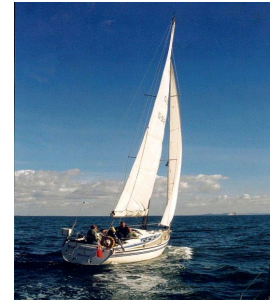




TOGLINE



The Quarterly Journal of the Trent Offshore Group

SPRING NEWSLETTER 2007

Sounding:- The process of determining the depth by bouncing the keel off the hard stuff.



Here we go once again into the new sailing season and welcome to the Spring edition of your very own newsletter, **TOGLINE**.

You will see that we are trying an experiment to produce your newsletter in Full Colour. There are so many photographs

submitted with the articles, that your Council feel it is worth experimenting – and we do hope you approve. Sailing is such a colourful sport, with the backdrop of (mostly) blue sea and sky, the happy, - sometimes green - but generally smiling faces of the participants - and a yacht under sail is such an attractive sight. Watching and, enjoying sunrises and sunsets that seem to have a special light to them. They can be difficult to capture on a camera, but we have a couple of good ones to show you. Even an overcast sky can display its own magic, because we know the sun will come out again, restoring those perfect moments that are never quite the same ashore. But enough of eulogising - please feel encouraged to submit whatever you will..

Unbidden articles such as those submitted by Stephanie Cooper and Alan Radley, really give us a lot of satisfaction and are so welcome. Many thanks, Steph and Alan and we are so pleased you obviously enjoyed your experiences. It encourages us to think that there are many more stories/reports lurking out there, with budding authors poised to put pen to paper or fingers to keyboard, letting us know how you really feel! How about it everyone?

We have also decided to introduce summary reports of “goings on” at our Council meetings. Our Administrator, Neil McFarlane, does a great job in summarising the matters we discuss and we would like to share them with you. They are quite lively affairs, not just social events and we do try to accommodate all aspects and interests of the club and

its members. See what you think anyway and please let us know if there is anything else we can do.

There has been much discussion recently about the aspects of safety at sea and one or two incidents that have highlighted some of the dangers. There have been in-depth analyses of the incident with Brittany ferries and another one off the East Coast. The latter event turned out to be less serious (relatively speaking) in that there was no loss of life, unlike the former. We know how rapidly a ship can appear over the horizon and the brief time available to us to determine its course in relation to ours. The Colregs tell us how we should react, but right-of way is not necessarily right under the circumstances! 50,000 tons takes a lot of stopping or turning and it is far better to react with circumspection than insist doing what is dictated! I know we are talking to the converted and I for one am grateful our skippers are experienced enough to keep out of trouble. But it behoves us lesser mortals to ensure that we always keep watching and **learning** from our betters.

Enough from me – once again thank you to everyone for your articles and your thoughts. Please keep them coming and enjoy them appearing in print!

Communication is the lifeblood of a club and we seem to be moving in that direction. Do enjoy this issue and especially your sailing. Learning can be as much fun as doing - with the right teaching. That we have in abundance!

Happy sailing.

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**--AND A BIT MORE ON ENSIGNS
WITH BURGEES THROWN IN!**

In this short article I would like to discuss burgees and courtesy ensigns. Please do not think that this is a 'load of old rope' because the maritime world

still has regard for common courtesies and many of our ignorant brethren (using both meanings of the word) have found themselves in real trouble when these are not observed in waters outside NW Europe. In a British registered yacht you can get away with not flying a French courtesy ensign in France (if you wish to advertise your bad manners) but do it in Greece or Croatia and your vessel is likely to be impounded until you cough up payment for a fine and produce the relevant ensign, even in Italy, Spain and Portugal you are likely to be told to get one or buzz off. The Nordic world also gets a bit starchy but the likelihood of taking a vessel there unless you live in Shetland is a bit remote!

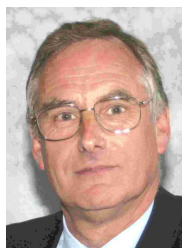
The yacht's ensign is flown from the senior flag position, which is a staff abaft the taffrail or from the truck of any small after mast (still the case today for ketches or yawls). In days of yore the club burgee, or flag officer's distinguishing pennant, of the yacht's skipper was displayed at the main masthead, which in maritime practice was considered to be the second senior flag position. Courtesy ensigns (the maritime flag of the country being visited) were carried at the next senior position which was from the signal halliard off the main starboard crosstrees and signalling flags, in the case of leisure sailing usually only the 'Q,' were displayed off the main port crosstrees. Any other flags such as rally pennants, class flags, or some flag specific to a crew member would be flown (or worn as is often said) below the signal flags. The point to remember is that the burgee takes precedence over a courtesy ensign. Do please note that, as skipper, if you belong to more than one club you can only wear one burgee at the senior position. You can, if there are pressing reasons, wear a second but this must fly with the 'also rans' below any signal flags.

Nowadays few single-masted yachts have any room for halliards at the masthead, because like the taffrail, it has been overwhelmed by the gadgetry of the electronic age so the burgee (or distinguishing pennant) is now worn, more often than not, at the next most senior position – that is off the starboard crosstrees. Courtesy ensigns, coming next in order of seniority, are therefore worn off the starboard crosstrees under the burgee and please remember that the Channel Isles are entitled to this gesture as sovereign states owing allegiance to the Crown but not to the UK government. Signalling flags (primarily the 'Q') are displayed from the port crosstrees and all other flags are worn below them. What if there is no port crosstree signal halliard? Next issue will deal with this but for the moment just hoist anything else below the 'Q', any courtesy ensign, and the skipper's club burgee or pennant in that order.

