



Up the Creek...

Let's Push the Boat Out

In more ways than one!

Who knows if we have seen the last of the winter yet? As I write, hazy sunshine is drying a line full of oilies, fleeces, boat towels and sheets. It must be spring again and it must be time for that flurry of activity that precedes the season's start. No doubt some sensible people did their nautical washing machines full at the end of last season but I have my excuses and I'm sticking to them!

Celebration Time

So we now look forward to a string of bank holidays – Easter, May Day and in early June an extended Whit-sun weekend courtesy of The Queen as she celebrates her Diamond Jubilee. And how does Tollesbury Cruising Club mark the occasion? By leaving the country of course and “Going Continental”! I'm sure HM won't miss us. (Or could this be what Julian Goldie is earnestly telling Princess Anne at January's Boat Show? See photo page 12)

We are also hoping to celebrate the London 2012 Olympics by taking part in **Push The Boat Out** – an attempt to get loads of people out on

the water on 21st July. So let's keep our diaries free and pray for fair winds.

Busy Schedule

See what else is in store for us this season by reading the Racing and Cruising reports on pages 3 and 4. Paul Noyland and Nigel Seary have put together an excellent programme of sailing with, as usual, something for everyone. If you are new to the club or have yet to join in one of the cruises or races, do consider coming along. The welcome is always very warm even if the sea temperature takes a while to get going.

This year Tollesbury Cruising Club is taking part in the RYA's **Active Marinas** programme to provide several courses offering training in such things as boat handling and passage planning. It's never too late to receive some expert advice.

Timely Reminder

It is Tollesbury's turn to host the Wallet Ball next year and

whilst this means organising the ball itself it also falls to us to create the legendary cabaret act for which the occasion is renowned. Peter Philpot tries to rally the troops on page 2.

Elsewhere in this edition Jim Morgan reports on a sunny day in the Solent, Ian Robinson races in the Adriatic and I relive some anxious moments in the Caribbean. Read on!

Hilary Morgan
Editor
Quicksilver



Christmas Cruisers enjoying the seafood at Bradwell last December
Photo : Nigel Seary

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Commodore's Corner

I hope everyone has got through the winter having remembered to drain their water tank as the temperature fell low enough to "wax" diesel fuel and partially freeze the marina in late January. But just like spring in the garden, the marina is showing signs of life again. People are appearing all over the place with pots of anti-fouling, polishing machines, tools, etc. The boats also look as though they are coming back to life with this amount of attention being lavished on them. Keep up the good work – it may inspire me to polish my own hull!

Wallet Ball

The Wallet Ball on Saturday 3rd March turned out to be a great success, not only for Wivenhoe Sailing Club who organised the event, but also for Tollesbury Cruising Club as we had the largest contingent there for many years. Eighteen in all! I also confirmed at the dinner that TCC will pick up the baton for next year's ball. Any help from our club



membership will be greatly received. Your Vice Commodore, Ian Robison, will be taking this project on board so look out for posters and internet requests – **Your Club Needs You!**

Active Marinas

There are already posters on the club notice board and website for the Active Marinas programme which is being organised jointly with the RYA. Check to see which courses you need to book. I've already booked a couple to refresh my own sailing abilities.

Osea Hazard

On a cautionary note, it would appear that a lot of rubble had been dumped on the causeway between Osea Island and the mainland. The council have said they will be removing it but in the meantime anyone planning a 'round the island passage' should beware.

So it just remains for me to say that I hope all your pre-season preparations have gone well and that we will meet out on the water before very long.

Peter Philpot
Commodore
Codan

Editor's Message

Its not only your club that "needs you" but also your beleaguered newsletter editor! Can I put in the usual plea for contributions? Without them there is no *Up the Creek*. So as you are out an about this summer why not jot down a few notes, take a few pictures and send them to me? As you can see from this edition, it can be anything boating related. I'm not looking for Pulitzer Prize winners - just some interesting and/or amusing anecdotes or useful snippets of information. Come on TCC - "Your Newsletter Needs You Too!"

Here's a reminder of the deadlines for the summer and autumn editions.

