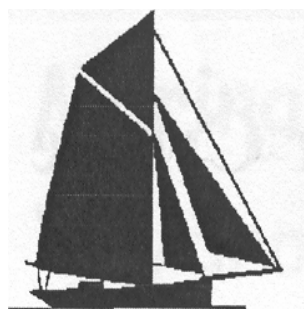


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Up the Creek...

New Committee

A new committee was elected for the Tollesbury Cruising Club at its well attended Annual General Meeting on Sunday the 28th of October. The new committee has already held its first meeting to plan the programme of racing and cruising for 2008. It has also approved plans for a new web site for the Cruising Club, which will be up and ready for access in the near future. The composition of the new committee is:

Commodore: David Walkerdine (*Ariel Spirit*);

Vice-Commodore: David Cooke (*Nimrodel*);

Rear-Commodore Cruising: Peter Philpot (currently looking);

Rear-Commodore Racing: David Knight (*Dionysus*);

Treasurer: Stuart Wallace (*Mornaque*);

Editor – Up the Creek: Barry Jones (*Zevkim*)

Committee Members: Betty

McInnes and Keith Macey (*Rose Tyler*)

Julian Goldie and Louise Goldie continue to act as **President** and **Secretary** of the Club, respectively, and Anwen Walkerdine continues as auditor.

The 2008 programme will maintain many of the themes and events that have been established during recent years, with a particular emphasis upon attracting new participants in the Club's cruises and races.

TCC on-line and in print

Club Web Site

Tollesbury Cruising Club is about to introduce a new Club web site. The site will be premiered on December the 1st, with the address: www.tollesburycc.co.uk

Colin Shead (*Toodle Pip*) will be the web master for the new site and is currently hard at work on its creation.

Up the Creek

Up the Creek always needs contributions from its members. We welcome, most particularly, articles

recounting recent cruises; reports of dramatic nautical experiences; notes on the facilities to be found at other harbours and marinas; and comments on equipment that has proved itself to be particularly effective or noticeably difficult to install or use. You do not need to be 'the skipper' to write an entertaining article, as a number of past entries have proved. There is, moreover, no age qualification; so contributions from younger members of crew would be most welcome.

The arrival of a better photocop-

ier in the marina office has also made the inclusion of photographs a better bet than it was in earlier years. Articles may be submitted by email or, if long and containing photographs, a CD ROM. The next deadline for contributions is the end of February, 2008.

To submit a contribution, or to discuss a possibility, contact the editor:

Barry Jones on:
01621 868554;

or email:

barryatzevkim@waitrose.com

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Commodore's Corner...David Walkerdine

It would be wrong to start my first 'Message from the Commodore' without saying thank you.

Firstly, thank you to our outgoing commodore **Andy Hobden**. Andy has worked hard to build the relationships between TCC and other East Coast clubs. During his tenure, TCC organised the Wallet Ball (one of the best in years!) and has seen numbers attending club functions increase. Andy also managed to secure some interesting and varied speakers for the Club's fitting-out and laying-up suppers, who have greatly enhanced the evenings. I would also like to say thank you to **Bernard Meggitt**, who is standing down from the committee this year to enjoy some longer distance sailing. Bernard has been a valuable member of the committee and has led us to victory over Maldon Little Ships' Club in the Buxey Ashes. Whilst I am talking of the committee I must also say thank you to all of the members of the committee for their hard work and welcome to **Keith Macey**, who joins us this year.

Personal Matters

I would also like to thank you for electing me as Commodore. I consider it an honour to hold this post and I hope that I will be able to bring something new to the role. For those of you that don't know me perhaps I should give you an insight into my sailing background. I have been sailing for the past 12 years and was introduced to sailing by my wife, **Anwen**, and her family. In fact, sailing was a condition of marriage; my future Mother In Law even insisted I complete my Day

Skipper certificate before we got engaged! We have owned three sailing boats in that time. Our first was a Leisure 17, followed by a Macwester 26 and our current boat is a Moody 34, *Ariel Spirit*. Anwen and I have recently had our first child, a little boy called **Theo**. Because of this *Ariel Spirit* is ashore and for sale. We hope to have another boat at some time in the future but for now we will probably have to attend events by road or try to find a berth on someone else's boat!

