



AQUARIUS S.C.

# THE MAIN SHEET

*Autumn 2003 Edition*

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## Commodores Report

August is always a quiet month. Everybody is on holiday and we don't hold a Management Committee meeting in August for that same reason. However things still move on.

On the domestic front the bar refurbishment is now virtually complete and a new safe has been fitted. The old safe, which is in the clubroom, is available for members to use for their personal possessions while on the water. Several committee members have keys to this. The skylight above the galley sink has been removed and the roof made good. No more stained ceiling tiles with a bit of luck! Many thanks to Bryan and Richard for that.

Bryan has also been hard at work out on the patio. The old metal railings have been replaced with a new wooden balustrade and a new signal flag mast has appeared.

On the water the 'sunken' cruisers have been raised and removed by Tim Barfield.

On the social front I understand that the trip up to the Ceremony of the Keys at the Tower of London went well (see George's article). The visit to Paines Hill at Cobham was another success. Thanks to Diana Carpenter for organizing those events.

During the last quarter AQSC also hosted a SigneT Open within our own Regatta. This went very well and several of the visitors stayed on for the jazz night and barbecue. Many thanks to everybody who put in a tremendous amount of work to ensure the Regatta weekends success. More recently Bob and Janet's London fun night was well up to standard. It was as chaotic as ever and great fun.

My personal thanks to everybody who helped out on the 4 October work party at the club. We got a hell of a lot done and the club and its grounds are looking all the better for it.

Last week I attended an RYA meeting at Wraysbury SC to discuss falling recruitment into our sport. The RYA proposed a new approach to address this problem and after discussing it with the management committee I'll tell you all about it in the next newsletter.

As we ease toward the end of the season there are still a number of things to look forward to which are listed in Richard's 'Dates for your Diary' article. Two key items are the annual club dinner on 15 November, and the AGM, prize giving and end of season party on **SUNDAY 7 December (NOTE change in day to SUNDAY)**. The AGM is especially important in that club flag officers and management committee need electing and I need feedback on anything that you feel needs improvement at Aquarius. I look forward to seeing you all at both these events.

Well that's about it. Racing continues until mid November so I'll hopefully see some of you on the water. For those of you that have finished, or never went out, think back to what happened last winter and ensure that your boats are properly laid up and picketed. We don't particularly enjoy wading about in freezing flood water trying to stop people's boats floating off downstream!

**Mike (The Commodore) Baker**

## News of Members - Joan Bray

Welcome

We warmly welcome the following new members and wish them fair winds and a happy future with Aquarius.

Paul and Christine Salmon and their children Reilly and Piper We wish them all a very happy and fulfilling membership.

Best wishes to Keith and Madeline Hatton who have recently moved to Sussex

Last but not least, good to see Peter Carpenter and Janet Edwards back to full health again.

## Winter's Coming .... !

Right heads up people. That time of year is just around the corner.

I would like you to start thinking about how you will lay up your dinghies and wet berth boats for the winter. If you think it's a bit early please think back to last year and what happened. We had people wading up the bank to tie down boats that should have been properly picketed weeks earlier. We had wet berth boats up over the bank on the towpath. We had, and still have, craft with weather covers that channeled rain water into the hulls and very little else. Most still haven't been replaced. Ah well, there're your boats !

So act now ... get together everything you need to lay up your craft and then give yourself time to go down to the club and ensure that your boat will see out the winter in style. One last thought for non wet berth boats, don't forget to take the bung out! you'd be amazed how many people forget !

**Mike (Over Easy) Baker**

## The Tall Ships at Rouen

Whilst you were all enjoying the Regatta weekend I was in France.

Every four years the Tall Ships motor along the Seine to the Port of Rouen. It was a spectacular sight. 17 ships dressed over all. The weather was glorious and the quays were packed with people. Bands played and there were plenty of water-side cafes selling fresh fish dishes and of course wine!

