



the Venturer

Newsletter of the **North West Venturers Yacht Club**
 Gallows Point, Beaumaris, Anglesey, LL58 8YL

Events

Sat 20th July	Caernarfon via Llanddwyn. OOD Ian Hynes (Mistral)
Sat 27th July	Rhoscolyn. OOD John Bowles (Symphony) START OF SUMMER CRUISE
Sat 3rd Aug	Traeth Bychan. OOD Malcolm Thomas (Hwyl Dda)
Sat 3rd Aug	Round Anglesey Race. OOD Dave Clough (Sarico) - <i>Whispered Secret Trophy</i>
_____ and Sat 10th Aug	Pen y Parc. OOD Ian Hynes (Mistral). <i>Survey Lewis Morris Malltraeth anchorage</i> RETURN OF SUMMER CRUISE
Sat 17th Aug	Traeth Dulas. OOD Glen Warburton. <i>Explore the Traeth Dulas inland sea.</i>
Sat 24th Aug Sun 25th	Porth Dinllaen (south about). Holyhead, RTM Monday 26th (Bank Hol)

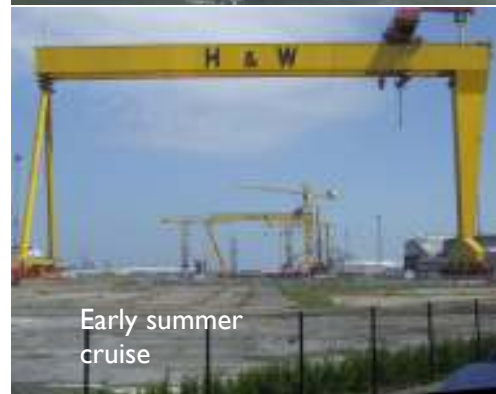
What's inside?



Abermenai
Open?



Further Sailing
Confessions of
a new member



Early summer
cruise

Commodore's Corner

Hello everyone and welcome to the mid-season Venturer, I hope everything is going well on the water. From what I can tell, it looks like there have been quite a number of successful beach barbecues! Right now as I write this, the weather has finally relented and we have wall to wall sunshine for our boating.

If some of you have been using the boat tracker on the web site, you'll see we are quite well spread out. We have Whispered Secret hopping around the UK coast, Snowbird near Guernsey and Straitshooter in the Aegean, as well as a few boats in Ireland. Pearl has been keeping us up to date on Facebook, with some stunning pictures of the Scilly Isles.

We have everything poised for us to get a new lease with ABC; as soon as we do there will be a rent increase so we aren't rushing this. When the season is over the momentum for club redevelopment will resume and we can push this forward.

So I'm sure we will continue to have a great season, with some Indian Summer weather to while away the lazy hours at anchor. I'm looking forward to joining in at some point!

Have a safe and enjoyable rest of season.

Glen Warburton
Commodore

Note: Final copy date for next Venturer edition: 2nd Sept please. Thank you.

Menai Vice

I finished my last write-up in the middle of April with "looking forward to the weather warming up", and it still stands in the middle of June, we have had some nice days, but with nothing being settled at all!

May 4th, The Astrador Cup had a time limit that none of the yachts could make due to the tide turning in Holyhead bay, having tacked all the way from point Lynas! May 5th, the Walton Shield was cancelled due to strong winds.

On 25th May, the Seamint trophy was cancelled on Saturday due to a lack of wind, but there was plenty on the Sunday night whilst tied up the wall in Port St Mary, I of M.

So for most, the season seems to have started slowly, with most yachts not launching until mid May! The best turn out by far was to Porth Wen on Saturday 25th May,

with 13 club yachts anchoring in the bay, and 12 going on to Port St Mary the following day :-)

Apart from that, all's going well ! If anyone requires fobs to go ashore from the pontoon on the pier at Beaumaris, please contact me, details in the year book, and do give notice if you can!

It would be nice if we could have some new yachts attending the weekend events, the more the merrier as they say, and also the weather settling down a bit. The summer cruise is nearly here, so looking forward to that, along with the weekends and BBQ's in between.

