



New Members

Please welcome Jo Norman to the association. Jo sails her Victoria 30, AZIZA, from Watchet Marina in Somerset, which is enough by itself to impress the editor of this Newsletter. Jo obviously has no fear of the Bristol Channel, Avonmouth, the strong tides and the weather sometimes encountered in the south-western approaches!

Please welcome also Alf and Pat Tracey, as new members. Alf has attended many of our South Coast functions in the past, as a crew member aboard Roy Dawkins' Frances 26, FELICITY and is already well known to many of the members.

Past Member

Sybil Weller sent a Christmas card to John Cade and asked to be remembered to the members that she knew. She wishes the association and its members well. You may remember that Sam and Sybil used to own the Victoria 34, OSPREY and based her in Lymington.

Resignation

Chris and Jenny Tebble have resigned from the association having sold their Victoria 34, FIRECREST.

ARC result for Rustler 36, ANNIE

Graham Gibson, who previously owned Victoria 34, PERSEPHONE OF PERCUIL, completed the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers in his Rustler 36, ANNIE, arriving in Rodney Bay, St. Lucia on the 16th December 2011.

Although it is claimed to be a 'rally', it is really a race and his overall position was 110th with a corrected time of 25 days, 5 hours 42 minutes and 50 seconds. Well done, Graham! The figures were taken from the World Cruising Club's website at www.worldcruising.com.

South Coast Social at Sarisbury

Despite standing down from the office of South Coast Regional Organiser, John Tyer had one more event up his sleeve and so, on Sunday 4th March, we enjoyed another social at the Sarisbury and District Community Centre.

On these occasions, Olive Hathaway and her helpers, organise an American style buffet in the hall, whilst other members and their guests enjoy a drink or two in the bar. We had a very good attendance of over thirty and everyone appeared to be in good spirits, while catching up with the latest gossip.

South Coast Social continued

John had persuaded Pat Manley to pay us a return visit with a talk entitled, "Seeing and Being Seen." Pat is always good value and can be a little controversial at times, so nobody nods off and there are plenty of questions at the end.



Pat takes questions at the end of his talk.

The afternoon ends with a draw for raffle prizes that helps towards the cost of the event.

Our thanks go to Pat Manley, Olive Hathaway and, of course John Tyer, for organising the event.

East Coast Social at Wivenhoe

Just six days after the South Coast event, Anne Grubb is busy with the East Coast Social. This year the Rose and Crown public house on the waterfront was open even before 12 noon and seemed better able to cope with our members' demands for food and drink!

With appetites sated and thirsts quenched, we moved next door, to the Nottage Maritime Institute for the talk by Professor Ted Evans.

"Arthur Ransome and East Anglia" was a fascinating talk that reminded many of our members of their childhood heroes, as the question and answer session at the end of the talk quickly proved.

Our thanks go to Professor Ted Evans.



Anne had made some of her excellent cakes to go with afternoon tea with the raffle draw completing the afternoon's events. Thank you, Anne.

'Ports of Call' articles

In response to an idea raised at a *Committee Meeting*, members were invited to submit articles based around their 'Ports of Call' in 2011 with a view to subsequent publication in 'Waterlines'. Unfortunately and quite exceptionally, 'Waterlines' had more copy than space available and two articles, in particular, received only the scantest of mentions. As a rather poor, second best, I include a fuller version of each here and thank the contributors for the work they put into preparing the articles.

The first, by Alan Donaldson, should provide an excellent alternate guide to North Brittany, a region that will be visited by many of our members in 2012.

The second, by Lesley Whitfield and Paul Brittain comes rather more as a warning of difficulties that can be encountered in some remoter areas.

NOMAD's cruising in 2011

For a variety of reasons *Nomad's* cruising this year was severely restricted and we went no further than the Baie de St. Brieuc. Brief notes on the places visited are below. Mooring fees quoted are for a 38 ft. boat in high season 2011.

Lézardrieux.

One of our favourite ports of call. We have normally eaten very well at the *Auberge du Trieux* but this year it seems to have gone slightly off the boil. However, we ate more than adequately (and more cheaply) at *Le Moulin de la Galette* and enjoyed moules frites at the Yacht Club. Mooring dues per day €28 + €0.40 per head Taxe de Séjour. At the top of the hill in the Place du Centre close to the Mairie there is a good boulangerie and an excellent butcher, also a bar/newsagent who sells some English papers. There is a reasonable supermarket in Rue du 8 Mai. Market day Friday morning in Place du Centre and well worth a visit.

