



AQUARIUS S.C.

# THE MAIN SHEET

*Autumn 2005 Edition*

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## COMMODORE'S REPORT - Mike Baker

Monday 20 June was a bit of a red letter day. I finally posted off the application for the new Club Premises Certificate to the new licensing authority and the Police. It took nearly three months to prepare. What a bureaucratic load of old cods! And that's putting it politely.

If we were a 5,000 capacity night club in the middle of Kingston, serving drinks till god knows what time in the morning, fighting a drugs problem and viewing anti social behaviour as a way of life I could understand all the palaver concerned with getting a new bar license; but for a small, non profit making, private members club it does seem a tad OTT.

Mind you, I've got my eye on some of our senior members, too much sugar in their tea and they go berserk. Square dancing, ballroom, lace making, you name it, they're into it. The management committee might even have to start issuing OAP ASBO's to curb their disturbing gardening, bird watching and stamp collecting fetishes.

Recently the licensing authorities have been expressing concern that very few establishments had submitted their license applications. The media meanwhile were saying that the reason for late submission was that the application forms were incomprehensible and wide open to misinterpretation which could lead to application rejection; but as the 6 August got nearer and nearer a look at the public notice pages of the local newspapers made interesting reading. More and more concerns took the plunge to get their applications in, many taking the variation option to extend their current licensing hours.

More recently the national newspapers and TV have been having a field day regarding the potential ramifications of allowing 24hr drinking. It's a bit late for that, perhaps they should have given the subject a little more deliberation when our esteemed government, and I use that word loosely, first proposed easing the licensing laws as a way of combating binge drinking.

I suppose there is a twisted logic in their thinking but it certainly isn't in tune with what's actually going on in the streets. Most of the kids I know just view the new policy as an opportunity to spend longer in the clubs and pubs.

It's going to be interesting to see how 'the authorities' plan to deal with all the businesses that may still not be licensed after the published cut off date and possibly even more interesting to see how our already overstretched Police are going to deal, in real terms, with the ramifications of what is about to be unleashed by this ill thought-out legislation.

Do you have a view on the above? Drop me a line and I'll publish it in the next edition of The Main Sheet.

Update: Well what do you know, it's 8 August and I've just heard from Joan that AQSC's club certificate application has been approved by Richmond Borough Council.

This news was followed closely by a survey request from the RYA asking if we had (a) applied, (b) been approved or turned down, and (c) how much our application cost. The RYA is still fighting a rearguard action to have sailing clubs put in a separate category to pubs, hotels and nightclubs from a charges standpoint.

I wish them well but I think our Government is currently distracted by the adverse outcry this legislation is causing to be too bothered about the dissimilarity of actual applicants.

On the domestic front, welcome to all our new members. I trust you will enjoy your membership and take advantage of all Aquarius has to offer. The training programme is going well and hopefully, in the not so distant future, we will have our first graduate.

I would like to remind you all about forthcoming events. There's a quiz night scheduled for 15 October which I'm told will be a little less taxing than the last 'Chinese' quiz.

Firework night at Kempton Park will be on Saturday 5 November with supper back at the clubhouse. Tickets via Richard. The AQSC annual dinner will be held at the club on Saturday 19 November, details elsewhere in this newsletter. This is a not-to-be-missed event and early booking is highly recommended.

I believe Diana has ordered a limited number of tickets for 'Aladdin' at Richmond Theatre in January.

The AGM, prizegiving and end of season party will be held at the club on 3 December. That will be my last AGM as Commodore as I will be standing down to make way for someone with fresh ideas and enthusiasm.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everybody on the club Management Committee for all their help advice and assistance over the last three years. It's been much appreciated. I'd especially like to thank Bodgitt & Son for all their work in the clubhouse over the last couple of years. That title covers several members, who between them have contributed an amazing amount of their time, knowledge and expertise. Gentlemen, it's been both an education and a pleasure to work with you.

Meanwhile, on the water, sailing continues until 13 November so there are still plenty of opportunities to get afloat before the end of the season. Richard is keeping track of the series results but there's still time for you to rack up a few more points.

As always more newsletter contributions would be appreciated. Just look at all the ramblings I turn out, you've got to be able to do better than those; Plus I'm running out of things to write about, so sharpen up your PC quill pens and let's have your 'take' on what's going on at the club, it's social programmes or anything else that takes your fancy.

See you on the water!

Mike (The Commodore) Baker

## **Teddington Theatre Group - "To Entertain You"**

### **Saturday, 23rd July 2005.**

Twenty-six club members and guests attended the evening concert entitled "To Entertain You" - consisting of songs and ditties provided for our delectation by Out and About from the Teddington Theatre Club.

