



# the Venturer

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



We raised in **£114.61**  
at the AGM

**Big thank you to Joan  
Hughston and Valery  
Parsons for organising  
and manning the stall.**

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## Winter Training

We have come to the time of year when our yachts have been put to bed for the winter. While watching the wind and rain through our windows, it might be a time to reflect on what training would be useful for next season.

Recently, I looked through my qualifications and found that my First Aid certificate is due to expire. First Aid qualifications normally require renewal every three years. So, I am looking to renew my First Aid before the start of next season.

The RYA provide a wide range of courses leading to qualifications. Some of the courses we have run at the club include –

- **Day Skipper Theory**, basic navigation and safety
- **Yachtmaster Theory**, advanced navigation, weather and collision regulations.
- **First Aid**, basic first aid for use at sea.

Other RYA courses include – **Diesel maintenance, VHF licence.**

Let me know about your training requirements. If there are enough people to run a course at the



club, then we will try. If not, then I can let you know about courses that I find out about at other organisations with which I am in contact.

**Richard Forder, NWVYC  
Training  
training@nwvyc.org.uk**

## Forthcoming events

**December 3rd** Annual Dinner Dance at The Bulkeley. Once again Georgie Starr is our live entertainer for the evening. Menu and booking form available online. If you haven't booked your tickets - do it now!

**February 11th** Caernarfon Informal Dinner: We are taking over Ouzo and Olives for the evening. The menu is a set three course menu at £16.50 per head. Non-members are welcome as guests too. Contact Denise Lewis to reserve your places.

# To the Outer Hebrides and Beyond

By Chris Jones. Photos by members of the crew

## Part 1: Waypoint 470

For several years Gordon & I have sailed for a week each year with a small group of friends under the informal burgee of Gresford Cruising Club alternating between the Med and Scotland. Our plan for our 2016 cruise was to sail from Armadale on Skye in a Jenneau 43.9 Sleat Odyssey and “see where we get to”. I first found out about and became interested in St Kilda nearly 40 years ago. There it has sat there like a distant star, tantalising but seemingly out of reach.

### False start

An evening sail up towards Kyle Rae and Loch Alsh for the night, but running through my Navigator's Checklist we found 30degree+ discrepancies between the various compasses and GPS. We checked on different headings and for stray metal around the electronic compass, then returned to Armadale for the owner to swing and reset the electronic compass.

### Off at last

We awoke to a glassy calm and watery light. With Martin on the helm after his first night afloat, we made our way down the flat calm Sound of Sleat. Rounding the Point of Sleat we put Eigg abeam, Rhum floating ethereally above a ring of cloud and the Cullins wreathed in their own cap of clouds. As the morning wore on the clouds over the Cullins slowly lifted to reveal the fearsome saw toothed ridges.

By mid-morning the sun had broken through

creating a clear sea horizon and the chance to try some sextant sights. The magic of bringing the green shaded sun down to the horizon made even Martin speechless (But not for long). As we ate lunch a pair of Minky whales passed. After lunch we practiced Man Overboard drill with the dan-buoy.

24 hour + forecast was questionable for St Kilda and with forecast E winds making Village Bay untenable. We made the tactical decision to head for Leverburgh and await the next forecast while considering Taransay or the lochs off the Minch.

Close in the under the cliffs at Gob na Hoe we watched gannets fighting with a skua and black guillemots flying low while listening to Celtic band Daimh (pron Dive) on the stereo. Once past David Alan Stevenson's 1909 Niest Point lighthouse, we took our point of departure for a smooth crossing of the Minch to the Sound of Harris passing just to the north of the Niest Point TSS.

Passing Rodel with its ancient square towered church we started running the pre-planned transits into the Stanton Channel through the Sound of Harris. Transit marks include small cairns on distant islands, Jane's Tower (a painted cairn), the left hand end of a building, and the top of one of the many rocks. We anchored in Leverburgh harbour off the pier with 4.9m below keel.

Landing we got chatting with the lifeboat crew

while Gordon borrowed their wifi connection to send out some emails for work. Then, with a clear conscience, we wandered through the village listening to more cuckoos, whilst being followed by a dog with children playing on their bikes. As we passed the Church of Scotland the minister for “South Harris, St Kilda & Rockall” Rev David Donaldson and his wife Jean invited us in. Over tea & banana cake we found how seriously religion is taken with four Free Churches and one Church of Scotland Kirk serving Levenburgh's sparse population. David painted an apocryphal picture of the cockerel being separated from the hens from Saturday night until Monday and children's swings being tied up on Sundays in Free Presbyterian Church households. Food for thought as we strolled gently back to the harbour and an amazing sun set.





pletely dark, St Kilda became a smudge slightly more solid than the clouds on the western horizon in the early light.

