



AQUARIUS S.C.

THE MAIN SHEET

Spring 2004 Edition

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Commodores Report – Spring 2004

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2004! To begin with our best wishes go to Maggie & Mike Rogers. Maggie's not in the best of health at the moment. Maggie's a lovely lady and with Mike's and the family's support we hope to see them both back at the club before long.

We may not have started sailing yet but the activities already packed into the pre-season programme are pretty extensive. We've been to Richmond Theatre, had a Quiz Night, held a Valentines Dinner for the ladies in the club house, started work on the new storage extension, held our first working party of the year and had the safety boat engine serviced. All that, and it's only early March.

AQSC's Management & Social committee's have already met a couple of times and the 2004 programme has been finalized and by now will have gone to print. This year, and for the first time, we have enough retirees and 'early retirees' within Aquarius to contemplate holding a Wednesday afternoon series of

racers. This has already been very unkindly dubbed the 'veterans' series. I have asked Richard organize this but we could potentially end up with more people sailing mid week than we usually get on a Sunday. That's not to say that I don't want to see you all out on the water on Sundays. I do. In fact I'd like to see a lot more of you on the water on Sunday's. It gets boring racing the same half dozen people all the time; and taking of people ... this year we must try harder to get more folks to come to our annual open weekend in May.

We need to re-establish a younger element at Aquarius which is vital for the clubs long term future. I will be attending the Commodores conference at the Dinghy Show next weekend and that very topic is on the agenda. Active sailing club membership is falling 5% year on year right across the country. That's a lot of people, and young people at that. We really need to try and get as many people as possible through the gates and out on to the water over the

open weekend, I hope I can count on your help and support. We need help with publicity and members at the club over the open weekend.

With this newsletter you should find this year's subscription and dinghy park charges form. Your timely attention to this would be appreciated. This year, as stated at the AGM, anybody having a boat in the trailer park will also be charged, as if the boat was on a regular berth along the bank.

So what's in this fun filled edition of 'The Main Sheet'? Beats me! I can't remember what I've sent to Richard half the time. Then when I read it in the newsletter I sometimes wonder why I wrote it, let alone submitted it for publication. I blame it on the shock of cooking the Valentines dinner in a kitchen that you couldn't swing a Hamster in, let alone a cat (no offence intended to either hamsters or cats of course). I think it's time to go back on the pills, the pains are starting again.

Mike (The Commodore) Baker

Annual Club Dinner

This year's bash was held in the clubhouse on Saturday 15 November. Preparations began almost a year ago when 'Tasty Morsels', the catering company we use, were booked. However things really went into high gear in the week prior to the dinner. On the prior Wednesday the social committee met for a final meeting and then the clubhouse was cleaned from top to bottom including the galley.

By the end of the week Janet and Bob had supplied crockery, glasses, cutlery and chairs. Mike Rogers supplied all the tables. Richard and Diana lent their Microwave ovens to supplement the one at the club. I supplied the lighting and Rodger the sound system.

By Friday night everything had been delivered to the club and Pete, Diana

and I spent the evening laying up the tables, hanging lights and pumping up balloons. The wind was howling outside to the extent that several ceiling tiles came down. Diana worked like a Trojan and finally declared everything to her satisfaction.

Saturday evening kicked off at around 7:30pm with Rodger serving aperitifs to the incoming guests. I think we had forty-four people sitting down to dinner but the club lounge didn't feel that crowded. Dinner was served at 8:15pm'ish. After everybody was seated Keith Hatton said grace and Diana Carpenter, Linda Rowley, Pat Irving and Linda Wheeler served dinner.

Given that everybody had pre-ordered their food, hopefully everybody was happy. A number of toasts and

'taking wine with' later, dinner was suddenly over. It seemed to go very quickly or maybe I was just having a good time!

Over coffee Bob and Janet ran the draw for the raffle. Just about everybody seemed to get something. I think Captains Chaos and Calm must have been wrapping raffle prizes for days.

After dinner Rodger cranked up the music, the tables got pushed back and those who still had the energy got dancing. The evening finally ended around 1:30am. when 'them' with no homes to go to finally got thrown out. Many thanks to everybody who were involved in the evening and especially to Diana Carpenter for organizing the dinner, it ran like clockwork and was a lot of fun.

Mike Baker

The Saint Comes Out - Keith Hatton

What sparked this off you may ask, well it was that mention of Treacle Mines by (Over Easy Baker) that really made up my mind.

