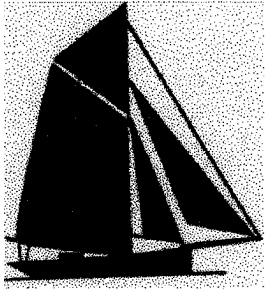


Volume 11, number 1, Spring 2006



Up The Creek...

New Committee, New Plans

The new season witnesses considerable change for the Tollesbury Cruising Club. The new committee intends to build upon the momentum established during recent years to create both an attractive cruising programme and

a challenging racing series. It is, in particular, hoped that a number of the rallies will prove attractive to families with young children.

This year's Wallet Ball was hosted by the TCC. A highly committed sub-committee made

strenuous efforts to make it a memorable event, as reports elsewhere report. Heartiest congratulations to all concerned.

Barry Jones
Steorra of Tollesbury

Marina Table Top Sale

It is several years since we last organised a table top sale and you will probably all have accumulated a garage full of marine rubbish by now. Sorry, I meant to say valuable, but no longer wanted, boat items that you would like to dispose of.

If you find yourself in this position, then this spring you have a golden opportunity to turn your rubbish in to cash. On **Sunday the 2nd of April**, which also happens to be the weekend of the Tollesbury Boat Fair, Louise Goldie has agreed to make the swimming pool bubble available to T.C.C. members who wish to take a table to sell their unwanted items.

The bubble will be moved off the pool and tables set up ready for the start of the sale at 11.00am. the cost per table will be a £10.00 donation to the R.N.L.I. for

club members, or £15.00 for trade or non-club members. If you do not have sufficient gear to warrant a table to yourself then that is not a problem. Just contact Jean and the items will be added to her table, again for a small donation to the Lifeboat Box.

On the last occasion that the Club organised such an event, the response was incredible. Most bargains were snapped up within minutes of the start by early-bird bargain hunters or shrewd trade buyers. So much so that later in the morning several browsers were overheard to comment on the fact that there wasn't much to see. So take a tip and get to the boat jumble early.

To book a table, or for more information about the event, contact **Jean Kemp** at least a week before the date, on **01376 514557**, or on **Polo IV** in **berth A8**.

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New Commodore's New Season Message

Wow! Andy Hobden elected Commodore of the Tollesbury Cruising Club. How did that happen? It was an honour to be asked to be Commodore. Many thanks to all those who have supported and encouraged me.

I remember some of the early Commodores since I first came to Tollesbury Marina in 1971. Back in the early 70's, as a young, shy (yes shy) 'yachtsman' with an eighteen-foot boat, I was in awe of those experienced Gods of the Seas, in their huge West-erly Centaurs and similar yachts, who made up the Committee.

It is unlikely that anyone will ever be in awe of me and after my performance at 'The Wallet Ball' I will probably never be taken seriously again.

Don't expect long fluent speeches because I don't do them. What I can try to do is share my enthusiasm for Tollesbury, boats and the sea, tell everyone where they are going wrong (sorry I meant to say give those that want it the benefit of my extensive and varied experience) and, possibly, win a few more races if the new Rear Commodore (racing) will let me.

Plans and Possibilities

Tollesbury Cruising Club's Com-

mittee is dedicated to making the coming season enjoyable and interesting. We have some great trips planned and I am, apparently, responsible for organising the Commodore's Cruise.

What's that you might ask? The answer is I don't know, but it sounded good when we talked about it last year. It might be a trip to Heybridge Basin or a Weekend bash to Calais. So watch the notice board for details (and any suggestions will be gratefully received.)

Diversity and Diversions

The marina provides facilities for many different types of yachting: from round the world yachtsmen and ocean racers, to live-aboards and weekend potterers; from motor boaters and fisherman to the social members who enjoy the club's atmosphere and facilities.

It is my hope that we can continue to develop the club's programme and cater for all berth holders. We are always happy to receive ideas for new events (and of course any offers of help in organising them). It is the support and feedback from the members that makes the committee's jobs worthwhile.

In the last *Up the Creek* we suggested that details of forth-

coming events could be emailed to interested members. The offer still stands. Pending the launch of our planned website you can email me at andy.hobden@rya-online.net for inclusion in our mailing list.

