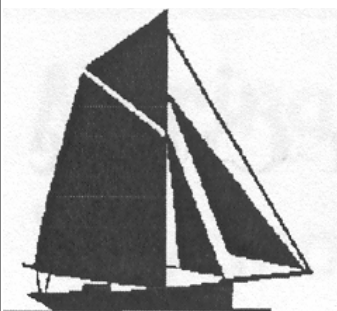


Volume 13, no. 2, Summer 2008



Up the Creek...

Web Site Developments

Many members will already have found the new Club web-site at www.tollesburycc.co.uk (also at www.tollesburycruisingclub.co.uk).

For those of you who have not yet explored the site please do so. We do not think you will be disappointed.

Our web-site is your up-to-date and on-line source of information about all Club activities. The complete programme for the year is also on the site, with detailed information about cruising and racing events, as well as news and details of what is on in the restaurant. We

also have an 'Up the Creek' archive, where you can view or print out copies of 'Up the Creek' in full colour.

A recent addition is a Discussion Forum, where you can discuss with other members any topic that you like about the Club and its activities (but not, please, any whinges about the marina or the Club House operations). Currently there are ongoing discussions about this year's cruising events, as well as discussions about training and qualifications. A search facility allows you to search the whole site, including

back copies of 'Up the Creek'.

A member's only 'zone' contains the Members' Directory and Personal Handicap List. To access this zone you have to log in using:

Members' Zone login: *username and password available from the webmaster.*

We would appreciate comments and suggestions about how to make the site more useful to members. You can email our webmaster, Colin Shead, at: webmaster@tollesburycc.co.uk or phone him on: 01376 514243

Caveat Vendor

The current economic conditions have made it a 'buyers' market' for boats. This has left boat sellers ever more vulnerable to fickle potential purchasers. It might be timely, therefore, to remind both sellers and buyers that an offer to buy a boat is a more serious matter, le-

gally, than a comparable offer to buy a house (outside Scotland, anyway). Technically, an offer, once made, can only be withdrawn on the grounds of a serious fault with a boat. Withdrawal from purchase on lesser grounds can entail the loss of the purchaser's deposit. However,

the conditions of the offer can nullify this condition. An offer to purchase, dependent upon a 'satisfactory' trial sale (even after a good survey) can compromise the legal and moral entailments of an otherwise clear offer to buy.

Barry Jones (editor)

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Edited by Barry Jones

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Racing Roundup, with Dave Knight

This year's racing season started on the 3rd May with the Annual Pursuit Race. We had a good turn out of 8 boats. I had a crew of old school chums, and we were happy to sit on the line in the light breeze and sun and start each boat, until it was our start time. The last few boats were given their start time and left to monitor their own starts. This race always gives me a severe headache, calculating the start time for each individual boat. I know how my boat sails, and a couple of other boats within the club. I then make a graph plotting their time over the course against their handicap. Then I revert to my chart software, where I have the course planned and, by inserting each start time, I get a different finishing time due to the tidal effect varying as each boat starts later. I then manually adjust my straight line graph with these times over the course and end up with a flat "S" shaped graph; adjusting the start time so that the slower boats have longer as they have less tidal push and the faster boats start later as they get more tidal help. This all looks very scientific (I think) but it is doomed to failure, as no one sails the perfect course or at maximum performance on each leg.

We did exceptionally well until the last leg across **Penny Hole Bay** where we were in the lead but with *Mimosa* snapping at our heels. I knew that to sail to our handicap I had to launch the cruising chute which, with my inexperienced crew, I was loath to do. Eventually we managed to get the kite up only a minute before almost being overtaken by

Mimosa. We then pulled strongly to the finish, taking first, *Mimosa* a strong second, followed by *Cobweb*.

The following weekend **The Wallet Long Race** was planned but, due to lack of entries from both our club and the Tollesbury Sailing Club, the race was cancelled.

Home and Away

At the end of May, we took *Dionysus* to Calais and Gravelines. Whilst everyone else who went out that weekend hid in harbour protecting their boats from the gale force conditions, we enjoyed sunshine and great sailing conditions. In fact we had an incredibly fast crossing, confirming my thoughts that for whatever reason *Dionysus* was going like a train this year.

On the 14th June it was **The Wallet Shield**, an inter club race, planned by Colne Yacht Club. The build up to the race seemed confused. Out of the 6 courses that had been announced only 3 were tenable as there were mistakes in the others. Also, the start time that had been announced would have stopped us from joining in as we would have had to leave Tollesbury at High Water and get to the start line by Batemans Tower in Brightlingsea 30 minutes later! The race organisers must have thought I was a complete pain, as it seemed I kept on emailing my queries and concerns.

