



AQUARIUS S.C.

THE MAIN SHEET

Spring 2003 Edition

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Commodores Report

Where to start? that is the question! Start at the beginning; continue to the end, then stop ... where have I heard that before?

The first thing has to be to thank Rodger for all his work over the last five years. Rodger was an exceptional Commodore who brought to the job consummate management skills and an infectious enthusiasm for everything he undertook. When he took up the reins he told me that he thought I was going to be a hard act to follow. I must say that I feel the same way about him as I begin my second term as Commodore.

Rodger steps down leaving the club in good order. We have a new roof on the clubhouse and our finances are back to pre-safety boat engine levels. We have a good handle on the external politics surrounding Aquarius, including the Unitary Development proposals, issues surrounding the building of the upstream bridge and the ongoing saga of our lease. We have a programme of work laid out for early 2003 including structural and electrical improvements to the club, all of which Rodger instigated. So thanks Rodger, I'll try and keep things moving along.

One of the first things to be addressed this year was the growing need for a club Health & Safety plan. This came up at last years Sailboat Commodores Conference and all clubs were encouraged to get such a policy in place before it perhaps became a legal requirement. We now have such a document. It's currently in its final stages of approval by the Management Committee and when finished will be available for all club members to read.

Another issue requiring urgent attention is our falling active sailing membership, especially amongst our youngsters. Many of our existing junior members are now at College or University and have less time to sail. This directly affects the number of boats we can expect on the water for Sunday racing. Considering the number of boats we have at the club, the turn out on Sundays is disappointing to say the least. This is another reason for encouraging the younger element who wants to race, who want to get their handicaps down, who want to sail at other venues and win races. We all really need to get behind our Open Day this year with both advertising and encouraging our colleagues and friends to come down and try sailing.

The clubs social side is in very good hands this year. Diana Carpenter has taken over from Madeline and has already organised a couple of excellent events. Many thanks go to Madeline for all her work over the last couple of years and our best wishes to her and Keith for there impending move to Sussex. Our Annual Dinner in the clubhouse has proved a great success over the last few years and I'm pleased to say that this years dinner has already been arranged with 'Tasty Morsels', the catering company that we use.

On the domestic front and despite repeated warnings about properly laying up boats for the winter the early January floods obviously caught several members out. Rodger, Keith, George and I spent a very cold and soggy New Years Day morning wading around in the river at the club trying to secure several dinghies that were in serious danger of floating away. I noted that a number of weather covers were also well past their 'sell by' dates and doing little more than channeling rain water into the craft rather than keeping them dry.

In two days the river had risen such that it was lapping the transoms of the Lasers pulled up on the bank just beyond the reservoir overflow. Downstream of the car park ramp one of the cruisers sank and was dragged several yards downstream. Despite the depth of the flooding and the strength of the stream several members were seen wading up the towpath, on their own! and without buoyancy aids on! Now I understand that there is concern for craft during these sorts of river conditions but this behaviour is madness. The risk of being washed away is a very real one.

I'll try again ... before next winter go down to TAM Leisure on the Kingston Road at New Malden and buy a pair of screw in pickets. These are chrome steel, about two feet long with a third of that length formed like a 2" diameter corkscrew. At the other end is a large handhold or ring. Screw that fully into the ground either side of your dinghy adjacent to the side stays until only the top ring is showing. Secure a good length of rope to one of the pickets. With the free end take a turn around the mast stay, then up around the mast and down to the opposite side stay and finally down to the other picket. The dinghy now can't rise or roll. For complete peace of mind the dinghies painter should also be tied securely to the nearest tree.

This years sailing and social programme is about to go to the printers and you will soon be receiving from our Secretary Joan Bray, invitations to renew your club membership for 2003/4. Finally and before I stop, the start of season party is set for the night of 29 March, 7:30 for 8:00, and I look forward to welcoming you all there.

Mike (Commodore but still Over Easy) Baker

Very Windy Sunday 27Oct2002

Again the weather forecast for Sunday was for it to be very wet and windy and this time it was extremely windy although fairly dry. Around 9:00 a.m. Richard Cannon had a phone call from Rodger Wheeler asking for help with fixing boats that had moved. Rodger couldn't do his usual paddle across the river because it was too windy. There were quite large waves on the river with a lot of white horses and columns of spray.

Richard's son Martin joined in to help. It was very exhausting walking and working in the wind and life jackets were worn in case we were blown into the river. Several boats had moved and quite a few boat covers were in a bad state. Richard Thornhill's Graduate had moved the most and the trolley was only partly under the boat and somehow it had turned upside down!! Some stakes used to tie boats down had pulled out.