Summer 2012 June 8th

Autumn 2012 November 9th

Racing Round-up

Season's Preview

The season hasn't even started but already I have to report a change to the racing calendar. The King's Head Cup, organised by the Tollesbury Sailing Club, has been arranged for the 18th August which is the same date we had set for the Howlett Trophy. As the King's Head Cup requires a big spring tide it is easier to rearrange the Howlett Trophy and this will now be held on Good Friday, 6th April, as a race up to the Orwell to start off the Easter Cruise.

The season continues with the Pursuit Race being held on the May Bank Holiday weekend combined with the Safari Supper social event planned for Hamford Water.

A change of sailing direction is due on 26th May with the Goldie Challenge Race to Burnham. This race is usually true to its name in that it is a challenge to decide on a start time to get the boats to the Spitway for low water and then it is a challenge for the crews short-tacking their way up the Crouch if the prevailing south-westerlies put in an appearance.

The Spring Bank Holiday/Queen's Diamond Jubilee weekend will see an attempt at a more ambitious passage race in the Thames Estuary to coincide with the cruising events to France and Ramsgate/Dover.

The end of June is the Ladies weekend combining the Lady Helm and

the Boudicca Races. The Lady Helm Race is usually popular but the Boudicca has not happened for several years due to a lack of entries so I am currently considering a couple of options to make it more appealing hopefully.

Notices of races will be posted in the club house and on the forum so feel free to add your entry to either, both or contact me directly. (contact details on committee page of the website)

Paul Noyland
Rear Commodore (Racing)
Moonshine

Racing Programme

April	6th	Howlett Trophy	to join Easter Cruise in the Orwell
May	5th	Pursuit Race	to join Safari Supper in Hamford Water
	26th	Goldie Challenge	to Burnham
June	2nd	Steve Rix Race	to join cruise to Ramsgate and Gravelines
	16th	Wallet Long Race	Brightlingsea pontoon party
	30th	Teapot Trophy	Lady Helm
	31st	Boudicca Trophy	All women crew
August	18th	Kings Head Cup	Round Osea Island Race
September	29th	Spare Race Day	in case any previous races have been postponed
December	1st	Frostbite Race	to join Christmas Cruise to Bradwell

Cruising Update



Wendy Cowell, Debbie Apthorp and Wendy Gooch raise a glass to end the season at the Christmas Cruise

2012 promises to be an exciting season with a great programme of events, together with a series of RYA initiatives and training days on such topics as boat handling and passage planning to boost your confidence and encourage more boats to go out sailing.

Gentle Start

Where has the time gone? It seems like only yesterday that we were shivering on the Bradwell pontoon enjoying the seafood and mulled wine before heading for the warmth of the Green Man during the Christmas Cruise. Spring is certainly in the air and for our first official event of the season we will be heading back to Bradwell again for our Shakedown Cruise on 24th March. High tide is at 13:11 and we will start with a gentle cruise up the Blackwater. Berths have been booked at Bradwell as have tables in the Green Man Pub in the evening.

Heading north for Easter

Over Easter we have a 4 day cruise planned to The Orwell and The Deben. Starting on Friday April 6th, we will head for Shotley for the evening, then into the beautiful Deben on the Saturday where berths have been

booked at Tidedmill Yacht Harbour in Woodbridge. On Sunday we will aim to stop somewhere in the Orwell on our way back.

On Safari

Over the May Bank Holiday (5th May) we will be heading for the Walton Backwaters where we will anchor in Hamford Water. You can cruise or hopefully join in with the Pursuit Race on the way. There we will organise our ever popular Safari Supper where you can enjoy different courses and company on different boats. For those who do not have to rush back, an extra night at anchor is recommended which will give you the time to explore the Backwaters by dinghy and enjoy watching the seals.

Burnham Weekend

May 26th is the Goldie Challenge weekend. We will be visiting Burnham Yacht Harbour in the Crouch. A meal will be arranged either in the marina restaurant or at the local Yacht Club.

Whitsun Week Cruise - Going Continental

Starting June 2nd - this is a great opportunity to cruise in company to France stopping off at Ramsgate on the way. Don't forget to leave space in the boat to stock up on some wine and cheese!

