



AQUARIUS S.C.

THE MAIN SHEET

Spring 2001 Edition

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COMMODORE'S REPORT Rodger Wheeler

Oodles and Oooooodles of water, fast flowing and more suited to white water rafters than Signets and Graduates! That's been the order of the day since last October. BUT I can report that last week Brian Clements braved the elements and was the first to sail on the Aquarius reach this year. So we should start racing in earnest on the Sunday 1st April. This year we have allowed a week for everyone to recover from the START OF SEASON PARTY, which has been RE-SCHEDULED TO 8.00p.m. on SATURDAY 24TH MARCH - Note that there will be a "surprise" starting soon after 8.00p.m. so please be prompt.

For those who remember to put the "bungs" back after the winter, there will be informal sailing on Sunday 25th March - the ultimate cure for a hangover!

Now this may sound totally foreign to some of you. "Please be nice to rowers". We have started a series of meetings with Hampton S.C. and the rowing clubs to try to avoid conflicts and improve safety. I was very pleased by the level of co-operation. By all means shout warnings to avoid collisions but next time you feel like uttering (expletives deleted) at about 80 decibels when a rower gets in your path, try a friendly wave instead.

This spring, we plan to formally christen our new "Millennium Pico" and we have a major project, the fitting of a new diesel engine to the rescue boat together with a new control system.

Make a date in your diaries - Sunday 6th May - The Mid-Thames Trophy is a new inter-club event for us; we will be the guests of Desborough Sailing Club. Also a forthcoming trip to the London Eye on the 16 June!

We trust that the club ghost (tiny footsteps in the roof ?), otherwise known as "The Mink" has now been exorcised by means of a good clean up above the false ceiling. It had superb walk-in accommodation at roof level at the rear of the club - and we suspect, all because some errant person failed to resecure the chicken wire in the eaves. Should the mink return, we have provided ultrasonic "music", which may not be to it's taste, in the form of an Italian mouse buster.

Now for a little gossip. Did you know that last autumn George, Joan, Linda and I attended an RYA reception with the Princess Royal as representatives of the Thames Valley region.

See you all on the 24th, **Rodger**

WELCOME - Joan Bray.

We extend a warm welcome to Arthur and Joan Sykes who joined us in December and wish them a long and enjoyable membership of Aquarius.

KNOW YOUR OFFICERS and COMMITTEE for 2001- Joan Bray

Commodore	Rodger Wheeler
Vice Commodore	Keith Hatton
Rear Commodore	Ron Munden
Secretary	Joan Bray
Treasurer	Joan Garrett
Boatswain	Bryan Clements
Harbourmaster	John Rhodes
Sailing Secretary	Richard Cannon
Publicity Officer	Mike Baker
Social Secretary	Madeline Hatton

Management Committee:-

Eric Bridgewater	Diana Carpenter
Peter Carpenter	Charles Dennis
David Ginn	Mark Hollamby
Barry Jones	Nigel Knowles
Mike Rogers	

Keith Hatton is also Bar Chairman and organises a team of bar people to serve on race days and Wednesday and other Social evenings and Madeline Hatton has a committee of 15 members to help run our full social programme.

All our committee members work for you on a voluntary basis carrying out a variety of tasks. There is quite a bit to do to prepare for the new season after the various floods this winter - if you can spare a few hours, your help will be much appreciated.

Contact details for committee members can be obtained from Richard Cannon (01932 786636).

PAY UP TIME !! - Joan Bray

Yes, it's time to pay those subscriptions again! It comes round quickly doesn't it.

The good news is that once more the subscription rates remain the same.

I would appreciate your sending your membership cards back with your COMPLETED subscription forms in order for me to update it.

THAMES BOAT JUMBLE Monday April 16 - Joan Bray

New event with over 150 stands selling everything. Held at London and Irish Rugby Club, The Avenue, SUNBURY.

Gates open 10am, Adults £3, children and parking free. More info on the website boatjumbleassociation.co.uk. I can't vouch for it but being local it may be of interest.

Sailing Secretary report 2000

Unfortunately this year we have had the worst sailing conditions though out the year I can remember since I started sailing in 1969. There have generally been light winds and in mid April we were unable to sail for two consecutive Sundays due to the strong current; the first time this has happened since I started I joined the Club in 1992. Then at the end of the season we had the floods with the water level up to 2 feet over the path and we were unable to sail for the last 5 Sundays.

