



AQUARIUS S.C.

THE MAIN SHEET

Spring 2010 Edition

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The Hon. Secretary's Bit

The AGM was again a successful event with 44 members in attendance despite the inclement weather. The good news is that increases are not being made to the membership or berth fees. I will be sending out subscription forms etc in early March so start saving.

Your club officers for this year are as follows :-

Commodore	Tony Hopkins
Vice-Commodore	Graham Thompson
Rear Commodore	Eric Bridgewater
Secretary	Joan Bray
Treasurer	Joan Walkden
Sailing Secretary	Richard Cannon
Boatswain	David Jennings
Harbourmaster	Nigel Knowles
Publicity Officer	Mike Baker
Social Secretary	Diana Carpenter
Bar Manager	Peter Carpenter
Health & Safety Officer	Pat Irving

Additional Members of the Management Committee:-

Ken Ayres, Michael Chipps, Simon Lunniss, John Neale and Rodger Wheeler.

We send our thanks and appreciation for their hard work and loyal service to Laurie Bridges and Bryan Clements who have stood down from their positions as Boatswain and Harbourmaster.

I look forward to seeing you again soon, meanwhile George joins me in wishing you a very happy and successful season.

Joan Bray

Commodore's Report

Tony Hopkins

The Winter seems to have dragged on and on with very little Sun and plenty of cold weather, the thought of capsizing makes me turn to another dram of antifreeze, at present the thought of sailing seems distant but I am looking forward to getting on the water, weather and temperature permitting! I think watching the Winter Olympics also makes the sailing season seem far away.

The club has been active and seen the "Ladies Day Lunch" which was well attended and the club panto was very well attended (oh no it wasn't). There are other social events on the calendar so please do keep abreast of what's going on! And it will soon be time to spruce up the club and the reach with the working party so please make sure that 24 April is in your diary!

There is a large old dead willow tree close to the upstream end of the reach which is in a dangerous condition, it has been cordoned off, please make sure that you keep yourselves and especially children from going too close, we are looking into it being removed.

This sailing season could be a very busy one, we are hosting the Mid-Thames Trophy and a Signet open event. There are the usual visits to Bawl Valley and Hampton regatta plus the club regatta and the Bosun open with the Royal Navy at Whale Island Portsmouth. We also intend to enter the Paxton Lakes SC 40th anniversary 24 hour RNLI race, yes 24 hours!

Cheats' Christmas Lunch

Rodger Wheeler

Feeding the five thousand ? Well I bet it seemed like that.

Tony Hopkins had the unenviable task of producing a Christmas Lunch for 59, the largest number I can remember for a sit down meal at the club.

Tony soon showed that he was up to the challenge starting with a Tomato and Vegetable soup. Everything was served by the 16 younger members of the club.

The main course was a magnum opus with roast chicken , stuffing, bacon wrapped chipolatas, roast and new potatoes and a selection of vegetables. And then there was the vegetarian option. Getting all that cooked in the Aquarius kitchen was quite a feat.

Next came the ticklish business of heating Christmas puds in the microwave ovens. It is a tricky job to heat the puds without exploding the dried fruit all over the inside of the ovens. It went down well with brandy sauce or ice cream.

Everyone enjoyed the event but producing that amount of food took quite a while so as everyone was still chatting over mince pies and coffee, the planned games were postponed till another time. Many thanks to Tony and Cassie and to all those who served, ran the bar and most importantly washed up afterwards.

AQSC Annual Dinner

The annual club dinner is perhaps the high point of the club's social calendar. A black tie and posh frock do and, for once, I can report on this event having had nothing to do with its organisation.

The dinner was professionally catered in the clubhouse by 'Food for Thought'. The menu they had prepared offered something for everyone. Starters included Smoked salmon and Prawn Cocktail or Pumpkin and Parsnip Soup or Seasonal Pate with Crostini.

The main course consisted of Supreme of Chicken stuffed with Brie and Tarragon or Slow Roasted Lamb Shank with Rosemary and Sundried Tomatoes or Portobello Mushroom with Wilted Spinach, Quinoa (don't ask me what that is) with a Creamy Bechamel Sauce (vegetarian). All served with Potatoes and Seasonal Vegetables.

