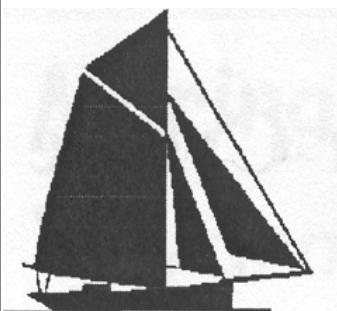


Volume 13, no. 3, Winter 2008



Up the Creek...

Danger lurks constantly

The Commodore's message and the report on the nearly-Christmas cruise in this edition demonstrates one of the dangers that can suddenly confront those using boats. Just because a boat is 'safely' moored in a marina does not mean that dangers no longer exist. Gas explosions and electrical fires are constant, if thankfully infrequent, hazards. Far more common are accidents when boarding boats or merely walking along slippery pon-

toons. When cold is added to the equation, then the danger is compounded.

Wearing life-jackets at all times in marinas or on pontoons is a step too far for adults, but is clearly (as the Tollesbury Marina advises) highly desirable for toddlers and young children.

Thinking in advance about how to extract an adult from the water, in the event of an accident, would, however, be timely. The incident at

Bradwell during the nearly-Christmas cruise brought home just how difficult it can be to drag a wet adult from the water and how useful it would have been to have some kind of retrieval device to hand. Equally importantly, crews need to know what to do and know where vital equipment is stowed.

Ed.

60 to 40 - The Red Equation

A growing number of TCC members will have become aware of the interesting dispensation that has now been 'granted' by the government over the imposition of duty on 'red' diesel for boats. With the abolition of duty free diesel for leisure boat users, the issue arose as to how to deal with that component of any boat's stock of diesel that might be used for (duty-free) heating pur-

poses. The solution that the RYA (and other interested bodies) extracted from the government was that the heating component of any diesel supplied to leisure boaters should be treated as duty-free by vendors. It was also concluded that an 'acceptabl' split would be approximately 60% of any future fuel purchases for propulsion and 40% for heating (and possibly cooking).

This, then, is a plausible, but not definitive, proportion to be declared by purchasers when purchasing fuel in the future, if they have frequently used diesel heaters, unless they can establish the a basis for an alternative split (by, say, being live-aboards).

Ed.

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Commodore's Christmas Message - David Walkerdine

I would like to start by saying thank you for re-electing me as commodore for the next year. I consider it an honour to hold this position and I hope that I can work with the committee to bring you an exciting programme of events for 2009. I would also like to thank all of the members of the committee for their help and support over the past year. Particular thanks must go to Betty McInnes who is standing down from the committee after several years service, including 2 years as commodore. Betty, your support and guidance on the committee will be missed.

New Season's Programme

At the moment we are busily planning for 2009. The Programme is almost complete but it is important for the committee that we understand what you would like us to deliver. For this reason I have put together a short survey to try to capture your ideas about what the club should be doing. A copy is included with this edition of Up the Creek or, alternatively, you can complete it on the club website at : www.tollesburycc.co.uk. Please feel free to email me your thoughts if you would prefer.

A Successful Year

2008 has seen a great selection of cruising and racing events and thanks must go to Peter and David for putting together the cruises and races this year and I am sure that they would like to thank the other committee members that have supported them with the or-

ganization of these events. I have not been able to attend many this year but I am delighted to say that I managed to make it to the **Buxey Ashes**, which we won, despite the inclement weather, and to the **Teddy Bear Race**, which was great fun, despite variable wind conditions! Many thanks to David Knight who played host to Anwen, Theo and me for both of these events.

One event that is often challenged by bad weather is the nearly Christmas cruise. This year we were lucky and the rain stayed away long enough for us to enjoy the usual **Pontoon Party** and a fantastic Christmas Dinner at **Bradwell Quay Yacht Club**. Thanks must go to BQYC for opening their doors especially for us and to Tollesbury Marina for generously contributing half of the cost of the seafood for the pontoon party.