Treacle has always been one of my passions, and unlike many childhood passions that normally manage to disappear like high clouds on a summers morning, treacle has never been further away than the kitchen cupboard in our household.

Perhaps it was that being a child of the last Great War, when following this event many of the basic commodities were rationed, and I was determined to make up for lost time. Unlike today children of my era never had the luxury of a car in the family, I never even had a bike until I was nearly fourteen and so I spent all my time running around, and in doing so burnt off masses of energy. This has to be replaced by something and what could be better than good old "Lyle's Golden Syrup", unlike many things from my youth that wonderful green tin has never changed with the lion on the front, and underneath the magical words- "Out of the Strong Came Forth Sweetness".

I was the youngest of a family of five, so my mother, God bless her, spent most of her time in the kitchen cooking for us all. Not for us the bought-in meals of today, in those days each meal was created from the ingredients on the

parlor shelves and my mum was a great cook. Not only managing to create great dinners but also to create smashing puddings and cakes on a daily basis. Looking back it seems that us kids never went too far away from home, perhaps it was because the nearest bus stop was nearly a mile away, and a penny was better spent in the local shop on sweets than going into Richmond or Kingston.

This led me to spend a lot of time with my mum in the kitchen often helping to make jams and pickles, and offering to help by making a Treacle tart, or Treacle Cornflake Tart or a roly poly (Steamed Pudding) or a "Spotty Dick" same as a roly poly but with currants and raisins in. This would be served hot with custard that same day, but on the next it would be sliced up and fried, have I got the juices flowing? No then you certainly haven't tried the best pudding in the world! The slices were then covered with an ample covering of you know what - yes treacle, absolutely delicious!

Having spent most of my life as a very active person, working with my hands, and also taking part not only in sailing but in other sports as well, it was not difficult to maintain a reasonable figure and keep the middle aged spread at bay. So giving me the opportunity to occasionally dip into the Treacle tin without too much worry. Has the addic-

tion been passed onto my sons, unfortunately not, they seem not to like the very sweet things in life, well out of a tin any way?

So what is the connection between the sweetness of treacle and the words "Out of the strong came forth sweetness" and also the picture of the lion?

The good book has the answer, in Judges 14: 7-9 it tells of Samson, who on his way to visit a woman that he likes, is attacked by a lion, which he tears apart. Some time later when he goes to visit this woman again he sees the lions carcass lying on the ground.

A swarm of bees fly out of the carcass and Samson reaches into the carcass and extracts honey, and gives this to his mother and father, but does not tell them that the honey has been taken from the carcass of a lion. This is the connection between sweetness, bees and the picture of lion with bees flying out of its carcass comes from.

Want to know more about Tate & Lyle then contact them for recipes and more at:-

Tate & Lyle Thames Refinery Silver-town London E16 2EW

PS Don't do daft thing like handle a tin of treacle and try to type at the same time, things can get awfully messy, and its not very good for the keyboard either.

Kempton Fireworks 2003

The early part of this evening should have been entitled 'how many people can you get in Richard Cannon's lounge?'. The answer is 'more than Richard thought possible' and this year Linda Wheeler didn't get locked in when everybody cleared off to the display. Which was good really because this year's show was well up to standard? There was a great variety of fireworks. They were loud, colourful and seemed to go on for ever. Lot of people there this year too, more than ever I think but all in good humour.



John & Margaret Tomkins enjoying the display



After the display everybody went back to the club where Diana served soup and hot dogs. Luvly Jubly! Many thanks to Richard for getting the tickets in advance and letting us meet at his gaff. Thanks also to Diana for an excellent supper supplemented by Liz's chips. If you've never been to the Kempton display all I can say is its pretty spectacular, well worth the money and a great evening out. Why not join us next year?

Mike (bangers are best) Baker

A New Consumer Unit for AQSC.

Now I don't know my RCD's from my MCB's let alone my double pole isolators from my split loads. But I know a man who does! Which is just as well because I have no experience of changing a consumer unit? For the un-enlightened a consumer unit is the box that distributes electricity via fuses to all the circuits, ring mains and ultimately all electrically driven gizmos in, say, your home.

Some time ago it was decided that the clubhouse was long overdue for a modern consumer unit to be installed. Those of you who have been plunged into darkness at past annual dinners can testify to that. At times the system just gets overloaded. Of course such an undertaking assumes a fair knowledge of what the existing club wiring actually controls, and at AQSC that's far from certain.