Dessert included a choice of Streusel Berry Tart or Poached Pears in Marsala Wine or Turkish Delight Cheesecake (that's a bit different). This was followed by Cheese and Biscuits, Coffee and Mints; a very good and varied menu.

Diana Carpenter wanted something a 'bit different' this year and had suggested a nautical hat competition with a prize offered for the best creation. It certainly got people thinking. Nobody can ever accuse AQSC members of not entering into the spirit of the event, or maybe they just like dressing up.

The evening started with a reception drink at 7:30pm, followed by the meal at 8:00pm. The table colour scheme for the evening was red and yellow and the old clubhouse looked outstanding in the candlelight. Virtually everybody had designed and manufactured an amazing array of hats which included flashing lighthouses, various boats, fend-offs and helmets. If anything the ladies outdid the gentlemen for sheer imagination and manufacturing expertise.

The meal was a huge success, probably the best ever, and the wine flowed (as it tends to do at Aquarius). Various addresses and toasts were made and then, over coffee there was a sketch suggested and prepared by Messrs Rainsborough and Knowles.



Photos by Mick Rogers for
Frank Rainsborough

Nigel Knowles, Frank (dressed as Lord Nelson) and Rodger Wheeler and all the flag officers poked a bit of fun at current Health and Safety directives. Most of the participants had no idea they were taking part until they were handed their scripts and props immediately before the start. It went down a storm.

Anne & Leo's raffle was as popular as ever and I would imagine made a good profit for the club.

Next Graham announced the winner of the 'nautical hat competition' and I'm a little embarrassed to say that I won it with my party popper firing 'Ketch 22'.

Diana was then presented with flowers from the club and thanked for all her hard work in organising the evening; and, in fact, a huge thank you goes to everybody concerned with the dinner both on the night and during the prior preparation.

It was a grand evening, nobody seemed in any hurry to leave and it went on into the wee small hours. A classic annual dinner!

Mike (Over Easy) Baker



Working Party Sunday the 29th of November

What a foul day! I arrived at 10.40 and expected only a handful of people to turn up because the weather forecast for Sunday was heavy rain; but by 12.00 a.m. there were plenty of hardy souls suitably dressed to battle the elements.

The plan was to de-weed and re-organise the trailer park, and the team set about the task with vigour! Most of the trailers were removed, and the dinghies/cats/cruisers were moved close to the conifers. All the old rusting and incomplete trailers were stacked under the conifers. This clearing work took plenty of manpower and was managed just on 1.30 when a much required lunch was served by Diana Carpenter, Joan Courtney, Pat Irving and Liz Archer, thank you ladies, as we were all wet and out on our feet by then.

Meanwhile Nigel had been lopping the trees along the reservoir tree line and another team had been re-hanging the clubroom curtains.

After lunch came the job of returning all the other trailers neatly into the trailer park, which is now uncluttered and with space for a few more trailers. Anyone who uses the "Trailer Park" please keep it tidy and uncluttered, please consider that other people may need to get out and return their trailers from time to time.

This was the third working party this year and it was great to see such a good turnout in spite of awful weather. Your efforts have made the "Trailer Park" a joy to behold and use, thank you.

Tony Hopkins (Commodore)

Firework Night

What can I say, perhaps same old, same old. It's like Christmas pantomime really. The year wouldn't be the same without these 'traditional' events. It's a bit like going to give the past a future. This year's Kempton Park display was well up to standard and as usual was accompanied by the fun fair and the obligatory smell of beef burgers and onions. Thanks to Richard for organising the tickets, allowing his house to be used as a car park and jumping off place for AQSC's pyromaniacs. Thanks also to Diana and her team for organising the supper back at the club. The soup and 'bangers in a bun' went down very well on a cold night. Pete's coffee went down a storm as well.

Mike (Oh! Ah!) Baker

AGM, Prize Giving and End of Season Party

My reaction to AGM calling notices is a usually a bit unenthusiastic. Nobody ever seems to want to get involved and it usually falls to the same old stalwarts to keep the club ticking over. Would 2009 be any different?