Richard tied the bow of his boat to the large pile of tyres it was resting on but when he returned to it the bow had lifted the tyres up and they had blown over so they were moved to rest on the front of the trolley.

The start hut was moving quite a lot and near it the wind speed was measured at gusting over 40 mph. There was no possibility of sailing.

Fortunately there didn't seem to be any real damage to any boats but now the windy season is upon us it is important that boats are very securely tied down and boat covers are in good condition and secure. Owners should come and regularly check their boats.



Martin Checking the Wind Speed at Over 40 mph

Thing's we need to know

Diana has asked me to ascertain (wow! I like that, word for the day!) how you guys would feel about the following ...

We are going to order some new club Polo Shirts, Sweat Shirts and Ties. All will have the AQSC logo embroidered on them. Please call Diana on (020 8393 8029) and let her know if you would be interested in principal in purchasing any of these articles. We are trying to get some idea of numbers.

Diana also has some tickets for the Ceremony of the Keys at The Tower of London on the evening of 19 July. They are free, first come first served. Contact Diana on the above number to reserve.

Diana (she has been busy) also needs to know how many people would like to go on the trip to Painshill Park near Cobham on 31 May. Again please use the above number to book places.

Better still, kill three bricks with one bird. Diana would love to hear from you.

Mike (Think I 'll go for a Tie) Baker



Richard Thornhill's Graduate



The Last Race Day of 2002

November 17 was the last date on the 2002 sailing programme. The day itself was far from ideal for sailing. It was very cold and the river, following all the recent rain, was running very fast. Racing was cancelled early on and thus the season finished pretty much as it had started. Those of us that that where at the club spent the afternoon doing some maintenance stuff and winterising our dinghies. Disappointing really but you can't argue with elements, that's a sure receipt for disaster.

Mike (Over Easy) Baker

Message from Joan Bray

I'm after your money again! Included in this packet is a renewal subscription form and I would be grateful if you could spend five minutes in filling out your correct address, telephone number, email address, and boat details in order to keep our records up to date and return it to me, plus of course your cheque.

An early response will save me a lot of time and being a non profit organisation, your subscriptions are vital to keep the club going.

On receipt of your cheques, I will send this year's programme to you which I think you will agree is a full and interesting one.

Meanwhile, I wish you a very happy and successful year.

Sailing Secretary Report 2002

The season started with some reasonable sailing conditions and we didn't lose any Sundays at the start due to excessive current. The second Sunday, 7 April, was particularly good with a 10 to 12 knot East wind, so we took the opportunity to hold the Long Distance Race for the Cundy Trophy; there was an excellent sail using Wilsons' ferry, just below Sunbury weir, as the turning line. This was probably as far upstream we have ever raced.

There was an excellent 3 days sailing at the Spring Holiday visit to Bewl with 10 to 12knt winds, although fewer members attended than usual; probably due to the bad weather forecast and the Jubilee celebrations. We also had good conditions for the Hampton Regatta and our own Regatta.

The Mid-Thames Trophy gave us another new experience sailing at Desborough Sailing Club a few miles upstream. Unfortunately the very light East wind was their worst direction and it was very difficult to get round the short course. Of the visitors we had the largest number of boats and came 2nd to the host club.

Another new venture for us was hosting a Signet Open Meeting at the Club. The weather was great for the sunbathing spectators but not so good for sailing with very light wind until the last race. In spite of this our visitors enjoyed themselves and thought highly of the club.

The weather was far from ideal for the Open days and we had fewer visitors than usual but the land sailing, with the Pico, at the Jubilee 'Picnic in the Park' (Busy Park) was much more successful. We held another open day for those who expressed an interest and it was much more productive than the first one.

From August there were very few good sailing days. Even the Signet events on large open water like Rutland Water had no wind nor did the August visit to Bewl. We were unable to sail for three of the last four Sundays; one due to gale force winds (over 40 knots) and two due to excessive current after prolonged rain.

A group of our youngsters have reached 18 with exams, work or college giving a life style change; this has reduced their sailing activity and had a big impact on the number of boats racing. The normal race entry was only about 4 to 6 boats per race, and the best was 10 boats at the Regatta. A total of 28 members helmed in at least one race.

Normally not more than one club boat has been out in a race and it is disappointing how little the Pico is used.

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 were 1st. Also Richard with Robert as crew won 11 of the 12 Signet races they entered over the year.