Lee Downes
Vice Commodore

Bins and Other Things

Probably everyone who uses the clubhouse has noticed that the good weather has also been very good for the vegetation surrounding the club. As it's quite a while until the end of season working party when we would normally deal with this, we need to consider employing a gardener. This is complicated by the Japanese Knotweed that needs special treatment. Nevertheless, rest assured this has been discussed by the committee and its being sorted.

On a similar note, we need to be vigilant when using the waste facilities at Gallows Point not to allow the bins to overflow- before you know it there'll be a seagull up to no good spreading the rubbish around. The same goes for the interior of the building; obviously some of us use the club more than others so it's a matter of making sure the galley area is kept clean and tidy for anyone to use (unless you're actively cooking up a cordon bleu meal and are mid-soufflé!).

And remember we have children in the club who may not understand some of the fruitier terms we use to describe our efforts in boat maintenance! We have a number of new members this year and the friendliness and enthusiasm to help them from older members is what defines us.

Glen Warburton
Commodore

PS: If you are going away for more than a weekend, or if your boat is on the hard, please try to park at the back of the clubhouse and not in the main car park during summer.

During the two weeks of the mini cruise there was a car left in the main car park, which was at times full, and worse it occupied two spaces .

Thank you

Irene Goodwin Trophy - Sat 2nd July - result

Rank	Boat	Class	Name	PY	NHC	Elapsed	Corrected	Points
1	Ocean Mood	Moody 27	J Jago & D Lewis	1180	0.887	94:55:00	01:20:26	1
2	Ospray	Sadler 29	E & M Hopkinson	1100	0.855	96:20:00	01:27:35	2
3	Olimilo	Corsair F28 cc	R & S Curry	810		88:00:00	01:48:39	3

Bosuns Corner - July 2013

Bosuns Ditties June/July 2013

A quiet two months and an apology from me for not being down at the club as much as I would have liked. Family illness and other commitments have forced absence for the early part of this season unfortunately.

Publications are always available at preferential rates from the Bosun's stores with many titles being held in stock – please feel free to enquire and order either via e-mail at bosun@nwvyc.org.uk or via my mobile phone, my number being listed in the yearbook and the members section on our website.

We stock a good range of club clothing which can be ordered for collection from the clubhouse or can be posted at a small additional cost – again, please feel free to enquire by one of the two methods above.

All Wales Boat Show

The All Wales Boat Show is to be held at Conwy from Wednesday 24th – Sunday 28th July 2013 from 11am to 6pm daily and is being combined with the Conwy River Festival. The All Wales Boat Show is under New Management and has combined two previous events into one new and exciting location in Conwy. This is a celebratory festival of all water-based activities with the very best in boating.

Members can enjoy a river cruise between the Show's two fantastic marinas, savour Welsh produce as they walk along the river banks, try their hand at the 'have a go' sessions, watch the many demos and the spectacular Conwy River Festival, experience first class hospitality and meet major regional and national exhibitors including boat sales and chandlery. **THIS IS AN EVENT NOT TO BE MISSED!**

Ticket Prices: Adults £15, Children £7.50, Family £40, Seniors/Students £10

Discounted tickets can be obtained from <http://www.allwalesboatshow.com>

Adults £ 13.50, Children £6.75, Family Ticket (2 + 2) £36.00, Seniors & Students £9.00 – Please quote code: "s9clb" to get your discounted tickets via their website.

Advance Notice:

Although you are receiving this in July, the end of the season will be here before you know it! We are planning to arrange sail laundering as a club via The

Boatshed as has happened in previous years where you can benefit from them storing your sails over the winter after the laundering process – more details to follow in the next newsletter.

Joy Bennett
Bosun

Anyone for "Bathtubbing"?

The bizarre sport of bathtubbing, as enjoyed by TV stars Rory McGrath and Will Mellor, comes to the All Wales Boat Show with the World Championships.

Entrants are expected from around the world for the competition - described as kayaking in a bath. Three days of practice runs will allow entrants get their sea-legs, with the contest itself on Saturday July 27.



Rafting Etiquette

Following some comments made by members over the past few weeks, could skippers please ensure that when rafted out against a wall, either in a marina, such as Victoria Dock, or against a break water, say Wicklow, it is good practice to have larger yachts on the inside, bow and stern lines attached, springs to the wall or the yacht inside of you, and shore lines for each yacht in the raft (and if its Victoria Dock, Mark will probably ask you to do it anyway).

