbage, onions, watermelons and spuds being on the 'fresh' shopping list with tins of tuna, stew, corn and chicken as favourite tinned food. Top snack foods were peanut butter, cashew nuts and chocolate (Jane as a true heroine managed to source Green & Blacks). Much discussion went into the playlist of iPods and a selection of reading for the passage. There is always edginess to these times as there is much to do and of course the long passage ahead weighs heavy on the mind. However, there comes a point when enough is enough and a decision is made to go.

We had a tough start being close hauled working hard to windward in big swells. We got very wet, and suffered sea sickness which is never good for morale at the start of a long passage. However, we did make good progress for the first five days and had daily passage averages of over 100 nautical miles. Then we hit the Horse Latitudes and ground to halt. Fuel conservation was critical and we gently chugged along at 3 knots for what felt like days on end with averages of around 75 nautical miles.

On this return leg we had been lent an Iridium satellite phone which we used for weather routing. Norman, our Mission Control sent a daily text of weather but importantly a crackingly bad joke e.g. why are pirates called piratesbecause they aaaaaarrrrggghhh. Thanks to the phone, we did avoid a gale by Norman routing us south of it. The phone also helped in calculating fuel consumption, knowing



how long we were going to have light airs. It is a bit of kit I would recommend for this leg of the journey.

Treats of the passage were amazing sunsets, hump back whales, John Masefield poetry, Bob Dylan, plenty of good bread making, and the occasional mid-Atlantic swim. There were lots of Portuguese man-o-war jelly fish about so we swam with caution. One day was treated as a 'Pouncer spa day', when we allowed ourselves a shower with three litres of water, had manicures and pedicures, painted our toe-nails, and washed our hair. Certainly a bit of a girlie thing, but I reckon there are not many small yachts crossing the Atlantic that manage a spa day? Perhaps Jane and I are really much better suited for the cruise ship crossing? Any way after 23 days and 25 hours (sounds better said this way) we arrived in Horta on the island of Faial in the Azores looking like glamour catswell OK we were wearing oil skins and sea boots.

The customs officer who greeted us said that in the 23 years he had worked in the office, we were the third all female crew he had met but definitely on the smallest vessel. So that is something for the record. Peter's famous bar awaited us and we availed ourselves of great Portuguese food and the local wines. Other luxuries were the hot showers (with clean towel and bar of soap provid-

ed) in Horta's fantastic marina, famous for all the boat paintings on every inch of harbour wall.



Norman, our final crew member for the last leg to Falmouth arrived on Faial the 6th June and we were underway by the 8th. It was a generally pleasant start but we hit our first and only real gale about 24 hours off Falmouth. It was short and sharp and fortunately blowing from the south-west so sped us home-wards giving 18 knots on the GPS as our maximum speed. It was just marvellous to be safe and sound in Falmouth. To be met by family and friends with champagne at 4 o'clock in the morning was one of those life experiences none of us

shall ever forget. Jane heroically left Falmouth to start work. Norman and I bought *Pouncer* along the south coast in the one and only sunny summer week. After collecting Jane again at Queenborough, we were met by a flotilla of boats to come up the Thames and to arrive to a wonderful GYC welcome on the 6th July. This marked the end of a 14-month transatlantic circuit covering 14000 nautical miles. Thank you all at GYC so very much for practical help, support and advice during this voyage.

*Photos, opp. page: top:stowing all that water;
bottom: landfall, Pico in the Azores;
this page: Norman enjoying a good blow somewhere
near home.*

Sailing Holidays Ltd

the flotilla specialists

Meandering around the Greek and Dalmatian Islands

Informal fun flotillas, independent sailing or a combination of the two!
A relaxed introduction to sailing around these beautiful islands
Mediterranean bareboat charter - we do that too!

020 8459 8787

www.sailingholidays.com

105 Mount Pleasant Road, London NW10 3EH
email: mail@sailingholidays.com

Diary of the GYC East Coast Cruise Summer 2008

by Trish Montemuro

16th August - GYC to Holehaven

We sailed and motor-sailed with Colin, Muriel and Gwen on *Amelia Dorcas* to Holehaven. Sat in the cockpit and watched the birds emerge for their supper as the tide fell.