Our thanks go to Rodger, for organising the event for the princely sum of three guineas per head, including nourishment. We would also like to thank Stuart, who put in a lot of work getting the clubhouse ready for the evening and Nigel, who was an excellent "mine host" from behind the bar.

Last, but by no means least, our thanks to the two Linda's, for providing us with such a splendid hot and cold buffet to follow the performance - certainly no-one went home hungry!

Out and About provided us with a very varied and interesting programme which apparently they usually perform for the entertainment of Residents of local Homes (what can I say!). There were sketches and songs made famous by Elsie & Doris Walters and Rob

Wilton through to Gracie Fields and Stanley Holloway (I still can't get "per tuppence, per person, per trip" out of my mind and it's driving me mad!) There were songs from the shows - Cabaret, Oliver etc. and we all joined in the singing with gusto using the song sheets provided.

Having had grandparents who "trode the boards" I knew a lot of the older songs (nothing to do with my age you understand) and so was tempted to join in even when not invited to do so! There were ditties, including "Father William" from Lewis Carroll and there were even some jokes (which caused both laughter and a few groans!). In fact, something for everyone, and the evening - which did indeed entertain us as promised (from the oldest member present to a young teenage guest) seemed to end far too quickly.

I can't close without making a special comment about the accompanist - who was absolutely priceless! Although somewhat taken aback when he first

started tickling the ivories, I am happy to report that what he lacked in accuracy he made up for in enthusiasm! (Les Dawson in concert immediately sprang to mind, as did Eric Morcambe when he remarked to Andre Previn that he was "playing all of the right notes but not necessarily in the right order"). So far as I was concerned, he was the icing on the cake - intentional or otherwise!

We must have been a good audience as the entertainers ended the evening by thanking us for our appreciation, the good food and drink provided and also for the cheque that they took away with them for their charity.

**Anne Bond**

Thanks for that Anne. It's really good to read something I didn't write. I just wish more people would contribute something more often ... Mike (Over Easy) Baker

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### **Regatta, Jazz Night & BBQ**

This year's regatta was held over the weekend of 18-19 June. During Saturday three races were run, one of which was the first trophy race. A further three were run on Sunday, two regatta trophy races and the Ladies/Novice trophies. The weather was hot and sunny and the wind, although out of the south (veering), which is not our best position, ensured some interesting sailing. In the event Pat Halling won the regatta trophy, narrowly beating Charles Dennis and Liz Archer won the Ladies & Novice trophies.

On Saturday evening some fifty people attended the club BBQ, again graced with incredible weather. I don't know what sold the best? The 'Hair of the Hog' or the Pimms No.1. I do know we got through a fair bit of both. Outside Mike Rogers and Alan Tolfree donned their gas masks and flipped burgers to the manor born. Nice one guy!

Just about every lady that arrived seemed to be clutching a bowl of salad. One thing though ... since Saturday why have my ears started growing and getting pointy? The Jazz band was 'pretty average!' that's very good by the way! Even Pat said they were good, and he should know.

My personal highlight is always the Sunday afternoon regatta cream tea. Frightfully English don't you know and highly naughty but nice. Many thanks to Joan and George for toiling in the Garson Farm fields on a very hot Sunday morning to pick the strawberries.

So, that's another regatta done and dusted. Bit of a break now before launching into the next round of social engagements. Tell you what ... how about filling in the time with a bit of sailing. Rumour has it Aquarius does some of that too!

**Mike (Over Easy) Baker**

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### **Sail Training Manual**

After much discussion on the need for a club sail training manual it was decided to use the RYA basic sail training booklet and accompanying DVD. A number of these booklets have now been bought from the RYA shop for use by trainees. Richard Cannon will oversee the novice training schedules and determine when each is ready to 'graduate'. Graduation will permit the use of the club dinghies and participation in club racing as helm. Member's full co-operation in supporting the training programme would be appreciated.  
**Mike (Over Easy) Baker**

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### **Working Party 1Oct05**

It was planned to have a major assault around the outside of a 'gardening nature'; fortunately it was warm and dry.

Around 20 members transformed many areas and a vast amount of overgrowth and shrubs were disposed of.

Diana and other ladies provided a very welcome lunch of Chilli Con Carne, baked potato, cheese and bread sticks.

