

Bear Essentials

'The Magazine of Cardiff Bay Yacht Club'

WINTER 2013

Editors:

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Cover photo taken by Richard Jennings

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Club Notices

Welcome to the Winter edition of Bear Essentials. The wet and windy weather has continued throughout the winter months, but being the water lovers that we are it has failed to dampen our enthusiasm for getting out there in our boats. Some of us however chose to find some warmer, sunnier weather to do our winter sailing in, which you can read about in this edition of BE. On a more serious note, the RNLI and other rescue services have been busier than ever, rescuing people stranded by flood waters. In this edition we have a piece on the rescue work of 'The Severn Area Rescue Association', and a synopsis of the talk given by the RNLI as part of our winter talks series.

WELSH GOVERNMENT RE-THINK ON MARINE CONSERVATION ZONES

Plans for highly protected marine conservation zones around the Welsh coast are in disarray following a storm of protest from communities and sailing, boating and fishing interests.

The original timetable for the proposals has been torn up and instead, two new committees will examine the responses that have been received - taking particular account of the social and economic impact on coastal communities - then report back in April before a further round of consultation.

The plan highlighted ten sea areas as potential Highly Protected MCZs with the intention of finally choosing three or four by Spring next year.

Within the designated zones nothing would be allowed to be deposited, removed, destroyed or disturbed. It was the definition of what might constitute 'disturbed' that caused alarm. Anchoring would certainly be prohibited but so also might sailing through, laying navigation marks or even re-laying marks that had been removed for maintenance.

In West Wales the proposals for zones off Dale and Abercastle brought protests that they would mean death to the communities there while designating the seas around Skomer would prevent North Haven being used to wait for favourable tides through Jack Sound.

The Welsh Government says the project 'needs to be re-considered in the light of the responses to the (first round of) consultation' which, it says, provoked 'strong and often conflicting views'.

"Local communities have made it clear in their responses that they believe there would be unacceptable socio-economic implications and we are committed into taking this into account."

It has set up a Task and Finish Group made up of Welsh Government departments and government agencies such as the Countryside Council for Wales and the Environment Agency. But alongside them will be a Stakeholder Focus Group made up of representatives of coastal communities, business, tourism and fishing, boating and leisure organisations. Its job will be to 'contribute to, challenge and question the work of the Task and Finish Group'. It will report in April.

The Welsh Government says there will be no decision on any of the sites before the outcome of the further work and there will be more consultation before any decision is made on how MCZs might be taken forward.

Members were informed in September 2012 that the club was cooperating with an investigation commenced by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) following an incident involving a collision of 2 CBYC RIBs in the Bay in October 2010. The current position is that the COM have provided the MCA with assistance, submitting a written response to enquiries raised. The MCA will consider this response and decide whether any further action should be taken but it is unlikely that we will hear any decision until early Spring 2013. The COM will keep members informed of developments.

Having found a splendid fossil (see below) on the beach around Penarth Head the other day I thought it may be interesting to see what fossils other CBYC members may have found and collected locally over the years. If you have any interesting fossils, then please do send us a couple of photographs or scanned images, and if possible where/when you found it and if you're really clever, the type of fossil that it is, and we'll see if we can compile an interesting article for the next edition of Bear Essentials. Many thanks, Angharad (Harri) Pocock

Please email the BE team at: slatercomm@ntlworld.com



CBYC Electronic Newsletter

Have you received the first of our What's On Newsletters by email? If not then it may mean that your email address is not current, we do not have an email address for you or it has landed in your junk folder. The latter can easily be rectified as you can add whatson@cbyc.co.uk to your address book or safe senders list. If you would like to receive future electronic newsletters, as another tool in the armoury of communication, then please go to www.cbyc.co.uk to subscribe.



The Marina project is being led by Bridgend County Borough Council and is the first phase of a comprehensive regeneration programme that will transform the waterfront of Porthcawl. The project will create a new 70 berth marina that will be open by summer 2013.



New 70 - berth Marina development in Porthcawl

A 70-berth marina is being built in the old harbour at Porthcawl and, reports Paul Brindley, it should be open by this summer.

Like the other boating venues up and down the Bristol Channel, Porthcawl harbour was built to satisfy the needs of the heavy industries based in South Wales and it provided an outlet for the products made at the Tondy iron works.

The Industrial Revolution was in full swing and to cope with increasing trade, the harbour wall was extended in 1840 to form a sheltered basin. Facilities at the dock were expanded further in 1864 when an inner harbour was constructed, complete with lock gates. Although the iron works at Tondy was by this time in decline, the dock continued to be a hive of industry exporting coal which was transported by rail from the Llynfi, Ogmere and Garw valley mines.

But towards the end of the nineteenth century the newer docks at Cardiff, Penarth, Barry and Swansea attracted the coal export trade and Porthcawl went into serious decline.

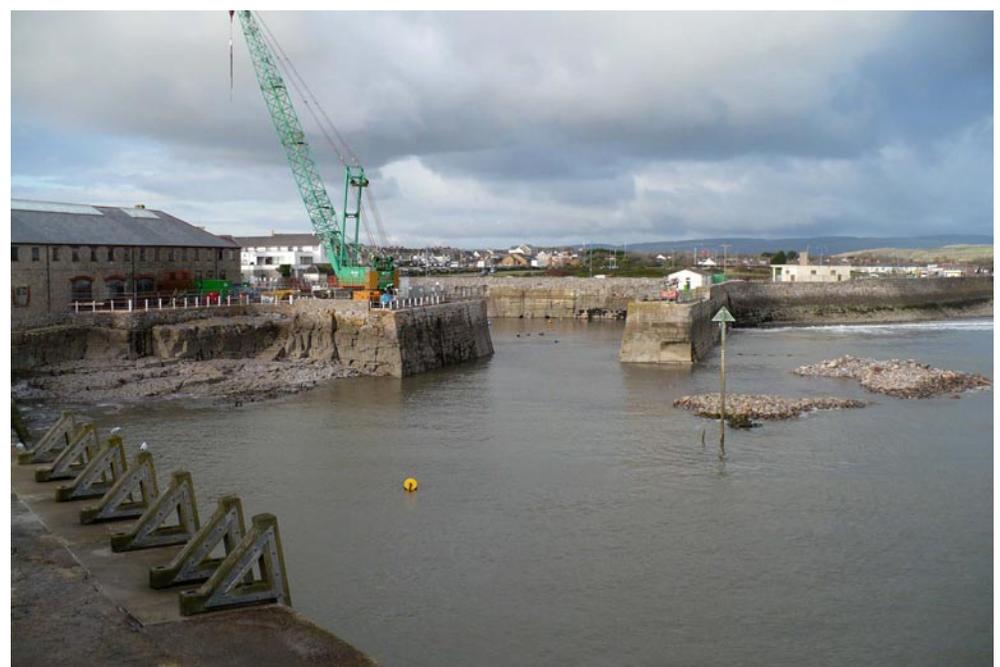
In 1906 the large inner harbour was closed and during the 1940s it was filled in to become the 'salt lake' car park. (This would have made a great marina, like Portishead, Swansea and Penarth docks)

The well sheltered harbour remained in use as a tidal basin with a varied collection of around 40 local craft drying out on a muddy bottom.

Some years ago the possibility of excavating the old inner harbour was

seriously considered, but at that time Tesco showed an interest in building a supermarket on this salt lake site and so the idea was put on hold. In 2005 a scheme to build a new breakwater along Sandy Bay was proposed which would have enclosed a new 400 - berth marina. However, finance for this was not forthcoming.

Eventually a much less ambitious plan emerged to convert the existing harbour into a marina of 70 berths. Bridgend Council are very much committed to this scheme which is seen as "making a significant contribution to the proposals for Porthcawl's waterfront and will act as a catalyst for the regeneration of the wider area."



The council's regeneration projects officer Ms Delyth Webb says:

"The harbour scheme is a key milestone in the regeneration of Porthcawl and will kick start the transformation of the waterfront... The marina will comprise 6m, 8m and 10m berths, visitor moorings and retain a commercial element. It will remain a haven harbour with emergency mooring in the shelter of the new eastern breakwater."

This involves dredging an access channel, extending the eastern sea wall and installing a lock gate and pontoons. Water level will be controlled automatically by sluices on either side of the gate. The gate itself will be manually controlled by the harbourmaster. Access will be approximately 2 hours either side of high water. Regular dredging will maintain the depth.

Approaches to the harbour can be rough with turbulence off the breakwater, especially during the ebb and during springs the crossing tidal stream can be strong.

