

# OYC Newsletter

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## Editorial

Just a brief newsletter this time with a run-down of the AGM and Boat owners' meeting, news about the bar and the bar rota, and information about the OYC library. Also a short poem. Finally please note '**Dates for your diary**' - Club activities for you to enjoy.

I am aiming to produce the next issue of this newsletter in July, so please let me have any news or items of interest by the end of June.

## Commodore's Comments

*by Robert Jones*

As we all know last year's summer was not as promised; there was a lot of waiting around the club for those who could seize the day(s) and enjoy perhaps a local rather than distant cruise. My foreign trip ended in being in Burnham-on-Crouch for five days. Each day the forecast was for better conditions but the weather systems remained static. The crew abandoned ship to return by train. Compensation came later in the year, in the form of the post Bradwell Cruise-in-Company, a visit with three other OYC boats to other muddy parts of the world, the Medway & Swale. The weather was fair but, unusually for me, we sailed both there and back. Jan and I particularly enjoyed an unannounced race, beating with a large sail training ship from Harty Ferry to Stangate Creek. Undaunted I look forward to a North Sea crossing this year. Two crossings really as I don't wish to abandon Titan on the other side. With the August Bank holiday being early this year it gives those with family members still at school the opportunity to cruise onward for a week.

Suddenly, after a busy period at home and club affairs during autumn, fitting-out is once again due (in reality resume). But first I need to complete laying-up. That's at the same time as the winter working parties commence - more things to do! Notices will be displayed and emails distributed to encourage you to participate in any way you can. See you there!

## Secretary's Snippets

*by John Appleyard*

### Obituaries

It is with regret we inform Members of the deaths of Mr Harry Ling and Mrs Anne Mordey, wife of Neil Mordey. We extend our condolences to their families.

### New members

Since the last issue of the Newsletter we have a number of new Members. Please give them a great welcome to the Club. They are:-

Tony and Sandie Braidley (Snapdragon 27 '*Tanti*)  
Jason and Sue Latter (Graduate class sailing dinghy)  
Michael Mayo and Ms G. Taylor

We wish them all a long and happy membership of the Club.

**Car park Barrier** - Access cards - please will those who have not yet paid their deposit (£5) please do so as soon as possible.

**Club handbook** - After many years sterling work Brian Pinner has asked that someone else take over publication of the Club handbook for 2009. Please contact me if you feel you could take this on. Brian is happy to explain what is required.

## **AGM and Boat Owners Meeting**

### ***Notes by the Editor***

As usual the OYC AGM was well attended.

Officers elected:

Flag Officers: Robert Jones, Richard Bull and Mike Percival continue for their second year in office.

Secretary: John Appleyard has taken over from Alan Bimpson. Kind words and a small token of appreciation was given to Alan for his work in his 7 years in office.

Mike Bird and Peter Davison continue as Treasurer and House Secretary.

Janet Sadler has taken over from Kriss Percival as Social Secretary.

Peter Parker continues his stalwart work as Mooring Master.

Robin Noon stood down as Sailing Secretary and Mike Fuller was elected in his place at the subsequent Boat Owners meeting.

John Hazelton has taken over as Bankmaster from Fred Codling. Again there were words of appreciation for all the work Fred (and Sue) did in this post.

Trustees: David Griffiths stood down and Terry Breadman was elected as a Trustee. Brian Pinner and Rex Belton continue.

The Management Committee comprises:

Brenda Read, Fred Codling, Alan Fisher, Colin Fox, Jeremy Belton, Brian Woods and Mike Lincoln-Smith

You may notice this is a committee of seven - this is because there was a tie for 6<sup>th</sup> place and the fairest solution was to elect both candidates.

Other business included discussion of mooring allocation and charges; administration of the post moorings along the creek and by the side of the Causeway; development of the new toilet/shower facilities; storage of dinghy trolleys on the pontoon during racing; retention of hazardous waste disposal facility; setting of Club fees for 2008.

Just a note about hazardous waste, in particular waste engine oil - the oil may be disposed of in the green oil 'bank' by our north entrance gate as usual, but PLEASE take your empty oil containers away for disposal elsewhere. You can put these in your household waste as long as they are empty. Please DO NOT put them in our Wastesaver skip as the Club could incur a fine.

### **Boat Owners meeting:**

Mick Fuller was elected as Sailing Secretary. He is also handicap Officer.

John Burnell, Brenda Read and Chris Codling are Assistant Sailing Secretaries, each with specific responsibilities.