You could board any one of the ships but I chose the Russian MIR which is the largest 100 metres long. It was quite awesome and it makes one realise how small our boats are. The cadets look so young but they all enjoyed speaking English. In the evening they looked stunning too with all their lights on but of course the only way to see them is under sail at sea.

**Joan the gardener Garrett.**



The Massive Mir



The Grand Turk

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## A weekend cruising in Chichester harbour - Graham Thompson

My largest boat is a Shipmate Senior which I bought in 2001 after a detailed selection process, the criteria being:

- Must be suitable for single handed launching, sailing and recovery
- Must be a trailer sailer, generally stored on its trailer
- Must have a centreboard so that it can be beached or readily got underway if it runs aground
- Must have a toilet and cooker
- Must be dinghy-sized to permit ditch crawling
- Must have at least two berths.

Boats which made the short-list included the West Wight Potter, Leisure 17, Sea King and Westerly Nomad.

On the long weekend of 12-14th July I led a meeting of Shipmates in Chichester harbour, the annual event having been switched from Poole to Chichester.

Seven boats and ten members attended. Although the chart indicates vast expanses of mud at low tide at least 10 miles of navigable channel remain and given the dinghy-like nature of the boat we were able to sail for 10 hours at a stretch, with the occasional picking up of a vacant mooring to brew some tea, make a sandwich or take a nap.

The highlight was an evening meal outside the Bosham Sailing Club against the backdrop of the sun setting over the boats moored in the Bosham Channel, all members having gathered to meet Tony Patrick, who was half way through his circumnavigation of England in his Shipmate 'Rainbow'

### Recommendations arising from the weekend:

Wilson's Boatyard on Hayling Island (023 9246 4869) offer a wide and gently sloping slipway usable at high tide +/- 3 hours, showers and toilets, all for the reasonable fee of £15 for launch, parking for car and trailer, and subsequent recovery.

Reported by two participants, 2 hours free use of a non-drying pontoon at Emsworth, giving sufficient time to visit this pretty town for some shopping and a pub lunch.

Overnighting at Bosham quay, again a very pretty location, costs only £2-70 and the adjacent sailing club offer a bar, restaurant and toilets.

Ready access to the Solent and sheltered sea sailing - the two who reported on Emsworth popped off to Portsmouth, 9 miles distant, for an overnight visit to a friend.

Attack Dell Quay on a rising tide and don't get stuck on the mud as I did - I managed to push off before the falling water stranded me for 7 hours.

The switch from Poole to Chichester proved a good decision and a return visit will be recommended for 2004.

## The 2003 SigneT Nationals

After a three year break this years SigneT Class Nationals was held back at Ullswater Yacht Club in Cumbria. To say that everybody was pleased about this would be an understatement. Ullswater is probably the most popular venue of recent times. U.Y.C. is located on the eastern side of the lake just south of Pooley Bridge. Over the years the clubhouse has steadily been improved internally, but externally it remains very much as I first remember it.

Back then, many of us camped behind the club. It was convenient, companionable and cheap! But nowadays many of us hire cottages in the area for the duration. After last years very wet Nationals at Rutland Water Lyn swore she would never camp again. I was not about to push my luck so we re-hired the barn conversion we had used at the last Ullswater meet and shared it this year with Keith and Madeline Hatton.

We arrived on Saturday afternoon and went straight to the club to drop off ST369. Many other crews had arrived and the water front was crowded with SigneTs in various stages of rigging. Over Easy went together like clockwork and the loading of her new red spinnaker finished her preparation. Lyn and I then drifted into the bar to catch up with some old friends at the club. As soon as Keith and Madeline's dinghy, ST858, was also rigged we all drove up to the farm to check into our cottage and decide which pub to go to for dinner.

