

The Venturer

North West Venturers Yacht Club



The Newsletter of the North West Venturers Yacht Club Ltd (NWVYC Ltd)

Gallows Point, Beaumaris, Anglesey. LL58 8YL

Vice Commodores Report

By the time you read this the new sailing season will almost be on us and you should have received your new membership card and copy of the sailing programme prepared by our Sailing Captain Ed Hopkinson. We have decided to start the season a little later than usual, partly due to other commitments but also because for the past few years very few boats have been launched by the beginning of April. Therefore, the Start of Season working party and evening Social will take place on Saturday the 15th April 2023 and the sailing programme will start a week later on the 22nd April 2023.

For those intrepid early birds that are launched before then and want to sail in company, please share your plans on the member's WhatsApp or Facebook group.

As you will already be aware, some of our older members have sadly passed away in the last few months, and following the death of Donald Marshall, Shirley Dwyer handed me a sailing log of a trip they did together in Adela, to Scotland in 2006. Unfortunately, we were unable to include it in the Venturer so I have placed it in the appropriate folder in the Committee Room library. It makes interesting reading and I recommend you seek it out next time you are at the club. There doesn't seem to have been much member activity at Gallows Point over the winter period yet, so I anticipate a mad rush towards the end of March as boats are made ready for launching and I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the clubhouse.

Andy Stevenson
Vice Commodore



Andy Stevenson. Vice Commodore

Burns Night 28th January 2023

Burns Night was the first social of 2023 at the Club House. Andy opened the bar on the Friday night for the early arrivals and hardened drinkers.

Saturday was Burns Night at the Club where the NWVYC members turned the club tartan.

We had over 30 members arrive. Food was very traditional with Haggis, Neaps and Tatties with a Whisky Sauce. Big thanks to Jen who supplied the delicious Vegetarian Spinach & Feta pie, and Sarah who bought a terrific Ratatouille with ribbons of pasta. We had lots of amazing desserts supplied by club members. Special mention to Cherrie for the Pavlova.

A big thank you to Paul Morton who enthusiastically looked after the whisky tots that went with the meal...with many being QC'd at the time.

Des was resplendent in tartan. The Haggis was paraded around the club, he addressed the timorous wee beastie before plunging the knife in. As usual, we made too much food, but it all went.

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After the meal, we were lucky enough to have guest speakers, David and Jeanette Harding. They gave us a really enjoyable presentation on sailing northern waters from Scotland, over to Norway and all the way to the Arctic Circle. It really was an interesting presentation & I know that many of the members present found it inspirational. Many thanks to David and Jeanette for coming over.

As a bonus, it turned out that Jeanette was a caller for a Ceilidh band, so we took advantage of Jeanette's presence and hit the dance floor. I don't think Strictly have anything to be worried about. There was a Scottish based raffle with prizes ranging from a bottle of Jura Whisky through to a Bottle of Iron Bru (Sorry John W).

We finished the evening with some music from the members, with a special mention to Waldorf and Statler on the Ukelele's. It was a great night which ran into the early morning.

Thanks to everyone who helped in the Galley, for delicious food, to all the members who helped deck out the club, Des for expertly dispatching the Haggis and everyone who turned up and made it a great night.

Rosetta Welling, Rear Commodore

St. David's Day (Belatedly) 11th March 2023

Well, we got up in the morning of Friday 10th to the best part of 6" of snow at home. We checked the WhatsApp to see if anyone was cancelling, but as there were no messages, we loaded the van up and headed over to Anglesey. By the time we got to Stoke, there was no snow, the roads were clear, and we sped over to the club in record time.

By the time we arrived, Andy had already decked the club out with Welsh Flags. We added bunches of Genuine Welsh Daffodils. Friday was quiet, probably due to the weather, but by 6.00pm on Saturday, the Club was rocking with nearly 30 members turning up and braving the weather with only a couple of cancellations.

So, what does a Welsh Menu look like.....we thought it could be a challenge..... but it wasn't. Rosetta made a Welsh Cawl (Lamb stew), with Creamed leeks, Glamorgan sausages with a Red Onion & Chilli Relish. The star of the menu was Sarah's Menai Moules Mariniere & frites (That's 'Mussels' & Chips!!). There was also a Welsh Cheese board to finish and some home-made desserts...special mention to Caroline & Marie for the home baking.

