



the Venturer

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

Events

Sat 4th/Sun 5th May	Astrador Cup. Holyhead — North about. Walton Shield, Holyhead to Llanddwyn Island OOD P&J Bennett, Avalon	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Web Site News</u></p> <p>The North West Venturers website has been updated to make it work more readily on your mobile phone and tablet. You can now see weather forecasts and tide information on the site, and you can easily participate in discussions even when on the move.</p> <p>There's a new secure area where you can register to see information which only members should see.</p> <p>We are working on a new way for you to update the club Boat Tracker service, so watch out for updates about this very soon.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Carolyn Warburton, Genesis NWVYC webmaster</i></p>
Sat 11th May	Llanddwyn Island, OOD John Bowles, Symphony	
Sat 18th May	Abermenai, OOD Glen Warburton, Genesis Cricket on Lavan Sands before Swellies!	
Sat 25th May	Isle of Man, OOD Des Founds, Stargazer (Start of mini cruise). Seamint Trophy	
Fri 31st May	Moelfre (evening), OOD Mike Hollingworth, Chinoak	
Sat 1st June	Port Wen, explore the brickworks	
Sat 8th June	Red Wharf Bay, OOD Glen Warburton, Genesis Visit Traeth Coch SC	

Commodore's Corner

The season has well and truly started despite it starting in the middle of a cold snap. Whilst some of us have been waiting for some warm southerlies, others have braved the ice and had a great time. It's certainly great to see boats in Beaumaris Bay again.

I hope the winter maintenance has gone well for club boats. Not so well for our boat... Genesis has managed to spring a leak in her saildrive. A leak that has caused all the gearbox oil to drain out of the water intakes. Galvanic corrosion! So this year we'll be covering our new drive, when it's fitted, with sacrificial anodes. Cheaper than a sacrificial saildrive!

We're really looking forward to, and hoping we can make it, to the Isle of Man trip coming up at the end of May. As I might have said before, passages to IoM may be rather more difficult when there is a farm of big whirlygig generators in the way. So don't forget to get those holidays booked! Lee and Mike have promised us a smooth and fair SW F4 passage.

Some of you may have noticed a new look for the web site for the club. This has been specially formatted to be 'mobile friendly' to take account of the members who access the site from their mobile phones and iPads whilst on sailing trips. The front page also shows the latest inshore weather and tide times for Beaumaris, which I find to be very useful and quick one-stop shop.

I'm very pleased to welcome Rick Smith as our new treasurer. Rick and Sue have a brand new boat "Moondance" so look out for them on the water.

I hope everyone has a great season, and I'm looking forward to spending some hot and lazy afternoons in the cockpit, at anchor in one of our many bays around Anglesey!

*Glen Warburton
Commodore*

Note: Final copy date for next Venturer edition: 17th June please. Thank you.
(and apologies for being so slow with this one!)



Menai Vice

By the time you read this, we will be well on our way to the first Bank Holiday in May, and the first races of the season, the Astrador Cup and Walton shield (OOD: Joy and Peter Bennett on Avalon). Racing times will be placed on the web site, and on the club notice board, so no excuses to dust off your sails and take part.

For the yachts not racing, please do join in with the weekend, but will all crews taking part, please let the OOD know, and please book in if you intend to dine out with the club on Saturday evening.

For any new members wishing to circumnavigate Anglesey over the Bank Holiday, and with weather permitting, this is the perfect opportunity. Saturday evening will be spent in Holyhead Marina, Sunday at anchor in Llanddwyn, Monday, return to moorings.

Easter weekend was, er, COLD, with ice covering the yachts in the morning that went to Victoria Dock. But all who went enjoyed the weekend.

April 6 was, er, COLD, with different ice covering the yachts that went to Moelfre, a rumour was started, that on this weekend, the crew of Zygo turned the fore peak into one big duvet, with just a small hole to enter and snuggle up for the night, but one of the crew were taking no chances, and still kept all of their thermals and clothes on, Venturers through and through :-)

Well done all for braving the weather, very cold at night, but sunny in the day.

Any members (new or old) who are looking for a drying mooring for the season, the club have an excellent mooring in the bay, please contact the Vice Commodore or Sailing Captain for further information.

So, onwards and upwards, looking forward to the weather warming up, the wind swinging to the west, and the BBQ's being lit.

*Lee Downes
Vice Commodore*

View from the Rear - March 23rd

The wintery weather and wild winds meant that the full RNLI Safety Road show trailer couldn't come to Wales. However, the Club hosted a very interesting and useful Lifejacket Clinic in the afternoon with the regional Safety Officer, Joe Moore together with Richard, his RNLI volunteer colleague. Some visiting members from the RAYC and the RWYC also came along with their kit, including a great number of the Celtic Longboat rowers' lifejackets!