18th August 2008 Brightlingsea

Gypsy Rose (Nick and Keith) caught us up and Colin on *Amelia Dorcas* hauled his 73 year old sister Gwen (!) up the mast to pull down a stray hal-yard.

19th August 2008 - Brightlingsea to Walton

Forecast was for gales in Humber and Thames. We went on *Amelia Dorcas* up to Rowhedge for lunch at The Anchor. It was sheltered here and we sat outside to keep Brandy, Muriel's dog company. After lunch we all sailed in F4 SW winds for the shelter of Shotley Marina, where food, drink and good company made up for the lack of sailing.

20th August 2008 – Shotley Point Marina

Nick came over with the news that Jonny Moore, a 16 year old round-Britain solo sailor in a Corribee, *Casuleu II*, was moored up just along our pontoon. His family had arrived because he wanted to give up despite being two-thirds round. He was finding the loneliness of long-term solo sailing hard. His mother was distraught at his quitting because their entire village had supported him and she thought he'd never forgive himself if he didn't go on. He'd already raised £17,500 for the Kendal Sea Cadets (pretty good going, I'd say). The family chatted to Mick who'd been up our mast (he'll do anything to attract attention!) and he invited them onto *Blue Moon* for a beer. They were still there 4 hours later and our boat became a psycho-social sea bed with Jonny, his family and all the GYC 'east coasters' thrown in. Later Nick put J in touch with Hilary Lister by phone for a chat. Hilary's advice was 'take a break'. Colin was also enlisted to have a word.

21st August 2008 – Shotley Point to Woodbridge

Sunny and breezy with a forecast for westerly 4/5/6's. Muriel was glimpsed early morning heading to the showers in gold silk dressing gown, buttermilk turban and gold towel flapping in the gusting winds. Jonny decided to head up to Pin Mill, leave the boat and take a break from his voyage. On his website he wrote, '...found lots of support ...especially from a group from the Greenwich Yacht Club.' Departed Shotley 08:30 for Woodbridge Haven where we headed to The Captain's Table for a fantastic meal.

22nd Aug 2008 - Tide Mill Marina to Ramsholt

Oona and Steve Chantrell arrived to meet us at the King's Head for lunch. Away at 1600 for Ramsholt where we met up for a meal with June and Lindsay Jamieson on *Alcedo*. Everyone crammed in Nick's

dinghy to get ashore. We sat outside the pub watching the sunset then back at the boat danced to the Beach Boys and listened to Simon and Garfunkel.

23rd Aug 2008 – Ramsholt Deben to Aldeburgh YC

Down the Deben together and across the tricky Ore bar. Up the Ore, the friendly Aldeburgh Yacht Club was a buzz with dinghy sailors and club

members. A fierce wind whipped up and we had a slight impact with a 40ft high-sided catamaran. The weather in the night was rough and two yachts dragged their anchors and slammed into one another .

24th August 2008 - Aldeburgh

Very rough with wind and rain. *Zeste*, (Tony and Elena) arrived just as we were deciding to walk to Aldeburgh. Walking along the sea wall between river and sea there were huge waves close in.

25th Aug 2008 - Aldeburgh -Orford – Butley Creek

F6. At Orford, we chose land-based activities like walking round the castle. Departed Orford for Butley Creek at 16:15 in sunshine. Beautiful mooring with many birds including lovely white egrets. Brian fished but couldn't catch our supper so we settled for spaghetti, but the stars were exquisite on this clear night.

26th August - Butley Creek to

Titchmarsh Marina

Wind against tide coming out of the Ore. Wind on the nose so we motored.

28th August 2008 – Titchmarsh to Harty Ferry

Left at 14:00 and punched tide for two hours. It was warm but overcast SW 3-4. We started with all sails up then from South Whitaker we motor sailed. At Maplin Edge winds SW 4-5 and getting rougher. 19:55 nav. lights on. Across the Maplins we went down to 1.6m depth. We moored up at Harty at 23:00. Mick and Nick took Keith ashore to go back to London, as his wife was unwell. Colin, the admirable Admiral of our Fleet, guided us subtly and safely throughout our long passage.

Friday 29th August 2008 - Harty Ferry

Naima (Simon and Jo) had arrived the previous day from Queenborough via the Columbine buoy. We all walked to the church then back to the pub where we played scrabble while we waited for the pub to re-open



for supper.