This years AGM was held on Saturday 6 December. George Bray officiated and after 'apologies' & approval of the 'minutes of the last meeting' he invited The Commodore Tony Hopkins to give his annual report.

The Treasurers report, given by Graham Thompson, followed and it appears that the old club is in fairly good shape financially.

Next on the agenda was the election of Flag Officers and Management Committee members. Changes to the Flag Officers concerned Dave Jennings, now Hon. Boatswain, Nigel Knowles, now Hon. Harbourmaster and Diana Carpenter returning as Hon. Social Secretary. All the other positions remain unchanged.

A new and welcome addition to the Management Committee was Ken Ayers. Diana will confirm her Social Committee at a later date.

Graham Thompson was re-elected as Auditor. Any other business was quickly concluded and Richard Cannon was invited to get the prize giving underway.

For details of who won what please go to the clubs excellent website, however it is worth noting that Imogen, Edmund and Andrew Morris did very well winning several trophies. Well done them!

Following the prize giving Diana and her team laid out a brilliant 'supper' of party food accompanied by Joan Walkden's celebrated mulled wine.

Overall a very good evening. Congratulations to our prize winners and thanks to Diana and her team for the outstanding catering.

Mike (Over Easy) Baker

Senior Moments

Thought some of the following might amuse ...

- a. The old don't have to worry about temptation. When you're old temptation avoids you.
- b. These days happy hour is a nap.
- c. I've reached the age when I need my hearing aid and false teeth before I can ask where I left my glasses.
- d. At my age everything has either dried up or leaks.
- e. I'm a dedicated follower of fashion (as long as I don't have to run to keep up)
- f. The first day of retirement is the first day of the rest of your life savings.
- g. Getting old is when you hear snap, crackle and pop before you even get down to breakfast.
- h. You can live without sex but not without your glasses.
- i. If I'd known I was going to live this long I'd have taken better care of myself.
- j. Nostalgic? How? I can't remember a thing.
- k. Retirement: twice the husband on half the income.
- l. Old age? The time of life when actions creak louder than words.

Mike (Retired yes, OAP – not yet awhile) Baker

Some Amusing Observations (well I thought they were)

Only in Americado people order double cheeseburgers, large fries, and a diet coke.

Only in Americado they leave cars worth thousands of dollars in the driveway and put useless junk in the garage.

Only in Americado they put hot dogs in packages of ten and buns in packages of eight..

Only in Americado they have drive-up ATM machines that have Braille lettering.

Ever Wonder ...

Why the sun lightens our hair, but darkens our skin?

Why don't you ever see the headline 'Psychic Wins Lottery'?

Why is 'abbreviated' such a long word?

Why is it that doctors call what they do 'practice'?

Why is lemon juice made with artificial flavour, and dish washing liquid made with real lemons?

Why is the time of day with the slowest traffic called rush hour?

Why isn't there mouse-flavoured cat food?

Why didn't Noah swat those two mosquitoes?

You know that indestructible black box that is used on aeroplanes? Why don't they make the whole plane out of that stuff?

If flying is so safe, why do they call the airport the terminal?

Mike (Over Easy) Baker

Some Boaty Information

The EA is urging people to apply for their 2010 river licences in good time. Apparently some 280 boat owners were stopped and cautioned last year for not having licences of which 27 were prosecuted. The un-powered (dinghy) rate for 2010 (valid to 31/12/10) is £30.50 per boat.

Dates for your 2010 diary:-

6-7 March RYA Dinghy Show at Alexandra Palace

4-6 June Beale Park Boat Show at Pangbourne

30 June – 4 July Henley Royal Regatta

17-18 July Thames Traditional Boat Rally

19-23 July Swan Upping

28-30 August IWA 2010 National Festival at Beale Park

Mike (Over Easy) Baker

You Were Warned

In the last edition of 'The Mainsheet' we reminded everyone that it was time to winterise and picket your boats. In late November we had some very heavy rain and high winds followed on the evening of the 30 November by a -3 degree freeze.