Paimpol.

A lovely place with more good restaurants than you could shake a stick at! Try *La Vielle Tour* in Rue de l'Eglise or (as a good Crêperie) *Ty Crampouz* in Place Martray. Or *Café du Port* or *L'Islandais* on Quai Morand, a hop skip and a jump from the visitors' berths in the Bassin. Major Folk Festival (Fête des Islandais) and Folk Music festival (Festival du Chant de Marin) during which the harbour may be very full - dates from the Tourist Board (tel. 02 96 20 83 16). A good wet fishmonger, a butcher and a small supermarket in Rue St Vincent, and a bigger supermarket in Av. de Guerland opposite the railway station. In summer, a steam train excursion to Pontrieux. A large and noisy market on Tuesday morning. Two newsagents on Quai Morand sell some English papers. Marina dues €25 per day.

St.-Quay Portrieux.

A very large and to my mind soulless marina, but a useful passage port. Market days Monday morning (Quai Robert Richet in the old harbour) and Friday morning (Place de l'Eglise). Marina dues €30 per day.

Binic.

A delightful little port, though access is severely restricted by tides - even on spring tides access is limited to about HW - 2.20hrs to HW + 0.15 hrs, and on neaps the gate doesn't open at all if the rise of tide is less than 8.50m.

Market Day Thursday morning. We ate well at the *An Armor* and badly (once) at *Rest. L'Eglise*, but we may have been unlucky since Peter Cumberland recommends it. A decent supermarket and a good butcher and boulangerie. A newsagent in Place de l'Eglise has some English papers. Marina dues €28 per day

St. Cast.

A new (2009) marina with all-tide access and a good alternative to St. Malo. Shopping in town, about a mile away, is good, as are the restaurants (try *Les Halles* in the pedestrian quarter) but there is very little in the immediate vicinity of the marina - not even a boulangerie! We found that the best solution was to walk into town along the coastal footpath, shop, eat and then take a taxi back; the Tourist Office got a taxi for us. We ate well in the marina complex at *Le P'tit Mousse*. Market days Monday morning (Place du Marché des Mielles) and Thursday evening (Rue Jacques Cartier). Marina dues €33 per day.

Tréguier.

Another favourite haunt, but beware the tide sweeping through the marina berths, especially on the ebb: if possible berth at slack water high or slack water low - entering a berth down-tide can be very hazardous, and the harbourmaster advises against trying to leave a berth at half-tide. A very good and large market on Wednesday morning. We have eaten consistently well at *Le St. Bernard* in Rue Marcellin Berthelot and at Hôtel l'Estuaire, both close to the quayside; otherwise, up in town, try *Le Canotier* off Place Martray or a number of Crêperies (my favourite is in Rue St Yves opposite *Auberge de Trégor*, a restaurant which to my mind is overpriced for what you get. For something special, *Le Kastell Dinec'h* on the Lannion road (taxi needed and you must book, because the hotel has only two tables for non-residents); it's one of the best places to eat in North Brittany. A visit to the Cathedral is a must! The *Pardon* of St. Yves, the local Saint and patron saint of the poor and of lawyers, is on the third Sunday in May, when the town is likely to be very full - details from the Tourist Office (tel: 02 96 92 22 33). Marina dues per day €27 = Taxe de Séjour €0.40 per head.

Alan Donaldson

EVERGREEN's cruising in 2011

I think you may know we did a circuit of Southern Scotland this year via the Caledonian and Forth and Clyde canals. It was October before we re-entered the Clyde at Bowling, as if through a worm-hole; it seemed surprising to suddenly be back in familiar waters after such a long trip.



Victoria 26, EVERGREEN at Dunbar

I'm not sure when we last wrote, but we had quite a tough time getting up the Firth of Forth. We managed to get all

the way from Perth to Dunbar in one go, (carrying tide nearly all the way), and with at least one minke whale swimming alongside for 10 minutes or so, only about 10m from the boat!

However, it blew from the west from then on - if we had been decided on an East Coast adventure earlier in the year, it would definitely have made sense to do it the other way round - and we didn't try to leave Dunbar the first day. Next day we tried hard to get to Edinburgh but only made it as far as the Bass Rock before turning back to Dunbar. On the way back we read 32 knots apparent, whilst doing 7 knots!