After the meal, Mike Hollingsworth produced a very 'Welsh Quiz'. Everyone took part and we were all embarrassed to realise how little we all know about Wales. A big thank you to Mike for organising this as it adds so much to the evening.

To maintain the Welsh theme, we had a Welsh raffle. Much to Dave's embarrassment, he won the first prize of a Bottle of Aberfall's Single Malt Welsh Whisky, so thought the only decent thing was to leave it on the bar for sampling. Unfortunately, due to the heat in the room, most of it evaporated.

The evening was rounded off by some good music. Thanks for Jim and Ruth for coming along to play with us and leading a few songs with Dave, Marie and Andy. We've got to get a handle on these evenings.....1.30 am finish.....it's just too early!!

Rosetta Welling

Rear Commodore

Just an early mention for the Start of Season Party which will be held on Saturday 15th April.

It'll have a distinctly Italian theme ...plenty of Pasta and Pizza we think. Please book early!!



The Saga of the Hob(it).

Once upon a time, there was a fire on which we cooked things, mostly other animals, and ate them. This worked well and everyone was happy (except for the other animals, but it was a bit late by the time we asked them). Then people started playing with wires, drinking and asking 'What happens if we....' and electricity was invented. They noticed that the wires got quite hot and some idiot thought that we could replace the fire with hot wires. That's when it all started to go wrong. The Devil, who really quite likes fires, got a bit miffed and sent his demons to sabotage the hot-wire-thingy. They did a sneaky job and made it fail only when the food was nearly ready; they were very proud of that.

An exorcist was called, but the demons were hiding and he couldn't find them. Another was called, he said 'It's the demons' and went away. A third was called, he wrote a report saying, 'It's the demons' and went away too. None of the spells worked, so in desperation a Howden who sold the hot-wire-thingy was captured, tortured and made to pay back half the money. But we still haven't got rid of the demons.

For those who don't believe in demons, I'll translate. If many or all of the rings on the hob are used at the same time, the heat builds up until the auto-shutoff trips, sometimes after 90 mins or less. It then takes a couple of hours to cool down before it resets and during this time, none of the controls work. The suppliers claimed that 'It's not meant for a commercial kitchen', which in my view is a load of Hobbits. If it's got that many rings, they should all work, and we're not a commercial kitchen running for hours on end. The third exorcist, sorry, engineer said that later versions of this model had cooling fans added, so it seems it's a design fault. Or the fans kept the demons out, take your pick.

The long term solution is to replace it with a better model, perhaps a 900mm wide model to match the extractor above and drawer unit underneath. The current one is about 800mm, so this might give a bit more room between pans and reduce heat build-up. But until the lease is sorted, there doesn't seem much point in buying new kit, so we've decided to limp along with the existing one for now.

- Firstly, apart from the design there is nothing faulty in the operation of the hob as it is now and it is safe to use.
- Secondly, if we use the outside rings (in the corners), it might slow the heat build-up.
- Thirdly, if we heat up and/or cook the food in those big saucepans, it might help to use the separate two-ring hob for keep-warm purposes, to let the main hob cool down a bit.

Finally, if you see any demons, don't tell anyone, they'll think you're mad.

SOS work party, Saturday 15th April.

There are a few jobs needed to spruce the club up before the start of season, so we could do with some willing hands before the evening social. I've listed those that I can think of below, but if you know of any others, please let me know.

1. Mowing the grass and strimming the edges. There is a flymo on site but no strimmer; I'll bring mine but feel free to bring yours as well, many hands and all that.
- 2.
2. Cleaning the windows; the salt does tend to build up.
3. Sealing the base of the new shed to the ground.
4. Fitting ventilation panels to the container. This needs some metal cutting and welding, and is probably best done when it's not busy, so I'll tackle this at another time.

Any other thoughts/ideas, please contact Tim Kirby on 07765 098252, on WhatsApp, or email at thetimkirby@aol.com.

I'll bring some tools but feel free to bring your own as well. If anyone has any white masonry paint for the posts and some old brushes, that would be good.

A quick note about the entrance door, a few days ago, the main door was found to be open with no-one present. I've checked the lock and it's working properly, so it may be that it just wasn't pushed fully shut; it was a bit stiff.