Sunday was a fairly leisurely day with just one practice race, late in the morning, to worry about. When we arrived at the club the last few SigneTs where rigging and everybody was staring at the sky and talking weather. If you've ever been to Cumbria you'll know that it has its own weather logic and if you don't like what you're seeing, stick around, it'll change within five minutes. Unfortunately, this year, hot was to be the order of the week with precious little wind to talk of. After a bit of a chat it was decided that Madeline would helm 'Over Easy' with myself as crew and a Paxton Lakes helm called Ben would helm 'The Saint' crewed by Keith. Why didn't K&M sail together I hear you ask? Well .... You'll have to ask them sometime! This year, and just to confuse the issue, U.Y.C. had introduced three new marks Thwaite, Lodge and Bay which the race officer immediately put into use. Madeline took one look at my nice red spinnaker and decided not to use it. I think she was so used to Keith's blue one that the sight of all that red fazed her. Nevertheless we scored a 5th place, so not too bad. The race was won by Richard Cannon in ST368, with Roy Melsom 2nd in ST761 and Joyce Cowern 3rd in ST907.

Sunday night passed pleasantly in the Brackenrigg Inn at Watmillock overlooking the lake.

On Monday morning eighteen SigneTs had registered for the Nationals. The day started with the official race briefing at 10:00ish followed by a postponed Race 1 which eventually got underway at 11:30ish. It was raced around the aforementioned cans in pretty light airs, but this time I did get to play with the new spinnaker and we came 4th. The race was won by Richard Cannon in ST368, with Paul Nicholson in ST530 2nd and Tim Wilde in ST847 was 3rd.

On Monday afternoon a few people went to see our most recent class builder's facilities at Bowness-on-Windermere. To get there we opted to drive over the Kirkstone Pass which is always pretty spectacular. I've written about Fyne Boats before so I won't bore you but needless to say we had a great afternoon with Hugh, one of the owners. Afterwards we headed back to U.Y.C. for a combined cheese and wine bash in the clubhouse with the Tempest fleet, also at Ullswater for their National's. It was a very social affair and enabled us to renew acquaintances with many of the Tempest crews that we have sailed with before at Ullswater. I seem to remember that far more wine (and beer) was drunk than cheese eaten!

Tuesday had Race 2 scheduled for 10:30am and Race 3 at 1:30pm. Both races were raced around similar shaped but longer courses which took in the marks at Brunskill, Waterside, Lodge and. We didn't have such a good day on Tuesday and only scored

a 9th and 8th respectively. Race 2 was won by Roy Melsom in ST761, Paul Nicholson in ST530 was 2nd and Tim Wilde in ST847 was 3rd. Race 3 was won by Paul Nicholson in ST530, Richard Cannon in ST368 was 2nd and Tim Wilde in ST847 was 3rd. On Tuesday evening we had an excellent meal at the Queens Head just outside Pooley Bridge and then went on to the SigneT quiz night which was held in U.Y.C for the combined fleets.

Wednesday was a lay day but the SigneT fleet was invited to participate in the Tempest class 'Round the Island' race at 1:00pm. This is a long distance job taking in the whole length of the lake ... not for the faint hearted and spinnakers are virtually mandatory if you want to get back at a Christian hour. Keith had to drive down to Chorley on business but got back in time to participate. The girls elected for a bout of retail therapy so Roy Melsom and I took them back to Bowness. We started at the Steam Boat Museum and then drifted into town. Several clothes shops later we drove around to Hawkshead for more of the same. Eventually we ended up in Ambleside for one last thrash and then back over the Kirkstone to Ullswater. On the way we passed Keith out on the lake returning from the 'Islands' at the Glenridding end of the lake. He had a long way to go! On Wednesday evening a combined BBQ, again with the Tempest fleet, was held on the lawn in front of the clubhouse. Even more falling down water was consumed this time as both fleets really got into the spirit of the week. That's my excuse and I'm sticking to it! Just after the Trout starter was served Keith sailed in, he'd finally made it. Gammon, sausage, salad and gateau completed an excellent BBQ.

Thursday had Race 4 scheduled for 10:30am and the Crew Invitation race at 1:30pm.