Defending the Ashes

Following our success last year, we need you to brush up on your cricketing skills to keep the Buxey Ashes trophy at Tollesbury. This really is a light hearted event with the Maldon Little Ship Club that will (weather permitting) take place on the traditional pitch ie the Buxey Sands at low tide on 14th July. We will then head for

Brightlingsea on the rising tide where we hope to join our opponents for a meal at the Colne Yacht Club.

Late Summer

The Late Bank Holiday Cruise will start on the 25th August and head for Lowestoft via the River Ore. This will be a great opportunity to head a little further north than usual and explore some more of the fascinating East Coast rivers along the way.

Please join in. Tollesbury is a wonderful, friendly and active club and it would be great to see some more boats and some new faces joining in with events. If you have any questions or suggestions please contact me or any of the Committee Members. Also - don't forget the New Members' Coffee Morning and Season's briefing on 1st April.

Happy cruising and I hope you finish the antifouling and winter jobs in time to join us for the Bradwell Shakedown Cruise.

Rear Commodore Cruising Nigel Seary *Diana II*



Dionysus joins the Christmas fun

Cruising Programme

March	Sat - 24th	Shakedown cruise to Bradwell
	Sat - 31st	Fitting Out Supper
April	Sun - 1st	New members morning and Season's Briefing
	Fri - 6th	Easter Cruise to the Orwell and Deben
	Fri - 6th	Howlett Trophy and cruise to Shotley (revised date)
	Sat - 21st	RYA Active Marinas Launch, followed by Commodore's Cocktail party
	Sat - 28th	RYA Active Marinas Day - Passage Planning
May	Sat - 5th	Bank Holiday Cruise to Hamford Water - Pursuit Race and Safari Supper
	Sat - 19th	RYA Active Marinas Day - Boat Handling
	Sat - 26th	Goldie Challenge Cup to Burnham
June	Sat - 2nd	Whitsun week - Steve Rix Passage Race to Gravelines via Ramsgate
	Sat - 16th	Wallet Long Race and Cruise, followed by Brightlingsea Pontoon Party
	Sat - 23rd	RYA Active Marinas Day - Boat Handling
	Sat - 30th	Teapot Trophy and Boudicca Cup
July	Sat - 7th	Family fun day to Mersea Stone
	Sat - 14th	Buxey Ashes and Brightlingsea
	Sat - 21st	RYA Olympic 'Push the Boat Out Campaign' followed by Summer Cruise
August	Sat - 11th	RYA Training Day - Shore based course at the Club
	Sat - 25th	Late Bank Holiday Cruise to Lowestoft via River Ore
September	Sat - 1st	Kings Head Cup Race (date to be confirmed)
	Sat - 29th	Spare race day (for postponed races) details on the Forum
October	Sat - 27th	Laying Up Supper
	Sun 28th	Annual General Meeting
November	Sat - 3rd	Fireworks at Brightlingsea
December	Sat - 1st	Christmas Cruise to Bradwell and Frostbite Race

Keep an eye on the Forum for updates, changes and discussions about events

Log on to the TCC website at www.tollesburycc.co.uk

Whitbread 60 for my 55th

Jim Morgan celebrates his birthday in style - but the weather has other ideas!

What a gift!

A birthday present from my lovely wife on a super fast ocean racer? What a treat was in store! Needless to say Hilary had more sense than to book a place for herself. The idea of spending 12 hours on a racing machine bashing around the Isle of Wight in whatever weather presented itself on the day was not her idea of a fun day out.

The boat was billed as an original Whitbread 60, built in 1992 for the Whitbread Around the World Race, in original race trim apart from the addition of a toilet required by the MCA to get her commercial rating. The boat was billed as being fast and exciting for both novices and experienced sailors, so I fitted in somewhere there.



Blueprint underway in The Solent
Photo : Bluebox Sailing

At 64 foot long *Intrum Justitia*, now re-named *Blueprint*, is certainly the longest sailing boat I have ever been on. She is also the most uncomfortable, but more of that later. In the 93/94 race *Intrum Justitia* placed second overall and created a new world record for most miles sailed in 24 hours 428.7 miles at an average speed of 17knots!