Three days before the event the courses were corrected, but then, on the day, a completely different course was called – confused, yes we were! We had six boats en-

tered and in the difficult light wind against tide conditions the windward mark was very hard to make. Our tactic was to keep over the Colne Bar/Bench Head sands in shallow water, but even so some tacks resulted in a gain to windward of less than a ¼ mile. Even the real racing yachts like *Jedi Knight*, a J122 with full crew from Wivenhoe S.C, struggled to make the mark. So it was an incredible performance by Ray and Debbie on *Aloha* to see them being one of the first boats to round that windward mark. They must have had a stunning sail, coming second on handicap whilst the rest of our club faired not so well with Andy Hobden and *Tongue Twister* 10th, *Dionysus* 11th and *Polo IV* 12th!! Sadly the party that Colne Yacht Club had promised us after the event did not materialise, but I think we were all too tired to be bothered.

The Goldie Challenge to Burnham

The Goldie Challenge on the 28th June looked to be an interesting Race to Burnham. As we had only 6 entries, I decided to amalgamate our race with T.S.C's race to Burnham. The week before the race there was much negotiation between the two clubs. Which course should we use? Should we monitor the race on the same VHF Channel? What start time/finish line should we use? After getting their race officer to agree to the start time, our course and monitor the race on CH17 I was happy to finish the race at the Joint Burnham Yacht Clubs finishing line.

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

(Racing Roundup continued)

The conditions for the race were excellent, bright and sunny with a steady SW F4 increasing during the afternoon to F5 – gusting 6. By the time we had rounded **Whittaker No. 6** at the entrance to the Crouch, the tide had not quite started to flood and so we started short tacking between the sand banks up the Crouch. Some of our fleet got caught out on the **Swallowtail** where it does shoal very quickly. We got away with it but saw our depth disappear from 4.5M to 2.0M in a matter of seconds. We did not go aground, but other competitors were not so lucky. *Mimosa* had taken the lead before crossing the **Spitway** and Graham looked like he was having the sail of his life. Apart from pointing much higher than us, he was feathering beautifully into the gusts. Well, as we approached Burnham everyone was looking for the finishing line but what had happened to the committee hut on the foreshore? Nobody saw it and *Mimosa*, who was well in the lead by now, announced they were to finish on the Transit marks on the Royal Corinthian, which left an exciting finish as we sailed through the moored boats. We were exhausted by the time we had finished, my back and arms certainly knew about each of the 37 tacks we had put in. Afterwards we found out that the Joint Start/Finishing Line committee hut was pulled down 5 years ago!

The day was crowned off by an excellent meal at the **Royal Corinthian Yacht Club**, and I was pleased to announce that *Mimosa* apart from taking line honours came first, *Dionysus* second and *Tongue Twister* third.

Ladies First

The weekend 19th/20th July was

going to be our **Ladies Helm** and **Boudica** races, for all female crewed boats. Unfortunately, due to the weather, we had to cancel the Saturday's race but several boats sailed/motor sailed to Brightlingsea where we had a gathering on *Lhasa*. Due to having only one entry for the **Boudica** I decided to run a shortened **Lady Helm** race back to the Nass. It was a gusty westerly again, which showed how well our females can short tack. It was a very close race with *Mimosa*, helmed by Maggie Timmins, taking line honours. However, on handicap Lindsey Savage helming *Dionysus* came first, *Mimosa* second, Jean Kemp on *Polo IV* third, Miriam Kemp on *Herald* fourth, and Wendy Gooch on *Nikita* fifth. Well done to all our helms as it was quite testing.

Still to Come

Coming up in the next few months we have the **Kings Head Cup** on the 30th August, which is a Tollesbury Sailing Club Trophy, in which TCC competes to be the fastest round **Osea Island**. Last year the winning boat went anti-clockwise and I believe this to be the first time a boat circumnavigating in that direction took the trophy. So which way will you go this year?

The weekend of the 13/14th September we have family orientated events with the **Teddy Bear Race**, where you have to fly a furry friend from the rigging, but also handicaps will be adjusted for our

younger (under 16's) to enable them to show us how good they are! Children of all ages are welcome, so please enlist the help of your family, and even grandchildren. The following day we have organised another fun event in our **Treasure Hunt**, so please be prepared to bring water pistols, swimwear etc., as this has always been a mad event.

Last Things

On Sunday the 5th October I am planning to re-schedule the **Wallet Long Race**. The start will be from Brightlingsea so you will have to get there on the Saturday afternoon tide. My intention is to run two races, **GOLD** and **SILVER CLASSES**. You must nominate prior to the start what race you will be in, but the **GOLD** Class will be long and harder, whilst the **SILVER** Class will sail a much shorter course for the less experienced or more cruiser orientated boats. This will, hopefully, be more attractive and get more people involved.