In spite of this we have had good support although slightly down on the record 1999 season.

The normal entry was about 6 to 9 boats per race and the best was 11 boats; it was a real pleasure having a good number of boats to race against. A total of 51 people helmed or crewed in at least one race.

The Club boats were well used with generally 1 to 2 boats in use and on two occasions four club boats were in use.

The Open day and Regatta were made two-day events again. The National Big Blue Go Boating weekend was combined with the Open days but it seemed to have very little impact compared to last year. The Regatta was very poor because it was one of our no wind days.

There were the usual visits to Bewl for the Spring and August Bank Holiday weekends. The Spring Meeting was extremely wet and windy on Saturday, and extremely windy Sunday but a good sail in a F3-4 on Monday;

we packed up in a torrential thunder storm. The August visit was a big improvement and gave some of the most enjoyable sailing of the year.

With the influx of new members, including a number of very keen juniors, training was organised for Wednesday afternoons from the beginning of July to the beginning of September. These were very popular and at times there were more than ten people at the Club. Leah Farmer was very active in organising groups of youngsters to come and Brian Clements was a big help.

AQSC members supported all the Signet Meetings and came away with the majority of the prizes. At the Signet National Championships Richard Cannon, with Robert Britton

as crew, and Mark Hollamby tied for overall first place with Mark winning on tiebreak. Robert did very well to come 1st in the Crew invitation race helming for Richard, and to finish 12th in the single-handed race.

Bob Jones has supported many Skipper and Catapult meetings and has travelled away from the Club more than anyone.

There was a major addition to the Club fleet at the end of the season with the purchase of Aquarius 2000, a Pico one/two handed boat obtained with a Millennium Awards for All Grant; Charles Dennis is to be thanked for his effort in achieving this for us. Due to the bad conditions it has only been out once with Charles on the last Sunday of the season when it was the only boat out. It will be in great demand next year.

The AQSC Web site and E-mail continue to be useful communication media. The latest race results are generally available on the web site by the evening following Sunday racing. Pictures of the storm and flood damage at the Club were also published there. I hope members are finding it useful. A list of Members with Email is on the notice board; if anyone is missing would they please let me have details. I would welcome any suggestions on improving the communication, marketing and presentation aspects of the web site.

As usual all trophies have been allocated to Personal Handicap results and this gives much closer Series results and usually helps spread the Trophies amongst the competitors instead of all going to one helm. But this year it has failed baldly again and Michael Stevens won three trophies. Some results were very close with only 4.75 points between the first 5 PH places in the Sprint series.

I would welcome suggestions that might improve support for events. Am I giving members what they want?, should racing be different times or days, too much or too little racing, alternative events. Please let me know so I have a chance to incorporate any suggestions in next year's programme.

Richard Cannon

Last Sunday Of 2000 Season Sailing

19Nov2000 was the last Sunday with sailing scheduled for year 2000 to end what has been a truly terrible sailing season. There was no racing for the last five Sundays and there was no racing on two consecutive Sundays near the start of the season. Sailing on a number of other Sundays has been very poor. One boat managed did to sail and just hold its own against the current; Charles Dennis took the Club Pico out for its first sail.

Early Sunday 29Oct started with no wind although the weather forecast was terrible; 60,70 or even 90mph winds. By 11:30 it had all changed and it was gusting over 30mph. A course had been laid and Keith Hatton took the club Laser and then handed it over to Michael Stevens. The wind was extremely strong, gusty and fluky and Michael couldn't make way against the strong current and had to be towed back. Racing was cancelled for the second consecutive Sunday. The new Club Pico has arrived and was rigged for the first time but it was too windy to take it out



Prizes 2000

The race series match those of last year, except the Pursuit series was replaced by the Sprint series, and the same trophies have been awarded. Everyone who were 1st, 2nd, or 3rd for Boat Handicap or Personal Handicap result in a main series receives a glass. Some glasses have also been awarded for amount of sailing.

If helm capsizes or have any other incident or breakage would they please make sure it is recorded on the race sheet so it can be include in my result records. Keith Hatton has been awarded the Water Rat for 9 capsizes, all in Club Lasers.

