



AQUARIUS S.C.

THE MAIN SHEET

Autumn 2008 Edition

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The Commodore Writes - Nigel Knowles

By common consent it has been a miserable summer (did it ever arrive?), but in true AQSC style we have made the most of it! True we have not had the best of sailing conditions and our venerable sailing secretary Richard has been heard to remark there are so many more people attending Sunday teas than there are on his sailing register that the "S" in AQSC should really mean "Social". Nevertheless recent weeks have seen the Club boats well used and it has been good to see a number of new faces at the Club.

On the social side we have enjoyed a Midsummer madness cruise to the Magpie, a BYO Barbeque followed by a cruise upstream to watch the Sunbury Regatta's fireworks, Mike Baker's quiz evening and a splendid evening of light-hearted "gypsy" music led by Pat Halling. We are indeed fortunate to have such talent in the Club - thank you Pat.

Looking ahead the Club's Annual Dinner is on November 15 (details and a booking form are included in this newsletter) and is followed by the AGM, Prize Giving and End of Season Party on 6 December.

As in recent years, although the sailing programme formally finishes on November 9, we will endeavour to provide safety boat cover on Sundays for those intrepid sailors who wish to continue sailing. The "once a month" Sunday lunches, followed by afternoon activities aimed at younger members will also be resumed.

The programme of refurbishment of the Clubhouse has taken a back seat over the summer, but Bodgitt and Co hope to resurrect it during the winter months with completion of the long scheduled kitchen make-over (yes really Diana!). They were however summoned into action to repair the damage caused by the recent break-in, and in quick time rebuilt and strengthened the Bos'n's store, back door and bar door. We are also replacing the alarm with a more modern sophisticated (and noisier) system. It is regrettable that the damage these miscreants caused is out of all proportion to the value of items taken.

Over recent years Bodgitt & Co's programme of improvements has meant that the Club has had to dig into its financial reserves. The Management Committee is now considering what further developments should be undertaken and is also reviewing whether changes are needed to our subscriptions.

An article giving the background to these deliberations is elsewhere in this newsletter, and I urge you all to think about the issues raised and make your views known: Any changes that the Management Committee feel to be necessary will be put to the AGM. This is when the Officers and Management Committee are elected (for which there are always vacancies!), but just as importantly it is an opportunity for the membership at large to have their say and to discuss what you want of your Club.

There is always a tendency for things to continue unchanged because "we always do that", so please think what you like about the Club and what you don't like, what we do and what we might do, what we could do better or more/less etc. and then air your views at the meeting.

This being the last newsletter of the year, I conclude by thanking all members of the Committee for their good work and indeed all members who have served the Club in different ways. I look forward to seeing as many as possible at the AGM.

News of Members - *Joan Bray*

We warmly welcome the following new members and wish them fair winds and a very enjoyable future with Aquarius:-

Malcolm Bradshaw & Family
Phillippa Godden & Family
Nick Hornsey & Family
Garry Lynch & Family

Fifty Years On And Still Going Strong

Congratulations from everybody at Aquarius to Joan and George Bray who celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary on Saturday 6th September. It couldn't have happened to a nicer couple. Keep on trucking guys.

Open Bosun Dinghy Regatta

Tony Hopkins noticed that on the weekend of 4-5 of October this event was being held at the Royal Navy Sailing Centre at Portsmouth and boats could be provided; it was added to the program of events.

Tony Hopkins with John Neale and Frank Rainsborough with Jim Lowden from QMSC entered.

Four races were scheduled Saturday and two on Sunday but unfortunately it was very windy, 20 to 30 knts, and only the the first two races were held.

There were 28 Entries and our members did well for Frank to come 7th and Tony 14th.

Richard Cannon

Midsummer Madness Cruise

The years 'Midsummer Madness' cruise was held on the evening of Wednesday 16 July. Nigel's plan was to leave the club at 18:30i'sh and sail up to The Magpie for supper and a couple of beers. The 2007 version of this event was wet with a strong stream running but this year proved to be a little more sailor friendly.

At 18:00 the wind was fair but half an hour later it was dropping, despite the forecasts. Keith Poncia and his wife Gayle in a Skipper 14, John Neil in a Bosun, and Nigel, Tony Hopkins and myself in Lasers set off and managed to get just over half way before the wind died altogether. Richard then took the Bosun and Lasers in tow behind the safety boat and, accompanied by Don's cruiser, we arrived at the Magpie by 19:30. Keith's Skipper had an outboard

so he was able to get there under his own steam.