SMALL WORLD – BIG TOG

Ann and I re-visited Gibraltar at the end of March and whilst there, dropped in the Royal Gibraltar Yacht Club. When signing the Visitors' Book, I turned back one page to find that 'Nigel and Julia Williamson – Yealm Yacht Club' had visited in October last year. As many of you know, Nigel was a stalwart member of TOG for well over a decade. He frequently gave members the run of his then holiday home on the quayside in Newton Ferrers for short holidays, or if they were joining ship in Plymouth. He sailed in countless expeditions in the Channel, Scotland, Ireland and France, as well as taking members out in his own yacht, kept on the River Stour until he retired from the family business. He married and moved permanently to his house in Newton Ferrers. At the same time he decided to resign from the Royal Plymouth Corinthian Yacht Club, the Manningtree Sailing Club and TOG and concentrate his efforts in the Yealm Yacht Club. In his Christmas card, he had written a note about their Autumn holiday in Gib but we had forgotten about it. If any member visits Gibraltar, do drop into the Yacht Club where you will be made welcome. Later this year work begins on a magnificent new clubhouse adjacent to the extended marina, which should be open for the 2008 season.

PUSHPIT PRATTLE by Keith Stedman



**WHY GET WET - FOUL WEATHER
GEAR FOR HIRE!!**

Did you know that TOG is now able to offer a limited number of members the use of foul weather clothing on any trip at a very reasonable price? Following the October Sailex last year we were able to purchase two sets of breathable foul weather clothing which is available to hire on any TOG trip. The price currently is £10.00 for a week so the price is extremely competitive. Two Members hired the "gear" for this Easter trip but as luck would have it the weather proved extremely clement. We cannot, of course, guarantee the weather will always be so kind!! So, if you are joining us for a sail this season and want to reserve a set please make this known to the skipper or endorse your booking form to this effect. Orders are taken on a first come first served basis. At the price offered can you afford not to be equipped for a wetting!!

REPORTS

The TOG Story (cont.) by Norman Allen

Part VII The Disruption

The 1990 Scottish Sailex had ended well but rumblings of discontent re-commenced after our return. The problem with recounting the story of this many sided fracas is that, to my knowledge, the records appear to be lost whilst the Minute Book of the Skippers' Council presumably rests somewhere in the School archives where it should have been placed upon the eventual, but drawn out, demise of the Flotilla in the mid '90s.

I have no papers save Flotilla Expedition Reports which relate to particular sailing events and these have been the basis for the earlier chapters of this history. The laws of the land are such that libel actions can be pursued at will and it would be a foolhardy scribbler who risked that with no contemporary written evidence to fall back on.

During the Autumn Term we had a small number of increasingly fractious meetings of the Skippers' Council which revolved around the four topics of finance, personnel, logistics and organisation. Basically we were split between those who wanted the Flotilla to be a proper sailing club, with an elected committee and officers, and those who wished it to remain primarily a school club with but peripheral adult events. I very much favoured the latter option and could see no reason for change when the total adult membership (as at September 1990) was only 22, of which 10 had sailed as a skipper and were members of the Skippers' Council anyway. As in any organisation there was a mixture of ambition and desires: I certainly would have liked our financial affairs to be more open but such things as subsidies to adults and to pupils had never been discussed and historically were the prerogative of the Vice Commodore; there were some who had ambitions to office and thought that a wider electorate than the Skippers' Council would be useful to that end; there were some who wanted to attract more adults interested in learning to sail and would have liked the Easter Trainex to reflect this...and so on and so on.

The wrangling stopped for the Annual Dinner, which was referred to in the last chapter, but directly the 'festive season' finished it started all over again. By the end of February I had had enough and decided that if I was to be involved any longer with the Flotilla it would be on my terms: I was fed up with the disloyalty of some skippers, with the desire of others to turn the Flotilla into something that was never intended and, in particular, I had become disenchanted with some of the activities of the Vice Commodore (Brian Hill). I took the bull by the horns and invoked the common procedural practice of using "chairman's action" to sack the Vice Commodore and to re-appoint him as Rear Commodore (Dinghies) responsible for basic training. At the resultant meeting I explained that the VC position could be an opportunity for the Council to elect an officer, if that was their wish, although the exact terms of reference would have to be agreed later. Far from helping matters this merely caused more trouble. Whilst some dissidents were partly mollified by this action, and were willing to ratify it as it would be a slight step towards club status, Brian most certainly was not and refused to serve. Furthermore we had addressed only one item of concern and there much to go.

I had tired of interminable meetings and the concomitant bickering of a minority so I wrote to the Headmaster (in his position as Honorary Commodore) and resigned my post. I walked away with Ken Merryweather, Mike Hall, David Brettle and, surprisingly, Mike Lawrence who was a particular chum of Brian, all Flotilla skippers. In addition Bob Adam informed Brian that he would stay for the 1991 Scottish Sailex, in order to further his skippering skills, and would then leave and team up with us (which he did). Joining us were long standing adult mates John Ellis, Nigel Williamson and Bob Wright, student afterguard members Rob Ellis, Bev

Allen, and Peter Besson and newcomers Arthur Wood and Jon Lyons.