Our Junior Sailors have been a very big asset to us and Michael Stevens receives the Young Helm Trophy; he has made very rapid progress during the year from being 7th on Personal Handicap in the Spring Series to 2nd on Boat Handicap in the Autumn Series.

SERIES	TROPHY
Autumn PH	Cruiser Cup
Sprint/Long Distance	Cundy Trophy
Sprint	Enterprise Cup
SPA	Saturday Trophy
Spring PH	Handicap Class Trophy
Summer PH	Laser Cup
Young Helm	Young Helmsman Cup
Boat Handicap Result	Charles Broken Boom
Event	Water Rat
	Glass
	Glass
Most races & no other prize	Glass
Most races Junior	Glass
Most Crewed	Glass

A total of 73 races, including 18 Fun races, were sailed during the year; Brian Clements, Michael Stevens and Graham Thompson were extreme keen to manage to compete in 60, 59 and 55 races respectively. Bryan only missed racing on 4 of the 25 days we raced, and Michael was only one behind.

A printed report of each race entry, series results, summaries and other items are in the Race Result folder that is normally kept in the Club entrance. As the race entry reports are very compact and give virtually all the information (except intermediate lap times) on the original race entry sheets these will not be retained.

MEMBER, H = Helm, C = Crew
M Stevens, 57 H + 2 C = 59 races

Bryan Clements & most races, 58 H + 2 C = 60 races
Michael Stevens
Rodger Wheeler, 44 H + 5 C = 49 races
Michael Stevens
Michael Stevens
Charles Dennis, 39 helm races
Keith Hatton for 9 capsizes, 40 H + 1 C = 41 races
Graham Thompson rank 3, 55 H, 1 C = 56 races
Richard Cannon rank 5, 29 H + 10 C = 39 races
David Ginn Helm 24 races
Robert Britton, helm 18, crew 6 = 24 races
Barbara Allen, crew 14 races

Prize Points

The adjacent table lists the places of helms that were in the first three places for Boat Handicap or Personal Handicap in any series, except the Fun series. One point is given for each 3rd, two points for each 2nd and 3 points for each 1st place. Ranking is according to the total number of points obtained; rank gives an indication of overall performance including BH and PH results.

Series	SPA		Spring		Summer		Autumn		Sprint		Rank for Prizes			
	BH	PH	BH	PH	BH	PH	BH	PH	BH	PH	BH	PH	Total	Position
C Dennis	1	2	2	3	3		1		2		11	3	14	1
M Stevens	3	1				1	2	1		2	3	11	14	1
G Thompson					1	3	3	2	1	3	7	4	11	3
B Clements						2		2	2	1	2	7	9	4
R Cannon	2	3	3		2						5	1	6	5
K Hatton			1	2							3	2	5	6
R Wheeler				1							3	3	3	7

Sailing Programme 2001

I hope that the weather conditions are kinder to us this year.

Last year the new Sprint Series with short races was popular and has been retained. The programme follows last years pattern but there is an additional annual away day to support inter club racing for the Mid Thames Trophy, at Desborough Sailing Club this year.

During the Open weekend, by request, we plan to include some short races as part of the fun for visitors.

Every four years there is a revision to the sailing rules; the new rules come into effect on the 1st of April. The main changes involve starting and tie breaking (the existing rules can give ambiguous results).

The foot & mouth epidemic is having a bad effect on sailing clubs; over 30 clubs have stopped operations including Queen Mary, Datchet and Bewl Water. This could effect our sailing programme.

I have been concerned at the river flow during the winter but I am encouraged that Bryan Clements managed to sail in early March.

Mid-Thames Trophy

Desborough, Littleton, Staines and Laleham sailing clubs compete annually for the Mid-Thames Trophy; we have been invited to join this event.

Members may remember that we used to sail with Sou'West SC until they lost their clubhouse on Platts Eyot and joined Desborough SC.

The Mid-Thames Trophy is an inter-club event (NOT team racing) for fun and and a social get together with the trophy going to the winning club; at least 10 boats per club may enter with the leading 3 to 5 boats from each club counting.

Clubs take turns to host the event and this year Desborough have scheduled it for Sunday 6 May (the May Bank Holiday weekend).

It should make an enjoyable addition to our programme and I hope we can field a good size team.