High Times and Low Times

The Christmas Cruise was a fantastic event which I believe was enjoyed by everybody but it could so easily have been different. Late in the evening, whilst returning to his boat, one of our members managed to fall into the water. I won't embarrass them here by mentioning names but, given the temperature of the water, it is worth considering what might have happened if help had not been close at hand. We all take care whilst moving about on deck under way, but do we take as much care when walking around the pontoons and stepping on and off our boats? Please be careful

when walking around the marina, especially during winter when the water is cold and there are fewer people around to help you if you were to fall in.

Web-site Wonders

Many of us travel some distance to the club so will not be around as much over the winter months when we will not be sailing. Remember that you can keep in touch with what is going on at our website. Our webmaster, Colin Shead, has done an excellent job of putting the web site together and he has offered to run some tutorials for people who have not used the site before. If anyone would like to know more, please let me know by phone or email.

Some of you will no doubt be leaving your boats in the water this winter. I hope that if you have that you are rewarded with some pleasant winter sunshine and a gentle breeze for a magical winter sail. If your boat is ashore for the winter then I hope that the same winter sunshine is good for getting the jobs done so that you can get back on the water next season.

I would like to end by wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I hope to see you out on the water soon.

David Walkerdine

Sundancer

Phone 07976 976408

Email:

commodore@tollesburycc.co.uk

Racing Report by David Knight

Funny how the seasons work out nowadays. At the beginning we had high winds and gales and light winds and zephyrs towards the end: both playing havoc equally with this season's races.

On the 13th of September we tried to run the **Teddy Bear Race** for all comers and, more importantly, to try and encourage our Junior Helms. Conditions that day were very light and we drifted our way towards Brightlingsea. Once past the **Bench Head** most of the fleet stopped, we went backwards, but Robin and Jean on *Polo IV* found the slightest of zephyrs and managed to cross the line. By this time everyone else was retiring as the conditions had not changed and it was getting late on the tide for us to get into Brightlingsea. This posed a problem because only one boat had crossed the line and thus qualified for the race. After much thought and a discussion with my crew, David and Anwin Walkerdine, we decided to award Robin & Jean the **Howlett Trophy** and try and run **The Teddy Bear** the next day.

Sunday's conditions were much improved for sailing. For the Junior Helm it was preferable to have no more than 10 knots of wind. We were given 15 knots – but we had to get along with what we got. Eventually, we were able to get started as everyone arrived on the start line out of Brightlingsea. We had 5 starters but only two boats with children. However, even before the start, *Wavedancer* sadly retired. On *Dionysus* I did not give my son Ryan the opportunity to give up in the brisk conditions. We pulled in a reef rolled up the genoa and off we went. I was left to trim the sails whilst

David Walkerdine advised Ryan where to point the boat. As a father I will never forget 'the dance' Ryan performed as we overtook *Herald* who had full sail up and looked rather overpressed.

Ryan helming *Dionysus* was the third boat across the line; an impressive performance by any standards. However, Gill and Paul Atkins on *Hiawatha* crossed the line first, after an excellent sail. I therefore awarded the **Teddy Bear Trophy** to them, second to *Polo IV* and third *Herald*, with Ryan taking the '**Junior Trophy**'. It was a shame the event was not better supported by our junior helmsmen and women, but it did prove that we have a workable formula for the race. It will be fantastic to see more families enjoying this event next year.