We scored a 7th in Race 4. It was won by Paul Nicholson in ST530, Roy Melsom was 2nd in ST761 and John Miller was 3rd in FW643 (I should explain that John's Fleetwind is the last of several that used to sail with the SigneT's. He now sails with us and we count him as a SigneT. In actual terms SigneT and Fleetwind PYS numbers are so similar as to not worry about). The Crews race is mainly for the crews who do not normally helm a dinghy. Madeline crewed for me and even popped the spinnaker at one point. Short of the line we waited for the last of the youngsters to go across. Well you can't have enthusiastic pre teens coming last, can you? On Thursday evening the SigneT Class Owners Association AGM was held in the clubhouse. You don't want to hear about that but it follows the usual format of reports and elections. Richard Cannon's financial report is always worthy of note, mainly because he's the only one who understands it ! No, I jest, but it's a bit like the racing results at Aquarius. Does anyone else really understand how the results turn out the way that they do?

Friday had Race 5 scheduled for 10:30am and the Single Handed race at 1:30pm.

Another triangular course and we managed a 5th. It was won by Richard Cannon in ST386, Paul Nicholson was 2nd in ST530 and Roy Melsom was 3rd in ST761. Madeline didn't fancy the single handed race so I did it. Ironically the wind got up and we had the best sail of the week. John Pratt came 1st in ST872, Roy Melsom came 2nd in ST761 and Joyce Cowern came 3rd in ST907. I came 5th. At 7:30pm on Friday night the National's prize giving was held in the clubhouse followed by a disco for the youngsters. The overall winner and 2003 National Champion with 6 points, was Paul Nicholson in ST530. 2nd with 8 points was Richard Cannon in ST368. 3rd with 14 points was Roy Melsom in ST761. Madeline and I came 8th with 24 points.

On Saturday morning we checked out of our accommodation and went down to the club to pack up the dinghies. U.Y.C's family week, combined with the Miracle fleets Nationals, was getting underway. It was chaos on the waterfront. After a spot of brunch Lyn and I started south while Keith and Madeline made for Warrington to visit with relatives. The venue for the 2004 SigneT Nationals is rumored to be Chichester Y.C. Should be good!

**Mike (Over Easy) Baker**

## AQSC Regatta, SigneT Open, Jazz Night & Barbecue - 28-29 June 2003

Wow! What a thoroughly enjoyable weekend. It had all the right ingredients, hot weather, 'enough' wind, good sailing, food and jazz. On Saturday we were joined by four visitors SigneT's and a host of their camp followers. Aquarius supplied some crews and Rodger and Linda Wheeler got the event underway promptly at 11:30am. The first two races were graced with an adequate amount of wind. By the third race the wind had dropped and enthusiasm to go out again was waning.

Thanks to Linda for preparing a great lunch and to Rodger for ensuring the day ran like clockwork. I think at the end of the day we had two Aquarius SigneTs (STs 368 & 369) in the top three. After the prize-giving most of the visitors left and there was a bit of rush to get the clubhouse cleaned up for the evening.

At 7:30pm the jazz band turned up closely followed by Ron and Andrea, Mike and Maggie & Rodger and Linda laden down with burgers, sausages, booze, crisps and bread rolls. Ron fired up the barbecue and things got underway. I'm not sure who was responsible for the 'Pimms' but Maggie, Pat and Joan may have had a hand in it (not literally). One thing for sure it certainly sold well! The barbecue, served on the water front, was a great success and the bar did brisk business all night. I think I finally left at 1:00am'ish, people just seemed happy to sit and drink and chat.

Sunday proved to be the better sailing day. Three races were run by Charles and Mary Dennis. As the very good East wind was ideal for going upstream the 3rd race also incorporated the 'Cundy' long distance race going up nearly to Sunbury Lock. Laurie Bridges won the regatta cup and the Cundy Trophy, and one of our new members, Liz Archer, won both the Novice and Ladies Cups. The afternoon ended with an impromptu race between two teams on a pair of stripped down Lasers. That was followed by both teams on one Laser which inevitably ended up with everybody in the river.

The Sunday Regatta tea is a tradition at Aquarius and this years was a triumph. Sandwiches, cakes, strawberries and cream, lovely Jubbly ! Huge thanks to Joan & George for picking the strawberries earlier in the day and to all the ladies who helped prepared the tea and sandwiches.