We took no one with us from the 47 strong school membership as there was no desire to exacerbate the situation further. Of the 22 adult members of the Flotilla 14 had walked away. At an informal meeting of most of the secessionists in March, prior to the Easter Sailex that had already been booked with RAFSA, it was decided that we would form a new club



dedicated to offshore sailing. What to call it? As those involved came from four counties and boring titles such as The East Midlands Whatever were non-starters, we were stuck. Plumber suggested the word 'Trent', as being a good name for a waterborne club covering most of the East Midlands, and then came up with "we could call it

the Trent Offshore Group. That sounds nicely ridiculous!" Someone else said "TOG for short.....not that it means much." About six months later Terry Wogan launched his own TOG club! That's how we got the name. (*At last!! – Ed*)

Surprisingly the disruption, for that is the only word that sums up the disengagement of two thirds of the adult membership, had caused little aggravation with the majority of those remaining. It was ironic that in terms of years of service none of the skippers had served anywhere near as long as those leaving, with the sole exception of Brian Hill. The Easter Sailex went ahead as planned in 'Sea Eagle'. My crew consisted of Windmill as mate, Rob Ellis as pilot, Pete Besson as bos'un and purser and four pupils from the school, the two sixth formers acting as watch leads. It was an early Easter but the weather was very favourable as we set off on 27 March for East Cowes-Poole-Braye (Alderney)-Yarmouth-Hamble (with dinner in the RAFYC)-Bembridge-and back to Gosport: a distance of 285 miles with 10 night hours. It was a fitting swansong to our involvement with the pupil membership of the Flotilla.

In keeping with a desire to keep personal animosity to a minimum it was decided by David Smith, Lester Brooks, Ken Merryweather and me that the planned SWAILEX to the Scilly Isles from Plymouth should go ahead in May. Consequently the three yachts that had gone to Brittany and the Channel Islands the previous year departed Plymouth on 11 May with a determination to enjoy ourselves to the extent of keeping crews as planned and thus preventing a 'them' and 'us' attitude. Our itinerary was to Fowey, Newlyn, Penzance, Hughtown (St Mary's), St Agnes (for an unforgettable overnight stop), Newlyn, Penzance, Falmouth, Fowey, Newton Ferrers and back to Plymouth. We covered 334M with two night hours.

The first all TOG sailex took place 13-20 July 1991 from Dunstaffnage. I skippered a Moody 376 and Ken took a Moody 31. We had variable weather conditions but covered 263M visiting Tobermory, Loch Sunart, Muck, Eigg, Loch Harport, South Uist, Tobermory, Salen, Oban and back to Dunstaffnage. We did have one incident that caused a minor hiccup in Tobermory when my daughter Bev, along with Rob Ellis and Pete Besson got bored sitting aboard in the rain and decided to enact a burial at sea in the harbour where we

were at anchor. It created chaos because some idiots thought it for real and alerted the Harbourmaster.....I needn't go on!!

Once the Summer was over the TOG members formally met on 26 September to create the new club when a constitution and the first standing orders, having been devised and passed around to all members, were accepted. Recognising that TOG was a cruising club it had been decided to dispense with flag ranks ashore, using them to denote seniority for command purposes at sea, accordingly the chief administration officer/chairman/buck stopper was to be entitled the Presiding Master and his number two, the Deputy PM. I was asked to take on the job and Ken became DPM. The other Council posts created and filled at that meeting were: Expeditions Master (David Brettle-who still does the job), Treasurer (Pete Besson), Training Master (Mike Lawrence), Administrator (Rob Ellis), Chancellor (Mike Hall-responsible for fund raising and social affairs) and Spare Hands John Ellis (who became Administrator on the expansion of Council when Rob took on Public Relations) and Bev Allen (who became the editor of a quarterly newsletter the following January, the forerunner of this august publication). A badge, designed by David Brettle and Bob Adam, was agreed and Bob, who became Boatswain, undertook to produce our new sweaters in time for Christmas! We were now established with no outside pressures and were our own masters. The preamble to the constitution, that has not changed to this day, was to be our light and guide. "To provide offshore sailing experience to members of the Trent Offshore Group (TOG) and to train members to relevant Royal Yachting Association (RYA) standards."

EASTER SAILEX by Neil MacFarlane

Hope

Mark Davis Skipper/commodore
Ian Johnson
Stephanie Cooper
Debbie Gee
John Bryant

Freelancer

Neil MacFarlane (Skipper)
Stuart Cook
Phil Greetham
Barry Weston
Fiona Cook
Diane Rowbotham

Gannet II

Richard Oakes (Skipper)
Michael Brooke
Peter Hodson
Sam Brooke

Poletrix

Arthur Wood (Skipper)
Paul Ratcliffe
Brenda Wood
Sarah Smart
Saul Musson
David Sowerby
Peter Chivall

Thursday 5th April



With good weather in prospect from the persistent high pressure zone in the south west, crews made their way to the Hamble. Four yachts had been chartered from Fairview Sailing, three new(ish) Bavaria 37's and a Bavaria 30'(Gannet II). Crew experience ranged from seasoned salts to offshore novices, but all had buckets of enthusiasm. After formal

handover from the charterers, victualling and safety briefings,

the four yachts left Port Hamble Marina bound for Cowes between 4 and 8pm - an ebbing, but benign tide saved any early histrionics within the confines of the pontoons. The yachts skirted Bramble Bank and most got some early practice of boat handling, hoisting canvas and sailing in a light south-westerly, including the navigational hazards of the "Precautionary Zone" in between Cowes and Calshot. After berthing in Cowes Yacht Haven in the early evening, crews dispersed to eat in the town and paid the traditional visits to the Union Flag Inn and the Island Sailing Club.

Friday 6 April

The yachts left Cowes in mid-morning and dispersed in the Solent intending to rendezvous in Yarmouth that evening. The day was spent familiarising crews with the boats and their equipment, including the first "real" navigation for those whose previous experience was limited to the evening classroom and practice RYA charts. *Freelancer* headed up the East Solent under engine with favourable tide in a light, F2 north-westerly and entered Portsmouth Harbour via the Swashway channel in early afternoon. Having inspected the historic ships and other RN vessels, she caught the ebbing tide



under engine, hoisting sails off Cowes in a light north-westerly, and made passage down the East Solent. *Poletrix* similarly headed East initially, taking in views of Osborne House and basking in the atypical

warmth and light winds. *Hope* and the other yachts entered Yarmouth in late afternoon/early evening and, under the direction of the berthing master, either moored up to pontoons or piles. Crews went ashore later to eat and drink, some in the august premises of the Royal Solent YC, others in local pubs and fish'n'chip shops. Near-vertical dinghies were later released from their moorings on the harbour wall and ferrying feats restored crews to their vessels.