**Richard Cannon**

## August Bank Holiday Monday at Bewl Water

A Bank Holiday wouldn't be a Bank Holiday without a trip to Bewl for some serious open water sailing. You'd think I'd had my fill at Ullswater but, well; you just can't get enough of a good thing and besides it's one of the rare chances I get to use Over Easy's big red spinnaker!

This year the Bewl Autumn Regatta on 29 August consisted of 2 pursuit races. Pursuit racing is based on boat handicap to determine start times. In theory if the handicap system works well all the competing boats should arrive at the finish line about the same time. The initial race instructions stated that each race lasted approximately 120 minutes for say an Optimist and about 80 minutes for a Laser.

In reality the race officer started the Oppies, Toppers and Mirrors at +26 minutes (actually zero) and everybody started as per their handicap after that. SigneTs went at +28 minutes (i.e. zero +2). The last boats to leave, almost half an hour after us were the Flying Fifteens and the big RS Asymetrics. In between everything from Solos and Lasers to RS200s and Enterprises.

There were 30 entrants but if you include as many again just cruising plus all the fishermen's boats, I'd never actually seen so many boats on the water at the same time. Very strange!

The briefing was at 10:00 sharp which gave the first Optimist start at about 10:30. Bewl Water SC charged a visitors entry fee of £6 for 2 handed boats and £3 for single handed boats, which is amazing given the club facilities, race organization, the water and prizes.

One thing that was very noticeable was how low the water was. It had to be down 20 feet. That might not sound a lot but at Bewl that must represent millions of litres of water (Bewl normally holds 31,300 million litres). The usual ramp couldn't be used as it no longer reached the water. We launched off 'the beach'.

AQSC members at Bewl included Richard Cannon and Liz Archer in ST368, Keith Hatton and I in ST369, Nigel Knowles in his Laser 35434 and Bryan Clements in the club Topper 20980. There was also our honorary member for the Day Bill Poulton in Enterprise 19536

Race 1 duly got started around 10:30 with one Oppie and one Mirror crossing the line. Two minutes later ST369 crossed the line and overhauled the other boats shortly after rounding the first mark. The wind was out of the West blowing at approximately force 2. The six mark course used the whole centre section of the water plus one of the three south facing legs, going round twice for one lap.

ST369 held 1st place for about a lap and a half before being overhauled by a Solo. Leading is great from a 'clear air' point of view but its murder trying to find the marks first time around. At Bewl the marks are so widely spaced that you can often sail half a leg, or more, before even spotting the mark that you should be heading for. At the end of Race 1 ST369 was 15th, Laser 35434 was 19th, ST368 was 21st after starting 10 minutes late, and Topper 20980 was 28th.

Race 2 was more interesting. For a start everybody was on the line at their appointed time. ST368 and ST369 overhauled the lead boats well before the first mark and held 1st and 2nd places for over two laps. Inevitably in lightening winds the faster boats began to catch the SigneTs on lap three. Now, the Bewl rules of pursuit racing say that a sound signal will be given at one minute before the finish and that a double sound signal will be given at the finish ... at which point ALL boats must hold station, one to another, as they come up to and cross the line which is moving towards the boats.

Try telling that to Bewl Lasers. By the time ST369 crossed the line one Solo and four or five Lasers had overtaken us. The Race Officer's reaction in the committee boat was 'protest them'. So much for rules! The results were published by the time we came ashore and no one was in the mood to change them. ST368 recorded a 5th (boats obeyed the rules). ST369 a 16th (which should actually have been about 11th) with Laser 35434 17th and Topper 20980 21st.

Both races were won by a Flying Fifteen with RS200s, 400s, Blaze and Lasers highly placed. Considering the opposition I didn't think we did too badly and the sailing was superb. Plenty of spinnaker work and, at times, some close racing. If you've never been to Bewl Water you should definitely pencil it in for one of the 2006 Bank Holidays. It's a whole different kind of sailing on big water and pretty addictive, as anyone who's been there will tell you.

Mike (Over Easy) Baker

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## The Palm Court - 25 Oct 2005

A trio of violin, cello and piano playing in the light of standard lamps amid the potted plants with a candelabra and trailing ivy on the piano for good measure. Delicate cucumber sandwiches... scones, jam and whipped cream... little catherine wheel sandwiches... butterfly cakes.... cream gateaux and many other delicacies - a beautiful spread. Yes, in the style of tea at the Ritz, Aquarius became the Palm Court.