The Wallet Ball

It has been a very busy winter for us. Organising the Wallet Ball created an incredible amount of work and my thanks go to those Committee members and the rest of our club who helped to make the **Hole in the Mud Gang's** cabaret such a successful show. The ball and raffle, helped us to raise over £700 for the Essex Air Ambulance.

Fitting Out

Tongue Twister has been undergoing a major refit, including new headlining and the new engine. There is still a long way to go yet if we are to be launched in time for the Easter Cruise to West Wick Marina so I had better go and get on with it.

Looking forward to meeting you all in the club or on the water.

Andy Hobden

Commodore

Tollesbury Cruising Club

Stop Press

Andy Hobden is being unduly modest in his comments about this year's Wallet Ball. As I can report, it was, in fact, a resounding success. The venue was admirable and the food good, and the band – Mark Shelley and the Deans – tight and tuneful. Of course, the highlight of the event was the cabaret, provided by the

Cruising Club in the shape of the 'Hole in the Mud Gang', which ranged from the highly entertaining to the simply hysterical. The sight of Commodore Andy Hobden with a brunette bob, dressed in a tight, lurex dress, with a red feather boa and high heels, is one that I shall find difficult to dispel. Former Commodore Betty McInnes in a pink basque was also pretty memorable. Selective reporting would be unfair, how-

ever, for all the acts were hugely entertaining. A personal highlight, however, was witnessing 'Tranny' (aka Trinny, of Trinny and Suzanne; aka Andy Hobden) jumping (on) Julian Goldie (of which, a memorable photograph is available, for a modest consideration!). Heartiest congratulations, therefore, to Andy, Betty and the full company of troupers and troubadours.

Ed.

Cruising Programme - 2006

As I write, winter is making its last efforts, with forecasts of frost, snow and severe weather warnings for Scotland, etc. Most of us are trying to get our boats ready for the season, whether in or out of the water. I keep putting off those outside jobs – antifouling and polishing; hoping for a warm weekend and finding one more job that needs to be done on the mast in the relatively warm shed or inside the boat, but I'm running out of both inside jobs and time! This is especially true as I intend to have 'Nimrodel' back in the water for the 'Icebreaker/Shakedown' cruise on Saturday 25 March, which brings me to the main reason for writing – the cruising programme for 2006.

At the end of last year's season, in October, when the committee sat down to plan for this season's events. As usual, we had the familiar discussions of the past year's events – what went well, the new ideas that worked and those that didn't. As part of the process, we have to work in the events which

are fixed in the calendar with other clubs or groups, like Wallet Shield or Buxey Ashes. We also include club races and the familiar popular events and cruises which have served us well for a number of years – like the fish shed lunch. We also try to include some different events which are either new or haven't been tried for a while. All this has to be built around the tides and, in particular, any neap weekends, when a large proportion of boats will find it difficult to leave or return to Tollesbury.

Anyway we've tried to make sure there is something for everyone, from local favourites, like trips to Brightlingsea, Mersea Stone, Bradwell; or slightly further a field to Shotley, Burnham/Fambridge; or the end of summer cruise to the Deben/Lowestoft/Southwold (which was a great success last year – especially as we had such good weather, including favourable winds for the whole week). For those who want to 'stretch their legs' a bit, there is the Calais rally

on the May spring bank holiday weekend or the Oostend Rally at the beginning of the summer cruise – we are not sure where we are going yet, could be left or right when we get to Oostend. We have also added a night cruise to Brightlingsea in June which will give those who have not tried it yet the opportunity to try this aspect of sailing – the most difficult bit is getting out of the creek! It would also be nice to see more children (of all ages) joining in with the events, so, to help with this, we plan to have a treasure hunt and a beach BBQ in July.

I hope to see as many of you as possible at these events, and by all means let me know if there's something you think would work that we've not tried. I can't guarantee we will fit it this year, but we are happy to consider new ideas for next season.

Have a great season.