On arrival we put in to the pubs moorings and found a number of members already there who had come by road. Mike and Jean Hendra had chosen to accompany Richard in the safety boat and Liz Archer and Anne Neale had travelled up on Don's cruiser.

Although we ordered food straight away, before long it became apparent that the pub chef was only just coping. He rapidly started running out of things and finally suspended any further orders. It later turned out he was on his own in the kitchen so it probably wasn't surprising that he was struggling. However, most of us got our orders eventually and a liberal supply of falling down water helped the evening along nicely.

I suppose there must have been about fifteen to twenty members at The Magpie. Not bad for a Wednesday evening. About 20:30 the sailing contingent donned the buoyancy aids and cast off for the return trip to Aquarius. We drifted down on the flow and got back by 21:15. A really good evening and sure to be repeated sometime although the next trip might be to The Phoenix which we understand has had a 'make-over' and we are told is now very good. It also has arguably better moorings. However that's one for the future. Back at the club the regular Wednesday night crowd were in, Nigel cranked up the espresso machine, and we rounded off a really good evening.

Mike (Over Easy) Baker

An Eventful Day in Chichester Harbour Aboard The Jolly Roger 'Trojan' (Or When The Topper Comes A Cropper).

It was a cloudy wet day in Chichester, a day in the week of the SigneT Nationals. Some of the AQSC members had arrived for a day of sailing at this prestigious sea venue. I was sitting awaiting the start of the first race when John and Anne Neale appeared with Rodger Wheeler, Tony Hopkins, the Lunniss Family, Graham Thompson and Bryan Clements. Anne Neale suggested that we (we being Ann Turner and myself, both SigneT veterans) might like to join Rodger, herself and Onnie Lunniss and son Dominic on Trojan for a trip around the harbour.

Over four hours later we returned from a splendid trip out. We'd watched the SigneT race close up and personal, seen Mike and Keith capsize spectacularly twice, along with quite a few oth-

ers; managed to avoid a nasty accident when a Topper wrapped itself around the bow of Trojan. John Neale thought we'd acquired a figurehead but Rodger skilfully reversed, or should I say, went astern and narrowly avoided grounding on a sandbank. We made it to Bosham, Dell Quay, Itchenor and back following the narrow channel between the exquisite yachts.

Anne Turner proved a useful crew member nimbly sprinting onto the foredeck and furling the jib. We were also asked to aid a sailboat in trouble. Anne Neale returned with a very wet behind having sat on a squelching cushion.

Rodger reassured us that the rotten floor repair done some weeks before wouldn't re-leak. Onnie managed to make to make us all tea and biscuits,

courtesy of Rodger while her son Dominic had a good sleep.

On our return there were some cold wet sailors awaiting us on dry land without their car keys or money. We'd had such a lovely time that I think we were forgiven. Thanks to Rodger (from a non sailor) for a truly memorable day.

Lyn Baker



Aquarius Quiz Night 13 September

This evening was part of the annual social programme put together way back in January. I've done two or three before over the years but they were themed to go along with the food (i.e. Indian and Chinese). This one was, thankfully, just general knowledge based.

About 38 members turned up on the night and Richard Cannon immediately set to work taking orders for the fish and chips supper. The quiz itself started about 20:00 and was contested between

four teams. Richard and Diana Carpenter arrived with supper just after 21:00 and things went very quiet while everybody tucked in.

By the end of the evening some one hundred questions had been posed and answered, or not. The results were very close with the 'River' team finally winning by a few points. They were presented with the Aquarius Quiz Trophy and a carton of chocolates.

Everybody seemed to enjoy themselves and my grateful thanks go to

Frank Rainsborough's grandchildren Millie & Noah for their assistance in scoring the quiz, Pete behind the bar, Richard and Diana for looking after the food and to Gordon Courtney who did a lot of the clearing up afterwards.

Judging by their popularity there's bound to be more quizzes, so if you feel like putting one together, get in touch and we'll see if we can fit it into next years programme.

Mike (wiz quizzes.com) Baker

AQSC At Bewl Valley SC (24 August)

Next to Ullswater I can't think of a better sailing venue. Bewl has it all; huge water, unrestricted wind, fantastic clubhouse and all in beautifully landscaped surroundings. It's good of BVSC to allow us to go down every year and use their facilities. I've lost count of the number of years the SigneT's have been going there and recently we have been encouraging AQSC members to go and sample 'big water' sailing.