30th August 2008 – Harty Ferry to GYC

We left HF 06:20 and *Blue Moon* was late for the Kingsferry Bridge due to a contretemps with some Swale mud. The others went on without us. We were on a rising tide so weren't too worried but knew this would make us late for the tide up the Thames. Broad-reached up the river and made the Oven's Buoy at 13:15. At the QE2 Bridge the wind picked up and with wind over tide it was very rough. Made it to GYC

punching the tide at 18:10.

We'd fulfilled our wish to travel further up the coast this trip. The aim is to go a bit further each year and expand our knowledge of this exciting coastline and its wonderful variety. Many thanks are owed to Colin Robson who covertly and cleverly supervised operations, correcting our sometimes wild miscalculations with subtlety and grace.

Photos opposite, top: Nick gives Keith a lesson in mooring chic; bottom; Muriel with some respectable clothes on. Pics by Annie McCombe

Crewing on a Thames Lifeboat, by John Donaghy

As I am sure most of you hardy sailors will be aware, the tidal Thames now has a dedicated rescue service operated by the RNLI. This came about after the collision between the *Marchioness* and the *Bowbelle* in 1989 which resulted in the tragic loss of 51 lives.

The Thames RNLI works with the Metropolitan Police Marine Support Unit and London Fire Brigade Marine Division. There are three stations along the tidal Thames offering 24 hour, 365 days a year cover to all river users, at Gravesend, Tower (Waterloo bridge) and Chiswick. There is also a station on the non tidal section, at Teddington. To call a lifeboat dial 999 and ask for the coast guard or police, or contact the coast guard via the VHF Channel 16, or London VTS Channel 14.

The three fulltime stations have fulltime crew members and a bank of volunteer crew of which I am one. Tower has around 35 volunteers; we commit to at least 2x12 hours shifts a month and come from all walks of life. I have been a volunteer crew member for five years and I would like to share some of my experiences as a crew member of the Thames RNLI.

Shifts run from 0700 to 1900 and 1900 to 0700. Day shift begins with a 'cuppa' prior to handover from the night crew, then assuming there are no emergency calls, boat checks take until 0830. Emergency calls are received either by the VHF radio or by land line from the coast guard; this activates an alarm bell which the Helmsman answers while I and the mechanic get on our dry suits and lifejackets prior to starting the boat engines and preparing to release the lines. The whole procedure takes 60-90 seconds before we slip our moorings and speed to the casualty. Our area of responsibility stretches from the Woolwich Ferry in the East to Battersea Heliport in the West which from our station we can reach within around 15 minutes.



As a paramedic I often carry out various emergency medical and traumatic scenarios with the RNLI crews to support their standard first aid training which their instructors provide. All the crews are trained in first aid to an advanced level; the boat carries Oxygen, Entonox (analgesia), a defibrillator and other medical equipment. Every

first Thursday of the month we have crew training, however most training is carried out while on shift. Of all the RNLI stations in the UK we at Tower are the busiest, with over 2,350 call-outs since beginning on the Thames in January 2002. At the time of writing I have attended 321 call-outs and saved 16 lives. Our call-outs vary from vessels in difficulty to people in the water, either 'jumpers' from various bridges or people falling from pleasure craft, often under the influence of alcohol and often in grave danger of drowning. Tragically, sometimes at night our extensive searches reveal no trace, as the individual will vanish from sight of the 999 caller even as we speed towards the scene.

I have always had an interest in the RNLI and an admiration for their crews. However living in Hackney, East London I never thought I would end up as crew on the busiest lifeboat station in the UK. For me it is a wonderful experience with a great sense of camaraderie amongst the crews. It has now become standard practice that I work on the boat Christmas day whilst Pennie, my wife, joins me to cook Christmas dinner for all the crew. She informs me that the advantages are: a clear kitchen at home and no washing up! (Yep you guessed it, we, the crew have to do that task, unless interrupted by an emergency call out, of course!!!)

Above: John in reflective mood with mop and bucket.

Kevin and Ronnie go Large in the British Virgin Islands

WARNING: Talking to the editor of Trident can get you lumbered with writing up what you did in your holidays!

