



Up the Creek...

Tollesbury Waves Farewell to the Bleak Mid-Winter

Well whatever you might think, the signs of spring are definitely all over the place. I have yet to make it back to the marina but I suspect that most of you are beavering away getting boats ready for the new season. It's been so cold and so dull this winter that I can't wait to get back out onto that sparkly sea and set sail wherever the wind may take me. But this is England and this is the Blackwater. Who am I kidding? It's more likely to be blowing wind over tide up the Wallet, churning the sea into the mud coloured chop we know and love.

But before the new season really gets underway, we take a retrospective glance back to all that snow and the Christmas Cruise that wasn't but turned into something just as special. Read Rob Perrin's account of the "Clubhouse Cruise" on page 6.

However, like many before it, this season looks like being a cracker! Our new Cruising Commodore Rob Perrin has put together an excellent programme for our enjoyment and the added bonus of back to back

long weekends in April/May (thank you William and Kate) should provide an excellent cruising opportunity. Ian Robinson, our new Rear Commodore (Racing), has taken care of the season's racing fixtures and so with everyone raring to go, we should be off to a good start. Read their reports on pages 2 to 5.



*Tollesbury shivers in arctic conditions
Photo Dave Cooke*

Late last season, Robin Kemp kindly drew my attention to some former editions of *Up the Creek* which, as always, contain some very interesting and amusing articles. He very kindly let me have his precious copies and I have kept these on file and propose "dropping" one or two in

from time to time when I have a shortage of new contributions coming through. The height of laziness on my part I know but like Robin, I too think they warrant re-publishing. But there is one particular article I recall that he has yet to send me. I believe it concerns a certain Aphrodite owner who wanted some manufacturer's information and typed 'Aphrodite, Amsterdam' into Google which, needless to say, returned certain websites which had nothing at all to do with boats! Come on Rob – 'fess up. My original copy made its way to the great recycling bin in the sky ages ago. We'd love to read it again!

In the meantime, let's get those boats gleaming like new and get back out on the water for some fun, frolics and bracing fresh air! I'm looking forward to seeing you out there.

Hilary Morgan
Editor
Quicksilver

Contents

Tollesbury Waves Goodbye to the Bleak Mid-winter.....	p. 1
Cruising Summary.....	p.2
Cruising Programme.....	p.3
Commodore's Corner.....	p.4

Racing Round up.....	p.4
Racing Programme.....	p.5
Frostbite Cruise.....	p.6
Going Overboard!.....	p.7
One Month's Grace.....	p.8
How it Cost Me a Fortune to Spend a Penny!.....	p.10

Edited by:
Hilary Morgan

Published by:
Tollesbury Cruising Club, Tollesbury Marina, Tollesbury, Essex, CM9 8ST

Cruising Summary

What can I say apart from what an exciting year we have planned this season? There seems to be something for everyone whether you want to cruise locally or be more adventurous. Please take a look at the programme of events for the year. If you haven't already done so, then join our website Forum for up to the minute news and join in the fun. Also keep your eye on the club notice board.

Keeping it local

As I write, we are starting the season off (19th March) with a short shake-down cruise down to Osea Island and back up to Bradwell followed by our first opportunity for a club evening meal in the *Green Man*. It will be good to catch up and discuss some interesting events that have taken place in the 'closed' season. We then move into April. How lucky are we? Potentially an 11 day cruise for some of us! Easter weekend (22nd April) closely followed by the extended early May/Royal wedding weekend. We are heading for the Orwell. Weekend 1 will take in Brightlingsea and Ipswich Haven. Those who are lucky enough to be able to stay will move on to the Deben for a couple of days exploring one or two 'quaint' anchorages. Weekend 2 (29th April) will give everyone the opportunity to meet up again. This time Shotley will be the initial destination, moving on to Suffolk Yacht Harbour over the weekend. And there'll be racing too!

Whitsun Week Cruise – Let's go Continental!

What an opportunity this is! For the more adventurous, this is a chance for both experienced and first timers to cross The Channel. The Calais

Rally beckons followed by visits to Gravelines, Nieuport and Dover. Not forgetting shopping opportunities for those French Fruit Flans!