Dave Knight

Rear-Commodore, Racing

Dionysus



Gypsy Moth IV seen leaving the Colne (summer 2008)

The Calais Rally by Paul Noyland

I had planned a week's holiday with my youngest son on *Herald* to include the Calais Rally and hopefully Gravelines and Nieuwpoort before returning to Tollesbury. Unfortunately, it transpired that no.2 son had managed to book a totally different week off work for which he blames me but, as skipper, I know where the blame truly lies.

I made a phone call to David Knight to inform him that I wouldn't be able to make the trip due to this 'misunderstanding'. David, naturally, jumped at the chance to offer such a potentially valuable crew member a berth on *Dionysus* and so my trip to Calais was back on again.

The *Dionysus* crew was: skipper David; Ian, who has sailed with David on numerous occasions; Sam (Samantha), a new crew member; and myself, who has crewed for (and argued with) the skipper on a number of trips.

Due to the uncertainty of the weather, and fishermen's blockades in various French ports, it was decided to hold a meeting on the Friday evening prior to sailing in the early hours of Saturday morning. The omens weren't good as the meeting took place in the clubhouse, from which the trees could be seen thrashing about in the rising wind outside. However, a VHF chat channel was decided upon and everyone was up for giving it a go early the following morning.

We retired to *Dionysus* where we attempted to get a few hours sleep. I lay awake listening to the howling wind outside and slept fitfully. At 0130 when we rose for an 0200 start I was convinced a howling gale awaited us in the Thames Estuary so I dashed to

my car for the laptop, connected to the internet, and attempted to get some real-time weather info. Surprisingly, I found that **Sandettie Lightship** was transmitting only 16 knots whereas **Walton** and **Frinton** weather data was showing 18-22 knots..... there was actually less wind away from the coast!

Into the 'blue yonder'

We cast off and made the usual interesting unlit passage down the creek trying to avoid all the obstacles and into the **Blackwater** where we raised sail but kept a reef in. The navigation lights of other boats were both ahead and behind us as we headed out to the **Bench Head**. It was roughly between the Bench Head and Colne Bar when we started to hear radio chat between other boats about heading into Brightlingsea or returning to Tollesbury. Evidently they had been listening to the latest Met Office forecast which was now mentioning such numbers as 6, 7 and even the chance of an 8! The lower ranks of the *Dionysus* crew were blissfully unaware of this latest forecast until we were mid-Thames Estuary. However, in his defence, I'm sure it was just an oversight on the skipper's part that it took him 3-4 hours to pass

on the details of this forecast to us.

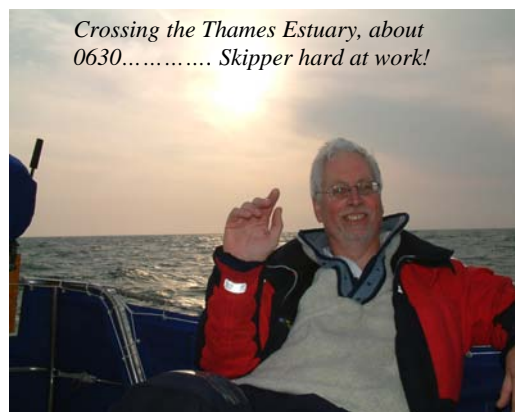
After what had been mainly a beam reach, we hardened up for the **Sunk** after passing through the **Spitway** and managed to lay the Sunk on the one tack. Bearing away for **Fisherman's Gat** we were able to go full sail as dawn broke and with quite a struggle the sun eventually broke through. The wind had now eased to 14-17 knots and we enjoyed a superb beam reach in a lively sea that decreased as we made progress.

Too fast by half

We had no problems with shipping and made such good time over to



Sam on the helm, taken at 0730 approaching the French coast.



Crossing the Thames Estuary, about 0630..... Skipper hard at work!

Calais that we were too early to cross the **Riddings Bank** and had to go round. It was at this point that we made the only tack of the crossing. Another yacht was heading (as I thought) towards Calais on our starboard side on the same tack. It was only at the last minute that I realised he wasn't and was probably heading up to Gravelines and going to cross us. Being the windward boat I had to call a quick tack to avoid him (don't tell the skipper, he was down below and blissfully unaware as to the reason for the tack).

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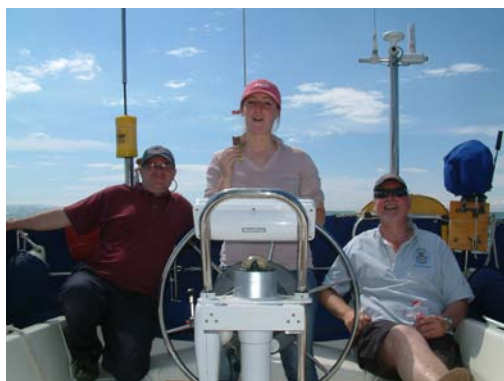
(Calais Rally continued)

We had made the crossing in just 9.5 hours but it took another half-hour at least to get permission to enter as ferry after ferry headed into, or out of, Calais. The new sill in place of the lock gates proved to be no problem and we soon found a finger berth inside the marina.

