



## HCSC NEWSLETTER JUNE 2020

### Dear Members

Welcome to the June Newsletter. As always in the current situation, the main news is how HCSC is dealing with Covid 19. You will find information about our plans for making the club as available as possible to you, our members. There are also plenty more contributions by members, covering history, sailing exploits and beautiful boats. Recently, some of us have been lucky enough to get out on the water in the sunshine. It felt almost normal! I hope we can see even more people enjoying themselves, as the summer advances.

**First of all, the Covid 19 news:** To open or not to open (that's the toilets) to sanitise or not to sanitise (that's the club boats). I am sure poor Hamlet had much bigger things on his mind when he pondered over to be or not to be but I never imagined that I would spend so much time on toilets! Fortunately for me, a trio of people took over the question of the boats. More seriously, we know people are keen to get back to sailing and to have the convenience of the clubhouse and our equipment. Sorry the arrangements seem to be taking a long time. We are following the RYA guidelines (cautious and conservative) and have been getting the necessary supplies in place.

In summary: **Club boats.** You have received the email that boats are now available, subject to thorough cleansing and government requirements. Although it is onerous, please do follow the procedure. We owe a big vote of thanks to Richard, Ian and Mike for all their work on this.

**Club toilets:** We have a planned procedure (thanks to Jan and Peter H for their help) and are getting in the supplies so hope to get news out to you soon. There will be only one loo in use and one person at a time in the space, two metres being quite a long distance.

**The clubhouse:** remains out of use in line with government limitations on groups and enclosed areas.

**Racing and other events :** A small group, led by Nick Griffin is looking at how we can get some form of racing organised and some of this might be extended to pottering as well.

**Support boats:** give us a bit of a challenge over social distancing. Paul J, Kevin and Mike are looking at our options.

**WhatsApp** The club WhatsApp group was set up about five years ago to help member to member communication, especially with arranging to go for a sail in the company of other people. Over the lockdown time, it has been very active with chat, jokes and requests for advice which has been very cheering to some people but a bit too much for others especially because of its consumption of data allowance. Now that people are getting back on the water, please can we get back to its original topic which is Keyhaven – based sailing. That way messages about going sailing will not get lost in the wider messages. The club has a Facebook page which is a good place for posting data heavy entries and to ask for advice. If you would like to join the group, please contact one of the administrators at [sailing@hcsc.org.uk](mailto:sailing@hcsc.org.uk).

For people who want to distinguish between groups or even sometimes avoid messages, if you tap on the three dots at the top of the WhatsApp group you can find options for this.

**RS Zest Dinghies** The General Committee has decided to go ahead with ordering two of these which will widen the opportunities for sailing. Staycationers in 2020 might be glad of them. They are made in Romsey and will be with us in July. Watch this space.

**Boat Jumble** Beaulieu Boat jumble is an annual event, a good opportunity to find that vital missing part that you need. It looks like it will not happen now so how about an HCSC one? Social distancing will preclude doing it in person(s) but we have a suggestion to set one up online. You could clear out your garage and shed and could post the items you no longer need (did you really ever need them?) and arrange swaps or sales. If you are interested in this please contact [Commodore@hcsc.org.uk](mailto:Commodore@hcsc.org.uk).

**Boats for Sale: (1)** Mirror dinghy no. 11060, with spinnaker chute. With Road Trailer. For Sale at the bargain price of £100. Proceeds to our Sailing Club funds. Contact A.O'Brien [dinghyadmin1@hcsc.org.uk](mailto:dinghyadmin1@hcsc.org.uk)



1 Mirror dinghy for sale by the Club

**Boats for Sale: (2) AVON SCOW**-in good condition, with all equipment and a combi road trailer. £1,700. Joe Scott: 01590 683017/07796121860 or [joe.scott@uwclub.net](mailto:joe.scott@uwclub.net)

**WANTED: WOODEN BOOM FOR AN AVON SCOW.** Contact Tony Cowell on 01590 681357/07802 511170.

**That's this month's news so on to the contributions that have been coming in from members,** this month with more from the ladies. Many thanks to all of you.

#### **From the Taylors: LOVE AND SAILING**

Back in the late noughties when blogging was at its height, and before everyone became a youtube star, I wrote this for a writing challenge. [Tillerman](#) challenged the sailing blogger community to write a story about "Love and Sailing" this month.

Our story started twelve years ago. Erica and I had known each other for just over a year, when I had the crazy notion to put my career on hold and sail across the Atlantic and back. We were fortunate, as I owned an old, but tough Van de Stadt 34, Blue Clipper which was up to the task.

Erica's longest sailing trip at that time, had been 50 miles, downwind from Weymouth to the

Solent in near perfect conditions. So, I was even more fortunate that she had no hesitation to coming with me.