I've tightened the mounting screws and greased the latch, and it's much easier, but the door still needs to be pushed fully home for the lock to engage. It doesn't need slamming, just a firm push against the rubber seal. If in doubt, try the handle again without the code.

Tim Kirby, Hon. House Officer

Sailing (mis)Adventures on The Norfolk Broads

By Liz Potter

The darkening skies were building behind us as we approached Hickling Broad on our final full day of sailing on 28-foot "Violet", a traditional Broads gaff-rigged wherry.

The passage along Candle Dyke was narrow and the reed beds were swaying in the mud as we sped downwind under full sail towards our nights' resting berth off Hickling Yacht Club.

The dyke opened out briefly, giving us a tempting turning point to head into the wind and lower our sails ahead of the approaching storm. We had a short discussion about the risks of pushing on under full sail, but at better speed in the freshening wind, against, lowering sails and motoring the final stretch but getting soaked in the squally downpour which was closing in behind us.

As racing dinghy sailors, our decision was unanimous and we opted for speed and sanctuary. Ten minutes later, the

heavens opened as we made our final approaches. We stowed the sails amid the peals of thunder and lightning, searching for the jetty under the darkening skies.

A bright bolt of lightning illuminated a line of boats moored along a narrow jetty and in the torrents of rain, we could just make out the shapes of two people holding berthing lines.

They were our good friends Mike and Anne St Paer, who had arrived in their own boat earlier in the day. We secured Violet alongside and clambered in under their welcoming awning to share steaming mugs of tea and cake and to swap tales of our adventures on the Broads that week.

As we told the story of our unfortunate and almost unbelievable incident, I finished with a doleful look at Anne and whispered "We can't write that story down. We are competent and respected sailors at our club".

"Oh, but you must", urged Anne, eyes wide with surprise and mischief. "It's what Broads sailing is all about". These things happen to us all.

The rain hammered down on us that night and I lay awake in my slightly damp sleeping bag, remembering the start of the trip which had begun with so much excitement and anticipation just six days earlier.

I had booked the trip to celebrate our 33rd wedding anniversary and we arrived at Martham Boats to collect Violet on the afternoon of our anniversary. There followed a race to get to the pub at Horning for our dinner at 7pm. Luckily there was a fresh breeze blowing and we had both wind and tide behind us, so made good time for most of the journey. As the evening approached, the wind dropped, but we persisted with the sails to limp into the pub staithe just on time.

There were many motor cruisers moored at the pub, some of which were due to leave very early the next morning, so we triple moored on the outside, promising to depart after our meal.

After the happy pub celebration came the first of our challenges, which was to find a parking spot for the night. We motored off to look for the little jetties around the corner, where we had happily camped a few years earlier, only to discover that the mud had encroached further and our stern was left jutting out mid-stream.

After some heavy reversing off the mud by torchlight, we found an obscure and stealthy parking spot beside some grand riverside houses. We hid the boat from view behind a large tree and decided to be away by dawn.

The following morning, we wound in our berthing lines, giggling like naughty school children and set off for a very ambitious sail to Great Yarmouth, where we were due to meet up with some friends, who were joining us on board for a few days on our passage to Oulton Broad.

The wind was fresh and building from the start and blowing from the East. This meant we had a lot of beating ahead, up the narrow waterways. We made good time, reaching the Stracey Arms for a brief 20 minute lunch stop.

It was the hot Indian summer, so we bought the last two ice-creams in the shop and pressed on upwind for Great Yarmouth. Luckily the tide was with us, but the wind had increased, making for tiring sailing. Andrew took the helm as the mainsheet was heavy work, with no cleats to help.

The boat was heeling heavily, as we pressed on towards Great Yarmouth, as we did not want to stop and reef in the narrow channel.

Just short of Mautby Marsh Drainage Mill, we went aground on a rogue mudbank, some way off the reed beds. The engine was started up and thrown into reverse, but it spluttered and died. It was re-started and the same happened again. Andrew ran forwards to drop the sails only to discover that the main halliard had come off the cleat and gone overboard. Even worse, it was wrapped around the propellor, which explained why the engine had cut out. He jumped off the bow to try to push the boat through the tack and away from the bank, but the tide was ebbing and the boat was firmly stuck. So, there we were; stuck on the mud on an ebbing tide with no engine and a sail that couldn't come down.