On the town in Calais

After a siesta the rested *Dionysus* crew headed for the *L'Histoire Ancienne* restaurant where we had enjoyed an excellent meal on the previous year's rally. They didn't disappoint this year either but the house wine wasn't up to the same standard..... though by the third bottle we decided it was improving. Just as we were leaving the restaurant the expected rain arrived and stayed with us through the night and part of the next morning.

The civic reception took place, as usual, in the marina bar around midday as the clouds cleared and the sun broke through. It was announced that 71 boats had attended, with **Benfleet** again providing the greatest number. Tollesbury had 2 boats as *Dulcibella* were already in Calais.



Chocolate break on the run up the coast to Gravelines in appalling weather!

Ever Onwards

We had already decided to take the first bridge opening in the afternoon and head for **Gravelines**. It appeared that a large percentage of the attending yachts were of the same mind as we joined a chaotic scrum in the marina with at least 40 other boats. Once out of Calais we headed over the **Riddings Bank** and enjoyed a glorious, leisurely broad reach in warm sunshine up the coast to Gravelines..... Bliss!

Due to the evening arrival and threat of rain, it was decided to forego a walk into town and eat at



Lunch at the sandwich shop in Gravelines town square, highly recommended.

the marina restaurant. I know some have reported good meals but on the two previous occasions I have eaten there I have had a poor meal. Unfortunately, history repeated itself but on this occasion it was Ian's meal which, at first, failed to arrive at the same time as ours and then was undercooked fish when it did.

Gravelines is a favourite destination of mine but the one gripe I have is that I haven't, as yet, had a good restaurant meal there. Reputedly, *Le Turbot* and *La Symphonie* are the two best restaurants but once again we found both restaurants closed the following day when

we tried to eat there. Both are closed on a Monday, which I will



Eating at the Queen Mary

have to try and remember on my next visit. We eventually settled for eating at *The Queen Mary* in the square on the Monday evening and enjoyed a pleasant, good value meal there, along with a beer or two. The bar was very quiet and we decided to head back to the marina bar for a drink before retiring early. That was the plan but somehow I don't recall leaving the bar very early, with good company none of us seemed inclined for the evening to end.

Homeward Bound

The following day was our return trip to Tollesbury. In spite of the fact that the Met Office was predicting F5, occasionally 6, we had to motor the whole of the way back never seeing even F2. It was pleasant but uneventful and took a mind-numbing 14 hours as opposed to the 9.5 hours of the outward leg.

The *Dionysus* crew thoroughly enjoyed the four days but look forward to repeating the event next year with more company.

Paul Noyland

Herald (and Dionysus)

Seeing stars in Albufeira, with Julian Goldie

I was enjoying the good fortune of a lunch, following our summer visit with Sam Bourne, Chairman of the Yacht Harbour Association, and Sue Lambert, Secretary of the Association, at a beautiful restaurant close to Sue's TYHA office in Kent, when I received a most unusual request from Sam. "Julian, would you like to go to Albufeira Marina in order to represent the TYHA and present them with their five gold anchor award, as I am on holiday on the 29th of July?"

"I will be delighted", I replied, surprised at being offered such a wonderful opportunity. Lousie and Annie agreed to come too!

Sue kindly made the arrangements with Albufeira Marina. I was asked to make a short speech just before the Diana Krall Concert at the Marina and present the award to their marina manager, Mr. Jose Massapina. I was now becoming just a little concerned as to the scale of the occasion.

Flying down to Faro

In due course we landed at Faro Airport and were met and driven the thirty kilometres to Albufeira by a lovely member of the marina staff. On arriving at the marina's hotel, we were invited to take a relaxing swim whilst our apartment was being prepared. Well, the circular pool was larger than a football pitch with some stunning water features leading from it. Following an alfresco lunch at the pool side, we were shown our apartment; not just a couple of rooms as we expected, but a huge duplex apartment with four bed-



rooms, four bathrooms and even three balconies. I have to say that we were overjoyed! Ricardo Jose, the operations manager, warmly welcomed us to Albufeira and showed us around the marina complex. We admired the brightly coloured, art deco apartments, restaurants and shops that lined the north side of the marina and the villas on the south side. He indicated the land on the western edge and explained that this area was designated for stage two of the development – two more hotels, two football pitches, a recreational and leisure centre, together with large, romantic gardens.

Reality returns

Our conversation turned to the itinerary for the following evening. Ri-

cardo pointed to the huge stage on the eastern side of the marina and advised us that some 2,500 chairs would be set out in front of the stage and that, following my speech, I would present the Gold Anchor Award to one of their berth holders. Feeling a little nervous at this stage, I politely asked the name. "You may already know



(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

(Albufeira visit continued)

Him,” Ricardo replied, “Sir Cliff Richard, he has a boat here.” My jaw dropped and Annie, my daughter, answered for me: “Just a little pressure then Dad!”

