



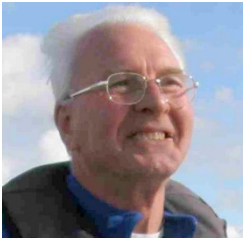
TOGLINE

The Quarterly Journal of the Trent Offshore Group
Formed and constituted, 26th September 1991

WINTER NEWSLETTER 2017/18



Channel: Narrow stretch of deep waterway bordered by buoys separating two grounded boats..



The dark days of Winter are coming to an end. The snow and ice are still around, but the first glimmer of Spring and eventual summer are appearing. The snowdrops, the crocuses, longer days. I know February at the moment

stands ready to be called the coldest on record but, hey, a new season and a fresh round of sailing adventures lie ahead.

You can see from the program at the back of this newsletter, the extent of the expeditions we have in store. It is unfortunate I feel, that they become booked up so soon. One of the problems we have lies in obtaining boats, virtually before the previous sailing season has finished! Obviously, it is a question of a balance between the number of boats and our possible ability to fill them. Deposits have to be paid and these, of course, are non-refundable. If we have to cancel a boat after a certain time, it costs!

John and the Skippers do a marvellous job at striking this balance and it seems to work – albeit at long range from the date of the expedition itself. At Council Meetings, we keep our fingers crossed that the boats can be filled – and we haven't been disappointed yet. I think the best thing is to keep an eye on the Website and as soon as the expedition appears – get in there!

Back in the “early” days – just pre and immediate post millennium - the boats were smaller – many 32-footers to take four or five people. My first trip with TOG was in May 2002 on a First 32 out of St. Malo. Hooked from that point... . Four of us. Admittedly, the space wasn't there, and we had to be friendly, but they were nimble and light to handle. They could certainly fly as well! Cross-channel? No problem. Lively in any sea – oh yes. A good test of the mal-de-mer! The trend nowadays seems to lean

towards larger boats and John assures me it is even difficult to find the smaller ones. They all seem to be allocated to flotillas in the Med. Perhaps nostalgia is kicking in here, but are we missing something? What do others think? Any feedback would be welcome.

I must apologise to our readers for the somewhat haphazard presentations in this Newsletter. I was short of material, put in “Afterthoughts” and a rogue's gallery of Council Members inside, since the recent changes of personnel. I used to put them in regularly, but with the submissions I have received latterly, there was no room. I love it that way. Long may it continue..

I know not much happens out there at this time of the year, but if you have any stories of previous trips (even non-TOG) you would like to reminisce, do please feel free. Spring edition is also likely to be short, so please.....anyone out there willing to provide material? If it looked vaguely like a boat and floated – fair game. It is all about fun on the water. We want to know about it. Thanks to Neil and Dilys for their trip on a RIB to the Scottish Isles and “How things have changed” from Arthur. The Annual Dinner was good fun and judging by the noise during the meal, an excellent time was had by all. I measure the success of an event by the volume of conversation....

Until the next time – April 30th – thank you for your support, keep smiling, stay warm and enjoy the coming events. It will be good to be on the water again.

Fair winds and calm seas....

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Presiding Master's Musings Winter2017

By Andy McWilliam

2017 proved a great success for TOG. The challenges of the Caribbean sinking and subsequent negotiating of insurance claims

led by Neil Macfarlane and John Bryant have been successfully closed, and we are wiser for the experience. TOG laid on some brilliant sailing experiences in new waters, and familiar areas too. Generally the elements have been kind to us, though the Balearic weather was not as expected in September.

We mariners enter 2018 with expectation for more adventures afloat, chartering from Dunstaffnage (Oban), and Neyland (Milford Haven) and of course our South coast mainstay, Fairview Sailing who are steadily upgrading their fleet, introducing the 'Dufour 38' replacing the ageing but wonderful 'Oceanis 37's. Early Easter means no Spring Starter this year, but May sees a fortnight sailex in Hebridean waters and the South Coast Jaunt in June is proving very popular. Two Fairview boats visit the French Coast and Channel Islands in July and 2 vessels depart Milford Haven 31st August. The End of Season October sailex is always fun.

January saw Diane Rowbotham take her seat on TOG Council as Treasurer. She took over from the stalwart Graham Wassall and has made an impressive start. Council are grateful to Diane for running this vital service without which TOG could not serve you, the members and friends. Cheers Diane.

As ever, John Bryant hold the booking process together, with incredible organisation.