Again in January we had snow and some of the coldest temperatures recorded in years. We trust this didn't catch you out. Freezing water can cause serious damage to a dinghy hull, in extreme cases splitting timbers and opening joints. You should also check your boats are still well picketed after the winter they have had. Don't rely on others, check on your own boat(s) regularly.

Mike (Over Easy) Baker

Greece and the Rat

Our Jaguar 27 was anchored in the clear, warm, blue water off Lakka on North East Paxos on night four of our holiday, when Jean got up for a trip to the heads. Whilst seated something nibbled her toe with explosive consequences and she screamed and crashed against the bulkhead.

We turned on the lights and found a small rat cowering next to the companion way steps. I tried bravely but unsuccessfully to catch it using a broom but I lost it through an orifice I was too fat to fit through.

For the next four or so hours we dozed and listened to every rustle or squeak. With first light we checked everywhere but apart from chewed food packets (it even ate my Ibuprofen tablets) and dirt there was no sign of the creature.

At eight we called our lead boat but without success. Our dinghy was inflated but the oars did not fit the rowing pins on the Plastico RIB so we were stranded. Eventually we cadged a tow to the quay and told the flotilla leader of our problem and he contacted our hostie, Sarah. Together they scoured the boat but without a sighting so Sarah went and bought some traps containing bait surrounded by sticky glue.

There appeared to be no company policy in evidence in regard to managing the situation and we were simply asked to set the traps and live with the situation. Jean wanted to leave the flotilla and go ashore but I was confident that we would catch the boarder that evening.

We sailed for Parga – Valtos Beach on the Greek mainland where, before going ashore for dinner, I set the traps again and Jean put some food on the quay. We returned at midnight to find that our guest had escaped the trap leaving only footprints and dirt. Some on our bed! I managed to quell the mutiny but only because it was so late, again we woke at every rustle or squeak.

At some stage I was snoring when the rat ran down my back. I leaped up banging my head on the deck above nearly breaking my neck only to find that the feet were Jean's fingers gently touched me to make me turn over.

I rose at dawn but apart from dirt we saw no further signs of visitation. Jean came to with a cold sore developing on her mouth, a sure sign of stress in her. The food she had left on the quay was now floating near the boat and had been well chewed by something with small teeth so I was hopeful that we had encouraged our passenger to dine elsewhere and seek more friendly accommodation.

Leaving the mainland for Paxos again raised Jean's anxiety but I persuaded her that Ratty had left so we sailed for Paxos and a night in Mongonisi. That evening I again set the traps before going to dinner and when we returned there were no more footmarks and no more dirt. Ratty had indeed gone, we slept like logs.

Apart from this excitement our trip went well with some light wind sailing and some iron-topsailing. The days were warm and comfortable, the sea warm and clear, the nights balmy and bright with stars. The food was good the drink flowed freely with new friendships developing. We enjoyed the socializing and had a great night Greek and other dancing in Mongonisi on the southern tip of Paxos.

Ahh the wonders of Ibuprofen! Jean won the "Perfect Parking Award" for womaneuvering the boat on and off the quay, even astern.

Apart from our small guest the holiday was most enjoyable and with luck we will do it all again next year.

Mike Hendra

Newsletter Printing

The printing and paper costs of this Newsletter were met in full by JDC Independent Financial Advisers
69 The Green Twickenham
020 8755 5577

We thank Frank Rainsborough for setting this up. Apart from the cost saving, it is good to have this task delegated.



Valentine lunch, picture by Roger Wheeler

Chapter 4 – It is not all over

The summer is over and the project is now in its tenth month. The sun has gone down over the hills and the nights are again drawing in.

The wood 'epoxying' stage is over and has come to a satisfactory end and it's fair to say I have sweated over but enjoyed the challenge of building a dinghy. I've resisted right from the start to record the overtime spent on this build but it's massive. However, I have noted, over the months, that I prepared and stuck in place over 120 separate pieces of wood to arrive at what is now, a rewarding form, which is unmistakably that of a SigneT.

Despite this, the build is far from over, as the whole carcass has yet to be covered over and over in epoxy to form a water proofed result. Then two coats of paint (topcoat over the undercoat) to the bottoms and hull sides. Then the topsides and cockpit varnished over to finish the coatings.