Nevertheless on the morning of 5 November *Bodgett and Son* moved into the clubhouse and set about stripping out the old electrics. Luckily the system had an upstream master switch which when turned off effectively isolated the consumer unit. Each disconnected cable was carefully labeled as to its existing stated use. Eventually all the circuit breakers were removed and the box itself was removed. At this point the working area looked like an explosion in a cable factory.

Nigel Knowles (a.k.a *Bodgett senior*) now had to decide which circuits were to be protected by RCD. Eventually it was decided to put all 8 power circuits through the RCD, leaving the lighting circuit (protected by its own MCB) thus unaffected in event of a trip.

The appropriate blanking plugs were then removed from the new case, to enable the cables to be run in, and the case screwed to the wall. The MCB's and RCD's were then fixed to the mounting rail and the two bus bars installed. Now came the tricky bit. Each cable tail had to be connected, positive to the appropriate MCB or RCD, negative and earth to their respective connector blocks. Sounds easy doesn't it? The trouble was that the cables were stiff and bulky and there were a lot of them and to make matters worse the consumer unit casing was not overly generous in size. At this stage *Bodgett and Son* was joined by Richard Cannon (he's the '.com' bit of the team) and he and I set about converting the kitchen (galley) wiring into a proper ring main, the supply having already been run in under the clubhouse.

Eventually Nigel announced that his back ached but the consumer unit wiring was finished and we crossed our fingers and just about everything else as he turned the master switch on. The good news was that there was no blinding flash. The bad news was that four out of the seven RCD's popped either straight away or when a load was placed on the appropriate circuit.

There followed a lot a head scratching and technical 'chit chat' like Oh bugger! And sod it! You know the sort of thing. Anyway Richard sat down in front of the unit and went into deep think mode. I've seen that look before; he tends to get it when he's staring into the guts of a computer. Finally he concluded that two of the negative straps were wired the wrong way around. Don't ask me how he figured that out. The whole thing looked like an explosion in a spaghetti factory. Anyway Nigel had a look and thought he might be right so he swapped them around and low and behold everything lit up like a Christmas tree.

A bit of clearing up and ... job done! Not the most glamorous thing that I've ever reported on but in it's own way one of the most important. Aquarius now has a really good electrical distribution and protection system thanks to our friends at *Bodgett and Sons.com* My sincere thanks to Nigel and Richard for all their work. I now feel a little more confident to go ahead and convert my own house consumer unit from old wire fuses to a MCB and RCD protected unit. So if sometime in the near future you see a plume of smoke over Stoneleigh you'll know it all went horribly wrong and that I'm on the phone to the old firm!

Mike (son of Bodgett) Baker

Quiz 24Jan04

The Aquarius 2004 social programme got underway to a roaring start with 21 members enjoying a quiz night on 24Jan04. Mike Baker set many devilish questions and we had a fish and chip supper in the interval.



Aquarius Sailing Club Clothing

A further supply of clothing with an Aquarius logo is available in navy blue.

Caps	£5
Polo shirt	£12.50
Sweatshirts	£15
Fleeces	£22.50

Samples will be on display and for sale at the Start Of Season Party
If interested ring Peter or Diana Carpenter on 020 8393 8029

2003 Annual General Meeting, Prize Giving and End of Season Party

The AQSC AGM was held in the clubhouse on the evening of Sunday 7 December 2003. Although this is one of the more serious annual club events it somehow always manages to retain a humorous and light hearted balance. I think that's quite important as there are far more sombre things in this life to get wound up about.

To the smell of simmering mulled wine and warming mince pies the club President George Bray duly got proceedings underway at around 8:00pm. Apologies for absence and the acceptance of the last AGM's minutes were quickly dealt with. George then invited Mike Baker to present his Commodores report. This is a bit like a state of the union address and summarizes past/present plans and progress together with future policy.

Graham Thompson (Auditor) was then invited to present the financial report. He went through the accounts in detail, highlighting cash flow, profit, loss and projections for next year. Copies of the financial report for anyone requiring them are available from the club Secretary Joan Bray.

George Bray then conducted the elections for the AQSC 2004 Flag Officer and Management Committee positions. Major changes include Pete Carpenter, standing down as Rear Commodore but taking over as bar manager from Mike Rogers. Rodger Wheeler and Pat Irving also join the Management Committee.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mike Rodgers for all his work behind the bar last year. Mike's easy going nature has masked a number of problems he and Maggie have had to overcome. All the best for the future guys!

Next the Social Committee was re-elected en bloc. Any Other Business passed with a number of questions from the floor being dealt with by Mike Baker and George Bray.