Back on watch at 06:00 a pair of grey mottled (Risso's) dolphins passed to the south of us heading east. Puffins, guillemots, razorbills, gannets, fulmar passed close by as they headed away from St Kilda. Boreray, Stack An Armin (Gannets) and Stack Lee like a Bishops Mitre stood out ahead. We tracked north of the rum line and were approaching the archipelago from the ENE. I started sketching the islands in the monochrome light, then adding the

When it came the Weather forecast was good enough for a passage to points west and delivered by the loveliest of lilting voice from Stornoway Coast Guard.

#### **Departed Leverburgh, heading for Waypoint "470"**

We ran a watch system with Gordon and I each taking 2 hour watches turnabout and the crew taking 2 hours on and 4 off. There were no lights on the steering compass, so we were using the boat's electronic compass with hand bearing and GPS as back up.

Passage through the Leverburgh channel and out into the Atlantic was straight forward.

The International Space Station arced across the sky to the south while the plough sat over mast head. Venus & Mars rose from astern. Our guiding star (Jupiter) set into the haze ahead just before a spectacular red moonrise. Never com-

colours as they started to fill in with the rising of the sun.

With the sea so calm we were able to put Stewart into the sea on his surf board with his cameras to film the birds on Stac An Armin &



Boreray from the water. Thousands of Gannet's started circling Stewart as he made his way towards the stacks totally ignoring the boat. Skuas, fulmars and guillemots joined the circling throng. Seals basking on the rocks ignored us, while one in the water kept watch. Gannets & skuas were fighting over fish caught by the gannets. A gentle swell broke over low lying rocks as we kept well outside the line of pot buoys tucked close to cliffs.

Leaving Boreray behind we crossed towards Soay and Hirta, then turned into Glen Bay. Puffins abounded skimming close past the sea caves which punctured the cliffs. Glen Bay is described as a possible anchorage but with 20m under the keel very close to the cliffs even at the head of the bay it would only be worth considering for a yacht in ideal or desperate circumstances.

Leaving the bay we passed close to the mighty arch through the cliffs then kept close under the northern cliffs of Hirta. Fulmars and guillemots nested on narrow ledges while walkers occasionally appeared high above us on the horizon. The radar station sat silent above all.

We dropped sail to enter Village Bay and anchored off the restored old feather store.

Gordon had partied there with the army detachment during his visit in 1977, a disco and bar set up in the ruin left roofless following a submarine attack in WW1. As we ate our lunch a pair of Minky whales were feeding further out in the bay and a male Eider Duck dabbled along the water's edge totally unconcerned.

**Continued on page 16**

## Commodore's Corner Lee Downes, Commodore.



As I sit here in the peace and quiet of the clubhouse with no other members about, looking out over the bay that has no club yachts waiting on their buoys, it gives me chance to reflect on the past three years when I have had the honour of being your Commodore. From an initial apprehensive start wondering what I had taken on, to then having a great deal of support from members, I settled into office looking forward to being able to improve the clubhouse and facilities for our members and to encourage new members to join us on the water.

As you will all have seen, with the help of many members and volunteers, we now have a clubhouse to be proud of and our members are sailing father and father away from Anglesey which is testament to the confidence

that our members have.

Personally, I said goodbye to Helian and have sailed with Joy on Avalon before buying Caretta from Ray and Polly earlier this year. In the few trips we have managed, I have enjoyed learning the joys of a long keeled yacht (apart from going astern!) and relished letting the wind steering take control as we have sailed around Anglesey. The paraffin stove was new to us as was the Lavac toilet but we soon got the hang of them although if any of you are experts on Taylor's paraffin stove's your help would be much appreciated at present!

I conclude by thanking all the committee members and flag officers who have served with me whilst I have held office and you, the members, for your unfailing support of the club. I know that in handing over to Paul Morton, the club will be in safe hands.



## The last Device

It has been an honour and privilege to serve you all over the last few years. I will always look back at my time as your Vice with fond memories. I hope those of you who have joined us on any of the cruises have enjoyed them. I have some particular favourites, the clubs first weekend trip to the Skerries lagoon and a trip up to Four Mile Bridge in our dinghies spring to mind straight away. Both of which I'd love to repeat if the weather gods can look down on us favourably.

I know that I am passing the baton on to a capable team of Mike B & Marie, Vice Commodore and Sailing Captain respectively. By now you've probably seen the odd email bouncing around asking you for ideas for next year's programme. Please, please, please give them your ideas as a matter of urgency!!! For those of you who feel strongly about the programmes content you may wish to offer your services on the Sailing Subcommittee. This could probably do with some fresh faces and new ideas. It's a great way to get involved and give something back to our great club. I look forward to seeing you all around the club or on the water. Signing off for the last time as your Vice.