As usual all trophies, except the Broken Boom which is for the overall best Boat Handicap result, 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. Some results were very close and a tie break was needed on one 1st and two 2nd place results. On ranking for prizes there was a tie for 1st place and 3rd was only 3 points behind. Rodger was the only helm, apart from those in the result's table, who did enough races to qualify for any series.

There was a change to the format of the racing this year; the fun race was moved from being the last race to being the first race of the day. I don't know if it has been an improvement. We intend to try the format for another year unless the general feeling is to change back to having the fun race at the end.

We need more members to partake in more races to make the distribution prizes more interesting. I 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

2002 Prizes

The race series match those of last year 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 included in my result records. Charles Dennis has been awarded the Water Rat for 6 capsizes, no one else had more than 2 capsizes which indicates our lack of wind this year.

Michael Stevens receives the Young Helm Trophy; he has had one of the lowest Personal Handicaps though out the year.

A total of 81 races on 27 days, including 22 Fun races, were sailed during the year. Even though Graham Thompson was unfit for sailing for 4 Sundays with 63 races he still did more races than anyone else, and only missed 2 other Sundays. Bryan Clements was next highest with 48 races.

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.

Trophy Winners

SERIES	TROPHY	MEMBER, Number of races H = Helm, C = Crew
Autumn PH	Cruiser Cup	Bryan Clements, 33H + 15C = 48 races, rank 5
Sprint PH	Enterprise Cup	Charles Dennis, 34H + 0C = 34 races, rank 1
SPA PH	Saturday Trophy	Charles Dennis
Young Helm	Young Helmsman	Michael Stevens, 28H + 4C = 32 races
Spring PH	Handicap Class	Graham Thompson, 63H + 0C = 63 races, rank 1
Summer PH	Laser Cup	Pat Halling, 22H + 0C = 22 races, rank 4
Boat Handicap Result	Broken Boom	Graham Thompson
Long distance race	Cundy Trophy	Richard Cannon, 41H + 1C = 42 races, rank 3
Event	Water Rat	Charles Dennis 6 capsizes
No Other Prize		
Most races	Summer Afternoon	Roger Wheeler, 31H + 9C = 40 races
Most races Junior	Glass	Robert Britton, 9H + 5C = 14 races
Most Crewed	Glass	Barbara Allen, 0H, 13 = 13 crew races

Annual Dinner 23 November 2002

With some trepidation Diana Carpenter volunteered to take on the responsibility of organising the Annual Dinner at the Club because Madeline Hatton was expecting to be in middle of moving house at this time. Diana needn't have been concerned as her hard work ensured everything went very smoothly.

In the past the Annual Dinner has made a deficit, so to avoid increasing the ticket price two major economies were made; tape and CD music (using Peter Carpenter's equipment) replaced the band, and Janet Edwards managed to obtain plates and cutlery at a much lower cost than from the caterers, although this gave us the the task of cleaning it (mainly by Diana) and returning it.

In previous years we have limited the number to 38 but this year it was increased to 43 to avoid disappointing members; we manage to accommodate them comfortably.

Our caterers, Tasty Morsels, lived up to their name and prepared us delicious out of the ordinary food. Diane, Madeline, Mary Dennis and Linda Rowley and Linda Wheeler distributed the food to us yet manage to fit in their own meal.

Members seemed to enjoy not having a live band as we were in control the volume and more people stayed much longer than usual having a comfortable chat. Around 11:30 pm space was made for dancing , and the music style and volume changed until 1:30 am when the last members left.

The raffle, run by Janet, was another great success with eighteen prizes donated by members, and well over £100 was raised.

On Sunday morning members returned to the Club to clear up and by lunch time it was all spick and span. It was probably one of the best dinners we have had, and for the first time in years there was a surplus.

AQSC Annual Dinner Saturday 23 November

This year's dinner was attended by about 43 people, the largest number since we have held it at the Club. The clubhouse was decorated with sails, pennants, lights and balloons. The tables had a rich red theme, right in keeping with the season, and the whole effect was striking.

The evening got underway at 7:30pm with a pre-dinner drinks reception. At about 8:00pm Roger invited everybody to be seated and grace was pronounced by Keith. The first course included Pear & Parmesan salad with basil dressing or Creamed mushrooms and sweet red onions on toasted ciabatta. The main course included Navarin of Lamb, Breast of Chicken stuffed with mushrooms and bacon in filo pastry with white wine source accompanied by a selection of white and red wines. Desert was a choice of Caramelised Orange Tart or Layered Chocolate Terrine followed by coffee & mints. Our vegetarian contingent was also catered for.

Diane Carpenter masterminded this year's event for the first time making sure that everybody was served with their culinary preference. Dinner was again prepared, in our galley, by Sarah and Bridgett who together make up the 'Tasty Morsels' catering company; our galley it has to be said is pretty well equipped now days.