The budget for this work is £3.2 million, borne by Bridgend Borough Council, with Bann Nuttall as the main contractors.

We'll have pilotage notes for the new marina in our April edition of Bear Essentials.





An electrical storm and tornados ... you don't get those off the Mid-Cardiff on a Sunday afternoon, but it was all in a day's racing for the crew of Judgement Day as Andrea and Jonathan Tithecott report

When invited to compete in an off-shore race from Dubai to Muscat, it sounded idyllic, with 350 miles of sunshine, moderate winds and clear blue water. Our skipper confidently advised that all we needed were shorts and T-shirts, no oilies required. Hooray!

Then he mentioned we'd be sailing through one of the busiest shipping channels in the world, in one of the most disputed stretches of water in the world, watching out for the Iranian Navy in case of arrest, and all the time at risk of piracy. Well, would you take up the challenge?

We did, and had the best time of our lives.

It all started when Jonathan accepted a job in the United Arab Emirates and, missing his weekly sailing fix with Judgement Day at CBYC, discovered the Dubai Offshore Sailing Club. There he met David Worrall, the very competitive owner of Shahrazad, a Beneteau 36.7 sailing in the IRC fleet. Having blagged his way into Shahrazad's crew, Jonathan learned from David that he intended to compete in the Dubai-Muscat race, a prestigious event in the UAE but as his regular crew were largely in-shore sailors he felt he needed a few sailors who had some off-shore experience. Having heard that the crew of Judgement Day had competed in the Rolex Fastnet 2011 and finished the race without wrecking the boat, he was persuaded to take us to Muscat.

David had spent months preparing the boat. Shahrazad was in tip top condition, with almost everything brand new. She was in it to win it. All she needed was some additional safety kit to comply with the relevant category of race. In the

weeks leading up to the race I, as health and safety expert, ensured that the safety equipment was all present and correct. It was just as well I was flying business class with Jonathan's employer, Etihad Airways, as I needed all my 43 kilos of baggage allowance for all the safety kit. Etihad were very accommodating in permitting us to carry all the CO2 canisters for the life-jackets! Force 4 made sure that we had everything in time.

The Dubai-Muscat race has an historic pedigree and in previous years has attracted a huge racing contingent. In 2012 the fleet was diminished by the threat of piracy in the area. We were promised a supporting warship by the government of United Arab Emirates by way of 'protection' but their offer of help came too late for some skippers. The 'protection' was principally to protect the interests of yacht 'Abu Dhabi', skippered by the local Volvo Ocean Race darling of Abu Dhabi Sailing. Abu Dhabi is an impressive 52ft bespoke Farr kitted out with brand new carbon sails, and was expected to win the race.

The Dubai equivalent to the PY fleet started the race on Saturday 17th November and got a good head start. The IRC fleet warning signal was at 12.55 on Sunday 18th November - both start times intended to coincide with the on-shore afternoon breeze to get the fleet off to a good start. Shahrazad slipped her moorings and arrived on the start line in blazing sunshine, and temperatures of 30 degrees. We expected a moderate easterly wind to prevail until around midnight when the switch is turned off and there is no wind until the following morning.

The starting gun went and Shahrazad got off the start line at full power on starboard ahead of the fleet. She led the fleet out of Dubai, around the exclusion zones of 'the world' and the 'Palm Jeremiah' leaving the impressive sky line of Dubai in the background. We said goodbye to the famous 7 star hotel Burj Al Arab and the most expensive cocktails in Dubai! It was water and electrolytes for the next 4 days.

Sunset happens early in the UAE, and we were very keen to get into our crew-watch patterns straight away. We were racing and needed to keep the boat going as fast as possible to maximize our progress North before the wind died on us. The first night was eventful as we navigated around a myriad of fishing nets and small fishing vessels, who insisted on sailing with no navigation lights, apparently for fear of scaring the fish. Happily, no sign of pirates! Unfortunately Diablo, a Beneteau 44.7, managed to slip ahead of us under cover of darkness and we found ourselves chasing to shorten the gap.

Day 2 at sunrise we were treated to our first glimpse of the coast of Oman. The word 'impressive' does it no justice, with mountains coming straight down to the sea, and extending in-country as far as the eye could see. As we continued northward in the afternoon the wind started to increase. Shahrazad was purring along with her full main and No 1 jib in a building North Easterly breeze.

As Shahrazad approached the Musandam Peninsula late afternoon on Day 2 a key decision needed to be made. We could either take the safe route and sail all the way

around the headland before turning South down the coast on the other side, or we could take a short-cut through a gap in the land mass. The skipper had gone through the gap on previous occasions and told salty olde stories of it all going horribly wrong. We were also keeping a close eye on Diablo ahead of us. She decided to go through the gap so the decision was made - Shahrazad would follow suit.

We approached the gap just before sunset, losing the light, in a (by then) strong North Easterly. We had changed headsail to a No 3 but were still quite pressed. On the charts the gap looked very narrow. In real life, it was minuscule. It was like something out of a Jules Verne novel. We approached 2 vertical cliffs either side of a narrow stretch of water which was probably no more than 100 metres wide. Beyond the gap was a line of breaking waves, representing the 'races' we would then have to negotiate. To add to our worries, there were local fishermen in small boats toing and froing. They were quite surprised to see yachts trying to navigate through this channel of water. We were welcomed by jeers, and despite the language barrier, we understood the international sign for "good luck you'll need it."

When we reached the other side we breathed a sigh of relief. The hard bit was over. Our plan was to get off-shore again and out of harm's way of piracy along the Omani Coast. Off we went out into the Straits of Hormuz and Gulf of Oman. Again, we were sailing into a headwind, as the wind bends around the Northern coast, and we knew we would have to put up with this for most of the night until the winds were due to ease in the morning. As things turned out, we got more than we bargained for.

Prior to the race, the weather forecast had mentioned the possibility of rain 2 days into the race. The forecast was universally discounted by all the skippers in the fleet, including our own. "It never rains" we were told, it hadn't rained in Dubai for a year and half previously. Having sailed in the UK for many years and being accustomed to the likelihood of a drop of rain I had the foresight to pack waterproofs for the Judgement Day crew. As we sailed out into the Gulf of Oman that night we observed the formation of clouds which looked like they might contain more than a few drops of rain - a typical anvil shaped cloud, the sign of a building thunderstorm. There was a scurry to find the oilies in the darkness.

The rain clouds turned into storm clouds, accompanied by strong winds, thunder and lightning. Richard Pettifor manfully went forward, retrieved Shahrazad's anchor and wrapped it around the mast, dangling a bit of chain in the water to act as an earth in the event of being struck by lightning. We quickly agreed a Plan B, and identified a

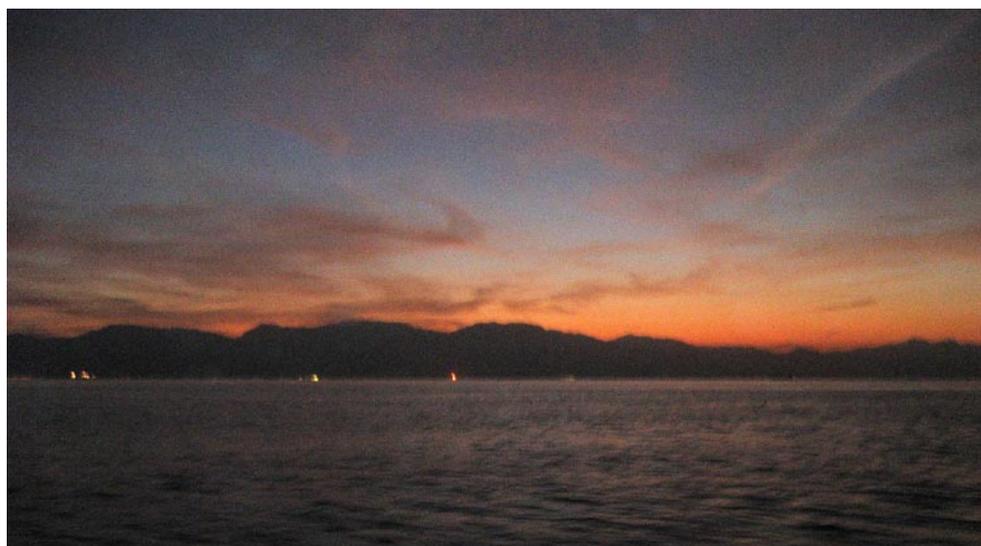


port we could take refuge in if conditions became intolerable. Shahrazad was fortunate in that the storms were quite localized and she was able to sail around the worst of it and keep racing, roughly in the right direction, subject to a number of course alterations.