Long Race to Harwich

The 27th of September was the planned Race from the Nass to the Harwich Breakwater, but the conditions were very slight, in fact the wind was non-existent, so we played chase, motoring towards **Harwich** until sufficient wind filled in enabling us to sail. Peter Philpot in *Codan* was the committee boat, and must have been infuriated with me as I changed and re-changed the start line. We tried **The Nass** - nothing - then motored to the **Colne Bar** - still nothing - then finally out to a yellow buoy near **Clacton**. For this event we had the most number of boats for this season, but had to make time to get to Suffolk Yacht Harbour where we had a Club Dinner booked. We started, we drifted and finally made our way towards **The Medusa**, ever so

slowly. Somehow Ray and Debbie Apthorp on *Aloha* managed to sail all the way with their Asymmetrical Spinnaker. *Ostara* was the first round the Medusa, but I will always remember Ian Robinson's pleading voice on the VHF, saying that once he'd gone round the mark they had stopped dead. Honestly what did he want me to do. There were another 8 boats hard on his heels!

We finished the race at the **Stone Banks**, then motored up the Orwell to Suffolk Yacht Harbour just as it was getting dusk. **The Lightship** put on an excellent meal, with the chef introducing himself before he served dinner. It proved to be a really lovely evening with a few people driving round to join all who had sailed there.

A Wallet 'short race'

The 11th of October was one of our planned spare race days organised at the end of the season for any races that I had been unable to run. Having tried to run the **Wallet Long Race** earlier this season, I put together more of a **Wallet Short Race**. Unfortunately Tollesbury Sailing Club, against whom we normally compete in this event, stated that they had an evening event at their club on the Saturday and doubted if we would get any interest from their members. We thus ran the event with only TCC members. As the race was shorter than normal for the 'Long Race', the course I planned was through the **Spitway**, round the **Whitaker** and back up to **Brightlingsea**. So what this course lacked in length, it made up in cross-tidal legs, with the

(Continued on page 4)

Malt Teasers with Stewart Wallace

Next summer, *Mornaque* will be heading to the **Inner Hebrides** for a taste of the single malt plus a grand collection of parties in the classic whisky distilleries.

Getting there will be fun, comprising a series of fairly long hops over long weekends. Our rough plan at present is to "hop" down to the **Solent, Penzance** (or somewhere nearby) and then shoot across to **Cork**. From there we can bounce along the coast of Ireland aiming for **Strangford Loch** and then across to **Scot-**

land. We will probably stay up there for the season before our trip back via the **Caledonian Canal** and the **East coast** in the following spring.

While the two week **Classic Malts cruise** is already heavily oversubscribed (we only have six berths) there may be legs that interest club members. Please let me know if you would like to join us and I shall do my best to juggle the numbers. Our trip back from Sweden last year turned into a very enjoyable and successful

collective club cruise so it can work.

The itinerary is not settled but basically we shall leave *Mornaque* near to airports that link us back to Stanstead. The availability of cheap (ish) flights makes this a realistic way to achieve a longer cruise.

We would also love to hear from anyone who fancies sailing loosely in company for the trip.

Stewart Wallace:

stewart146@hotmail.com or 07799338298

Beware the Perils of Vodaphone GPRS

Many of us use GPRS memory stick type connectors to get broadband on our laptop computers. These are advertised as having unlimited connection, subject to fair useage conditions and all for about £25 a month. They do work pretty well.

However, there is a catch. If

used in Europe they suddenly become very expensive because Vodaphone (and probably all the others) switch from block rates to roaming rates.

I recently came across an example of someone using this facility in Holland to pick up weather forecasts, emails etc and ending

up with a bill that topped £2,000. I don't imagine that their employer was sympathetic!

It's worth having a look at your contract before taking one abroad.

Stewart Wallace

Mornarque

(Continued from page 3)

(*Racing Report continued*)

wind on the outward legs, mainly on the nose.

A course like this really makes you work hard and you need to make the most of the shallow water to gain against the tide and yet still lay the marks. In fact, I was probably too clever with this course, because as we approached the **Whitaker**, the wind dropped and all we could do was drift down tide of the mark, whilst the three lead boats, who had already rounded the mark, made good pace towards **Brightlingsea**.