We spent the winter preparing the yacht, buying equipment and extracting ourselves from our shore side life. People often tell me how lucky we were, I always recall the dark December day when I hung upside down, cleaning 27 years of dirt from the frozen bilge, with nothing more than a 2 hour drive home to follow - plus of course Erica's company to keep me going!



2 Max and Erica at sea

We left Portsmouth in June 1997 sailing down the western approaches and out into the Bay of Biscay with it's awesome reputation. Biscay crossed, we made our first trip 500 NM out into the Atlantic, finding the island of Madeira roughly where it should be. Then on to the Canary Islands, Gambia in West Africa, before crossing the Atlantic, arriving in Barbados just in time for Christmas.

Sailing the islands was wonderful, south to Trinidad and then north to the Virgin Islands with all the Windward and Leeward islands in between.

It wasn't all plain sailing, we had storms and huge waves, the odd shark had come too close. Equipment had broken a thousand miles from land, in light airs we'd hand steered for ten or twelve hours a day, day after day, under the tropical heat, trying to maintain our speed. Through it all Erica never faltered, she was always there, punchy and positive. Her trust in me was implicit, that trust might have been a burden, but it wasn't, I just grew to love her all the more.



### 3 Atlantic crossing on the way home

A mountaineering friend joined us for the homeward leg, between the Virgin Islands and the Azores. It was nice to have an extra hand for the 24 day crossing, especially during the night watches. But it was an intrusion, the yacht, our journey and our life together had been so complete, that having someone else share didn't seem quite right.

When our crew flew home from the Azores as arranged, Erica and I wandered those magical mid Atlantic islands hand in hand, for a few weeks, before heading off for the last leg of our trip back to Falmouth and home.

In 2000 we got married, for some reason a television company had got hold of our story and made a short program of our trip, it was a pilot for a series called "The Things we do for Love" hosted by the late John Peel and went out on Meridian TV. Our honeymoon - of course we went sailing. As the noughties drew to a close Joseph was born, and now ten or so years after the original was written we're still sailing, maybe not as much as we used to or as much as we like, but of course I still love Erica just as much.



### 4 Little Joseph - in a boat - where else?

## **FROM Katie Long**

The adventure begins... Four trains and a bus to "Padstein", lugging all my sailing kit and sleeping bag, was exhausting, but I was so excited to be joining a friend to crew round Lands End and head towards Plymouth that the long journey was worth it. The best bit had been the ride along the stunning coastline from Exeter, over Brunel's spectacular Saltash Bridge and across to Bodmin. I really was back in Cornwall again!

Early the next morning, with a stiff NW F5-6, I was nervous to leave the shelter of the tiny inner harbour. Solo on my Sadler 26, I would have stayed there, but my skipper friend, much more experienced than me, had just sailed around Ireland in his GK29 and was keen to get going. I trusted his confidence and we set out before 0600h, as the spring tide was turning.

After stowing fenders and lines, I was given the helm to steer GK out along the narrow channel through the sandy shallows, out past islands and headlands. The blustery F6 was on the nose and I was more than a little nervous as we motored out into the headwind. I realised my friend was giving me something to do to distract me from the bucking of the boat through the oncoming wind-over-tide waves. Together we hauled up the heavy sails, set them and turned towards the West. Then we both strapped on and my nervousness gradually subsided, feeling safe on this heavy, seaworthy boat. Despite these only being minor headlands and the notoriously rough Lands End ahead, I began to enjoy the exhilaration of the wild weather and the sea.

Before long, my companion disappeared below, saying he was going to navigate.... with his eyes closed!!! Having got me to do the passage plan, then set up the unfamiliar chart plotter, he was trusting me with a boat I had never sailed before! It took a while to sink in, but knowing he was there if needed, I soon settled to sail her along the North Cornwall coast.

Keeping a good lookout for lobster pots which littered the shallows, I headed further offshore, as instructed, curving a path to allow for the backing wind, towards Pendeen Point, North of Lands End. En route, I was joined by two pods of dolphins, including a couple of foot-long young ones. The adults wove under the bow, whilst the babies shied away, returning to join their mothers as they re-emerged to ride the bow wave. Then, imagine my excitement when I saw a great, slow-moving conical fin - a basking shark! There were few seabirds, but I saw occasional lone gannets and a couple of guillemots skimming low over the surface of the sea, riding up the air currents with every wave. Amazing!