Dinner was professionally served by Mary, Charles, Diana, Peter, Madeline & Linda. Later, and over coffee, the raffle was held by Bob and Janet. The prizes for this were all donated by management committee members and all, without exception, were well worth winning.

Dinner ended at about 11'ish at which point virtually everybody took to the dance floor. Many were still dancing a couple of hours later. A huge thank you to Diana and her team for an outstanding annual club dinner. Hopefully we can prevail on her to do the whole thing again next year!

Mike (1 of 3 DJs) Baker

FOR SALE

a. Computer Desk. White tubular metal frame desk mounted on castor wheels. Three levels including pull-out/retractable keyboard shelf. Approximate size 30" x 22" with top shelf height of 33" £20

b. Wheels. Pair of launch trolley sand wheels (virtually unused) £15 the pair.

c. Bicycle Wheels. One pair 22" Sun Levanter Alloy Rims (no tyres) Made in the USA. Rear with 7 speed gear cone. Virtually brand new. £20 the pair.

All items can be brought to the club for viewing. **Mike (Over Easy) Baker** 020 8393 5495

Multifabs Survival Coverall Immersion Suit foul weather gear, small (less than 5'7" and 39" chest) excellent condition. Offers around £40 E-mail botterillschess@hotmail.com or phone John Botterill 020 8391 1079

Rover 200 Hatchback (1992) Tow Bar (inc. single point electrics) - £10 - E-mail richard@cannonr.me.uk or phone Richard Cannon 01932 786636

Laser 4.7 Mast and Sail, brand new £350 - Pat Hallings 020 8979 5707

Gull 277, Refurbished. £200.00 - Barry Jones 020 8255 1501

Trailer mudguards, pair of brand new Towsure 'Mini' wheel size, free to person able to drink 'yard of ale' - Andrew Davies E-mail nishikigoi@btinternet.com or phone 07050 269152

Laser 2.7 rig (i.e. lower mast and sail). Little used. Ideal

for youngster/beginners (or oldsters who haven't got the stamina to sit out in a blow any more!) £250 o.n.o. 020 8399 9266 or ncknowles@blueyonder.co.uk

1976 Roswell built Smokers Satisfaction. (Merlin Rocket) Good deck,hull,sails. ready to sail. needs minor work. Combo trailer & cover £500 no offers. Injury forces sale. John Graham 07973 814552

Graduate 2854 Good condition & good sails. 1981, new-est in club. White hull & green deck. Recently re-rigged. £600 ono, Rob Britton 07939 955082

Leisure 17 bilge keel cruiser, easy maintenance glass fibre, and outboard motor.

10' wooden dinghy, oars, sails, good condition. Offers to John Rhodes 020 8979 1664

Wanted

Laser condition immaterial, also cheap Optimist - Pat Hallings 020 8979 5707

Laser Tiller extension - Charles Dennis Mobile: 07984 921139, Phone home: 020 8224 1051, Phone work: 020 8891 0121 Extension 2785, Mobile: 07984 921139 (temporary). e-mail Charles.Dennis@mailhost.brunel.ac.uk

Murder Mystery Evening at Clubhouse

On October 12th Captain's Chaos & Calm hosted a murder mystery evening in the clubhouse.

Every person had a part to play. Each player had a script with questions, answers and clues to be used at the appropriate time. One player was the murderer.

The task for everybody was to determine who that was, using all the information that came to light throughout the evening. The trouble was that it soon became obvious that all the participants also had very strong motives for committing the homicide.

That's not to say that it was all taken very seriously, in fact quite the opposite was true. Some people really entered into the spirit of their characters, the result, and most of the accents, were hilarious. I ended up playing the part of a flamenco dancer and I've got two left feet!

A time out was called halfway through for Bob and Janet to serve up soup, jacket spuds, fillings and deserts.

Murder, mystery, booze and food, what more could you want? Oh yes, a result! Well, despite the microwave tripping out the lights and finding Roger the Commodore stretched out on the floor, the actual murdered turned out to be Keith Hatton, a shifty character if ever I met one!

One or two players voted him the most likely to have done the dastardly deed and were declared the winners. Many thanks to Bob and Janet for an excellent evening, a devious murder, and a great supper.

Mike (Over Easy) Baker

Valentines Dinner at Mr Wong

I think it was Diana who suggested that the Aquarius ladies would appreciate a 'romantic' dinner out, and it was Rodger who recommended the venue and got things organised. Now I know that Mr.Wong doesn't exactly sound as whimsical as say Charlie Chan's or Fu Manchu's but then they weren't noted for their cooking.