From the diary of Ron Mehta aged 63 and a half with apologies to Adrian Mole.

My friend Kevin and I have been racing dinghies since 1980s but have only had limited experience of crewing on yachts, so when he decided in a moment of pre-retirement angst that we should charter a yacht and go sailing in the Caribbean

I fell about laughing and listed at least a million reasons why this would be an act of supreme folly. He was not to be dissuaded. However he did agree that a skippered catamaran was the best option. My view that a skippered schooner with a crew of nubile maidens was a better idea fell on stony ground particularly with our wives, Angela and Maggie, and we chartered *Atlantis II*, a 42 foot Lagoon Catamaran (see below). Full details on *Atlantis* can be found on their website - www.grenadines.net/bequia/atlantis.htm.

We had seven days on *Atlantis* and three days in a villa on Bequia. One could not have wished for a better introduction to the pleasures and pitfalls of cruising. The crew, Frits and Maria were charming and entertaining and brilliant cooks and they kept us supplied with gallons of beer and other alcohol. *Atlantis* has a huge cockpit which could seat six of us in comfort when at anchor and provided shelter under the bimini from the elements when under way.

The weather in March can be variable in these latitudes and we had more than our fair share of rain and wind as well as days of glorious sunshine. We spent much of our voyage motor sailing as the winds were often on the nose. *Atlantis* was a wonderful platform under this mode of sailing. The cockpit was dry and there was no heeling or pitching. But when the wind was abaft the motor was switched off and we managed a very respectable 5-6kts under sail alone. Our most exciting sail was a broad reach with *Atlantis* logging 8 knots and rock steady in a shifting seaway. If you have access to a broadband connection to



the internet you can see a short video clip of the action at <http://video.google.com/video-play?docid=-6533856108904251951&hl=en>

If not perhaps this picture (left) will give you an idea. This yacht came storming past us flying a red ensign.

We sailed from Bequia down to Petit St Vincent and back again, anchoring in Mustique, Canouan, Tobago Keys, Union and Mayreau as we sailed.

On Mustique it poured with rain and blew a gale on the houses of the rich and famous. The Mustique Company (an owners association) provides all services for local inhabitants including free education, medical and dental care. They even look after the turtles!

In Mayreau we saw pelicans swooping for fish but the sea-gulls which appeared from nowhere every time we had a meal would catch our "offerings to Poseidon" on the wing.

The location highlight of the holiday was Tobago Keys where you can swim with turtles or just sit back and drink a view so idyllic that it takes your breath

away. No photographs can do it justice.

The water was crystal clear and despite the anchorage being crowded with other craft there was plenty of room to swim and the tiny islands could be explored on foot. It is a magical place.

We really enjoyed our time on *Atlantis* as occasional deck-hands – when the dinghy painter got itself

round the prop or hoisting the sails, furling the ropes, swabbing the decks but mostly we enjoyed the food, drink and location. We thoroughly recommend the area for sailing and if like us you have little experience of cruising then this is an excellent way to gain that experience.

Kevin has since bought a Red Fox 20 with twin dagger boards which we hope to sail from Woodbridge next year. Who knows; we may even make it to Greenwich once we know what we are doing!

Ron Mehta



Celestine Comes to the Big City

by Ron Munroe

Celestine (aka Kingfisher 20, Sail No 56) had formed a strong attachment to her familiar bed of mud at Oare Creek. And the sailing was good out in the Swale, once she had negotiated the twists and turns of the creek! That was the trouble, and the fact that she was an hour's drive on motorways for me every time she needed exercising.

So when I heard from my friendly chandler, Tony Charge at Danson Marine, that berths might be available at GYC, I quickly went along to find out more and applied to join. It meant that *Celestine* would be on trot moorings, but I knew she wouldn't mind, especially as one of her big cousins, K26 *Cristina II* was also a club member.

Now *Celestine* never liked travelling on the back of a lorry, and had let me know once by bashing me on the head with her mast while being loaded. It seemed prudent, therefore, to suggest cruising up to GYC.