**Mike Hollingworth, Vice Commodore**



*The President, shocked that his precious tenpence has failed to win him a profit, encourages Josh in his bid to nudge the coin to a winning square.*

**What a trooper!**

## View from the Rear

Paul Morton, Rear Commodore

As it is no time at all since the last edition of the Venturer was published my report this month will be brief. The Autumn events went well with the majority of the boats now out of the water.

The End of Season Work party was very well attended, thanks to John our House officer the new dinghy store was painted and area around the Club House is looking particularly good.

**The Dinner Dance** booking forms are now in circulation and also available on the website please. Book in A.S.A.P. With your choice of Menu. It will be an early start 6.30 for 6.45 so we will have plenty of dancing time. Beaumaris appears to be particularly busy that weekend and extra accommodation is available at **The Victoria Hotel in Menai at £79.50 Dbl. room. Mention NWWYC** when contacting on **01248 712309 or at info@vicmenai.com.**

By the time you read this your AGM. & Members Forum plus the Bonfire & BBQ will be over. I hope all those toffee apples didn't cause too much dental damage. We look forward to seeing you all at the Club over the next few months and that inclement weather (snow.?) doesn't interfere with our plans, It has never stopped us yet !!!

Jen and I would like to thank everyone involved for their support and enthusiasm over the past year and we look forward to seeing many of you at the Dinner Dance.

**BOOK RIGHT NOW !!**

**Paul Morton, Rear Commodore**



**The Dinner Dance Menu and booking forms are available on the website: [www.nwwyc.org.uk](http://www.nwwyc.org.uk)**

## 2017 Subscriptions

At the AGM held on 5th November 2016, it was unanimously agreed that the following subscription rates be applied for membership for 2017.

	2017 Subs	Early payment Discount	Subs if paid before 31st December	Subs by PayPal before 31st December	Subs by PayPal after 1st January
Family	£130	£10	£120	£124.50	£135.00
Single	£95	£8	£87	£ 90.50	£ 98.50
Outport	£70	£5	£65	£ 67.50	£ 72.50
U25	£35	£2.50	£32.50	£ 34.00	£ 36.50
Anchor	£20	n/a	£20	£ 21.00	£ 21.00

The rates for the dinghy store remain as per 2016 – Dinghy & Outboard £50, Outboard only £25. A deposit will be charged to new dinghy store members for their key. Replacement keys may also be purchased from Sue Beetlestone with payment either by BACS or PayPal.

**Ed: Thank you to all the contributors to this, my first Venturer as Editor. If you would like to contribute to the next edition please let me have your article, stories and photos**

via email to [hello@ap-design.co.uk](mailto:hello@ap-design.co.uk)  
by  
**Saturday 3rd December 2016**

## Take good care of my motor by Richard Adams

Having limited experience of marine motors, I'd read in the manual what you were supposed to do but experience tells me that what manuals say and what it's really like are not always closely related. So I was delighted to see that 22nd October promised a workshop on winterising outboards, kindly set up by Des Founds.

The day dawned sunny, which always helps. I arrived at the clubhouse expecting a long queue but obviously most members have either learned what to do or leave it to chance, for there was only Benneteau Bill and myself as learners. Des had set up a long plank, Bill helped me manhandle the 6hp Suzuki out of Shoestring, and the work began. Des took us through the basics of flushing, oil change, checking and greasing things etc. and his huge experience of engines meant that we learned how hard (or not) you should tighten nuts, what you could shortcut and what you couldn't, and much else. Not only that but he'd laid on special high-cholesterol snacks to get us through the morning.

Learned a lot, enjoyed the banter and got the motor safely away for winter. What's not to like? If he does it again next year, try and come, even if you already know what to do: it's just good fun. Very many thanks to Des for being very generous with his knowledge and experience.

## Jerry's Birthday Treat! by Denise Lewis

With the weather not looking a particularly nice forecast for the weekend, we had sort of resigned ourselves to stop at home, but Saturday, 1st October, 2016 was Jerrys birthday, and what does Jerry like to do best in the world - go sailing.....



So an early morning start from home to Beaumaris to enable us to go through the Swellies at 10.24am destination Rhoscolyn with Avalon and Hwyl Dda - there was a lot of rain about, and it was quite cold, but it was probably the last sail of the season, so decided to make the most of it.

We motored until we were half way across the bar, when the wind picked up, the rain stopped and a wonderful sail was had all the way to Rhoscolyn - so much so, that I did a bit of sofa sailing, reading my book, so that Jerry could enjoy the tipping up, without me moaning!!

There was plenty of room at Rhoscolyn, with only one other boat there, who left soon after we arrived. We decided to hit the beach, for an early evening BBQ, which was very pleasant, including a birthday cake and candles, and then drinks on board Ocean Mood to finish off the evening.