Mr. Wong is located in beautiful downtown Molesey but when Lyn & I arrived at midday on Sunday 16 February he must still have been in bed so we went to the pet shop! I had a very entertaining conversation with a parrot. I said hello and he said hello back. I really started getting the hang of this when I said goodbye and got a goodbye in return. At this point Lyn started feeling neglected and dragged me out of the place!

By the time we got back to the restaurant Mrs.Wong (well I assume it was Mrs.Wong) had opened up and Aquarius type people started arriving. Rodger ordered some oriental nibbles and non oriental wine and things started warming up. Several bottles of wine and lot of food later we decided that Mr.Wong, far from being inscrutable, definitely knew how to scramble his noodles and crisp up his ducks. My personal favourite was the seafood but I could tell that Madeline was really turned on by the orange sorbet.

We never did get to see Mr.Wong but Mrs and number one daughter looked after us very well. Many thanks to Rodger for organizing things; no doubt, prompted by the ladies, we shall do it again some time.

Mike (One Hung Low) Baker

Over Easy in the land of Pasty Factories & Treacle Mines

This year Lyn's birthday present from my daughter Abby was pretty original. Sam announced that she had made reservations for us at Rick Stein's restaurant at Padstow. Ah! Sam is short for Samantha, her second name, my choice and what I call her. Just thought I'd clear that up. Now, it's not that we were ungrateful but the thought of a ten hour round trip drive for dinner did not fill us with, shall I say joy!

However Abby assured us that she had also found a B&B close by. On arrival we checked into the Hendra farmhouse at St.Tudy and then went to find Padstow before retiring to the local for a bite to eat.

The next morning, after a huge breakfast, we set off to the Eden Project outside St.Austell. This is an amazing place dominated by its colossal biosphere's and well worth a visit. While there I was told that plans are afoot for an expansion which will include another biosphere and possibly a University!

We then moved on to Mevagissey for pasties and a pint. We walked off the pasties at the shipwreck museum at Charlestown. Square riggers in the dock and a host of stuff in the museum brought up from wrecks around the Cornish coast. Absolutely intriguing!

That evening we drove into Padstow and together with Abby and her boyfriend John, enjoyed a sumptuous dinner at this famous venue. In addition to the main restaurant Rick Stein also has a bistro and a cooks shop in the town.

Across from Padstow harbour is Rock. This is a big sailing area and was to have been a SigneT Nationals venue a few years ago. Unfortunately the class we were to have shared nationals with dropped out at the last minute and we had to cancel because we couldn't meet the minimum number requirements

The following day Abby and John had to return home. We drove up with them as far as The Cobweb Inn at Boscastle. After they left we headed for Jamaica Inn on Bodmin Moor and a couple of jars.

The next day we spent wandering around St.Ives, The Lizard and Falmouth. St.Ives is timeless, a bit more commercial every time I see it but it still manages to retain its old world charm. One of its greatest treasures is the Barbara Hepworth museum. This was the house and walled garden where she lived and worked during the 50's, 60's and early 70's. Many of her extraordinary sculptures are displayed in the garden. Her workshop is virtually as it was when she died in 1975. We finished the day with a Cornish cream tea at Falmouth.

The following morning we said goodbye to our host Christine and made our way back home. Cornwall is a beautiful county and well worth a few days to explore its charms.

Mike (Over Easy) Baker

Christmas - What does it mean to you ?

Season of goodwill? Rampant commercialism? A break from work? A chance to spend some quality time with friends and family? Endless expense? Well ... it's probably in there somewhere. Christmas, in the Christian Church annual festival, held on 25 December, is to celebrate the nativity, or birth of Christ. The origin of the celebration is unknown. Scholars believe that it is derived, in part, from rites held in the pre-Christian Germanic and Celtic peoples to celebrate the winter solstice. If you are a believer, then the story as related in the Holy Bible might be more the basis of your Christmas celebrations.

My earliest memories of Christmas were of a far simpler time. Since then Christmas has progressively become more and more sophisticated. That's not to say they are any less enjoyable just that expectations are higher. Pressure from advertising has a lot to do with this. At its most simplistic it's predictably aimed at the children, at its most sophisticated it's aimed at propounding the latest seasonal thinking to ensure we provide 'the perfect' Christmas.

This peer pressure is often couched in time saving and organisational benefits, aimed at make us look like the consummate parents and hosts. Christmas now is a curious amalgam of influences. The religious and charitable often forgotten. The Dickensian ideal, together with the wish for the increasingly rare 'white Christmas' and the commercial, in terms of food, drink, presents and decorations.