Returning to the deck after nearly 6 hours, my friend explained that he had left me to experience being out there, on the ocean, alone, to gain confidence in my ability to sail solo. He had always been there, just in case, but was pleased that, apart from when I squeaked about the dolphins, and a moment when I had needed assistance tightening up the sheet of his massive genoa, I had sailed to Pendeen virtually by myself. But now, changing onto a more southerly heading towards Lands End, I was not confident of helming through the Brissons rocks. I was happy that he stayed in the cockpit, still with me on the helm (albeit assisted by "auto helm" and only needing to steer with buttons), to head

between the rocks and inside the Longships Lighthouse. He explained that we would use a back eddy, as the tide was turning against us.

By now, the wind had eased considerably, backing towards the West, and we had lost the rough wind-over-tide conditions that had dogged our progress so far. As we eased past Longships, the water became relatively calm and I noticed, for the first time, the slow swell. The "Atlantic Swell", which I had worried about for years, had been with us all day and it wasn't at all like I had imagined. Just a long rise and fall, I was sure it could be horrendous in bad weather, but right then it was just amazing and I loved it!



5 The Longships Light (looking West)

**Member, Nigel Sabin,** made the lovely box for our ensign that we have in the clubhouse. He is modest about his skills but someone else has sent us these photos of the model boat he has made.



6 Nigel's model

Nigel writes:-

" It is based on an American design called a "cosine wherry" which is approx 14ft long, although I have adapted it to a clinker build. The model, which is just under 2ft long is made from Yellow Cedar on Sapele and Oak was used for the fixings and timbers. It ended up taking about 3 months! Let me know if anyone wants to know more".



7 Another view of the amazing craftsmanship in the model

### Jim Page has sent us this account of the beginning of HCSC

Major I. M. Bellairs is one of three founding fathers of Hurst Castle Sailing Club. Born in 1882, Ivor Mackenzie Bellairs was an engineer by profession and arrived in Keyhaven in 1931. He built "Keyhaven Barn" which is still there to the North of the village green.

Major Bellairs was a notable if peppery local character. He was a man of action, serving as a local councillor and involved in many local good works and activities. Bellairs did not stand on ceremony and it is said that his eccentricities meant he did not feel at home in Keyhaven Yacht Club, then located across the other side of the basin. As a consequence, together with Mr Roy Knight and Mr George Andrews he set about establishing an alternative sailing club to specialise in dinghy racing. They organised the first inaugural General Meeting of Hurst Castle Sailing Club which took place at the Toc H (see note 1) Hut in Milford on Sea on Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> April 1938. The first Club Regatta was held in August of that year which also saw the Club's affiliation to the RYA (Fee 2 guineas [£2.10]) and the adoption of a one-design for class racing - Montague Sharpies.



8 Modern 12m Sharpie dinghy

During the Second World War, Major Bellairs was put in command of the Keyhaven Home Guard, and took his duties so seriously that when a suspected German bomber flew over the village in the dusk of evening, he dashed out with his rifle onto the green and aimed a shot after it into the air. His aim, he declared, was to “stir up Keyhaven and show them that there was a war on!”

The Club was mothballed during the war years but in March 1948, Major Bellairs, Mr Andrews and two others called the first post war general meeting which was held at No. 15, High Street, Milford. They then set about reviving the Club fortunes by contacting former and potential new members such that by the end of the year membership had passed the 100 mark.



## 9 Extract from Club Membership Handbook, 1948 (With thanks to Richard Bagnall)

As well as the drive for membership, they also addressed the need for a permanent home for the Club. A war time pillbox at Keyhaven was brought into use as a gear store (5/- [25p] per season, plus 2/6d [12.5p] key deposit) but a proper home was still needed. Undaunted, Major Bellairs sprang into action again and using his local contacts and inside knowledge, prevailed on the then local authority (Lymington Borough Council) to provide the current plot of land. This had previously been used as a rubbish tip and also included the aforementioned pillbox. The Borough Council cleared the site and offered the Club a 21year lease at £1 per annum which was promptly accepted.

With a plot of land secured, attention now turned to a building to go on it. Major Bellairs along with two other members, Jack Walker and Cecil Whistance agreed to finance a building. This took the form of an interest free loan to be redeemed at such time as the Club could afford it. Government building regulations after the war were very strict however due to the shortage of raw materials, so a new build was out of the question. Eventually an elderly cricket pavilion on the Newland Manor Estate (see Note 2) was secured and with the help of many members, dismantled and re-erected at Keyhaven. The total cost of the exercise including transport, specialist labour, draining and fencing was £639.



10 The first HCSC Clubhouse

The Clubhouse was opened on Whitsunday, June 5<sup>th</sup>1949 by the Mayor, Councillor Stuart David who was also a member and a future President of the Club.

Major Bellairs died in 1957.

