
Hollowshore News



Founded 1959

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Autumn 2013

From the Commodore



Another season is over for most of us although I'm keeping my sails on for another couple of weeks. It is after all still a lot warmer out there than it was at the start of June!

In my first newsletter back in February of this year I hoped to get out a further 2 newsletters during the year.

Well I blame it on the sailing and the work but I'm only going to make 50% of that target. Do let me know of any ideas for future newsletters.

Cruising News

The cruising year started with the annual St Kats trip up the Thames. This was well attended although the forecast winds on the departure date did put a few boats off. At the other end of the season the weather for the Bus Pass Cruise up the Medway could not have been better, with record times set for getting from Hollowshore to Medway, and balmy weather on the non-sailing days.

In between members have been busy doing what we do: cruise. At the time of writing our furthest



flung members, Eric and Dee Govan are somewhere between Tonga and New Zealand and hope to fly home for Xmas. Pictured here is their Sirene of Oare, flying the Hollowshore pennant in a Tonga regatta.

Philip and Jean Davies completed their circumnavigation of England after wintering on the West Coast of Scotland. Half a dozen boats enjoyed

mixed weather in Holland in June/July although one had a somewhat challenging return across the channel (see next page). A club cruise to Essex was also well supported. Individually there were many more stories to tell. A good year!

Social Activities

Numerous social events have been held starting way back with a Wine & Wisdom in February: anyone remember what "21slag" could possibly suggest? Since then excellent food has been dished out, barbecues charred, music played and the bar has stayed open throughout the year. For those that attended there is no need to summarise and for those that didn't come along next time. A huge thanks to anyone who contributed to the success of these events.

21 shillings in a guinea

Creek News

Medway ports have issued an invitation to tender for dredging the mouth of Oare creek near the Tester boatyard. They hope to conduct the work this year and will remove about 1000 cu. M. of mud. A hydrographic survey will then be carried out after a period of settlement and they will watch for any changes possibly brought about by the potential flushing effect of the cut channel. Let me know if you notice any improvement.

Meanwhile at the other end of Faversham creek developers continue to request planning permission to convert old maritime business locations to more gentrified use, i.e. restaurants and residences. Their advertising, of course, uses photo-shopped pictures of Thames barges moored in front of the aforementioned riverside restaurants and residences. But these developments will only discourage barges, or any other sailing craft, from being there. Faversham Creek Trust works to keep the creek as a maritime centre. See their website (<http://favershamcreektrust.com>) for the latest news of planning applications.

For some time the Faversham Oyster Fishery Company (FOFC) has had its fishery rights within the Swale disputed by the Sondes Estate. This could affect us as we currently rent our mooring from FOFC. We are also shareholders in FOFC so we would lose our dividend income too. It now seems that the 2 parties will agree with the Sondes Estate having shooting rights with fishing and mooring rights going to FOFC. Good news.

Up the Creek Without a Paddle

Tim and Sheila Hopper recall their return from Holland earlier this year.

On 15 July we set off in light winds from Nieuwpoort, Belgium, to the Swale aboard our Mk2 Moody 31. We planned to motor-sail confidently directly home for our 20th Channel crossing.



It turned out to be a totally windless day, but we still made very good progress under motor alone until just past the half way mark when we heard a loud and alarming 'clunk' from below. The engine stopped suddenly and we feared a badly fouled propeller. We knew immediately that we'd hit some serious debris in the water.

With no alternative means of propulsion we were haplessly adrift... inside one of the busiest shipping lanes in the world. We were about 15 nm equally from Ramsgate, Dover and Calais. I checked below for catastrophic leaks but there were none.

We were drifting in the lap of the tide, albeit towards safer waters, the narrow half mile wide commercial traffic separation zone. I squashed

comparisons with us being a solitary bunny on a motorway's central reservation.

Without delay I called the Coastguard on Ch16. They already had us on radar. They asked for our position to be updated to them every 30 minutes. We waited patiently for the forecast occasional force 4 to materialise. Thankfully we had plenty of food and water to keep us comfortable.

Sailors soon learn never to expect the wind they need, or any wind at all when they need it the most.

But as time and tide drifted on we became concerned that we may be adrift mid-channel all night. Clearly we would become a serious hazard to shipping as we were bound to slip back into the path of ships with the next change of tide.

We accepted the coastguard's offer of assistance. Walmer's Atlantic 85 lifeboat, were soon on their way, at sea-skimming speed.

The lifeboat men were the very best. We felt concerned for them all donning heavy survival suits on one of the hottest days of the year. They attached their tow rope. William, youngest of the RNLI crew who'd boarded our boat to keep an eye on us, took the helm most of the way.