Clubbing Matters

What does Tollesbury Cruising Club mean to you? To me Tollesbury marina is a fantastically friendly place which is used by a variety of mariners. We all use our boats for different things but in general they are used for pleasure. One of Tollesbury marina's challenges is that access is limited by the tide. To me this is also its great strength. Inevitably, we are often arriving and departing at the same time and there is always a friendly face to chat to on the pontoons. Sometimes it amazes me just how long it can take to get from the berth to the car park on a summer Sunday afternoon and this always adds to the enjoyment of the weekend. I believe that the Cruising Club is an extension of that friendliness. The name would suggest that we are only about cruising but, having seen just how passionately some people take their racing, that is clearly not the case. I believe that the Cruising Club should offer something for everyone. The Committee and I will endeavour to provide this by or-

ganising a range of cruises to suit all levels of abilities, races open to all (although I am not sure how the Rear Commodore Racing will handicap the power boats!) and also a range of social functions. One of the best things about our Club is that it is not exclusively a sailing club and I am delighted that over the past year we have had one motor cruiser regularly attending the rallies. **Glen** on *Wai Loa* has also played an important role in many of the races by acting as committee boat.

Prospects and Possibilities

So, what do I hope to achieve during my time as commodore? Well, I hope to reinforce the strengths of the club. I hope that more berth holders will feel that we can offer them something that they would like to join in with whilst still appealing to the members who already regularly attend club events. One thing that I have heard from many members is that they never know what is happening or how to join in with club events. I believe that it is essential that we offer varied forms of communication and, with that in mind, I believe that we really need to have a presence on the internet. We are in the process of building a club web site and hope to have it up and running before the end of the year. We will be able to keep you informed of upcoming events and you will be able to sign up for cruises and races on line. We also hope to have a discussion forum so that members will be able to communicate with one another.

At the last fitting out supper we raised £1000 for the RNLI and I

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Racing Review.....Dave Knight

Racing this year has proved to be incredibly difficult to organise, but has resulted in enjoyable and challenging courses.

The Goldie Challenge on the 19th August, which was originally planned for the 12th May, had to be cancelled for the second time due to high winds and a very poor forecast.

On the 8th September we ran the **Wallet Long Race** and I was determined to organise a 'long race' as most of the racing this year had been upset by the conditions. Fortunately the day dawned reasonably bright but with only 6 – 8 knots of wind which was substantially greater than the forecast. So we set off on Course 'C' giving a straight-line distance of only 23.5 Nm. In those conditions the course proved challenging, with much hoisting and dowsing of Spinnakers and Chutes. It was yet again a day, where the lighter boats excelled. The first five boats crossed the line in a mere zephyr, leaving the next two boats to drift over the line. The rest of the fleet retired due to absolutely no wind, with only the tide taking them towards the finish line and **Batman's Tower** as dusk was quickly falling. As the light failed, my thoughts were very much with Barry and Stephanie Jones, who were the Officers of the Day and Committee Boat. Sadly for them, it proved to be a very long day waiting for the fleet to appear and they eventually arrived in Brightlingsea in darkness. Many thanks to them! After such a long day, it was declared that Ray and Debbie on *Aloha*, who had sailed a very convincing race and taken line honours, had also come first on handicap. Andy and Philippa in *Tongue*

Twister came second and Robin and Jean were third in *Polo IV*. I also have to mention Paul and Jill on *Hiawatha* with their determination not to give up in the failing light, trying to prove that Maxi's drift just as fast as a Moody! We all then enjoyed a pontoon party that night.

The Kings Head Race, as organised by the Tollesbury Sailing Club was ran on Saturday 29th September. With a bright sunny day and fickle winds, it was thoroughly enjoyable. There were 19 boats entered, many members of both TSC and TCC. This year there seemed little advantage as to what way you went round **Osea Island**, and all boats stalled at one point in the lee of the island. *Ostara* sailed an excellent race showing a good turn of speed again. The winds that we had been praying for arrived almost as soon as we crossed the line and, within a few minutes, it had increased from 8-10 knots to 18 knots!. This gave some of the boats further back in the fleet a great lift, with *Psyche*, an Atlanta, winning on handicap. *Tongue Twister* came second and *Black Adder*, a Pegasus 700, third, all proving how competitive the smaller boats can be in such conditions.