Into June now and we plan to make the ever popular visit to Hamford Water for a Safari Supper weekend (11th June). This will also give some the opportunity to explore the Walton Backwaters by dinghy.

Howzat?

We need to win the Buxey Ashes. (18th June) Following conversations with Maldon Little Ships, they are of the opinion that they will win it this year as they have a great deal of interest. (That's if they turn up this time - they left us high and dry last year! – Editor) Well I don't think so. So come on - get your name down now to open the batting and bowling. This weekend will also include a visit to Brightlingsea or even a BBQ on Mersea Stone.

Here comes summer

We are all kids at heart so come and join the Family Fun day on Osea Island (2nd July) and bring your dinghies. There will be fun and games followed by a BBQ. The Summer Cruise (22nd/23rd July) is planning to go to Holland. Sign up now or why not let us know where you are planning to go? You may have some interested parties who might want to join you or meet up with you. Use the Forum and start the interest. You never know!

Into August now and this brings an adrenalin pumping night sail to Harwich (12th August), Halfpenny pier for breakfast and then on to Wolverstone or buoys at Pin Mill

with an evening meal at the *Butt & Oyster*.

The Extended Late Sumer Cruise (20th or 27th August) this year will be in 2 parts and again some may well take advantage and join in both weeks. The first week has been arranged to help those with children that need to get back to school (shame). The second week is back to a more traditional plan. During both weeks we are expecting to be visiting the Medway, London, Dover and Calais. Full details will be posted nearer the time.

And finally...

We have other events that will be taking place during the season especially those tying in with races. These all include venues for anyone not wanting to race who can cruise there instead.

I'm sure you will agree that there is plenty for all here, so please come along and join in. Register your interest on the Forum and don't forget: this is your club. A great deal of what happens is suggested by you, so have your say. I am only too pleased to talk with you and discuss ideas.

Happy Cruising for 2011. I look forward to seeing you on the water wherever it may be.

Rob Perrin
Rear Commodore (Cruising)
CARTEL

Cruising Programme 2011

Date		Event
March	Sat 26th Sun 27th	Fitting Out Supper New Members' Coffee Morning/Season's Briefing (11:00 in the Clubhouse)
April	Sat 2nd	Cruise Seminar (14:00 – 17:00) Commodore's Cocktails 18:00 - 19:30 (Both in the Clubhouse)
	May 3rd Sun 9th Fri 22nd Fri 29th	Mother's Day Carvery Table Top Sale in aid of RNLI (Clubhouse patio) Easter extended cruise – follows through to Cruise to Shotley and Club Dinner
May	Sat 14th Sat 28th	Goldie Challenge Race - Dinner at Swallowtail restaurant (in marina) Whitsun week Cruise to France
June	Sat 11th Sat 18th	Hamford Water Safari Supper Buxey Ashes and Father's Day weekend
July	Sat 2nd Sat 9th Sat 16th Sat 23rd	Family Fun Day Wallet Long Race (to be confirmed) - Brightlingsea weekend Kings Head Cup race/Brightlingsea Summer Cruise to Holland (starts Friday evening)
August	Fri 12th Sat 20th Sat 27th	Night sail to Harwich Extended Late Summer Cruise – Part 1 Extended Late Summer Cruise – Part 2
September	Sat 10th	Teapot Race & cruise to Brightlingsea
October	Sat 22nd Sun 23rd	Laying up Supper Annual General Meeting (in the Clubhouse)
November	Sat 5th	Colne YC Fireworks Party (Brightlingsea)
December	Fri 9th Sat 10th	40 th Anniversary Fancy Dress Party Christmas Cruise and Frostbite Race (Bradwell)

Rob Perrin
Rear Commodore (Cruising)
CARTEL

Commodore's Corner

Here we are on the edge of the 2011 season. I'm looking forward to it and not just because the weather is getting better and I can go sailing, but because it will mark the end of another winter of hard labour repairing and improving. I'm sure many of you will recognise the feeling - not only looking forward to that first spring sail but also to the end of the work! (Hopefully!)