David Cooke

(dave@nimrodel.fsnet.co.uk)

Rear Commodore Cruising

LEDs Lead the Way

With 'Tongue Twisters' winter refit in full flow, my attention turned to new lighting for the fore cabin. I originally fitted 5-watt fluorescents in what was then the kid's bedroom so that they could use them without us worrying too much about battery drain. Now 20 years old, these lights are very scruffy, scratched, battered and in need of replacement if they are not going to spoil the effect of the new headlining.

My thoughts turned towards LEDs (Light Emitting Diodes) and, as I haven't seen much about this in the Yachting press, I thought I would pen

a few words about the possibilities of switching to LED lighting.

The beauty of the current developments in LEDs is that they work off low voltages, produce minimal heat, draw very little current and can be had in several colours including red. They have a life expectancy of up to 50000 hours (which equates to being left on continuously for six years).

The disadvantage is that a single LED does not yet emit enough light, so multiple clusters are needed. White LEDs can produce a 'cold' bluish light, although 'warm' white versions are available. LEDs also produce a

very directional beam so that a diffuser will be needed if the light is not being used as a spot light.

I was surprised to discover that traditional bulb forms are now produced as LEDs. The 5 and 10-watt festoon bulbs (dome light bulbs) common in many of our cabin lights are available as LEDs (as are bayonet bulbs) making for a very simple upgrade. Direct replacements for Halogen bulbs are also available.

One possible supplier on the Web is www.ultraleds.co.uk. They advertise 'Dome Light' LEDs from about

(Continued on page 4)

Racing and Ratings for 2006

Being voted in as your Rear Commodore Racing last October has given me much time to think about the best way to calculate everyone's personal handicap. When Andy undertook this task last year, he developed his own method and other Race organisers have had theirs.

I have however decided to proceed along the RYA approved route, simplifying it to our needs. Calculating a performance number for each boat after it has raced (i.e. the handicap that each boat would be sailing off, if it were to have been a dead heat of all competitors). This meant I have had to take each race for last year and recalculate the performance number for each boat, at least for those races for which I have the finishing times.

New Personal Handicaps

Attached is a copy of the personal handicap sheet for all who raced last year and the list of the qualifying races. You will note that many handicaps (including my own) have been reduced significantly and that most people will now be racing off a handicap much nearer their Portsmouth Yard Stick Number. If you have not raced before, or not completed

a minimum of 4 races in the last year, you will be given a trial handicap and this will vary over your 4 qualifying races.

My aim is to have a more open handicap system, allowing those who race rarely, or have not done so before, a fair chance at the silverware, hopefully encouraging more members to join in.

The personal handicap sheet is included at the end of this edition of *Up the Creek*.

The Racing Programme

The first race of the season is the Pursuit Race on May the 13th to Harwich Breakwater. For this race every competitor is given an individual start time, that reflects the handicap. The race should thus end with a very close finish on the line.

The Wallet Shield

On the 17th June we are the host club for the Wallet Shield and I will be running the Wallet Long Race along side this event. The Shield is a team event for the fastest 3 boats, on handicap, from one of the competing 7 clubs. This is always a fast and furious race and can be taken quite seriously. By running the Wallet Long Race alongside the Wallet Shield the

fastest boat from The Tollesbury Sailing Club and our club will be awarded the Wallet Long Race trophy. It may be necessary to add a further mark or two, on to the course for the Shield, but all competitors will be notified well in advance.

Boudica Trophy

The weekend of the 22nd/23rd July is for the Ladies, with the Teapot Trophy for the fastest Lady Helm to Brightlingsea, and on the Sunday the Boudica Trophy for the fastest all female boat for the return trip.

And More Fun

I also intend to continue having a few 'fun' races during the year; these will take place when we have a club cruise, and we can add a bit of spice into the outing, for those who wish to compete. These events will be posted as usual on the notice board.

I hope to see many more members competing this year and hope that the handicapping will open up each race, and encourage a friendly approach to racing that we, as a mainly cruising club, can be proud of.

Dave Knight

(Continued from page 3)

LEDs continued

£8.00, which they say produce a light equivalent of 7 watts on a current consumption of 60 milliamps. It would be easy to swap between red and white lights over the galley and chart table for night use, as it is the LEDs themselves which are coloured.