The Goldie Challenge was run on Sunday 30th September. The tides that weekend were very large springs, so it was late before all the racing fleet had extricated itself from Brightlingsea. There was no wind, so *Dionysus* led a flotilla of boats past the start line, past the **Inner Bench Head** and finally out to the **Bench Head** where it was decided we would have to have a

drifting match to the **Nass**. Fortunately most boats were able to find some wind, just enough to fill a spinnaker and slowly, ever so slowly sail towards the Nass. Robin and Jean on *Polo IV* piped Ian and Carol on *Ostara* on handicap who crossed the line first. Barret and Joyce on *Magpie*, in their first race with the club, sailed, or drifted, very well and came third.

The Steve Rix Race to Harwich Breakwater was on the 6th October. The forecast indicated yet another light day. Fortunately, the wind did pick up to 8-10 knots, not sufficient for a heavy boat with a weedy bottom like *Dionysus*, but sufficient for the race. This time it looked like the neap tides were going to stop the race by not making the predicted height. Stewart Wallace and his crew on *Mornaque*, had to quickly change boats to Keith and Betty's *Rose Tyler*, due to its shallower draft, and several of the fleet got stuck in the mud in the creek, whilst we touched the sill.

The 6' 4" depth on the sill did not make and the most I saw was 5' 6". Fortunately all the boats made it to the start line and we commenced the long beat up **The Wallet**. It was an interesting race and the Green Can positioned off **Holland Haven** proved hard to find. The buoy was hard to see, even though the co-ordinates I had given were precise. Paul and Debbie, sailing on *Herald*, went going exceptionally well. His gesticulations to his back side, as they overtook us, signalled a freshly scrubbed bottom to his boat – not at all what I took the sign to mean! I had planned the race hoping for a

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 2)

Commodore's Message (continued)
 hope that we can raise at least as much again next year (the challenge is on to raise more – if anyone has any good ideas I would be delighted to hear from you). We all hope that we will never need the services of the RNLI, but if we ever do need to make that call the volunteer crews will turn out night or day whatever the weather to provide assistance. They are worthy of our support so early next year we will be looking for items that we can auction or raffle in order to try to exceed that £1000 target. If there is anything that you or your company can offer, please let me know.

Read and Write

I always enjoy reading *Up the Creek* and I hope that you enjoy this edition. I am sure that the

editor would appreciate more copy for future editions. Do you remember the first time you came to Tollesbury? I certainly remember my first visit when we came to a Tollesbury Boat Show many years ago, where we enjoyed spending a long time over lunch in the Club House dreaming about how we could own a boat and be part of such a lovely club. I also remember my first visit by boat and I will write a separate article about it soon. I would be interested to hear your stories of your sailing experiences or why you enjoy Tollesbury so much. Submit your entries to the editor by the end of January, 2008. I will judge the entries and award a bottle of Champagne to the most entertaining.

Things to come

Over the next few weeks the committee will be planning the

cruises, races and social events for 2008. If you have any ideas you would like to see included, please drop me an email or write to me care of the marina. In the mean time, it may be November but there is still the Christmas Cruise to Bradwell to look forward to. If you have never joined this cruise before, a selection of seafood from **The Company Shed** is laid on and we all wrap up warm and enjoy seafood and drinks on the pontoons and great fun is had by all. Prizes are awarded for the best dressed crew and the best decorated boat. I do hope to see many of you there.

David Walkerdine

Email :

david@dwalkerdine.freeserve.co.uk

(Continued from page 3)

racing roundup (continued)

South Westerly but the Easterly gave us much tacking and a challenge in laying some of the marks. Ian and Carol on *Ostara* again showed us how well they have got their Hanse 370 going, but Keith Macey and Betty McInnes also went exceptionally well in their first race in their Maxi 1100, *Rose Tyler*. This has got to be the boat to watch out for! Paul Redhead proved that their Etap 30, is very competi-

tive. 1st place went to *Ostara*, 2nd to *Cobweb* and 3rd to *Hiawatha*.

So I can now take a deep breath and thank everyone who has competed in any of the races. Was it a good year, or just challenging? We have several new boats showing how fast they can go, plus other members, with boats better suited to the lighter conditions showing exceptional pace. There will need to be some juggling of the personal handicaps again to try to give a level

playing field, and spread the awards around more in 2008. So those who did well this year, beware!!