February 3rd and TOG were back at Greetham Valley Hotel for the annual Dinner Dance and Awards. The evening was a great success. The disco was there and waiting. The awards were announced and presented – see the awards list elsewhere in this publication. The raffle was dispensed with and a 'whip round' raised an impressive £239.00 for the RNLI. We are happy to support and hope not to have to use the services of these brave men and women. May I remind everyone that TOG is your club, whose skippers would like your ideas and input into organising Sailing experiences in new waters and familiar ones too. Please talk to our skippers. TOG Council will endeavour to help you bring it about.

Happy and safe sailing

Andy

REPORTS

ANNUAL DINNER AND AWARDS EVENING – Saturday, 3rd February 2018.

About forty members and guests attended a happy and enjoyable occasion at Greetham Valley Golf Club. Good company, excellent food (much improved) and a good disco to round off the evening. Several of those attending stayed over in the very pleasant accommodation and enjoyed an excellent breakfast before departing on Sunday

A number could not attend due to holidays, family commitments and some illness.

Various other points were made by the Presiding Master, which are covered in his "musings" next door.

The awards were presented as follows: -

THE MILLENIUM PLATTER for best submission for TOGline.

This was awarded to Neville Buckle for his illuminating description of the Majorca Sailex. An in-depth analysis and the odd touches of humour, made it an absorbing read. (Ed)



The second award, the **ELLIS TROPHY for NEWCOMER of the YEAR**, went to Jeremy James who sailed on the Sailing Skills weekend and also the October EOS Sailex. Jeremy, unfortunately, was unable to attend on this occasion. He will receive it in due course!

The third award, THE COMMODORE'S CUP, was awarded to Prof Neil Macfarlane, our retired Presiding



Master as recognition of the years he has devoted to ensuring the smooth-running of our

organisation on the Admin side, ably assisted by our Secretary, Stewart Cook. Between them, they made a damned good job of everything – especially the follow-up for the “Joules” incident...

The next award, THE NORMAN ALLEN CUP in memory of our founding Presiding Master, went to John Bryant. This



for the work he does in the background, of ensuring the sailaxes are organised and are run successfully prior to

actually setting sail. His experience and organisational talents are invaluable and we look forward to his continuing provision of them..

The final award, THE NAVIGATOR'S CUP, went to



that amazing skipper – Alan Mortimore. This for all the good work he has done on the (long) various trips he has organised.

He modestly pointed out that others did the work, but we all know how much input the skipper gives on the whole trip!

Congratulations – worthy recipients all.....

HOW THINGS HAVE CHANGED.....

By Arthur Woods



In 1976 my first RYA certificate was NATIONAL COASTAL GRADES 1&2. Although we learned to navigate to RN standards our

instructor “knew nothing about boats with canvas engines”.

Admiralty charts were black and white, depths were in fathoms and feet and distances in nautical miles and cables

By 1979 the Day Skipper to Yachtmaster system was in use by RYA and metric charts were normal. All these certificates required a knowledge of morse code and all 30 signal flags.

Shipping forecasts were broadcast by BBC 4 times a day. RYA used to sell packs of A4 forms so that we could write down the data for 30 shipping areas and 13 coastal stations and draw our own metmaps.

Most yachts carried a copy of Reeds Nautical Almanac which had not changed its style since Victorian times. In 1984 Macmillan introduced a modern almanac which eventually displaced Reeds and took over that name. Chartwork required the use of dividers and a parallel rule. Ship's Logbook was written up every hour and distance was often measured with a Walker Patent Log. Many of you know it was a mechanical device that used a rotating spinner on the end of a 10 fathom line. OK as long as there was no flotsam to foul it. Most yachts carried a Deviation Card as compasses were not accurate in all directions. Radio Direction Finders were marketed but not much use. The current buoyage system was introduced in 1977 but not operational in all British Waters until 1981.

Vessels leaving UK and intending to cross the Channel had to report their intentions to H.M. Customs and on return had to hoist the “Q” flag and wait for visit from a customs officer before going ashore.

Most charter yachts had 3 different working foresails and a storm sail. These were kept in sail bags which were stowed in lockers and one chosen according to the weather.

Life jackets and harnesses and much other safety gear were not as good as today. Following the storm in 1979 that killed 15 yachtsmen in the Fastnet Race many lessons were learned and improvements made.

Happy days!

ST. KILDA – THE EDGE OF THE WORLD.

by Neil Msfarlane (and Dilys...)