Things did not go smoothly right from the start; we we'd hardly gone 200 yards when she came to a slow stop. Quite out of character, but with a little persuasion and the rising tide we were soon on our way again, heading out past Hartly Ferry on a northerly breeze. That evening in Queenborough we had just paid for our meal at the Flying Dutchman when the fire alarm emptied the house. Burnt chips again! Back on board no-one got much sleep as the wind howled through the rigging and rocked the boat against the pontoon.

At dawn we cast off hoping to make Yantlet by 0700. An hour late, we had to fight tide *and* wind, doing 2 knots for 90 minutes. Turning west into the Thames with the tide behind us and a northerly F5 we were soon making 4-5 knots over the ground. *Celestine* enjoyed sharing the river with 50,000-ton commercial shipping; we were finally doing 'proper' sailing! We'd been advised by GYC members who'd done the passage before that we'd take at least twelve hours to cover the 40-odd miles from Queenborough, [really? Ed.] so help from the engine was called for. We were soon making a steady 6-7 knots, and helped by the strong wind from the north, sometimes 8! Where the river narrows, between Gravesend and Dartford, the current can be nearly 3kts and we hoped to take advantage of this. Well, with all the excitement of playing 'spot the tanker' and coping



with the navigation rules, *Celestine* forgot to look where she was going. I was down below when the helmsman called out "There's a Russian ship right behind us!" I popped my head out and replied: "Yes, and there's a darn great green buoy ahead!" Not wanting to get caught between the Russian to port and the buoy to starboard, he put the helm up-wind and tried to go round to the north. *Celestine* was having none of it! Tide and wind combined to drive us onto

a sharp corner of solid iron - bang amidships. And *bang* it was! Bouncing off, she did a 360° pirouette, which must have amused the Russians no end! A quick inspection established that we had a 9" gash in the side, but it was not life-threatening or below the waterline. *Celestine* pressed on undeterred, passing under the QE2 Bridge at 1200hrs, and reached the Barrier by 1400hrs. We tied up at the GYC pontoon at 1430hrs and in desperate need of 'a little something' to calm our nerves, adjourned to the club bar.

Next day I moved *Celestine* to her new home, and introduced her to her new neighbours. She was rather nervous about this, so we engaged the help of the Trot Boat to hold her hand and lead us out to the mooring. Two weeks later, Ben the Boat Doctor came and we beached *Celestine* next to the club slipway where relatively painless surgery was carried out on her injury. Job done, she was refloated on the tide amid admiring comments all round.

The lesson learnt from all this? DO NOTHING IN A HURRY. If we hadn't been so concerned with keeping to a schedule, we'd have slowed down and gone downwind of the buoy, instead of trying to fight wind and waves with the engine. As skipper, I should have seen the danger of going too fast, especially with the current as strong as it was, and should have over-ruled the helm's decision to steer upwind. Only the strength of the Kingfisher's hull and the two bulkheads saved us



from a real disaster.

All's well that ends well, and *Celestine* is settling in and enjoying city life. She has already visited Tower Bridge and is looking forward to many more exciting trips up and down river.

Photos: top, *Celestine* in her peaceful country setting on the Swale; bottom: on her wicked city mooring at GYC.

Greenwich Yacht Club - the *extremely* early years

Rotherhithe: AD 1016 – 1699

How King Canute dug a by-pass,

and Elizabeth Howland (age 13¾) gave her name to a Great Wet Dock

Capt. Mainwaring: *Mark my words, Wilson, Hitler will never get through the Maginot Line.*

Sgt. Wilson: *He didn't, Sir.*

M: *There, what did I tell you!*

W: *No, he went round it.*

M: *What! Typical shabby Nazi trick! You see the sort of people we're up against, Wilson!*

In AD 1014 the Danish king, Sven I 'Forkbeard' died on a pillaging trip to London. He had left his son Knut in charge of the invasion fleet up north at Gainsborough. After Sven died the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* tells us, "the fleet all chose Knut for king". We Brits were having none of it; in the last issue we saw how in that same year we had invited our own King Ethelred "the Unready" to return from exile and how, with the somewhat gung-ho 'help' of King Olaf of Norway, he had recaptured London from the Danes.

Knut – known to us as Canute – "sat with his army in Gainsborough until Easter", after which he "went out with his fleet... and proceeded southward until he came to Sandwich. There he landed the hostages that were given to his father, and cut off their hands and ears and noses." Ah well, boys will be boys. Perhaps he just wanted to show that, following the death of his father, he was now ready to paddle his own knut.