We continued our tour and I could not stop smiling. I have to say that I was incredibly impressed with the marina.

Marina appointments

Of the marina’s 475 berth capacity, it was already 90% occupied in just the three years since opening. The features had been very well thought out. For example, they had used a thick plate glass in the companionway gates so as not to detract from the view of the marina.

The boatyard too, was well equipped with a 70 ton travel-lift, a 6 ton hoist crane, and eight repair booths, together with four large workshops for major repairs. The hard standing areas were well laid out and clear of clutter. It also had an extremely well designed antifouling interceptor, which also had an oil separator fitted, so that only the cleanest water could return to the marina.

Environmental considerations have clearly been a top priority from the early planning stages. The education process of all customers within the complex, from hotel guests to berth holders, has been so well thought out, encouraging energy saving, waste separation all round the marina, with



The Presentation to Sir Cliff Richard

even the water from the lawn sprinklers being recycled. It is clear that the waste management systems at Albufeira are amongst the very best in the industry. The marina was awarded the European Blue Flag in 2005 and 2007 and is currently in the final stages of environmental certification under norm ISO 14001. The files that Ricardo showed us left us in no doubt how detailed this procedure was.

The marina staff were very helpful and friendly throughout, something that really creates a welcoming feeling for the boat owner and the holiday visitor alike.

Comes the night

As the evening of the presentation got under way, Ricardo met us at the reception and walked with us across to the marina, where we saw this long queue waiting for

the concert. We were ushered straight to the front barrier, where we were introduced to Mr. Jose Massapina, the marina manager, thus giving me an opportunity to thank him personally for his very kind hospitality.

The moment then arrived when Louise, Annie and I were introduced to Sir Cliff Richard and, as we walked through to the stage, he told me how much he enjoyed boating from Albufeira marina.

As we were shown to our seats, we were advised that two Portuguese Government Ministers were due to attend the Presentation and Concert. Finally, we were called to the stage and, as we waited to be called on, I said to Sir Cliff, “It is wonderful to meet you Sir Cliff. You have done this many times, for me it is my first.”

“Don’t worry, you will be fine,”

(Continued on page 8)

Marina Matters

Sponsors' Thank-you

We are delighted to be able to report that our campaign to 'sponsor a buoy' has been remarkably successful, gaining some 18 sponsors and ourselves, to sponsor a mix of lit and unlit channel markers. After some initial teething problems, requiring rebalancing the buoys that grounded at low water, we are very pleased to announce the complete set of new channel buoys are

in place, comprising of mainly lit buoys, starting from the new larger No 2 port hand buoy, positioned between the West Mersea port hand buoys and our new East Cardinal buoy, which stands some six feet above the water with a white light with a 2 mile range. The line of buoys then run through Tollesbury Fleet guiding boats to the South Channel and then through

into Woodrolfe Creek and up to the Marina. We have even put the solar flashing lights on either side of the marina entrance, to aid your night time navigation. Once again, thank you sponsors!! Your help allowed us to go ahead with this very important project .

Julian Goldie

Life-lines and Lollipops in the Chandlery

You may recall that we have been promoting a campaign of 'safety on our pontoons'; recommending that children wear lifejackets whilst in the marina, for which our Harbour Master will give them a free lollipop. This year we are also asking our boat owners to leave their stern boarding ladders up, but not tied, so that if anyone has the misfortune of falling into the marina, they can pull down a bathing

ladder and climb out of the water (safety ladders are also fitted to the pontoons in a number of locations).

The scheme is entirely voluntary and any boat can take part. We ask you to attach a bright yellow or red sail tie/webbing tie to you transom boarding ladder. We have 1 inch wide, bright yellow webbing ties available free of charge in our chandlery for this purpose. Please

come in and pick one up when convenient.

Should you become that 'reluctant' swimmer, please come back and clean up the 'host' boat the next day.

If these related campaigns prevent an accident, then we shall have achieved something very important.

Julian Goldie

(Continued from page 7)

(Albufeiran visit continued)

he replied. With that I was introduced in Portuguese to the vast, waiting audience. The speech went well and I was able to thank our hosts and compliment Albufeira Marina on its many qualities. It really was an honour and a pleasure to present Albufeira Marina with the Yacht Harbour Association Five Gold Anchor Award and to present it to Sir Cliff, on their behalf. Well done Albufeira! You thoroughly deserve this accolade.

We then retired to our seats to enjoy the Diana Krall concert, which was absolutely splendid.

Last things

To round off the visit, next morning Ricardo had very kindly organized a RIB to take us out to see the dolphins offshore and to view the spectacular caves that feature along this beautiful part of the Algarve coast.