Dilys and I were in Scotland for a golden wedding bash last August and we managed to fulfil an ambition which had been thwarted a year before by bad weather – a visit to the St Kilda archipelago. The islands lie in the north Atlantic some forty miles west north west of North Uist in the main Outer Hebrides, and are a UNESCO World Heritage Site and National Nature Reserve. They are internationally recognized for their birdlife and are thought to have been continuously inhabited by humans for up to 4,000 years. The population existed largely by subsistence farming and exploiting the huge colonies of gannets, fulmars and puffins as sources of food, feathers and oil. However, following decades of emigration, high infant mortality and decline, the remaining 36 inhabitants were evacuated in 1930 to other Hebridean islands and mainland Scotland. The last native St Kildan died on Clydeside in 2016 aged 93.



Since 1930 the islands have been inhabited on a temporary basis by the military (in wartime and a small radar base set up in 1957 for tracking British rockets), scientists, ornithologists, conservationists, and tourists – mainly in the summer months. The islands are owned



and managed by the National Trust for Scotland.

We visited the islands not by yacht but a fast comfortable RIB for up to 12 passengers that reached a cruising speed of 25 knots. We left early in the morning from Uig, Loch Snizort on the north of Skye, crossed the Little Minch, through the Sound of Harris between North Uist and Harris and out into the Atlantic. In the Minch we had good views of the Fladda and Shiant Isles, then later Berneray, Pabbay and Shillay. After some 75 NM in slight to moderate seas and a comfortable trip, with the opportunity to get fresh air on the afterdeck and observe the sight of dolphins, seals and puffins (but alas no basking sharks) we arrived in Village Bay (or Loch Hiort) on the main island of Hirta. We went ashore by dinghy to be welcomed by the NTS warden. In overcast and damp weather, we had four hours ashore to explore the island. Our ship's mate, Nicola, became our expert guide and succinctly outlined the history of the islands, their unique fauna including the St Kilda wren and dormouse, Soay and Boreray sheep, archaeology and

architecture, and the history and life of the islands' human inhabitants. Afterwards we explored Hirta but



the low mist rather precluded a visit to the cliffs to see the nesting seabirds, but the cleitean (domed stone and turf storage buildings), the blackhouses along Main Street, the school and church, and First World War gun emplacement were fascinating. Our time ashore went very quickly then it was back on board for a splendid boat tour of Hirta and other islands in the archipelago. The RIB's skipper, Andy, expertly negotiated the cliffs, sea caves and arches, sea bird colonies, and the sea stacs and the surging seas in the narrow channels between them. We then headed east to the Sound of Harris and by 2030 and were back on Skye to dine well at the Uig Hotel.

I would thoroughly recommend this superb "day trip" and indeed the operators at www.gotostkilda.co.uk. I do hope that, weather permitting, TOG's 2018 Hebridean Sailex manages to include this remote destination.



AFTERTHOUGHTS.....

I was in the six item express lane at the store quietly fuming.

Completely ignoring the sign, the woman ahead of me had slipped into the check-out line pushing a cart piled high with groceries. Imagine my delight when the cashier beckoned the woman to come forward looked into the cart and asked sweetly, "So which six items would you like to buy?"

Wouldn't it be great if that happened more often?

Because they had no reservations at a busy restaurant, my elderly neighbour and his wife were told there would be a 45 minute wait for a table.

"Young man, we're both 90 years old," the husband said. "We may not have 45 minutes."

They were seated immediately...

All eyes were on the radiant bride as her father escorted her down the aisle... They reached the altar and the waiting groom. The bride kissed her father and placed something in his hand.

The guests in the front pews responded with ripples of laughter. Even the priest smiled broadly.

As her father gave her away in marriage, the bride gave him back his credit card.

Three friends from the local congregation were asked, "When you're in your casket, and friends and congregation members are mourning over you, what would you like them to say?"

Artie said, "I would like them to say I was a wonderful husband, a fine spiritual leader, and a great family man."

Eugene commented, "I would like them to say I was a wonderful teacher and servant of God who made a huge difference in people's lives..."

Al said, "I'd like them to say, 'Look, he's moving!'"

AUSTRALIAN BRICKLAYER'S REPORT

This is a bricklayer's accident report, which was printed in the newsletter of the Australian equivalent of the Workers' Compensation Board.

Dear Sir,

I am writing in response to your request for additional information in Block 3 of the accident report form. I put "poor planning" as the cause of my accident. You asked for a fuller explanation and I trust the following details will be sufficient.

I am a bricklayer by trade. On the day of the accident, I was working alone on the roof of a new six-story building. When I completed my work, I found that I had some bricks left over which, when weighed later were found to be slightly in excess of 500lbs.

Rather than carry the bricks down by hand, I decided to lower them in a barrel by using a pulley, which was attached to the side of the building on the sixth floor.

Securing the rope at ground I went up to the roof, swung

the barrel out and loaded the bricks into it. Then I went down and untied the rope, holding it tightly to ensure a slow descent of the bricks.