On completion of the AGM Richard Cannon was invited to announce who had won the 2003 'Pots'. Following Richard's Sailing Secretary report Linda Wheeler presented the prizes.

After the prize giving Joan Garrett and Joan Bray served a superb cold supper complemented by hot, spicy mulled wine. Not a bad AGM, it's never going to be the highlight of the year but it is a necessary evil and important for the well being of the club. Thanks to George for chairing the meeting and to the 'Joan's' for the excellent supper.

Mike Baker

Work Party at AQSC - 28 February

This was the first work party of the season and was supported by approx. 25% of the membership; excellent considering the bitterly cold morning. The plan was to ready the club for the start of season in late March.

While Bryan directed the work and indulged his pyromaniac urges, Diana Carpenter & Joan Garrett were hard at work in the galley making tea & coffee and preparing lunch. Four teams set to work. One in the trailer park clearing nettles. Along the bank another cleared brambles and fed Bryan's bonfire. Another worked on the inside and outside of the clubhouse while the last worked on the new storage extension digging out the area behind the rear foundations. Oh yes! And Pete Carpenter worked on his own preparing the safety boat for launching.

By early afternoon everybody was ready for a break so when it was announced that lunch was ready nobody lingered outside. Hot soup was followed

by bangers and mash with fried onions, Luvly Jubly! Soon after lunch everybody got together to put our safety boat Aquarius SC back in the water. She will be going down to Tim Barfields in a few days time for her annual engine service. She started first time! A good omen for the coming season I think.

My sincere thanks to everybody who gave up their Saturday and came down to help out. They were :-

Joan Garrett	Pat Irving
Liz Archer	Graham Thompson
Mike Baker	Roger Wheeler
Nigel Knowles	Pat Halling
George Bray	Bryan Clements
Dave Jennings	John Neale
John Tomkins	Richard Cannon
Pete Carpenter	Diana Carpenter
Gordon Courtney	Joan Courtney
Bob Sumner	Janet Edwards
Eric Bridgewater	Charles Dennis
Laurie Bridges	

My apologies if I missed anyone but at least the weather was dry, if a tad cold. We got a hell of a lot done despite the fact that poor old Nigel snapped his shovel. Even a representative from the catering company that we are considering using for our next annual dinner turned up to give us the once over. Poor girl must have wondered what she had walked into. However Bob, Janet and Diana must have schmoozed her because I'm told 'Food for Thought' will be happy to tender for the 2004 club dinner. Now all we need to do is get as many people on the water for the spring series and I shall be a very happy little Commodore.

Mike (Over Easy) Baker



A Valentine's Dinner to Remember (or 'how the men showed their galley skills when they would rather be sailing')

I first realized something was different the night before Valentine's. On trying to cook dinner I found the Hostess trolley had gone, half the kitchen utensils had disappeared and there were no plates!

What a splendid evening! On arrival the club was buzzing and was decorated with hearts and fairy lights. Rodger met us on the door dressed in his DJ and presented each of us with flowers. Drinks were served by a smiling John Neale and delightful music was being played by Mike Leigh on the keyboard. The atmosphere was warm and friendly with people chatting and laughing. By contrast, in the background, banging and swearing was heard coming from the direction of the kitchen. This was the start of a very memorable evening.

A little after eight every one was invited to be seated around the excellent oval tables, newly acquired by Nigel, and we feasted our eyes on a centre

piece of crudities and dips, and duck pate. Hot rolls were then served and everyone tucked in.

Much to our delight the main course of pork or chicken arrived with a wonderful selection of new potatoes, broccoli, carrots, roasted vegetables and cauliflower cheese was closely followed by a disheveled Mike and Keith as they appeared from the kitchen, still wearing jeans and T-shirts only to vanish again in the direction of the changing rooms.

Everyone was having a good time and the food was excellent but there was more to come. The next course was Sorbet closely followed by Mike and Keith who re-appeared suitably 'suited and booted' to thunderous applause. Pat Halling then treated us to a violin performance accompanied by Mike on keyboards. Next Pat's wife Anne gave us a recitation from 'Christopher Robin', could there be more? Well yes! The men gave us a brilliant rendition of 'Thank Heaven for Little Girls'.

After the cheese and biscuits the grand finale was a line of sparkler filled gateaux's carried out shoulder high by waiters doing high kicks. Now that's something you don't see everyday! Champagne corks started popping and everybody received a glass of bubbly to toast the workers. Coffee was then served with mint and champagne chocolates and as Richard crept amongst us requesting a further £1 per head the disco heated up and people danced into the early hours.