Our thanks, then, to Mr. Jose Massapina and Mr. Ricardo Jose for the very kind hospitality. We loved it so much that we are going

back again in August!

Julian Goldie

Tollesbury Marina

(Note. Albufeira is one of the newer members of the Trans-Europe Marina association. Now all we have to do is to get down there! **Ed.)**

Shotley Shake Down Cruise, with Ian Robinson

The programme for the weekend 5th/6th April was for a shake down cruise to Shotley marina and dinner in the Bristol Arms. *Ostara* was keen to go. A shakedown cruise is traditionally the first of the season, but this year it was the second on the calendar. The first cruise of the season, to Burnham on Crouch over Easter, had been abandoned due to the gales. The Shotley trip thus proved to be the first actually held and it lived up to its name.

The days leading up to the weekend were fine and sunny with gentle winds. However, the forecasters had been long forewarning of a low off Norway that would feed wintery weather over the UK during the weekend with snow, sleet, rain, freezing temperatures and strong winds. Due to the miserable forecast, by Saturday most boats had withdrawn. There were, however, one or two hardy souls who left the decision as to go or not until the last minute. On Saturday morning one could pick and choose one's forecast as to how optimistic or otherwise one felt. Every source agreed that the wind would be northerly and that it would be cold with a certainty of wintery showers. The wind, however, could range from a benign F3 to a stiff F6 or F7. The coastal forecast was for 15 to 17 mph in the afternoon on Saturday, falling away overnight and then picking up to much the same strength on Sunday morning before falling away again. There was nothing in this forecast other than one should wrap up well.

At the marina the weather was quite pleasant with a blue sky and lightish northerly wind. Dave Knight and crew (Lindsay and Ian) on *Dionysus* were keen to go. Rob

and Jean on *Polo IV* planned to stay local as they had already been to the Orwell that week and *Polo IV* is a wet boat driving to windward - as Saturday's course would be. All the other usual suspects were missing.

The decision to go

On *Ostara* we were undecided. We had not sailed as yet, but the forecast was definitely short on the tropical conditions we prefer. We decided to stay put. *Dionysus*, therefore, cut a lonely figure as she left on the tide for Shotley. Back on *Ostara* the chief crew suddenly popped her head out of the saloon - looked at the bright sky and said, "Let's go and see what it is like out there. If we do not like it we can come back or go into *Brightlingsea*". So, an hour behind *Dionysus*, *Ostara* made up the rear of the Tollesbury fleet heading for the Orwell.

In deference to the forecast, and the chief crew, *Ostara* had a reef in from the start and this made the leg out to the **North Eagle** a bit on the slow side as the wind was only F3 and *Ostara*, having been in her berth for the winter, had a foul bottom. However, although we were not moving very quickly we had the compensation that it was sunny, the sea was gentle, visibility was very good and we were out on the water. To combat the cold the chief crew had on her thermals, salopettes, oilies and sundry other layers and so whilst she struggled to move she was definitely not cold and so all was well with the world. As we put the cardinal buoy behind us and made up towards **Clacton pier** the weather began to change. Instead of 8 to 9 knots across the deck it became 15, which was good

as *Ostara* only comes alive above 10 knots. We could also see dark clouds massing to windward, which was not so good. Any thoughts of shaking out the reef were put on hold. Soon we had cold driving rain pouring down on the helm and 25 knots across the deck as we hardened up to stay close inshore on a port tack. A second reef went in and unusually on *Ostara* it was decided to roll up a bit of the headsail. Because it was a shakedown cruise the second reef line wrapped itself around the boom un-noticed, which left the main fuller than was desirable and as we tramped along **The Wallet**, *Ostara* was laid over a bit more than she should have been. Eventually, the reefing error was noticed and corrected. As we reached the Naze the squall ended and the sun came out as we started to beat toward the **Harwich breakwater** in 17 knots of wind. About half way across **Pennyhole Bay** more squall clouds could be seen gathering and so, as the day was closing down, we turned on the iron topsail and motored into the harbour as light snow started to descend.

Into Shotley Marina

The **Shotley** lock keeper welcomed us with surprise as he was not expecting any more Tollesbury boats, but had the lock ready for our arrival. Even the lock keeper was a bit rusty for as we were about halfway down the approach channel, with more bank exposed on either side than I remember ever seeing, he piped up to ask our draft as he only had 2 metres. As *Ostara* only has 1.65 metres we were OK. On the approach to the outer posts to the Shotley approach channel, I had

(Continued on page 10)