A total of 52 lifejackets were inspected with the results as follows:

Cylinder Missing: 1, Fired: 2, Corroded: 4, Loose: 4, OOD firing head: 28, No crotch strap: 25, No lifejacket light: 40, No sprayhood: 40, Lights not working: 5, No faults: 16. === **Food for thought.**

Talking of food - catering for the 40 members who braved the weather was provided by the Bishopsgate.

Our evening talk carried on the RNLI theme of the day with Colin Williams, our Regional Operational manager giving us a presentation on the breadth of work that the RNLI carries out. Very interesting and lifelike with the wind blowing and rattling around Gallows Point!

It came as a surprise to some members that "Kiwi", the brand new Moelfre lifeboat, is homeless at present because of planning objections to the design of the new boathouse. Hopefully, by the time you read this, the matter will be resolved.

Ed Hopkinson celebrated a significant birthday recently and he very kindly donated a barrel of Bosley Cloud Real ale (brewed in Macclesfield) to the club with all the takings going into the club's funds. It proved very popular. Thanks Ed!

The Start of Season party evening finished in great voice with the local "Pigs Ear" band of banjo and guitars, playing a great selection of loosely connected boat-themed songs!

After a long day, the clubhouse was finally empty and quiet at 00.30 hrs. My grateful thanks to all who helped at the morning Working Party, to all those who provided food, to all who helped at the social and to all those members who cleared up next day.

Now that the Venturers have officially Started the Season, its worth remembering that Sailing is the fine art of getting wet and becoming ill while slowly going in the wrong direction at great expense.....

And please remember as you all cruise away over the next few weeks, in whatever direction, that your fellow members would love to hear all about your sailing triumphs and mishaps in our season of winter talks...keep that log going and all those photos!

Alison Pattinson, Rear Commodore

NWVYC Training

Sailing Together working with Snowdonia Sailing School



Special Offer for NWVYC members

5 day RYA practical training course £425.

A donation of £25 will be made to Club funds
(normal price £450)

RYA Practical courses:

Competent Crew and Day Skipper,

Dates :-

Wed 10 - Sun 14 April

Sat 20 - Wed 24 April

Mon 6 - Fri 10 May

Mon 13 - Fri 17 May

Ladies Day Sail

Sun 19 May 2013



The day sail provides an opportunity to develop

- ⇒ boat handling skills
- ⇒ MOB strategies in short handed situations.

The training will take place on Pearl.

Cost £60 per person including a light lunch

Programme:

Meet Conwy Marina 0800

Briefing for the day

Exit Marina 0845

Return to Marina 1630

For more information and contact details

visit our web site :

www.sailing-together.co.uk

or

Phone Richard Forder on 0774 500 8338

Yacht Pearl is a Moody 36 with comfortable accommodation for five plus the skipper. Pearl is based in Conwy Marina. She is fully coded to MCA safety requirements for commercial operation.

Richard is a club member and Yachtmaster Instructor with many years experience of sail training.

Working Party - Sat 23rd March

A big THANK YOU on behalf of the Committee to all the members who braved the elements to scrub, clean, tidy and carry out some maintenance jobs at the Clubhouse despite 50 knot easterly winds!

Rear Commodore

Racing with NWVYC ?

The Venturers – racing? Isn't that something that RAYC, the Volvo Owners Club (?) Oracle and Whitbread do. Names like Alinghi, Steinlager, Velsheda, Adela, B and Q (?), Coutts, Golding, Blake and Doulton are not often seen gracing the Strait (but McArthur has). Neither by the way are these names often towing a dinghy!

Yacht races may be over a simple course of only a few miles, as in the harbour racing of the International One Design; long-distance, open-ocean races, like the Bermuda Race; or epic trans-global contests such as the Global Challenge, Volvo Ocean Race, Clipper Round the World Race and Mini Transat 6.50.

We are a cruising club, but we do have racing on the Sailing Programme – why? Does that mean we are not cruising that weekend, but racing? Well the definition of a yacht race above is what we do on a cruising weekend – a simple course of only a few miles, such as the James Berry race across Red Wharf Bay.

What is the difference between going from Dinmor/Ten Foot Bank to Lynas Point in a race, and travelling the same route to Porth Eilian, Porth Wen or Cemaes? The only difference is recording a time, and not using your engine – and if you would have wanted to buy a motor boat you would have done so in the first place as it's a lot quicker!

But you say you don't race as you are not competitive - really? Are you quite sure about that? What skipper doesn't feel the urge to assess how far in front/behind another yacht is, and tries to make sure they don't get left behind / overhauled – and that isn't just a male thing either is it? (and there are at least 2 ladies in the club that prove that!). So, whilst we may have a race advertised, it's still a cruising weekend, but for those that wish to race they just time themselves, and have a bit of friendly competition and banter at the destination so why not join in and not use your engine?