Sunday morning at 5am came far too soon, and we headed off in the dark looking for pots, it was a pleasant morning, and watching the sun rise, was really spectacular, the photos do not do justice. Avalon was heading into Victoria Dock for her winter berthing, so once they were settled, we went along side, the crew jumped ship and we motored back with Lee and Joy back to Beaumaris, going through the Swellies at 10.53am.

**It just shows, that when we are not too keen, the effort is worth while - thanks to Lee, Joy, Paul and Marie for the good company and making the weekend enjoyable.**



# Life Raft Servicing 2016

Most members will know that we make arrangements for a life raft servicing company to come and collect all the members' life rafts that are due for a service in readiness for the 2017 sailing season.

NorWest Marine is our servicing partner and they will collect life rafts from the clubhouse in early December subject to minimum numbers. Another benefit is that they store them for the winter in appropriate dry and clean conditions. NorWest have some very impressive premises close to Liverpool Docks and its run by Dave Adams, ably assisted by Ian. They also have a depot in Immingham, but all commercial liferafts end up at Liverpool due to the testing equipment required for commercial rafts, plus they are very heavy and a lifting gantry is required.

NorWest do a lot of commercial work often at very short notice – they get a call advising that a commercial vessel is approaching Liverpool/Holyhead, and they have to meet it at the quayside to offload all of its life rafts, and get them serviced and returned often within 2 tides.

The commencement of the liferaft servicing sees the contents being unpacked and the life

rafts inflated manually, which takes up a lot of floor space.

After the rafts have been checked and consumables replaced, they are then re-packed into their valise or canisters. Some rafts are vacuum sealed in a plastic bag – another cost of about £35, others just get re-packed as they are. Some canister rafts require a new clam seal (another cost), others don't. The rafts are then labelled up with their next service date – normally 3 years, but once a raft is over 12 years old they generally only get a 1 year service date.

## **When completing your liferaft service form, please bear the following in mind: -**

- Make sure your email address and phone number have been provided so that NorWest can contact you before re-packing to discuss any additional items you might require in the life raft.
- The actual servicing cost quoted (approx £60) will only be about 1/3rd of the final bill – make sure you get indicative quotes for things like flares, first aid kits, vacuum bags, clam seals, torch batteries and life raft batteries.



- Get prices for the consumables in advance – you may be able to source them more cost effectively.

There are forms in the clubhouse and on the website for you to download and complete – please ensure you label your liferaft up clearly with your name, your boat name and NWVYC so that it can be traced every step of the way. Any queries, please contact me directly

**bosun@nwvyc.org.uk**  
**Graham Jones**

# Selecting an anchor by Vyv Cox

In advance of Vyv's talk in January, here is your chance to 'gen up' on the subject beforehand.

Until the 1930s yachtsmen had little choice when it came to purchasing an anchor, the Fisherman being just about the only type available. In 1933 keen yachtsman Sir Geoffrey Ingram Taylor, a professor at Trinity College, Cambridge, invented the CQR. Yachting Monthly published his paper entitled The Holding Power of Anchors in April 1934. With a couple of exceptions these were just about the only choices available until the late 1980s, when anchor designs began to proliferate, resulting in the current situation where there is a choice of close on 100 to pick from. This is a guide to the types available and how best to select for the type of anchoring you do.

## Anchor requirements

### Penetration (sharpness)

Scientific analysis has demonstrated that the key to achieving almost instantaneous penetration of the bottom is to maximise the weight acting on the tip of the anchor. If there is one factor that differentiates 'New Generation' anchors from the rest, it is this one. Designers of the latest anchors have

maximised tip loading by adding weight in this area, sometimes with lead and in other cases by increasing the steel thickness, but also by reducing the weight of other components to the minimum required, for example the shank and flukes. When the anchor is at rest in the upright position the only points in contact with the ground will be the tip and the far end of the shank. The angle that the fluke makes with the shank contributes to penetration once the tip has entered the bottom: the optimum angle has been found to be about 35 degrees. This property is known as 'Dynamic setting': the anchor buries itself rapidly due solely to the pull on the rode.

### Fluke shape

The most obvious difference in fluke shape is that on new generation anchors they are concave, or perhaps flat, whereas on older anchors they are mostly convex. The great advantage of the concave shape is that once the tip has penetrated the bottom it tends to dig itself ever deeper. Tales abound of the difficulty that yachtsmen have encountered



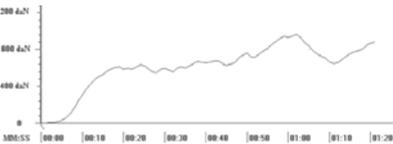
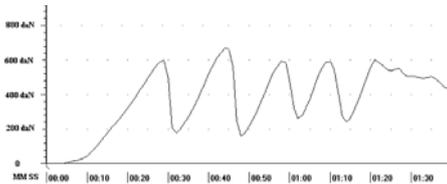
when trying to recover newer anchors after riding out a big blow. It is the combination of good penetration and fluke shape that allows modern anchors to achieve rapid dynamic setting, typically with a pull on the rode of 1 metre or less

### Holding stability

However, there is also a more subtle advantage that the shape gives. Many older designs, both plough and flat, show instability at higher loads, causing them to successively roll out and reset, sometimes over some distance. Not all plough anchors are unstable but those with a hinge almost certainly are.