If the forecast is showing strong winds, it would be wise to shorten the raft to no more than three yachts to prevent damage to the inside yachts. Be prepared to wait to raft up if you know smaller yachts are coming in behind you - a 15 minute wait could avoid 3/4 hour of yacht juggling.

Lee Downes

Racing with NWVYC - Part 2 - The "How"

We are a cruising club. We race to enhance our sailing skills, not to shout at other yacht skippers and have arguments. It has to be enjoyable, but some are more competitive than others. There is room for everyone within a NWVYC Club Race, and we should all respect others yacht skippers reasons for taking part. After all, we were all novices at some stage.

How do you start a race? Full instructions are contained in the Race Instructions which in the past few years have normally been available for collection from the clubhouse the week prior to a race, or downloadable from the website. The key thing is engines off 4 minutes before the start time – so you need to think ahead – where do you need to be before you turn the engine off, and for the 5 minutes before the start where are you going to go to make sure you are as close to the line as possible – it's all about positioning.

Now you are off. What are others doing? Why is that yacht going over there? Do they have knowledge of back eddies or better wind conditions. That yacht that's pulling away – how are their sails set – should you trim yours in a similar manner? The yacht that's overhauling you – how do you position yourself to block them from taking your wind and forced them to overtake on the leeward side of you? Have the so and so's got their engine on! Have you remembered to remove your ensign to signify to others you are racing?

How do the club make sure that handicaps are correct? Handicaps are a mathematical calculation of your time to cover the course, derived from elapsed time multiplied by a published figure for your yacht. Until a few years ago Club Handicaps for monohull yachts were based on the Liverpool Bay Sailing Association (LBSA) handicaps, but they ceased to be published, and so the club moved to 'Portsmouth Yardsticks' (PY) handicaps, a scheme operated jointly by the RYA and its affiliated clubs. These are also now to be discontinued, and a new system is being brought in by the RYA. They all work on the same basic principles – initial handicaps are calculated from the design features of a yacht, they are then used, the results monitored, and then modified from actual results. If you don't race, then your results don't get included in the monitoring and so the handicap remains the same.

The RYA decided that Cruisers can no longer be supported under the PY, due to the need for results to be fed back and monitored and the volume of return data dropping significantly year on year. They have now launched a new progressive handicap scheme for Cruisers named "The National Handicap for Cruisers (NHC)".

The Club are very fortunate to have Mike Butterfield in the club, a very senior person in the RYA racing world, who administers Handicaps for our club yachts. He has already applied the new NHC listing to NWVYC Club Yachts. This listing is available from Mike and is on the Club Web site – home/programme/racing/handicaps.

If you don't have a handicap and want one Mike will work one out for you – all you need to do is complete the handicap form available upon request and on the handicap page of the Web site and send it to Mike. You will need to declare things like prop type (fixed or folding) and whether if you carry a cruising chute or spinnaker you intend using it if racing – and if you don't intend using it you can't then use it.

So why do some yachts always appear to win races? A lot may depend on the course – a straight spring across Red Wharf Bay on a beam reach will see bilge keeler's performing well, whereas a beat will see fin keeler's pointing higher and therefore faster to the line. The best solution is a traditional triangle course, where all points of sailing are tested, similar to the Trilogy Race course in 2012 which for the first time used a virtual GPS waypoint to create a triangle – and all competing yachts, after handicap, finished a few minutes apart.

Racing relies on trust, as you will need to take your own finishing times, and make sure you sail the correct course – particularly in the Strait where you are normally bound by Channel markers. The course is clearly defined in the Race Instructions – as a general rule all markers are left to the correct side – the only exceptions tend to be when we are racing round the cans when clearly you will leave a marker to the wrong side if turning 180 degrees around it.

One final point – Insurance. Your yacht insurance may not cover you for racing, or if it does, it may exclude masts, spars, rigging and sails. It's worth contacting your insurer, as any additional premium to cover these items may be quite small (for Sarico it was £40). However, make it clear that the NWVYC are a cruising club, and its races are not competitive IRC / RORC / ISAF races, that they are normally run to a cruising destination, and only have half a dozen or so yachts actively competing.

If you have any doubts or questions, then please contact a member of the Sailing Sub Committee who will be happy to help.