So what have we in store for you? Well for the detail I'll refer you to Ian Robinson's (racing) and Rob Perrin's (cruising) articles elsewhere in this issue and of course to the 'Programme'. I can do no more than recommend some of the events I'm particularly looking forward to.

As I write, we are getting ready for the Fitting out supper on Saturday 26th March, a chance to have a great evening out including good food, music and dancing (but not for me!). The next weekend (2nd April) is the Commodore's cocktail party on Saturday evening, preceded in the afternoon by something new, a 'Cruising Seminar' - 'seminar' because I can't think of what else to call it. The idea is that we get together and swap information on sailing and cruising. We hope to have two or three short formal presentations, with plenty of discussion and questions. Come along and make it a success. I'm also looking forward to the summer cruise to Holland. I've not been for a couple of years it and it will be good to go back. Another event on my list is the Family Fun Day,

something we have been developing for a couple of years. This year we are planning to base ourselves at Osea, so bring along dinghies and other craft, or just come and watch and join in the BBQ in the evening - all welcome.

Please feel free to contact me with your thoughts and comments, via the website, Forum, e-mail, phone, 'snail mail or in person.

Whatever your plans are for the season I hope you have a wonderful and safe time and hope you can join us for the races and cruises. You will be very welcome!

Dave Cooke, Commodore
(*Nimrodel*)

Robinson's Racing Round-Up

The first events in the club's calendar are rushing toward us, but most of us appear to be still in winter hibernation. As I write, I have made a start on *Ostara*, but in truth I doubt I can be ready for the 19th March. Still we will see!!

It is none the less time that we updated club members on this season's cruising and racing events. The cruising events are very well supported but in truth, the racing component has eased off a little recently. Hopefully this year one or two extra boats will join in.

I am pleased to tell you that Joyce Woodham and Ron Fry have volunteered their boats as committee boats this year which is good news. Having a committee boat is great for us as it makes starts and finishes so much easier. There will still be times when we will self time finishes. The committee has decided that in such a circumstance the time will be taken when the helm position crosses the

line. If there is a committee boat then it will record the time the bow passes the line.

One very important aspect about working with a committee boat is that skippers absolutely must radio the committee boat if they are pulling out of the race (or ask another boat to relay the message). It is not funny if you are on a committee boat patiently waiting for the last boat to come in only to find out later that they had quietly slipped past to go to the pub! Another point to mention is that by definition the committee boat will be last in. The racing captain of the day must make sure that there is a suitable berth allocated and a shore party standing by.

Racing in our club is not about 'headbangers'. No one protests the outcome. (Yes I know that I whinged a bit last year in the forum about the TSC's habit of putting ringers into the Kings Head Cup - but we have a cunning plan for this year). Our races

are all about putting an enjoyable edge into a normal passage. I would defy the most hardened of cruising sailors to tell me that they never tweak their sails if they observe a similar yacht nearby going in the same direction. None of our boats are stripped out racers. Our handicap system does what it says on the tin. It handicaps successful boats. It cannot guarantee that everyone will be a winner, but if someone tries, then success will happen one day. As most of our races are A to B races, one day the weather will suit an 'uphill' boat and on another it will favour a 'downhill' boat. On the day, any boat can win any of our races.

So if you are joining the cruise why not join the race too?

See you on the water soon.

Ian Robinson
Rear Commodore (Racing)
Ostara

Racing Programme 2011

Date		Race
April	Sat 23rd	Pursuit Race – Projected Start 0600 hours Incorporated into the Easter Cruise – a run from Brightlingsea to Harwich Breakwater via the Medusa and Stone Banks
May	Sun 1st	Howlett Cup Incorporated into the Spring Cruise to the Orwell. The start will be late morning. A short ‘round the cans’ course in either Pennyhole Bay or in the Stour
	Sat 14th	Goldie Challenge & Burnham Weekend – Projected start 1030 hours The traditional course from the Nass to Burnham via the Swin Spitway. Dinner will be at the Swallowtail restaurant at Burnham Marina.
July	Sat 9th	Wallet Long Race and Brightlingsea – Projected start 0900 hours A traditional course from the Nass out into the Wallet and finishing at Brightlingsea. Course to be determined on the day, but hopefully will go up to Wallet no 2.
	Sat 16th	Kings Head Cup and Brightlingsea – Projected Start 1400 hours The traditional race around Osea Island with TSC.
September	Sat 10th	Teapot Race and Brightlingsea – Projected Start 1230 hours Our race for ladies at the helm. A white sails only event. The course will be round to Brightlingsea from the Nass via the Bench Head (perhaps with some additional marks too)
December	Sat 10th	Frostbite Race and Bradwell - Projected Start 12.30 A white sails only event. The course will be down to the Thirslet buoy from the Nass and finishing by turning with the barrier to port and across the line heading west between the committee boat and the Bradwell beacon