We were treated to outstanding performances by Pat Halling's Palm Court Trio. Pat led us through the history of the Palm Court with music to match. Robin really made the cello sing with Saint Saens' "Swan" from the Carnival of the Animals. Mandy has a lovely voice and sung at Aquarius for the first time. Mike on piano was a treat as usual. John and Anne were persuaded to demonstrate the Viennese Waltz to the strains of the Merry Widow, and many of us took to the floor to dance to a reprise at the end of the concert.

The spread of food which followed was a real picture. Many thanks to Diana, Janet, Linda and Pat. Thanks also to the unsung heroes, Peter behind the bar, and Stuart who did everything from setting out the club beforehand to tidying up the next day. Stuart was also official photographer. Watch the website for some pics.

Rodger Wheeler

## Christmas Is Acoming Joan Bray

In the festive mood here is Joan's recipe for mincemeat which yields approximately 2 1/2 to 3 lbs.:-

1/2 lb ( 225 g ) fresh cranberries  
4ozs ( 110g ) Bramley apples , cored and chopped small (no need to peel)  
4ozs (110g) shredded suet (I use vegetarian)  
6ozs (175g) raisins  
4ozs (110g) sultanas  
4ozs (110g) currants  
4ozs (110g) candied peel - finely chopped  
6ozs (175g) soft dark brown sugar  
Grated zest and juice of an orange and a lemon  
1oz (25g) ground almonds  
2 teaspoons of ground mixed spice  
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
A good grinding of fresh nutmeg  
3 tablespoons of brandy

Combine all the above ingredients , except the brandy, in a large ceramic bowl mixing together very thoroughly. Then cover the bowl with a clean tea cloth and leave in a cool place overnight or for 12 hours to allow the flavours to develop.

Then preheat the oven to mark 1/2 , 225 f (120 c), cover the bowl loosely with foil and place in the oven for 3 hours. Remove the bowl from the oven - don;t worry about the appearance of fat - that's how it is supposed to look. As it cools, stir it occasionally so that everything gets a coating of melted suet and when it is quite cold , stir in the brandy.

Pack in sterilised jars and cover with waxed discs and seal. It will keep but is best eaten within a year.

## The Twelve Days Of Christmas - Anon Joan Bray

On the first day of Christmas my true love said to me  
I'm glad we brought fresh turkey and a proper Christmas tree

On the second day of Christmas much laughter could be heard  
We tucked into our turkey, a most delicious bird

On the third day of Christmas we entertained the people from next door  
The turkey tasted just as good as it had the day before

On the fourth day relations came to stay , poor Gran looked old  
We finished up the Christmas pud and ate the turkey cold

On the fifth day of Christmas outside the snowflakes flurried  
But we were nice and warm inside, for we had the turkey curried

On the sixth day I must admit the Christmas spirit died  
The children fought and bickered, we ate turkey rissoles fried

On the seventh day of Christmas my true love he did wince  
When he sat down at table and was offered turkey mince

On the eighth day nerves were frayed, the dog had run for shelter  
I served up turkey pancakes with a glass of alkalized

On the ninth day our cat left home, by lunchtime dad was blotto  
He said he had to have a drink to face turkey risotto.

On the tenth day the booze had gone ( except for some home-made brew )  
And if that wasn't bad enough, we suffered turkey stew

On the eleventh day of Christmas the Christmas tree was moulting  
The mince pies were as hard as rock and the turkey was revolting

On the twelfth day of Christmas my true love had a smile upon his lips  
The guests were gone, the turkey too, and we dined on fish and chips.

## Our Richard Does It Again - Stuart Schafer

A trip to the Hampton Sailing Club Regatta, weekend 25-26 June, proved to be a great success for Richard Cannon. Richard was in sparkling form and in five exciting races over the two days in which an average of 40 boats per race took part, 13 in the handicap class alone, Richard scored three wins one second and one fourth to win first prize in the handicap class.

This was no mean feat when you consider that in the last race on Sunday Richard got off to a dreadful start where a gap failed to open, Richard found himself over the start line and then touched another dinghy, and had to go back to restart and he had to also do a two turn penalty. Did this deter our Richard ? "did it \*\*\*\*", he just doggedly got stuck in and went on to win the race. To coin an old phrase, "when the going gets tough the tough get going".

Well done Richard. Also thanks to Charles Dennis for putting in an appearance and competing in two races on Sunday. Also thanks to Keith Poncia and his wife for turning up to give support.

Richard was crewed in the two races on Saturday by Liz Archer and in Sundays three races by Brian Clements and would liked to extend his profound thanks to both of them for their invaluable support in making the win possible.

It really could not have been a better weekend weather wise, Saturday was a bit overcast, Sunday started the same but later the sun came out to make it a really terrific weekend.