Saturday 7 April

To catch a favourable tide at the Needles, *Hope* and *Freelancer* left Yarmouth a little before dawn at 0600, followed shortly after by *Gannet II*. In a light north-westerly, the yachts headed down the Solent under engine in mist and a glassy sea, to pass close to Hurst Castle and enter Christchurch Bay via the North Channel. With little wind but a favourable tide, the yachts dispersed in a general westerly direction to enter *Poole* Bay and spent the day in boat handling and practice of various manoeuvres, including MOB's. *Poletrix* made a later, mid-morning start from Yarmouth, having had the usual full English breakfast and relaxing rowing tour of the harbour in the early morning sun, seeking the rest of the fleet which had left four hours earlier. *Poletrix* spent some time on boat handling etc in the Solent before exiting via the Needles Channel into the bay.

Earlier problems with the VHF persisted the next day, so information on positions was relayed among the yachts as and when contacts were made. *Freelancer* encountered *Hope* at anchor for lunch off Bournemouth, and then set off under engine for Swanage, returned past Old Harry and anchored for

a time in Studland Bay, before entering *Poole* Harbour around 1400. *Hope* reported that she had bagged the last place in the Dolphin Haven, so *Freelancer*, having eyed the Town Quay piles with some trepidation, headed upriver under the bridge to Cobb's Quay Marina where berths were available. However, both the river and the berths were shallow, as well as being restricted by the bridge opening times, so *Hope* quickly returned downriver on a falling tide, awaited the next bridge opening, and was lucky enough to identify *Gannet II* on Town Quay. They rafted up alongside at 1700 in time for G&Ts.

Meanwhile, contact had been made with *Poletrix* crossing Poole Bay, who declared her intention to pass the night under the stars at anchor in the relative peace of Studland Bay and duly did so. In Poole, crews went ashore and experienced the temporary showers, which even by Poole standards, were appalling and clearly designed for contortionists. However, drink and an excellent meal in a quayside pub, soon eradicated these traumas. TOG member John Merrill and his new 50ft plus catamaran *Foggy II*, were found to be in the Dolphin Haven. Some crew took the opportunity to sample John's legendary hospitality - one skipper leaving a greater "impression" on the cat than had been intended.

Sunday 8 April



Under yet another day of bright sun, clear sky, little wind and flat calm, the yachts left Poole and Studland bound for Weymouth. *Freelancer* passed the

harbour entrance at 0800 and anchored in Studland Bay for breakfast. Replete, she rounded Old Harry, then Anvil Point, and motored through the overfalls off St Albans Head. Sails were hoisted and she made 5.5kts SOG in a F2/3 south-westerly, with the others yachts also experiencing a good sail. Joining *Gannet II* in Weymouth Bay for some close formation sailing, *Freelancer* practised MOB's under sail in ideal conditions. *Poletrix*, after some good sailing, had entered Weymouth earlier and passed through Town Bridge to spend the night in the marina. *Gannet II* rafted up to another 30ft yacht on Custom House Quay, to be followed by *Freelancer*, more G&Ts, and then finally *Hope*, by which time the innermost 30 footer was beginning to fret.

Monday 9 April

More sun, calm seas and little wind in the morning.....Three yachts left Weymouth around 0830, but *Poletrix* was somewhat delayed by skipper waking times, bridge opening, preparation of a full cooked breakfast, and a tour round the town. *Freelancer* had a literal but educative tangle with a lobster pot marker posing as an errant fender outside the harbour but sprang free. The early bird yachts then headed east under engine with a strong favourable tide to catch the tidal

gate before 1600 at the entrance to the Solent. The urge to catch the tide precluded sailing, but a quick if somewhat noisy and vibrato passage exemplified the advantages of a careful



scrutiny of tide tables to the less experienced practical navigators with SOGs of 8-9kts recorded. *Hope* led the way, followed by *Gannet II* and *Freelancer*, passing Hurst Point around 1300 - 1400h. *Gannet II* anchored for lunch just east of Hurst Point and the other two yachts picked up moorings buoys of Yarmouth for the same purpose. Meanwhile a fresh northeasterly had sprung up and the yachts got in some excellent sailing and photo-opportunities, before entering Lymington Marina around 1700h for the night. *Poletrix* again exhibited her independence and made passage from Weymouth to Poole, where she spent the night..

Tuesday 10 April

Back in the Solent, three yachts did their own thing for the day, with the aim of all four meeting up in Cowes for the last night. *Freelancer* refuelled in Lymington and left around 1300, briefly grounding well within the buoyed channel, as subsequently did *Hope*. *Freelancer* motor-sailed up the Solent and entered the Beaulieu River to go up to historic Buckler's Hard for a pleasant, but pricey pint or two, once mooring fees were included.

Poletrix made the customary leisurely start from Poole and tested the accuracy of Bellfield Plotter Predictions, charted soundings and advice in the Almanac for the upper reach of the small boat channel and found all wanting. Later in the passage, eye contact was made with yacht *Dolphin 1* who wished to make a repeated inspection of the Saildrive System for half an hour. Radio contact was re-established with *Freelancer* and *Gannet II* whilst at lunch hove to, in the just bearable heat 3M south of the Needles. In the early evening the four yachts met in Cowes Yacht Haven and the crews dined and swapped yams in the Anchor Inn.