Wallet Shield – date to be confirmed

This is a team race organised in turn by one of the Wallet Association Clubs. We do not yet have a date. It is a team race in which the 3 best handicap times from the entries of each club are counted.

Ian Robinson
Rear Commodore (Racing)
Ostara

The Frostbite 'Cruise' - or 'Ice Cold in Tollesbury'

A rare thing! The weather gets the better of Cruising Club sailors.



The final plans had been made, the berths were booked at Bradwell, the sea food was ordered and the evening party booked at the *Cricketers* Pub. Sixteen boats were ready and party hats were packed.

Then the snow fell, ice formed on every surface and engines froze. Everyone held their nerve. It was nothing these hardy sailors had not faced before. Schools had to close, thermal underwear was purchased and workers took hours to get into work. Yet still the hardy sailors of Tollesbury didn't flinch. Dogs with short legs had cold tummies and taller dogs had cold paws. Julian cleared the pontoons and gritted the area around the bar and Louise added anti-freeze to the gin.

By Friday the weather forecast was for minus 7 degrees at Tollesbury that night and finally Rob and Pete decided that it was just too great a risk to expect even the hardest sailor to brave the arctic weather. The thought of eating seafood whilst

dancing on icy pontoons was too frightening to contemplate.

It was thus that a group of downcast sailors filled the clubhouse on Saturday afternoon around about the time they should have been setting off for Bradwell. Their depression was enhanced by the fact that the air was filled with the sound of dripping as the snow thawed and the promised freezing fog failed to arrive. Spirits were soon lifted by Louise's secret recipe mulled wine and a wonderful spread of seafood prepared lovingly by Pete. It was strange to enjoy this annual culinary event in the warmth of the clubhouse but it lost none of its unique appeal.

After lunch there were a number of party games including a stunning pass the parcel complete with forfeits which had Keith shouting "bananas" after every sentence and Robin doing an impression of an Elf. Team *Ostara* won the word search competition and Stuart and Wendy (*Mornaque*) took the prize for the hat competition in their Elfin finest. The atmosphere in the clubhouse was fantastic, although those families who had booked in for a quiet lunch seemed bemused at first but eventually joined in the games.

In the evening some of the brave few battled their way by car to The *Cricketers* Pub in Bradwell for food and musical entertainment whilst others carried on the tradition of



'Bananaman' Keith Macey returns to his childhood!

having a lovely Christmas dinner on their boats complete with pudding and crackers.

What might have been a sad afternoon was transformed into a fun packed event thanks to the brilliant teamwork of the TCC.

Rob Perrin
(CARTEL)



Where did you get that hat? Dave Cooke 'congratulates' Wendy Wallace

Going Overboard!

Hilary Morgan wipes the smiles off our faces.

We've all seen it happen, some of us even have first-hand experience, but when does falling in become less of a laughing matter?

Backflip

Last year's May Day Bank Holiday cruise to the Orwell brought the typical downpours expected in this country whenever there is a long weekend. The highlight of the last day's cruising was provided by Charlotte Perrin (Grey Goose), who, assisted by Rolo the chocolate Labrador, did an elegant backflip into the freezing waters of Levington Marina. Husband Rob nearly joined her as he rushed to help her, flinging himself over the guard rails on *Aloha* where the rest of us were doing what TCC members usually do in the pouring rain.

Bad Reputation?

And so an article about falling in began to take shape in my mind. A bit of a giant leap I know but then I usually have the reputation for being the one in the water. For longstanding TCC members the words 'falling in' and 'Hilary' are synonymous! It seems to me that fallings in 'fall' (pardon the pun) into two distinct categories – the amusing video clip type and the downright life threatening. I can see this article turning into a list but I will try to keep it story-like.