The wind was about 5-10 knots straight up the reach, although it was a bit patchy at times it made for some great sailing and kept the spectators such as myself well entertained.

The Hampton Club are to be congratulated for putting on such a great regatta. The sight of forty dinghies, Merlins, Enterprises, Comets, GP 14s, Toppers, Lasers, and even a lone Kinsman was a truly magnificent sight. Needless to say a few cruiser drivers had to change trousers after navigating through this lot.

A big thank you to all at Hampton for their hospitality their friendliness and some great food and of course a terrific spectacle, thank you all very very much.

## A Salcombe Sojourn - John Neale

It's not very often that you have really memorable sailing days but 1st September.2005 was one of them.

What could be nicer than creaming along in a Salcombe yawl on a lovely warm autumn day, driven by a fair wind and surrounded by beautiful Devon views?

But I get ahead of myself. So as Julie Andrews said. 'Let's start at the very beginning'.

We'd been invited by friends, who have a flat in Salcombe, to join them for a few days following the August Bank Holiday which we eagerly accepted especially as he had recently become the proud owner of a Salcombe Yawl.

'What is a S.Y?' I hear you ask. Well it's a locally built traditional wooden boat of clinker construction being 16 feet long and about 6 feet wide with a large open cockpit, and a short covered deck of about 3 feet long which extends in front of the main mast to a straight bow on which is mounted a bowsprit of some 18" long which nowadays carries the roller reefing gear for the foresail.

The cockpit layout is similar to the GP14 with side seats under which are buoyancy bags. The side decks are approximately 9" to 12" wide upon which there are slatted wooden seats for the comfort of sitting out (what luxury). They also save the blood supply to your legs from being cut off by the 2" high edge coping which surrounds the cockpit to keep you dry (very civilised). The cockpit contains a centre board case which houses a great chunk of metal drop keel of a size to make even Bosun owners envious, especially as it is easily operated via a large drum pulley, so no grunting required.

The Mizzenmast is stepped on a small aft deck and held in position by 4 stay wires. The tiller passes under this deck and out through the transom, into the stock and rudder, which are mounted in the normal dinghy fashion. The Mizzen sail has a small boom but no control lines so it's able to do its own thing and be forgotten about when sailing.

The powerhouse of the rig is a traditional triangular mainsail with centre sheeting and, on this boat, was only attached to the boom at its toe and heel but the cut of the sail was very full along its foot and it didn't seem to gap from the boom.

Surprisingly there wasn't much clearance under the boom, about 2' above deck level so it was still necessary to duck when going about.

All in all a very pretty boat, easy to handle and light on the tiller. However the problem of sailing it was where it was moored !

Being a new boy on the scene, my friend could only get a drying mooring which left the boat high and dry on mud flats at certain states of the tide which meant we could only sail a couple of hours either side of high tide... and you need something to get you there and back. In this case it was a RIB, which was tied up with 20 or so other inflatable tenders at Salcombe harbour pontoon.

So the first job is to locate yours, then leap from one to another to get to it, disentangle its painter (making sure not to leave others untied) and then push your way through them all into clear water before daring to start the engine. All of which requires a certain amount of agility and ensures you start with wet feet!

You then motor through all of the mouth watering expensive boats bobbing about at their moorings until you find your mooring. You then ferry yourself around the Yawl wiping off the seagull guano and removing the cover before clambering aboard and hoisting the sails, all of which takes the best part of an hour. And you think you've got it tough to launch at Aquarius eh??

It was however all worth while for once we'd slipped our mooring and had started to sail down the main channel past the town ferry, the yacht club and all those lovely old buildings piled up through the town from the waterfront, you're in another world.

We beat out over the bar in a nice 2-3 breeze, though it took quite a while to punch through the incoming tide, but we managed it OK with yours truly at the helm. Once beyond the bar the sea state changed to quite a significant swell as it was funneled into the estuary between the headlands on either side, so we turned and ran before it swapping drivers as we did so.

This was a much more relaxed sail and we were able to admire the scenery as we creamed along with the wind and tide. We got back far too quickly and decided to carry on all the way up to Kingsbridge which is at the head of the estuary before returning to our moorings at Salcombe, which we picked up without trouble having had a wonderful two and a half hours of sailing in lovely surroundings. I thoroughly recommend it.

Thus it was that we arrived back at the flat somewhat tired but with feelings of high elation and a resolve to get up early (7am) the next morning to catch the last couple of hours of the tide before we had to return home... but that's a sailors tale for another time perhaps?