Wednesday 11 April



Last morning - yet more sun, calm and little wind.....*Freelancer* cast off at 1030 and headed up the River Medina to the Folly Inn, passing Ellen McA's catamaran en route, and loosely accompanied by

Poletrix. Leaving Cowes, the yachts headed back to the Hamble, *Freelancer* and *Poletrix* skirting east of Bramble Bank and entering Southampton water by the North Channel.

Each yacht fuelled up in the Hamble and entered their respective berths in the marina in exemplary fashion. After cleaning the boats and packing up, the crews dispersed having all agreed that it had been a splendid week in all respects but a little more wind would have made it ideal.

AND NOW – WHAT REALLY HAPPENED!!

(My grateful thanks to Stephanie Coope and Alan Radley for the next two pieces, presented unbidden. More! More! – Ed)

So this was it then! All set for a week aboard a Bavaria 37 yacht with my partner and three people I didn't know, but who I would get to know pretty well (although I didn't know that to start with). Our skipper was Mark Davis and right from the start it was plain he knew his windward from his leeward, which is more than I did!

I'd done a bit of sailing, so I knew some of the terms and expressions. However, as a nurse I shuddered with disbelief every time someone mentioned being good or bad 'down below'. It turned out that I was very good down below and my cooked breakfasts became a legend before the week was out. I had great fun cooking at sea using the gimbal facility on the cooker, although I do acknowledge that the weather we had was pretty quiet.

On the first day Mark gave us a safety briefing and showed us the basics on the boat. When he explained how the lavatory worked, I couldn't quite see but thought it would be straightforward enough. When we were all ready for turning in on the first night after an exhilarating sail across the Solent, I realised after I had used the lav, that I didn't quite know how to flush it. Imagine my embarrassment when I had to open the heads door and ask for a plumber. So already my shipmates and I were getting to know each other very well indeed!

As I drifted off to sleep on the first night, moored in Cowes Marina, I felt relaxed and happy. Goodness what fun we were going to have! The bunk was really quite comfortable and I enjoyed the slight rocking motion. I slept like a log.

Next morning we were up and away. We moored in a bay, which we renamed Billy Connolly bay, (look up the film Mrs Brown 1977) and had breakfast. That day, skipper and crew had a marvellous time and this was the pattern every day of the holiday. Highlights for me include learning the man overboard drill, having a go at helming; learning to throw a rope; sailing in the Solent with Gannet II and Freelancer; drinking the delicious wine that John brought; just being on a boat; going into Portsmouth and Gosport harbours; seeing Ellen McCarthur's trimaran - and so much more. A special mention must go to the hilarious journey back to the boat in the tender at Lymington. I laughed till I cried and my sides were painful next day from so much laughing. Just as I thought things couldn't get any better, Mark introduced us to close boat manoeuvring within the confines of Cowes North Marina. It made me realise how large a Bavaria 37 is and how small the marinas are. Mark showed us how to berth the boat single handed, then we all had a go at the same manoeuvre. We then adjourned to Billy Connolly bay for a last breakfast and a change of underwear!

I absolutely loved the trip and I would recommend it to anyone. Special thanks must go to Mark Davis for looking

after us so well. Thanks to my fellow rookie crewmembers Debbie and John and special thanks to my partner Ian who has introduced me to the fantastic world of sailing.

Stephanie Cooper

Incompetent Crew – (I think not!! – Ed)

TOG OFFICIALS DELIVER!!

by Alan Radley

What do you do when you are relatively new to boating, the ink on your RYA Day Skipper Certificate is hardly dry (well, wet actually), and you have just bought a boat that needs moving from its current mooring to the one where you want to keep her?

Easy – you call on the Presiding Master and Bo'sun of your local boating association – in my case TOG – to help. If you are lucky, they will come along and help you with the delivery. And if you are really lucky, you get Keith Stedman and Mark Davis to do this for you.

Only last month I bought my first boat, a Sadler 26, with bilge keels. The choice was dictated by the fact that I will keep her in Poole Harbour, on a swinging mooring that dries out.



Though I have my Coastal Skipper/Yachtmaster theory qualification (courtesy of Mark's evening classes) my experience of practical sailing is slight indeed. I needed an experienced crew for the move, who could give gentle (!) advice when asked for, and who could get me safely through the Solent and on to my mooring.

So, on a bright and warm April morning Keith and Mark joined me on 'Sublyme' and we made our way out of Chichester Harbour, along with a fleet of weekend sailors catching the tide. The wind that weekend was a 2/3 NE, sometimes enough to get the sails up, and sometimes needing the extra push of the motor. At just 9 hp this gave Keith and Mark plenty time to find their way around the boat, try out the autopilot, give me a lesson in reefing and suggest ways I needn't spend more money (very welcome). We spent the night in Yarmouth, where anyone watching the rafting up would have been doubtful who was Skipper and who was crew. (I don't take easily to this rafting up bit.) We had a good pub meal that evening, the odd drink or two, and the next morning set off at sunrise to catch the tide through the Needles Channel. In their haste to get away quickly the crew forgot to remind the Skipper about paying mooring dues. (I made a mental note of that.)



Having crossed Poole Bay we anchored a while between the piers at Bournemouth to enjoy the global warming. Not only did the crew do all the anchoring but they also examined the anchor, measured the rope and chain and advised the Skipper of recommended changes (which he has yet to do). We then set off again to enter Poole Harbour by the Swash Channel, to the disappointment of Mark who really wanted to see if we could test clearance in the inshore East Looe Channel. (The Skipper demurred.) With the mooring

picked up (again, I had the sense that this crew had done this before, no shouting was required!) we went ashore.

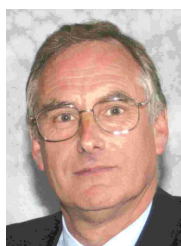
All in all I couldn't have asked for a better maiden voyage on my boat. The crew's advice and their pleasure at being afloat was the best inspiration that a novice Skipper could possibly wish for. Hope my luck is yours someday.