"Besides all these evils, the king ordered a tribute to the army that lay at Greenwich, of 21,000 pounds" – another payment of Danegeld.

Canute comes past GYC

In 1016 "came King Knute with a marine force of one hundred and sixty ships... toward London; but it happened that King Ethelred died ere the ships came.

After his decease, all in London, chose Edmund king." Edmund was Ethelred's son, known as Edmund Ironside. "Then came the ships to Greenwich...and within a short interval went to London"... where they were confronted with London Bridge. Now last time we saw how, 2 years earlier, Ethelred and Olaf had succeeded in getting the Danes to surrender by pulling down London Bridge. The bridge had now been repaired – at least to such an extent that, manned by the determined Londoners led by Edmund, it presented a formidable

obstacle.

For the Vikings a bridge was a nuisance, as the further you could get your ships up-river into your enemy's territory, the better. So Canute did just what another invader would do 920 years later, when faced with the Maginot Line: he went round it. The *Chronicle* tells us that his men "sunk a deep ditch on the south side and dragged their ships to the west side of the bridge." The 'deep ditch' would not have had to be all *that* deep. The Vikings boasted that their ships could 'float in a puddle'. The peninsula they dug across was known by the locals in Anglo-Saxon as a 'hrother hythe', or cattle landing-place. We know it today as Rotherhithe.

A Viking King of all England

In a rapid sequence of events, Edmund was defeated by Canute at the Battle of Ashingdon in Essex in October 1016, and by January 1017 Canute was king of all England. He built his palace at 'West Mynster', and it is generally acknowledged that he went on to become one of our better kings.

The Normans

The Anglo-Scandinavian empire which Canute established lasted 49 years, although our next bunch of conquerors who arrived from 'Northman-die' in 1066 were in fact close cousins of the Danes, Norwegians and Swedes (see the last issue). They were, in the words of our Editor, just 'more bloody Vikings'.

Rudyard Kipling sums-up:

*So when you are requested to pay-up or be molested,
You will find it better policy to say:-*

"We never pay anyone Dane-geld, no matter how trifling the cost;

*For the end of that game is oppression
and shame;*

And the nation that pays it is lost."

As the earliest specifically-recorded man-made navigable waterway in London, "Canute's Canal" has always been the Holy Grail of waterway anoraks. But some in the past may have found it – or even re-used it...

A new London Bridge

In the 12th century Londoners decided they needed a new bridge, and that this one should be made of stone. The 'design and construct' contract was awarded in 1176 to Peter de Colechurch a local parish priest with a talent for engineering. He died in 1209,



4 years before his bridge was completed, and was buried underneath the chapel which stood on the bridge. This, the famous ‘Old’ London Bridge, survived for 600 years until it was replaced by the Rennie bridge in 1831. This was succeeded by the present bridge in 1973. But what was the connection between Canute’s Canal and this, much *later* London Bridge?

Henry Johnson’s Dock

In the seventeenth century in Henry Johnson’s ‘Great Dock’ at Blackwall (*Trident*, Autumn 2007) ships, even East Indiamen, could be repaired while still afloat in sheltered water. The ‘Great Dock’ reigned supreme for 40 years. What would be *really* useful, though, would be a privately-owned wet dock closer to the Royal Dockyard at Deptford.

Elizabeth Howland’s garden pond

Now, it so happened that the fabulously rich Howland family owned land on the east side of the Rotherhithe peninsula, just above the Royal Dockyard. Sir Josiah Child was the dictatorial chairman of the East India Company and he had a granddaughter: Elizabeth Howland. In May 1695 Elizabeth married Wriothesley Russell, heir to the Duke of Bedford. Elizabeth was considered to be worth about £100,000, and Wriothesley (he *must* have had a shorter version) was not short of a bob or two. As part of Elizabeth’s wedding dowry her father gave a huge tract of his land to the Russell family. The bride’s granddad was one of the most powerful and influential men on the planet and it is just possible that he had had something to do with bringing the happy couple together. Anyway, following the marriage, £12,000 was raised for the building of a wet dock by the Russells on what had been the Howland family estate, one which would make Henry Johnson’s 1½ acre ‘Great Dock’ look like a puddle. Work began with almost indecent haste (see below) and by the end of 1699 the Howland Great Wet Dock, supposedly named in ‘honour’ of Elizabeth, had been built in her family’s front garden: it covered 10 acres and could accommodate up to 120 ships.