What benefit does racing have for Cruisers? As you can't use your engine it enhances your sailing skills and abilities, increases patience, possibly increasing your knowledge of your yacht and additionally for a passage race, your knowledge and understanding of tides and weather conditions. It's very easy in very calm conditions to put the engine on, and just get going. You don't necessarily have to think that far ahead in terms of cross tide, or channel markers. 3 years ago in Sarico a tactical decision made at B8 caused us to miss B1 (a distance of 2 miles in a straight line down the main channel!) in almost windless conditions and forced us to retire. And

there is a sense of satisfaction when the breeze does finally kick in, the sails start to pull again, and the sound of water moving around the yacht can be heard. Far better than the 'dunk dunk dunk' of a noisy diesel engine?

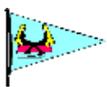
You become far more aware of getting sails set properly for the conditions. Allowing a fuller shape for light airs – easing off the kicker, letting the outhaul out, taking some tension out of halyards. Concentrating on the tell tales to make sure you are getting the maximum benefit from the sails. In stronger winds, putting reefs in early to prevent excessive heel and weather helm – how many times have you reefed and seen your boat speed fall? In blustery conditions keeping hands on the mainsheet ready to ease off in gusts and keep going in a straight line, more or less upright rather than on your side. Getting the crushing chute or spinnaker out in light airs to maintain or increase speed. In nearly all of these cases the other alternative is to put the engine on and either motor sail or take the sails down completely – and in rough conditions the ride will probably get worse.

At some stage in your sailing experience, you are going to experience engine failure – and it will rarely be at a convenient time – and that's because if time wasn't an issue, you wouldn't have your engine on would you? Having gained the experience from racing it will enable you to be able to sail your yacht in differing conditions which will give you enormous confidence in being able to deal with engine failure. If it fails on a lee shore, being able to sail off could save yourself and your yacht.

Another factor to consider is Lifeboat call outs. How many times have you heard a sailing yacht calling the coast guard with engine failure – when it's nice breezy sunny day? The skipper has obviously made a decision to call the coastguard as they believe themselves to be in danger (why else call?), but had they more confidence in their ability to sail without an engine would they have still called out the lifeboat?

So what's stopping you from joining in the racing? Nothing really is there? You will hone your sailing skills, learn more about the handling for your yacht that just using the engine, and that will hold you in good stead for when you may get a problem. Plus, what is better than sailing – because that's why we all bought a sailing yacht isn't it? And there is nothing wrong with a little competitiveness is there?

If you have any immediate queries, please contact any member of the Sailing Sub Committee, or look in the



Racing with NWVYC ?

Yearbook (page 18). In the next Venturer there should be another article on how the club organises racing, handicaps and insurance – in the meantime to find out more the club web site has been revised with a section on racing under the Sailing Programme, and carries all the information you need.

Going back to the opening paragraph, in case you are wondering, the first 5 names are racing yachts, the remainder are skippers, and no, the Adela I'm referring to is not a Macwester Wight moored at Menai Bridge.

*David Clough
Sarico*

Early start for Sarico

The season started early for Soay and Sarico. Both managed to get launched in mid March, and on the Easter weekend we all went for a run down to Indefatigable on Sarico.

The following weekend Derek, Jean and Tess came aboard, and splitting crewing responsibilities between Soay and Sarico joined us for a run to Rhoscolyn. In nigh on windless conditions we motored across the bar, and with a hint of a breeze sails went up, and we ghosted along at about a knot over the ground. The breeze steadily came up, and we were reaching at 4 knots as we approached Rhoscolyn.

A run ashore for the 4 legged crew (and John and Derek), lunch, a swap of crew, and we were on our way back – and the cruising chutes came out. What a start to the season!

*David Clough
Sarico*

Sarico fully crewed in the Straits



Marine Watch

A new service has been launched to tackle marine related crime. North Wales Police and Gwynedd Council have formed the [Marine Watch](#) scheme, which will aid crime prevention and detection.

PCSO Caryl Thomas of Bangor Police Station, who is leading the scheme's launch, said: "Essentially it's about the theft of boats or equipment from them or boat yards so I'd like to see as many owners of marine craft join the scheme as possible."

Boat owners can register their vessels with Marine Watch and be kept up to date of any suspicious activity in the area.

For more information about Marine Watch:

1. Phone PCSO Thomas on **07929 368 349** or
2. E-mail caryl.thomas@nthwales.pnn.police.uk

Moelfre - Sat 6th April

A cold clear start saw three boats leave the bay on Saturday morning for a motor sail to Moelfre. Zygo and Ocean Mood ventured further and explored Dulas prior to returning to anchor with Sea Gem and Avalon off Moelfre beach. A relaxing afternoon in the warm spring sunshine was followed by an early meet up in the Kimnel Arms for food and drinks prior to us all retiring to our own boats for an early start on Sunday.