Sailing Committee: Cyril Fulcher, Neale Fuller, Scott Harris, Sylvia Jones, Arthur Nicholls, Ian Theobald, Dave Thompson

Mooring Committee: Richard Oliver, John Hazelton, Chris Porter, Nigel Abbott, Ian Theobald, Fred Gooderham.

Discussions included storage for the racing dinghy trolleys whilst out racing. The proposal put forward by Mick Fuller was referred to the Management Committee for further discussion with a view to finding a workable and economic solution.

A Club Regatta is planned. This event has not run for a few years. It is hoped it will be well supported and thus continue in future seasons.

## **House Secretary's comments**

*by Peter Davison*

A big thank you to everyone who did their bit for the bar rota system, every little help is appreciated. Also to Diana Fossett for running the Bar Rota scheme.

If anyone has free time please put your name down on the bar rota - don't wait to be asked.

I endeavour to keep the bar stocked and tidy - if there are any problems I hope members will feel free to leave a message on my answerphone to keep me up to date.

Private functions were well attended, but unfortunately some of the Club functions were not!

If any member wants to book the clubhouse for a private function the first point of contact is by letter to the Secretary. This goes to the Management Committee for approval. It is then passed to the Social Secretary and myself.

## **The Bar rota system**

*by Diana Fossett*

### **74? - What's Special?**

You may have noticed some of them if you've been in the club bar on a Friday, Saturday or Sunday. Yes, it's the number of sets of members who did at least one bar duty during last year. For some, bar duty was a new experience and some were also new members. For others it's not their favourite activity but all feel that they are doing a bit for our club. But the 74 are only the people you see. First timers need someone to show them the ropes and take them through the guidance notes. Those living nearby find it convenient to visit the experienced hands on a Thursday evening. For those living further away another member will meet them at the beginning of the evening, spend half an hour with them and take them through procedures like collecting the keys from Pam, security and cashing up. Oh, and serving drinks!

Then there are the organisers, Chris, Pat, Therese, Ron, Danielle, Sandy, Howard, Roger and me, Diana, who take it in turn to do a month or two each. They will have made up to 40 phone calls and spent several evenings asking members to fill slots on the rota. It's time consuming but satisfying to complete 'a month' before handing on 'the Bible' to the next month's organiser. And how do we know that number? 74? Because details of every contact are noted on a form and then transferred to the database for analysis, and to help organisers select which members to phone. The aim is to try and get as many members as possible involved. If you aren't yet contributing to the club, perhaps this is your opportunity to do so! Sign up – don't wait to be asked!

Occasionally, there are hiccups when helpers find they are unable to fulfil a commitment. This is when the House Secretary, Peter, needs to find a replacement, sometimes at short notice. In the 'old days' members signed up for bar duty and a few still do (and it would be good if more did) but because five years ago that system was failing, the present system was set up. And thanks to a lot of work by a lot of members, staffing the bar at weekends for ordinary club sessions (Friday and Saturday evenings and Sunday lunchtime) runs pretty smoothly. Also we mustn't forget those who get together themselves and regularly staff the bar on weekday evenings.

And, of course, there wouldn't be a bar to staff if it wasn't for the hard work that Peter and Val put in, week in and week out. We have a superb venue for functions, both club and private. Peter organises bar cover for Club functions so if you enjoy being behind the bar, do let him know you are available. A reminder though: if you have a private function which has been allowed by the committee, it is your responsibility to find a club member to run the bar.

I believe the bar is an important focal point of our club which generates some income and supports the DIY ethos of our special club. Many thanks to all who make it work.

## **The OYC Library**

*by Alan Fisher*

Firstly, I must thank those members who have contributed books to the library over the last year. We now have some 340 titles available for borrowing, which means that numbers have more than doubled over the last couple of years. Most of these are related to sailing or the sea, and if you are into reading its well worth a browse to see what you can find. There is a complete list of books in a folder in the library, ordered by category and author, or you can ask me to email you one (Excel document). To whet your appetite, here are a few brief reviews:-

### **The Walkabouts**

I'm particularly fond of "real life" sailing stories and regularly go round the world once or twice each winter, reliving the experiences of others. It may be Walton backwaters in practice, but I can go anywhere in imagination! One particularly good book of this kind is Mike Saunders' story of his family's voyage from Mozambique to the UK in a 33ft wooden yacht, via St Helena, Rio, Recife, the West Indies and the Azores, called "The Walkabouts".