As we approached sunrise we thought we were in the clear; the lightning show had disappeared behind us and the rain had abated but the Gulf of Oman was not finished with us yet. Off our port beam approximately a further 15 miles offshore of us was a tornado. It took us a few moments to work out what it was. We reverted to our red alert status and made the obvious decision to sail away from it. Interestingly, as we sailed into safer territory the winds dropped and we were able to continue progress. We saw a few more tornados that morning off-shore of us and made sure we steered clear of them. Others in the fleet were less successful. We lost sight of Diablo at this time. They were off shore to port of us and got too close to the tornado, and apparently clocked 70 knots of wind, which completely trashed their lovely new carbon main sail. Diablo put into port for a night to make repairs and continued their race 24 hours later.

Day 3 saw a significant change in the weather for the better. After drifting around in no wind for a few hours, the midday breeze kicked in and we changed back to the No 1 and headed for Muscat. The beautiful port of Muscat became our target. We trimmed and tweaked and got the boat purring along to get there as fast as possible. David had news on his satellite phone that we were leading the fleet again, but there were boats behind us who could beat us on handicap. The watch system was abandoned and it was all hands on deck to make the finish line before we lost the breeze. The sail into Muscat was uneventful, save for a few oil tankers. We crossed the finish line on Wednesday 21 November at 8pm with line honors. David had hidden a bottle of fizz on board, which was duly consumed which we followed with a shower then a crate of beer courtesy of Muscat yacht club. Shahrazad won the race and David collected his well-deserved trophy on Friday night.

So, if someone asks if you want to sail through the Straits of Hormuz, keeping away from the Iranian navy, avoiding the Somali pirates and joining the Dubai to Muscat race ... do it!



Four club stalwarts, Fred Jenkins, Leslie Davies, Brian Ostrich and John Wood, set off on a winter tour of the D-Day landing sites in Normandy but one of the most memorable parts of the trip came well before they hit the beaches.

It was a very cold and foggy day when we set out for Portsmouth to catch the ferry to Le Havre. We arrived in plenty of time so went to Old Portsmouth on the harbourside. This was where all the spices entering the port were landed and it is still known today as 'Spice Island'. After a meal we went across the road to Portsmouth Sailing Club which overlooks the harbour and were met at the door and cordially invited in by the Commodore, John Hughes.

It proved to be a very cosy club and we were given a warm welcome by everyone we met – Dave Baker, Edward Fillingham, Tommy, Mike and the lovely bar lady Sam, among many others.

We arrived on 'champagne night' – a regular Monday occurrence when each member supplies a bottle of champagne – and soon there was great repartee going on followed by some singing and a monologue by Edward. Then these members sent out for a Chinese meal which was similarly enjoyed by all concerned. Our group soon got into the spirit of things – literally – and were thoroughly enjoying the visit while I, as the driver, had to take it easy but still enjoyed the company. Eventually it was time to go so we made our farewells, promising to return in the future and inviting anyone who comes to Cardiff to pay us a visit.

Fred Jenkins



Examining a German tank in the D-Day museum at Ouistreham, Normandy

Portsmouth Sailing Club's headquarters is The Old Consulate, one of the oldest surviving buildings in the Old Harbour area. It was built in 1830, is Grade II listed, and was once, as its name suggests, the consulate for 13 different nations. The club was founded in 1920 and one of its founder-members was the marine artist W. L. Wylie, some of whose paintings are exhibited in the nearby HMS Victory museum.

If you visit a sailing club – by boat or by foot – write us a short report and let us know if the club has a social or sailing initiative that is particularly interesting.

HAPPILY GOING WHERE SPARKS MAY FLY

Ahoy!

...all CBYC Ex Commodores!

We plan a first (Annual) Ex Commodores Dinner on Friday The 12th of April 2013, cunningly set a fortnight after our AGM. Our President will be writing a personal letter to all those Ex's who we hope will wish to attend. That invitation going out in January 2013. The Dinner in April will be in the Clubhouse, there will be no music or dancing – just good eating, enjoyable talking and fascinating listening. The title of this piece is suggested by one Ex Commodore who last summer competed in the Famous Middle Sea Race in the Med. A race which takes you adjacent to three lively volcanos. One night at anchor enjoying a chat and a drink on deck, in very light airs and watching the huge sparks flying from the top of Stromboli, he suddenly thought, after several glasses of very good wine, why don't we all meet up once a year to exchange memories, opinions and gossip plus maybe a few old or new facts, around the dinner table. Can we sell this idea to the Club? Well they have agreed so far!

Here are some details about our proposal:

Tickets will be priced at around £15 per head.

Each Ex we hope will bring a partner, a wife or a husband or even a friend. The price incredibly pays for the following three course meal:

Choice of Starters

- Spring vegetable consommé
- Tata salmon with Bloody Mary dressing
- Red pepper and shallot pancetta salad.

Choice of Main Course

- Ragout of lamb with roasted vegetables
- Medallion of beef Rossini and Cocotte vegetables
- Fillet of Sea Bass with mussel and Saffron Risotto.

Plus a choice of a Vegetable alternative!

Choice of Puddings

- Warm apricot melba
- Bitter chocolate tart with candid orange
- A delightful Welsh cheese board followed by coffee and mints.

Dinner will be set at 19.30 for a 20.00 sit down at the table.

We hope that perhaps around 30 CBYC Ex's and their guests will join us complete (of course) with the new Ex Commodore and his guest.. We thought also that it would be appropriate if the new Commodore were to join us so that he or she can listen and learn from the reminiscences which will surely be heard around the table all night long. We would like to know by around about the AGM at the end of March who is going to join us. By the way there is even a rumour that the Club may provide us with a free glass of Prosecco on arrival.

We look forward to your response to the personal invitation you will receive from the President in the New Year.

P.S. As the President has kindly agreed to invite you all personally, in writing, we thought it would be cruel not to ask him to come along as well. Well like some of us in the past we are sort of, making up the rules as we go along...?

Roger Dunstan and John Mead.

In the fourth of our guides to Channel ports, Neil Lamden takes us to the salty little town of

Watchet!



Watchet is a pretty little village on the Somerset coast at the foot of the Quantock Hills; it has a well-protected harbour and just a few hours away by sailing boat or half hour for our MOBO friends.

Sailing boats have to typically push the incoming tide for several hours to get across in sufficient time. Allow plenty of time for your first visit, best be a little early rather than late. Stay in close to the Welsh coast for the first section to avoid the worst of the tide, and then cross directly to Watchet Harbour paying attention to the DZ range at Lilstock which is still occasionally used by Navy helicopters.

Watchet is one of the main topics of conversation in the Bristol Channel at the moment due to the amount of silting in the marina. This is in the process of being dredged, with limited success, so phone the marina for an update as the status will be changing continuously. The level of silt accumulation is quite astounding and not a wonder it presents a challenge to the marina operators.

If you do end up sitting in the silt, shutting off the water intake valves to the heads and engine to prevent silt finding its way into the workings is a good idea. At the end of the day boats would have normally sat in the silt in Cardiff Bay prior to the barrage being

built and everyone coped OK with that. At least in Watchet Marina you can still walk aboard your vessel with the added luxury of electricity and water being close at hand.

There is an outer harbour and an inner harbour which is where the marina is located. The outer harbour is large enough to give you time to sort out your fenders before entering the inner harbour. There is a strong tidal set across the outer harbour entrance, be aware of this as you approach, it's easy enough to let yourself drift past the entrance. When you're in the outer harbour there are a set of traffic lights to port. As you'd expect only pass through these when they are on green, if the lights are red there may be traffic leaving the marina, or worse, the cill may be raised.

Access is approximately +/- 2 hrs, check online for more accurate times and is controlled by a tidal cill which closes to impound the water outside of these times. Call the staff on CH80 during normal office hours and they will direct you accordingly and may even take your lines. They are a very helpful and friendly lot here. If you arrive outside of hours, find an empty berth, you'll find information on how to access the shower block on the noticeboard at the bottom of the walkway.

Once ashore there are several pubs and restaurants to suit most tastes, also some nice cafes for afternoon sticky cakes or a second breakfast. The local cider is good but takes no prisoners.

Once you are in the marina take additional care if the water is approx. +/- 1hr as there can be a strong current running into the marina which may result in some unexpected boat manoeuvres.

Make sure you and your crew are not caught out by this!

Watchet has its own boat museum next to the station and is worth a visit to see how things were in the days of old. You may have noticed a plume of steam as you approach the marina, this is probably the steam train which runs to Minehead and is a great way to spend a day out if you've seen the bright lights of Watchet.