It proved to be a challenging race with *Ostara* coming first, *Polo IV* second, and *Mimosa*, whose Skipper sailed a totally different course to everyone else but managed to find less tidal current and thus came third. Also of note was Paul Noyland who sailed *Herald* single handed and was still able to fly his kite, whilst Paul and Miriam Kemp in *Grey Goose*, who retired from the race, were still some 1½ hours behind everyone else in getting into **Brightlingsea**. As it was Paul Kemp's birthday, we had a long wait for their arrival so we could all share the Birthday Cake!

Last things

To end the season there was a 'white sails only' **Fun Frostbite Challenge** on November 29th as an appetiser before going into **Bradwell** for the **Seafood Lunch and Christmas Dinner** at the Bradwell Quay Yacht Club. A significant number of boats entered for the event this year and were not put off too much by the crew and myself singing Christmas Carols as loud as possible as we sailed the course.

David Knight

Rear-Commodore – Racing
Dionysus

Hard Times and Low Tides

with Nick Noscoe

We all have our stories of daring do and fantastic voyages to wonderful exotic places. But sometimes things happen nearer home, in the local marina to be exact, where everybody can watch the drama unfold.

This saga started with the idea of a mid season bottom scrub in August. The scrubbing post was booked and the predicted tides were good. We rose at 0600 and were on the 'posts' by 0630. The weather wasn't brilliant, but this particular Saturday the sun was shining and there was a moderate south-westerly breeze blowing. The day proved to be fine and ideal for the work intended - cleaning off the hull and touching up some of the anti fouling.

A good start

All went extremely well. The boat settled beautifully on the sleepers, thanks to the kind advice from Dennis, whose place I was taking. After all was secure we retired below for a good breakfast while the tide ebbed. Just after 0900 work could start. The hull was scrubbed, painted and even a sticky sea rock was sorted out, all completed by 1000. Clear up and time for coffee, great, job well done. No problem. Little did I know that some unknown sea god was at work!

Great Expectations

It was far too windy to stay on board so we left to return first thing the next morning, full of

hope. But, alas, we had a repeat performance of the previous evening, with a third of a metre below predicted. By now the tides were approaching neaps so there was no chance of getting our 5 foot draft off the scrubbing post for at least the next two days.

Seal the day

On the other hand it was a beautiful morning so we settled down for breakfast, pretending we were at a quiet anchorage somewhere. Then through the still air of the morning sunshine the peace was shattered by a crunching sound. A quick glance round soon located the source. What looked like a small football was struggling to eat a rather large mullet. A precocious seal, possibly from West Mersea, had come into the marina to enjoy the rich pickings while basking in the morning sunshine between us and the fuel pontoon - a very welcome distraction from our trials and tribulations.

Try as we might

Over the next couple of days there were Incantations to various deities of all denominations, just stopping short of a sacrifice to Neptune. Of course, all was to no avail. Wednesday's tide was higher but still well below predicted - so no movement. Next, the elements decided to test our security. The wind freshened but all held. By the afternoon it was blowing quite hard, so, in a weak moment, I turned on the wind in-

struments, I would rather have not known it was gusting to 35 knots in the marina. The next tide at midnight was nearly good enough; she started to move but the back of the keel wouldn't let go. During the day we may have been able to drag ourselves off, but, at night and without the option of calling on the work boat if needed, the idea was definitely a no brainer.

Free at last!

So its got to be Thursday, lots of water, we hoped. Even if the tide was half a metre below predicted we would be OK. All was well - just. There was only six inches to spare - 0.4 metres below predicted. I was a little nervous as we slipped off only twenty minutes before the top of the tide and returned to our more conventional berth.

Will I use the scrubbing post again? Possibly. I will also consider more carefully the other option. As I had no plans for that week, there was no hurry to be elsewhere so it didn't matter. Considering the hassle, and if I had had other commitments, getting the yard to do a lift and hold on the tide is a definite probability. Point two, don't put too much faith in the tide predictions, even when you think that you have allowed for the effect on the tide of variable weather patterns.