Canute’s Canal Discovered?

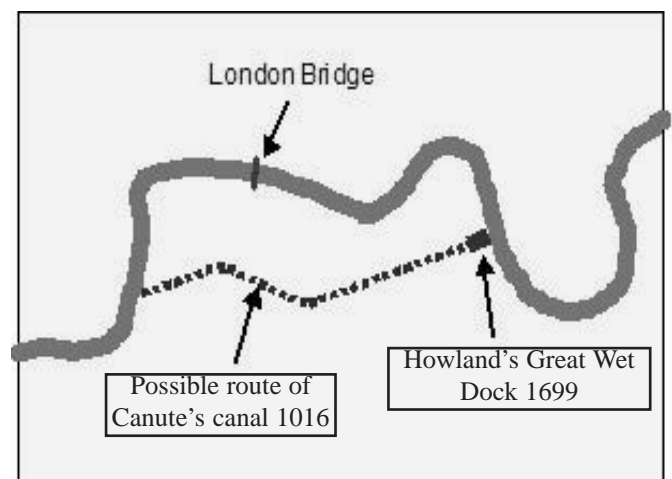
The building of *both* of London’s first ‘great docks’ had been followed, with interest, by Samuel Pepys and by his contemporary, John Maitland.

Maitland believed that he had succeeded in tracing the route of “Canute’s trench”: “*from its influx into the Thames at the lower end of Chelsea Reach .. south of Newington Butts ... and across the Deptford Road ... to its outflux where the Great Wet Dock below Rotherhithe is situated.*”

Furthermore, Maitland had “*inquired of a carpenter named Webster, who was employed in making the Great Wet Dock at Rotherhithe in the year 1694, who remembered that in the course of the work a considerable body of fagots (bundles of wood) and stakes were discovered*”. Maitland believed that these were “*part of the works intended to strengthen the banks of the canal*” and that he had discovered Canute’s canal. But there

was another popular explanation for the archaeological remains: in 1699, the year the Howland Dock opened, Samuel Pepys received a letter from his friend Dr Wallis, describing how, 50 years earlier when he was a child he had walked “*across the fields*” to Lambeth in order to cross over London Bridge to Westminster. He wrote that during his walk a friend “*showed me ...diverse remains of the old channel which had been heretofore made from Redriff to Lambeth for diverting the Thames while London Bridge was a-building, all in a straight line or near it, but with great intervals which had long since been filled-up.*” However, he goes on, “*those remains which then appeared so visible are now (50 years later) all or most of them filled-up.* So the explanation given to Wallis, which he passed-on to Pepys, was that the sections of shallow ditch which had been visible 50 years earlier were the remains of a diversionary channel which Peter de Colechurch had made during his building of London Bridge.

It is possible, however, that Colechurch re-used the route of Canute’s canal. There is no suggestion that he diverted the *entire* flow of the River Thames across the Rotherhithe peninsula, but simply that he might have temporarily diverted a *proportion* of it – to reduce tidal pressure on his embryonic bridge-works, or to offer an alternative route to river traffic.



Sadly there is now nothing left to see of King Canute’s by-pass, but if you ever come out of Surrey Quays tube station and find yourself walking along ‘Canute Gardens’, have a look around.