When it's time to leave, typically as soon as the cill is dropped you should have a couple of hours of favourable tide to make your way back towards Cardiff. When you leave the marina do check that there is no traffic about to enter the outer harbour and take the corner wide to avoid collisions.



RNLI – Calling for help

Winter series talk, 23rd October 2012

Paul Stewart-Davies and Paul Smerkinich came along to the club to give an RNLI demonstration of the various means of getting assistance at sea. These two gentlemen are two of a three man sea safety team based at Penarth. They will visit your boat and give “advice on board” or give talks to interested bodies such as our club.

Amongst the campaigns run by the RNLI to enhance safety and preserve life the current emphasis is on awareness of cold shock, the importance of wearing lifejackets and the value of means to aid calling for help and then ensuring rescuers can locate you.

To kick the evening off they divided us into four groups of 9 or 10 participants. Each group was given a scenario – sinking, injury, fire and man overboard. A set of 30 cards showing various means of indicating distress ranging from signal flags to hi-tech electronics was given to each group, and a skipper appointed. We then had to decide whether each item would be useful / not relevant to our scenario, or we needed more information about the item.

They then talked us through all the items, showing us dummy models of many of them. Space limitations preclude a full repetition of all they discussed but some bullet points are listed:

- Fixed VHF set – Very useful especially with Digital Selective Calling (DSC) facility and GPS link, vulnerable if power threatened by fire or flooding or antenna loss through dismasting.
- Handheld VHF, now also available with DSC. Range limitations.
- Mobile phones – OK but range limitations and vulnerable to water. Keep in a waterproof aquapack or similar.
- Satellite phones. Good for long voyages but expensive.
- EPIRBs – Emergency Position Indicating Rescue Beacons - send an alert via satellite, the more expensive ones have built in GPS. Some will self launch and float as your boat goes down, others you take with you into the liferaft. They will work over most of the world as they link to satellites, Must be registered with Falmouth Coastguard.
- PLBs - Personal Locator Beacons - basically mini EPIRBs attached to your lifejacket.
- SART – Search and Rescue Transponders - Useful in a liferaft for bouncing back radar signals to rescuers making locating you easier. Some now have AIS function too (SAR Transmitters).
- Personal survival AIS (Automatic Identification System) transmitters – transmit a signal to other vessels, which can identify your distress and location if they have the relevant equipment.
- Man overboard systems – send a signal to your boat if you stray more than a set distance from the boat.
- Flares – need to be in date and you need to know how to use them. Awkward to dispose of old ones, never use as fireworks.
- Electric / laser flare devices – still under development, not loved by helicopter pilots.
- Spot messenger – a sort of GPS tracker linked to worldwide system, subscription based.
- Signal flags N over C.
- Foghorns, whistles, waterproof torches, lifejacket lights and heliographs – lo-tech ways of drawing attention to the casualty.

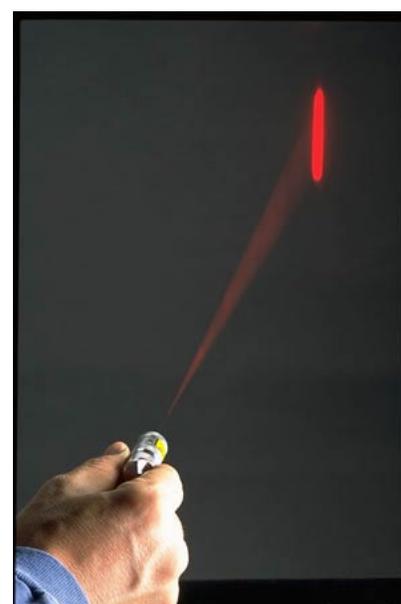
Further information:

- Visit the RNLI website: <http://www.rnli.org/safetyandeducation/stayingsafe/seasafety> and download their Sea safety guide, or pick up a copy at the lifeboat station.
- Visit the RYA site for a fact sheet explaining the merits of the various devices: <http://www.rya.org.uk/infoadvice/regssafety/Pages/alerting.aspx>
- Attend one of the excellent VHF / Short range certificate courses run by Geoff Parr for the club.



Above: EPIRB on Flat Holm shuttle

Below: HX851e Standard Horizon



Above: Type of hand held laser flare

Angling

The competition for the best fisherman is really hotting up now with Rob Williams of Gladiator approximately 15 or 16 points ahead of Harvey Preston and John Gittins and on the boat side Gladiator is first, ahead of Mustang Sally by nine points.

The best specimens so far are Simon Watts, best conger; John Gittins, best bass; John Haines, best thornback ray and Rob Williams, best cod.

We had a highly successful Open Cod – it was certainly a record for the recent competitions – with over 300 anglers on more than 100m boats participating. As you will see from the photographs many cod were brought to the scales and all 23 prizes were awarded. First prize went to Groucho on Kobe, second prize to Chrissy Mather on Sandpiper and third was Harry Aspro on Misty Blue.

We have received excellent reports on various websites on the organisation of the day and I would like to congratulate all committee members as it was exceptionally well-run and particular thanks to Steve and Nick in the yard.

This is my last report for Bear Essentials from the Angling Section as I will be standing down as Chairman at the AGM which will be in mid-March and the following positions are up for grabs this year: chairman, secretary, competition secretary, social secretary, weighmaster, membership secretary and minutes secretary. I would like to take this opportunity of thanking all committee members for the support they have shown me in the past five years, the admin staff, especially Kirsty and Sam and for the excellent support the angling section have received from Steve in the yard.

The time is right for me to let go of the helm and pass on the section, which is in a good financial, position, to perhaps a much younger man who will have new ideas for the future of the section. Good luck and Bon Voyage.

Sid Hearne, Chairman.



Above: Mark on Rose Catherine



Below: Christopher Short - Rose Catherine



Dinghy Section Laying Up Supper 2012

On the 7th Dec the section held its annual supper and presentation of prizes. As ever Richard and his team laid on an excellent meal which was very much enjoyed by everyone who attended.

This year's winners are as follows:

Spring Stradform Cup

- 1 Andy Freemantle
- 2 Mark Brand, Glyn Webb
- 3 Idris Dibble, Steve Dawber

Summer Dovey Cup

- 1 Mark Brand Glyn Webb
- 2 Jim Atkinson CYC
- 3 Idris Dibble, Steve Dawber

Dinghy Sailor Of the Year Yeldon Cup

Matida Matthews

Early Wed K R Smith Cup

- 1 Mark Brand, Glyn Webb
- 2 Sophie Harrison, Bobby Millar cyc
- 3 Jack Preece

Late Wed Monty Banks Cup 1

- 1 Mark Brand Glyn Webb
- 2 Andy Freemantle
- 3 Toby Bedford Liz Stewart

Autumn Lightship Cup 1

- 1 Mark Brand, Glyn Webb
- 2 Fergus Cordie (LARK CYC)
- 3 Idris Dibble, Steve Dawber

Best Crew S R Harfoot Cup

Rossie Savage

Most improved THE PERENNIAL PADDLER AWARD Christos Tsakiris

We are now all looking forward to the start of the new season which will be towards the end of March (please check club web site in the New Year for exact date) This year as well as teaming up with Cardiff Yacht Club, I am looking forward to closer relations with Penarth Yacht Club. The plan so far is for PYC to organize an event on the sea for us pond sailors and for us to run an event for them to join us on the Bay. I am also looking forward to greater involvement with the WYA with a project to encourage those youngsters who are coming to the end of the youth sailing to take up Club Sailing and get more involved with the local clubs.

Sail Fast Have Fun! Idris Dibble Dinghy Chairman.



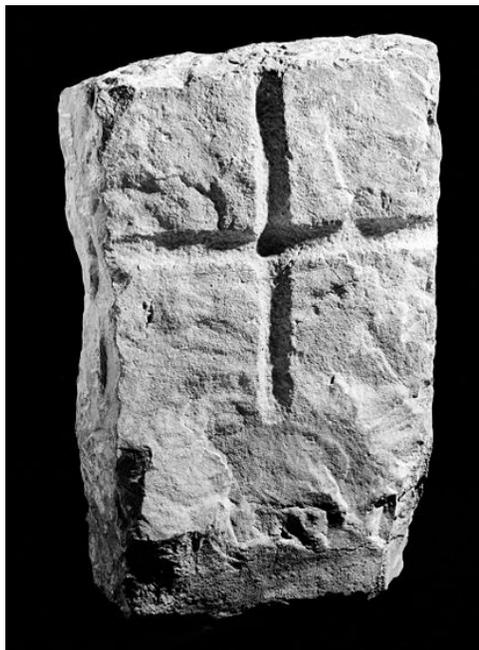
In the last issue we looked at Flat Holm’s role as a smuggling centre but both Flat Holm and Steep Holm have histories that span many centuries and which mirror the social and industrial development of South Wales, as club historian Alan Thorne explains

Flat Holm and Steep Holm stand as rocky sentinels at the entrance to the Severn Sea, an area defined by Captain W. H. Smythe, the first dockmaster to the 2nd Marquis of Bute, as stretching from the end of the River Severn at Kingroad to the beginning of the Bristol Channel at the Holms.