Luckily a hire motor cruiser passed by and we hailed him over to get a tow off the mud. He obliged and we set off once more for our destination of Great Yarmouth, whilst discussing our situation. As it was now approaching 5pm and I suspected that the boat office might soon be closing for the day, I was finally allowed to call for help.



The voice on the answer machine told me that the office closed at 4:30 and please call another time. The next stage of our crisis management involved me rummaging below deck to seek out the hire boat manual, where I found the emergency number.

I called the number between tacks and was answered by the calm and friendly voice of Ian. He went on to tell me that there were no boat lifting or diving services in Great Yarmouth or elsewhere on the South Broads. He advised us that our best bet was to turn around and sail back to our lunch stop at the Stracey Arms, where he would meet us and try to assess the best option for our significant problem.

We had by now reached an appropriately named turning point called Scare Gap, which was to be the limit of our sailing journey for that day. We were faced with a two-hour run back against the tide in a race against the dwindling daylight.

The wind was still blowing a strong Force 4-5, gusting 6 and we were careering downwind under full sail. The river took a few bends, requiring us to gybe often. On one of these gybes, the boat lurched into a huge broach and promptly grounded side-on to the river on the same unmarked mudbank which we had visited earlier. This time, we were held onto the bank by the strong wind, which was pinning our mainsail out, Andrew disembarked for a second time to try to push the bows around, but the boat was well and truly jammed.

It was getting late in the day and passing shipping was sparse by now. Most of the hire motor cruisers had finished for the day, so we were fortunate that one such craft was late and trying to get to Great Yarmouth before nightfall. We hailed him and he approached our stern. His young Thai partner took the helm and approached us at some speed, whilst the Skipper stood on the bow to catch our lines. There was a bump, which nearly knocked the skipper off his deck onto our transom but made for an easy transfer of lines. They towed us off backwards, but released us too early, only 10m from the bank. We needed to bear off some 90 degrees to clear the bank and had no momentum to do this. The boat sailed back onto the bank once more.

A second rescue attempt was made. This time, we took his forward lines on board. The Thai lady set off with an enthusiastic reverse speed, which had Andrew adding a quick half hitch onto his line, to hold the pressure. When we reached mid-channel, the knot was jammed so tight that I had to perform a small operation with a sharp knife to release us.

It was clear that the river was too narrow for two boats to manoeuvre properly, as the motor boat had gone aground on the opposite bank now. On our release, we still didn't have enough momentum to avoid the bank and sailed straight back on it. The motorboat managed to get off the mud and set off for Great Yarmouth.

We both waved and yelled frantically and he turned and came back once more.

"One last try" he shouted angrily, as he approached us. On our last tow-off backwards, we finally got enough way on to avoid the dreaded mud bank. With a muddy and cold Andrew crewing and me helming the boat very cautiously mid-river, we set off for our rendezvous with Ian.

Looking at the map, we could see that the final stretch of sailing towards Stracey Arms involved a beat, as the river turned very sharply.

After an hour of sailing the wind was dropping and about 1km from our destination, just before our final upwind leg, I spotted a remote staithe on the opposite bank. I pointed it out to Andrew, half-joking, that it was where we would be spending the night.

By the time we turned the corner, the wind was light and we were punching a strong tide. As we were pushed towards the same bunch of reeds on 3 successive tacks, I called Ian to say that we weren't going to make it. I suggested that we meet at the remote staithe I'd spotted earlier, as there appeared to be vehicle access to it through the farm.

Once again, we turned the boat around and moved slowly down tide, trying to make a seamanlike landing under full sail, brushing softly against the overhanging trees as Andrew jumped ashore with the mooring lines.

At last I was ashore too, and off to track down the farmer to ask for retrospective permission to land and new permission for Ian to have access in his truck. All permission was hastily granted, perhaps because, over the hedge, I caught the farmer singing along to the radio in his underpants whilst tending to a barbecue in his garden.



I continued along the farm path until it reached the road and waited there for Ian, giving him the description of a desperate blonde woman in shorts and crocs, dancing about in a crazy way, as the Broads mosquitoes had arrived in their thousands for a feast.