A lot of people worked very hard to help make the weekend a success and I do hope that everybody who came to the club over the weekend enjoyed themselves. Those who couldn't make it, well you don't know what you missed, but there's always next year !

**Mike (Over Easy) Baker**



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## What Goes Around, Comes Around

Everybody has probably heard of the above saying. I've have had some experience of this but never more so than when our youngest followed his elder sister, bought a place of his own and moved out. Suddenly it was Lyn and I again just as it had been twenty plus years ago. The house went strangely quiet and the washing diminished dramatically. Now there's always milk in the fridge and food in the freezer. There's always hot water and never any trouble getting into the bathroom. None of my tools go astray, or worse, turn up ruined. Lyn's clothes and makeup don't go missing. I tell you its weird! Getting use to being a couple again is interesting. I guess it helps that we both have hobbies. Lyn still works part time and, second time around, has gone back to display work.

Of course there was a price, isn't there always. In return for our 'freedom', in Abby's case, it was refurbish a block wood floor, tile a bathroom, lay a laminate floor, build endless bookcases and install a kitchen ring main. In Noel's case it was a lot of decorating, electrics and flooring. Not a bad exchange I suppose. It was fun to watch their growing pride of ownership as their respective homes came together. For us, and after fixing up three houses of our own, helping the kids with theirs was definitely a case what goes around, comes around.

Then why do I miss the loud music? Items dropped and left all over the house and waking up to the smell of last night's, post pub, kebabs or curry.

**Mike (Over Easy) Baker**



## Everything Comes to Those Who Wait

How long would you consider you need to wait for an agreed moving date once a house move chain is established? Two or three months, four at the most? How about eighteen? That's how long it took Keith and Madeline Hatton to move from Ham, outside Kingston upon Thames, to Storrington in West Sussex.

The problem seemed to be that the first time buyers in the chain kept dropping out. Basic checks, like have these people got an agreed mortgage, or mortgage offer, were not done and this caused catastrophic problems when the chain tried to move the process forward. I suppose one might have assumed that the estate agents involved would have carried out such checks but apparently not!

Anyway things firmed up in the weeks before the SigneT Nationals in early August and K&M knew that they would be coming back straight into the move. In addition to moving 'the house' contents Keith's business also had to be moved. This involved the clearance of the large work shop behind their house at Ham, no small undertaking considering the amount of tools and materials in it. I think we moved two half-ton truck loads of wood out just for starters.

The movers arrived on the prior Saturday and started packing things into boxes. On Monday 18th August they came back and things got underway. While the guys loaded the removal van K&M's sons, Paul and Anthony, loaded another truck borrowed from Anthony's place of work. Keith and I

loaded our estate cars and a trailer borrowed from Nigel at Aquarius. Madeline alternated between making tea and coffee, Hoovering and looking like she didn't really want to go. Eventually everything found its way onto the transport and we collapsed onto the lounge floor to await the phone call from the Solicitor's which would confirm that monies had changed hands and that K&M could hit the road to their new home.

We arrived in Storrington about 2:30pm having diverted via Epsom to pick up Lyn on the way. The movers were already offloading and after a quick look around we pitched in too. Crates quickly piled up in every room in the house. Vast amounts of tools vanished into sheds and the garage while tea started appearing out of the kitchen (always a good sign that!). After the movers left, demolishing part of the front garden wall in the process, some friends, who had already moved down to the area, arrived with lunch. Well needless to say we downed tools and tucked in. Well you can't look a gift chicken leg in the mouth can you?

Since then we have been down to Storrington a couple of times and K&M are now well settled into 'Pinecroft' and beginning to exploring their new surroundings. Keith is also now working on establishing his business in the area. They still have lots to do but they are finally in, up and running. Good luck to them both in their new home.

**Mike (Mr. Move-it) Baker**

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### Working Party at Aquarius on 4 October 2003

I have to say that I was highly gratified by the number of people who gave up their Saturday to help on this working party.