This time, as with last year, there wasn't a regatta being held, it was just free sailing but hey! There's nothing wrong with that. To ensure an early start on Monday I took Over Easy home on Friday having first spent an hour in the trailer park fighting through waist high nettles and getting my road trailer around or over a number of foreign objects.

In the event three SigneT's made it this year, Richard Cannon with ST368 (June), myself with ST369 (Over Easy) and Keith Hatton with ST858 (The Saint). In addition there was Liz Archer who came with Richard, Bryan Clements who came with Tony Hopkins and brought a club Laser and Topper, Rodger Wheeler with a Bosun and Team Lunniss with their Pacer. Additionally Jean & Mike Hendra came down for a sail as did Frank Rainsbor-

ough and his two grand children Noah & Emilia, who I believe likes to be called Millie. I also spoke to Keith & Gayle Poncia although they opted not to go out in the boats.

The conditions at Bewl were pretty boisterous all day. The morning was 3 to 4 from the SW but in the afternoon it was 4 occasionally gusting 5. The wind wasn't particularly consistent and a capsize to windward was something to watch out for but despite the wind and the spray being thrown up over the bows just about everybody went out at sometime or other.

My abiding memory will be Bryan. He'd not had much luck in the Topper so I suggested a sail in Over Easy. I did warn him however that he was bound to get wet. At first he wasn't too keen but then changed his mind. We left the pontoon and went straight up onto a screaming reach. The water spray over the bows was virtually continuous and Bryan took the brunt of it. About two thirds the way across we tacked and returned. On the reach back not quite as much water came over the bows but that that did was far greater in volume and poor Bryan got absolutely soaked.

Back at the dock he was out of the boat like a drowned rat. I apologized profusely but Bryan was very good

about it as said that I had warned him it would be a wet sail. It was at that point he said he hadn't brought a change of clothes and squelched off up the pontoon to try and dry out enough for Tony to allow him into his car for the home-ward journey.

By 4'ish I think we had all had enough. Keith had managed three cap-sizes, Tony had three and several others had come pretty close. Everybody was aching in places they didn't even know they had places. A hot shower was never so welcome.

On the way back some of us made our usual stop at The Grasshopper at Westerham for some falling down water and a carvery. This pub has a simply enormous car park so cars towing boats is not a problem. The food, up to last year, was pretty average too (that's 'very good' in Over Easy speak) however there had obviously been a change of management and chef since then and the place had really gone downhill. Both the service and the food left much to be desired.

Apart from that I do hope everybody enjoyed themselves and many thanks to Richard for liaising with BVSC and arranging everything.

Mike (Over Easy) Baker

Work Party On Saturday 4 October

These days are absolutely vital to stay on top of the huge amount of ground work and external maintenance that seems to pile up each year.

Despite being hard and sometimes dirty work they are always well attended and 4 October was no exception. Some twenty-five people turned up to paint, trim, weed and clear brambles. Joan and George supplied an excellent lunch, Chicken a la King, Macaroni Cheese and Apple Pie with Ice-cream as I recall. Stuart did an outstanding job of clearing up after lunch.

To everybody who turned up, too many to name but you know who you were, can I offer you all a big 'thank you' on behalf of the Management Committee. Your efforts were much appreciated and the club now looks so much better for its external spruce up.

Mike (I came, I saw, I trimmed)
Baker

Final 2008 SigneT Open Meeting

For as long as I can remember the final SigneT open meeting has always been held on a Sunday at Ferry Meadows in Neene Park, Peterborough. It is usually preceded by a SigneT Class Owners Assoc. committee meeting on the Saturday. Nowadays that is held at Pat & Jenny Overs who live in Little Paxton, near St. Neot's. Coincidentally Little Paxton SC is also the venue of the first 'open' of the season.

This year two Aquarius boats attended the meeting. ST368 with Richard his crew Rob and ST369 with Lyn & myself. No, Lyn doesn't sail, for this meeting that was Keith Hatton's job. He and Madeline drove across country to Paxton from a family bash that I believe started on Friday.

The committee meeting mainly centred on alternative venues to the Alexandra Palace RYA dinghy show following a decision at the Chichester AGM not to attend the 2009 show on cost grounds.

This year the meeting attracted seven boats. The conditions were warm and sunny but with virtually no wind, which I have to say is unusual for Ferry Meadows.

Three races were held but they were drifters with the occasional zephyr of a breeze out of the SE just to get the helm's hopes up. All three were sailed over figure of eight courses, short on duration, with two of the three being finished at the next convenient mark rather than the actual transit.