As forecast, the wind had dropped to nothing so we returned to our moorings on Sunday morning accompanied by porpoises along the North Coast of Anglesey and through Puffin Sound. A nice gentle start to the season – warmer temperatures and more wind would have helped but a lovely weekend all the same.

Joy Bennett, Avalon

Sarico off Llanddwyn



Sailing Confessions of a New Member - Part I

When I first met John, a few weeks ago now, he'd just arrived with his boat Davico, very cold, tired, and hungry after a long and eventful week. So, I thought, buy him a pint, welcome him to the Club, and try to blag an article for the Venturer out of him.

Well, it worked, and he's done us proud. Thanks very much John. Part 2 to follow in later edition.

Hope your season eventually grants you some time to enjoy yourself and take it easy. It's clearly been a character-building start!

Ed Hopkinson

I am sure this piece will have Venturers experienced yachtsmen and women shaking their heads and sighing about the exploits of a novice boat owner but I feel my recent yachting sins, which I am not proud of, should be confessed. The other titles considered for this NWVYC newsletter article were Beaumaris or Bust, The Tale of Two Passages and Carry on Cruising.

It was the school Easter holiday period and I wanted to move our boat Davico from Milford Haven to Beaumaris. The plan, a few days with a family of six staying on a 26ft Westerly Centaur – cosy, then the family would leave and I would meet up with my sailor mate, Scouse Mick.

We were to meet and depart from Pembrokeshire on April Fools Day, Mick rang me the day before, I suspect from a comfortable Padstow restaurant (he had been moving his Bavaria 40 to a different Cornish berth). He told me that a few days of North Easterlies / Easterlies force 4/5 and sixes had been forecast and probably better to meet up on April 2.

No problem, I would sail solo and we would meet up further round the Pembrokeshire coast. How hard can it be? I can do passage planning, navigation and seamanship, after all I had taken the course and passed the exam.

I thumbed through the Pembrokeshire cruising guide and worked out my passage plan through Jack and Ramsey Sounds and talked to the local experienced yachtsmen, then ripped up the plan. The gist of advice was don't worry about slack you can use some of the flood on these tides.

I left Milford Haven as soon as the lock gates were open on the morning of April 1, easterly force 5s, tankers and cargo ships but no yachts or small boats – hmm, I should

have taken the hint. Very cold and big waves rolling into the beam, just what you want in a 26ft bilge keeler! I was not, could not, go to the mast to hoist and reef the mainsail to try and steady the boat. I motored on safe in the deep cockpit.

Through Jack Sound at 8.5 knots SOG and onto Ramsey island. I then anchored for the night in Porthlysgi Bay just by the start of Ramsey sound. Bacon sandwiches and a mug of tea for dinner, then fell asleep in my sleeping bag under a 13.5 tog duvet – it was still cold, frozen beads of condensation on the inside of the windows.

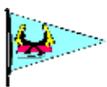
My reflections on the first day of the trip after the feelings of being rather pleased with myself had subsided – put all the stuff you will need in the cockpit before you leave (I had stabbed myself in the eye with the autohelm rushing from the cabin to the cockpit after finally finding the damn thing):

1. when you buy a boat check how much anchor chain it has (I was in for a nervous night anchored close to rocks on an unsettled sea with half as much chain as I think was required, a question for the reader how much anchor chain is required for a 26ft boat?);
2. put your waterproof trousers on before you leave in unsettled weather (wet underpants do dampen ones spirit).

A beautiful calm morning watching the sun rise, light reflecting on the water in Porthlysgi Bay and I need some liquid fuel for the stove. I reach into the rear cockpit locker but just can't reach it, a little further, a little further, got it. One problem I am stuck in the locker from the waist upwards, trapped by the lip on the locker top. Panic turned to chuckling. What a way to go if no-one finds me. Think John, what did my Day Skipper course say to do when stuck head first in a locker. I finally managed to unzip my sailing coat which made me a bit thinner and wriggled free.

Got underway and was rewarded by a lovely passage through Ramsey sound in the early morning sunshine. I saw my first yacht, moored up just past the Bitches by the old lifeboat station - another Westerly Centaur. Wind on the nose, motored on round to Fishguard and picked up Mick from the quay side.

I had consulted the handy Venturers laminated passage planner sheets, Mick was an experienced night sailor and we had plenty of diesel on board so I assumed we would roll up our sleeves, hoist some sail and set course for Bardsey. I was informed by Mick sailing was about



Sailing Confessions of a New Member (Part 1 contd)

enjoying yourself and taking it easy, he also muttered something about needing WIFI for his laptop and his phone being out of charge – was there an iPhone charger on board? The charger will be added to the boat's kit list in future as well as a cruising guide for the waters I did not think we would be visiting.