You will note in Block 11 of the accident report form that I weigh 135lbs. Due to my surprise at being jerked off the ground so suddenly, I lost my presence of mind and forgot to let go of the rope. Needless to say, I proceeded at a rapid rate up the side of the building. In the vicinity of the third floor, I met the barrel, which was now proceeding downward at an equally impressive speed.

This explained the fractured skull, minor abrasions and the broken collar bone, as listed in section 3 of the accident report form. Slowed only slightly, I continued my rapid ascent, not stopping until the fingers of my right hand were two knuckles deep into the pulley.

Fortunately by this time I had regained my presence of mind and was able to hold tightly to the rope, in spite of beginning to experience pain. At approximately the same time, however, the barrel of bricks hit the ground and the

bottom fell out of the barrel. Now devoid of the weight of the bricks, that barrel weighed approximately 50 lbs. I refer you again to my weight.

As you can imagine, I began a rapid descent, down the side of the building. In the vicinity of the third floor, I met the barrel coming up. This accounts for the two fractured ankles, broken tooth and several lacerations of my legs and lower body.

Here my luck began to change slightly. The encounter with the Barrel seemed to slow me enough to lessen my injuries when I fell into the pile of bricks and fortunately only three vertebrae were cracked. I am sorry to report, however, as I lay there on the pile of bricks, in pain, unable to move, I again lost my composure and presence of mind and let go of the rope and I lay there watching the empty barrel begin its journey back down onto me.

This explains the two broken legs. I hope this answers your inquiry.

YOUR COUNCIL MEMBERS....

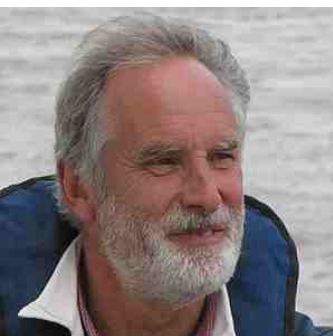
Presiding Master
Andy McWilliam



Deputy Presiding Master
Arthur Woods



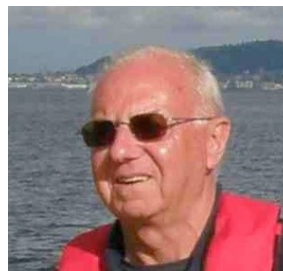
Membership Secretary
Keith Stedman



Training Master
Dave Bond



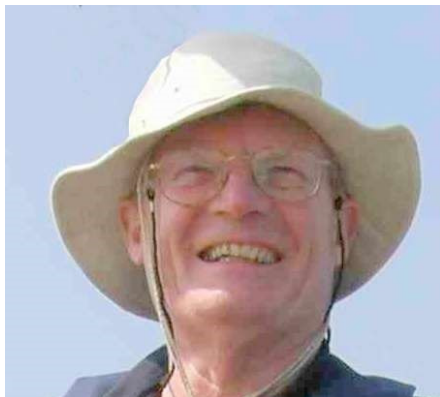
Web Master
John Bryant



TOGline Editor
Ian Calderwood



Administrator
Stewart Cook



Treasurer
Diane Rowbotham



Past Presiding Master
Neil Macfarlane



Social Secretary
Paul Burghart



I thought it might be a good idea to let everyone have as look at the revised Council set-up. I always feel it is good - thanks to a picture - to be able to put a face to a name and position on Council..... Nowhere to hide!

The main changes are – Treasurer – Diane Rowbotham. She replaces:

Graham Wassall



After 7 good years as Treasurer, Graham wished to hang up his hat. We are very grateful to him. This has been mentioned before, but there is no harm in mentioning it again. Thank you, Graham for all your work.....

Clive Crankshaw – Pilot.



No replacement for Clive as he feels that, with the advent of Electronic Charts and G.P.S., (available even on Mobiles now), that the position is redundant. We do have several charts available for

those die-hards who love to plot, if we venture farther afield, but most hire craft now provide them as standard. Our thanks to him also, for the help and support he has given over the years.

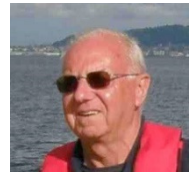
Council usually meet four times per year and a lot of mental energy is consumed whilst we try to serve the interests of you, our members of the Trent Offshore Group. Earlier last year, I provided some extracts from the “TOG story”, which went back to our roots. I hope you all enjoyed it and that the aims of the Group are still being met to your satisfaction. We are only human and rely quite often on feedback from yourselves. If you have any suggestions which can improve our contact with your interests, then please, do let us know! Our talents don’t extend to reading minds!