Many thanks to everybody involved from all the lucky ladies who witnessed this truly amazing event. Madeline Hutton, Anne Neale, Anne Knowles and I laughed from start to finish.

Lyn Baker (Over Easy's other half)

Out Comes 'Aquarius'

Saturday 13 December saw the last activity at the club this year. Pete Carpenter, Richard Cannon, Nigel Knowles, John Neale, Pat Halling, Rodger Wheeler, Bryan Clements and myself turned up early afternoon to help take 'Aquarius' out of the water for the winter. Now I know that all the lads would have far rather been Christmas shopping in Kingston, or the like, and lugging mountains of carrier bags around; but to a man they decided to forego the pleas-

ure and forced themselves to come down; and at the end of the day who am I to deny them!

Our rescue boat is a valuable asset and needs looking after. She's not the lightest of boats around but the lads made light work of dragging her out, chocking her up outside the clubhouse and draining her engine down. Afterwards the least I could do was make them all a coffee despite their protests that they really should get back to the Christmas shopping.

Before she goes down to at Tim Barfield's in March for her annual service she'll have a proper drainage bung fitted, be pressure washed and spruced up. Thanks to everybody who turned up to help it was much appreciated. Just a thought ... next time you find yourselves playing Xmas pack mule (or should that be Reindeer) decide early on whether you're charging by weight or distance (you're bound to be on to a winner either way!) No offence ladies!

Mike (The Commodore)

Replacing Things

Things break, fall off, fall apart, crack, unravel and occasionally wear out. At times like these the first impulse of my generation is repair it. Have you ever tried to repair anything now days? Nine times out of ten you need to plug it into a computer the size of Canary Wharf just to find out why it won't perform. Even if it tells you it will probably mean an incredibly expensive LRU (that's a Line Replaceable Unit) and if it

can't, and it doesn't respond to a sharp kick, you might as well trash it and buy a new one.

One would think therefore that the loss of the club Laser rudder assembly would be a little more straight forward to fix. I mean, after all, there are thousands of Lasers around so it should be relatively easy to get a new one, right? Wrong! Apparently Laser sailors lose a lot of foils and the few places that stock

them can't keep up with demand, despite their cost. Talk about cornering a lucrative market.

Ikea however came up with some wicker chairs straight away to replace the worn out ones in the club room. I guess that's because they're low tech and cheap as chips!

Mike (Gone off Lasers) Baker

Valentines Day Dinner at AQSC.

The suggestion for this 'first' was Rodger Wheelers. It really came about following the news that Mr. Wong's, venue for last years dinner, had closed. The logistics however were pretty awesome. Over 40 people to be provided with a four or five course dinner prepared and served in the clubhouse.

Planning started about a month ago with a list of everything needed, plus all the jobs needing to be done. Rodger took care of all the shopping and also supplied all the stereo equipment. Tables were a major problem which was eventually solved by Nigel Knowles (a.k.a. Bodgett of Bodgett & Son fame) who made them!

On the day preparations started early. During the morning the club lounge was converted into a bijou restaurant. At 2:00pm mountains of food were delivered to the galley and the chef's Keith Hatton and yours truly (a.k.a. E-colli.net and Salmonella.com) got cracking with the food preparation while another team, including Nigel, Rodger, George, Peter Carpenter, Richard Cannon, Bob Sumner and Graham Thompson cleared the club, laid up the tables and decorated the lounge with a Valentines theme.

During the afternoon the 'live entertainment' in the form of Pat Halling and Mike Leigh arrived to set up and conduct a final rehearsal. By 6:00'ish organised chaos turned into organised panic as the cooking started. By seven o'clock the Hors d'Oeuvres (Duck & Orange pate with carrot and celery strips, tortilla chips and dips) were ready to serve. The main course comprising either stuffed bacon wrapped chicken or Pork Fillet with garlic and

herbs or a vegetarian dish together with oven roast vegetables, Broccoli/Cauliflower au gratin, buttered carrots, new potatoes, peas, gravy and stilton sauce was well underway with two sets of anxious eyes watching over it all. The pre-cheese course sorbet was less of a problem i.e. it's easier to keep something cold than hot! The dessert of Gateau with chocolate and Grand Marnier sauce (with sparklers no less) and the cheese took a back space at this time. Coffee and mints completed the menu along with plenty of wine and chilled Champagne to toast the Ladies at the appropriate time.