Perhaps it would have been a fool hardy route straight across Cardigan bay, in moderate seas, initially pushing tide with only 2 watches but the next forty eight hours creeping round the coast did not involve much of enjoying yourself or taking it easy.

Wind still right on the nose, Mick wanted the mainsail up to steady the boat and help the diesel a little. I hoisted the mainsail with a reef in, it flogged for about an hour until the stitching gave way along the length of one of the panels. I lowered the mainsail. Given our slow progress and my sudden weariness we settled on stopping overnight in Cardigan.

We arrived outside the bar across the Cardigan estuary probably about an hour and a half after HW with pilot notes on how to navigate the channel. Mick was keen to proceed but the waves breaking along the length of the bar made me very nervous, I wasn't sure of the white water rafting capabilities of a Centaur.

A voice over the radio – Cardigan coastguard. 'You weren't thinking of entering the estuary were you? Not enough water at this time'. Mick was still keen to get in – 'Could someone guide us in?' 'No not at this time' was the reply, so we anchored in the shelter of the small island west of the estuary entrance.

Not to worry, plenty of food and drink on board, I cooked a pasta meal and all was right with the world after a few glasses of red wine. We were just settling down for the night when we were disturbed by the noise of large outboards and spotlights piercing through clouds of 2-stroke smoke. The RNLI RIB had come out to guide us and a fishing boat up the channel. In hindsight I should have left the VHF on.

I was wide awake now, adrenalin flowing, peering into the night, following the zigzagging lights of a RIB in 1.5m of water.

The guys from the RNLI were great and moored us up on the quayside, even offered to take us to the pub, until everybody realised it was now shut. They also informed us the boat may end up holding up the floating quayside on the next low tide. After everybody had left, Mick sug-

gested long mooring ropes would solve the floating quayside problem. I don't now how it happened but we seemed to have dropped one of the lines, one of my trouser legs was completely wet and the boat was pointing in the opposite direction. But at least we now had long mooring lines.

In the morning Mick managed to find a hotel with WiFi and an iPhone charger, he unexpectedly needed to get back home and arranged a lift for us both. I was tempted to return with Mick and wait for better weather but decided to press on.

While waiting for High Water I logged a passage plan with Milford Haven Coastguard for New Quay, spoke to New Quay harbour master about mooring arrangements and wandered over to the local sailing club to see if gain some local knowledge about the exit channel.

I found an old sea dog preparing his boat for the coming season. He drew me a map and informed me the channel had moved recently and to look out for some old small buoys which local fisherman had dropped to mark deep water. Yet again my cruising guide would be of little use.

Locals then kindly sorted a jerry can full of diesel for me. Mick helped me cast off and waved me goodbye about half an hour before high water. The start of the channel was easy to navigate with standard buoys, it was as I got closer to the sand bar things became tricky. Eyes glued to the depth gauge while trying to pick out some floating object that might pass for a marker used by the local fisherman. I could see the transit that marked the old channel but not these mythical buoys. Ok, try and visualise the map, 1.9m on the depth gauge all still ok but then my concentration was broken by a group of yobs shouting and screaming on a power boat passing at high speed. Serves them right if they hit the sandbar I thought.

Then it slowly dawned on me, they were trying to tell me something. A quick, severe course change to starboard and the thumbs up from those lovely helpful people on the power boat. Davico travelled another half a cable and we were in deep water. Phew.

While Cardigan estuary is lovely, especially viewed from the cliffs, I would not sail there again due to shifting channel and very restrictive high water access.

*John Creasy
Davico*

Cardigan to Beaumaris to follow in next edition.....



Ozzie Racing - part 2

For the start of today's race it meant an early rise and down on the pontoon by 7. This wasn't a problem as Lin and I were going to bed early most nights and rising to a hot sunny day by six am; breakfast on the patio, then off on our newly acquired cycles to somewhere different each day.

We both quite surprised ourselves as to the distances we covered, most days about 20km, but did on one occasion ride 40km to a secluded sandy beach where we skinny dipped with a dolphin and her calf. It was 40° so didn't stop too long in the sun as we didn't want to get our twiddly bits burnt.

Anyway, back to the pontoon... Loaded all the sails, tinnies and ice, got our full complement of crew, then cast off to make our way to the start area. This was to be a passage race of 75 miles, so Lin had packaged me a butty box for the trip, and bought a black tea-shirt so I'd blend in with the crew. Not to be though—they wore white this race! But the skipper had brought me one so I felt really accepted as the crazy Pom which they called me—if only they knew how true this was to be!!!

Lots of yachts were gathering out by the start line; there were three different classes in the race, cruisers up to 40', any yacht up to 65' of cruising type, and full out-and-out racing yachts. We were in the last category so would be the third class to get away. It was a fantastic sight to see all these different types of yacht milling about trying to get the best sail set up before the start gun.