*David Clough
Sarico*

Round Anglesey Yacht Race

On the 3rd August the Round Anglesey Yacht Race takes place as the opening event of the Menai Strait Regatta fortnight. There are 4 classes, 2 for the really competitive types with wraparound sunglasses and bawling skippers, 1 for Cruising yachts (class 3) and one for multi-hulls.

Over the past few years the numbers of Venturers taking part has steadily increased. Detente has won it on more than 1 occasion, so they will be the ones to beat if they compete this year.

The official organisers are the Menai Bridge Boat Club, and entry forms and sailing instructions will be available from <http://www.aaroncare.f2s.com/index.html> in due course. The official club weekend of 3rd/4th August is a trip to Traeth Bychan, but if you are interested in taking part in the race Sarico will be competing, and I'm the OOD insofar as club members are concerned.

If you have any questions or queries about the race then please feel free to contact me and I will let you have the

benefit of my experiences over the past 7 years – I will also have copies of the SI's and entry forms.

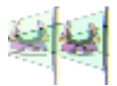
Start time is provisionally around 08:30, so there is a chance with wind we will get round in daylight. For those in Victoria Dock the Dockmaster has agreed to drop the gate early at 06:45 to give time to get up to Menai Bridge.

If you opt for Traeth Bychan, please give us all a cheer on the VHF as we pass you at anchor, hopefully late afternoon / early evening. And remember, the club now has the Whispered Secret Trophy, awarded to the highest placed NWWYC Cruising Yacht to finish.

*Dave Clough
Sarico*

Trilogy 2012 - Sarico overhauling Soay





Sailing Confessions of a New Member - Part 2

Last month, we left John venturing out into Cardigan Bay again, having escaped from the Teifi estuary into the open sea. Well, if you thought it might all be plain sailing from there, you have to take into account the so-called-Spring weather we had to contend with this year. John continues the story.....

No surprise wind and seas on the nose again and too rough for the autohelm. No time to waste if I was going to get into New Quay harbour. I steered as smooth a course as I could, trying to preserve every fraction of a knot of speed. I would have plenty of time tonight, into town for a drink and something to eat, then I rounded the headland and saw New Quay bay. All the large waves were extinguishing themselves on the beach and harbour wall.

I entered the bay, Davico was rolling all over the place. I spoke to the harbour master, I could moor against the harbour wall. I dismiss this idea sailing solo, after seeing the waves breaking on the harbour wall and sea defences. I am sure a more experienced skipper and crew could have got in, but all I could think about was Davico crashing into the rocks and harbour wall.

Was it OK if I pick up a mooring buoy in the bay? Yes, I tried, I could pick up the mooring line but the pitching of the boat would rip it out of my hands each time. Blood everywhere, a lost boat hook and cut finger, I let the harbour master know I could not pick up a mooring.

'Don't worry', was the reply, 'I will get the inshore lifeboat to come and help you'.

Shortly Davico is embraced with another RNLI RIB. The only way the professional RNLI crew of young men and women managed to pick up a mooring line was by placing it in the RIB and transferring it to Davico's main cleat.

The RNLI suggested they tow me to Aberystwyth marina, it would be a rough and potentially dangerous night in force 6's on the mooring. I was reluctant at first – I had already put people out enough and part of me wanted to complete the entire journey under my own steam. Common sense prevailed, OK for a tow.

We waited for a bit and then the impressive Mersey class offshore lifeboat appeared. Tow line attached and 2 RNLI crew placed on board Davico and we were off. The 2 hours passed quickly on the journey to Aberystwyth talking to the lifeboat crew members.

One a very experienced fisherman, informed me he was waiting for the good weather at the weekend before he took his boats out! At this point I decided to leave Davico in Aberystwyth marina and wait for better weather. Conversation was interrupted by Davico being dragged into large waves at 6 knots, nothing for the Mersey class but the impact in Davico was quite disturbing. I need to go to the dentist this week with tooth ache; I think a filling has been shaken out.

Thankfully as we got closer to Aberystwyth the seas sub-



A Little Help Picking Up a Mooring

Sailing Confessions of a New Member (Part 2 contd)

sided. We were met just outside Aberystwyth in the dark by the local inshore lifeboat crew, crews were exchanged and Davico was piloted onto her marina berth. More details of the rescue can be found on the RNLI website, the above picture is courtesy of the RNLI.