Damage done by the Gales on 29-30 October 2000 - Richard Cannon

The extremely strong winds and heavy rain had a big effect on the club but fortunately there wasn't any major damage. One of Grahams Thompson's Graduates in the trailer park was picked up and dumped upside down. Rodger Wheelers had used a 15 inch long steel stake to anchor his enterprise but this had been pulled out and slung from being opposite the mast to being round the bow.

The large large willow tree by the bosun store was badly damaged; fortunately Thames Water dealt with it. Even the iron pole supporting the telephone cables was snapped.

The boats with berths where there was a clearing in the trees and bushes behind them were the ones that were moved by the wind



Flood Effects 7 Nov 2000 - Richard Cannon

Aquarius Sailing Club didn't escape the effects of the floods that hit the country. As there was over 300mm of water over the bank (reaching the second step up to the Clubhouse) Richard Cannon walked up to checked the boat berths. He had to abort the first attempt because the water was over the top of his wellingtons and it was too cold.

After going home to change into dry suit and life jacket he succeeded, although at first it was very unnerving walking through the fast flowing water, up to his knees, without being able see what you were walking on.

So far the boats seem to be surviving. The Hawker safety boat, on the path just outside the Club, was floating above it's launch trolley. A couple of boats weren't tied down so tethers were made to the boats in front. The most upstream cruiser looked as it was well overlapping the bank.

During the couple of hours he was at the Club the water had risen another 25mm. Frank Trotman went to look at his boat in the evening and the water had risen a further 300mm and reached the top of his legs. Rivermead Island at Sunbury was fully covered by the river.

Thames Water have had the willow tree branch broken in the storms last week removed; the tree looks a lot smaller now.

Water, water everywhere but not a chance to sail...

Having fought our way along the top fence that separates the Sunnyside reservoir from the club in total darkness Keith Hatton and I arrived on the clubhouse patio. The river was up two steps and the lockers along the waterfront were well awash. The plan had been to get to the boats further up the bank but given the stream was running at something approaching twelve knots and it was pitch black we decided that discretion was the better part of valour besides, we reasoned, the boats are insured! The next morning Richard called. Time to get our dinghies, strimmer and the mower out of harms way. An hour later in wet suit and life jacket I was up to my knees with Richard and Lawrie in a still quite fast flowing River Thames. The problem was knowing where the 'edge' was. First Richard's dinghy was dragged up. Then Lawrie's, then Keith's, and finally Over Easy was pulled and floated down to the ramp and up into the trailer park. Next up was HMS Styrofoam. We drew the line at the rescue boat 'Aquarius'. She was a bit too heavy for three, but we beached her on the lower ramp so that when the level eventually falls she will be ready to be brought up outside the clubhouse and 'winterised'.

Just as we finished Bob Sumner turned up. Richard wound him up about turning up on the following Sunday for his race officer duty. Just for a moment Bob looked absolutely dumbfounded, either because he'd forgotten that he had RO duty or he was thinking why would anybody want to sail in this? We last saw him wading up to 'Waterman' with the river slopping over the tops of his 'shorty' welly boots.

Having once lived on the river I've seen it in many conditions but I have to admit I've rarely seen it that swollen and flowing so fast. I was a lot happier knowing Over Easy was out of it. While we were along the bank we checked on the other boats and were happy to see Rodger's advice in the last news letter had been taken and that most of the other boats were securely tied down. Richard, as always, had his trusty camera with him so I'm hoping, for those of you that didn't get to see the flooding close up, we may be able to publish a picture or two.

Mike (Over Easy) Baker



The Thames Navigation Management - Richard Cannon

The River Thames has a very long history of navigation being managed, much of it regulated by ancient acts of parliament. In more recent times there was the Thames Conservancy Agency, Thames Water, the National River Authority (NRA) and since 1996 the Environment Agency (EA) which merged several units from the Department of the Environment

There may now be another change as there is a body of opinion that feels that British Waterways (BW), who manage many canals and rivers should also manage the Thames. After investigation, eighteen months ago a decision was made to keep the status quo.

Last year a select committee of the House of Commons was charged to look at inland navigation and there is an opportunity for users to make their views known. The Inland Waterways Panel of the RYA are now suggesting to the RYA Council that they recommend changing the management of the Thames Navigation to British Waterways.

This may or may not be the right decision and the Thames Valley Region of the RYA believe personal members and member clubs should be able to make their views known.