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## Aquarius Web Site - Richard Cannon

The Aquarius web site is an excellent source of historical data. Race results go back to 2000, newsletters to 1999 and Trophy records to 1952. If there are any errors or entries missing please let the webmaster (Richard Cannon 01932 786636) know. Also please let him know if you have problems displaying pages.

There are a number of alternative free browsers to Microsoft Internet Explorer that are recommended as less likely to be attacked by hackers and viruses. Some are Netscape, Opera and Firefox; these are generally more compliant with standards than Internet Explorer and have more features.

I have been using Firefox since the start of 2005 and it is excellent. FireFox and Opera allow web pages to be opened in Tabs so you can return to

them and pages will zoom to change the text size. Although IE gives an option to change text size it doesn't change much on many pages. If text overlaps images try changing the text size.

I am also using a new program to generate some web pages (free Open Source Nvu) and they may behave differently; it is important that I am informed of any problems.

## South in a Westerly

Lyn's cousin Paul runs Hamble Yacht Services out of the Mercury Marina at the head of the Hamble River. Paul had been on at me to go sailing with him for some time. Due to circumstances I'd never been able to make it but at a recent family funeral we again discussed getting away. Paul explained he wanted to relocate his 10m Westerly 330 Regatta from its mooring on the Hamble to Cherbourg for a holiday and needed a crew to help him take it over.

Three weeks later we met at Paul's place in Hamble and were joined by another Mike. Mike Godwin also has a yacht at the Mercury and is a great friend of Paul's and had also been recruited. When we arrived we found that the Westerly had already been moved on to the holding pontoon and was ready to go (i.e. there was plenty of beer and wine onboard).

I got a quick orientation tour and we cast off. Paul's boat turned out to be quite an Aladdin's cave of technology. INGPS Satnav linked to George, the self steering gear (should you want to use it). Multi distance radar, two radios and every conventional and digital instrument you ever heard of.

I was fascinated by the nav system which looked a bit like those you see on modern passenger aircraft entertainment screens. Alterations could be made in real time to way points and to compensate for wind and tide and the whole thing was rather like an aquatic video game.

Most of the instruments also displayed at the helm station repeater and all the rigging and sail sheeting came onto the coaming above the hatch to the cabin. The guys and halyards all ran through individual muscle boxes and they and the sails sheeting could be led onto one of the six self-tailing winches.

Below there were berths for 6-7 people in three cabin areas. The main cabin also housed a very well laid out galley

and a high tech nav station.

The head was aft on the starboard side, balanced on the port side by the 'Captain's cabin'. Everything was varnished teak and was in tip-top condition.

The run down the Hamble into Southampton Water was done under mainsail and 20hp diesel engine but once we got out into The Solent the genoa was unfurled and got underway. I kept pestering Paul and Mike to keep the sails 'trimmed' and several times had the leeward rail awash. We ran down to Hurst Castle, tacked and passed The Needles away on our port side. Paul set up the course and we sailed out into The Channel.

The sea was very calm and initially we made good progress at about 5-6 knots; But after three or four hours the wind fell away and we stowed the foresail and started the engine. The rest of the trip across was fairly uneventful apart from dodging the odd freighter. I've never seen the sea so calm, at times it looked like black oil with the moonlight playing across it in silver; it was when we got outside Cherbourg that the fun started.

We arrived at daybreak (about 4:30 i'sh). We could see the harbour entrance about five miles away but as we cruised in a really thick fog bank appeared out of nowhere and engulfed us. Mike went to the nav station, Paul took the helm and I went right up into the bow. I could only just see Paul 10m or so behind me. We edged into the outer harbour to the sound of fog horns all around us. Other yacht horns were easily recognized but the much deeper horns of the commercial, military and ferry traffic was a worry and they were very close to us. Obviously a lot of the boats were waiting for the fog to lift before attempting the inner harbour.

Below Mike was 'playing' with the INGPS Satnav display when suddenly a detail of the harbour came up with 'us'

clearly showing in the middle together with direction. Paul decided to trust it and we headed for the inner wall with yours truly calling out course changes as other traffic appeared out of the fog. It became apparent that a lot of yachts and power boats were circling including one of the 'tall ships', in Cherbourg for the Bastille Day celebrations.

After an hour or so we entered the inner harbour and things were no better. Mike continued to call out heading and distance but because of the traffic we couldn't always follow his navigation instructions. It was very crowded; obviously a lot of boats had arrived for the French holiday weekend.

Then, ahead of us, I spotted some moored up yachts. This turned out to be the holding pontoon just outside the marina entrance. We moored temporarily on this while we got our bearings.