I played with a Halogen replacement 4 LED spot bulb. This replaces an MR11W diachronic halogen light. Rated 12 volts and 0.4 watts. An 80-amp hour battery could by my calculations, light it for three months without recharging. It seems happy to run

with the output from a battery charger and my car battery. This would probably not be quite bright enough, but you can get 8, 12 and probably 18 LED versions.

'Marine' LED lights are available from chandlers but seem expensive and there are few styles available as yet. LED Navigation lights have recently been approved by the MCA but are currently about 4 times the cost of their traditional equivalents. You can get LED clusters with the Aqua Signal bayonet fitting at £13. These probably do not comply with collision regs yet.

IKEA has some nice little LED units but all theirs come with a 240-volt transformer which we did not need. I got a couple of nice Halogen reading lamps there which I have fitted with Halogen replacement LEDs rated as the equivalent of 7 watts. I hope that these added to two dome light LEDs in the roof will provide sufficient lighting. If not we can always go back to ordinary bulbs.

I will let you know how we get on with them.

Andy Hobden
Tongue Twister

The Adventures of the *Tollesbury*

The following article was prompted by the display on the *Tollesbury* prepared by the Rev. Keith Lovell (vicar of Tollesbury) at the village's Trafalgar Day exhibition and Stuart Wallace's identification of a chapter 'Rescued in a Sandwich Box' in John Harding's recent book, *Sailing's Strangest Moments*, (Robson Books, 2004), which recounts *Tollesbury's* war-time exploits. Keith Lovell has also written, at length, about *SB Tollesbury* in his book *In the Land of the Tolles* (1991). The content of the article is thus drawn primarily from the writings of Keith Lovell and John Harding. Ed.

The *SB Tollesbury* was a classic Thames Sprintsail barge, flat bottomed cargo vessels with mainsails supported by sprits and swinging lee-boards to provide resistance to leeway when sailing to windward. Sprintsail barges were lightly crewed, often with no more than a skipper and mate, and were concentrated in the shallow estuaries of the East Coast.

The *Tollesbury* was built, without an engine, for George Fisher of the then 'Plough and Sail' pub (now a private residence) in West Street Tollesbury – hence the name! She was built in 1901 by Felton's yard in Sandwich, Kent. After an early life coal carrying, the *Tollesbury* was bought by the grain merchants R & W Paul, of Ipswich in 1912 and henceforward concentrated on grain and associated cargoes.

Off to Dunkirk

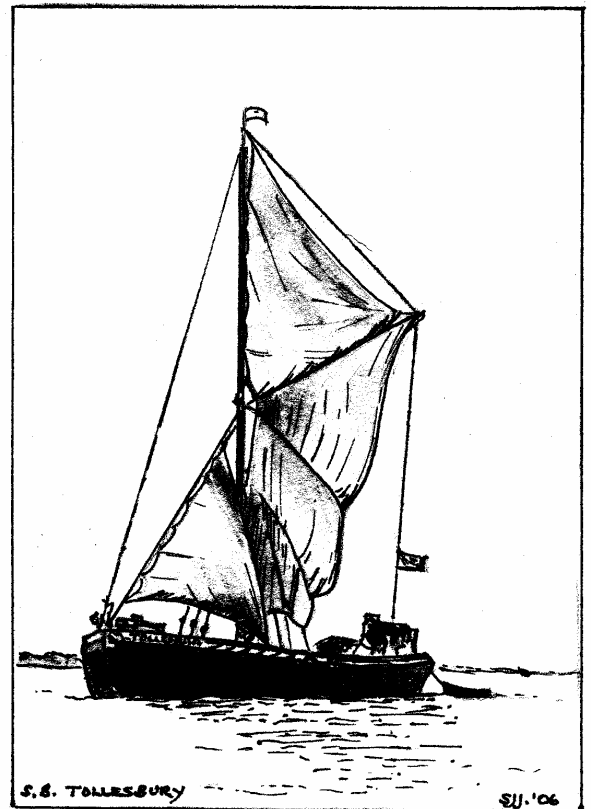
Tollesbury's skipper in 1940 was

Lemon Webb. In May of that year, the war in Europe had reached a critical juncture with the breakthrough of German forces in Belgium and France and the enforced retreat of the British Expeditionary Force towards the port town of Dunkirk. The response of the Admiralty was to conscript a wide range of vessels that might assist in an evacuation of British troops from the beaches of Dunkirk. Webb and his nineteen year old mate were given the option of leaving the *Tollesbury* at Erith on the Thames or to volunteer to sail their vessel over to Dunkirk. Both volunteered, and *Tollesbury* was soon a member of a flotilla of assorted vessels being towed by the tug *Sun XI* towards the French coast.