At 7:30pm, with Mike Leigh providing some background music, the guests started arriving and were greeted with pre dinner drinks and carnations for the ladies. It was about this time that the realization really kicked in that Keith and I had actually got to serve over forty meals within the next half hour. A rather awesome feeling I can assure you!

At 8:00pm everybody was invited to be seated and the first course was served by 'the waiters' for the evening Nigel, John Neale, George Bray, Pete Carpenter and Rodger. Serving the main course was a logistical nightmare (I must remember never to say a cross word about our annual dinner caterers). Eventually everything got out onto the tables and for the first time Keith and I relaxed a little. The rest of the meal was pretty straight forward. I specially liked the sorbet, my kind of thing! The gateaux and cheese appeared to be well received and by the time coffee was served everybody seemed very relaxed.

Rodger then introduced Pat Halling who is a virtuoso violinist and Mike Leigh, who is a concert pianist. Pat has played at the club before but the addition of Mike on keyboards provided a whole different dimension. The guys played a selection of music which really grabbed everybody's attention. They were terrific but then we had a real surprise! Pat's wife Anne, a lovely lady that we don't see enough of at the club, stood up and gave a recitation, accompanied musically, from 'Christopher Robin'. It was delightful, so unexpected and, I think a little to her embarrassment, received a virtual standing ovation. The evening ended with couples dancing to suitably romantic music or lounging around the bar for a nightcap until 2am in the morning.

My thanks go to Rodger for both the Valentine's dinner idea and the organization. He worked like a Trojan to pull it all together. A big vote of thanks goes to my fellow chef Keith. That'll teach you to say things like "I can cook, I was in the Boy Scouts". Thanks also to 'The Waiters', and everybody who helped get things ready prior to the event and to everybody who turned up on Sunday morning to help clear up. My thanks to Nigel, who made all the tables used on the evening! (You've not seen the last of them). I'm not going to say a word about the washing up, just that there was a lot of it. Thank God for dishwashers! And no ... this events chefs will NOT be tendering an estimate for the 2004 annual club dinner! Mike (Have a new respect for Jamie Oliver) Baker

Menu

Hors d'Oeuvres

Warm bread roll, butter and Duck Paté. Celery, carrot and cucumber batons. Dips, stuffed Olives.

Main Course

Stuffed chicken breast wrapped in bacon or Pork with rosemary and garlic cooked in butter
or Winter Veg Quiche
or Parsnip, Broccoli and Gruyere Flan
New potatoes
Broccoli/Cauliflower/Leek au gratin
Oven roast onions, peppers and mushrooms.
Buttered carrots

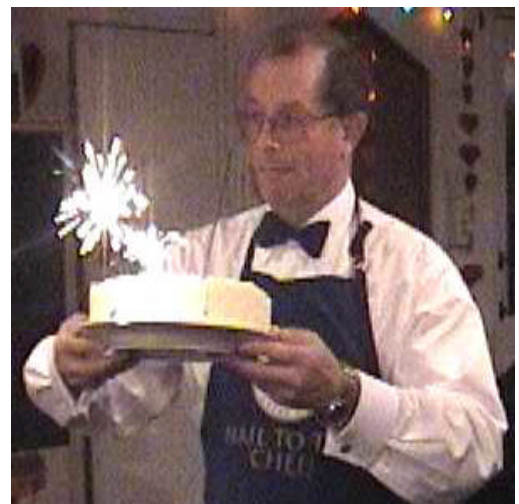
Sorbet Lemon/Mango

Biscuits selection and Cheese Board (Cheddar, Stilton, Wensleydale & Cranberry, Brie de Meaux)

Sparkling Gateau and cream, oranges

Champagne

Coffee and cream
Champagne Leaves and Mint
Leaves Chocolates



Nigel Knowles with a sparkling gateau

SAILING WITH THE VIKINGS - Tony Allen

What was sailing like in the ships of the Vikings, those bloodthirsty raiders who terrorised the coast of Britain a thousand years ago? On a tour of Denmark last summer we had the chance to find out.

The best place to see Viking ships is at Roskilde, a few miles west of Copenhagen, where a specially built museum houses the remains of five 11th century boats that apparently were sunk at the entrance to the fiord to form a defensive barrier. Two are long and narrow, the warships of the day, but the others are broader with more cargo space, the trading vessels. They have built modern replicas of four of the boats, and are still working on the fifth one, the largest; tests on the wood of the latter show that it was actually built in Dublin, so there are plans to sail the modern version back from Denmark to Ireland.