Aquarius SC did quite well with ST368 winning the open and ST369 coming third. Richard also won the annual 'Traveller's Trophy' for the best points score over the whole 2008 series.

The drive back from Peterborough featured the usual delays on the M25, I guess made worse by the additional traffic enticed out by the good weekend weather.

Mike (Over Easy) Baker

In Town without my Car

Sponsored by the London Assembly this event was part of Richmond Council's effort to champion sustainable transport, boost the environment and encourage a healthier lifestyle; it is a world wide campaign and over 40 countries take part.

This year the event was partnered and on the same day as the Great River Race which is rowed and or paddled from Ham to Greenwich.

Aquarius SC was contacted by Richmond Council a few weeks earlier and invited to participate in the 'In town without my car' festival to be held on Richmond Green on 13 September 2008.

The brief I received, apart from outlining the purpose, indicated that the event was free, that all facilities would be provided, including free parking for stall holders around The Green. I immediately accepted the invitation, which seemed like an amazing publicity and recruitment opportunity and set about planning what we could do. Six years ago we had exhibited at something similar in Bushy Park I used that as a model.

I started by updating all the club information handouts and then got some new graphics together for the display boards. Dave Jennings and I then spent the Sunday prior to the show scrubbing the clubs Laser Pico which was to form the focus of the clubs stand.

Once the handouts were printed and the Pico was on my road trailer we were well on the way. George Bray offered to help on the day so at 08:00 on Saturday the 13th I picked him up and we headed for Richmond.

On arrival we were met by a lad who was sporting a tee shirt with 'staff' emblazoned across the front. He ushered us into a parking space right outside The Cricketers' pub and then stuck a huge great parking exemption ticket on the windshield. This was intended to keep the traffic wardens (excuse the foul language) off our case throughout the day. I hadn't left the car for more than two minutes to hunt out our 'pitch' before the first two were eyeing up the BMW and Pico like a couple of hungry sharks.

At this point boy wonder in the tee shirt reappeared and pointing to the ticket on the windshield, said they should have been briefed on the show and parking arrangements and suggested that they push-off somewhere else. Good bloke my tee shirt friend and the sharks cruised off looking like someone had just pinched their dinner. We got the stand up and the Pico rigged pretty quickly, George is a dab hand with the old bunting when he gets going. Once finished we had 15 minutes to kill so we wandered over to the corner bistro for coffee.

The show itself was quite small. There were only twenty or thirty stands ranging from health centres, rambling associations, various cycling organisations and shops, Transdev, RNLI, and various health improvement outfits including holistic yoga and vegan campaigners. We were the only sailing club and the yellow Pico attracted a fair bit of attention, especially from the kids who crawled all over it. We had quite a lot of interest from families, couples and singletons.

If half the people that we gave paperwork to actually come to the club, it will have been worth the effort. I think the organisers were hoping that a lot of people would drift over from watching the start of the Great River Race but I don't think that happened to any great extent.

One or two trips to The Cricketers for a brew helped the day pass and at 16:00 we de-rigged the boat and packed up. I must thank George for all the work and help he provided during the day, I know it was tiring because we were on our feet virtually the whole time and the next day I ached. I can't think it was any easier for George but he did a great job and I'm very grateful. Thanks mate!

We got home about 17:30 and then had to think about getting back to Aquarius by 19:00 for the Quiz Night. On the way back a brake pad warning light came on in my car. Another job for next week!

Mike (Over Easy) Baker

General Stuff

We have an extraordinary amount of 'lost property' this year. Mostly clothing, which can be found in the containers in the men's changing room. Claim it by end of season, or loose it. We also have some very nice spectacles behind the bar in a 'Specsavers' case. Someone must be missing these!

Once again a polite reminder that it is essential to close and lock the car park gates when you arrive and leave the club. This is not just for the obvious security reasons it is also a requirement of our TWU lease. Don't leave it to other people ... it's your responsibility.

The trailer park is currently a shambles. Not just because we didn't get around to strimming the nettles on the

4th October but more because of what's in it. It's intended for road trailers that are required to be clearly marked with their owners name and boat number.

What we actually have is a fair amount of 'scrap metal' that will never see a road again. Please ... if you have a trailer in the park make sure it is clearly identified because very soon the Management Committee is going to have a clear out and any un-identified or un-claimed metal work will be sold for it's scrap value, we even have a buyer lined up. You have been warned!