On the second attempt we made it to Granton, and were very kindly invited to dinner (and showers!) at the home of Charles who we'd met whilst at Crinan. The next two days, we had a lovely sunny sail out to Inchcolm island with Lorne, (another of the Crinan sailors), before finally going on to Port Edgar by the Forth bridges.

Unfortunately progress from there on was slow - the canal was celebrating the 10th anniversary of its reopening - and hence was closed for through traffic! It was another two weeks before we could go back, and then the logistics of getting to the start were not straightforward. The canal has to be booked in advance, as they only seem to take at most 1 lock load a day through in each direction. I thought I had secured a booking starting Saturday lunchtime, but when I phoned on the Thursday to confirm, they said I'd have to be there at 8:30 am. I explained the impossibility of this - the tide* from Port Edgar would only allow a lunchtime arrival, so they said I'd have to be there on Friday, or miss our booking altogether.

*From the Forth, the Carron river leads up to the canal. It is drying, but also has a very low bridge the underside of which is only 5m above the river bed. So the tide can't be too low, or too high to pass that point!

We had booked Port Edgar to take the mast down at 9:30 am on the Friday morning, and we would have to leave about 10:30 to lock in to the canal before running out of water in the Carron river outside. This would leave 1 hour at most to secure the mast on the boat before departure, and Paul wasn't due to fly in to Edinburgh until about 13:00! It was so windy during the week, there was no question of them taking the mast down Thursday pm, but they did get to it about 20 mins early on the Friday. I phoned our friend Helen who came out from Edinburgh for that crucial hour to help me with the mast, and our friend Jim who lives in Dundee and was planning to do the Forth and Clyde with us, came out a day early arriving at 10:30 just in time to help with the final securing of the mast, before an immediate departure. The wind was still hard against us, and the Forth was lumpy. Without our mast we were only making about 2 knots even with the tide, and for a while I thought we wouldn't make it. However, as we approached slack water the situation improved, and we made it to the Carron river in the nick of time. I had phoned the lock keeper to ask him to have the lock gates open as we would be scraping in, and in fact he met us part way along the Carron in a RIB, and showed us the best route in, including taking the critical bridge through the arch intended for traffic coming the other way. In the event, there was plenty of water, (also I think there is a stand at high water on the Carron, which I'd not wanted to take for granted)!

So getting to the canal seemed like a major achievement, and I was glad to see Paul there. The canal itself was quite interesting. Early on we passed the Falkirk wheel which takes boats along the Union canal right into Edinburgh - it was interesting to see it operating, but we didn't go up. (I think we just could draft-wise, but the union

canal itself gradually shallows and we would get stuck at some point). The central section was surprisingly scenic, and there were canoe races going on, so we had to keep our eyes peeled. We took the branch into Glasgow one night, staying very near the centre, (in a well locked but still attractive compound from where we walked into the city centre).



Approaching Glasgow with the mast down

Popping out at Bowling, (after putting the mast back on - ourselves this time, though they did operate the crane), it seemed a surprise to be back in familiar waters, and we had quite a tough sail to Rhu, (with tide but against the wind again). We went back up for one more sail up Loch Goil 2 weeks later, before a final trip to put the boat away, about 3 weeks ago, I think.



Drying sails at Rhu

The Forth and Clyde is set up for yachtsmen to be able to use, but it is slightly awkward. Although originally built as a full height canal, so many low bridges were built across it in the 60s that it was a major achievement to reopen it even as a mast down route. The Edinburgh end is especially awkward as the mast needs to be down before the canal is reached. There is a privately operated crane in the Carron river, but by then you may be very short of time, and also possibly wobbling relative to the crane etc, (which I think may also be floating). We were advised that Port Edgar is a better option, but it does mean negotiating about 12 miles of the Forth without a mast. Originally there was a service to transport your mast along the canal, but now you have to transport it yourself on the boat. Not so bad for a deck-stepped mast, but with a keel-stepped mast there will be an even bigger overhang. I think the maximum draft is only about 1.6m, and I think you'd scrape the bottom quite a bit at that, so it's really for small boats only. At the Bowling end, British Waterways operate a very simple crane in the canal basin, but you have to do all the rigging yourself, including supporting the base of the mast as the mast is lifted up by the spreaders. I suspect HSE would have a fit if they knew - however it was ok given that our mast doesn't weigh that much.