The first wave went off at 8:15am with 15 yachts in all. The second group started 5 minutes later, then we were last away 5 minutes after them. Total number of yachts was approximately 40. All starts here are upwind so it's all about tactics and try to go over the line as far upwind of the start boat as possible - right on the gun.

"We're going to swap a bit of paint here" thought I as we squeezed between the start boat and another yacht. Gee-se that was close but we were the top upwind yacht off the line. Weather was overcast with predicted rain and gusting winds, and two metre swell predicted out in the bay. It was blowing around 20 knots at the start, to full main and No 2 genoa. All the crew had legs and torso over the guard rail and we were tramping along at about 16-18 knots.

Prior to setting off, Doug the owner/skipper had let me know what sail plan he wanted for each leg of the race.

All lines to be led aft with lazy lines attached to each sail ready to go straight up. Two genoa uphulls were used so one sail could go up before the other was taken down thus keeping the boat powered up all the time.

Halfway to the first mark, the wind piped up and waves were soon washing down the side decks soaking us all, me being up front as the bowman got a drenching every time and my earhole was full of salt water constantly. About a mile away from the first mark, the skipper told everyone how the 2nd leg was to be attacked - No 1 genoa was to be flown and a reef in the main as soon as we rounded the mark - be after I'd lofted the No 1.

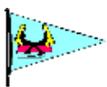
It's always tense when getting to a mark as everyone is one edge and not wanting to make any mistakes. All want OK though and we settled down to a fast broad reach with the wind on our starboard beam. All hands were asked to go to the rail and to move a lot more aft as we were nosing the bow under a lot of water in the waves. The lee rail was constantly underwater and lovely warm sea was washing down the topside when hitting waves, the wind increasing on this leg to mid 20s and boy did this thing shift - wow!

I was thinking of that butty box Lin had put me up but there wasn't time or the chance to eat anything - only the lollypops which had been thrown on the boat but the start line officials when we passed them (whether in anger or not I don't know!), but being the furthers up front from the cockpit I always seemed to get the leftover lime or lemon one, never the raspberry or blackcurrant ones. Still I never felt hunger just an adrenalin rush all the time.

By this stage we were in 4th place overall, having passed all the cruising fleet, the consensus on the rail was to shake the reef out of the main and keep the same sail plan as the wind was near to 30 knots all thought this was the safest most sensible plan to go with.

Unbeknown to them, the skipper had asked me to rig the very large gennaker for the downwind leg. Soon we were approaching the last mark before the run for home, waves were now white-topped and a good two metres high. I moved forward to the bow, clipped on the bug fail then slid up to the mast ready to swage the sail up when told. The look of horror on the 4 girls faces when I did this was a picture, then them all looking at the skipper and in unison screaming "You're not putting up that f—ing big sail in this wind are you, surely?".

No time to argue - the skipper's word is law and we



Ozzie Racing - part 2 (contd)

were approaching the mark all too quickly. Sheets were readied at the cockpit and all crew stood by. As we rounded the final mark, the skipper nodded to me to get pulling, so up she went.

This sail is bloody huge, like looking at Richard Branson's balloon from where I was - no time to look, get then genoa down quick. As soon as the No 1 was down I started strapping it to the guardrail on the port side, and had just finished when I heard a shout, "Hold on Pom!".

Too late this yacht took on the mantle of a Polaris submarine doing a crash-dive. If you've ever been bowled over by a large wave on the beach and taken under, you know how I felt. No holding on in this wave and I knew I was heading down the side deck underwater! Whallop, my torso hit the rigging stay amidships and something to grab hold of. Thank goodness, 'cos all this water has to go over the side sometime, and if I don't hang on - me with it! All too soon things too their way and I was left hanging onto the stay with legs and lower half of me over the side - yes I did sh** myself, and was aware of someone shouting "Get in you crazy Pom".

Scrambling back into the cockpit was a real relief, with the girls working hard between the tears. Looking forward to the mast, I couldn't believe my eyes. 20+ knots on the log - oh boy what a ride. One of the girls was shouting she couldn't hold the tail of the gennaker as it was pulling so hard, so I was put into action on the grinding winch and two girls on the tail. When the wind gust-ed the fail was freed off a bit and when the gust ended I winched it back in.

This surfing was an incredible experience but very close to broaching or pitch-poling. It all seemed one hell of an adventure to me, I was loving it!

Our skipper Doug certainly knew how to get the best out of this yacht and his helmsman raced hobie-cats, so he like the speed trip as well. We were picking off the yachts in front at a hell of a rate and were up to 2nd with the lead boat 30 yards in front to our port. We're going to get him before the finish line I thought to myself as we pumped and grinded through the waves.