It is well known that the Vikings made incredible voyages, such as to Iceland, Greenland and Newfoundland. Their ships just had one square sail and no drop keel, but experiments have

shown that they could sail at 60 degrees to the wind. The sail was controlled by a sheet to each of the four corners plus one to a point half way along the foot, so it could be braced fairly tautly for beating to windward. Steering was by means of a vertical oar over the starboard side near the stern. It seems strange that they never had more than one mast, and never developed leeboards to improve the performance, but presumably tradition was important in shipbuilding.

The hull would have been made of oak planks, split rather than sawn, overlapping as in clinker construction. Iron was used sparingly, for anchors and some of the nails. Sails were normally wool, or else flax, treated with animal fat. For the rigging they preferred strips of walrus skin, but probably hemp was more common, and rope was also made with horse hair or the fibres of lime trees.

The highlight of our visit was an outing in one of the reconstructions, the Kraka Fyr, a small fishing and cargo

vessel built in Norway about 1030; length 12.0m, breadth 2.5m, draught 0.5m, sail area 25 square metres. It has five oars on each side, and fortunately there were enough volunteers among the passengers to row out of harbour against the wind. Once in the middle of the fiord we hoisted sail and enjoyed reaching in about a force 3. Tacking was tricky, and involved backing the leading half of the sail and giving reverse rudder in order to go about, making a sort of 3—point turn. I was allowed to helm for some of the time, and had to get used to a tiller going across the boat. So that you sit behind it and push to go to port and pull for starboard.

At the end of the trip we were able to sail into harbour, so no more rowing was needed. Sadly we were not allowed to go ashore anywhere for a bit of rape and pillage - I don't think Erik Bloodaxe would have been satisfied with our meal at the local Chinese restaurant at the end of the day.

FOR SALE

Streaker sailing Dinghy plus trailer and launching trolley. White fibreglass hull. Sail No 1391. Available to view at Aquarius. Insured value is £1000. Price £550 ono. (includes boat, trailer, trolley and 2 junior life jackets) Contact Irene Sutton on 020 8977 6518

Graduate 2854. Good condition & good sails. 1981, newest in club. White hull & green deck. Recently re-rigged. Special Price £500 ono, Rob Britton 07775 801879 or Richard Cannon 01932 786636

Laser XD. Top spec, brand new (April 2004), trolly, cover etc, all the latest gear, cheaper than boatshow, £3100 - Pat Hallings 020 8979 5707

Various

1. Wetsuit. Female, size Med. Colour Blue with Yellow/Red/Black inserts. Would suit teenager £10
 2. Casio C-7 Portable Electric Piano Keyboard (Full size keys). Internal recording facility. Many backing tracks, effects and styles £30 o.n.o.
 3. Canon Starwriter 30. Portable publishing system. Cross between electric typewriter and a word processor. Records on 31/2 inch. floppy disks £30 o.n.o.
 4. 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
 5. Wheels. Pair of launch trolley sand wheels (virtually unused) £15 the pair.
 6. 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.
 7. Printer cartridges. 3 x HP51629A Large Black Ink Cartridges. To suit :-HP DeskJet 600, 660c, 670c, 690c, 693c, 694c, 695c or 697c, HP DeskWriter 600, 660c or 670c HP OfficeJet 500, 590, 625, 635, 700, 710 or 725
£1 each (Note: Boxed but all dated 2001 hence low price)
- All items can be brought to the club for viewing. Mike (Over Easy) Baker 020 8393 5495

Wanted

Bosun any condition - Pat Hallings 020 8979 5707

The Last Sail of the 2003 Season

The last racing of the 2003 season was held the morning after the annual dinner. Seven boats battled it out in reasonable conditions, given the very high winds that battered the clubhouse on the prior Friday night. Nigel Knowles and Joan Garrett had race officer duty and once we managed to tear them away from their coffee and croissants things got underway, albeit very late. Now in fairness that wasn't their fault. A lot of people were helping to clear up the clubhouse after the annual dinner and more than one or two hangovers were also evident.

Three races were eventually completed without incident. All that remains now is for Richard to crank up his abacus and work out who's won what which will be revealed at the AGM and prize giving. Thanks to everybody who turned up for their race duties throughout the year. It's not the most glamorous thing to do but it is vital that those race sheets are completed so that Richard has the records that he needs to updated handicap data and calculate race results.