Nick Noscoe
Sardinade

For the Full Colour edition of *Up the Creek* - see the Tollesbury Cruising Club Website: www.tollesburycc.co.uk

The Late Summer Cruise -

David Cooke

The Plans

As usual with these events, the basic planning happened way back on a cold damp evening the previous November. I remember the discussion; it was a debate around whether we should go to London, as we had the previous summer, or the East coast for the late summer cruise. The debate was short. Every committee member had been asked by at least one member for a cruise to Southwold! So the decision was made and Peter Philpot, your Cruising rear-commodore, took the responsibility to organise the cruise and duly set about making the provisional bookings with the marinas and harbours.

The standard strategy to get to Southwold is to take a tide up to the Orwell or Deben, then wait until the next convenient high water and take it up to Lowestoft. The trip is about 40 miles and you really need to be around Thorpeness before the tide turns. How long you spend in Lowestoft depends on your liking for the traditional fishing port turned seaside town. The next step is the 10-12 mile trip back down to Southwold which is best entered on the last hour of the flood. Your stay in Southwold is almost certainly going to be longer than Lowestoft, not just because of its rightfully deserved reputation as a great place to visit from the sea but also, once you are tied up on the inside of a 6 boat raft, it can take the best part of an hour to disentangle yourself from the complex crochet work which is absolutely necessary to hold you to the quay!! From Southwold the East coast cruise can go on to the Deben the

Ore and Alde, the Orwell or straight back to Tollesbury.

The Cruise

On Friday night, at the cruise briefing, Peter told everyone that he was unable to come along on the cruise due to last minute work commitments, so I took on the role of leading the cruise, but Peter helped enormously by making last minute calls finalising arrangements and smoothing the way as we sailed around the East coast.

So, on Saturday 23rd August, HW Tollesbury 04:42, we motored over the bar and left the marina at about 05:00. On board *Nimrodel* we had a full family complement of my wife Jane, Jessica, my daughter and of course Rhys, my son. For this trip we were also joined by Rhys and Jessica's friend Alice. Alice has been on a number of shorter trips with us and we have been promising for some time to take her on a longer trip. We had a wonderful sail up to the **Orwell** in the company of *Duette*, *Lhasa*, *Hiawatha*, and *Breezer*, the rest of the fleet setting off on the evening tide. On entering the Orwell everyone had slightly different plans (a great thing about club cruises is you can do your own thing if you want!). *Nimrodel*, *Duette* and *Breezer* dropped anchor in **Hamford water**, with our compliment of young people going for a swim with Ella from *Duette*. Jane and I took the dinghy off to explore the upper reaches of Hamford river, a pleasant experience but quite easy (for us) to get lost! The rest of the fleet spent the night in **Shotley marina** or on buoys off **Levington**.

The next morning involved a

very early start on what turned out to be a wet and windy day. We converged at **Languard point** with a number of other boats, including *Magpie*, *Mimosa*, *Ostara*, *Polo IV*, to mention but a few and continued up the coast to *Lowestoft*. In fairness it was probably the low point of a very good holiday. There was certainly a good wind and everyone made excellent speed. However the sea was lumpy and the rain came at us from behind the whole way (driving itself nicely under the spray hood). I think everyone was pleased to see Lowestoft and we then just had to sort out where exactly the new berths were. We had decided not to stay at the Royal Norfolk and Suffolk Yacht Club but in the new annex to **ABP's Lowestoft Haven**. This is situated to the north (turn right!) just after the entrance and through the fishing dock. A small marina with good toilet/washing facilities but no clubhouse and a none too picturesque view, it does have the benefit of being close to the town centre. We decided that, as we had a lot of boats with us and the weather was not looking too good, a team outing was called for. Jessica, Rhys and Alice took things into their own hands and organised an outing to the best cinema in town, yes, you've got it – the Hollywood! They went up and made a group booking for 15 people. Apparently the man at the cinema nearly fell over with shock at such a large booking and a group discount was agreed there and then! Now Jane and I would not normally go to see a film full of ABBA songs, but I have to say the End of Summer

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(late summer cruising, continued)

Cruise outing to see **Mama Mia** was the most enjoyable night out I've had in a long time, rounded off with fish and chips on the sea front – what more could a chap ask for?