I would like TOGline to keep going. I hope everyone receives it and that you, the members, continue to provide the lifeblood which keeps it afloat....

Thank you all for the fuel you provide.....



TOG 2018 Sailing Programme
Trent Offshore Group
TOG Members and Friends



HEB18 Hebridean Sailex - A two week sail out of Oban in May 2018 - Lead Skipper Alan Mortimore

- Sat, May 5, 2018 3:00 PM Sat, May 19, 2018 9:00 AM [Google Calendar](#) [ICS](#)
ELOISE

The plan is to explore the Outer Hebrides visiting destinations such as Isles of Bara, Mingulay, with time to explore the Isles of St Kilda - weather permitting. We have reserved one Jeanneau Sun Odyssey with six/seven berths. Going in May should give good opportunities to see a wide range of wild life both at sea and on land. This Sailex has been arranged following the very successful "Best of the North" Sailex arranged in 2017 - see TOGline for reports of that event and the News blog on this web site.

We originally committed to charter two similar yachts due to there being limited availability and members were encouraged to make their 2018 plans soon and commit to joining this two week sailex. We have now released one of the yachts and have six confirmed berths for the Yacht on charter. There is potentially space to add one more member on this trip (male or female), please discuss with Alan Mortimore

SCJ18 South Coast Jaunt Sailex - Lead Skipper Dave Bond

- Wed, Jun 13, 2018 9:00 AM Sun, Jun 17, 2018 5:00 PM [Google Calendar](#) [ICS](#)

The South Coast Jaunt will start from Port Hamble taking two new Dufour 38's from Fairview Sailing. Our Plan will be to sail west to Weymouth before returning to the Solent for a final night at Cowes. Final details are being agreed and further information will be added when the Lead Skipper - Dave Bond has them to hand. Cost per berth £375.00

As of February 6th we only have one berth available for this event. Interested members are encouraged to book and pay the booking fee as soon as possible to avoid disappointment.

XCS18 Cross Channel Sailex

- Fri, Jul 20, 2018 4:00 PM Fri, Jul 27, 2018 11:00 AM [Google Calendar](#) [ICS](#)

XCS18 Cross Channel Sailex - A one week Sailex to France and/or the Channel Islands - **Lead Skipper Andy McWilliam**

We have chartered two Oceanis 38's from Fairview Sailing and will seek to add a further yacht should there be sufficient demand. The aim of this trip will be to cross the Channel from Port Hamble to France or the Channel Islands and explore the area before returning to the Solent. This expedition will give those aspiring to RYA Yachtmaster Practical Courses the possibility of qualifying passages. With strong tides, challenging navigation and exciting sailing, a trip to these beautiful islands is one not to be missed! .

Costs for this Sailex will be £400 per berth based on a crew of 5 for each yacht. As of January 2018 this event is fully booked although we do have another Solent event available in June - The South Coast Jaunt that still has one berth available

- **PEM18 Pembrokeshire and the Scilly Isles** **Lead Skipper Alan Mortimore** Fri, Aug 31, 2018 4:00 PM Fri, Sep 7, 2018 10:00 AM [Google Calendar](#) [ICS](#)

Sailing from Neyland in Pembrokeshire offers access to a number of fine wild life and sailing areas. In late August / early September 2018 we have chartered two 37/38ft yachts to sail from Milford Haven to explore the Scilly Isles. Stopovers could include Padstow and a visit to Lundy Island.

This option could involve long passages and night sailing is likely. Weather and wind will dictate whether other options need to be considered such as North Wales, Southern Ireland or calling in to locations on the north and south coast of the Bristol Channel.

This Sailex will have 5 berths per yacht - 10 in total and costs will be £300 per berth to include an optional outboard engine for the dinghy on each yacht. Members pre-registering for this sailex were offered the opportunity to book and 8 places have been taken leaving two berths available for the remaining membership. As of January 2018 we are now fully booked on this Sailex and reservations are open for a standby berth.

- **EAS18 The popular End of Season event** - **Lead Skipper Phil Greetham** Fri, Oct 12, 2018 9:00 AM Sun, Oct 14, 2018 5:00 PM [Google Calendar](#) [ICS](#)

Our traditional End of Season event will follow recent practice and comprise a long weekend with various navigation and sailing challenges organised by the Lead Slipper - Phil Greetham (assisted by Dave Bond) We plan this event to start and finish at Port Hamble. This year the challenge could even include around the island sail. Cost per berth £190

All these events are detailed on our web site - see the sailing page reference -

<http://www.trent-offshore-group.co.uk/sailing-programme/>

Bookings can be made by following the link at the top of the sailing page. Further information from any TOG Council Member or myself.