On the light-hearted side, there is the time I fell out of a dinghy off the power station at Bradwell. A kindly TCC member wanted see if certain of my body parts would now glow in the dark, such was his concern. I remember a past Commodore getting into her dinghy at The Rocks on the Deben and missing her footing off the beach. She sank into the water up to her chest. "Now your lifejacket's

going to go off!" said Keith, blandly. A short pause – then – woosh! I have had yet more dinghy moments in the Caribbean, but the water there is warm and there's no tide to speak of and no-one bats an eyelid when you walk to your restaurant table dripping wet. They've all been there and the seats are usually plastic. At Pin Mill many years ago, Jim pushed the dinghy out in front of him with the boys and yours truly already seated aboard. He assumed he would be able to clamber aboard but stepped right off the end of the hard into the cold mud right up to where you don't want cold mud if you are a bloke! ("Whatever you do, don't laugh!" I told the boys who were still quite young then. To their credit – they managed to remain silent, perhaps sensing the gravitas of the situation.)

But Seriously Folks....

But I have been witness to many a dangerous encounter with the briny. Ambulances and even air ambulances have been called, people have been fished out of Bradwell Marina during Christmas Cruises. (Though I have to say that the water is much warmer at that time of the year than in June!) On one occasion I lent a whole set of clothes to a recently immersed friend.

I myself nearly drowned in the Veerse Meer on our first trip to Holland. We had been barbecuing ashore in time honoured Tollesbury tradition, but on the way back to the boat, I tripped over a mooring line and in I went. Not usually a problem but I had a rucksack full of beers on my back and I was carrying two other bags full of food, plates etc in my hands. I tried to swim but was unaware that my foot was actually still caught on the jetty and all I was do-

ing was to kick Betty in the tummy (she had huge bruises for weeks) as I tried to swim and she tried to free me. Every time I raised my head, the rucksack pushed it back down under the water. I lived to tell the tale due to some quick thinking by Keith Macey and Richard (Joyce Woodham's son) who came to my rescue with a dinghy.

We all practice man overboard drill and spend a small fortune on contraptions and gismos to assist us in getting a victim back on board. We are more aware of the danger when at sea and take the relevant precautions. But we let our guard down when the boat is safely tied up and are lulled into a false sense of security.

In my personal experience, I have known of more people falling overboard in dangerous circumstances in marinas than anywhere else. It usually happens during mooring when we jump off the boat onto the pontoon. Here is a man overboard not in the open sea but in a small confined space, trapped between a moving boat and a pontoon. I have seen people go under pontoons. If a lifejacket were to inflate at this moment, it would trap them under it! If a person is injured in their fall and can't climb out themselves, it is very difficult to get them back onto dry land. Add to this a set of saturated oilies, cold water and possibly age and you have a recipe for disaster – literally. I am thinking of dislocated shoulders, broken ankles, heads bashed against the hulls of boats on the other side of a slippery pontoon just to begin the list. All of these required urgent medical attention involving 999 calls.

Continued on page 8.....

One Month's Grace

Jane Cooke reports on *Nimrodel's* summer cruise to the Channel Islands

Some years ago I read *One Summer's Grace* by Libby Purves. I've not yet had my summer's grace, but in summer 2010 I did get one month's grace. For a family with two full time jobs, busy teenagers and who, on the whole take far too much, this was an amazing period of time. It's also interesting that, despite having a boat since our youngest son was five, we haven't taken off and sailed round the world, spent a summer in the Mediterranean or anything similar. Life gets in the way. However to coincide with my husband Dave turning 50, a month's trip to the Channel Islands was planned.

When I was asked to write about our trip I was reluctant, thinking that people would tend to be interested in passage planning, routes taken, sea states and all those things. That's not what comes to my mind when I think about the trip.

Easy Does It

In mid-July, Dave, Rhys and I drove down to *Nimrodel* for the start of our trip. It may have only been for four weeks but that evening, a liberating sense of freedom crept over me. We stayed up into the night sorting out the boat ready for the next morning and having a night cap or two!