The tide dictated Ramsgate as the destination and a hoist out of water next day confirmed that a very thick piece of rope had firmly wrapped itself around the prop. Once cleared of the obstruction, the engine on our resilient Moody restarted successfully.

A very big "thank you" particularly to Walmer RNLI ... and to friends who assured us that it could have happened to anyone.



On reflection:

- Perhaps as amateur sailors we should avoid feeble winds as well as the gales. Or travel in company with other boats, club members.
- If difficulties arise, decide to accept help early rather than late, as tired crew can easily make mistakes.
- A further means of propulsion such as a spare outboard would be handy, with enough fuel, and able to be dipped into the water from the transom

Avoiding Big Ship Trouble

At a recent meeting of the Medway and Swale Boating Association the RYA expressed concern at the number of occasions where leisure craft were seen underway with no obvious watch. This even included vessels crossing the Thames shipping lane north of Sheerness! In this article Mike Torode reminds us of the rules as well as giving some useful insight from the larger ship perspective.

The Collision regulations state quite clearly, that pleasure craft must not interfere with the passage of commercial vessels. I realise that big ship discipline is rarely practised by yachtsmen, but it might be a good idea to adopt some professional routines aboard your boat to avoid confusion.

1. Keep a good lookout **ahead and astern** at all times.
2. On sighting a ship, check whether or not it is on a converging course.
3. Take a bearing on the approaching vessel and if it remains constant you are on a collision course.
4. Check your chart or local knowledge, to verify that there is no navigational hazard which might compel the approaching ship to alter its course
5. Check that no more ships are approaching that you need to avoid, which can often be the case in a cross-Channel situation.
6. Do not be tempted to take a chance crossing ahead of a ship. Make quite sure that you will be well clear by the time the other vessel reaches your position
7. If you decide that you should change course to stay out of the way, steer for the stern of the approaching ship and follow it round as it gets nearer, you are then in a position to pass astern and continue your passage with the least loss of time and distance.

Also, whatever course of action you decide on, act in good time and leave no doubt aboard the other vessels as to your intention, let him see quite clearly what you are doing.

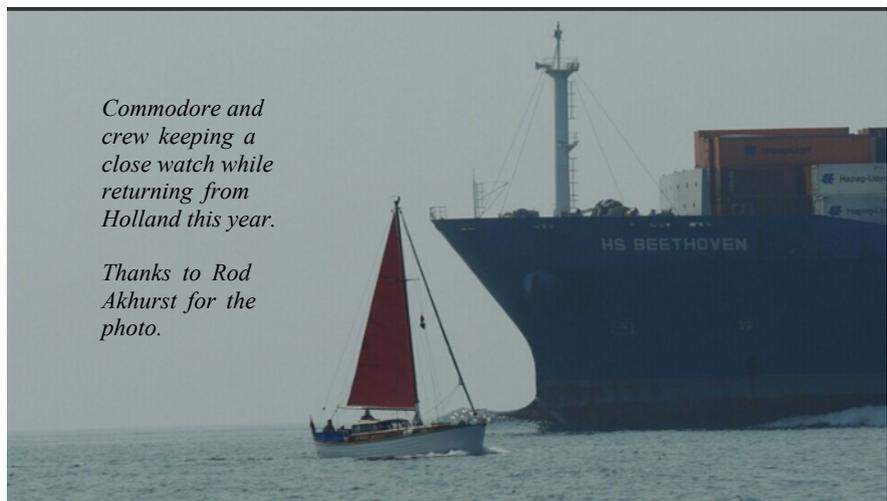
Aboard ship when an Officer-of-the-watch gives a helm order, the helmsman repeats the instruction and further tells the OOTW when the ship's head is on the new course. It is after all possible for the person steering to mishear with the wind and perhaps engine noise.

There are a number of facts to bear in mind concerning ships: Firstly they may be covering the ground at speeds in excess of 25 knots and they are not easy to stop or redirect. A large container

ship would take several minutes to either alter course or slow down. The RMS Queen Elizabeth, the largest ship afloat in my day at sea (at 83,000 tons), took six minutes to alter course from the time the quarter master put the helm hard over. At a speed of 26 knots, in that time she would have travelled 2.6 nautical miles. Today there are many vessels much larger than 83,000 tons.

Also in my day, there were never less than three people on the bridge in coastal waters. But today with smaller crews that may well not be so! In many vessels e.g. a fully laden container ship, officers will not be able to see directly ahead for some distance due to their deck cargo.

In a cross channel situation altering your course may put you in the way of other vessels also on



Commodore and crew keeping a close watch while returning from Holland this year.

Thanks to Rod Akhurst for the photo.

converging courses, you will then have to keep changing direction or reduce speed to stay out of trouble. In say, the entrance to the River Orwell you can be in the way of ships from opposite directions.