We were greeted on the marina pontoon yet again by Coastguard officials, clip boards in hand, name address, telephone? etc. etc. I felt like a naughty school boy at this point. The marina manager had also come out at night to make sure all was OK.

Suddenly I felt very tired, I rang Jo my wife, and could she pick me up in the morning? I thought it wise not to tell her details regarding my trip. I plugged in the electrical hook up turned on the fan heater and fell asleep.

The next morning Davico was made ship shape and I took a stroll round the marina to look at the boats while I was waiting for Jo. I also had a visit from a man who I think was a senior Coastguard officer – I make this assumption because of the blazer and lots of gold braid. Had I got life jackets, flares, VHF, what were my plans now? I experience the same feelings as when stopped by the police for speeding and waiting to see if you are going to get a ticket. I am sure if the Coastguard could issue tickets I would have got one.

On the drive back to the Wirral, my mind turns to the second part of the passage, who could I get to help me to get Davico back to Beaumaris? Confidence shattered. Wife worried. I needed someone experienced, I was not going to trouble the Coastguard and RNLI again. I send a very speculative Email to Vice Commodore Lee Downes asking for help.

The second thing on returning home I do is fire up the laptop and register Davico's CG66 form with the Coastguard and make a donation to the RNLI, the first thing was to play football with the kids.

Over the next few days Lee steps into the breach and we finalise plans. The weather at the weekend was going to be good. I picked up Lee in Stafford on Friday evening and we drove down to Aberystwyth. Chatting in the car I knew we would get on when I found out Lee and I shared an interest in motorcycles. Something to eat in Aberystwyth and it was early to bed. It would be a 05:00 start on the second part of the journey.

Lee piloted Davico out of the marina in the dark, the sea was flat calm and stayed that way for the rest of the day. I logged the passage plan with Coastguard, I thought at

five thirty in the morning I would get the answer machine but a pleasant voice who seemed to know all about Davico noted down the passage details.

The rest of the day was uneventful and very enjoyable. Wonderful warm sunshine, amazing wild life, all set to the back drop of snow capped Welsh mountains. No wind to sail. The day was punctuated by regular cups of tea and snacks for Lee. Lee does like a cuppa.

Lee showed me the passage through Bardsey, over the bar and down the Straits.

About an hour of the Straits left, around 20:00 and I was becoming impatient to moor up and go for a pint, suddenly the peace is broken by the sound of the Beta's engine overheat alarm. A feature of the engine but I knock off a few revs until the alarm stops.

We moored up and notified the Coastguard. We were home!

Lee and I met up with some other Venturers members and went for a few drinks and a curry, I regretted this the next morning – indigestion, Vindaloo and whiskey do not mix.

What have I learnt? A lot, the main thing, I will be a fair weather sailor, bad weather and rough seas exaggerate the skippers, crew and boat's, deficiencies and faults.

What am I going to do post passage? Fix all the boat broken bits, update the electronic charts/almanac and write a letter to the RNLI suggesting they change the colour of their RIBS to white, the current RIBS leave lots of large black marks all over your newly polished white hull.

Lastly a few thank you's. It goes without saying the professionals at the RNLI and Coastguard, Lee for getting Davico home at such short notice, trying to pass on his yachting experience and putting up with my incessant questions and chatter, Eddy for a lift to Bangor station and support of my wife who was single handed with the kids for a week.

*John Creasy
Davico*

Venturers Trip to Abermenai. Weekend 18/19 May OoD Nick Lowther

The programme said "Cricket on the Lavan Sands". Nick (Hwyl DDa), the newly instated OoD is a bit of conspiracy theorist. His first key decision was that "Cricket on the Lavan Sands" was tantamount to mass Rock Trophy suicide. Play was therefore abandoned without a ball being bowled! But disappointment was tempered by the promise of golf at Royal Abermenai!

With so many boats still not in the water, the fleet was restricted to Hwyl Dda, Mistral, Helian, Sylvan, Ocean Mood and Sarico. Saturday was grey, overcast and chilly. Most people were toggled up. Lee seemed to be in shorts and T shirt! The trip through the Swellies was uneventful. There was a good north westerly breeze and we got a sail up the Straits to Abermenai, losing Sarico en route to the fleshpots of Victoria Dock.