Alan Radley

REPORTS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS

PRESIDING MASTER :

KEITH STEDMAN



A VIEW TO THE FUTURE

A couple of **TOGline** issues ago, I wrote a short article regarding introducing my two grandsons to the joys of sailing (When Pringles Take Precedence – Autumn 2006). It is perhaps only fitting then that I should write this small but important reminder to all at the start of the 2007 sailing season, to remind us all of the need to protect our marine environment for future generations to enjoy. I

know it is a somewhat hackneyed phrase, but I do feel "that we do not own the world we only hold it trust for future generations" is true. This of course also holds true for the waterways, estuaries, seas and oceans which we all love to sail and enjoy.

It is with this in mind that I would like to draw your attention to "The Green Blue Project" which is a joint initiative between the British Marine Federation and the Royal Yachting Association, which aims to promote good practice to preserve the marine environment across the United Kingdom. The project seeks to both educate and inform users of the marine environment, by providing practical information showing how we can all contribute to its preservation and showing how, by taking a few simple steps, we can all make a real difference. To quote another cliché, "Think Global - act Local".

So, perhaps before setting off on that charter boat this summer, why not visit the "The Green Blue Project" website? It has some interesting tips for us all to enable us to reduce our impact on the marine environment. The website is www.thegreenblue.org.uk. You can, through the website, order your own copy of "How to" guides, giving practical environmental hints for both boat owners and users of both coastal waters and inland waterways.

DEPUTY PRESIDING MASTER

ARTHUR WOOD



Tall Ship Sailing

Several members of TOG have expressed an interest in tall ship sailing on a square-rigger and your council asked me to look onto the possibilities.

There are now dozens of these vessels and a lot of different matters to consider.

There are plenty of opportunities for youth voyages and some

attractive trips for rich people but - less scope for the rest of us! One vessel which has a number of voyages for people aged **18 to 75** is **STAVROS NIARCHOS**.

Her schedule for 2007 includes the following:

18-23 June	Liverpool-Cardiff	£299
11-18 October	Portsmouth-Falmouth	£399

If you would like to go on any of these you will have to book directly with Tall Ships Ltd. Their number is:-

023 9283 2055

or investigate

www.tallships.org

for more info.

PAUL RATCLIFFE - MEMBERSHIP (01778 341475)



-SOCIAL EVENTS

JOHN BYRNE



-NAVIGATION

CLIVE CRANKSHAW (01664 454403)



Trinity House has been undertaking trials in the East Swale concerning the introduction of new LED (light emitting diode) lights on buoys. Five starboard hand buoys were converted to synchronised simultaneous flashing greens during

2006. The trials are thought to have been a success and Trinity House is planning to carry out further trials. Some of these trials may be on converting these lights to flash in sequence (first one light, then the second, then third and so on) similar to runway lights. This is thought to assist mariners in identifying the channel as though they were on a runway.

So, if you are down on the East coast and find yourself in the area of the East Swale why not let Trinity House have your views on the new lights. Just visit their website and fill in on line the evaluation form.

-ADMINISTRATION – COUNCIL MATTERS

NEIL MACFARLANE (01159 663028)

Council Meeting. February 16th 2007



Eight members attended with Keith Stedman in the chair. John Byrne was welcomed to his first meeting as the new Social Secretary and Bosun. In answer to queries members noted policy on the group's annual accounts – they were not routinely published to the whole membership, but after auditing and approval by Council it was open to any member to request and receive a copy. On berth costs for sailing trips charges were determined on the basis of the yacht charter fee plus typically 5% to cover expenses and maintain club funds. Current policy on the reimbursement of RYA practical examination fees would be reviewed.

Eighteen deposits had been received for the Easter Sailex with more expected. Two yachts had been booked from Fairview Sailing on the Hamble, a third would be retained. Other planned trips had variable interest so far and would be publicised in a flyer to members.

A new website would shortly be launched.

Council agreed that the Annual Dinner had gone very well and feedback from members and guests had been very positive. The “subsidy” for the disco was well worthwhile. The same venue had been booked for 2008. The raffle had raised £170 for the RNLI.

The Treasurer reported that TOG had a healthy balance on deposit and this would rise as subscriptions were received. New signatories to the bank account were agreed.

The TOG Skippers' Manual would be reviewed and updated.

It was hoped to include colour photographs in the printed copies of future editions of **TOCLINE**.

Applications from new members were approved, and it was agreed that the discounted membership fee for direct debit payers was appropriate.

Among other business Council noted: that the TOG representation on the East Midlands RYA should be reviewed; that, following a successful VHF course, a First Aid course was imminent, and a Sea Survival course planned; that 2007 Programme Cards should be distributed to members; and that a revised booking procedure for berths on TOG trips should be implemented.

Council Meeting on 20 April 2007

Council met at the King's Hotel Grantham with nine members present and Keith Stedman in the chair. Updates on the sailing programme were received.

The success of the Easter Sailex week was noted with four yachts chartered for a good mix of experienced and novice sailors. The Milford Haven trip was fully booked, but Conwy Bay was abandoned due to little interest. The Channel Islands/St Malo trip has generated some interest and enquiries about possible charters were in progress.

Various social events were planned, with a barbeque at Rutland SC in prospect. Draft 2005-06 accounts were received, discussed and sent for audit – the financial position of the club was sound.

It was agreed that **TOCLINE** would be printed in colour in future – the extra costs were very reasonable.

Membership was healthy with a reasonable influx of new members joining via RYA classes and sailing trips – but some established members were in arrears and needed reminders.

For training, a Sea Survival course was planned, following on the successful First Aid course. The club was an approved RYA Training Centre and the most recent certification had been received. Mike Hall was approved as an ICC Tester on behalf of TOG, but the club's CEVNI information needed to be updated.