Ian had a long road trip from South of the River Bure to the North bank, via Acle Bridge. He arrived with his son in the passenger seat of his pickup and had a kayak in the open back. He acknowledged me with a pitiful smile and I pointed him towards the farm. He set off in a cloud of dust and splattered mosquitoes, whilst I jiggled and windmilled my way back along the track.

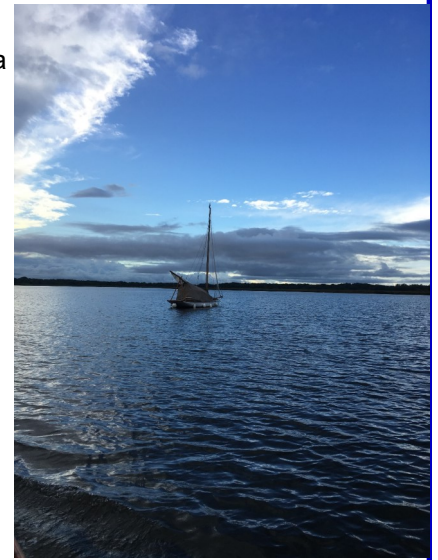
As I reached Violet's awkward landing spot, I saw Ian's plan unfold. He had attached a pulley from his tow hitch onto her jib halliard and cranked the boat over onto the landward side, exposing her prop. He then launched the kayak, untangled the main halliard from the prop and they were packed up and gone, like Batman and Robin, in about twenty minutes.

The sun had set, and darkness surrounded us. It was now 8pm and it had been a very long day. Andrew and I shared a small cold pork pie for supper, to celebrate surviving the first day of our 34th year of marriage. We retired to our berths, which were wet where the boat had been submerged.

The following morning, we set off once more for Great Yarmouth and pulled in at the Yacht Station. The only berth left was one immediately behind our second rescuer of the day before. We took over a peace offering of wine and chocolates, asking which way they were heading, so that we could go in the opposite direction.

The rest of our journey wasn't without the occasional mud landings, but we took great care to secure all lines on a regular basis and can look back upon our trip with a degree of humour not felt at the time.

As with all extreme challenges that sailing brings, they tend to mature into great adventures with the passage of time.



Report and photos by Liz Potter.

THE DAY WE WENT TO LARGS

Graham finally retired this year, for the past 10 years we have been working towards our retirement plan of sailing around Britain taking our time visiting the little harbours and quirky places on route, and to do this over a few years.

But this year we planned to have 3 months sailing as a kind of shakedown cruise on Sizzler our 28ft Colvic Countess.

We set off in May we were going in company with Dave and Rosetta on Tranquility to the TT on the Isle of Man, something Graham wanted to do for many a year. But unforeseen events at home meant that we had to return home, also a very good friend passed away, so we stayed at home a little longer and attended the funeral.

We returned to Sizzler at the end of May to find she had been hit by another boat, we had a lot of damage around the push-pit, rubbing strake, boarding ladder and a hole in the gelcoat in the transom area, this was a bit of a damper for the passage to IOM.

After checking with the insurance company, we went to Abermenai to dry out and check the hull under the waterline. we were ok to carry on with our cruise. We decided to sail to Peel where Dave and Rosetta were waiting. We left the straits through Puffin sound, it was an uncomfortable trip, so we decided to pull in and anchor at Moelfre, and wait for a more favourable tide, we left at 8 pm on the 31st May. We arrived at Peel at 10 am for the flap gate opening. We all felt exhausted and not well over the next few days, we put ours down to stress of the damage to boat and emotional time at home, Dave and Rosetta were also feeling unwell, we all tried to enjoy the TT but felt very unwell.

We did lots of covid tests, but they were all negative.

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After 11 days we all decided to come home as we still felt exhausted with no energy it took Graham days to do the odd jobs needed on the boat.

We got back home on the Wednesday night. Whilst we were in IOM, we saw a boat for sale in Largs it had been on the brokers website for a couple of weeks.

We have been looking at getting a larger boat for a few years, so we could have a little more space and comfort, we were looking at the following models of boat, Moody 34, Moody 346, Westerly Seahawk 34/35, westerly Oceanranger, as well as looking at other yachts with suitable cabins that we had stumbled across during our search, such as a Warrior 40, Moody Eclipse 33 and Oceanlord 41.