The trip was typified by us taking our time. We stopped, visiting places on the way and making sure our trip was a real holiday for everyone. This started early by us sailing to Dover in the company of *Navicular Star* and then taking the Sunday off to visit Dover Castle. It was warm and sunny and we had a brilliant day out. From there we met up with friends in Eastbourne and then on to the Isle of White. Strangely, this is somewhere that we had never really visited before so another day off was called for before the trip to Alderney.

We sailed overnight to Alderney and arrived around 4.00am in the morning into a steady swell in Braye Harbour. We had some time to explore Alderney before dropping down for an overnight stop on Guernsey and then on down to Jersey. Here we met up with



St Peter Port—The weather turns nasty

Carol and Ian from *Ostara* and had a fun night out with them. We had beautiful sunny weather the next day so decided to visit Elizabeth Castle in St Helier. It's an amazing castle and another theme for our trip became

..... Continued from page 7

In our first year at the marina an elderly lady, who already had a broken leg in plaster, fell off a motor boat moored in the first berth on C pontoon. She fell not in the water but into the cold mud and was trapped with the tide rising. It was dark and everyone was hunkered down in their boats or socialising in the clubhouse and her faint cries were unheard.

I can't remember the rest of the story but she was rescued and lived to tell the tale and the incident prompted the

installation of the pontoon ladders which are now in place.

The marina does everything it can to warn us of the dangerous environment in which we frolic in our spare time, but in the end it's up to us as individuals to do our best to keep ourselves safe whilst still having a good time.

Well, as I thought, this started off as a funny article about falling in but it seems to have taken a more serious turn. It's just the way my thoughts progressed, provoked by Charlotte's close encounter with Levington Marina. The water and air temperature

were cold on that rainy afternoon but a warm shower revived her and we were soon able to laugh off a funny situation whilst all the time thanking our lucky stars that it turned out the way it did.

So have fun out there, take care. Enjoy the amusing ones but learn from each and every one of them.

See you out on the water – not in it I hope!

Hilary Morgan
Quicksilver

apparent - the mix of the 2nd World War and history further back in time.

After Jersey, Dave, Rhys and I explored Herm and Sark before being joined by our daughter Jessica and a group of old friends to celebrate Dave's 50th birthday. However before this, we did get to meet up with Carol and Ian again in St Peter Port as the weather turned nasty and lots of boats took refuge in the harbour. This turned out to be very good fun as hundreds of boats of different shapes and sizes slotted in together to form a strange sort of 'pack ice' that was constantly moving and shifting. After drinks on *Nimrodel* we were unsure whether Rhys could get Carol and Ian back to their boat in our dingy and he had to weave through a maze of ropes, boats and opening and closing gaps!

Who needs friends?

A couple of days before Dave's 50th we were joined by a group of friends who planned to camp on Herm and stay on for the birthday celebrations. It marked probably the maddest section of our holiday and definitely a



*The British Seaside at its best!
(Shell Beach)*

very memorable phase. We packed everyone on board for a night of eating and drinking, proving that *Nimrodel* is a real 'Tardis' as bags and camping gear disappeared into her cavernous lockers. The next day we



Nimrodel at anchor off Shell Beach

went across to Herm, dropped anchor and shipped our friends and all their camping gear onto the island via dinghy. As always Rhys was ferry man.

Once camp was set up we had the most incredible day on Shell Beach. If it hadn't been for the temperature of the sea you could have been in the Caribbean! Herm is definitely a little known treasure and on a hot sunny day, absolutely idyllic. From here we moved to Sark, picking up a visitors' buoy at le Greve de la Ville. It's a brilliant bay with a number of visitors' buoys and if you are lucky enough to pick one up it gives you a safe base to from which to explore Sark for a day or so. There is no fixed charge; you leave a donation at the visitor centre. It was another memorable day of fun, frolics, wine and very good food.

Perhaps the funniest part of our friends' trip out to the Channel Islands was us collecting them and all their camping gear from Herm. This involved Jessica and I taking a dinghy full of camping stuff back to *Nimrodel* and unloading it in what felt like a mountainous swell! We learned to time passing various items from the dinghy to *Nimrodel* on the 'up swell' to reduce the distance and grab hold of the next item in the 'down swell'. Not sure if it's worthy of being added to our list of skills on our CVs but it's a very useful skill on a boat!