Expect the Unexpected

I would like to share a story with you. It is a bit of, "A day in the life of a Marina Manager." One morning in early July I arrived at the office at 8.30am, pleased that the Marina, Boat yard, and Boat Park, were tidy and ready for our annual visit by our Insurance Underwriters. I was met by Paul, our boat handling Manager, who I noticed had temporarily lost his usual cheerful bouncy spirit. I was very shortly about to be told why. "Julian, we have found a bomb sitting on the marina sill," was Paul's next sentence. My bounding stride came to an abrupt halt. "Today is not a day for that sort of joke," was my reply, reminding him who our expectant visitors

were. "No, no, I am quite serious" Paul continued. My jaw dropped. He calmly advised me that he had moved the object from the sill and placed it ever so carefully by the Granary! A glazed expression passed over my face as I contemplated what had actually been done. The emergency services had been called, and the long wait ensued whilst the bomb squad prodded and poked this unexploded war time shell. My underwriters were due at noon, and at 11.15 I walked over to the senior police officer to enquire how much longer would this exercise continue "Oh, possibly another 20 minutes or so" the officer replied. Dangerously close to noon I

thought .

Well, true to their word, the bomb squad drove out of the marina gates at 11.45. At just before twelve our insurers and our broker arrived, in a cheerful mood, with comments about the lovely weather we were enjoying. As we sat down in my office to discuss our business (underwriters always love to tell their clients of some of their insurance nightmare cases) I listened diligently, safe in the knowledge that the bomb squad had gone!

I did wonder if they had passed each other en route

Julian Goldie.

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(Shotley cruise continued)

remarked to the chief crew that as the weather was so awful there would be no audience. Wrong - even at 5pm on a cold day with a stiff breeze and snow/sleet flurries there were loiterers to watch the circus in the lock. *Ostara* got marked at 6.5 out of 10 for her performance. The lock keeper kindly brought down the shore power adaptor on the correct assumption that we would need it.

As is their usual practice for club trips, Shotley had assigned us to the linear side of G pontoon. The problem was that the wind was still around 17 knots and was blowing off the pontoon. We tried to land. The chief crew tried very hard to rouse *Dionysus* to help. Eventually, we gave up and circled to a box on the other side of G. In the quickly gathering gloom I managed to ram *Ostara's* bow hard into the end of a finger pontoon. It was the shakedown cruise after all. Eventually all was well

and then, and only then, the crew of *Dionysus* surfaced.

Soon we were snug in *Dionysus's* warm cabin and with a glass in hand and nibbles on the table the rigours of the afternoon quickly faded. Eventually we all stirred ourselves to walk round to the **Bristol Arms** for whale and chips and pudding to round off the day.

The long 'road' home

With high water at Tollesbury around 1330 hours on Sunday an early(ish) start back was required. *Dionysus* started at 0730 with *Ostara* 30 minutes later. As we cast off the snow started to fall and a thick bank of it could be seen approaching from up river. Exiting the lock we were in the most snow we had seen all winter. The wind was around 10 knots true from astern as we motor-sailed out of the harbour against the new flood. Visibility was about 500 metres and we kept motor-sailing out to the **Stone Banks buoy** when we tried sail-

ing, but the wind was too light even with full sail. Eventually, the snow lifted and we intermittently sailed or motor-sailed up an almost empty **Wallet**. *Dionysus*, it later transpired, had kept motor-sailing and was long gone and we had only to pick our way around the anchored angling boats. Off **Clacton** the wind increased to 15 knots and as the course had tended sufficiently to the west, we then had a good broad reach with a reef back in that hardened progressively into a close reach as we closed in on **The Nass** to end the cruise.

Back on our berth we found happily that the bow was only scuffed, so although boat handling skills had become a little rusty over the winter no damage was done. The sailing was interesting and the company good. So a successful first cruise of the year I think.

Ian Robinson

Ostara

A Watery Future, by Chris Edwards

Government Agency's Flood Management Strategies' Threat to East Anglian Coast Recreational Sailing

Climate Change

Climate change is widely forecast to bring more unsettled weather and more frequent storms. Coupled with rising sea levels this is imposing considerable stress on sea walls and other flood defences. With global warming and the melting of glaciers and the ice caps, the rise in sea level for East Anglia alone is predicted as some 4mm per year initially but increasing. By 2080 the total rise since 1990 could be as much as 800mm. (Source: report of the Marine Climate Change Impacts Partnership (MCCIP), a partnership of Scientists and Government Departments and Agencies). We are already experiencing this change with strong winds, torrential rain and breaches to sea walls at Minsmere and on the Blyth.

Development of Flood Management Policies

The EA (Environment Agency) is responsible to Defra (Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs), for flood defences. It has been tasked to assess the state of existing flood defences and the future requirements for such defences based on 20, 50 and 100 year predictions of sea level rise, erosion and flood risk. They are then to devise flood strategies

which take account of all factors; technical, economic, environmental and social, with consultation to take into consideration local issues and needs.

This consultation is to be with Local Communities and Representative Bodies, (including the RYA).

Each strategy is to have the following objectives:-

1. Reduce the risks to people and to the developed and natural environments from flooding and coastal erosion;
2. Identify solutions that are technically sound and most fit for their purpose;
3. Be environmentally acceptable and sustainable;
4. Ensure best value for money from a **National** perspective.