Movie Madness OR Merely Mama Mia?

Gently Homewards

My crew were very keen to move to **Southwold**, so together with *Duette* we made an early move down the coast to stake a pitch (well berths) for the rest of the fleet the next day. It was a sunny day and we had a wild ride down the coast – much to everyone's delight. The next day we were joined by no fewer than 10 other Tollesbury yachts. We quite simply took over **Southwold Harbour!** It was like a floating circus had arrived in town with people, folding bikes, fishing rods and

body boards appearing from every direction! Southwold did not disappoint and everyone had a wonderful time, fishing, cycling, on the beach, shopping, in tea shops, nice pubs serving good beer and my wife took to sampling a selection of the morning's papers in the Sailors Reading Room. Peter Phil-

pot had organised for us to use the sailing club's garden for a BBQ and, as in previous years, they were most welcoming and an excellent BBQ was enjoyed

by everyone.

Given the number of boats and people on them, there is no way that a single plan would meet everyone's needs and that we could expect to keep such a large group together. So on the Thursday some boats set off for the **Orwell** and a number of us, *Nimrodel*, *Lhasa*, *Magpie*, *Rose Tyler* and *Pamela Jane* headed for the **Ore**. *Lhasa* was the first in the Ore and had settled in the wonderfully named **Abraham's Bosom**. It was a great place to stay. Jane had been cooking dinner along the way and we

had a very memorable (and atmospheric) candle lit supper. The next day a couple of boats moved on, some went all the way up to **Aldeburgh** and we settled for **Orford**. For us this was the absolute highlight of the holiday. We found a mooring, took the dingy ashore and looked round a few little shops (nice butchers, gift shops and a smokery) and had a good look round the castle. It was a truly wonderful day. Later on we put our hammock up on the deck and lounged around before an evening sail back to Blackwater and picking up one of the leaving buoys in the creek at about midnight.

This was our own particular end to the holiday as the children wanted a day sailing their Pico together with Charlie from *Duette* (who joined his Dad late on in the week). It was a very windy day and the Pico sailors had loads of fun. After a late supper we went back into Tollesbury on the midnight tide.

The end of summer cruise has always been a great success, but I have to say this year we surpassed ourselves. Thank you to Peter Philpot for doing all the advanced sorting out and making calls along the way and to everyone who came along and made it a truly memorable week.

Dave Cooke
Vice-Commodore
Nimrodel

Dandy's Lament

I am not a natural seadog
It would be fair to say
I'd rather take my tennis ball
Off to the park and play.

But my owners seem to like these
boats
They must be barking mad
So when they said they were selling up
I really was quite glad.

But instead of lots of walkies
They still went off to sea
As they sailed with other people
And to kennels they sent me!

So I've spent some time reflecting
Instead of chasing my tail
And decided to start enjoying
At least the 'Après Sail'.

Next year I'll be aboard *Sundancer*
(It's my other yacht you see)
So if you see me up on deck
Come and say "hello" to Dandy!

Translated by:
Anwen Walkerdine
Sundancer

A Night to Remember!

Dinner and danger at the nearly-Christmas Cruise - with Barry Jones

It started extremely well. The rains held off; the early birds were berthed without incident; the racers raced to a successful end, with a handicap victory for *Ostara*; and, by mid-afternoon, the pontoon party was in full swing with seafood and nibbles supplementing a profusion of drinks – some warming, some cooling. The range of seasonal hats added considerably to the convivial atmosphere, as did the vibrant Christmas illuminations that festooned many of the boats.