We found that it was possible to support the mast fairly well for transit - Paul had drilled some holes in planks of

plywood beforehand which I fitted across the pushpit and pullpit with very large cable ties. (Also we had some wooden blocks with holes to help keep the ensemble in place). Then we simply laid the mast along the length of the boat, (on the stbd side as the morse control lever is to port), resting on the plywood planks, and tied to pushpit, pullpit and the planks. Away from the planks, some circular section foam was used where the mast crossed the pushpit/pullpit steel.

The Forth and Clyde is I think only used by a few hundred boats of all types a year. There was another slightly larger sailing boat who started the day after us, and I think we passed one going the other way. On arrival at Bowling, a similar sized boat to us was just figuring out how to get their mast off and support it, so we gave them Paul's mast support 'kit'. We travelled with a canal barge for a while, and also with a large plastic cruiser for a while, and these were about the only traffic we saw, though I imagine the summer is a bit busier. We had 3 canal staff operating locks for us most of the way, and they wouldn't let us help. (Also, not all the locks had pontoons near them to drop off helpers). Weed was a problem near the Glasgow end, and we had to clear the engine water inlet strainer about 3 times. We have a set of brass fittings which screw onto the engine water inlet from the inside, and which end in a hose tail, (usually used for winterising the engine). We found the most successful method was to take out the strainer itself, and then clear any remaining blockage by fitting the dinghy pump to the hose tail and pumping air down and out of the boat through the water inlet). Unfortunately we did damage our wind instrument during the transit as Paul found the propeller fouled whilst trying to leave a lock. (I would have removed the instrument, but for the fact it had previously been cracked and was partly held on by epoxy - so I guess it might not have lasted that much longer anyway).

So, all in all, definitely the most hassle of the 3 Scottish canals accessible to yachts, but still a fantastic short-cut, which makes a circular route round most of Scotland a possibility. (We were actually sorry not to have made it down to the Farne Islands before heading back to the west, but there's always another time...)

Lesley and Paul

Chairman Motor-Boats

The Shadow Motor Boat section had not been represented on the Committee since November 2008, when Dave Probert stood down from that office, until the last Annual General Meeting when John Walker accepted the nomination and became Chairman (Motor-Boats.)

You will remember that in 2010, 4 Shadows and 5 Victoria Yachts shared a joint rally at Limehouse Basin in East London; something of an historic occasion. Again, last year, the same 4 Shadows enjoyed an extended rally to both Limehouse and St. Katharines Haven joined by just one yacht this time. All of this activity by Shadows on the tidal Thames was due to the enthusiasm of John Walker and his loyal band of supporters.

This year, the Shadows have a rally at Maidenhead on the 26th May and later to Abingdon on the 15th September, so are sticking to their more traditional cruising grounds. Yachtsmen are always welcome at

these events and may be able to hitch a ride on the river but do please contact John as early as possible if you hope to attend.

Chairman (Yachts)

Jon Spencer has taken on this office, recently vacated by Anne Grubb, who served for three years. In addition to the regular Chairman's role, Jon has also agreed to organise two South Coast rallies this year in the absence of a regional organiser.

The first rally is to Warsash, the home of Victoria Marine and Victoria Yachts. The weekend of the 26 and 27th May is the date and we will be guests of the Warsash Sailing Club, where Jon Spencer also holds 'high office'. This will be the first time many of our yachts have returned to Warsash since their fitting-out and you should definitely be there if at all possible.

Later in the year, on the 1st and 2nd of September, we are having a rally at Island Harbour, a peaceful locked marina just upstream of the 'Folly Inn' on the River Medina.

If any member is interested in taking on the role of South Coast Regional Organiser for 2013, please contact any member of the Committee to discuss what would be involved.

Journal Editor

We have just learnt that Peter Allen has stood down as Journal Editor after producing three fine editions of 'Waterlines'.

Peter's determination to have the magazine professionally printed on glossy paper and to have an improved and less cluttered layout to the pages has brought its own rewards and will be a difficult act to follow. Thank you, Peter, for all your good work.

Peter hopes, ... by resigning now this should give ample time to find a suitable qualified volunteer to take on the task.

If any member would like to become the new Journal Editor with a view to producing the Winter 2012/2013 Issue 32, please contact any member of the Committee for further details.

Next Newsletter

The next Newsletter should be available in June, when we will be able to report on the first three of our rallies.