An incredible amount of work was achieved. Nearly the whole exterior of the club house was painted by Brian Clements, Jo Courtney, John Neale, Graham Thompson and Pat Halling.

The walk ways from the car park gates to the Bosun's store were weeded and white lining renewed where necessary by Mike Rogers, Gordon Courtney and John Neale. New ring main cables were laid ready for the installation of the new consumer unit by Nigel Knowles. Several trees were lopped or trimmed by Pat Irvine, Laurie Bridges and Nigel Knowles. John Tompkins and Eric Bridgewater undertook a lot of general trimming and clearing around the club while Pete Carpenter, David Jennings and Richard Cannon undertook a whole range of general work.

Bryan satisfied his pyrotechnic urges by burning everything that he could lay his hands on (well almost!). Charles Dennis pressure washed a whole range of things including the club house exterior, a couple of the larger wet berth boats and the water front walkways.

Last, and by no means least, Diana Carpenter slaved away in the galley and produced a great lunch of Chilli con carni and/or Chicken and Mushroom casserole, with baked potatoes and French bread which really hit the spot judging by the number of folks that went back for seconds.

Great job guys, thank you all very much.

**Mike Baker**



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### Stop Press News

The 2004 Dinghy Show will be held on March 6 and 7 at Alexander Palace, and yes, it is 'the dinghy show' no wind-surfers next year. It may also be the last show at Ally Pally as the RYA's current four year contract with them expires in 2004. Alternatives may be Earl's Court, Olympia, Docklands and even (God forbid, the NEC at Birmingham). Hopefully a fresh contract can be agreed with the Alexander Palace management team but ... time will tell. Put it in your diary, it's well worth a visit!

**Mike (with Publicity Officer hat on) Baker**

## Bob and Janet's London Fun Night

Captain's calm and chaos's latest extravaganza was held in the club house on Saturday 11 October. No particular reason for mentioning the date other than to say if you missed it, hard luck.

It was their best yet. The whole thing was based on everybody's knowledge of our capital city (or lack of it in some cases). Cockney slang, questions about things and places, past and present, all came into play.

Supper consisted of a traditional London supper of pie, mash and (mushy peas?) followed by sponge and custard. This proved very popular and vanished as soon as it was served.

The quiz finished with a dinghy race in the clubhouse. Toy boats on a magnetic board were moved by numbers and or answers to questions on, yes, you guessed it, London.

The evening flashed by and Bob's incomparable scoring techniques ensured a nail biter finish.

A great deal of thanks is due to Janet and Bob for a excellent evening. An awful lot of work goes into something like this to ensure that it runs like clockwork and appears effortless. Nothing could however be further from the truth and if you doubt that just try it sometime.

Thanks guys it was great!

**Mike (Over Easy) Baker**

## On the Local Government Front

Amongst other things your Management Committee keeps abreast of local government planning applications. I recently wrote to Surrey County Council re some minor variation of details regarding restoration of the Molesey reservoirs at Hurst Park, East Molesey.

Ideally, and as part of the restoration work currently underway, we would have liked a reduction in the wall height to improve the air flow across the river and an assurance that no 'high' trees would be planted along the top of the bund, impeding air flow across the river.

In the event the SCC planning authority approved the minor variation to details for restoration pursuant to condition 1 of the planning permission Ref. EL97/1445 (Available to read at <http://www.richmond.gov.uk/depts/env/envplanning/policy/udp1.htm>) The following informatives were also added to the authority :-

1. All conditions under planning permission EL97/1445 continue to apply.

2. Under the terms of the Water Resources Act 1991 and the Land Drainage Byelaws 1981, the prior written consent of the Environment Agency is required for any proposed works or structures in, under, over or within 8 metres of the Thames main river.

AQSC's Management Committee will continue to monitor the situation across the river from us and take whatever action considered appropriate to protect the clubs interests.

**Mike (The Commodore) Baker**

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## Impossible Dream - Richard Cannon

I don't go to big boat shows as normally there isn't much there that interests me; I don't go sailing in big boats because I am very prone to sea sickness.