Oh how the smug get taken down a peg or two when things go wrong. Alongside the other yacht with 100 yds to go, a big gust comes up. "Let the sheet run" shouts the skipper. All to no avail - there's a riding turn on the winch, I tried to free it but there was far too much load on it. As if in slow motion, the yacht broached, the sail and mast hit the water, there was screaming and

shouting - and lots of hanging on!

"Des, clear that jam" says Doug. I let go of the topside I was holding and dropped into the bulwark under water. After what seemed like ages struggling with the riding turn, it finally freed itself and went screaming off the drum like the devil's whip. As soon as this happened, the yacht came upright and we crossed the finish line - happy to be in 2nd place.

I dropped the fail into the forehatch and made my way back to the cockpit where most of the crew were very relieved and happy to have got a result—considering.

"Go below and wee if we took on too much water Pom". This I did and was standing up to my shins in water down below. "Is this yacht water ballasted?" I asked Doug. "No, why?" he replied. "Well it is now" I jokingly said. "Open up the tinnies" was the shout of the day and we put the donkey on for a relaxing run back to the pontoon berth she has in Geographe Bay estate.

If anyone gets the chance to crew or just to get a placement on a a race yacht, go for it. You'll never experience anything like it. After berthing, we unloaded wet sails to dry out and pumped out 160 gals of warm salt water from below.

No, I never got to east those butties, nor did anyone else as they were just a sodden mess below decks. Not to worry, I was high on adrenalin. Pol and I rode back to her sisters, and a bite to eat, then we all went to Geographe Bay Yacht Club for the evening's presentation. More beer and a great night with Dough showing off his latest new acquisition - Ebb and Flo.

I was sorry to have missed the final 2 races, but all good things come to an end - so a fond memory will always stay with me from this trip, and our pennant will fondly be shown down under.

Des and Lin, Stargazer.



Newsletter from 'Helgi' - Christmas 1993

This is the NWWYC 'Timewarp' slot! Please put your watches back 20 years. Yes, I know, that makes no difference in Anglesey ;-)

With the recent death of Brian Sharrock (see March Venturer), I thought you might like to read what former Venturers Brian and Wendy Sharrock were up to on their global circumnavigation, in their 37ft yacht 'Helgi', almost 20 years ago.

So, for a short while we can stop shivering in our chilly spring weather, and take ourselves off to the Caribbean to dream of tropical waters, and imaging snorkelling with sharks and rays.

This extract from the voyage of 'Helgi' covers their start from Florida, via Cuba, to Grand Cayman, prior to their departure for the Panama Canal.

Thanks to Sandra Finney, ex-commadore who sent me this blast from the past!

Ed Hopkinson

Having decided, after a lot of thought and debate, to leave the United States, we settled down in Fort Lauderdale to prepare Helgi for our Pacific crossing. This because a long and expensive job.

Pleasant interludes did come though. Our son and his family spent two delightful weeks with us and we had an extremely welcome and pleasant visit from two stalwart 'Venturers', Marjorie and Gordon, when their cruise liner docked in Port Everglades. The air was filled with nostalgia until darkness fell on our berth at Hendricks Isle.

And then back to work!

The United States is a wonderful place to shop, not only because it is the land of plenty but because things are so cheap, and the supermarkets will almost always deliver right to the boat. Re-supplying also meant a lot of work reorganising stowage, for on a voyage like getting to and across the Pacific you have to think months ahead.

Early in January 1993, on a day notable for an extreme torrential deluge, we left our comfortable berth and went down to Miami, where we stayed a couple of days. From there we made our way down the outside of the Florida Keys, with just short stops on the way to Key West.

Our brief passage down the Keys did not enchant us. We

found them drab and uninteresting when compared with the nearby Bahamas, which are lovely. Key West itself must indeed be the armpit of Florida. But we were there for a purpose, to cross the Gulf Stream to Havana, for we had decided to explore the "forbidden land" of Cuba.

The sun was setting as we left Key West to make our night run across the Gulf Stream. For us this was a very emotional moment. During the twenty months we had spent in the United States, sailing the whole of the east coast and back, we had come to love the country and made many real friends. Our American journey will live forever in our memory as a most wonderful time of our lives. We looked back into the sunset and, lump in throat, waved and called, "Goodbye America, goodbye!"

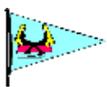
Cuba turned out to be a great experience and Hemingway Marina, some miles west of Havana, is as smart, clean, modern and well appointed as any we have come across. Upon entry the officials were thorough but friendly and welcoming.

There were no restrictions on our movements and as we cycled to and around Havana people stopped to greet us and shake our hand. There is little motor traffic in Cuba, there is no fuel because of the US embargo, and the roads are full of bicycles.