Mike (Over Easy) Baker

Social and Sailing Calendar to May

March	11:30 am	2:00 pm	3:30 pm	Officers and Notes
27 Sat				Start of Season Party 8 pm
28	Fun race	Spring race 1	Spa race 1	R Cannon, M Jerwood, L Bridges
April				
04	Fun race	Spring race 2	Spa race 2	R Clough, Margaret and John Tomkins
07 Wed	Starting 7 April there will be sailing on Wednesday afternoons, race starts at 3pm			
11	Easter Egg Trophy , 4 races 3 to count			John and Carole Money, Tony Allen
18	Fun race	Spring race 3	Spa race 3	George and Joan Bray, Graham Thompson
24 Sat				Dinghy Drive 8pm - Bob Sumner
25	Fun race	Spring race 4	Sprint races 1 & 2	Mike Baker, Liz Archer, Nigel Knowles
May				
01 Sat	Mid-Thames Trophy at Staines SC, Support Your Club			
02	Fun and Training Races for Newcomers			Rodger Wheeler, Linda Wheeler, John Neale
08 Sat	Club Open Weekend			R Cannon, Robert Iremonger, John Botterill
09	Open Day, Training & Funday Racing			R Cannon, Pat Irving, Eric Bridgewater
16	Fun race	Spring race 5	Spa race 4	Barbara and Tony Allan, John Neale
23	Fun race	Spring race 6	Spa race 5	Ron Munden, Mary and Charles Dennis
29 Sat	Away Weekend at Bewl Water			
31 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.

We have a growing number of retired or semi-retired members and from 7 April there will be sailing for the Wednesday series on Wednesday afternoons at 3pm.

On Saturday 1st May, the Bank Holiday weekend, the Mid-Thames Trophy inter club event will be held at Staines SC; everyone is encouraged to enter. On Sunday 2nd May there will be fun and training races for newcomers.

The Aquarius Open Days are 8th and 9th May; members are asked to bring a friend along with them.

On the Late Spring Holiday 29-31 May, and the Late Summer Holiday Monday 30 August visits to Bewl Water are planned.

A New Storage Extension for the Clubhouse

At last year's AGM I mentioned that we were planning to build a storage facility between the clubhouse and the Bosun's store. Well it's underway. Nigel came up with the design, we raided the local builder's yard and Bodgett & Sons went back into business in mid February putting in the support pilings ready for the floor. The design extends the clubhouse at the upstream end, with access via the men's changing room.

The new area will be used to store a variety of things such as chairs, tables and items which are only used occasionally and presently occupy valuable space within the clubhouse and the men's changing room. This work also clears the way for the much needed refurbishment of the men's changing room and the shower area.

The initial delivery of building materials was sent on a huge ten ton lorry which reversed down the ramp from the car park with both his offside rear wheels on the grass. Think about that. I was waiting for the whole thing to roll sideways off the ramp, down the bank and into the river. The driver thought it was a huge joke and duly dropped three or four tons of supplies above the slipway. Good game, good game!

So far Bodgett & Sons have finished the front foundation piles and bricked up between them, leveled the ground to the back of the site and completed the centre and rear foundation lines. Actually that's not quite true. We did get some valuable help with that digging on the recent work party day. Thanks guys! The floor joists and the floor are now down and work is about to commence on prefabricating the three outer walls and the roof trusses.

Later the existing door into the men's changing room will be taken out and moved and the wall angled off to give easier access to the new extension. There will be a window in the front wall of the extension and it will also have lights and power plumbed in. Eat your heart out Bob the Builder.

Mike (Son of Bodgett) Baker

Club Open Weekend

This year's open weekend will be over the weekend of 8th & 9th May. It's never too early to start talking about this because it's a major annual recruitment event. We really need to introduce some youngsters to Aquarius and any ideas to this end would be gratefully received. I've already been in touch with station manager at Radio Jackie who has agreed to broadcast some publicity for us in the run up to the weekend. I will also have posters and fliers available in good time, plus newspaper adverts.

What I need you guys to do is distribute this PR material in good time and talk to friends and family about the weekend. Encourage them to come down and bring their friends. Posters and hand outs should be put in your local shops, schools, libraries and anywhere else that you can think of. Scout, Sea Scout and Guide groups in your areas should specifically be targeted. Let's see if we can get a record number of people down to the club (and afloat) this year.

Mike (Publicity Mgr.) Baker

Start of Season Party Saturday 27 March 7:30pm for 8pm

Come and join all your friends in the clubhouse and help get the 2004 season off to a flying start with good food and a pint or two. This is not to be missed ! So switch off the TV, come down to the club and re-discover good old fashioned conversation.

Mike (The Commodore) Baker