Promises, Promises

The boat has been re-painted since her racing days and looked extremely mean with black hull, dark grey deck and black sails. The advertising 'spiel' stated that the crew would enjoy "taking the helm as we speed past the Needles, or changing sails on the front of the yacht whilst she crashes through the waves of St. Catherine's Deep". Taking the helm sounded great, crashing less so! The boat was designed to plunge the bow through the waves with the decks under water most of the time when sailing at top speed. On the internet we were promised 25knots in the right conditions.

I was very busy up until the 11th of July last summer as I had a completion deadline so I booked the following Monday. The weather in the preceding weeks was strong winds and blustery conditions, ideal for a performance boat. However as we got closer to the day the weather steadily 'improved'.

The best laid plans.....

Monday morning the sky was cerulean blue and there was not a breath of wind up by the hotel. "Never fear", I told Hilary, "there is always more wind on the coast and a sea breeze will definitely fill in during the day." Down on the Hamble I was really glad I had thought to pack shorts as well as my oilies as at 08.00 it was really hot and we were all slapping on the sun cream passed round by the skipper while he gave a simple safety briefing.

"Keep your head down on deck and don't fall overboard". With that we were off out into the Hamble, down Southampton Water and heading west.

There was no speeding past The Needles or crashing off St Catherine's Deep only the steady thud of the engine as we slipped along in a flat calm with the water like glass and the slightest of swells. A Maxi 1100 gliding past us going the other way with a poled out genneker gave some hope that there must be some wind but it was probably mostly the tide!

Put your backs into it!

As we cleared the Needles the skipper called for the mainsail. It took 6 of us in teams of two to get the sail up and about 6 minutes. We were told that recently, on a team building exercise, one of the England rugby team prop forwards had done the job on his own in just under 3 minutes! I know for sure that I had to stop at just two minutes or have a heart attack!



Pricey Kevlar
Photo: Bluebox Sailing

Well we didn't tear away but at least the engine went off and out came the big Kevlar jib. "£30,000 original price. Too expensive to be replaced for the likes of us amateurs. So look after it!" the skipper shouted as we dragged it across the deck. It was pretty impressive. With main and jib we were doing 5 knots at about 60 degrees to the wind and in only about 6 knots of wind.

The sun still hammered down on a silver sea out of an unblemished pale blue sky and more sun cream was issued along with sandwiches, coffee and hot chocolate. As you will have gathered there was still no crashing or bashing. To be honest, I was quite glad as *Intrum Justitia* had never been designed as a cruiser with all the comforts that that offers. Under engine the deck had been fine to sit on but as we heeled further with increased speed it



The 'winch pit'
Photo : Bluebox Sailing

became untenable and it was back to the cockpit.

This would better have been referred to as 'the winch pit' as that is all there was room for plus a 6 man racing crew to stand. With 10 guests, two crew and the skipper it was like being on a tube train in the rush hour with those working on winches bumping bums with those of us trying not to be in the way.



Blueprint's flat open decks

There is nowhere to sit on a boat like this I was told as when in the race, the crew would have been standing harnessed to the deck to withstand the waves which constantly run from bow to stern and, the skipper continued, that is why there is nothing to sit on as it would slow the boat down.

A change of direction

As we turned East the wind was off the stern quarter and we hoisted the asymmetric chute and lovingly rolled up the skipper's Kevlar jib. I will never moan about folding away my own jib again as this one was huge and took 4 of us to carry it back down below. A little

more wind and we were up to 10 knots and all perched like a row of monkeys, legs over the side. Quite comfy really as there was no rail just a smooth edge, so as not to slow the boat down again I supposed, but a bit precarious if sitting on the downhill side while eating a Kit Kat!

At Bembridge the wind died and we drifted sideways on the tide for half an hour making little progress till the wind freshened and swung into the North West.

All of a sudden we were off! You could feel the boat accelerate as the wind speed increased. Down with the chute - on with the smaller jib, hardening up and we were doing almost 20 Knots. It was undoubtedly thrilling but we were back to playing sardines in the 'winch pit' again.