There is something very nauseating in covering the same ground four or more times over and over but the hope of a rewarding outcome has so far overcome this feeling and the accompanying knee and back pain.

Oh yes, I have forgotten to mention that I keep turning over in my mind the irrational fear that it's all going to come unstuck after its launch. The dingy fills with water and rolls over. I go over the side, leaving me drifting over to the bank with only my face bobbing in the water like a starboard hand buoy. Then I wake up and realise - it is not all over!!!!

By John S Panting

Bodgit Journals

Wednesday 10 December found Bodgit & Son working at the club again. 10:30am coffee, as usual, then to the business in hand.

There were doors to be hung from the conservatory up to the top deck. Modified window finishers had to be fitted to the outside of the conservatory and a new answer phone cable to be run into the clubhouse and connected.

It was a long haul but at 8:00pm Richard arrived with Cod & Chips which signalled the end of the day. Following dinner there was just time to clean up and get the clubhouse ready for Pat Halling's musical evening on the Friday.

Wednesday 23 December: Bodgit & Son (Pantomime Div.) with the help of Stuart Schafer constructed the stage for the Aquarius Panto. This was followed by erection of wing flats and scenery for the 'inside the castle scenes'. The 'outside the castle' scenery was then designed and Mrs Bodgit was good enough to dye a couple of old sheets blue and machine them together for the backdrop.

Meanwhile Bodgit Senior opened his own boatyard and started churning out panto Pico's (luckily none of them were required to actually float).

Once the post Christmas snow clears to allow work to recommence those will be hung and painted ready for the 17th.

Over the years Bodgit & Son has undertaken a fair amount of work at Aquarius but building a panto set has to rate amongst the strangest but possibly the most fun!

Monday 11 January: Finally the snow cleared enough to be able to get to the club and paint the remaining scenery while also giving it time to dry. Bodgit's boats were also completed and launched upon a blue cotton sheet pond in time for the dress rehearsal on Saturday the 13th and the show itself on the 14th.

Sunday 14 February - Valentines Day Lunch

Aquarius has held this event for the last few years sometimes in-house, sometimes in local restaurants. This time the ladies, by popular consensus, had indicated that they would prefer the Valentines Day lunch to be held in the clubhouse.

After some discussion a local catering company called 'A bit of a Do' was contacted in Hampton. The company is run by Alison and together with Tony Hopkins they put together a suitable menu.

Email and Snail-mail information was then sent out to the membership while advertising matter was placed on the Aquarius website and in the clubhouse.

The lunch was restricted to 40 persons and Tony took on the job of handling the bookings and orders. In the event only twenty-three bookings were received by the prior weekend which was a little disappointing.

The lay up for the lunch was done on Wednesday 10 February and included cleaning up the main club room and scrubbing the galley from top to bottom and ensuring the bar was well stocked.

By the evening the clubhouse was looking 'pretty average' (that's very good in Over Easy speak) and ready for the main event on Sunday.

Tony was on hand at 11:30am on Sunday morning to let Alison in and ensure she had everything she needed.

By 12:45 ish people started arriving and were greeted with an aperitif and a long stem red rose for each of the Ladies.

The bar ran flat out for a while with the gentlemen ordering wine to accompany lunch. While everybody enjoyed a pre-lunch drink Alison served a Thai canapé Hors d'oeuvre which included Spring Rolls, Thai dipping prawns and Chicken Saté. Shortly after everyone was invited to be seated and the main course of Beouf Bourguignon

(Allison's spelling), Green Thai Chicken Curry, Red Vegetable Curry, Rice, Vegetable Medley or Green Salad was served.

Normally, over food, things go a little quiet. Not so at this lunch and if anything the conversation and laughter got louder as the meal went on. Everyone seemed to be having a great time.

Deserts of Chocolate Fudge Cake & Almond Cheese Cake were then served, after which some folks were looking decidedly 'stuffed'.

Once the dishes were cleared away the Aquarius 'gentlemen' (and I use that title advisedly) served coffee and mints to round off the meal.