There will be one more 'fun race' this year on the Saturday of the Christmas cruise when *Dionysus* and crew will be using our secret weapon by singing Christmas Carols all around the course!

David Knight

Read Commodore - Racing
Dionysus

Cruising Notes

Tide Mill Harbour: Woodbridge

The new shore-side facilities at the Tide Mill Harbour, Woodbridge are now up and running; a long-awaited and much welcome improvement to an otherwise ideal cruising location.

Dover Marina

The Granville Dock at Dover Marina

also saw the opening of a set of new shower/toilet cubicles this summer at the head of the access ramp. Warm and comfortable to use, these new facilities are also a welcome addition to Dover Marina's facilities. There are, however, some doubts as to whether the fittings in these new facilities are robust enough to survive for long (there were already breakages and failures by late June,

2008, when the paper towel dispensers had only just been installed).

Dunkirk Marina

This year's visitors to the *Grand Large* marina reported that some of the toilets lack seat tops and that the operators restricted the Trans Europe Marinas' concession to one visit per year (irrespective of the length of that visit, or subsequent visits).

The Late Summer Cruise.....

We set off on Saturday 25th around 10.00, in company with *Dipper*, *Magpie*, *Polo IV*, *Toodle Pip*, *Wai Loa*, and *Zevkim*. There was a debate over whether to start straight away, and punch the tide, or anchor and wait until after lunch. We all opted to punch tide. However for us fate (or Volvo Penta) decided otherwise!

As we passed the last channel marker at the end of **Woodrolfe Creek** our engine overheat alarm came on, indicating a problem, and so we picked up a Leavings buoy. Dennis Thorp from *Breden* very kindly came along side and after a few minutes we confirmed that water in the engine bilge was not the result of a blown cylinder head gasket but because the seals of the freshwater pump had collapsed. With help from Barrett (*Magpie*) in finding the telephone number, I established that **Volspec**, Tollesbury had a replacement pump. So, while I took the pump off the engine, Jane and Rhys got the dinghy out and pumped it up. We now had a real deadline if we wanted to get out of Tollesbury Creek before we lost the tide. Rhys and I took the dinghy ashore and parked on the public hard and soon discovered that, because of the unique way in which Volspec structures their spares pricelist, I was better off buying more spares than I needed. In fact, I left the shop with a complete freshwater upgrade kit (see me in the Club and I'll rant for about 15 minutes on the subject)

Off at last!

Anyway, we obtained what we needed and fitted the new pump, and made it out of the creek into a lovely sunny day with gentle winds blowing not quite in the right direc-

tion. However, we made really good time and arrived at **Chatham lock** only a little after the rest of the cruise, so waiting till after lunch worked then!

Nice relaxing day on Sunday. Visited an outlet centre (definitely not my favourite pastime, but did buy 2 sets of shoes in the Clarkes' shop) and the cinema, followed by a late lunch in a nearby restaurant.

On to Limehouse

We set off for our evening anchorage at about 1830, a pleasant trip down the Medway to **Stangate Creek**. Anchor up at around 0530, enroute for the Thames and Limehouse and an eventful day. Jane helped me with the anchor up (that's me pulling up the chain and Jane on the helm in case you were wondering) and returned to bed. I headed out of Stangate Creek passing close to Glen in *Wai Loa* to give him an early morning call – which I'm sure he appreciated. Then the day started to go wrong... there was some wind so I unfurled

the sails but continued to motor into the Medway. I was distracted by the chart plotter (dangerous things!) and, with the restricted visibility under the genoa, I didn't see that a large green starboard buoy *Victoria* (the size of a transit van) was heading to me at about 5 knots. The auto helm was on and I didn't have enough time to switch it off. The result - a loud bang and Jane was woken up again! Fortunately it was a glancing blow and *Nimrodel* is a tough old bird, so the only damage was a graze to the gel coat. With the first disaster of the day over we proceeded out of the Medway and into the Thames and a lovely morning.