Oh, what a joy to be back in Abermenai! The only real surprise was the absence of Skye! The bonfire was ablaze by 6.45 and BBQ's sputtering into life, despite their 2012 sell by dates.

At 2000, the guest of honour arrived off Sylvan, in the shape of Alice Hackney, 13 on the day. How old we all felt, but how young we were all acting!

The Royal Abermenai Golf links are reminiscent of St Davids at Harlech and Ballycastle in Northern Ireland - impressive amounts of sand and very little grass. Nevertheless, as the first lark of summer ascended over the dunes, 11 Venturers demonstrated a varying degree of skill in pitching a golf ball towards a large plastic container acting as the hole. There were divots flying and air shots galore; certainly, no holes in one. Suffice to say, Rory McIlroy is not feeling the hot breath of competition from any of us, but old Tom Morris was certainly turning in his grave. But, it was a bit of fun and maybe we broke new ground with this first Venturer Golf tourney?

.....and so it was back to Mistral for a "bit of



after". Great company all round and lots of fun stories to accompany the "rusty nail". What more could we have asked for? Thank you Ian and Christine for your hospitality..... I guess that is the price you pay for having the largest and best stocked boat.

Not a ripple on the waters overnight. You would hardly have known you were afloat had it not been for the rumble of the anchor chain shifting in the turning tide and the tinkle of an oversider! Peace and tranquillity personified.

Sunday was warmer with the promise of sunshine. Denise sent Gerry aloft to fix the VHF antenna; Ian was "sorting" his electrics; Alice rowed Anne about in the dinghy; Lee collected mussels and checked his rigging; tea towels dried in the sun; Nick, Malcolm and Shona did a bit of food scavenging along the shoreline.

.....it was one of those long, sleepy, and relaxing mornings.....and lunch on board Hwyl Dda was

cockles and muscles in white wine stock on a bed of sea beet with fried shallots. Delicious and straight out of the Venturer manual of "something for nothing"! Galley Rat to note.

What a shame we had to leave. It was gentle neaps which gave us all a good "Swelly window". Everyone back on moorings by 6pm. No mishaps to report. Thank you fellow Venturers for your company and gentle introduction to the arts of OoDing.

Nick Lowther (Hwyl Dda)



Mini Cruise (start) May 25th

The forecast was looking good for most of the week, sunny with just enough wind to hold the race, but Friday's forecast changed to sunny, with no wind, so after a discussion on Friday evening, it was decided we would go to Porth Wen on the Saturday, and then on to the I of Man on the Sunday, with a better forecast for wind.

We had a good turn out of thirteen yachts in the bay and glorious sunshine for the BBQ in the evening, with all having a good time.

A start time of 06:00 was set for departing in the morning, but not all ended up going at the same time. The forecast was for a F3/4 occ F5 from the SW, going W. All started motor sailing for the first hour or so, and then sailing as the wind veered, and making good progress.

The first group of six, Sea Gem, Dizzy, Helian, Ocean Mood, Verity and Osprey, kept fairly close together, arriving within half an hour of each other, and the visitors mooring looking tempting, rather than the wall? But in the end we all tied onto the breakwater, in three groups, with a big mooring barge looking favourite for Dizzy, Helian and Verity, joined later by Mistral and Hunters Moon.

The other yachts arrived safely and made fast, but the forecast for the night didn't look promising, with F7 and rain being the main for the night, and keeping most crews busy for a few hours at the height of the tide 01:00 hours onwards, and again at 04:00

Monday had the same forecast, so all yachts

stayed put until Wednesday, and then moving on to Peel in sunshine again, Calf Sound was calm for us with wind and tide together, followed by a good sail towards Peel, which had to be cut short to make the last swing bridge, and allow access into the marina.

Thursday evening saw plans being made by Dizzy, Sea Gem, Ocean Mood, Verity and Osprey to go to Ardglass, while Helian stayed until Saturday, and then heading back to Beaumaris and work.

So for the first week, all had a good time, bar Sunday night and Monday in strong winds and rain, along with days out on the bus, a trip on the tram to Laxey to see the Laxey Wheel, watching the TT practice for one night in Douglas, some very nice sunshine, followed of course by some Ice cream on Peel sea front, what more could you ask for.