Ships are staffed by human beings who are, at times, just as liable to be careless as you, nobody is perfect, not even well trained ships officers!

The safe course is always try to avoid a potential collision situation by acting safely in good time.

Also adopt the practice of navigating outside the shipping lane whenever possible. For example, in the Medway, it is possible to travel the length of the river without using the main channel except perhaps to cross it. Just pass the buoys on the wrong side, there is plenty of water. When you have to cross do so in the narrower parts. Never be tempted to drop your anchor in a channel.

The watchword is always keep a good look-out and act in good time. Do everything in a seaman-like manner.



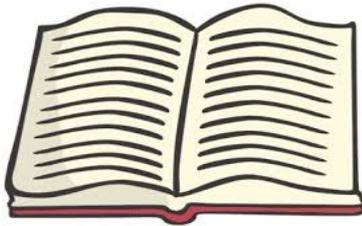
The Captain's Bunker

Those of you who play golf will know that on many courses one particular bunker is indicated as The Captain's Bunker. Players misfortunate enough to land their ball in this trap not only have a harder next shot (or 2 or 3 or) but are expected to donate £1 to a charity box kept in the clubhouse. Cricketers have a similar institution called the Primary Club, qualification for which is being out first ball. Membership fees go straight to a charity that provides recreational facilities for the visually impaired.

Now as a long-time cricketer and more recent golfer I have often been a victim of both of these hazards. However, I'm not aware of any sailing equivalent. Earlier this season, and for the third time in my sailing career, I hauled on the main sheet with nothing attached to the other end, and watched helplessly while the sheet ran through the block at the top of the mast. Looking forward, as I usually do, to getting someone else to climb my mast I thought I would feel even happier if someone else was benefitting from my stupidity. Who better than the RNLI whose services I am more than likely to need if I carry on this way? So on my next visit to the clubhouse I added a small contribution to this worthy cause to ease my pain. Anyone wanting to confess other sailing misdemeanours is welcome to do likewise. Perhaps we should start a book?

Book Review

Boat, People and Me by Anthony Howarth



"Boat is pinned over, held, quite literally, in the grip of the wind at about forty-five degrees. Not rocking or oscillating. Held as if in a vibrating but rigid clamp.

The waves appear to be twice the height of our mast. Breaking water curls clear over Boat. The next wave shreds in the wind generator's blades and drenches the satellite navigation antenna, mounted at the stern. A wave passes way over my head. Then another – it fills the cockpit!

I remember thinking, as I sat in the water, that the sea was remarkably warm for February."

This is the introduction to Volume 1. It is a story of a couple with almost no knowledge of sailing who take on whatever the ocean will throw at them. At first sight they seem idiotic but their sangfroid brooks no doubt: they will survive and survive they

do and think little of it other than appearing to relish the experience. You can't help but admire their approach to life and be amused by it. So, although their sort of sailing will remain a vicarious pleasure for me I look forward very much to reading Volume 2. See <http://www.boatpeopleandme.com/> (only available as an eBook).

Clubhouse News

Ever since moving to the new club house there have been mutterings from some members about the acoustics in the clubhouse especially for the better attended events. Various investigations and discussions on potential solutions have come and gone and this year we finally decided to invest in some acoustic ceiling tiles. Concerns were expressed about the need for and the effectiveness of the tiles as well as the potentially damaging aesthetic effect. At a personal level I think the solution chosen works and doesn't in any way detract from the clubhouse but I welcome the views of other members at our busier events.

We have also installed a plate warming cabinet and additional shelving in the kitchen: both very useful additions when catering for large numbers.

Many thanks to those individuals who volunteered to be in the working party installing the tiles and shelving.

London Boat Show

We will not be running an organised coach tour this year. Brian Chapman who has run this very successfully for several years has been finding it harder each year to fill a coach. This year many attendees felt the show had declined in value so it is unlikely we could fill a coach economically again. Travel to London in groups by car or rail would prove cheaper for all. The committee is however investigating a trip to Southampton. Many thanks to Brian for all the successful years.

Welcome Aboard

Welcome aboard to all those who have joined over the last year: *Darren Russell & Partner, John Hillier & Partner, Robert & Linda Morrison, Harold Fischer, Diane Leamon & Richard Dunn, John Wiltshier & Margaret Marsh, John Banton & Jenny Wraith and Stephen Wall.*

Your Committee

We are always looking for new blood and/or new ideas. Come along to the AGM on 7 December and enjoy some early Xmas refreshment.

Commodore	Martin Ashton
Vice Commodore	John Webb
Rear Commodore	Alan Thorne
Secretary	Bryan Collings
Treasurer	Steve Keeler
Committee members	Mark Sanders, Chris Lovering, Sue Thorne, Michael Riches, Steve Rivers, Jim Moore