As a crew we had definitely improved. Our tacks up towards Southampton Water were much smoother and with a lot less bumping into each other, probably helped by the fact that the two professional crew were up at the bow spotting and were out of the way.

It may sound a little as if I did not enjoy the day but this is far from true. I had a really nice 13 hours round the island in beautiful weather and superb cruising conditions. But I did miss my comfy cushions and the calm that Hilary and I enjoy these days pottering up and down the East Coast and I am really glad I wasn't a member of the round the world crew for one leg, let alone 9 months as my backside had had quite enough by the time we tied up again back on the Hamble.

Give me a cruiser any day!

Jim Morgan
Quicksilver

Sea to See – a Sailing Weekend on the Adriatic

Ian Robinson and friends sample ‘La Dolce Vita’

In August I became aware of an event called *Sea to See* which was being sponsored by the Italian city of Pescara, to participate in a yacht race over the weekend of the 16th/19th September. The race is called the Velandi-amo and attracts around 140 yachts. The invitation to Norway, Germany and Britain was for a party of up to 15 sailors from each country. Pescara would pick up the tab other than the travel cost out there.

Carole and I thought the opportunity to enjoy a weekend of Italian hospitality and sun was unmissable. We were joined by the yard’s Finance Manager Lindon Lloyd, his son James and a friend Dan. There were two other



Saturday Morning

We flew from Stansted and arrived on the Friday evening at 10pm to be



The Tollesbury Brit Crew

Brits and together we comprised the UK contingent. The Germans were 10 strong. Norway was represented by an Oslo based Italian.

greeted by balmy Mediterranean night air and a taxi to whisk us to our seafront hotel. A welcome dinner awaited us and we started to get to know our hosts and the other participants over a glass or three of wine. After dinner the night was still too young for Lindon and Co. and they went off bar hopping. Carole and I thought a bit of sleep might be helpful.

Boat Allocation

On Saturday morning we strolled to the marina under wall to wall sunshine for a briefing and a “practice” sail. 4 charter boats with skippers had been laid on for the international crews. I think they were all Jeanneau Sun Odysseys. We Brits were assigned a 45 with a foul bottom. There was a 55 for the main German group. Our hosts, some spare Germans and the “Norwegian” were assigned to another 45 and a 42. Only the 55 had any pretensions toward being able to race.

The plan was to sail about 12NM south to a marina in the port of Ortona for lunch and then return to Pescara for a Gala dinner. On the Adriatic we were greeted by dolphins and almost no wind. We drifted southwards eating pizza and drinking wine, but learning little about the boat or the skipper, whose English was not great (better than our knowledge of Italian, of course). Soon lunch time was nearing and we bashed on under engine. Lunch was a splendid affair under a gazebo.

Eventually it was time to return on board and motor back to Pescara. Along the way our weekend nearly ended. A fishing boat bizarrely charged at us and only sharp avoiding action avoided a serious collision. Lots of fiery radio traffic then ensued.

At 7pm we were picked up by coach and taken to a winery in the heart of a nearby mountain village. There we were greeted by the owner and her booted, suited and be-medalled sommelier served the wine. Wow!!

After grabbing a welcome drink we went off on a tour of the vineyard's cellars dug beneath the village. There, along with the history of the vineyard and the excellent Pecorino grape they grow, we were regaled with the antics of the Germans in WWII who apparently used the cellars as a panzer repair shop. After the tour we sat down for an excellent cold spread of local meats and cheeses. The wine flowed. We all visited the cold spread several times, and commented that this seemed a strange gala dinner.

Anyone can make mistakes

Yes, dear reader, you have guessed the truth. We ignorant Brits and the Germans too had mistaken the range of cold foods as the meal instead of just the hors d'œuvre. Entrée and dessert followed, but we managed to sample them. Too soon it was time to return to Pescara, where Lindon and Co. again headed off seeking more night life.