Problems Again

We reached the **Queen Elizabeth II** bridge taking the M25 over the Thames and had a call from *Zevkim* suggesting it would be a great place for some cruise photographs. So we posed for some and then circled around taking pictures of other boats on the cruise as they



Nimrodel approaches the Queen Elizabeth Bridge

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Late summer cruise (continued)

passed under the bridge. Then, as we passed under the structure, we lost power. I pushed the engine throttle lever forward thinking that one of us must have accidentally knocked it back. Unfortunately that didn't help. The cause of our loss of speed must be something more serious... I suspected fuel starvation or a fouled propeller. The latter was confirmed when I ran the prop in reverse for a few seconds and the amount of vibration increased. I radioed 'the fleet' to let everyone know of our troubles. Offers of help and advice were very reassuring but, having established that whatever was around the stern gear was not going away even with repeated forward and reverse cycles to help the rope cutter do its job, we decided to proceed on up the river at reduced speed. I called *Wai Loa* to request Glen stand by to tow in case we completely lost drive – a dangerous situation on the busy Thames. So, making around 4 knots through the water we crossed our fingers and carried on. We calculated that we still would be at Limehouse before the tide turned. The rest of the journey to our destination was almost uneventful apart from an inquisitive sniff from the 'men in black' – the Thames river police in their very fast, black rib. They didn't seem to have any problems with power!

A foredeck party at Limehouse

On arrival at Limehouse I called the lock keeper on the VHF, whose response was efficient and helpful, promising he would have us in as soon as he could cycle the

lock. The locking in went without incident, with the lock keeper helping us with lines, handing us a map of the berths and local information, and getting us through into the basin very quickly. We tied up and discussed how we were going to investigate the stern gear. Plans were made to get as many 'volunteers' as possible to stand on the foredeck – I think offers of beer and wine helped but everyone arrived at the appointed time and cuddled together on Nimrodel's bow. The stern started to rise from the water, but not enough. I moved as much of the heavy kit from the stern locker to the forecabin as I could – still not enough. I then attached the spinaker halyard to the far end of the opposite finger and winched – still not enough. While I was standing at the end of our finger pontoon, pondering what next, I became aware of somebody behind me. Looking around, I noticed Glen had changed into his wetsuit and within a second he was in the water and under the stern. Seconds later, he reappeared with an armful of white reinforced plastic tarpaulin. It took a couple more dives before he declared the prop and shaft clear of debris. We cleared the foredeck of helpers and took Nimrodel for a turn around the basin. All was well, apart from a slight extra vibration. So that was the third incident of the trip so far; what else good go wrong?

London delights

We had a very pleasant stay in Limehouse: some nice meals locally and 'downtown'; a visit to the **South Bank** and the **Tate Modern**; saw a film in Leicester

square; and generally relaxed. Jane, unfortunately, was short of leave so returned to work in Cambridge via the railway on Tuesday morning so it was just Jess, Rhys and I who set off through the lock out into the Thames on Thursday afternoon.

Down river again

After my experience on the trip upriver I was even more sensitive to the amount of debris floating past and had Rhys and Jess on look out. It really is amazing what moves up and down the Thames on the tide. Lots of timber, from branches and tree trunks to 20ft long 6x4 beams; lots of gas cylinders, up to 32kg propane torpedoes threatening the boat; and several more sheets of the deadly reinforced tarpaulin. We managed to get to our anchorage back in **Stangate Creek** without getting too intimately involved with any more Thames flotsam/jetsam.

The next day was ambitious for us. We left Stangate Creek at around 0500 with *Wai Loa*, *Magpie* and *Polo IV* and had to collect Jane and our Pico dinghy from Tollesbury on the tide in the afternoon, before getting out to **Pyefleet** to meet out friends on *Duette*. I handed over command to Jane for the trip to East Mersea and retired to my bunk for an afternoon nap.

We finished the week's holiday with a pleasant couple of days in Pyefleet and Mersea Stone, dinghy sailing and the children camping on the beach following the pre Buxey Ashes Bar-b-que.

David Cooke

Vice-commodore
Nimrodel

Remember, remember—Articles and Competition Entries

The deadline for the 'Tollesbury experiences' competition is the end of

January, 2008 and the copy date for 'ordinary' contributions to the next

edition of *Up The Creek* is the end of February, 2008.