The Flat Holm, which is part of Cardiff’s St Mary’s Parish and, as such, is part of the Parliamentary Constituency of Cardiff Southeast and Penarth, has seen much marine activity from the earliest times. Neolithic people were early visitors followed by those of the Bronze and Iron Ages.

The Romans established a lookout station on the island as an early warning system against Irish pirates but they also mined there for galena, a lead ore which also contained silver. These workings were re-opened and worked as late as the 1790’s by the 1st Marquis of Bute.

The Liber Landavensis records show that in 620 AD, King Tewdric was mortally wounded fighting the Saxons and requested he be buried on Echni, the earliest recorded name for the Flat Holm.



Medieval cross found on Flat Holm, now housed in the National Museum of Wales in Cardiff

During the 5th and 6th Centuries early Christians established a priory on the island and numerous saints visited it. Saint Barruc, also known as Finbarr, Patron Saint of Cork, was drowned when his small boat sank while returning to the mainland from Flat Holm and he was buried on what is now Barry Island. The priory was rebuilt and enlarged during Norman times and a farm and rabbit warrens were also built. The priory was rebuilt and enlarged during Norman times and a farm and rabbit warrens were also built. The Anglo Saxon Chronicle contains numerous references to Braden Relice/Reolice, another early name for Flat Holm. Braden is the Old English word for ‘broad’ and Relice/Reolice is derived from the old Irish ‘reilig’ which comes from the Latin ‘reliquae’ which can be translated as graveyard and/or relics. Numerous graves have been found on Flat Holm.



The farmhouse as it is today.

The Vikings were very active in the Bristol Channel from about the 800’s to the 1050s and used all the islands including Lundy, Sully and Barry as well as the Holms. Flatter is the Old Norse for flat and Holmr is a river island. During 894 and 915 Vikings based on Flat Holm raided Llandaff – there were no weirs on the Taff in those days. The Normans called the island Flatam Holmon and a 12th Century document signed by William, Earl of Gloucester, Lord of Glamorgan, states, “... three acres dedicated to Santo Michael’s et Santo Cadoc et Dolfino on the island in the sea at Penarth...” While a charter of the same date says “...Flatam Holmon with the chapels in that island and the living of the island...” (Note the plural ‘chapels’).



Landing beach on Steep Holm

During 1865, 9 acres of land was purchased from the Marquis of Bute for £550 by the Secretary of War to construct batteries. Work started in 1866 and the barracks opened in 1869. The government of the time thought that war with France was imminent but were mistaken and although the barracks could accommodate 50 men only a master gunner and five men were stationed there.

The island played no part in the First World War but in WWII was the scene of considerable activity.

An army reconnaissance party landed on Flat Holm during September 1940 and work soon started to modernise the military installations. Two batteries of 4.5” dual-purpose anti-aircraft and anti-ship guns were mounted as well as two large searchlights, two 40mm Bofors guns and numerous twin Lewis machine guns. The dual-purpose guns were to defend the North and Middle channels of the Bristol channel and prevent enemy E-Boats passing the line between Steep Holm, Flat Holm and Lavernock Point.

Remains of batteries on Flat Holm





Early in 1941 work started on a T-head pier on the East Beach. The 300-ton SS Assurity, owned by Everards of Greenhithe, was in constant use ferrying men, ammunition, stores, sand, cement and steelwork from Barry Docks. By 1942 the Assurity was joined by numerous vessels requisitioned by the government including the motorboats Corrigoyle, Peter Piper, Skipjack and a steam launch, Hasler. At the end of 1942 the fleet also included a lighter, the Yumbi, and a Royal Navy paddle steamer, New Roseland.

When the pier was finished, and one on Steep Holm, a narrow-gauge railway was laid along the piers and up into the islands. Ironically the railway was German Wehrmacht 60 centimetre gauge Feld Bahn railway captured from the Germans on the Western Front between 1916 and 1918 and added to in the 1919 reparations. A total of 70 kilometres was acquired and shipped to England. Experts consider the remaining lengths on Steep Holm to be unique. During WWII, 350 army personnel were stationed on Flat Holm

From an early point in the war German bombers laid magnetic mines in the Upper Bristol Channel and they were to claim at least 50 ships. We detailed one, the SS Lunan, in Bear Essentials issue 19. An early victim was the SS Stanholme which detonated a mine off Nash Point on Christmas Day 1939 and 13 crew were lost.

The Flat Holm guns were first fired at 20.50 hrs, on October 6, 1941 against Junkers JU88 bombers which were dropping magnetic mines. At the same time the following day The Junker 88s of II Gruppe, Kampfgeschwades 30, flying from Melun in France, returned and the island was hit causing extensive damage to buildings and equipment and injuring 29 men. Medical supplies were dropped by air and Barry Docks was closed to shipping until October 10 when the more serious casualties could be taken off.

There was engagement with enemy aircraft until 1944 and a random selection illustrates the action. On August 5, 1942, 27 rounds were fired against bombers heading for Cardiff. On March 13, 1943, Focke-Wulf FW190s were engaged at 7,800 feet and on May 18, 1943 all the island's guns were fired at enemy aircraft flying at 4,800 –



Above: Junker JU88 bomber

Below: The guns that would have shot at them
Below: Derelict Isolation Hospital

9,200 feet, the engagement lasting 35 minutes in which 108 rounds were fired. Then last engagement was during May 1944 when two aircraft were fired on for 15 minutes. The batteries became non-operational on December 18, 1944.

Up to 1939 the Harris family had run a farm, market garden and a pub, the Flat Holm Hotel, on the island. Frank Harris was also caretaker of the isolation hospital there and was paid ten shillings a week to act as the island's postman. The Harris family owned a cutter and carried army personnel between Brean Down, Flat Holm, Steep Holm and Cardiff. After the war Commander Knowles took on the lease of the farm and held it until 1975.

As a stranger side to the island's wartime activities it was also, in 1941, the location for a patriotic thriller called Tower of Terror starring Wilfred Lawson, a young Michael Rennie and the exotic Mexican actress Movita. Movita was married to the handsome Irish heavyweight boxer Jack Doyle, nicknamed 'the horizontal heavyweight' because of his propensity to being laid out by opponents. During the filming Doyle heard that Rennie and Movita were getting close. He came to Barry, hired a motorboat and went out to the island. He confronted Rennie, they fought...and Doyle lived up to his nickname.



An elderly patient at a care home in Symonds Yat has gone missing. To find him will require specialists trained in ground search, mountain rescue, and operating power craft in very fast-moving water. There is one service that can provide all the expertise needed to tackle this hypothetical situation.

The Severn Area Rescue Association (SARA)

has all these skills and more, developed over 40 years of operations in the treacherous waters and shores of the Severn and its rivers.

It's the UK's largest independent lifeboat and land rescue service with 16 boats, 15 emergency vehicles and 170 personnel operating from four centres, Chepstow, Sharpness, Tewkesbury and the Wyre Forest. From these bases they cover an area from Cardiff Bay to the West Midlands and as far north as Shrewsbury but their expertise is widely recognised and they have also been called in to help with search and rescue operations in Caerphilly, Builth Wells, the Brecon Beacons, Snowdonia, the Cotswolds and Dartmoor.

SARA was formed in 1973 by a group of local boatmen who offered their skills and local knowledge to help people caught out by the shifting quicksand and ferocious currents of the Upper Severn and its rivers and originally operated from Tutshill, near the current Beachley station at Chepstow. In 1985 Sara became the official mountain rescue service for the Wye Valley and the following year the Wyre Forest station was opened. In 2007 floods devastated Tewkesbury and in the six days that followed SARA rescued 200 people and fifty animals from the waters. The Tewkesbury station opened in 2009. Now its professionalism is nationally recognised – it works closely with HM coastguard, police, fire and ambulance services and the RNLI as well as linking with RAF Air Sea Rescue and air ambulance services on specific 'shouts' – and it can provide two DEFRA 'Type B' flood rescue teams to any national emergency.