Race Day

Sunday was race day. Carole and I set off to the marina early to catch the build up, but many Italians were even earlier and the marina's shopping concourse was buzzing. Press and television were present. The announcer on the public address was building up the pressure. The local competitors were



Committed Racers

a mainly "beautiful" people dressed in Gucci for the marina is a "high end" facility and a place to be "seen at" as much as to sail from. There was not a muddy boot in sight. There were



Our Hosts

some dedicated race teams to be sure, but most were groups of friends and families intent on a good day out. Surprisingly the race organisation seemed to work and we soon headed off to our boats for the midday start.

On the boat the skipper introduced a friend whom we had understood was present because he spoke good English and we would race the boat.

What happened was that the skipper did not relinquish the wheel throughout the race and his friend was the pit boss. Also because the skipper owned the boat and he lived on it during the summer season he had absolutely no intention on of taking any risks.

Italian Job

We started plumb last and as the race developed he always took the view of discretion over valour (no jokes please). In defence of the skipper it must be said that Italians on the water are no different to Italians in cars. In that "rules are for cissies". There was quite a bit of bumping and boring at the early turning marks. The "German" boat was holed above the water line (shame), but the damage did not prevent it doing quite well in its class – unlike us!! During the race the wind picked up nicely and we gained maybe 15 places and even took down the bimini! Unfortunately the race was over all too soon as it

was a single lap of a simple rectangular course about 8 NM long.

After the race the skipper relinquished the wheel to me and his friend attempted to offer me steering advice. Cheek!! I didn't helm long as I had a longish spell on Saturday. During this period we arranged to have the engine put in gear to stop the propeller whirring away. Put-

ting the gearbox in astern at about 7 knots proved too much for the securing nut and the propeller actually fell off! We did not know this for about an hour, but when we did it was back to the marina for us.

Before prize giving there was time to sit in the shade on the concourse and sample the local beverages. At the end of proceedings we international crews were called forward for a photo shoot (You Tube Velandiamo 2011.m4v).

To cap off the day we then trooped to a nearby restaurant to be excellently fed and watered one more time.

The Brit contingent was not flying out until late on Monday evening so we had the night before us. Carole and I decided we could forego an early co-coa and bed and join the others at a nearby cocktail bar to while away the evening. We were joined by a couple of the Germans and we settled down to put the World and the Euro to rights.

Next day was a quiet affair. A slow start followed by a walk in the town centre, lunch on the seafront promenade and a doze on the beach. Eventually it was time for the taxi to take us to the airport for our Ryanair flight home.

Ian Robinson
Vice Commodore
Ostara

Trouble in Paradise

Its Not All Plain Sailing on a Charter in the British Virgin Islands-but at Least We Escaped the Snow!

White Bay on Jost Van Dyke in the British Virgin Islands is almost a cliché of a tropical beach. Palm fringed white sands and, tucked in the far corner, the famous “Soggy Dollar Bar” so named because your money gets wet as you wade ashore. Previous visits to this idyllic location have been peaceful and calm but this year was proving to be the exception.



White Bay in Quieter Times

We had already encountered several large boats – mainly catamarans – with inordinate numbers of noisy, drunk Americans aboard whose cackling laughter and very loud music turned our idyll into your typical English town centre on a Friday night. Our immediate neighbour overnight, a huge cat, made noise of a different kind, drowning out the sound of the waves lapping the shore by running its engines all night to power the air conditioning. At least that kept its occupants below. But the thrumming of engines is not what you go to the BVI for.

Just looking for a quiet life....

We left the anchorage by about 0830 in search of a quieter location and shelter from the quite strong wind and headed for the lee of Little Jost van Dyke about five miles along the coast. We motored out of White Bay, turned the corner and were about to hoist the sails when the engine stopped and the oil alarm beeped. The jib was unfurled in double quick time and we were able to sail while we considered the situation. It became obvious that although the fuel gauge was showing the tank to be a quarter full, we were out of gas as they say. We were very surprised as we are always told that the tank is full on leaving the marina

and being a charter boat we should never run out of fuel as the tank is very big. However, we had chartered for 12 days instead of the usual 7 and I began to wonder if they had not filled the tank to its capacity. Perhaps the fuel gauge was faulty? During our boat briefing, we had not been told to expect to refuel. However, it did occur to us that there might be a blockage in the fuel line as we had had a horrendous few hours the previous day, pitching and yawing in an 8ft following sea as we had made our passage from Virgin Gorda to Trellis Bay.