Graphs (shown overleaf) by the late Alain Poiraud show holding trials of a hinged plough anchor, top, and a new generation anchor, bottom. The vertical scale units are Deca-Newtons, almost exactly the same as kilogram

## Selecting an anchor by Viv Cox continued...



force, and the horizontal ones are minutes and seconds.

### Resetting

One of the most important characteristics of an anchor is that it should reset with a change of tide or wind direction. A major attribute of newer designs is that they swivel in position without breaking out. Some designs, most notably the flat types, can tend to break out and skip across the surface of harder bottoms. Another problem with this type, inevitable due to its design, is that chain dragging across the bottom can wedge between the shank and the flukes, preventing it from resetting at all until

the blockage has been freed.

### Shank

A consequence of the drive to reduce the overall weight distribution of modern anchors is the heavy, forged designs of yester-year have been replaced by far thinner ones stamped or cut from plate. Forged shanks did have their advantages though, most noticeably that their H or I shape gave them considerable lateral stiffness. In order to restore this stiffness, the flat plate used needs to have high yield strength, values of 400 – 800 megaPascals (MPa) being generally specified. Such materials are specialised and can be difficult to achieve in metals other than carbon steel.

Shank shape is a strong contributory factor in dynamic setting. Unfortunately its achievement often leads to a long, curved shank that can make the anchor difficult to stow on some bow rollers.

### Materials

The most common material of construction is steel, galvanised for corrosion resistance. Various rules dictate that the carbon content should be below 0.21% to ensure ductility at all likely temperatures, which also means that welding is rarely a problem for the manufacturer. In general the flukes will be made from a

standard mild steel and the shank from a constructional steel with perhaps high manganese, or a HSLA (high strength, low alloy) type.

Several manufacturers produce anchors in other materials, aluminium and stainless steel for example. It can be problematic to obtain sufficient strength in these materials, requiring either sophisticated alloying or clever design features such as hollow shanks. The result is that anchors in alternative materials are generally somewhat expensive. Performance is generally satisfactory but may not be quite as good as for steel equivalents. The major advantage of aluminium is its light weight, ideal for use as a kedge anchor, while both aluminium and stainless steel offer good corrosion resistance.

### Weight

In the past, and even today, there is widespread belief that a good anchor is a heavy anchor. This may well be true of older types in which tip loading was not maximised, where the anchor sinks into the seabed under the influence of its own weight, known as Static setting. The excellent performance of various aluminium anchors shows quite clearly that weight is not a prerequisite for good holding. It is a truism that anchors are marketed by weight but they hold by their area. In general modern anchors have increased their surface area by comparison with older types of the same weight.

## Cost

Most of the new generation anchors are expensive, due in part to their more advanced materials and methods of construction but perhaps also in an attempt to recoup some of their development costs. Not to mention advertising campaigns. At the other end of the scale are the copies, cheaply made from low-grade materials, often sold via the Internet. Somewhere in between lie the relatively recent plough anchors such as Delta and Kobra, having relatively simple manufacturing methods and widely available, although not basic, materials. Interestingly, a genuine CQR anchor is probably the most expensive steel anchor on sale, thanks to its expensive, forged construction. You can expect to pay sums in excess of four figures for new generation stainless steel anchors.

Owners who regularly spend long periods at anchor in remote anchorages, perhaps in the more extreme locations of the world, would certainly reap the benefits of buying the more expensive types. Modern ploughs are about a third of the price of new generation types, are almost as effective in most circumstances and will be found to be perfectly acceptable for most weekend and summer-cruise yachtsmen. Occasional anchorers may well find one of the copies to be acceptable, unless they break or bend!

## Types of Anchor

### Fisherman

The one fact that everybody knows about the Fisherman anchor is that it is good on rock and weed. But does that mean it is useful for the yachtsman? The flukes of the Fisherman anchor are extremely small, making it very likely to drag on any conventional bottom, ruling it out in most anchorages. Fishermen like to anchor where the fish are, which is mostly over reefs and rocky outcrops. They want an anchor that will hold them in position on a less than ideal bottom while they catch fish, but it isn't the end of the world if it fails. They simply re-anchor, or pack up and go home. This type of bottom is not likely to be sought out by the yachtsman intending to anchor overnight or for any extended period and there is really no advantage in carrying one, particularly because they are difficult to handle and need to be extremely heavy to provide adequate holding.