By the time you get this newsletter the 2008 sailing season will be almost over. You should now be thinking about winterising your dinghies. Make

sure the bungs are removed. Have you ever seen what water and ice can do to a hull if it's not drained out? Remove hatch covers, sails, rudders etc. and make sure your boat cover is in one piece and secure, at the moment many aren't.

Also make sure your dinghies are well picketed. One line to ensure it cannot float away in the event of flood and another to ensure it can't roll, causing damage not only to itself but to other craft. This is more common than you would think. Again, quite a few are un-secured.

*Mike (Over Easy ...
if not tied down) Baker*

Some Much Needed Input To 'The Mainsheet'.

I am much indebted to John & Annie Neale who live just a few doors away from me in Stoneleigh. I had mentioned to them that I didn't get much input to the club newsletter and that people must get sick and tired of reading the stuff I keep churning out.

John & Annie had obviously thought about this and turned up one evening with a compendium of wit and frivolity put together by a friend of theirs. They suggested that I might be able to use some of it in the next newsletter.

My immediate reaction, after reading it, was to cancel the next newsletter and publish what they given me instead. However sense prevailed and so I will include portions of it over the next few additions of 'Mainsheet'. I trust you will enjoy reading it as much as I did, and once again my thanks to John and Annie for thinking of this.

Reputedly these were answers given in response to the challenges of some exam questions. Some students must have thought that, if you don't know an answer, you might get some marks by making the weary examiners smile a little... Here we go...

1. English - Define the word 'monotony'.
Monotony is being married to the same person all your life.
2. Use the word 'judicious' in a sentence to show you understand its meaning.
Hands that judicious can be soft as your face.
3. What does the word 'benign' mean?
Benign is what you will be after you be eight.
4. What is the correct use of a semi-colon?
Only to be used as a last resort, a semi-colon is a partial removal of the intestines.
5. Technology - What is a turbine?
Something an Arab wears on his head.
6. History - What is Britain's highest award for valour in war?
Nelson's Column.
7. Who did not welcome the return of the prodigal son?
The fatted calf.
8. What is a Hindu?
It lays eggs.
9. Name some famous pilgrimages.
Muslims used to go to Gamages but now it's closed. Christians still go on pilgrimage to Lord's.
10. Geography - Name the four seasons.
Salt, pepper, mustard and vinegar.

Knowing your age - You'd better believe it!

1. You and your teeth don't sleep together.
2. Your try to straighten out the wrinkles in your socks and discover you aren't wearing any.
3. At the breakfast table you hear snap, crackle, pop and you're not eating cereal.
4. Your back goes out but you stay home.
5. When you wake up looking like your drivers license picture.
6. It takes two tries to get up from the couch.
7. When your idea of a night out is sitting on the patio.
8. When happy hour is a nap.
9. When you're on vacation and your energy runs out before your money does.
10. When you say something to your kids that your mother said to you and you always hated it.

New Proverbs

1. If you're too open minded, your brains will fall out.
2. Age is a very high price to pay for maturity.
3. Before you criticize someone walk a mile in his shoes.
That way, if he gets angry, he'll be a mile away - and barefoot.
4. Going to church doesn't make you a Christian any more than going to a garage makes you a mechanic.
5. Artificial intelligence is no match for natural stupidity.
6. A clear conscience is usually the sign of a bad memory.
7. A closed mouth gathers no feet.
8. If you must choose between two evils, pick the one you've never tried before.
9. My idea of housework is to sweep the room with a glance.
10. Not one shred of evidence supports the notion that life is serious.

If you've found something of interest or that amuses you, if you've an event or an exhibition that might be of interest, let's hear about it. If you've got a favourite recipe, read a good book or been to an interesting place abroad let's hear about it. If you want to write a short story or compose some poetry lets see it.

I could write a book about spending a day at the Maritime Museum at Greenwich or the Royal Navy dockyard at Chatham but I'd rather you guys wrote something, from your viewpoint. So come on, sharpen up your quill pens or crank up your word processors, forget what people might think and write about something that we could put in an edition of 'Mainsheet' next year.

You can even add a few photographs to illustrate your opus. It's a lot easier than you think and it also means I don't have to write so much, which I'm sure everybody would be happy about.

Mike (Easy Over ... just for a change) Baker



John Neale

Break In At Aquarius Sailing Club

It was early afternoon on Tuesday 30 September when I got a call from Richard Cannon. He had just been talking to Bryan Clements, who had returned to the club, having played golf on Monday, to find it had been broken into.