TCC wins the 20th Buxey Ashes

The 'Buxey Ashes Weekend' September 1st/2nd turned out to be very enjoyable for all and especially successful for TCC. In contrast to the poor summer weather generally, this weekend was excellent. A steady SW wind gave a good sail to **Mersea Stone** on the Saturday with little wind overnight for the BBQ on the Stone and safe anchorage off until morning (good excuse for being 'too heady' to make Pyefleet). A shattering 'wake-up anchor-up' call from *Dionysus*' klaxon at 0700h on Sunday morning helped to get the boats away (and cursed by all the folk of Brightlingsea). By 0830h seven **TCC** and four **Maldon Little Ship Club** boats were anchored off **Buxey Sand** with a light breeze and sunny intervals for the rest of the day.

The Match ran from 0845h to 1100h with **TCC** providing the Scorers - Andy (*Tongue Twister*) and David (*Dionysus*), and Umpire - me (*Navicula Star*) with traditional salt-caked white Panama hat. **TCC** batted first getting 46 runs against **MLSC** 38 with the highest scorers being Ray (*Aloha*) with 23, (also Match highest - well spent youth?), Philip (*Navicula Star*) 10 and Lindsay (*Dionysus*) 8, the highest lady scorer. Stewart (*Mornaque*) showed surprising agility as wicket keeper! Glen's (*Wai Loa*) arrival sporting a fork worried **MLSC** but he proved successful in the outfield collecting long balls and a bucketful of bait. Presentations and photos followed, with **TCC** retaining the Buxey Ashes Trophy for the third year running and winning the Ladies' Trophy with Lindsay - well done!

The **Buxey Ashes** is, arguably, the longest continuously running

annual tidal sands cricket match anywhere and provides a very entertaining and social weekend of sailing and sport for all ages. It is hoped that both Clubs will encourage more members to come and play or support the Match in the future. However, on asking around, it seems the **TCC** newer

members know little of the **Buxey Ashes**. (One thought it was an environmentally friendly sea burial service). Having followed

the event for nine years and being the **TCC** Committee organiser for the last three, I thought some further information might put it in perspective.

The Trophy

In 1988, the first **TCC** v **MLSC** cricket match took place on the exposed Buxey Sand during LW springs (**MLSC** won, just) and has continued as an annual fixture since.

A trophy was made with an apothecary's glass bottle (as was used for leeches?), a brass engraving plate and two cricket badges fixed on a small oak plaque. The 'Ashes' filling the bottle appear to be sand and black particles but their exact origins are not recorded. However, in keeping with a more nautical tradition, my forensic diagnosis is that they are most likely some burnings of sand and seaweed from the first Buxey

pitch (but 'Ashes' from a Viking Pyre of the **TCC**'s losing team's Captain cannot be ruled out).

Over twenty years the trophy weathered and became too small, with the brass engraving plate full. This year it was up-dated by the **TCC** with transfer of the Ashes bottle, plate and badges onto a



larger varnished oak plaque. Another brass plate was added with space for more, allowing for over 50 years' new engravings' results (but with global warming this may be excessive!).

The Trophy shows that over the 20 years, **TCC** has won the Ashes 8 and **MLSC** 10 times with two years, 1990 and 1991, not recorded (draws, storms or winning club too hard up then to afford engraving costs?). The best run of wins was **MLSC** with five 2000-2004 but **TCC** are catching up with good wins in the last three years.

The Pitch.

The mid-northern area of **Buxey Sand** gives the best pitch to date having a fine compacted flat stretch of sand drying to 2.2 m above chart datum,. With a mean spring tidal range of 0.5m - 5.0m,

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'Admirable' Laying-Up Supper

A good time was had by all at this year's Laying-Up Supper, particularly the many deserving recipients of the assorted cups and awards.

The after-dinner address was given by member, and Tollesbury resident, **Roy Clare** who entertained the audience with tales of nautical mishaps: initially as mid-shipman/skipper of RN training yachts; and latterly as a witness to others' errors.

Maritime beginnings

Roy's nautical career has been both varied and illustrious. Roy first went to sea aged 2 in a steamship of the Union Castle line, travelling with his parents to South Africa. He learned to sail aged 10 as a Sea Cadet in naval cutters, whalers and Bosun dinghies.

Earning a yacht skipper's ticket aged 17, Roy sailed his first **Fast-net** two years later. Subsequently, he skippered numerous naval yachts – including the 52-foot ex-German 'windfall' *Capella* – in a succession of ocean races and Sail Training Association events during the 1960s/1970s. He was Chief Mate on the homeward leg

from Rio in the Royal Navy's Nicholson 55 *Adventure* when she was placed second overall in the **1973/4 Whitbread Round the World Race**.