We were by now opposite Great Harbour, the main “town” on the island which had refuelling facilities but we didn’t fancy going alongside the jetty under sail. We could in theory anchor under sail and then sort it out. This seemed to be the best option and we called the Sunsail base to advise them of our predicament. It was agreed we would anchor and their workboat would come out to us.

Great Harbour now has mooring buoys for forty odd boats and many people also anchor around the mooring field. At this time in the morning the bay was full and many boats were chugging around as they left the har-

bour. The wind was strong and gusty from the east and there was quite a swell running. Jim knew what to do but had never actually done it! We talked the process through with Jay, our friend from Florida who was sailing with us, untied the anchor and worked out how to disengage the motorised windlass with a winch handle as it would not work without the engine. We picked our spot and began to weave our way through the huge motor yachts anchored in the outer reaches of the bay. Target practice with superyachts is not my idea of a good time! I had to avert my eyes on several occasions. Our mouths went dry. We reached the appointed spot, turned up into the wind, let the jib fly, the boat slowed to a standstill and Jay released the windlass. The anchor dropped about 2ft and hung in mid-air above the waves. The chain would not lower and we wallowed around for a few seconds being swept sideways towards the rocky shore by the strong wind and current.

All purpose tool?

We aborted, hardened up, went about and sailed back out to the deep water to consider our options. Jim decided to take positive action and brandishing that all-purpose implement cried, “If all else fails – whack it with a winch handle!” Still no movement



Huge motor yachts at anchor - sitting ducks?

on the gypsy. A dinghy approached from the boat adjacent to our previously intended anchoring position and the two men aboard offered help. There wasn't really anything they could do at that time but they said they'd stand by aboard their boat and we should shout across if we needed them. The skipper knew the area well and told us that if we could sort the anchor out, this would be a good spot to drop it.

A cursory glance at the fuel gauge showed a quarter of a tank so Jim tried the engine again and low and behold it started and we began to motor sail back in but a few minutes later, that sickening whine from the alarm again. Jay had managed to flake out about 10 metres of chain from the windlass about 6 inches at a time, having to disentangle it as he went as it had become badly "knotted" as a result of rolling around in the locker.

Second time lucky?

As we approached the same spot, the crew of one of the huge motor yachts, pristine in their coordinated white polo shirts and chino shorts, was lowering its twin engine, 20 ft "tender" and it looked as if they too would come to our rescue, or perhaps they were preparing to fend us off and repel boarders? But at the very last moment we got some more life out of the engine and were able to lower the anchor on the windlass with Jay and I feeding tiny lengths of chain through as we released them from the tangled knot in the locker. The anchor bit first time and there was a collective sigh of relief all round! We reported our position to Sunsail base and were told their boat would be on the way soon. We quenched our fear induced thirst with Coke and settled down for the long wait.

That's the way to do it!

The skipper of the adjacent yacht came over and gave us a pep talk. He was a sailing instructor out of St

Thomas and had been very reticent when he saw a Sunsail yacht approaching the anchorage under sail. Sunsail boats, in their very obvious red and blue livery have a bit of a bad reputation in the area and most of the "locals" think they are crewed by idiots. He said we had broken the mould and had approached the situation with text book precision! In fact he had students on board and they had watched from below expecting to see how not to anchor under sail but we had proved him wrong!! The superyacht crew hoisted their dinghy back on board their gin palace.

A couple of hours later, Sunsail's answer to the AA arrived. Boots – a greying Rasta with a pen wound into his wiry beard and Chip – usually a jovial young chap but somewhat dejected this morning. (Perhaps he had had a rough night?) The tank was filled brim full but still showed half on the gauge, the system was bled and we were on our way. By this time the anchorage we were heading for, like everywhere else, was full. (I've never seen so many people before in all our visits to the BVI) so we headed for Little Harbour which was quiet and deserted. We had an excellent lobster dinner at Abe's and a quiet night in the shelter of the encircling hills.