This year I had a free ticket to the Southampton Boat show and went with Frank Rainsborough, ex commodore of Queen Mary Sailing Club. What made it very worth while and interesting was that Frank had an invitation to the naming ceremony of a 60 ft catamaran the 'Impossible Dream' at the Royal Southampton Yacht Club.

Ten years ago Mike Browne was a top athlete but then his world fell apart after breaking his back and being paralysed in a ski accident.

He lived at Ashford (Middlesex) and was introduced to 2.4 metre sailing at Queen Mary Sailing Club. The 2.4 metre is a scaled down version of a 12 metre racing yacht equipped for sailing by disabled people.

Within a couple of years Mike became one of the best 2.4 metre helms in the country and sailed for Britain in the Sydney paralympics. Three years ago he had the impossible dream of sailing single handed around the world.

He found designer Nic Bailey who didn't think it was impossible and came up with even more outrageous suggestions. The result was the 'Impossible Dream' designed to be sailed single handed by a person in a wheel chair.

Everything is powered and remote controlled. A person in a wheel chair can board, unaided using chair lifts and go right round the deck, trim sails and helm. The enclosed cockpit looks like one from an aircraft, again a wheel chair can go down to the sleeping quarters in the hulls unaided.

It is a beautiful looking boat and now Mike has to learn open ocean sailing. It was financed by his business 'Snow and Rock'; one of his outlets is at Shepperton on the left as

you go from Chertsey Bridge to Addlestone. Although he has now sold the business and is living at the Royal Southampton Yacht Club.

We were able to look all over the boat, chat with Mike Brown, Nick Bailey and the builders Multimarine Composites. After the naming Mike gave a very interesting speech describing the history of the project.

It is amazing what can be done by some one with the determination to overcome impossible odds.

Impossible Dream





## Ceremony of the Keys - 19th July - George Bray

Well, the Crown Jewels are safely locked up for the night - Eight Aquarians went to the Tower of London to see the "Ceremony of the Keys" which is the oldest military ceremony in the world and which has taken place at the Tower every night for over 700 years.

The Tower of London itself is over 900 years old and in its time has been a Royal Palace and place of refuge in time of civil unrest, as well as a Prison, the site of the Treasury and Royal Mint, an Armoury, the repository of the Crown Jewels, and even the site of the forerunner of London Zoo. And of course the place of many celebrated executions.

The Beefeaters or more correctly the Yeomen Warders of the Guard live and work within the Tower. They were first formed in 1485 and are all ex time servicing members of the army who achieved the rank of Sergeant Major and who had been awarded long service good conduct medals which many squaddies refer to as rewarding 21 years of undetected crime!

We met up at St Katherine's Dock, a very interesting mix of marina, restaurants, pubs and shops. The marina has both Thames Sailing barges and some very serious looking yachts and cruisers with price tags in the millions but after due inspection and a few noggins we moved on to Tower Hill.

At 9.30pm we were ushered through the gate and somewhat incongruously had our bags checked electronically by a Yeoman in Tudor uniform. Once inside the fortress, we found ourselves a little apprehensive as we were facing the Bloody Tower with the Traitors Gate immediately behind us but our guide for the evening assured us that we would be released eventually.

The ceremony began with the Chief Warder carrying an ancient candlelit lantern and the keys of the Tower being escorted by a small detachment of Guards. The party progressed through several tower gateways slamming and locking the doors and eventually being challenged by the sentry opposite us with the traditional "Halt who goes there". On giving the response "Queen Elizabeths keys", all then moved on to the steps by the White Tower where the rest of the Guards detachment were drawn up to present arms to the key party, for the warder to call "God bless Queen Elizabeth" and for the last post to be sounded.

The ceremony is short and purely traditional but within the setting of a softly floodlit Tower is quite theatrical and we all enjoyed the experience. Afterwards they did agree to let us out through a small postern gate - I hope they remembered to lock it after us.