### Plough types

CQR, Delta, Kobra. Named 'ploughs' because of their resemblance to the agricultural device of the same name, they share its main property – when pulled hard enough they turn the bottom over and drag. The plot of holding force against time shown above at left illustrates this well. The actual load at which they drag varies according to the specific anchor and the bottom, but I have personal experience of a Delta that dragged badly in

soft mud, admittedly in extreme gusting winds.

The 2006 joint Yachting Monthly, Sail Magazine and West Marine anchor test is widely held to be one of the most realistic of the dozens that have been reported. It placed the new generation anchors tested firmly at the top for holding, with the Delta somewhere in the middle, the CQR and Bruce firmly at the bottom. In view of the wide popularity of the latter two, with thousands of posters claiming satisfactory performance in anchorages worldwide, some explanation seems necessary. My own theory is that almost all anchor tests compare 25 lb anchors, whereas world-girdling yachtsmen typically carry CQRs of 55 lb or more. As shown in the 'weight' paragraph above, for anchors where tip loading is not maximised they need plenty of weight to set. Tip loading of the CQR lies between 12 and 16% of the total weight. Conversely the Delta (and presumably the very similar Kobra) have good tip loading, about 28%, helping them to set easily but ultimately dragging at high loads due to their lower surface area.

### Bruce

The genuine Bruce anchor has not been manufactured for very many years. When it was produced it was made from cast steel, a strong and tough material. Unfortunately its reputation has suffered due to the huge number of copies that have been produced, often in low grade, brittle and weak materials.

## Selecting an anchor by Viv Cox continued...

The original anchor had precisely made fluke angles, not replicated in many of the copies. The genuine item sets and holds well in soft – medium bottoms, is apparently chosen by fishermen thanks to its ability to hold on rock, but its long leading edge struggles to cut through weed. Again, big, heavy ones work far better than small ones.

### New generation

Bugel, Manson Supreme, Rocna, Sarca, Spade. The first of the new generation types was the Bugel. It has a flat, thick fluke with relatively low surface area, a plate shank and a roll bar. The design makes it easy and relatively cheap to manufacture although ultimately, at wind speeds probably never encountered by the vast majority of yachts, its holding may be slightly less good. The Spade differs somewhat from the others in that it does not have a roll bar. Its tip loading is the highest of all, at 47% of its overall weight. The design is complex, with a hollow shank and the ability to separate shank from fluke for stowage. The Manson and Rocna are broadly similar, both having tip loadings of around 35% of total weight, plate shanks and roll bars. The setting and holding of all of these designs is excellent, the Spade in particular heading the load values obtained in a large number of anchor tests. Relatively recently the Sarca has been achieving very



*Later Bruce*

high holding in tests but this design is very scarce in UK.



*Current Rocna made by CMP*

### Copies

CQR and Bruce copies have been available for some years, those of Delta for only a few. Rocna copies are now appearing from Chinese manufacturers. In some cases it takes only a cursory inspection to see that copies are crudely made, welded in ways that an amateur would be ashamed of and with minimal galvanising. Cast types are more difficult to assess by eye but it is likely that they are made from cast iron, a metal that is brittle and has almost non-existent tensile strength. Many photographs of snapped ones can be found on the Internet. There are cast iron versions of the genuine CQR, which can be recognised by the weight marked in lbs, ending in ½. These also have a tendency to be brittle and will snap if impacted hard enough.

### Flat anchors

Danforth, Britany, FOB, Fortress, Guardian. These anchors have a large surface area for their weight and, as might be expected, they hold extremely well in soft – medium bottoms. Setting on these bottoms is also good, enabled by their sharp fluke tips, controlled at an optimum angle for penetration. On hard bottoms such as packed sand and shingle they may have a tendency to skid without setting. As might be expected the aluminium versions are lighter than the steel ones, making them ideal for handling as a kedgie but losing nothing when it comes to set and holding. Their only drawback is that they can have a



***Danforth***

tendency not to reset when the direction of pull changes. They are thus the ideal kedge but few choose them as the bower anchor.

### **What to select**

For maximum performance in extreme conditions there would appear to be two recognised options – either a very heavy older anchor type or a somewhat lighter new

generation. Many tables are published giving recommended anchor weights for boat length and in the past it has been widely accepted that going one or even two sizes bigger would offer the greatest anchoring security in the worst conditions. Several of the big names in world cruising journalism adopt this approach, accepting the difficulties that stowing and recovering their large size and weight will bring. With the advent of new generation anchors the situation seems different: when I bought mine I was advised that the recommended size was sufficient for all foreseeable conditions. I cannot claim to have tested it to the limit but after winds of around 50 knots it has been so deeply buried that I had great difficulty in recovering it.