The tale starts in Rhodesia where Mike, his wife and three small children were effectively stranded during the period of sanctions in the early 1970s. They couldn't take any money out of the country, and so sold all that they had and bought a 1954 Australian ketch, called Walkabout, with the plan of sailing her back to the UK, where Mike had trained as an engineer. It is an engrossing story - of fitting her out in a remote location 550 miles from land-locked Rhodesia; of cyclones and storms; of learning new skills; dealing with seasickness and continuing the children's lessons - all in one small cabin.

As with most of these books, what matters most is the writer's ability to convey the reality of his experiences, to be able to "take you there with him". Mike Saunders has the gift of really being able to write, so the story is much more than a list of place descriptions, dates and daily runs. In a book filled with drama and humour, you also begin to care about the people, whether his family will be safe in the storms and so on. Fortunately, Mike is one of those people (rather like Mick Simkins!) who can fix almost anything and thrives on pressure situations. Of course, despite all the problems, they win through in the end.

### **An Old Gaffer's Tale**

A book with more local interest is "An Old Gaffer's Tale", by Martin Eve. This is the story of "Privateer", a traditional East Coast fishing smack, converted to a yacht in Boston. She was originally owned by an Ipswich solicitor in the early 1930s and after a series of short-term owners was finally bought in 1966 by Martin Eve, who still had her in the late 1980s. The book tells of her history, the trials and tribulations of owning an old wooden boat and the various adventures that the family experienced in their travels.

The author describes his visits to many East Coast harbours, his old gaffer races and the family's annual cruises – first in the Blackwater and Thames estuary, and then eventually going foreign, with a final trip to the Frisian islands (of Riddle of the Sands fame), through the Kiel canal to the Baltic. Again it's well written, and will appeal to anyone interested in what its like to own a "boat of character" (though I guess one or two club members could provide an answer to this question!).

### **The Thumbnail Circumnavigation**

I must also mention that we have in the library a copy of our own Paul Packwood's book "The Thumbnail Circumnavigation", in which he tells of his 2005 single handed voyage in the 18 ft "Plover" along the South coast, round Lands End, up the Bristol Channel and through the canals and river Thames back to the East Coast. This really is a great read, with all sorts of adventures - ranging from hitting something concrete on the bottom near Portsmouth and being pitch-forked into the cabin (breaking his thumb in the process), to losing his way near Padstow and being rescued (somewhat unwillingly) by the RNLI. But for me, of particular interest is his description of

travelling through the Kennet & Avon canal and then down through the length of Thames, which contains some fascinating background information.

Paul's book is on sale in the club, but if you don't have your own copy you can borrow the "official" one from the library.

I hope these brief reviews will have encouraged you to have a look at the OYC library to see if there is anything there that appeals to you. And if you have books that you no longer want, then we will be glad to receive them. Finally, may I just remind everyone to record all borrowed items in and out of the log book, so that we know where they are.

### The Club Archive

I should also briefly mention the club archive. Several members have let me have photos, newspaper cuttings and other items of interest, and we are beginning to form a reasonable collection. I hope to do a bit of work on this over the winter and, if possible, get on paper a brief history of the club, including links with other clubs on the river during the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Again, if anyone has items of interest, I would be glad to follow these up.

### Dates for your diary

#### Working parties:

9th & 23rd February - continuing work on the Causeway wall next to the old wide hard.  
Locker refurbishment: look out for notices/email.

**Winter walks:** Peter Haffenden and Janet Sadler, Social Sec., have organised a series of local walks.

The first, around Wherstead and Freston, was a very pleasant way to spend a sunny crisp winter morning. Further walks are planned for 28th February and 30th March. Start at 10.30.

**Cruises-in Company:** 28th June - Erwarton; 26th July - Stone Point; 23rd August - Bradwell

**Social events:** Valentines night 16th February, 8-12, dancing to Insomnia Disco; Prize draw.  
Shanty night 19 April, music by High Water Mark.



## Of Years Gone By

by Ron Ducker

I roam round all the creeks and saltings with sadness on my face  
I see remains of sailing barges lying all over the place  
Where once stood that mighty mast now a piece of rotting deck  
A stem, a stern post might remain the rest is just a wreck.  
No more can you look out to sea and see those big red sails  
But you can still sit in the bar and hear of the tales  
Of years gone bye of men and boys who sailed these lovely craft  
Not forgetting the dear old dog whose house always stood aft  
Down channel once they plied their trade,  
Through weather good and bad  
No longer are these passages made  
That makes me really sad  
Among the barges that remain are Centaur and dear old Pudge  
Kept alive by people whose hearts you will not budge  
Away from these lofty ships whose masts almost touch the sky  
So they don't join the hundreds that have already died.

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