Toilet Trouble

All was well with the world until the holding tank blocked the next day and we had to call the "cavalry" yet again who came to us in Pirate's Bight, Norman Island with such helpful remarks as "s**t happens!" and proceeded to blow compressed air into the system with the same piece of plastic piping with which they had bled the engine the previous day.

The upper tank contents emptied into the clear water where people were swimming with a cry of "There she blows!" from Chip and Boots. I was amazed how quickly the water cleared and we too went swimming an hour or so later.

God bless America?

That evening we went ashore for dinner to be confronted with big screens everywhere. It was the Superbowl complete with super noisy Americans. We got hostile looks as we attempted to eat unobtrusively whilst they stood to attention, right hands on hearts or stiff Marines salutes, for the Star Spangled Banner! A bit intimidating. Where were the screens yesterday for the England v Scotland Six Nations? Given the chance, we would have given a gut crunching rendition of "Flower of Scotland"! (Perhaps it was best we didn't, I don't think Scotland did very well.) Then a shaven headed Englishman in a rugby shirt propped himself up on the bar, unbeknown to him, obscuring the view of the TV screen. Raucous shouting and shoving ensued till he realised his folly, shrugged his shoulders, and settled elsewhere.

Some local lads had arrived in several very expensive looking power boats and were obviously racing each other. Things got heated and we thought there was going to be a fight! It was all happening at Pirates'! We ate our meal and retreated to our boat for a quieter evening as all the noisy Americans were watching the "football". It used to be us Brits who had the bad reputation in holiday places. Jay said that for the first time ever, his nationality was not sitting easily on his shoulders.

The next day we opened the holding tank again, as usual whilst underway in the main channel between the islands, and the slick stretched for several hundred metres. I'm very pleased that didn't come out in the anchorage!!!!

Despite the above, the strong winds and the noisy Yanks, we did have a wonderful time!!!

Hilary Morgan
Quicksilver

Marina News

Julian Goldie Welcomes a Royal Visitor to the Which Marina Stand as Transeurope Appoints a New Chair

Boat Show

It was a busy Boat Show for Julian Goldie who was to be found on the **Which Marina** stand. He is pictured below, in front of the Tollesbury Marina panel, welcoming HRH The Princess Royal. "She was most interested in our work. Whilst on the stand she awarded one of our marina members with their Gold Anchor award."

Transeurope

New Transeurope Chair, Melanie Symes of Puerto Calero Marina has now officially taken the helm and can be seen pictured below with past chairmen Jean-Michel Gaigne, Andrew Jagers and Julian himself.

Transeurope has welcomed four new marinas to its fold this year bringing the total membership to 50. In the

latest Transeurope newsletter Melanie states, "It is a real pleasure to be welcoming our 50th member to Transeurope Marinas. It is a sound achievement for the group and can only reflect positively on a very simple association bound together now for over 25 years with the common goal of promoting a good service amongst an international network for both berthholders and visitors."

New Additions

Peurto Deportiva de Gijon is located within this historic city on the Cantabrian coast. With 780 berths up to 24 metres it is an excellent haven for anyone planning an Atlantic crossing. **Jachthaven Wetteville** is an inland marina in North Holland with 400 berths situated in the so called "Green Heart". A perfect gateway for exploring the inland

waterways of Western Europe. **Upton Marina** situated on the River Severn south of Worcester and north of Tewksbury is well-placed for both river and coastal destinations. With its proximity to the Solent, **Beaulieu River and Bucklers Hard Yacht Harbour** is a welcome addition to the Transeurope group. Three miles from the river entrance, the marina is situated in the New Forest.

A pamphlet detailing information about Transeurope has recently been mailed to TCC members. You can find out lots more and read their current newsletter by visiting their website.

www.transeuropemarinas.com

Hilary Morgan
Editor



Julian Goldie welcomes Princess Anne to the *Which Marina* stand at the Tullet Prebon London Boat show, in January



Melanie Symes with previous chairmen Jean-Michel Gaigne, Andrew Jagers and Julian Goldie