For each strategy plans must be developed for the coastal or estuarine system based on the following policy options:-

1. Do nothing and let nature take its course overtopping or breaching sea walls and widening estuary mouths.
2. Hold the line by maintaining, and if necessary raising and strengthening existing sea walls to meet the expected rise in sea levels from global warming.
3. Managed realignment by maintaining some walls in vital areas but allowing others to decay or be breached so allowing flooding to relieve pressure on

other defences.

4. Advance the line by reclaiming more land and extending sea walls.

To date there has been no overall statement of the future Flood Management Policy. However, at a Public Consultation event for the Blyth Estuary (Southwold) on 28/29 September 2007, the EA stated that their policy for that river and estuary based on their work and those of their Consultants and taking into account the economic reality of limited Government funding, was: **"to withdraw maintenance of flood defences where the cost of maintaining them is greater than the assessed benefits"**.

The EA has assessed that the effect of applying this policy to the Blyth will result, over a period of 20 years, in the walls of the marshes upstream of the harbour progressively failing or being breached, with resultant tidal flooding of those marshes and a large increase in the volume and speed of the ebb as the marshes drain. This in turn would accelerate the undermining of the existing harbour walls and widen the estuary mouth to a more natural bell shape.

There will most certainly be a serious impact on recreational boating, with possibly more

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Pontoon Representatives

The TCC committee has decided to nominate committee representatives for each pontoon. These representatives will try to introduce themselves to berth holders on each pontoon and act as points of contact for any Cruising Club issues that TCC members might wish to raise.

The pontoon representatives will be as follows:

Pontoon A: David Knight

(*Dionysus, berth C 5*)

Pontoon B: David Walkerdine

(*Sundancer*)

Pontoon C: David Cooke

(*Nimrodel, berth C 28*)

Pontoon D: Barry Jones

(*Zevkim, Berth C 9*)

Pontoon E: Stuart Wallace

(*Mornarque, berth C 30*)

Pontoon F: Keith Macey

(*Rose Tyler, berth F 46*)

Pontoon G: Betty McInnes

(*Rose Tyler, berth F 46*)

Pontoon J: Peter Philpot

(*Codan, berth J 6*)

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(Flood strategies continued)

shallow waters for dinghies but keel boat moorings and sailing areas will be reduced or lost altogether. Club premises and other facilities could similarly be affected or rendered unusable.

In fact the time scale may well be much shorter than predicted. On the morning of 9 November 2007 the near combination of a North Sea surge and high spring tides breached the wall of Tinker's Marsh. This was not repaired, so the marsh partially flooded. Since then on 1 March, with a neapish tide but strong northerly winds, ten more breaches were made and the Blyth Estuary Group (BEG) organised a massive work detail for 8 March to try and fill these breaches. The ten breaches start about 1km above the Bailey Bridge and are about 2-3 metres wide, removing $\frac{3}{4}$ of the wall material. There is a lot of water in Tinker's Marsh, and Robinson's Marsh (below the Bailey Bridge) is very wet. The threat to the viability of recreational boating on the Blyth Estuary is

undoubtedly very serious.

Impact of Policy on Other Estuaries

Taking the Blyth as the starting point we must expect similar dramatic changes to the Ore/Alde, Deben, Hamford Water, Blackwater & Colne and the Crouch & Roach. The impact on the Stour & Orwell may well be less because of the major economic driver of the ports of Felixstowe, Harwich and Ipswich. Here the benefits of continued maintenance of sea defences are likely to outweigh the cost of such maintenance. In the case of Hamford Water there exists a serious threat to the whole existence of the complex, from the pressure on the Naze itself and Stone Point. Both of these have been steadily eroding over centuries, but are now nearing the stage where, when Stone Point is swept away, the salt marshes and islands will be left open to the full force of the sea.

What Can and Is Being Done?

The fundamental fact underlying this threat to our coasts and estuaries, and thus to recreational boating and commercial fishing, is Climate Change and

Sea Level Rise, coupled with the serious lack of funding for Flood Defence Construction and Maintenance. There are possibilities for self help, witness the BEG effort on the Blyth and policies being developed by the Landowners and Users for Hamford Water and the Essex Estuaries. In cooperation with the Environment Agency, these ideas could be implemented but funding remains a problem. The RYA is actively engaged with Government Departments and Agencies, both centrally from Hamble and here in the Eastern Region where our own Environmental Co-ordinator is keeping close to the Authorities and their Consultants, taking every opportunity to press the case for recreational boating and facilities. Ultimately **more funding is required** but the costs are large, running into several hundred millions for East Anglia alone, one of the most vulnerable areas for rising sea levels and more frequent storms.

Chris Edwards

Chairman, Eastern Region RYA