For me, the Delta offers the optimum balance between performance and cost for the average cruising yachtsman. I replaced a 25 lb CQR with a 25 lb Delta more than 20 years ago, welcoming the step change in setting that it provided. Throughout the time that I owned a succession of them we never dragged, until the occasion mentioned above in Greece, in mud with the consistency of thick custard. Deltas, and the similar Kobra, are typically



***Delta photographed underwater***

well under half the price of most new generation anchors. The shank of the Kobra is long and curved, which may make it problematic to stow on some boats.

Copy anchors have their place, suitable for occasional anchoring at very low cost. They are fine for daytime anchoring and overnights in light conditions but for anything more serious it would be safer to use the original article.

**Yv Cox is a past Commodore of the Club and a contributor to Yachting Monthly.**

## A new sailor was born by Marion Bamford

When Ian and I met one of our first conversations was about the things we enjoyed. I told him how much fun was to be had on the water under sail. Unconvinced, petrol head Ian stated he'd stick to motorbikes. A short while later he allowed me to persuade him to include a visit to North West Venturers' as part of a bike day. Lee came across to us wearing a Manx TT shirt (looking nothing like Ian's preconceived idea of a blazered, waxed moustached commodore) and admired the bike, a couple of weeks later we went out for a sail and a new sailor was born!

On my birthday in December 2014 we bought Rionagh a 34' Bavaria (I've never had such an exciting birthday). We bought her in Ardrossen almost opposite the Isle of Arran on the Clyde. When looking at yachts we found that our choice within our price range was a bit limited as Ian's 6'4" and many beds are too short and most have very limited headroom.

Ian took his day skipper course early in 2014 and I met him at the end in Rionagh, the training boat hurtled in with a jammed genoa in a force 8, Fortunately I missed that bit of weather. One over enthusiastic student leaped prematurely for the pontoon and of course fell in, Ian had the opportunity to be a hero and fished her out, cold and embarrassed but unharmed.



As the Clyde is mostly fairly kindly and there is always somewhere to go at any point of tide we decided to stay up there and "cut our teeth". There should be a warning that Scotland enters your soul and it's impossible to stop visiting. We summer on a mooring near Fairlie and use their facilities and pontoon at high tide, very nearby is Largs, they are kind and if it's choppy and low tide we leave our gear there and collect Rionagh with just us in the dinghy. We winter in Ardrossen where there's loads of services and we can extend our season just coming out for anti fouling and a few short weeks.

It's difficult to choose a tale to tell whether it Bangor to the Isle of Man under just the cruising chute, anchoring near a pretty beach and discovering a seafood shack outside a crumbling mansion or a night anchored in a loch with a sky full of stars and rutting stags bellowing on the three mountains around us or spotting our first basking shark. It's easy to forget

the scary moments when they're mixed with the kindness of strangers who are fellow sailors.

This summer we tested our skills and ventured out into the western isles. The weather was very much against us so we went west through the Crinan and hung around in there walking and quite possibly drinking too much until things calmed down a bit. We left the Crinan just as Timothy West was setting off on a canal trip with a gaggle of TV cameras and sound engineers. It was a case of get out now or risk being stuck here until tomorrow as we arrived in the basin; so we left on a beautiful bright day with no passage plan and everything out below decks including coffee ready for passage planning! We motored through the Dorus Mor then sailed to Craobh Haven in idyllic conditions giving ample opportunity to make proper passage plans and to enjoy the stunning scenery.

Later in our trip we came to fulfil my childhood dream of going to Iona under sail. You do have to be careful what you wish for! We discovered we were unable to motor without the engine boiling and needed to find somewhere suitable to dive under the boat to clear the weed we suspected we'd picked up earlier on leaving a loch off Mull. It was a great test of sailing skills and we made a perfect sail into the sound of Iona and maintained momentum to do a u turn into Bull Hole before running out of power just past the ferry slip. The only

choice left was to drop the anchor. This didn't hold well on the rock bed and we were slipping. We did everything we could to make sure we didn't drag onto the beautiful pink cliffs. We'd the dinghy ready to use as a really big fender, boat hooks ready and fenders everywhere and raised a pan pan.

Very quickly a yacht responded to the pan pan, towed us into Bull Hole and got us secure on a mooring. Wonderful people as sailors are they didn't then just leave but came on board and showed us a cheeky way of clearing weed from the sail drive using the dinghy foot pump as a suction pump. They waited with us whilst we checked the engine then invited us to follow them to Tinkers Hole so we'd be sure the engine was running properly while they were nearby. The RNLI lifeboat had arrived from Tobermory by this time and they stood by until we gratefully dropped anchor for the night.