Richard's car had a flat battery and having phoned the Police he was anxious that somebody should go to the club to open the gates and see them in.

I arrived twenty minutes later and Bryan showed me what he'd found. Part of the Bosun store wall, adjacent to the door, had been ripped off, presumably to get at tools that could be used. The club's back door had been forced open. An attempt to get into the store room

had failed. The bar door was forced, ripping the locks out. The till and safe had been emptied and drink and chocolate bars stolen. The telephone in the foyer had been smashed off the wall and a garbage sack upended on the floor.

Half an hour later Richard arrived with Nigel. Twenty minutes after that the Police arrived and went through the place with Nigel. They concluded it was an amateur job, probably kids looking for drug money. They said they would send a crime scene investigation unit because there was a good chance they could get some finger prints. Until then we were asked to leave things just as they were.

Nigel put together a shopping list of items so we could begin the repair work as soon as the Police were finished. The finger print police women visited on Wednesday and Bodgit & Son started work on Thursday.

First priorities were the bar and back doors and the Bosun's hut which needed a whole new wall to the left of the door. As of now, 3 October, work is ongoing to ensure the PIR activated lighting works efficiently and to install an enhanced alarm system. This is essential because in the Police view there's a good chance that at some time or another they will be back.

Mike (Over Easy) Baker

Cundy Trophy 14 September

The Cundy Trophy is for a long distance race and for a good long distance sail we need to go upstream in an Easterly wind. A date isn't scheduled in the program as it is very unlikely to provide a good sail but it is sailed concurrent with the first afternoon race when the conditions are suitable.



On September 14 although there was a 2knt current the 5 to 7 knt steady East wind seemed ideal and the OOD, Richard Cannon, decided to hold the Cundy race.

The first mark was down stream and after it was rounded the patrol boat went upstream just ahead of the fleet of 6 boats for 35 minute. Beyond the lock progress was slower due to the faster current. The second mark was laid below the weir opposite Wilsons' Ferry; probably the furthest we have race upstream.

The last boat rounded the second mark at 40 minutes, the first boat finished after 1:02 hrs and the last one after 1:08 hrs. It was a very enjoyable sail and the Cundy Race couldn't have been held in better conditions.

Sailing a Club Laser Hanna Lunniss did extremely well to the keep up with the experience helm and won the Cundy Trophy on Personal Handicap by a big margin.

Richard Cannon

Hungarian Gypsy Music Evening

Over recent years Pat Halling and a variety of his musician friends have staged many musical evenings at Aquarius. Strings, harmonicas and wind instruments have all been featured.

This year Pat elected to introduce Hungarian gypsy music and what an evening it turned out to be. Fiery and passionate described the music which was matched by an equally hot and spicy goulash supper prepared by our equally fiery and passionate gypsy chef, Diana Carpenter (sorry Di, couldn't resist that!) with the help of her brother Richard Cook who provided the Goulash and Eiko Thompson who provided the rice.

Pat is amazingly talented on the violin, as were his fellow musicians John Sutton, Musical Director Hampton Choral Society, on double base and Eddie Hession, one of Europe's finest accordionists, on piano accordion.

The programme they presented was varied and engaging and I felt very privileged that they were prepared to take time out and come and entertain us in this way. Thanks guys for a wonderful evening. Thanks also to Rodger for organising everything and to Diana for the superb gypsy supper.

Mike (Quite forgotten how much I like Goulash) Baker



Pat Halling

Rodger Wheeler

John Sutton

Eddie Hession

Penalty Turns - Richard Cannon

It has been reported to me that some helm are doing their penalty turns a long time after the incident. The rules make statements like 'as

AQSC Development Strategy - Nigel Knowles

Introduction

Some time ago the decision was made to embark on a substantial program of refurbishing and improving the Club's premises. In recent years we have progressively added a store room, renovated the ladies and gents changing rooms and shower, rewired and re-carpeted the clubroom, installed new windows and built the quarter deck. One further project that is planned is to refurbish the galley over the coming winter.

This programme of improvement has been funded in part out of our regular income (i.e. mostly membership dues) and in part from cash reserves. In consequence our reserves are now substantially lower than they have been for many years and the Management Committee feels that it would be imprudent to erode them much further.

We thus face a dilemma - do we curtail the improvement programme? - or should we boost our income by increasing subs and/or charges for social and other activities?

This article sets down some ideas to act as a focus for an informed discussion about how the Club should develop. The ideas are not intended to be firm proposals; they are meant only to inspire thinking and debate.