We sailed back from the Channel Islands with both Jess and Rhys on board and had a few good days in Lymington and the Solent. We dropped Rhys off as he was then going sailing on a BT Challenger trip and headed for Portsmouth. This gave us an opportunity for an impromptu trip up the Spinnaker Tower, a late night out at the cinema and then another day off to visit the *Warrior* and *Victory*.

We re-traced our steps, visiting friends again in Eastbourne and then a final stop at Ramsgate. This took Jess back to her childhood and we played on the beach, saw Toy Story at the wonderfully named Granville Theatre and rounded off a rather splendid day out with fish and chips.

It was a wonderful four weeks spent meeting people from Tollesbury, family and friends, fitting in some really good sailing - on the whole just doing what we wanted and moving and changing our plans as the weather and our fancy dictated.

Jane Cooke
Nimrodel



The inevitable photo! Log reading hull speed of 13.7 knots in the Alderney Race

Well here is one of those past articles I told mentioned at the beginning of this edition. I confess—I needed something to fill an extra page and as I had already informed you of my intent, here is an article from 2001. It was written by Dave McCombe of *Stargazer* who has now left us to sail in Greece where he and Geraldine have their new boat. I'm sure he won't mind my reprinting this in his absence! (Editor)

How it Cost Me a Fortune to Spend a Penny!

Picture the scene – a wet and windy Friday evening in April after an evening's on-board socialising with the clock the wrong side of midnight.

With a virtually landlocked marina at Tollesbury and a serious call of nature beckoning, I decided to use the clubhouse facilities. I was unable to use the outside toilet as I couldn't see the push buttons on the door lock in the dark and had forgotten my torch. It's a five minute walk back along the pontoon to my boat and time was getting short, so I tried the main clubhouse. I could not remember if access was available at that late hour but luck was with me. I entered the relevant code, gained entry and shortly after, being much relieved, pushed the electronic button to allow me to exit the building.

After three failed attempts and upon hearing a quiet ticking, realisation dawned – a time clock was running on the locking mechanism and I was now incarcerated until dawn!

I considered my options:

1. Stay in the clubhouse for the night and worry the life out of my wife who would, no doubt, believe that I had gone overboard!
2. Phone for assistance, but I had no money for the coin box and who would I ring anyway?
3. Yell for help, but the clubhouse and pontoons were deserted.
4. Escape by an alternative route.

So option 4 it was. I checked for alarms, window and door sensors and selected a window in the restaurant that appeared to offer easy access to the lawn in front of the building. I undid the window catches (good, no alarms sounded), sat on the edge of the window frame, pushed myself off and, for a brief moment, was suspended by a pair of Timberland trousers and Pierre Cardin boxer shorts which were firmly hooked onto the pin that secured the window stay!

With a ripping sound reminiscent of a mainsail blowing out in a Force 10,

my trousers and underwear gave way! The loss and cost of clothing brought a new twist to the saying 'going to spend a penny'. I remember thinking "It's a longer drop to the ground than I expected", hit the wet grass and sprawled ignominiously on the ground covered in mud, which added to the misery. I managed to partially secure the window from the outside and crept back along the pontoons with no one the wiser, apart from the CCTV. In the morning I discreetly returned to the 'scene of the crime' to fasten the window properly from the inside.

So, should anyone check the tape for the early hours of April 6, 2001, they will see me walking back to my boat whilst performing a half Monty.

It was a cloudy night, but I know there was a big half-moon shining!

**Dave McCombe
Latterly of *Stargazer***

Deadlines for future issues of *Up the Creek*

Should you be considering submitting a contribution to the newsletter, please bear in mind the dates below. I would need to receive your article by June 26th for inclusion in the Summer edition and by 11th November for inclusion in the Autumn edition. Do please keep your articles and photos coming; without them, there would be no newsletter! Don't wait for a deadline date. If you feel moved to write something, why not send it to me straight away?

Hilary Morgan, Editor