The western coast of Scotland is idyllic and within the Clyde it's easy to choose somewhere to go and find somewhere to shelter for the night. Scotland has quite rightly won cruising ground of the year. There is a document called "Awakening the Giant" which is going to be monumental.

We're proud to display our club burgee and have run into other members addicted to Scotland. Non members are intrigued by the

logo and we're happy to give them information about the friendliest club should they venture to North Wales.

**Should members fancy a change of sailing scenery contact us as we're happy to share our newfound knowledge.**



## 50 CLUB UPDATE

Thank you for your support of the 50 club. More members have purchased numbers since I last wrote so a big THANK YOU – it helps the club but also makes it more fun to have prizes being paid out rather than retained in the kitty.

So, onto the interesting part. Since the last Venturer, there have been three draws: -

### Sept 2016

1st	No 34	Unsold at time of draw
2nd	No 11	Joy and Lee on Avalon
3rd	No 43	Dr Shirley Dwyer

### October SOS Party

1st	No 42	Colin and Alison Pattinson
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### Oct 2016

1st	No 29	David & Pam on Spindrift III
2nd	No 24	Mij and Treor on Hindsight
3rd	No 08	Mike on Chinook

As per my usual statement, **there are numbers still available for purchase** and it doesn't matter when you buy your number, you are still entitled to the all the draws throughout the year – 12 monthly draws and a mega draw at the start of season and end of season party. **Your £50 BACS, cash or cheque purchase gives you the chance to win and also helps to support the club.** If you are interested and require any further information, please contact Joy Bennett using the details in the yearbook.

# To the Outer Hebrides and Beyond

By Chris Jones.

continued from page 3

Too excited to catch-up on sleep, we landed and walked up through the village, then fell asleep in the sun on the grass in front of the Museum. Refreshed, postcards were posted to NWVYC and families, an old tradition for visitors to St Kilda. Then we wandered around the Free Church of Scotland and adjoining school room. Both were filled with an overwhelming sense of the sadness and constraint they had inflicted on the islanders. The isolated St Kildan way of life was gradually undermined by the combination of Church strictures, sporadic education and communications with the mainland, coupled with influence of Edwardian steamer tourists whose life view and ideas were so fundamentally different from the way of life of the islanders. High infant mortality and migration of younger islanders had ultimately precipitated the evacuation of the last 36 remaining islanders in 1930.

Around the head of the bay below the old village lie the 1960's MOD prefab buildings strapped down to their concrete foundations which serve the radar station on the summit of Mullach Mor. We climbed past the dry stone cleits used by the islanders to store the driedfulmars they lived on and the walled enclosures used for their sheep up to "The Gap". We passed a pair of Great Skuas mating and ragged Soay Sheep grazing, then from the ridge we looked down onto Fulmars nesting a few feet

below and to the sea well below. With stunning views out over to Boreray and the stacks with the mountains of Lewis, Harris & the Uists just visible on the horizon.

The shipping forecast warned of strong winds to come, so time to head for shelter. An overnight passage to the Sound of Barra. Engine to start with, but not for long. Word of the day: "Wow"

## Night passage Outside the Uists

I came on watch at midnight with Ian. Wind rising engine off 2 reefs in main. Reefed the fore sail as rudder pulled out of water, auto helm working hard to keep us on track. Full cloud cover, so much darker than last night. The Monarch Islands lighthouse flashing its double flash every 15 seconds to starboard. A pair of fishing boats several miles away on our port quarter.

Back on watch at 04:00 this time with Stewart. Wind had risen but domestic batteries very low and the Navigation computer was unreadable. Auto helm turned off to conserve batteries and reduce the groaning noise in the skipper's cabin. Hand steering. The wind turbine on Barra made a good aim point.

06:00 Gordon & Ian came on watch for the passage through the Sound of Barra. I stayed on the helm. Ian reset the Nav computer back to day-light settings, then piloted through the rock-strewn Sound of Barra.



Wind rising as we came out of the Sound of Barra and headed out into the Minch and North past Eriskay, bows slamming into the swell. Boats coming out of L Boisdale were well reefed down. Moored in Loch Boisdale Marina we slept. An off-wind berth rigged with extra spring lines for the rising wind funnelling F7+ across the loch & marina.

Dinner in the Loch Boisdale Hotel then back on board for a night cap. Gordon introduced a range of whiskies to sample and savour. To gain the full complex flavour hold the whisky in your mouth for one second for every year of its age. This brought on the first "raisin moment" a mindfulness exercise to deeply contemplate a single raisin with all five senses in turn. Sleep came easily.

## Wind bound in Uist

We were wind bound for the next two days so had a road trip around S Uist, Benbecula, N Uist, Berneray, and Eriskay. But that is a story in its own right.

Ed: PART 2 in the Next Venturer!