It was agreed that the club should purchase almanacs and relevant charts for the purpose of planning trips and briefing skippers and crews.

-TREASURER



RICHARD OAKES (01636 640414)

BO'SUN'S STORES



JOHN BYRNE

TRAINING

COLIN BROCKETT / MARK DAVIS



**(01205 722886) /
(01949 860815)**



Diesel Engine
Radio (Short Range Certificate – GMDSS etc.)
First Aid
Radar Sea Survival

Colin offers sailing experience over a range of weekends on the Wash/East Coast, to TOG members and friends on my yacht “Nosey”.

The east coast is a good sailing area to help one understand tides and the importance of arriving or leaving at the correct state of tide, as most harbours are drying. The Wash, with its sandbanks and channels make navigation a **very** interesting challenge! These weekend trips are particularly interesting and useful to students who have taken, or are taking, RYA shore based courses and wish to put their theory into practice. Get to grips with offshore sailing, together with instruction and testing for the International Certificate of Competence (ICC).

On any trip, the work is changed round and crew members are brought on in general seamanship navigation, boat and sail handling

One of the things he finds it hard to understand with some of the TOG Members is that when talking to them, they say they are keen to sail but cannot get a week off, or even afford to go on one a week charter, but that weekends would suit them. He is not touting for business but, having had the proposed “Nosey” programme put in Tog Line the past few years, he is amazed at the virtual total lack of interest in the opportunities presented. All of Tog, or associated trips, are designed for the membership. If what we try to arrange is not what you want, then please - tell us what is. It is difficult for the council to suggest and arrange trips and charters, only to have to cancel them due to lack of support. Come on members, help us to help you.

- WEBSITE

PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE! There is a wealth of information on it!

www.trent-offshore-group.co.uk:

It has been upgraded considerably and now has a “buy and sell” section to help you dispose of those unwanted bits and bobs!

You will also find all the Application Forms as required by the Group

FUTURE SAILING EVENTS

DAVID BRETTE (016233 882924)

04/07 CHANNEL ISLANDS 14th – 21st July.

Sailing out of St. Malo, Channel Islands and North Coast of Brittany make a pleasant change from our own south coast –

just to be different! Probable travel overnight to St. Malo and kick it off with a cruise!

Contact: - Neil Macfarlane 01159 663028
neil.macfarlane@ntu.ac.uk

05/07 ??????? August

Suggestions from members welcome.

Contact: - Mark Davis – 07711170451

mark.r.davis@btinternet.com

06/07 FALMOUTH/CORNWALL 1st – 8th Sept.

Contact:- Richard Oakes 01636 640414

gofindit@talktalk.net

07/07 OCTOBER SAILEX 3rd – 7th October.

.For those of you who wonder what the special attraction is for this trip, the only way you will find out is to put your name down and **give it a go!** (and read Dan Edson's report in the Autumn Newsletter – Ed.)

Contact: - Mark Davis – 07711170451

mark.r.davis@btinternet.com

PLEASE NOTE that we do need to have early commitment, **with deposits**, for all our trips, just the same as any other holiday organiser.

ASIDES

Taken from the Guardian, an actual letter sent by the Inland Revenue:

Dear Mr. A.

I am writing to you to express our thanks for your more than prompt reply to our latest communication, and also to answer some of the points you raise. I will address them, as ever, in order. Firstly, I must take issue with your description of our last as a **"begging letter"**. It might perhaps more properly be referred to as a **"tax demand"**. This is how we, at the Inland Revenue have always, for reasons of accuracy; traditionally referred to such documents.

Secondly, your frustration at our adding to the **"endless stream of crapulent whining and panhandling vomited daily through the letterbox on to the doormat"** has been noted. However, whilst I have naturally not seen the other letters to which you refer, I would cautiously suggest that their being from **"pauper councils, Lombardy pirate banking houses and pissant gas-mongers"** might indicate that your decision to **"file them next to the toilet in case of emergencies"** is at best a little ill-advised. In common with my own organisation, it is unlikely that the senders of these letters do see you as a **"lackwit bumpkin"** or, come to that, a **"sodding charity"**. More likely they see you as a citizen of Great Britain, with a responsibility to contribute to the upkeep

of the nation as a whole.

Which brings me to my next point. Whilst there may be some spirit of truth in your assertion that the taxes you pay **"go to shore up the canker-blighted, toppling folly that is the Public Services"**, a moment's rudimentary calculation ought to disabuse you of the notion that the government in any way expects you to **"stump up for the whole damned party"** yourself. The estimates you provide for the Chancellor's disbursement of the funds levied by taxation, whilst colourful, are, in fairness, a little off the mark. Less than you seem to imagine is spent on **"junkets for Bunterish lickspittles"** and **"dancing whores"**, whilst far more than you have accounted for is allocated to, for example, **"that box-ticking facade of a university system."**

A couple of technical points arising from direct queries:

1. The reason we don't simply write **"Muggins"** on the envelope has to do with the vagaries of the postal system;
2. You can rest assured that **"sucking the very marrows of those with nothing else to give"** has never been considered as a practice because, even if the Personal Allowance didn't render it irrelevant, the sheer medical logistics involved would make it financially unviable.

I trust this has helped. In the meantime, whilst I would not in any way wish to influence your decision one way or the other, I ought to point out that even if you did choose to **"give the whole foul jamboree up and go and live in India"** you would still owe us the money.

Please forward it by Friday.

A DAY WITHOUT LAUGHTER IS A DAY WASTED!!!

A man was flying from Seattle to San Francisco.

Unexpectedly, the plane was diverted to Sacramento along the way. The flight attendant explained that there would be a delay, and if the passengers wanted to get off the aircraft the plane would re-board in 50 minutes.