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## Sailing Report - Richard Cannon

We had mainly good sailing in the first half of the season and it has continued to generally be good for the second half of the season, although we did have some very fluky strong winds.

The Regatta, combined with the SigneT open meeting on Saturday, was very successful and popular with the visitors. It was a pity the wind wasn't as good on Saturday as on Sunday when the Cundy long distance race was held giving an excellent race up to Sunbury.

For the August visit to Bewl Water there were ideal conditions; warm and dry with a 10 to 15 knot wind giving gentle planning. During a couple of hours sailing right around

the reservoir only half a dozen tacks were needed. It was a pity there was only one Aquarius boat, Richard Cannon's Signet, and Barry Jones as crew to enjoy Sunday.

Liz Archer crewed for Richard on Monday when there were five excellent short course races. After finishing racing Richard found Bob Gloyne waiting and they went out for a super three hour cruise.

Aquarius members supported all the SigneT events with Richard winning two Open meetings and the Annual Points Trophy, Robert Britton won the Lois Field crews Trophy and Mike Baker won the magnificent Wilkinson Sword Trophy.



Mike Browne  
in the cockpit



Mike  
Browne

## SOCIAL CALENDAR

### Dates For Your Diary

Saturday 1st November	Kempton Park Fireworks and a social with hot food provided at the Club afterwards. For cut price (£4) advance tickets contact Richard Cannon on 01932 786636 by Wednesday 29 October; meet & park at at Richard's at 7:00pm for a short stroll to Kempton Park. For more details see: <a href="http://www.kemptonfireworks.org.uk/">http://www.kemptonfireworks.org.uk/</a>
Saturday 15th November	Annual Dinner. Please book tickets early, numbers strictly limited. See menu choice and booking arrangements with this newsletter. Book by November 1st for discounted tickets, subject to availability.
<b>SUNDAY 7th December 8pm 2004</b>	<b>AGM, prize giving, and end of season party. NOTE CHANGED DATE</b>
Saturday 24th January 8pm	Quiz
Saturday 14th February 8pm	Musical Evening
Saturday 27th March 8pm	Start of Season Party

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### AQUARIUS SAILING CLUB ANNUAL DINNER

#### Saturday 15th November 7:30 for 8:00

The annual dinner will be held in the Clubhouse:-

Dress: Smart/Smart casual

Price £23 (£24 after 5 November) includes:-

Reception drink at 7:30

Three course meal by Professional Caterers

Table wine

Coffee/Tea and mints

Candle light, soft music, and good company

Please refrain from smoking in the Clubhouse before and during the meal

Limited to 38 members on first come first served basis

This is a very popular dinner so earliest booking is advised; 1 November at the latest

To secure tickets please complete the included Dinner

Menu entering:-

1. Menu selections ticked

2. Cheque payable to Aquarius SC

(£24 per person, £25 after 5th November)

3. Stamped addressed envelope for returning your tickets

Send to Diane Carpenter

11 Chestnut Avenue

EWELL, Surrey KT19 0SY

Tel: 020 8393 8029

**PLEASE ORDER BY 1st NOVEMBER**

**For discounted tickets**

Any tickets not sold by then will be offered to guests of members. Please include a note if you wish to bring guests, they will be placed on a waiting list until 1th November when any remaining tickets will be allocated.

**If anyone has items they would like to donate to the raffle would they please contact Bob Sumner on 01895 252528.**

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### Annual General Meeting, Prize Giving and End of Season Party

#### SUNDAY 7th December 2003 - Joan Bray.

This is the last event of the season and we value your support in helping to elect the Officers and Committee for next year.

It is also your opportunity to air your views on the way the club is run and what changes you might wish to see.

The proceedings normally take about an hour followed by prize giving presided over by Richard Cannon.

Then it's on to the party - a time to reminisce on the season past and plan for the season to come aided by a glass or two of our traditional mulled wine, mince pies and other goodies.

Altogether an evening not to be missed.

**NOTE: Day changed to SUNDAY**

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### FOR SALE

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

**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](mailto:ncknowles@blueyonder.co.uk)

**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.

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