All of a sudden, and after nearly two hours, the fog cleared ahead and there was the yacht marina off our port bow. Almost immediately a harbour master Gemini appeared alongside and directed us to the visitor's pontoon and moorings. To say we were glad to get in would be an understatement, especially as we could still hear fog horns bellowing in the outer harbor.

After spending another day with the boat during which we walked around Cherbourg and had a look at the 'Tall Ships' and their crew displays, Mike and I had to catch the ferry back to Portsmouth. The sea was still like a mill pond and we made excellent time.

Mike's going back in three weeks time to help bring the Westerly home but I will be up at Ullswater for the Signet Nationals. We all agreed to do it again sometime, and I must say I can't wait. Racing dinghies are one thing but sailing a 10m is a whole different ball-game!

**Mike (Fogs eye) Baker**

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## Upstream Launching Ramp

We all know that 'Bosuns' are a bit heavy, so I suppose it didn't come as much of a surprise to hear that while Pete Carpenter was recently recovering his boat the whole kit & caboodle broke through one of the upstream ramps.

Bryan Clements and Stuart Schafer constructed a temporary repair but it was evident that something a little more permanent was going to be required.

Mike Rodgers and Nigel had a look on Sunday 24 July and concluded that the steel work that sits within the L section edge members needed replacing. They took some measurements and are now trying to find some suitable material which will be 'Bosun proof'.

The geese that had been prevented from using the ramp for the last few weeks looked highly amused and paddled off muttering something about poetic justice!

**Bodgit (always something to do) & Son.**



## There Once Were Some Ugly Ducklings Who Hopefully Will Now Live To Become Beautiful Swan's

You may remember the local swan family that had eight signets this season. That's a high number in terms of survival (i.e. only 39% of signets born on The Thames make it to adulthood).

One of the parents vanished within a few weeks after the eggs hatched. The remaining parent battled on with the eight chicks. Sadly these first reduced to six, then five and finally three. That was bad enough but then the other parent went a.w.o.l.

Finally, on the morning of Tuesday 26 July, Stuart phoned Nicky at the Swan Sanctuary. She came down to AQSC and between the two of them they managed to round up the three remaining chicks. Two looked reasonably healthy but the third was much smaller and would not have lasted very long. The fourth one was found a few days later and it was also picked up by the Nicky.

They are now being cared for at the sanctuary and have been 'adopted' by one of the other families. Nicky was telling me they have some sixty other signets all collected under similar circumstances. Nature can be very cruel but occasionally perhaps we can do something to 'help out'. Nice one Stuart!

Mike (Over Easy) Baker

### Housekeeping and Winter Reminders

I have been asked by the committee to remind all members to (a) do their own washing up and not just leave things in the sink. (b) leave the galley area as they would wish to find it and (c) take your rubbish home with you whenever possible. Thanks folks.

Winter's coming but NOW is the time to start thinking about winterizing your boats. If you don't believe me just take a wander up the bank a look at the state of some of the dinghies and their covers. Some simple precautions taken early can make all the difference.

1. Check your boat for flaky varnish and paint (inside and out) and, if possible, do something about it.
2. Check your boat cover, is it still waterproof? Are its securing straps still good?
3. Check your pickets and tie down lines. Are they secure?
4. Do your hull bungs and or self bailers work okay? Have you ever seen the damage ice can do to a boat because rain water can't drain out?

Mike (Over Easy) Baker



### SAILING SECRETARY REPORT

Easter was early this year so the sailing season started with the Easter Egg Trophy on the 27 March. We were fortunate there was no current although the NE wind was rather light for the afternoon race; we managed to fit in four short races. Although there were only 5 boats out racing was very close; there were 3 ties in the Boat Handicap results and 4 in the Personal Handicap results.

The big event of the year was hosting the Mid Thames inter-club event on 30 April for the first time. It was a very fine day but the wind was rather light and patchy especially in the afternoon. If we had had much more wind it would have been very difficult to have a single start with the 19 boat entry. There was a slight current and this gave a big advantage to the faster boats like the Merlin and Enterprise of Hampton SC which managed 2 laps before many boats had done one lap. Hampton SC won and Aquarius were 2nd. Apart from the light wind it was a highly successful event.

The open days on 15-16 May were hot and fine although a rather light wind; there was enough wind to give quite a large number of visitors a reasonable sail. We gained a few new members.

The Regatta on 18-19 June had very fine days but the wind was very variable and fluky; much better for the Jazz/BBQ evening than for sailing. Unusually all the boats had a lady helm for the Ladies/Novice race.