*Lee
Helian*



Missing - NWVYC Race Pack

Some years ago the club had a race pack wallet usually held and maintained by John Partington. It contained useful information for OOD's of race weekends, and the club hooter. Have you got it?

If so could you please return it to any member of the Sailing Sub Committee.

Thank you.

Mini Cruise (continued) May 31st

Friday 31st saw an exodus from Peel, with Dizzy, Sea Gem, Ocean Mood, Verity and Osprey heading west towards Ardglass. Ben, the marina office dog made us all welcome, and showed his range of tricks (mostly fetch the tiny stone). We almost got to eat in the beautiful surroundings of the golf club - but they were so busy, and some of us were just too hungry to wait!

Next morning the destination was Strangford Lough - only a short hop, and the first time I'd seen the impressive tide turbine tower in the Strangford Narrows. (I saw on the BBC that a yacht had the misfortune to actually hit the mechanism a week or so later and was dismantled).

Anyway, all safely through the narrows, and avoiding the 'pladdies' we made our way into the Quoile river, to the Quoile Yacht Club. What a superb location for a BBQ, reasonably priced Guinness, and a great welcome from the members there. Thanks again Quoile YC.

One overnight stay and we moved up the Lough to Strangford Lough YC, and an evening trip to Daft Eddy's (*no relation*) Restaurant. Clearly someone had heard there were celebrities in the place that evening, as they'd flown in by 'chopper' to meet us (but then they left without offering us a trip round the Lough :-).

Monday saw us leaving the Lough again, destination Belfast marina, in the up and coming 'Titanic Quarter', right by the city. There was very little wind again, some sea fog on the way up the coast. Of course that wind was right on the nose all the way. Verity, Sea Gem and Ocean Mood considered taking on the Stena Superfast (I'm sure the photo must be deceptive), but soon we were all in the marina - it's got to be one of the best value marinas around, just pay at the meter.

Tuesday gave us all the opportunity to see the city. Such a place of contradictions, beautiful buildings, modern shops, then the 'famous' murals and paramilitary associations. The bus tours now take tourists from across the world round it all, with, I thought, a very informative and interesting commentary. The plans for the Titanic Quarter are impressive, and it will be interesting to see how this, and the city develop in the next 5 years.

The journey home involved overnight stops at Ardglass (again), and Port St Mary (on the wall again), but this time there was almost no wind at all. The final evening of the cruise was spent in the pub at Cemaes, and anchored in Llanbadrig Bay.

I'd like to thank all the crews of Dizzy, Sea Gem, Ocean Mood and Verity for being great company for the 2 weeks (and for all the help taking lines).

*Ed Hopkinson
Osprey*



One way of arriving at Daft Eddy's (but not for us)

Astrador Cup / Walton Shield 4th/5th May

Holyhead and Back Saturday/Sunday 4th & 5th May

Disappointing weather put a dampener on the opening races of the season. Although seven club boat's tried, none finished the first race from Puffin to Holyhead on a grey and overcast day. A delayed start time saw us battling tides and when Sarico finally threw in the towel in Holyhead Bay, the rest of the fleet followed suit and engines were started! A valiant effort by Sarico, Helian, Sea Gem, Ocean Mood, Good Knews, Macaw and Avalon all the same. Soay came to Holyhead via the faster and, I believe, calmer route and arrived before us all despite leaving after us! We reconvened in Holyhead Sailing Club in the evening where new members Dave and Liz Priest joined us together with Jan Lomas's daughter to enjoy good food and recount the tales of the day.

Sunday morning saw a beautiful morning with strong winds forecast allowing us a lie in before we left gradually for our return journey back to Beaumaris, the forecast not allowing us to race to Llanddwyn as planned. 35 knot plus winds round Lynas gave a lively sail with most boats having minimum canvas employed and still racing away. A thorough soaking in the entrance to the Straits through Puffin Sound for some however didn't dampen enthusiasm for the sailing! Thank you to those who made the effort to come especially the three single handed sailors. The races will be re-run over the August Bank Holiday weekend subject to the weather, of course.