The particular advantages of Thames barges like the *Tollesbury*, were that they had flat, relatively shallow hulls, which would allow them a close approach to the Dunkirk beaches, and a wooden construction, which would provide protection against magnetic mines. *Tollesbury* arrived off Dunkirk at midnight, in very light winds, laden with water and food for the exhausted men ashore. The crew had to deploy their twenty four foot long sweep oars to row into the shore. *Tollesbury's* anchor was set, a wooden ladder deployed, but broken against the hull by the swell,

and then some two hundred and seventy three soldiers were embarked via the boat's tender.

Aground on the falling tide, *Tollesbury's* desperate passengers had to jump back into the water in the attempt to push her off the sands. In the event, they had to wait some two hours before the flood allowed *Tollesbury* to float, but her attempt to sail away was in vain as the wind dropped. A destroyer was summoned by flags, but retreated in the face of the threat from German aircraft. Two more destroyers and a Motor Torpedo Boat came



Sketch of SB Tollesbury drawn from a photograph taken in 1990 on the Orwell (note the absence of a mizzen mast)

along side but, again, withdrew in the face of danger. *Tollesbury* sailed on towards the UK, only to

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(Continued from page 5)
SB Tollesbury, continued

witness the destruction of the two destroyers astern. A mine exploded close by, when approaching the North Goodwin lightship, but *Tollesbury* finally managed to drop anchor in Ramsgate Broad and transfer her precious cargo ashore in motorboats.

Post-war days

Tollesbury's post-war career could not match the glories of

1940. She continued under sail until 1950, when an engine was installed. She then continued in trade until 1965 when she was sold on as a yacht barge. By 1978 she was moored at Pin Mill, on the Orwell, as a houseboat. In 1989 she underwent extensive renovation in Ipswich Dock, in preparation for the 1990 celebrations of Dunkirk. Thereafter she was moved to South Quay, Millwall Dock on the Thames to become a bar/restaurant, surviving

the effects of an IRA docklands bomb in 1996. Unfortunately, as the following newspaper report indicates, subsequent developments have not been so benign. We hope, however, that *Tollesbury* will, once again, come through and prosper.

(Note: we have been trying to discover the current situation regarding *Tollesbury* and will report any further news.)

21st September 2005

East London Advertiser

Pub with No Pier Sinks Last Pint

Hitler's Luftwaffe failed to sink her at Dunkirk and she even survived the Docklands IRA Bomb 56 years later.

But now a famous barge that has recently been a favourite haunt for thousands of office workers lies mysteriously defeated at the bottom of Millwall Dock.

An investigation is under way into how the floating pub *Tollesbury* sank on Monday morning.

Firefighters and rescue teams were called to

the dock, near South Quay, Marsh Wall, after the Thames barge began to sink.

Investigators were trying to fathom how the vessel, which survived both German Gunfire during the 1940 evacuation of Dunkirk and the 1966 South Quay IRA bomb, ended up partially submerged in the water.

Emergency services went to the scene at around 7am on Monday, but by the time they arrived the 84ft barge, which had no one on board, had already sunk.

Marina News

Prize winning Etap 46DS

Readers of the *Yachting Monthly* will have been pleased to see the picture of Dave Morris, of Woodrolfe Brokerage, receiving the IPC Marine Media award for the best aiboat over forty foot for the new Etap 46DS. The 46DS also won the innovative yacht of the year in the European Yacht of the Year awards for 2006.

Paul Frost

Congratulations, also, to the Paul Frost, of the boatyard staff, who has recently taken the plunge and entered the state of marital bliss.