Nearly Christmas cruises are not always so lucky with the weather or so well supported. Some 15 TCC boats were signed on for the mini-cruise on the 29th to 30th of November, and 60 people were booked in for the Christmas Dinner in the Bradwell Quay Sailing Club: the maximum that could be accommodated and fed. The pontoon party went without hitch, save for a period of rain that failed to dampen the spirits of those in attendance. Indeed, the boats alongside the 'A' pontoon hammerhead had been well advised in lowering their fenders to allow for the predictable sinking of the pontoon, under the weight of bodies.

Dinner was booked for 6.30 for 7.00. Few were slow to arrive at the warm and welcoming bar in the Bradwell Quay Sailing Club. The classic Christmas dinner of Turkey and trimmings, followed by Christmas Pudding and mince pies, with cream and brandy butter, was served promptly and effi-



ciently, and consumed with noticeable speed by the hungry boat crews. With Christmas crackers, paper hats, absurd riddles and a continuing flow of suitable libations, the dinner was widely enjoyed.

With dinner over, the livelier spirits on the TCC committee



took to the organisation of some party 'games'. A ladies' musical chairs proved to be a robust diversion, while the unisex 'pass

the balloon' contained episodes of considerable mirth. Targeting one pound coins at an empty bottle, in aid of the RNLi, also proved to be popular and drew in some of those who might have been deterred by the exuberance of the earlier games.

Ominous Tidings

As the evening drew to a close, a few felt it desirable to pay their respects to the **Green Man**, some progressed for post-parandials to friends' boats, while many retired to their warm and welcoming berths. All was well with the

world for boats at the shore-side end of 'A' pontoon until just before midnight. A loud splash was rapidly followed by increasingly anguished calls for help from Glyn (crew on *Codan*, *Zevkim's* neighbouring boat).

This was one of those moments of stunned disbelief. Was the shouting merely post-celebratory amusement, or

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(Continued from page 8)

(Nearly Christmas Cruise continued)

did it signify something rather more serious. When Glen called out that “Peter had fallen in”, realisation dawned. It took a few minutes to roll out of my bunk, find some basic outer clothing and venture out to join the fray.

The sight on arrival was not encouraging. Peter Philpot (Codan’s skipper) was floating up to his shoulders in the water, alongside the inner end of the finger pontoon, with one or two people vainly trying to pull him out. There were calls for some rope(s) to assist the process. I returned to my boat for suitable warps, as did others from nearby boats (including Sue, from *Iceni II*, who, along with her daughter, had been one of the first on the scene). On returning with a lengthy rope, however, it was not at all clear as to how it could be used effectively. *Codan’s* halliards were occupied by the Christmas illuminations that Peter had raised earlier in the day. The halliards of *Magpie* on the other side of the finger berth might have been usable, but the angle of pull would have been quite wide.

Success at last!

This was the point at which three of us—myself and Barrett and crew from *Magpie* (I think, given the darkness and confusion of the moment) made a renewed attempt to extract Peter through a collective effort to roll him up and onto the finger berth. Counts of three allowed us to co-ordinate our efforts, which slowly began to have some effect. After about three such pulls, Peter was rolled onto the finger berth, to lie there soaked and exhausted for a few minutes before being assisted to his feet and a slow, and extremely cautious, boarding of his boat. The small crowd that had assembled on the

main pontoon by this stage was visibly relieved and slowly dispersed to allow Peter Philpot to go below and have a most welcome, warm shower and to discover that he had gashed his leg (the cold of the water had staunched the flow up to that point), torn his trousers and wrenched his shoulder.

Reflections on a near run thing

Those who had participated in Peter’s rescue, or stood by as deeply concerned witnesses, then retired to reflect upon the dramatic happenings and what, if anything, could have been done better to effect a rescue. Peter had probably been capsized by a dodgy knee. He had been in the water for anything between 15 and 20 minutes before he was successfully rescued. This is getting close to the limit of survival in the water for most people at this time of the year, so there was clearly no time to call up any professional assistance.