Until he married, he also crewed – in every spare moment – on-board a wide variety of Class 1 and 2 ocean racers, at home and abroad, participating in most of the deep ocean classics. He particularly relished crewing on many occasions for one Commander - Peter Bruce - learning to live in the drying room of the **Island Sailing Club** as an antidote to campaigning a succession of the Commander's leaky, if highly competitive, Quarter-Tonners.

Only cruising

Since marrying **Sarah** (a former WRNS officer) in 1981, he has not missed ocean racing. They now 'cruise efficiently' in their own boat, their latest being the lifting keel Beneteau 285 *Harmony of Tollesbury*, which is ideal for the relatively shallow North Sea waters between the coasts of France and Belgium and their home port of Tollesbury. This year they reached Zeebrugge and nearly made it to The Netherlands.

Naval service and beyond

Serving in the Royal Navy for more than 30 years, he rose from the lower deck to become First Lieutenant of the mine-hunter *Bronington* (under the command of **The Prince of Wales**); subsequently, he skippered the ship himself. Later, his commands included the destroyers *Birmingham* and *York*; the six destroyers of the Third Destroyer Squadron; the aircraft carrier *Invincible* and the **Britannia Royal Naval College** in Dartmouth.

Promoted Rear Admiral in 1999 to serve in a NATO appointment, Roy left early after a year to take the even more exciting job in Greenwich, where he was **Director of the National Maritime Museum**, Queen's House and Royal Observatory, Greenwich, for seven years.

This summer he was made a CBE for 'services to museums' and is now **Chief Executive of the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council**, with responsibilities in London and the nine regions of England. As someone said, he has swapped one ship for an entire fleet.

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Buxey Victory (continued)

this gives a safe 4 hour (MLWS +/-2h) for the game. Also good anchorage holding and position with protection from the South Westerlies is found just off the Sand around 01° 03'7000E and 51° 42' 385N. This is in the charted **Swire Hole** (6.5 – 10.5 m below chart datum) being the very South West end of the Wallet shallowing into the **Ray Sand Channel**. This anchorage is but a short dingy ride for keel boats or

an even shorter walk for beachable Long Keelers like *Navicula Star*! Fog, rough seas and strong winds particularly from the N and E can make anchoring unsafe, but the Match is still playable on the stony tufted proxy pitch at Mersea Stone (unless washed-out by stormy monsoon weather - 1990/91?).

The Game

The ball used is a tennis type as anything heavier would have no bounce. With limited time on the

uncovered Sand, the game is played on limited bowled-overs of 2 per player and balls received of 12 per batsman. All runs are as scored with no boundaries and the umpire's decision is final (– usually?).

Now you know so please come and support the Buxey Ashes next year.

Bernie Meggitt

Navicula Star

A Sailor's Lament! ...Or the adventures of Buttercup.

"Brr Brr." OK, I know telephones don't make those noises anymore but I can't write down my current ring tone!

"...a case of what? Wheeping garboards!" This sounded painful – and expensive.

"...Yes, when we pulled her out of the field, the aft end seemed to flex a bit and water appeared down the sides of her keel." Long pause – "Oh dear.....what do you suggest?"

"...think you ought to have somebody look at her."

"...Like who?"

"...Send you a list of possible surveyors."

"...Great, but which one do I chose?"

"...Can't tell you.....Date Protection Act."

"...BXLXKS to that. Who **do** I ask?"



Sally afloat, before surgery

In deference to the majesty of the English Law, the next paragraph is omitted. We are now in the Tollesbury boatshed, the cockpit furniture is out, the cabin sole is up and the tanks have been removed. Our pretty little ship looks as if a bomb has hit it.

The survey report is.....gloom, doom and disaster, but there is a



Sally in the boatshed

ray of light and a very long tunnel. What to do? Grit teeth, smile, ring bank manager and hide all bills from my lady wife (new kitchen in the new year, darling). So what does a man really do when deprived of his boat for the best three months of the summer? I am not sure quite how my mind

lighted on this project as 'therapy' but Buttercup is made of shuttering ply. She was cut out free-form with a jig saw, properly primed and carefully painted. She has three dimensional udders and a local farmer gave her a free cowpat on a cardboard plate. Thanks to

a radio microphone and a karaoke machine buried under her straw, she can talk to casual passers-by and does indeed enter both simple and erudite conversations.