With all these positives one wonders therefore why stress levels are sky high at this time of the year. Just before Christmas I spent a day with Lyn shopping in London. Lyn wanted to see the Christmas windows, having once worked in window display at Yeager in Regents Street. Apart from Liberty's and to a certain extent Hamley's no one bothered with Christmas windows at all. Indeed many stores had already started their sales.

I have never come across so many ill tempered shop assistants who obviously didn't want to be selling anything. The only exception was a French sales girl in Debenhams who couldn't have been more helpful. Perhaps, in answer to this, the papers were full of Christmas breaks in far flung places and hotels. Let someone else take the strain, just pay and turn up for an instant Xmas. With some of these deals you even have the option of attending church on Christmas morning for a genuine Carol Concert. Remember those ? but of course that's optional, you don't have to go.

This year one of the national newspapers reported that just 3 of the top stores 960 greetings cards refer to birth of Jesus. The most popular cards featured Snowmen, Snowflakes, Candles, Puddings, Reindeer, Santa Claus and Teddy Bears. I think the Church has it's work cut out in future putting Christ back in Christmas !

Having said all that I do hope you had a wonderful Christmas, I know I did. I guess the old maxim that Christmas is what you make it, still holds good.

Mike (Over Easy) Baker

Fireworks that Really Work

The Kempton Park annual firework display just gets better year on year. This year, despite the weather, which left a lot to be desired, the evening, which commenced at Richards, went very well.

A whole crowd of us, including some visitors, walked up to Kempton having ditched the cars at Saxonbury Avenue. That was after Richard had gone back to release Linda Wheeler from his house, having inadvertently locked her in!

Richard had acquired tickets prior to the event so that when we arrived we didn't have to queue. The firework display, arranged by the local Rotary Association, started shortly after we arrived, and what a display! The whole thing lasted about twenty minutes and was co-ordinated to a mixture of classical and modern music. Even the rain, which had been chucking it down all evening, stopped for the show.

Fireworks have got very sophisticated. Ground, medium and high level and every colour and configuration you could think of. Some seem to have a new dense crimson powder like core that shimmered as it ignited. The concussion from some of the mortars could be felt even where we were standing. As the air bursts grew in intensity they seem to reach out to the audience in a crescendo of colour.

If you've never been to Kempton I strongly suggest you try it next year, as I said at the beginning, it just gets better. Bring the grandchildren, they'd love it.

We ended the evening back at Aquarius for a traditional fireworks supper, care of Linda, Janet and Diana. Tomato and chicken soups followed by bangers, chips and beans, cakes and coffee ... lovely jubbly!

Much thanks to Richard also for acquiring the reduced price tickets ahead of time and for letting us use his house as a jumping off point. Cheers mate!

Mike (Bangers are best) Baker

We're in the money - George Bray.

Twenty three braved the elements and the receding floods to enjoy the Aquarius version of " Who wants to be a Millionaire "on the last Saturday in January.

Chris Tarrant sent his apologies but Lynda Rowley proved to be an excellent substitute and kept the evening rolling along despite four unruly teams.

The questions , with four multiple choice answers, ranged from the dead simple to the very tricky and caused much "debate " within the teams and the options of " ask the audience " or " phone a friend "proved spectacularly wrong on several occasions.

The half time refreshments of soup and jacket potatoes, masterminded by Diana, were very welcome and revived our energies for the second half with the teams attempting to answer the million pound questions. Surprisingly this went to a playoff and winners, and also rans were all rewarded with chocolate truffles.

Lynda and Diana thanks for a super evening - roll on the next social!!

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

AQSC 2002 Annual General Meeting, Prize giving & End of Season Party

This years AGM was held in the clubhouse on Saturday 7 December.

The AGM's prime purpose is to elect club flag officers, management and social committee members for the next season. It also reviews the clubs financial position and any required changes in the clubs rules and bye-laws.

Following the review of the 2001 AGM minutes Roger presented the Commodores Report. In addition to summarising achievements during 2002 he used his report to thank everybody for their help and support over the last five years, as he was standing down as Commodore. Joan Garrett then presented the Treasurers Report which confirmed that the club is in relatively good financial shape.