Accordingly 7 members of the committee attended a large emergency meeting, held at the Thames Motor Yacht Club, on 20 February 2001 to hear presentations by The EA and BW. A very interesting meeting and it is unusually to have two large organisations doing this; they both went out of their way to praise their opponent and avoid any criticism.

The BW were represented by their Chief Executive Dr David Fletcher assisted by Paul Wagstaff; he made no promises but concentrated on their achievements with the 500 miles of rivers and 1500 miles of canals they manage, and the success at raising funds to develop them. There was also a video that had been produced for their AGM.

The EA were represented by their Chief Executive Baroness Young assisted by Board Member Professor Mc Glade and their Recreation Manager Eileen McIveer. The Baroness stressed that they were committed to developing the Thames for recreation and admitted they had warts which needed improving. She had only been in the job for under four months which was a disadvantage.

I had gone to the meeting thinking that it would be better keeping with devil you know. Generally The EA are considered to have done a good job at managing the Thames in an integrated manner but British Waterways gave the better presentation and it was generally agreed that British Waterways had done a super job at revitalising and developing the canals, and I was ready to change my mind.

We had a question and answer session, with views from the floor. We then had a response from Dr Mark Warner, a RYA Council member, who previously voted for the status quo but now argued passionately for British Waterways. BUT then Michael Shefras, the chairman and a public member of some EA committees, argued equally passionately for remaining with The EA.

We didn't fully believe either side; there was concern at splitting the Thames navigation from the other functions like flood control, and concern that BW would be too commercially oriented for much of the Thames development. I hadn't been converted. On a show of hands about 4-1 were in favour of remaining with The EA. The meeting had lasted three hours.

A new Laser Pico at Aquarius

This years sailing season sees the additional of a brand spanking new Laser Pico to the fleet of club dinghy's. This was acquired with a grant, from Millennium Festival Awards for All Programme and is aimed at our younger membership. It's a 3.5m Polyethylene dinghy which can be sailed in various modes. PN is 1258 single handed (126 Aquarius Club number). It's a family boat which inspires confidence in beginners. It has a spacious cockpit, high boom, is well built and exceptionally tough. The Pico is available to book in the normal way but Richard may require some proof of competence before she can be taken out and raced.

Mike (I t'll never replace a SigneT) Baker



The Annual Dinner & Beyond

AQSC's millennium year ended with the annual dinner on the night of Saturday 25th November. In similar style to the last few years this was held in the club house with private caterers brought in to prepare the meal. The club provided the wines and a very good raffle followed by a live band. The clubhouse was trimmed with sails and pennants and each table decorated with colour co-ordinated table clothes, serviettes, flowers and candles. The whole atmosphere was warm and intimate. Many thanks to all members of the sub committee who put a lot of work into this event and made it a thoroughly friendly and enjoyable evening. Unfortunately Lyn and I had to leave the dinner early. We had an extremely early taxi booked the following morning to get us to Heathrow for a holiday flight to Borneo. Why Borneo? probably the same reason that took us to the Island of Komodo to see the dragons and will probably sometime in the future take us to the Congo rain forest to see the mountain gorillas. This time it was Orang-Utans.

Mike (Over Easy) Baker

Murder Mystery Weekend (well evening really) - 24 February 2001

A newsletter or two ago I commented that Madeline was turning out to be a really good social secretary. Well, she did it again! If you'd ever wondered what it would be like to play 'Cluedo' for real then this was for you. The venue was the Sisswood House Hotel at Lower Beeding in Sussex. Originally built for a past director of Harrods the house, although having been extensively extended, retained much of its old world charm, including a smoky fire in the reception area that managed to set the fire alarms off just before we went to bed on Saturday night.

The whole idea was that, over a five course dinner on Saturday night, the guests had to determine who had committed a murder, the weapon used, and the motive. Four main characters were involved, played by actors, two men and two women. The circumstances and 'suspect' profiles were provided to each guest and between each dinner course the suspects played out, in the dining room, events leading up to the murder and dropped a series of clues as they went. At the end of the meal everybody had to guess 'who done it'. Some eighty guests sat down to dinner including twenty-two from Aquarius. The Aquarius crowd included the Rogers, Carpenters, Hattons, Bakers, Futchers, Brays, Cogswells, Mundons and Sumners. Most of the aforementioned had elected to stay over night. The swimming pool in the health club, and the hotel bar, for the less energetically inclined, were put to good use. At 7.30pm everybody sat down to dinner and mayhem duly commenced.