Everyone is a volunteer – they are on call 24/7 – and running costs are met entirely by local fund raising and sponsorship from district, town and parish councils as well as local companies. Replacement lifeboats and vehicles are funded by legacies and donations from charitable foundations because rescue services are not eligible for lottery funding.

Girls from Haberdashers School, Monmouth designed and built an electronic system which can track the rescue boats with individually-coloured traces on a giant screen and designed a trailer from which the rescue boats can be launched sideways as well as conventionally. Another group of sixth-formers are working on a blue-light system for the lane leading to the Beachley station to alert traffic during a call-out. It's a measure of how much the community values and identifies with the service.



It takes up to a year to train a volunteer and every crew member is trained to lifeboat code standard as well as in fast water skills and mountain rescue.

As Beachley Station Chairman Mervyn Fleming points out, "Every launch is a potentially hazardous situation when crew members can be standing waist or chest deep in twelve knots of current.

"And only about a quarter of the launches from Beachley are done from the slipway. Mountain rescue skills, belaying and traversing, are also important in getting the boat and crew up and down the steep banks of tidal rivers."

After training and a couple of years of experience many crew undergo extra training to become specialists in particular areas and some have gone on to become qualified instructors in their disciplines.

"The crews are unique," says Mervyn, "As a group they are the most highly-skilled and multi-disciplined people in the country."

One thing it is difficult to train for is the emotional impact of recovering bodies – a regular occurrence given the nature of the area and the number of bridges which people deliberately or accidentally fall from.

Eight years ago two eleven-year-olds were swept off an island at the mouth of the Wye. Both were found and one was revived but despite all efforts the other never regained consciousness.

"We lost about a quarter of the people involved in that rescue," says Mervyn. "They said, 'We just can't do this any more'."

"When we know we are likely to recover a body we will try to ensure some of the crew are people of long experience who can support anyone to whom it is new. If, for example, we are recovering a body from a pond we will put less experienced people in the shore party so they handle just a body bag.

"We have access to the same counselling services as the police but the main support is that provided by fellow crew members. It's the same as on an operation – you look out for yourself and your colleagues."



Racing challenges, winning success and what's in store for 2013?

2012 was a special year for Challenge Wales. For some people it was being onboard Challenge Wales as part of the Queen's Jubilee Pageant that made 2012 memorable for them, for others it was participating in racing events and meeting like-minded people. But the last few months of the year still provided some great experiences and sailing opportunities for both volunteer crew and young people.

In July Challenge Wales sailed from Milford Haven to Derry-Londonderry, crewed by young people from Caerphilly, to absorb the homecoming leg of the Clipper Round-The-World Race. The youngsters enjoyed the atmosphere and festivities and spending time on board the New York Clipper yacht.

In August, Challenge Wales was welcomed into the arms of the Tall Ships family, taking part in her first Tall Ships Race. Challenge Wales first sailed from Cardiff to Dublin to join the spectacular fleet of Tall Ships that had raced from La Coruna. The sight of the Tall Ships moored in Dublin was stunning, square riggers, some the largest in the world, from Ecuador, Mexico, Norway and Poland to name a few...and all crewed by young people. Challenge Wales was to join the last part of the event racing from Dublin to Liverpool in the Tall Ships Irish Sea Regatta.

Although the distance from Dublin to Liverpool is only some 80 miles, in the Tall Ships Irish Sea Regatta the object was to sail as many miles as possible around given waypoints and in the set time period of 66 hours. The start of the race was postponed for 24hrs due to an unfavourable weather forecast but the reduced time of 42 hours still proved challenging for the Challenge Wales crew of 15 to 18 year olds.

The race proved to be a very technical event as well as a hard sail in winds from 30 to 40 knots. With a total of twelve waypoints located between the two ports the course area went from Dublin Bay to Morecombe Bay and from Anglesey to the Isle of Man. The object was to maximise the tides and boat speed to complete the



most miles and not be penalised for crossing the finish line outside of the time limit. Challenge Wales achieved 367 miles to win the prize for most miles sailed and won first in class after handicap.

Crew parades also play a major part of the Tall Ships experience and Challenge Wales had the questionable honour of being judged as the rowdiest crew in the Liverpool parade.

It was certainly a fantastic year for the Challenge Wales charity!

So what will 2013 bring with it? Challenge Wales will still be working with hard to reach groups of young people for sail training will continue to offer Gold Duke of Edinburgh Residential opportunities and will still be reliant on volunteer crew to deliver services. This year Challenge Wales plans to take part in the Round The Island Race (with young people crewing), to be present at the start of the Clipper Round-The-World Race (young people event), when they decide where and when, and we are also planning a Fastnet campaign (with adults and selected young people). Racing events provide opportunities for sailors to gain some big boat experience, for volunteer crew to gain more sea miles under their belts, for the charity to gain some marketing exposure and for the participants to work as a competitive team.

Remember, we always need volunteer crew who have the time and commitment to help us sail the boat and if you are under 26 years you may be eligible for funding to help get you onboard.

Find out more at:

- www.challengewales.org
- www.twitter.com/challengewales
- tel: 029 20 220 266

Photo above: The crew parade



Above: One of the young sailors at the helm

Below: One of the Tall Ships in Dublin



October, and a race in the Mediterranean sunshine... two ex Commodores jumped at the chance!

Our transport was to be a friend's Beneteau 44.7 recently purchased in Italy. Kevin Rolf and I joined the boat on the Wednesday before the race and set to all the preparation and test sailing to try to get all the systems in order. Our first attempt at test sailing wasn't too successful when firstly the main halyard parted and then having been repaired jumped the sheave at the top of the mast and jammed halfway up (or is that down). Lots of sorting and repairing later our race started from the Saluting Battery, Valletta Harbour, Malta at 11 o'clock on the Saturday. A good breeze greeted us for a short hitch out of the harbour followed by a 2 mile spinnaker run up the coast before peeling off heading for Sicily and the infamous Messina Straits.

The Middle Sea Race is run every year from the Royal Malta Yacht Club and is a 600 mile event that circumnavigates Sicily plus a few outlying Volcanoes. The Messina Straits lie between Italy and Sicily and funnel into a small gap about 2 kilometres wide at its narrowest point. Famously there is a strong tidal flow here with whirlpools, back eddies and tidal rips, just like the Bristol Channel but with blue water and temperatures of 27 degrees! Once out of the straits its northwest to the next turning mark, the active Volcano of Stromboli. We spent a becalmed night here watching in awe as the Volcano fired off plumes of molten lava every 10 or 15 minutes, looking like a giant intermittent Firework and quite spectacular against a very black night. Why would you want to live on Stromboli? No central heating bills I suppose.

We then had a sloooow beat which took us two days in very light and patchy winds along the north coast of Sicily. We chose an offshore route to avoid the forecast calms along the Sicilian coast, and for a while we looked famously good, but all good things come to an end and we came unstuck in our own light patch for a while which put paid to our hopes of overall glory. We were still fighting for third in class so disappointing but not a complete disaster. We then sailed in to one of the most spectacular thunderstorms I have ever had the pleasure to witness. Alternate puffs of warm and cold air, heavy rain and continuous lightning. Checking the weather reports from all the Airports around Sicily, every one of them was reporting a thunderstorm.

Some thunderstorm! We excelled ourselves at this point by putting someone up the mast to retrieve out masthead spinnaker halyard. He couldn't get all the way up (it was our only masthead halyard)



Photograph above: On the morning of 20th October 2012, the Saluting Battery, high up in the Maltese capital of Valletta, signalled the start of the 33rd Rolex Middle Sea Race. A record entry of 83 yachts from 19 different countries started the 606-mile race witnessed by thousands of spectators crowded along the bastions overlooking Grand Harbour.

Image below: Map of the course: race starting at the Royal Malta Yacht Club and heading in an anti-clockwise direction around the island of Sicily.



so we equipped him with a bent teaspoon attached to an old batten and he went fishing trying to snare the swinging halyard using the continuous lightning to illuminate his efforts. A cunning plan we thought, waving a bit of metal in the air in a thunderstorm! There must be better ways to pass your leisure time! With eventual success our masthead spinnaker went up and the rest of the night we chased the storm downwind, enjoying the vivid visual effects as it moved away from us.

The last leg became very light and the last night we were becalmed, ending our hopes of third place as the faster boats had already finished. We trickled towards the finish line the following morning just in time to see our homeward flight take off over our heads. Six days on a 45 footer to do 600 miles must be some sort of record. We finished with no water, no food, no toilet roll, but still a supply of hair gel for one nameless crew member.