Joy Bennett

Newsletter from 'Helgi' - Christmas 1993

Another look at the NWVYC 'Timewarp' slot! Almost 20 years ago, former Venturers Brian and Wendy Sharrock were off to the Pacific on their global circumnavigation, in their 37ft yacht 'Helgi'. This extract from the voyage of 'Helgi' covers the voyage from Grand Cayman, transit of the Panama Canal, then over the equator, and out into the Pacific to the Galapagos.

Having got the all clear from the airport met office, we set off for Colon, the entrance to the Panama Canal. It was a good 700 mile passage. We caught a nice 10lb Albacore too, which fed us for a few days.

We enjoyed our stay at Colon, even though it was not wise to venture into the town unless in a group and certainly not at night. The Panama Canal Yacht Club proved to be a good mail drop – thank you letter writers – and where there was a good atmosphere among yachties from all over the world.

The formalities for the transit of the canal may appear complex and time consuming but we quite enjoyed wandering from one office to another. The transit usually takes two days and the physical requirements can be taxing. Your boat must carry four 125ft x 7/8" lines. Pre-warned, we had acquired these in the USA; they take up a lot of room and weigh a ton. Then you must have four 'line-handlers' on board, plus the helmsman, and you must carry the pilot allocated to you by the Panama Canal Authority. These extra bodies must be fed three square meals a day and the line handlers accommodated overnight; the pilot goes ashore at night.

It was a good transit and an experience we had looked forward to. Our pilot was a polite and friendly Panamanian and our line-handlers were other yachties. Brian had earlier acted as line-handler on another British boat to gain the experience.

Through the canal, and there we were, flushed out into the Pacific. Good cause for celebration after we had hooked up to one of the Balboa Yacht Club buoys.

We had both recently taken the time to read the heavy volume of Charles Darwin's Origin of Species, so it was with great excitement that we set sail on our first Pacific voyage, to the Galapagos.

The Galapagos Islands are very strictly protected by Ecuador. You are expected to apply for permission to visit, which is almost certain to be refused. The usual method adopted by yachts is to arrive and take the chance of being granted a few days stay. This was our method of

approach.

In order to get into the 'trades' we had to first sail south towards the equator. This puts an enormous number of extra miles on the passage but is necessary in order to sail. For us the passage was one of 1256 miles, taking 8 days, and with light winds we earned every mile. Some days the spinnaker was up and down like a fiddler's elbow.

Crossing the equator was a first for us and as we crept nearer the imaginary line we prepared in as near a traditional fashion as possible. Dressed up in grotesque costume we coloured our bodies and faces with cocoa, drank champagne, threw water at each other and took photos. Now we should be in the southern hemisphere for quite some time.

Upon arrival at Academy Bay, on the Island of Santa Cruz, we found that the Port Captain was an Ecuadorian naval officer who had recently returned from a year with the Royal Navy in Plymouth. He was most obliging and allowed us a five day stay.

Our few days were well spent and we found interest and excitement in taking a full-day organised boat tour to other islands, allowing us to see the many and peculiar varieties of birds and reptiles. We also went on a diving expedition, swimming with a seal colony – white-tipped sharks as well! The Darwin Centre on Santa Cruz offered lots of interest, particularly the giant – really giant – tortoises.

We now had the big one to do; three thousand miles of open Pacific to the Marquesas. It turned out to be a wonderful downwind trade-wind sail all the way, taking us twenty-two days and three hours, with only eight hours use of the engine. We each read twenty one books. We also saw one Japanese fishing boat, and passed one yacht which had blown its mainsail. The same thing was to happen to us on the night we made landfall on Hiva Oa. A sudden change of wind and the main split right across!

On arrival at Hiva Oa we stood off until morning and made entry into the port of Atuona, open-mouthed at the spectacular mountain backdrop.

*Brian and Wendy Sharrock
Helgi, 1993*

Photo Miscellany



Far left: Ben the Ardglass marina office dog

Left: Nomadic - former tender to Titanic

Below: Sea Gem decide on discretion over valour



Dawn at Red Wharf Bay

Welcome

The Venturer would like to give a warm welcome the following new members to NWVYC:

Liz & Dave Priest – Dizzy

Roger & Amina Nicoll – Lillebolero of Duquesa

Thanks to Nigel Hackney (Silvan) for getting up so early to capture these atmospheric photos of Red Wharf Bay