Ethos

Traditionally we have always had a DIY ethos with a strong element of "make do and mend". This keeps costs down and helps promote a sense of camaraderie. The Byelaws stipulate that members are responsible for keeping their berth(s) tidy and that full members take their turn on the duty roster. For some (prospective) members this may be too demanding of their time (i.e. a duty day is one day less of sailing).

Some Clubs allow members to opt out of a duty in return for a higher membership fees. Conversely some Clubs reduce membership fees in return for a regular duty (e.g. cleaning, grass strimming). At the other end of the spectrum many bigger Clubs use professional staff for some of their operations (e.g. coaching catering) which increases substantially the cost of membership- either directly or indirectly.

Facilities

Our facilities (club room, changing rooms, car park, berths etc) are generally adequate for the current number of members. True, the Clubroom can appear small and somewhat limiting for some social occasions and some have argued that we would struggle if the membership were to grow to any extent.

However Clubs like Hampton, Minima and Thames all manage with similar size facilities and have substantially larger memberships. Nonetheless a number of improvements are feasible and would arguably make life more comfortable.

In addition to the new galley and refurbishment of the launch ramp which are already planned, these could include

- Remodelling the bar to provide more storage (by using part of the foyer) and better fridge and freezer facilities
- New, more secure entry doors to the foyer and quarter deck
- Decking over the old concrete top deck and expanding its size
- Providing glass side panels to the roofed area of the quarter deck to create a conservatory for the cooler months. The panels would be demountable so that they could be removed in the summer months.
- A heavier weight, customised "tent" to cover the quarter deck for social events
- A floating pontoon alongside the laser berths to facilitate launching and retrieval

Club boats

We currently have eight club boats; (3 Lasers, Pico, Topper, Fusion, Grad and Bosun). They are generally low maintenance and we make no charge for their use. In the last couple of years they have been quite well used, especially by new members and they appear to be an effective way of attracting people to the Club and introducing them to sailing.

Several are beginning to look a bit tired and it would be sensible to replace some of the worn out equipment (e.g. laser sails, foils and riveted fittings), before they fail completely. In addition if we want to promote an active youth section then further boats (e.g. picos) and/or alternative rigs (e.g. laser radial) are needed.

Finance

Subs have not increased since 1994 and berth fees since 1997. Moreover the entry fee and Club boat hire fees have been waived in recent years. The cost of membership, in real terms, is at an all-time low (the increase in RPI is some 40%). Membership is cheaper than all other clubs in area.

While the Club's finances are quite sound, we cannot continue to improve and develop the Club's facilities as we have been doing without extra income.

It can be argued that the membership fees are low enough for people to join the club who only intend to make casual use of it. If membership costs were higher then members would be more likely to question what value they got from the club and make more use of it.

There is anecdotal evidence that a number of people find the boat storage charges low enough not to have to worry whether they use their boat or not. While the Club's byelaws stipulate that all boats must have a current EA license and therefore be in a seaworthy state, clearly a number are not compliant. The worst ones reflect badly on the Club and arguably tend to attract attention from passing yobs. Should we increase the fee for those that don't comply?

There are also a number of trailers that appear to have been dumped on the premises; if we were to make a nominal charge, then it would be easier to identify the owner and/or get rid of abandoned ones.

The table below sets down a possible fee structure in response to some of these points which would increase the Club's income by approx 10% other things being equal. I emphasise that these are not firm proposals, but are put forward to provide a basis for discussion about whether we should revise our subs.

The Management Committee will be making proposals to the AGM on December 6 for any changes: please feel free to air your views with any Committee Member before then or email me directly.

Possible Revised Fee Structure

Subs	current	possible
Full Members	£48.00	£55.00
Full Members (TW Plc staff)		
Boat owner	£24.00	£27.00
Non boat owner	£11.00	£13.00
Family Members - Sailing partner / £ 6.00		£12.00
Non sailing partner / Children	£ 6.00 each	£ 6 (£12max)
Junior Members - under 18 years	£10.00	£10.00
Junior Members - 18 - 21 years	£14.00	£14.00
Berth Fees		
1st Dinghy	£ 22.00	£25.00
each additional Dinghy	£ 35.00	£40.00
Dinghies without EA license		£60.00
Trailers		£ 5.00

Berth fees apply to all craft left anywhere on the premises longer than 1 month.