### **From Sheila Wicks: Racing at Cowes in a Super Yacht**

When I joined the staff of Skandia in 1997 I had no idea that the Company was the sponsor for Cowes Week. We had not long lived in this area having moved from Chester. I'd only worked for the Company for a few months when I was lucky enough to be offered the chance to sail in Mike Slade's Farr Maxi 80 yacht, Longobarda. The yacht was to take part in Cowes week racing and various clients of Skandia were invited along. A few staff, me included, were also invited to take part. We had a short training session followed by three races during the week. The idea was that the staff members would be experienced and able to assist the paid crew. I have to admit that I may have exaggerated my sailing qualifications a little and I was not the only one to do so. The invited guests were not expected to have any previous sailing knowledge. Consequently on the training session there were a lot of people trying to look as though they knew the ropes or should I say 'sheets' but actually had little idea what they should be doing. The paid crew were perfectly able to sail the yacht without any help or hindrance from the rest of us. We soon realised that we were there as ballast. That was actually a lot more difficult than it sounds because tacking meant transferring ourselves from one side of the enormous yacht to the other, a distance of about 7 metres, without getting entangled in fast moving ropes. It felt like climbing up the side of a house tipped up at a precarious angle. Well that was the training session.

Just before the start of the first race one unlucky 'guest' fell through the open hatch, a drop of a couple of metres. Fortunately, he landed on a pile of sails but he was clearly in a lot of pain. The race however, had to go on regardless. After the race finished, he was transferred by rib to shore where a waiting ambulance took him to hospital. We later heard that he had cracked his ribs. Racing, of course, meant using the Spinnaker. Re-packing the dropped Spinnaker ready for reuse was an unglamorous job as it took place inside the hull. This then was a task for the Skandia staff! Somehow we must have managed to tie the correct corners together because we felt the yacht pick up speed as the spinnaker flew. Our task complete we were able to come on deck to witness the finish of the race. There were only 4 yachts in the Super class and we came a credible 2<sup>nd</sup> overall.

When I looked online for photos I saw that Longobarda is now up for sale if anyone has a spare 200k. A word of warning though, no Marina in the Solent can provide a deep enough anchorage for her.



11 Longobarda (1)



12 Longobarda (2)

**One of our Oldest Members, Amy Hinsley writes:**

A passion for sailing

At the age of 40 I was teaching children with learning difficulties. This was near Watford. The message came from Herts county council education office. An RYA sailing course for teachers was to take place at Bury lake, Rickmansworth. I joined and thoroughly enjoyed the course.

I passed the beginners and intermediate levels. This qualified me to take children from school once a week in the summer term. Another member of staff qualified and we mastered the support boats. We sailed Coypus and Toppers mainly. I was hooked on sailing and continued to take more qualifications.

Mike was very supportive. He had learnt to sail as a boy in Liverpool. John preferred sailing as an option to other sports at school. Geoff, Ros and Martin had sailing lessons with their schools. We bought an enterprise and joined the local sailing club, Chess Valley club. Sailing with John, both of us learning, was a bit fraught! I bought him a Laser and I had a Topper.

I wanted to extend my inland sailing to experience on the sea. We took courses at Dodnor Marine. John and I qualified as RYA instructors. When I retired I had time to help sailing with the girls from the Blind school. A wonderful experience.

When Mike retired we moved to Lymington. We contacted a colleague of Mike's, Dick Beck. He was teaching sailing to the ninth Lymington sea scouts. He soon had me involved and I introduced the RYA structure to the sailing course. I was lucky to have a wonderful team of keen sailors and scout leaders to help.

I brought a mirror dinghy and had many years sailing with Jill and Sally in Lymington. Then we moved to HCSC and I bought my Scow. I joined the activities of this very friendly club i.e. pottering and racing, also helping beginners gain confidence, passing on my enthusiasm. Sadly at 90 I had to stop sailing.

Mike and I had many adventures in our Drascombes, sailing around the Isle of Wight and to Poole Harbour. Wonderful memories!

**Exploits of Ian Day:** I have held over another long contribution from Ian about his younger self's exploits for the next newsletter. In the last one he told us about his altitude sailing record attempts. This month he was still at it when he got his long suffering wife to hoist him to the top of Tудо Bem's mast to do a bit of maintenance. At least the boat was not trying to sail this time. I have lifted his photos from our Facebook page (always worth looking at).



**13** Tудо Bem - view from the top



14 Tudo Bem - looking up!

From mixing up viruses with crows (Corvid 19) to inventing a new virus (Covid 18) our communication with you occasionally suffer from fat finger (or Freudian) slips I hope you are laughing with us, not at us. Certainly, I hope you are laughing. It is good medicine. Look out for our next communication about ....yes, you got it -the toilets.

Best wishes,

Jean Woods (Commodore)