The next item, the Election of Officers, was overseen by the Club President George Bray. In summary George remains as Club President. Nigel Knowles, my replacement, is Vice Commodore. Peter Carpenter and Eric Bridgewater continue as Rear Commodores looking after internal and external issues respectively. Joan Bray continues as club Secretary. Joan Garrett remains as Treasurer. Laurie Bridges is Boatswain, Bryan Clements is Harbourmaster. Richard remains as Sailing Secretary and Diana Carpenter takes over as Social Secretary. Mike Rogers becomes Bar Manager replacing Keith Hatton

The Management Committee is comprised of Charles Dennis, Barry Jones, John Neale, Graham Thompson, Richard Gloyn, Ron Munden and Mike Rogers. The Social Committee is comprised of Diana Carpenter, Richard Cannon, Mike Rogers, Roger and Linda Wheeler, Peter Carpenter, Linda Rowley, George and Joan Bray, Janet Edwards and Bob Sumner.

Next Graham Thompson presented his auditors report which confirmed that the club is in pretty good shape. In conclusion George invited Mike Baker to say a few words. Mike thanked Roger, on behalf of AQSC, for all his work over the last five years and presented him with an engraved beer tankard and Linda with a bouquet of flowers.

The AGM was followed by the annual prize giving. Now even if I could explain Richard's scoring regime and the resulting prize distribution, I wouldn't. This is totally the province of the Hon. Sailing Sec. and I shall defer to his own article on this subject. The prizes themselves were presented to the winners by Madeline Hatton. Following award of 'the pots' supper was served and the end of season party got underway. May I, on your behalf, thank George & Joan Bray and Joan Garrett for all their work in organising and catering for the evening.

Mike (Over Easy) Baker

Aquarius Web Site

The AQSC Web site and E-mail continue to be useful communication media. We now have our own domain name sailaquarius.org.uk and all committee posts have an E-mail address like sailing@sailaquarius.org.uk.

About 70% of our members have access to e-mail. If Members with e-mail are not receiving an occasional e-mail from me could they please let me have their e-mail address.

I would welcome any suggestions on improving the communication, marketing and presentation aspects of the web site.

Richard Cannon.

Aquarius at Richmond Theatre

The first club social event of 2003 was a visit to Richmond Theatres pantomime 'Peter Pan' on 16 January. This was organised by our new Social Secretary Diana Carpenter.

Peter Pan needs no explanation, being one of the countries best loved children's stories. It's classic pantomime material and was re-told by an excellent cast led by Robert Powell as Captain Hook and Bonnie Langford as Peter Pan. The production was supplemented with all the usual flying effects and an unexpected opportunity to hurl foam rubber 'rocks' at Hook and his gang.

Richmond, along with the likes of Wimbledon, are grand old Victorian theatres, still able to provide traditional live entertainment. Pantomime is a very English institution, often very difficult to explain to our colonial cousins across the pond. A visit to a live show is perhaps becoming a rarity in our high tech world but it remains a real pleasure. I personally hope that pantomime will be around for years to come!

Many thanks to Diana and Peter for organising a thoroughly enjoyable evening despite the fact that I managed to loose my ticket sometime over Christmas and had to do some fast talking on the night to gain admittance to the theatre !

Mike (Oh, yes it is !) Baker

Over Easy locked in The Tower of London.

My wife Lyn belongs to a Badminton Club which runs an annual programme of social events similar to Aquarius. I usually get to go along on these trips. The latest one on 16 November was a bit different.

First, we met a chap from 'The Original London Walks' and did the Jack the Ripper tour around the Aldgate and Whitechapel areas of the East End. Absolutely fascinating with tons of facts figures and suspects.

That lasted a couple of hours and then we went up to 'The Tower' to watch The Ceremony of the Keys. This is the longest, continuously running military ceremony in the world. It happens every evening at 10:00pm, 365 days a year. Ironically as a result the audience ends up being locked inside The Tower. They then have to be let out afterwards, which sort of defeats the object really, but there you go!

Our host was the Yeoman Gaoler. He's the Head Beefeater and responsible, amongst other things, for the smooth running of the nightly lock up. We were met at the West gate by a Yeoman Warder at 9:30pm (precisely) and led down to an area between traitors Gate and The Bloody Tower. There at 9:45 the Yeoman Gaoler marched down to collect his Grenadier Guard escort. Then back up the causeway gates to lock up.

On returning to the Bloody Tower gate the 'escort to the keys' are challenged by the sentry and the ceremony follows through to its conclusion. It concluded at 10:05pm when we were shown to the exit. We then had to be let out of the tower through the postern gates set in the main, locked, gates. At midnight no one can enter or leave The Tower of London without the password. I kid you not ! a password, which is changed every day. This sort of thing might seem a bit outmoded now days but it's a bit of English heritage and well worth seeing.