On child shouted

"Mummy, Mummy, there is a man in that cow!", only to be ad-

monished with "don't be so stupid.

I'll take you home if you are going to behave like this."

"Quite right," said Buttercup.

Buttercup likes

Shakespeare:

"T.B. or not T.B."

(Hamlet).

Hemmingway:

'For Whom the Bull Tolls.'

She cleans her teeth

with 'hoofpaste'.

And her favourite oratorio is 'The Cream of Gerontius' (that's enough, ed!)

You can see how a boat in dry dock affects a man's mind. Sally is back in the water now and her garboards are tight. So here's to next season and bye-bye Buttercup. Time to moooo-ve on!

Clive Debenham

Sally



Buttercup at her best

The End of the Commodore Cruise – 20th October 2007

The neap tides were always going to be a problem for the 'end of the commodore cruise' and those that could went out on Friday evening. *Tongue Twister* had a lovely quick trip, motoring across to **Bradwell** with no wind and the beautiful sunset boding well for the morning trip up to Shotley.

On Saturday Morning, after the luxury of the extra hour or so in bed permitted by leaving from Bradwell rather than Tollesbury, we left the Marina and enjoyed the light north easterly wind that let us fetch down the Blackwater, just leaving the North Eagle to Starboard and then sail a long beat up **The Wallet** and out towards **The Gunfleet**. The seas were flat and the sunshine made for a perfect, though chilly, day.

The tide only just made 5 feet on the sill on Saturday morning; the un-seasonal High Pressure system helping to hold the levels down. With 20 seats booked at the Bristol Arms, and some boats neaped or with engine problems, there was an anxious head count which stalled at 13 diners until an 'all Tollesbury boats going to Shotley call' got welcome additional responses from people not previously signed up for the event.

Out by **The Gunfleet**, opposite the **Naze Tower** and just needing to put in our first tack, we listened to a call from *Ostara* to *Hiawatha* talking about "an amazing wind shift by the Naze" where the wind had dropped, gone round to the South east, and increased to 17 Knots plus in about 5 minutes.

A short while later, it did the same to us and, although we were expecting it, we managed to put the cockpit coaming under water until we freed the jammed mainsheet. Once sorted we raced off towards **Shotley**. It was an unusual experience and we watched *Samaru*, sailing a couple of hundred yards inshore of us, still close hauled until they too got the shift.

Shotley Sojourn

It was pleasant to be able to lock into Shotley quite early for a change, giving us time to browse round **The Ganges Museum**, time to admire the 'Hood 50' for sale in the yard, an obvious bargain at £167,500, and spend some money in the chandlery.

Dinner in **The Bristol Arms** was a great success. We finally sat down 25 members and friends. The early meal allowed those that wished to go into the main bar to

watch the Rugby.

The return home on Sunday was magical. Bright sunshine, flat mirrored blue seas and not a lot of wind. What wind there was made it feel chilly and it was a case of suntan cream and thermals. The wind filled in enough for a sail between **The Naze** and **Clacton Pier** but the rest was done under engine.

We picked up a buoy in **The Leavings** just after sunset. *Hiawatha* moored along side us and with the tides still being very low, the decision was made to avoid the creek in the dark and go in on Monday morning. We pooled resources to make an unplanned feast for five and spent a very convivial evening together.

Monday morning brought thick fog. At 07:30 we could only just see the boat behind us; no shore, no depth gauges. An anxious wait bought an improvement in visibility and we crossed the sill near the top of the tide with the gauge barely showing five feet.

A great trip. Eleven boats made Shotley and all had a great time despite the Rugby result.

Andy Hobden
Tongue Twister

Cruising Catering

Pilot books are not always as informative as they might about the catering facilities in other harbours. **Ramsgate**, for example, offers a well-stocked *Waitrose* in

the street behind the parade containing the Royal Temple Yacht Club. **Dover**, is furnished with a Marks and Spencer's food hall and a large Sommerfield supermarket. The supply of hot food in both the **Royal Temple**

(Ramsgate) and **Royal Cinque Ports** (Dover) **Yacht Clubs** now seems to be rather variable. However, both towns are well provided for in terms of bars and restaurants, so eating out presents no difficulties.