As tourists we could buy almost anything in the tourist shops and supermarkets – for US dollars only – and the prices were quite reasonable. The ordinary Cubans are not allowed in these shops and their rationed supplies are of much leaner substance. We observed that there were not many fat Cubans, nor were there any beggars or badly dressed people – as is the case on many other Caribbean Islands. Our main impression was of happy friendliness.

It was very nice to meet people from the British Embassy too. Bryan and Doreen, having heard there was a British boat in the marina, drove out from Havana to see us. They invited us to dinner at their apartment. They are a northern couple and made us feel very much at home. We met other embassy staff at dinner and had a long interesting discussion, learning quite a lot about Cuba.

Cruising the coast southabout to Cayo Largo was delightful. Picking safe anchorages was easy; choose an entrance through the surrounding reef and you are in calm, very clear water abounding with life. One day,



Newsletter from 'Helgi' - Christmas 1993 (contd)

within half an hour's snorkel diving, we caught three lobsters – until moved on by sharks. In most places we were the only people there, but the Cuban tourist business is growing. Canadians and Germans mainly are taking advantage of the unspoilt resorts.

At Cayo Largo, on the day we left for the Cayman Islands, the colonel of the Guarda Frontiera came down to the dock to see us off, and the Captain of the Port, through an interpreter, said how pleased and proud they were to have had us as their guests. We almost changed our minds and stayed.

Our proposed route to Panama had been via Jamaica but after waiting for nearly two weeks for a lull in the strong easterly prevailing wind, we decided to go for Grand Cayman. Just a day and night passage buy boy, what a night! The wind howled all across the Caribbean at up to forty knots with enormous beam seas trying to knock us over. Thank goodness Helgi can take a lot in her stride, but it was a relief when morning came,

bringing us to a land fall and promise of a lee off Grand Cayman's west coast.

Grand Cayman is noticeable still a British colony. Officials and police are very smartly dressed – and no guns. We only intended staying a few days at the Island but we were there for three weeks, largely because of the dreadful weather being experienced in the Caribbean and along the American east coast.

We were fortunate in meeting Dave, an Australian professional diver. He took us on one of our most exciting adventures when we went out to dive inside the perimeter reef to play among and feed by hand the huge stingrays. It was rather nervy at first but soon we grew accustomed to these great, billowy tablecloths swimming all around us and taking pieces of squid blindly from our hands. What a terrific experience!

*Brian and Wendy Sharrock
Helgi, 1993*

Bosuns Corner - April 2013

For those of you who made through the arctic conditions on 23rd March 2013, a big thank you for supporting our raffle again. Prices of a bottle of Bushmills, an LED torch and a Venturer's Anniversary book were donated and £80.00 was raised towards the club mooring fees.

Almanacs, Charts and Publications

Imray have recently republished the following charts:

C60	Gower Peninsula to Cardigan - Replaces 2006	Nov 12
C61	St Georges Channel - Replaces 2008	Oct 12
C62	Irish Sea - Replaces 2008	Jan 12
C64	Belfast Lough to Lough Foyle - Replaces 2004	Oct 12
C66	Mallaig to Rudha Reidh - Replaces 2007	Aug 12
2800	Mull & Adjacent Coasts Pack - Replaces 2004	Nov 12

If you are planning to go North on the mini cruise at the end of May, please order your charts in plenty of time – remember that you benefit from a discount on all Imray publications (general rule 17.5% off Imray list

but please check with me for exact prices) and you also help the club. There are various Yachtsman Pilot books available to cover the areas suggested and a full Imray catalogue is available in the clubhouse for reference purposes.

If you have ordered publications, they are now available in the Bosun's corner – please leave a cheque in the Honesty Tin or pay via internet banking – if you could e-mail to let me know how you have paid, I would be most grateful.

If your burgee is looking tired or tatty, new ones are available at £20.00 – these are British Made and embroidered! Battle Flags are also available. Please fly your burgees whenever you are on board to let other yachts know that you are members of NWVYC.

Please Note: Due to an error by Imray on their printed price list, the current cost price of the Cruising Anglesey & Adjoining Waters Pilot should be £27.50 and not £25.00 as published in previous Venturers. As such, the cost to members has unfortunately risen to £22.75 with immediate effect.

*Joy Bennett
Bosun*

Photo Miscellany



Damico High & Dry in Cardigan
- See Pages 6/7



Oops - unplanned trip to Lavan Sands



A sunny start to the season - but much colder than it looks!



Soay en route to Rhoscolyn



Soay at Rhoscolyn

Welcome

The Venturer would like to welcome to the Club the following recent new members:

- ⇒ Andrew Hillyard with boat Selkie
- ⇒ Alan and Doreen Williams (no boat as yet)
- ⇒ John O’Sullivan with boat Rathlin

Hope to see you at the club, and on the water during 2013.

Ed Hopkinson
Editor



Moelfre Sat 6th April