Social Calendar - Dates For Your Diary

Sat 8 Nov	Kempton Park Fireworks and a social with hot food at the Club afterwards. Note change of date. For cut price (£5.50 instead of £8) advance tickets contact Richard Cannon on 01932 786636 by Wednesday 5 November; meet & park at Richard's at 7:00 pm for a short stroll to Kempton Park
Sat 15 Nov	AQSC Annual Dinner starting at 7:30 pm.
Sat 6 Dec	AGM, Prize Giving and End of Season Party starting at 7:30 pm..
Sun 14 Dec	Cheats Christmas lunch and Games tournament.
2009	
Sun 18 Jan	Lunch and sailing rules Quiz
Sun 15 Feb	Ladies Valentine Lunch
Sun 1 Mar	Lunch and frostbite Cruise
Sat 21 Mar	Start of Season Party
Sun 29 Mar	Start of sailing

Aquarius Sailing Club Annual Dinner Saturday 15 November 7:30 for 8:00

The annual dinner will be held in the Clubhouse:-
 Dress: Smart
 Price £25 includes:-
 Reception drink at 7:30
 Four course meal by Professional Caterers
 Table wine
 Coffee/Tea and mints
 Candle light, soft music, and good company
 Limited to 45 members on first come first served basis
 This is a very popular dinner so earliest booking is advised; 9 November at the latest.
 To secure tickets please complete the included Dinner Menu entering:-
 1. Menu selections for each person ticked.
 2. Cheque, £25 per person, payable to Aquarius SC
 3. Stamped addressed envelope for returning your tickets
 4. Note that Phone bookings will **NOT** be accepted.

Send to Diana Carpenter
 11 Chestnut Avenue
 EWELL, Surrey KT19 0SY

PLEASE ORDER BY 9 NOVEMBER

Any tickets not sold by then will be offered to guests of members. Please include (G) against guests, they will be placed on a waiting list until 9 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 at the club, by the 9th November, for Anne and Leo Bond to wrap.

Annual General Meeting, Prize Giving and End of Season Party Saturday 6 December at 7:30 pm for 8 pm

Your presence is requested for the Annual General Meeting, the most important meeting of the year where the future administration of the club will be decided for the coming year.

Matters for discussion include elections for Commodore, Flag Officers and Committee, the club's finances and future plans.

The Annual Prize Giving and End of Season Party will follow including our traditional mulled wine, mince pies and other tasty fare.

Joan Bray

Kempton Park Fireworks Saturday 8 November (Note change in date) Richard Cannon

It is the largest display in Greater London; afterwards we will return to the clubhouse for soup & victuals.

Richard Cannon can obtain advance tickets for members from a local shop for £5.50, instead of £8 and queuing on the night; please ring him on 01932 786636 by 5 November if you would like him to buy you tickets.

Members can meet and park at Richard's house, 77 Saxonbury Avenue, Lower Sunbury, by 7:00pm, for a short stroll to Kempton Park avoiding car park jams.

Alternatively Tickets in advance can be obtained from
<http://www.kemptonfireworks.org.uk>,
 up to 1 November.

Sailing Beyond The End of Season

The last scheduled racing for this year is on the 9 November but if the weather and river conditions are suitable for sailing then safety boat cover will be provided beyond this date. Members will be informed of intentions by e-mail.



Newsletter Printing By JDC - *Richard Cannon*

This story is **NOT** in the paper version of the newsletter.

Production of the newsletter involves a number of members starting with Mike Baker who writes most of the stories. Most stories reach Richard Cannon by email and he extracts them into the Serif PagePlus Desk Top Publishing programme and lays them out. The completed newsletter is emailed to Laurie Bridges as a PDF (Portable Document Format) file and he checks it for errors. Richard then prints it.

For many years the printed Aquarius Mainsheet newsletters have been photocopied on John Money's copier by Richard and we thank John for that invaluable assistance. However given that John's machine was giving occasional problems, when Frank Rainsborough offered to take on this copying task using the machine at the office where he works, we were pleased to accept, and this is the second issue that he has produced for us! So thank you John for your past help, and thank you Frank, and JDC Independent Financial Advisers (69 The Green, Twickenham, TW2 5TU, Tel 020 8408 6232), for donating these copier costs, and paper!

Richard prints the address labels and gives them and the newsletters to George and Joan Bray who fold them in to envelopes and post them.

Around 25% of members receive newsletters from the website which is a big saving in cost and effort. Richard copies the stories from PagePlus to the Serif WebPlus programme and formats them as web pages and publishes the newsletter to <http://www.sailaquarius.org.uk/> as web pages and as a PDF file that should look just like the paper copy except it is in colour.

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