No ... I'm not going to tell you the story line or who did it, just in case Madeline decides to use something similar down at the clubhouse one evening. Colin and Christiana Cogswell, friends of Keith and Madeline, distinguished themselves by winning the 'Defective Detective' awarded for the most implausible solution to the murder. When we came down for breakfast the following morning we found the hotel had been taken over for a Brides Fair. Everything from stretch limo's, rings, dresses to sexy underwear was on show. A great weekend! Many thanks to Madeline and Keith for organising it ... I can't wait for Madeline's next idea! Base jumping off the Post Office Tower perhaps?

Mike (I survived Sisswood House) Baker

SWEEPSTAKES AT THE AQUARIUS - Janet Edwards

It was on a cold and frosty night that we arrived at the club to enjoy a night of betting and throwing large yellow fluffy dice. There were six races on the card with different horses taking part in each race. The betting all done, the odds decided the OK was given for the start of the first race. There was a strange water jump half way down the course which consisted of a small towel (from the bar !!) That was of course in case you fell in, the jump consisted of a white piece of board from I don't know where. Then on the other side of the jump was another small towel and yes you've guessed it, in case you fell in the other side. Now this was all very good but Honest Joe alias George and his side kick Madeline could only see half the race and so it was that it was left to the punters to make sure that no cheating took place after the dry water jump.

We all had a little flutter on our favourite horses. We had no knowledge of their previous form so we all had to make an educated guess as to which horse would run the course. Some of the names were perhaps more popular than others for example Fluzy, Jaguar, Black Beauty, Queen Mary, Lightning and Jolly Roger.

After the third race we all decided that it was time to take a break especially after all the hard work of deciding which horse, betting our 50p max. And then collecting our winnings. Our supper consisted of hot soup, French bread and cheeses, salads, cold meat and Richard's hot jacket potatoes. All of which went down a treat.

The evening continued with the last races, we all took it in turns at throwing these large yellow dice previously mentioned, the horses were duly moved up and down the course until they were thoroughly worn out, and so were we!. The event drew to a close at approx. 11.30. From my own point of view I enjoyed it and I believe that I can say from all who attended that in fact we all enjoyed the evening.

Thanks to all who made the evening possible.

It transpires that Richard did a Diana. He was relaxing after an exhausting day when his Psion alarm went off to remind him of the Sweepstakes evening in an hours time; he then had an inkling that he was to supply jacket potatoes for an event. A quick look at the Committee meeting minutes confirmed this was for the Sweepstakes so panic stations. Fortunately he had a suitable stock of potatoes and although time was short additional cooking at the club enabled them to be fully cooked.

Club Security

If members unlock the club entrance gates they must not be left unlocked unless it is for an event in the Club programme.

When a gate is left unlocked the club padlock MUST be locked to close the chain links; this allows a member to exit if the gate is locked by the Thames Water lock while a member is at the Club (a member has been trapped inside in the past).

When leaving the club lock both gates if in any doubt about some one else locking them.

CONDOLENCES

We were sorry to hear of the death of Eric Bridgewater's wife, Nan, and extend our deepest sympathy to him.

Social and Sailing Calendar to May

March			
24 Sat			Start of Season Party 8pm
April			
	am	pm	Officers
1	Spring 1	Spa 1	R Cannon, M Jerwood, P Carpenter
8	Spring 2	Sprint 1 & 2	Linda Tillman, R Hollamby, M Hollamby
15	Easter Egg Trophy, 4 races, best 3 to count		J Money, B Allan, A Allan
22	Spring 3	Spa 2	B Sumner, J Edward, M Futcher
28 Sat			
29	Spring 4	Sprint 3 & 4	M Baker, M Hatton, K Hatton
May			
6	Mid-Thames Inter Club Trophy at Desborough SC		
12 & 13	Club Open Weekend		
20	Spring 5	Spa 3	G Bray, J Bray, J Botterill
26 to 28	Away weekend to Bewl Water SC Regatta in Kent		

NOTE - Start of Season Party DATE CHANGE

Club Open Weekend 12-13 May

An early event in The Clubs 2001 calendar will be the 'Open Weekend' where we seek to increase membership. Club members might like to start thinking about friends, colleagues and or family that perhaps, in the past, have indicated that they would like a chance to go sailing. This is particularly aimed at youngsters. The open weekend is an ideal opportunity to give them that chance, at no charge. So please put the date in your diaries and get talking to potential members about getting afloat at Aquarius.