Malta is a fascinating place so having finished and got ashore by 10am, we ended up spending the day in the Yacht Club Bar! We worked out that our first beer was expensive due to the cost of having to rebook the flight, but the more beer we drank the less each beer cost us. The logic seemed good to us anyway.

Some mention should be made of the Royal Malta Yacht Club. The Thursday before the start of the race they put on a crew party. With 83 boats competing and an average of more than 10 crew per boat, the club put on a party with free food and drink for the whole evening. Some of our younger and more enthusiastic crew got a bit tired and emotional and were not at their best the following day. I guess it is why they put in on two days before the start.

So two ex Commodores travelled to Malta sailed round Sicily without stopping and seeing any of it, got back to Malta and saw the inside of the Yacht Club's Bar. Splendid: we really will have to do it again, but next time maybe buy later flights back. Ryanair is not so cheap when you book last minute...but Malta is definitely worth a visit.

written by Roger Dunston

Below are some of the photos that Roger took on their voyage:



Photo above: The Royal Malta Yacht Club

Photo below left: Yachts crossing the start line

Photo below right: The pre-event party



Photo above: Sails packed and ready to go

Photo below: The start area, Valletta Harbour, Malta



Photo above: Close encounters North of Sicily

Photo below: Chasing the sunset in the Mediterranean



Homeward Bound!

But the beautiful inland waterways of Holland and some challenging sailing make it more than just a return trip on Osprey's Baltic Cruise



We had left the Baltic a week earlier and were now entering a river in the north of Holland, intending to take the Standing Mast Route through to Vlissingen in the south, a distance of some 230 nautical miles through the Dutch canal, river and estuarine waterway system. Having locked in from the sea we berthed for the night in the excellent and cheap Stichting Yachthaven.

We crossed the Lauwersmeer and entered the beautiful estuary of the Dokkumerdiep. The estuary narrows quickly and winds through wooded and reed-lined banks to the first lock and road-bridge.

We had been advised that the most picturesque route was to go west to Dokkum and despite the narrowness and shallow nature of the channel, we successfully reached the town centre on the first evening. Having gone all the way through The Netherlands, we can now confirm that 1.9 metres is definitely the deepest draft that is viable through the Standing Mast Route.

At Dokkum we tied up alongside a lovely "Lemmer Ark", a 60ft version of a Dutch Botter. The bridge masters on this part of the route, collected their modest fee by lowering a brightly painted clog with a fishing rod into which was placed the few Euros required. Into the countryside again there were miles of narrow, winding river to navigate with horses, cattle and combine-harvesters appearing on the banks. Thatched windmills and weeping willows were a feature of this lovely "Vermeerian" landscape. We felt like we were sailing through an oil painting!

The river wound its way through villages with little houses and gardens backing onto the water, each with a boat of some sort or another. Early in the evening we took a short detour into the centre of Sneek, a

beautiful town with a complex canal system taking smaller boats through a maze of channels into its urban heart.



Crossing the Isselmere and arriving at Enkhuizen we met our friends from Australia, a couple with whom we have been sailing for over 30 years, he an ex-professional skipper who was to remain aboard all the way back to Cardiff. The next day we sailed for Hoorn. The inner harbour at the town centre is accessible to deep draft yachts which makes Hoorn one of the most picturesque overnight stops on the Markermeer.



Next came Amsterdam, the contrast between the quiet, rural setting of the Markermeer and the pulsating, hectic feel of the city was stark. A night convoy system through Amsterdam departs at around 2am and takes yachts through 11 bridges which open in succession and into the Nieuwe Mer.

We pushed on hard past Schipol Airport, the area surprisingly quiet and rural considering it was so close to one of the world's busiest airports, past.

Alphen then Gouda, to get to Middleburg on the Rhine Estuary by evening where we were due to meet our third Australian crewman. It was a really good days journey of 44 nautical miles – quite an achievement considering the navigational challenges, bridges and locks to be negotiated! Next day, returning to the sea on a fine August morning, we carried the tide all the way out of the Westerscheld almost as far as Ostend, some 30 miles distant where we celebrated the end of this stage of our summer cruise with a delicious sea-food supper, bought from one of the many stalls along the harbour-side and washed down with Belgian beer.



Homeward Bound

With 500 sea miles ahead and some bad weather forecast, it was reassuring to have full confidence in Osprey's capabilities and in those of an experienced crew. That first day was to test us as we sailed close hauled into an increasing westerly along the Belgian coast, opting to overnight at Nieuwpoort and with an early start next day and a fair tide, the 114 mile passage to Sovereign Harbour near Eastbourne was completed by 1 am on a starry night with a gentle wind. Portsmouth was the next destination with a gale forecast for later but a fair wind for the majority of the trip. We were able to make 6 or 7 knots sailing full-and-bye with 110% Jib and double reefed main. Just after reaching the shelter of the Spithead, the rain came and then the wind. By the time we were safely tied up in the excellent Haslar Marina, the gale was rising. It blew hard for 24 hours so a rest day was called and delights of Portsmouth pubs enjoyed.



A morning departure took us along the Solent into a brisk head wind. Negotiating the Needles Channel was interesting with large "wind over tide" waves giving us a rough ride. Faced with an increasing headwind, we altered course for Poole where we were to wait out a more northerly bend on the wind due the next day. Poole Harbour Marina won our trip award for being the most lukewarm and expensive welcome in 7 countries! Before first light the next day we motored out into a fresh south-westerly. It was forecast to go south and increase. Not too bad if we could get our southing in early. Two hours later we freed our sheets and were quickly sailing at 7 knots in a stiff breeze. The rain came, the visibility closed down and we rounded Portland Bill at high speed heading for Brixham. With our "one-ten" and two reefs we flew at over 8 knots with the rain lashing down. This was an exhilarating reach, the wind just forward of the beam and steady at 23-28 knots. As we approached Berry Head in the late afternoon, the sun shone briefly only to be replaced by the heaviest downpour of the day as we tied up in Brixham Marina.



With the ship's compliment now down to two, we left at first light on a pleasant morning motoring into a light breeze around Start Point. We caught the west-going tide at the perfect time and carried it for most of the rest of the day and as the wind filled in from south of west opted to make for Falmouth. We arrived just ahead of the next serious blow, negotiating the large racing fleet coming out. There were many modern yachts as well as a large fleet of Falmouth working boats, gaff rigged wooden craft of great beauty and with surprisingly good sailing performance. These boats do not carry an engine and to watch them returning to their moorings at the end of the evening is to witness some truly impressive boat and sail handling.

The next 48 hours were spent weather-bound in Falmouth. But not a bad place to be if it has to happen! On the third day, Osprey slipped out of Falmouth in the darkness to take full advantage of a fair tide around The Lizard. As the sun came up and the breeze filled in, we were surrounded by Common Dolphin, as usual, inquisitive about us and keen to play on our bow-wave. Rounding The Lizard was straightforward and we were soon able to alter course for Land's End, reaching the Runnel Stone just as the tide turned in our favour.



With careful timing, a fair tide of at least 9 hours can be used in rounding the bottom of Cornwall and tremendous progress achieved. As the Longships rock came abeam the wind picked up, filling our sails to carry us northwards towards home. All afternoon the wind increased and provided a cracking sail with our destination now set for Padstow for the night. Coming close inshore past Trevoise Head using a narrow passage between the Bull and the Quies, we entered Booby's Bay and the Camel estuary just before high water. This was an amazing run, some 85 miles from Falmouth in 12 hours. Arriving in Padstow on a summer evening at high water, one is struck by the beauty of the estuary and reminded why this is such a popular destination for many Bristol Channel boaters.

Another early start the following day gave us the opportunity to reach the Bristol Channel and a blazing sun in the sky and force 6 on our quarter made a fitting end to our trip.



Almost 3,000 nautical miles had passed under Osprey's keel since we left Cardiff in June, seven countries visited and a host of idyllic ports and anchorages discovered. Everywhere we were given a warm welcome both by harbour staff and yachtsmen. Everywhere there were excellent facilities with electricity, internet, saunas and showers all thrown in to the modest overnight charges. The Baltic Sea comes highly recommended for its sheltered sailing waters, beautiful coastline and friendly people. Denmark, Germany and Sweden have large expanses of quiet coastline just waiting to be discovered and they are just three of the nine countries with Baltic Sea coasts. There must be many more summers of happy exploring to be had in those northern waters.



Me and My Boat

Most yachtsmen will, at some time or another, wonder how long they will be able to retain the agility necessary to continue sailing and reflect that one day their cruising experiences might be limited to listening to the tales of others in the club bar.