The Hampton SC Regatta on 25-26 June had perfect weather with a 5 to 10 knt wind straight up the reach giving excellent sailing. Richard Cannon won the Handicap Class and Charles Dennis was 2nd Laser.

From July on there have been a lot of poor sailing days with light and very fluky winds. The visit to Bewl on 29 August was an exception where there were about perfect sailing conditions; hot and sunny with an 8 to 12 knot wind. Very different from the Late Spring Bank Holiday visit when it was cold, wet and no wind.

There were Signet open meetings at Paxton Lakes, Grafham Water, Fishers Green and Ferry Meadows, and the Signet Nationals at Ullswater. Richard Cannon, Mike Baker, Keith Hatton, Michael Stevens and Robert Britton supported these events with excellent results. All the meetings other than Paxton, the first one, had excellent sailing conditions.

Richard won the first 6 races for the Signet Senior Points Trophy so let Michael helm his Signet ST368 for the last two Open meetings. Robert Britton crewed for Michael in the last meeting at Ferry Meadows. Michael did excellently to win two races and come 2nd in the 3rd race, which Mike Baker won with Keith Hatton as crew. Michael would have won the Novice Points Trophy but winning Ferry Meadows made him ineligible. Richard won the Signet Nationals, with Robert Britton crewing.

The Aquarius Spring and Summer series have been completed; Charles Dennis won the the Spring series on Boat Handicap and Graham Thompson won on Personal Handicap. Graham Thompson won the Summer series both on Boat and Personal Handicap.

## Social Calendar Dates For Your Diary

Saturday 1 October	Working party from 10:30 to 15:30. Suggest that you bring gloves and wellies and tree loppers if you have them. Diana is planning a chilli + baked potato lunch.
Saturday 5 November	Kempton Park Fireworks and a social with hot food provided at the Club afterwards. For cut price (£4 instead of £5) advance tickets contact Richard Cannon on 01932 786636 by Wednesday 2 November; meet & park at Richard's at 7:00 pm for a short stroll to Kempton Park with fireworks start-ing at 7:45 pm. For more details see: <a href="http://www.kemptonfireworks.org.uk/">www.kemptonfireworks.org.uk/</a>
Saturday 19 November 8 pm	Annual Dinner. Please book tickets early, numbers strictly limited. See menu choice and booking arrangements with this newsletter. Book by November 5 for discounted tickets, subject to availability.
Saturday 3 December	AGM, prize giving, and end of season party (7:30 for 8 pm).
<b>2006</b>	
Saturday 11 February	Ladies Night
Saturday 18 March	Start of Season Party

### Aquarius Sailing Club Annual Dinner Saturday 19 November 7:30 for 8:00

The annual dinner will be held in the Clubhouse:-

Dress: Smart/Smart casual

Price £23 (£25 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 45 members on first come first served basis

This is a very popular dinner so earliest booking is advised; 5 November at the latest.

To secure tickets please complete the included Dinner Menu entering:-

1. Menu selections ticked

2. Cheque payable to Aquarius SC

(£23 per person, £25 after 5 November)

3. Stamped addressed envelope for returning your tickets

Send to Diana Carpenter

11 Chestnut Avenue

EWELL, Surrey KT19 0SY

Tel: 020 8393 8029

#### PLEASE ORDER BY 5 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 5 November when any remaining tickets will be allocated.

**If anyone has items they would like to donate to the raffle would they please leave them behind the bar for Bob Sumner to wrap.**

### News of Members - Joan Bray

We extend a warm welcome to the following new members and wish them many happy and fulfilling years with Aquarius

Stephen Anderson, Don & Helen Barnett, Andy Brockley, Mike & Jan Mason, Carl Wheat, Catherine Bridger & Sarah Herbert

### Condolences

We are sad to hear of the death of Len Palmer earlier this year who with the help of Daphne was a former secretary and enthusiastic member of Aquarius until he retired from sailing in 1997.

Our deepest condolences go to Daphne and family.

### Annual General Meeting, Prize Giving And End Of Season Party Saturday 3rd December At 7.30 For 8.00

This is the last event of the season and your support is greatly appreciated,

Several items are to be discussed, most importantly the election of your new Commodore, Officers and Committee. An additional item to the agenda is the ratification of changes to the rules in compliance with Bar Certificate regulations.

The meeting normally lasts an hour and is followed by Prize giving presided over by Richard Cannon and our End of Season Party with it's traditional mulled wine and mince pies.

Hope to see you there.

Joan Bray