Late Addition: Thinking that the above might be an enjoyable AQSC social outing I mentioned it to Diana Carpenter. As a result I understand she is making the necessary enquiries with a view to including something similar on this year's social programme.

Mike (Over Easy) Baker

Social and Sailing Calendar to May

March	11:30 am	2:00 pm	3:30 pm	Officers and Notes
29 Sat				Start of Season Party 8 pm
30	Fun race	Spring race 1	Spa race 1	R Cannon, M Jerwood, P Carpenter
April				
6	Fun race	Spring race 2	Spa race 2	Linda Tillman, Barbara & Tony Allan
13	Fun race	Spring race 3	Spa race 3	John Money, John & Margaret Tomkins
20	Easter Egg Trophy , 4 races 3 to count			George & Joan Bray, Maggie Fitcher
26 Sat				Easter Bonnet Special Social 8pm
27	Fun race	Spring race 4	Sprint races 1 & 2	Mike Baker,Liz Archer, Nigel Knowles
May				
3 Sat	Mid-Thames Trophy at Hampton SC, Support Your Club			
4	Fun and Training Races for Newcomers			Rodger Wheeler, Linda Wheeler, Laurie Bridges
11	Fun race	Spring race 5	Spa race 4	Barbara & Tony Allan, John Botterill
17 Sat	Club Open Weekend			Richard Cannon, Pat Irvin, John Neale
18	Open Day, Training & Funday Racing			
24 Sat	Away Weekend at Bewl Water			
26 Mon				

The Sailing Program Richard Cannon

The Fun race will continue to be the first race in the morning. The Fun race schedule will be flexible and there may be more than one race. Quite often the wind has improved as the day has progress and sometimes the best wind has been after we have finished racing; It is hoped that having longer races in the after noon will give better sailing later in the day.

On Saturday 3rd May, the Bank Holiday weekend, the Mid-Thames Trophy inter club event will be held at Hampton SC; everyone is encouraged to enter. On Sunday 4th May there will be fun and training races for newcomers.

The Aquarius Open Days are 17 and 18 May; members are asked to bring a friend along with them.

On the Late Spring Holiday, 24-26 May and the Late Summer Holiday there will be visits to Bewl Water.

The Signet Class Owners Association have asked for another Signet Open Meeting; it will be combined with the Regatta on Saturday 28 June. The results for Club members sailing with the Signets will also count towards the Regatta.

Aquarius Open Weekend

Right you lot, heads up please ! I'M GIVING YOU PLENTY OF NOTICE. The Aquarius SC Open Weekend for 2003 will be held over the weekend of 18 & 19 May. In addition to media coverage, by mid April, there will be plenty of promotional handouts in the clubhouse and I would appreciate if you would ALL collect a few and get distributing in your area. Prime targets should be Libraries, Shops, Adult Education establishments, Schools and Sea Scout/Venture/Ranger Units. It doesn't end there ! During the 2003 season The Aquarius management committee would like EVERY MEMBER to bring at least one colleague, friend or relative to the club with the intention of introducing them to sailing and ultimately Aquarius SC membership. Not a lot to ask is it ?

Mike (Publicity Officer) Baker

Start of Season Party Saturday 29 March 7:30pm for 8pm

Come and join all your friends in the clubhouse and help get the 2003 season off to a flying start with good food and a real treat this year Pat Halling and friends will be providing the musical entertainment. This is not to be missed ! So switch off the TV, come down to the club and re-discover good old fashioned conversation and live entertainment.

Mike (The Commodore) Baker

Carrot and Coriander Soup

Linda Wheeler made this delicious soup for the AQSC 2002 End of Season Party and there was a request for the recipe to be made available on the web site. It is included in the newsletter for those who don't have web access.

50g (2 oz) butter or margerine
1 large onion peeled and chopped
450g (1Lb) carrots peeled and diced
900ml (1 ½ pints) chicken stock
1 teaspoon ground coriander
salt
freshly ground black pepper
2 tablespoons lemon juice
about 300ml (½ pint) milk

To garnish snipped chives or fresh coriander leaves

Melt the butter or margarine in a large saucepan. Add onion and carrots and fry gently for 10-15 minutes, stirring frequently but do not allow to brown.

Add the stock and bring to the boil.

Stir in the coriander, plenty of salt and pepper and the lemon juice, cover and simmer for about 30 minutes or until the carrots are tender.

Cool slightly, then blend in a blender or food processor until smooth.

Return the soup to a clean pan with enough milk to give the required consistency and bring back to the boil.

Taste and adjust the seasoning and serve hot sprinkled with snipped chives or fresh coriander leaves.

Serves 4-6