Everybody got off the plane except one lady who was blind. The man had noticed her as he walked by and could tell the lady was blind because her Seeing Eye dog lay quietly underneath the seats in front of her throughout the entire flight.

He could also tell she had flown this very flight before because the pilot approached her, and calling her by name, said, "Kathy, we are in Sacramento for almost an hour. Would you like to get off and stretch your legs?" The blind lady replied, "No thanks, but maybe my dog would like to stretch his legs."

Picture this:

All the people in the gate area came to a complete standstill when they looked up and saw the pilot walk off the plane with a Seeing Eye dog! The pilot was even wearing sunglasses. People scattered. They not only tried to change planes, but they were trying to change airlines!

True story.... Have a great day and remember...



THINGS AREN'T ALWAYS AS THEY APPEAR.

The Three Little Pigs

Three Little Pigs went out to dinner one night. The waiter came and took their drink order.

"I would like a Sprite," said the first little piggy.

"I would like a Coke," said the second little piggy.

"I want beer, lots and lots of beer," said the third little piggy.

The drinks were brought out and the waiter took their orders for dinner.

"I want a nice big steak," said the first piggy.

"I would like the salad plate," said the second piggy.

"I want beer, lots and lots of beer," said the third little piggy.

The meals were brought out and a while later the waiter approached the table and asked if the piggies would like any dessert.

"I want a banana split," said the first piggy.

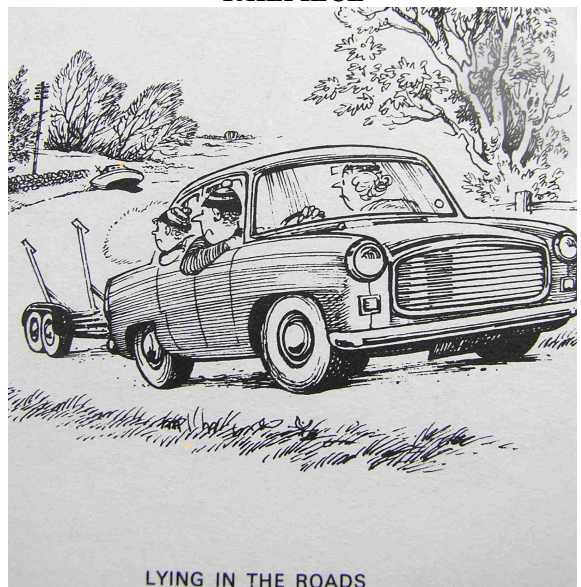
"I want a cheesecake," said the second piggy.

"I want beer, lots and lots of beer," exclaimed the third little piggy.

"Pardon me for asking," said the waiter to the third little piggy, "But why have you only ordered beer all evening?"

The third piggy says - "Well, I'm the little piggy who goes 'Wee, wee, wee, all the way home!'"

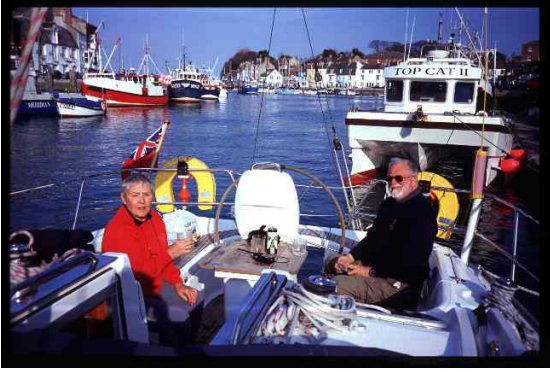
TAILPIECE



LYING IN THE ROADS

With Thanks to Thelwell.

Easter Sailex



YACHT NOSEY MWSJ 5 MMSI 235010032

Owner; - Colin J. Brockett RYA/Dpt Yachtmaster, ICC and CEVNI Examiner

“NOSEY” Is a PARKER 325 (33ft) Lift Keel yacht, well equipped with safety and navigation aids. Accommodation for six in three cabins - four berths being available on any trip.

Possible planned sailing trips for 2007.

Sailing out of FOSDYKE YACHT HAVEN on the river Welland off the A17 approx 3 miles east of Sutterton.

I have put a lot of weekend dates down, but mid week sailing can be arranged on request. If you wish to sail on any of these dates please contact me ASAP.

Possible ports of call Wells, Brancaster, Blakeney, or laying at anchor. For longer trips visits to Grimsby, Hull, Bridlington, Great Yarmouth, Lowestoft etc are possible. Final destination will be dictated by the prevailing winds and tides at departure time.

Costs to be as last year i.e.: - Vitals, fuel, etc. to be shared plus £10 per day contribution to boat. All insurance to be the responsibility of the individual.

"NOSEY" POSSIBLE PLANNED TRIPS FOR 2007

- March 30th to April 1st
- Easter April 5th to 9th (or could be longer if required) April 20th to 22nd.
- May 3rd to 6th
- May 18th to 20th.
- June 1st to 10th Boston, Brancaster, Bridlington, Whitby, Humber, Boston.
- June 15th to 17th.
- June 29th to 1st July
- July 13th to 15th
- Sometime between July 20th to August 12th Boston, North Holland, Boston this to fit in with crew availability but total cruise to be a minimum of 15 days. (this could be Northern France and the Channel Islands, which would allow a few days meeting and joining up with some members of The Parker and Seal Sailing Association)
- August 24th to 26th .
- September 14th to 16th.
- September 28th to 30th.
- October 12th to 14th. & 26th to 28th if not too cold

If you are interested in any or part of these proposed trips please contact me on 01205 722886.

Mobile 07904 349829.

Email colin@brockett5.fsnet.co.uk

Please Note; - Only non-smokers are acceptable as crew.