Mike (Get them afloat) Baker

Sailboat and Windsurf Show 3-4 March

This year the SigneT class was allocated a stand in the West Hall. That's the smaller, carpeted hall directly behind the main entrance. It's much more open plan in style and presented some interesting design problems. Keith Hatton's SigneT ST858 'The Saint' graced the stand. She had a new varnish job and a brand new suit of R&J sails. Yet another Aquarius based boat flying the flag !!!

Mike (Get your kids sticky fingers off the boat) Baker

New Year in Germany

Around early December time, over the last few years, Lyn and I have coached down to Germany for the Christmas markets. Cologne, Nuremberg, Trier all compete with one another for the best and most varied. This year we decided to try something a bit different and went down to the same area but for New Year. We stayed at a little hotel in the village of Nehren, just along the Mosselle river from the picturesque town of Cochem. The night we arrived there was snow on the ground, the Rhine castles were floodlit and the wheat beer and schnapps flowed. The hotel was very small but had a big heart and an exceptional chef! At midnight on New Years Eve, following an excellent meal, champagne was served along with a great fireworks display. Actually we had two 'new years' because of the one hour time difference (any excuse for a party!). New years day started 'a bit late', can't think why! but ended up with a cruise on the Rhine and a visit to an amazing mechanical toy and music museum. If you have ever considered an alternative way to spend a no hassle New Year I can definitely recommend you try Germany. (The company we went with was Travelsphere who have a pick-up in Kingston-upon-Thames).

Mike (Plum schnapps is best) Baker

Annual Club Fees (Polite Notice)

It's nearly that time of the year again folks! Joan will be sending out those A4 forms and inviting all you good people to renew your membership and mooring fees. The majority of members view this as an annual responsibility and take the appropriate action straight away ... and some don't. This means come August/September she can still be chasing down outstanding fees. Members are politely reminded that fees are due shortly after Joan's letters land on the mat and prompt attention to this not unexpected annual occurrence would be appreciated by your Management Committee.

Mike (Wonder what happened to my cheque book) Baker

FOR SALE

2 x Launch Trolley sand wheels - £15
 Rover 200 hatchback (old style) Tow Bar (inc. single point electrics) - £10
 Rover 400 estate Tow Bar (inc. single point electrics) - £10
 Talk to **Mike Baker** or phone **Over Easy** on 0208 393 5495
 Rover 200 hatchback (1992) Tow Bar (inc. single point electrics) - £10 - **Richard Cannon** 01932 786636

SigneT's for Sail (I mean Sale)

For anyone interested, and who wouldn't be ?, here is the latest SigneT dinghy availability list :-

ST141 Any reasonable offer considered. Needs some repairs to underside of hull.
 Tel. Harry Madison on 0208 422 7228
 ST370 (That's one up from Over Easy !) Free to a young sailor or 'offer' from an older person. Needs some woodwork, paint and varnish. Lying in the Aquarius pipe yard. Two suits of sails, Aluminium spars, Launch trolley.
 Tel: Graham East on 020 8942 8524 or talk to Mike Baker.
 ST372 (£320) Two suits of sails, Aluminium spars, Road trailer & launch trolley.
 Tel. Tony Smith on 01245 441201
 ST651 (£250) Stored for many years with fittings removed but available. Hull sound but requires paint and varnish. Deep sea rudder available but not fitted to stock. Wet suits also available.
 Tel. John Simkin on 01775 769407
 ST685 (£400) Recently restored and in good condition. Main, Jib and Aluminium spars. Road trailer and launch trolley.
 Tel. 01562 850240

Also for information the following is the SigneT class 2001 open programme :-

19-20 May	Colemere SC (Shropshire)
2-3 June	Paxton Lakes SC (Bedfordshire)
4-11 August	Brightlingsea (Essex)
25-27 August	Bewl Water (Kent)
23 September	Ferry Meadows (Bedfordshire)

I know that over the past few seasons many Aquarius club members have come along to these venues. If anybody would like more information on how to get to the above places/clubs just contact Richard Cannon, Keith Hatton or myself.

Mike (SigneT biased) Baker