On Thursday morning we rang to see if the boat had been sold, it hadn't. We had missed a few boats as they were getting sold quickly during the covid years, so we decided to go to see it and told the broker we would be with him in 5 hours, so off we went to Largs.

The boat was in Largs marina it was raining heavily but we had about 1 hour before the broker closed, there was an obvious leaking window, but first impressions were good.

We went back the next day and spent most of the day going through the boat, some of hatches leaked, but handles were loose, when I tightened them, all was ok. (She was ours (in my mind)), just had to get the survey done fingers crossed all would be well.

The deposit was paid, and we sorted out a surveyor to check her out.

A week later the survey was done, and it was good for a 33-year-old boat, mostly maintenance jobs and some TLC.

No osmosis or problems with hull or keels. In mast reefing worked ok, new engine with 100 hours, and both sails were 6 and 7 years old. All plumbing and water were working well. Oven only 3 years old. All instrumentation worked well.

She needed the orange gas pipes changed, a new anode on next lift out, the leaky window resealing, some rusty clamps on the steering cables changed, the head linings in some of the lockers needed some attention (westerly droop) and the damage to the woodwork from the leaky window. The pulpit nav lights weren't working, but the wiring was corroded and snapped when pulled, 12v getting to end of lead, so fault found.

Nothing Graham couldn't fix so we went back up to Largs, paid the balance, signed paperwork and spent 7 days getting the boat ready to sail back to Beaumaris.

I spent the week cleaning and Graham fixing some of the issues on the survey. The man who sold us the boat was an accountant and in his own words useless at maintenance.

But all the fittings on the boat looked original and not been tampered with too much, so although some areas need a little attention the boat in the possession of the previous owner was looking ok.

(We didn't realise this initially till we had a few people on board to look around, as I had never been on a westerly before, we met a fellow westerly owner at peel, and he was quite impressed to what he saw. Some boats of this age seem to be messed about with a lot internally and that's something we aren't keen to see).

We came home and arranged that we would sail the boat back to Beaumaris on the 18th of July.

We both came home from Largs with Covid we had avoided it for 2.5 years, Sod's law we get it now.

Graham recovered quicker than me but we both tested negative before we had to go back to Largs. Our son took the week off work and came with us.

We left Largs marina at 0600hrs Monday 18th July, and motored down the Hunterston channel into the Firth of Clyde past Troon and Ailsa Craig to Portpatrick, we arrived at 2000 hrs.



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We stayed in Portpatrick till Thursday morning awaiting some bad weather to pass thru, then the next passage to Peel (40nm), this went well, northerly wind gusting between 16 and 25 knots, gave us a good sail to Peel.

I spent the journey in bed as I was still suffering, graham was still exhausted from covid, so our son did most of the sailing from Largs to Peel.

Once in Peel we had a crew change, our son went back to work via the Mananan ferry to Liverpool. And a few days later another crew member arrived for the next leg to Beaumaris.

The planned departure was delayed due to strong wind, so we left a few days later, and due to tides decided to overnight in Port St Mary. We left next morning to arrive in Beaumaris Bay later in the evening.

Purchasing this 1989 Westerly Seahawk 35 means we now have 2 boats, this was not planned, but sometimes fate lends a hand.

Noreen and Graham Jones

If You enjoy reading the travels and exploits of our members or have anything nautical that you think would be of interest and would like them published in The Venturer, then please send to
“editor@nwvyc.org”

Charles Townley.



We were sadly informed, by his partner Angie Davis, of the death of Charles Townley, who a good number of members will remember as a person who always had time to help or give advice to any who needed it. He passed away on the second of March in a Southport Hospice after being diagnosed with pancreatic cancer only three and a half weeks previously. Charles was a keen sailor who had kept his boat Meganza in Victoria Dock before selling her a few years ago and had an adventurous and full life. He had previously taken his boat through the Canal Du Midi to explore the Mediterranean.

Charles had been a University lecturer before retiring and such was his reputation was headhunted by The Oxford University Press to be their ambassador, travelling the world on their behalf. A true gentleman and action man who will be sadly missed by his family and friends. His funeral took place at the Charnock Richard Crematorium on the 21st of March 2023.

SERVICE TO CELEBRATE THE LIFE OF

Charles Robert Townley

26th June 1935 – 2nd March 2023

RIP.