Because Peter was in the water at the forward end of his boat, he could not get to the boarding ladder at the stern of his boat or to any of the fixed safety ladders located in other berths within the marina. Direct lifting by a suitable number of willing hands, or the use of halliards (less suitable because of the compression stresses from rope or canvass loops and the dangers of vertical lifting to a badly chilled body) was, therefore, the best option. The biggest problem

with that, was the difficulty of getting a really good grip on wet and stretch clothing, while leaning over the edge of a none-too wide or stable finger pontoon. A Life-jacket would have provided suitable handholds. Ironically, Peter wears his life-jacket religiously whilst sailing, but few adults wear their life-jackets when on marina pontoons. Some of the commercial devices that allow those in the water to be rolled onto deck or pontoon would clearly have been ideal. Still, with determination and co-ordination it proved to be possible to haul Peter out of the water and, thankfully, the grouping of the visiting boats in Bradwell Marina meant that there was willing and able assistance on hand and within earshot of Glen’s anguished cries for assistance. Danger did not, in the end, turn into disaster and all was well that ended well.

Barry Jones

Zevkim



No Party Poopers here—good times before the drama

(Note – I discussed mentioning the drama with Peter Philpot, and he gave his permission, pleased to contribute to raising awareness of what can go wrong on boats.)

Steorra to Spain - Barry and Stephanie Jones

Steorra of Tollesbury, the 'other boat in our lives' arrived at the new MDL marina in Sant Carles, Spain, in September. We decided to relocate *Steorra* from her temporary home, ashore at Hamble Point Marina, in the autumn of 2007. The slack and deteriorating market for used boats finally convinced us that we would be better off putting her back into commission, for use somewhere where, we hoped, the weather would not exert quite such a strong, and often negative, influence upon our sailing.

Decisions, decisions!

The trigger for the decision over *Steorra's* future was the news at the 2007 Southampton boat-show that a new marina was being built by MDL in north-eastern Spain. After some four years of preparation, MDL was about to start the construction of its new marina in Sant Carles, to the south of the delta of the Ebro River, about 100 miles south of Barcelona: a location that offered the possibility of day sailing in the large, sheltered lagoon off Sant Carles as well as cruising along the coast or a 24 hour trip over to the Balearics. The four-year berthing package (to include free transfers to and from Barcelona or Reus (Tarragona) airports, free electricity and other benefits) seemed to be very attractive. That decision was, however, merely the start of the saga.

First things first.

Relocating *Steorra* to Sant Carles depended upon two conditions: first, the readiness of the new marina to receive incoming boats; and second, some means of transportation from the Hamble to

Spain. MDL promised the readiness of the marina by May, 2008. An arrangement had also been made with Peters and May for a sea-borne shipment of a small fleet of boats, soon thereafter. The month of May came, however, but unforeseen construction problems had prevented the readiness of the new marina. We, and other new berth holders, therefore had to sit tight and await developments patiently.

The months of summer passed with encouraging news about the progress of the Sant Carles marina, but no good news about the prospects of a ship to Spain. Enquiries about possible over-land transportation were initiated, as were investigations about the possibilities of delivering *Steorra* through one, or other, of the French canals.

Light at the end of tunnel

By late August, however, a light suddenly glimmered out of the

gloom when MDL announced that they had now switched to Premier Packaging and Shipping as their preferred shipping agent.

Finally there.

From then on, things really began to happen. With a firm promise of shipment in early(ish) September, we re-launched *Steorra* at the end of August and embarked upon her re-commissioning. Then, on the 15th of September, while the Southampton Boat Show was in full swing, we finally delivered her alongside the formidably slab-like sides of the *OXL Blue Sea* for hoisting out and loading for shipment directly from Southampton to Sant Carles. A week later she was safe and sound in her new berth and a week after that we were on board and basking in the early autumn sun.

Barry and Stephanie Jones

Zevkim (and Steorra)



Steorra in Sant Carles' Marina