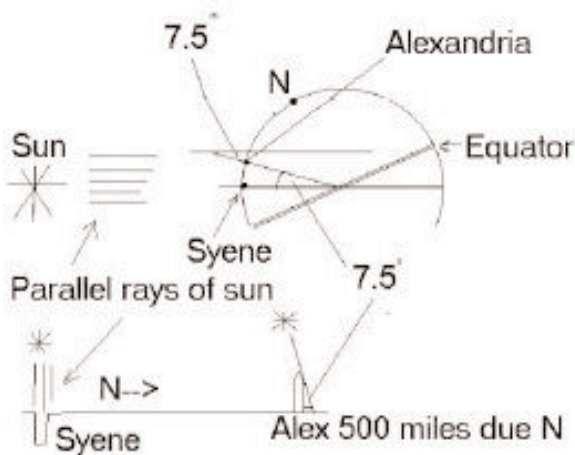
Greenland Dock

The Howland Great Wet Dock became the main base of the British whaling fleet, and in 1763 was renamed Greenland Dock. It was greatly enlarged in 1893-1904, slicing across the Grand Surrey Canal, and went on to specialise in timber. It is still there, together with its neighbour South Dock (*Trident*, Autumn 2005) These two are all that remain of the enormous Surrey Commercial Docks system which until the 1970s honey-combed the entire Rotherhithe peninsula. But that’s another story...

Jeremy Batch

John Powell gets physical

Eratosthenes was the first person to make an estimate of the Earth's circumference around 250 BC. He knew that Alexandria was 500 miles due north of Syene (on the Tropic of Cancer) where there was a deep well which reflected the sun at noon on the summer solstice – when the sun was at its zenith. At the same time in Alexandria the shadow of an obelisk showed that the sun was at 7.5 deg from its zenith. Because the sun is a very distant object its rays arrive in parallel which means the arc of the Earth (or as we now say the difference in latitude) between Syene and Alexandria was approximately 7.5 deg. If we divide 7.5 deg. into 360 degrees we get 48. So Eratosthenes estimated that the Earth's circumference was $48 \times 500 = 24000$ miles. The distance was actually given in stadia which was the length of a games stadium. His result agrees with modern determinations to within 4%. Not bad eh?



An old sea captain was sitting on a bench near the docks when a young man walked up and sat down. The young man had spiked hair and each spike was a different colour... red, green, orange, blue and yellow.

After a while the young man noticed that the sea captain was staring at him. "What's the matter, mate? Never done anything wild in your life?"

The old sea captain replied, "Got drunk once and married a parrot. I was just wondering if you were my son!"

Next time you're working on your boat, and make an almighty cock-up, cheer yourself up with this from Peter Ripley.

In 1978, on three months leave from the Merchant Navy, I bought the *Alison Stokes*. She was a beautiful, carvel-built cruiser which had spent two years on the bottom of the Medway. To restore her *all* I needed to do was re-secure her side planks; fit a new stern shortening her by 6"; replace the oak ribs; fit new knees; then completely fit her out. I built a steaming oven for the green oak ribs and learnt how to secure using rivets and roves. 20 years old and fresh out of training, it would be a 3-month walk in the park!

Seven years later still on dry land I was finally putting in the engine when a plank sprang away from the bow. That was when terrible realisation dawned; as a rookie

boat builder, I'd used brass screws. I *now* know brass and salt water don't go, (brass being 20-40 % zinc) and there were a thousand screws all being eaten away by the salt-impregnated wood. I didn't dare float *Alison Stokes* so stripped her down, sold the hull as a play-house and the rest for scrap. To rub salt in my wounds, her portholes ended up embellishing the doors of a night club near my place of work.

Last year I passed a house in Kemsing and spotted in the garden a play-house called the *S.S.Ripley*. To my delight it turned out to be *Alison Stokes*, still in one piece and in possession of the original buyer. Fifty years old and still going strong!

So the moral of this story is that if you want your boat to last a lifetime, don't use brass screws and if you do, don't put it in the water!



"And you really mean that with one of these things we could win the Frostbite Race?" Photo of the diesel maintenance class from Annie McCombe .

Quote in the newspaper the other day from Simon Woodroffe, millionaire founder of the Yo! Sushi restaurant chain:

"I'm having an aluminium speedboat built in Sweden that will be perfect for trips down the Thames. It'll do 40 knots and be able to drive up on anything."

Oh, good.

It's amazing how boats which are advertised on this page get sold! With a couple of exceptions. Don't forget, as a GYC member, if you have anything boaty to sell, you can reach all our members by advertising it here.

Free.

Trident is the club magazine of Greenwich Yacht Club, Peartree Wharf, 1 Peartree Way, Greenwich, SE10 0BW.
Telephone 020 8858 7339. Website: www.greenwichyachtclub.co.uk.

This edition was put together by Carol O'Shea with lots of help and cups of tea from Ray Sharp.