But when Stuart and Gaynor Preece found ill-health was making their Westerly Korsort too difficult to handle they switched to a motor cruiser and discovered a whole new cruising scene.

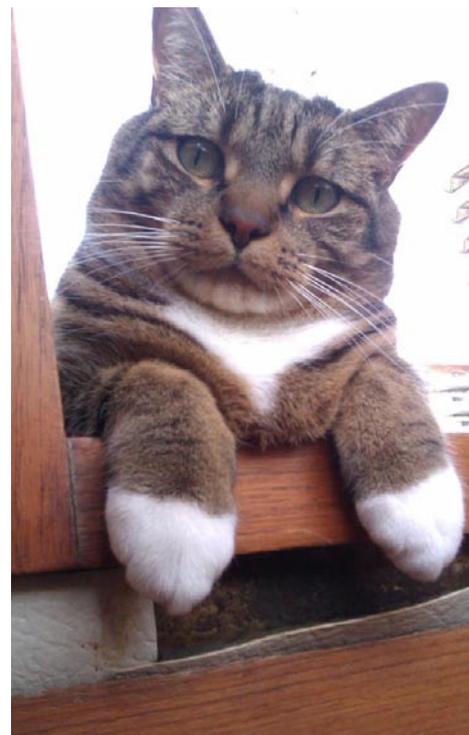
They found Kittiwake, a Jeanneau Merry Fisher 32, in Norfolk in 2009 and have spent the last couple of years re-visiting their favourite Bristol Channel haunts. One surprise, to a couple used to the camaraderie of yachting, was how friendly and sociable the motor-cruising community are.

Being members for 20 years, with Stuart joining the committee for two years, they feel the friendships and connections with all sections are important for all members, new and old, to feel included.

“In a motor cruiser you are visible in the cabin or on deck – not hidden by spray dodgers or down below – and so there are more opportunities to chat to fellow cruisers,” says Gaynor. “And, of course, the saloons are ideal for socialising and entertaining. At the moment I’m trying to persuade Stuart to upgrade to a larger boat with even more room for visitors.”

Stuart finds the freedom afforded by the 285 hp Volvo KMD diesel ‘marvellous and relaxing’ but admits there is a direct link between throttle and wallet.

In the coming season they plan to continue cruising the Bristol Channel and hopefully further afield.



PETS ON THE PONTOONS

Meet Ollie, who lives aboard his Westerly Discus, Tanglin, in Penarth Marina with CBYC members Sarah and Jeff Rodgers. They’ve had Ollie since a kitten and he’s adapted well since they all moved on board a year ago. He’s fallen off the pontoon once and discovered he could swim quite well. He was nevertheless promptly rescued by Jeff and will be closely monitored on the pontoons this spring. For the winter, however, he’s content to sit in the cockpit and watch the world travel over the Pont y Werin Bridge.

Let’s have photographs of your sea-going animals and a few lines about their exploits



••••• GLOBETROTTING SAILOR IS CLUB’S YOUNGEST OCEAN YACHTMASTER

Freddie Jones, who sailed Toppers as a ten-year-old member of CBYC, turned his passion into a career which has taken him all over the world crewing yachts for the rich and famous. Now, at just 20, he’s completed his Yachtmaster Ocean – probably the youngest person from CBYC to do so and possibly the youngest in South Wales.

After Toppers he sailed 420s with Nathan Bailey and for a couple of years the pair entered competitions throughout the country with a moderate degree of success. By the age of 17, Freddie was working for Cardiff Harbour Authority and had already completed his first significant 600-mile passage non-stop from CYBC to Santander.

In October 2010 he completed a six-month course at the U.K.S.A on the Isle of Wight which included Yachtmaster, Sea Survival, On Board Fire Fighting and Sail Training on yachts and large power boats. He registered with a crewing company in Barcelona and was given his first job on a super motor yacht. He stayed with this boat for a few months and later moved on to an even bigger and more expensive boat. He has travelled thousands of miles and been to exotic places such as Galapagos, Cocos Islands, Costa Rica and Tahiti.

Freddie returned to the UK last November for more study at the U.K.S.A. – broken by a trip to the Azores aboard a Farr 65 - completed the Astral navigation course and in December sat and passed the Ocean Yachtmaster exam. Congratulations Freddy, you’re an example of just where sailing can take you.

Written by Mike Bailey

Your invitation to 'The Bridge' restaurant

Spring into the New Year with The Bridge's new light and tasty seasonal menu. Here's a sample of what you might expect and there will be daily specials available.

Starters:

- Dometail of Melon with a red berry and kir royale compote
- Roasted tomato and ruby basil soup
- Smoked salmon and trout, horseradish cream and a watercress salad

Mains:

- Breast of Duck with plum jus, creamed potato and baby spinach
- Baked fillet of sea bass with mussels, ribbons of veg and buttered new potatoes
- Squash and pinenut filo pastry, with wilted greens and mange tout

Dessert:

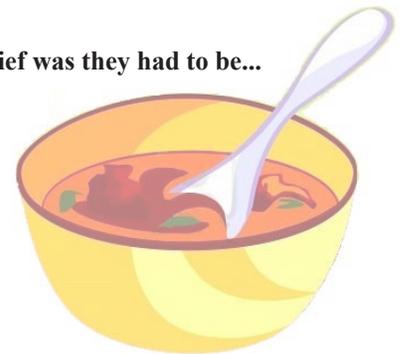
- Chocolate and Baileys meringue
- St. Clements tart with a raspberry coulis
- Strawberry sorbet with a vodka fizz

GALLEY GOURMET

We've asked Jamie to come up with a series of meals suitable for hungry cruising folk. The brief was they had to be...

- Made from ingredients you might find in a small, harbourside foodshop.
- Quick to prepare.
- Able to be cooked in one pot.
- Capable of being eaten from a bowl with a spoon.

...here is the latest of his 'cut-out-and-keep' recipes.



Lamb Steaks in Mint Jus

- 4 lamb leg steaks
 - Salt and freshly ground black pepper
 - 30 ml/2 tbsp olive oil
 - 15ml/1 tbsp corn flour (cornstarch)
 - 30 ml/2 tbsp water
 - 300 ml/half pt lamb or chicken stock, made with 1 stock cube
 - 30 ml/2 tbsp mint sauce
 - 2.5 ml/half caster (superfine) sugar
1. Season the lamb with salt and pepper
 2. Heat the oil in a large frying pan (skillet). Add the lamb and cook for 3-4 minutes on each side until browned and just cooked through. Do not overcook. Transfer to a plate and keep warm.
 3. Remove the pan from the heat. Blend the corn flour with the water and stir into the juices in the pan. Quickly blend in the stock and stir until smooth. Return to the heat and bring to the boil, stirring. Stir in the mint sauce and sugar and season to taste the salt and pepper. Cook for a further 1 minute.
 4. Arrange the lamb steaks on warm plates and spoon the mint jus over. Serve with parsnip and potato mash, carrots and peas.
 5. To make the potato and parsnip mash, simply boil potatoes with one or two parsnips in lightly salted water until tender. Mash with a knob of butter or margarine and a splash of milk, and season to taste.

CARDIFF BAY YACHT CLUB



Come and enjoy the relaxed and comfortable surrounds of the Quarterdeck Bar and Bridge Restaurant. With unrivalled views over Cardiff Bay, this is a truly unique location, designed to be enjoyed by all the family.

Quarterdeck Bar opening hours

Monday:	17.00 - 23.00
Tuesday:	17.00 - 23.00
Wednesday:	12noon - 23.00
Thursday:	12 noon - 23.00
Friday;	12 noon - 23.00
Saturday:	12 noon - Midnight
Sunday:	12 noon - 22.30

The Bridge Restaurant opening hours

	Lunch	Dinner
Monday:	Closed	Closed
Tuesday:	Closed	Closed
Wednesday:	12 noon - 15.00	18.00 - 21.00
Thursday:	12 noon - 15.00	18.00 - 21.00
Friday:	12 noon - 15.00	Closed
Saturday:	12 noon - 15.00	18.00 - 21.00
Sunday:	12 noon - 15.00	Closed

Last orders will be taken 15 minutes before the end of service.

Opening hours applicable until March 31, 2013

To avoid disappointment, please phone 02920 226575 within the opening hours, as above, if you wish to make a reservation to dine in the Restaurant. If outside these opening hours then please phone our Admin Office on 02920 666627.

When a Bank Holiday the Restaurant will open for lunch but will be closed in the evening.

The restaurant may be closed if we have a function booked. Posters advertising any event will always be found on the main notice board at the Club or on our website.

Cardiff Bay Yacht Club
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