I do know that a meal that our better halves don't have to cook or wash-up afterwards is always welcome, and perhaps, even more so on Valentine's Day. So girls ... we hoped you enjoyed your lunch, the company and surroundings. Same time next year?

Mike (Over Easy) Baker

The Aquarius Pantomime

Over the years Aquarius SC has done many things and gone to many places, including in recent times, Christmas pantomimes at local theatres. This year however Aquarius outdid itself by writing and performing it's own Pantomime, entitled "The Princess and the Pico", for the first time.

The original idea for a panto was put forward a year ago by Rodger Wheeler as a way of encouraging our younger members to get involved in a project over the closed sailing season.

Imogen Morris came up with an original story and wrote the script. No mean task and from that point it took on a life of it's own. Edmund Morris was given the job of Director backed up by his dad Andrew and Rodger Wheeler as Producer.

Following several production meetings the story was broken down into scenes and a cast list of both our younger and young at heart members drawn up. Scenery and props lists were compiled together with costumes, lighting, music and make-up requirements.

While the cast got to grips with learning lines Bodgit Panto Productions got on with the business of staging the show which included making the stage, designing and painting scenery and manufacturing stage properties. These included an interesting collection of small dinghys which were required to be sailed/capsized on the stage.

Bodgit did actually draw the line at a suggestion for a trap door in the stage. It was felt that cutting a hole in the clubhouse floor would not go down well with the Management Committee and would create one hell of a draught.

Rodger, doubling up as sound and lighting engineer, vanished into the roof for hours on end. We have no idea what he did up there but eventually the lights and sound burst into life, which was helpful.

Picture by Frank Rainsborough
Juniors having a break from rehearsals



Meanwhile, Richard Cannon and Frank Rainsborough were looking after Programme Design and the Box Office and it was heartening to hear, just a few days before the show, that it was sold out and no further bookings were being taken.

Jean Hendra, in addition to being cast as a fish, was appointed as make up lady for the show and this is interesting. I have never seen so many blokes (Rodger Wheeler, Mike Hendra, Frank Rainsborough and Tony Hopkins to name a few) queuing up for Jean to do their make up, while arguing about who had the biggest boobs, best hairdo and most colourful tights. I tell you, put a bloke in a dress and something very weird happens to him (or them) in this case. I'm especially worried about Tony (The Commodore) Hopkins, he was overheard chatting up some of the back stage crew at one point.

Joan Courtney looked fantastic as the Fairy, complete with gossamer wings but was obviously suffering with the cold backstage. Gordon Courtney, on the other hand, as the priest, had a long warm coat on.

The front of house staff also had plenty to do. Anne Knowles did an excellent job of producing a very tasty chilli when she realised that Nigel, who was still slaving away making boats, was never going to find the time to do it himself. Well done Anne.

Thanks also to Pat Halling who helped with the between the scenes entertainment and Ken Aryes & Simon Lunniss who served up the food after the show was finished.

So what of the show itself. Well, if you had seen the dress rehearsal on Saturday the 16th. You might have been forgiven if you had suddenly found a more pressing engagement. Like most dress rehearsals it was a shambles with everybody saying things like 'it will be all right on the night'. In the event the Sunday performance actually went off surprisingly well.

Fortunately the audience don't know what it should have been so don't notice all the things that go wrong. Quite a lot, especially the scene change fillers, had never been rehearsed.

The audience entered into the spirit very early on and seemed to be laughing a lot of the time. Albeit probably at their friends and relatives making absolute fools of themselves, but what the hell!

Our younger members including Hannah Lunnis, Imogen Morris, Noah Ashworth, Robbie Lunnis, Dominic Lunnis and Millie Ashworth should be very proud of themselves and what they achieved in a very short space of time. I also hoped they had a lot of fun. The mature members were primarily there to support them but I know they got a lot of enjoyment from it.

Since the panto the video that was recorded on the Sunday has been run several times for the cast and crew to watch. Hopefully an edited version will be available later in the year for general viewing. Some of those involved are already taking about what to do next year. Heaven help us!

Postscript:

I arrived at the club on the evening of Wednesday 27 January to find everybody eating Haggis, Neaps and Tatties and watching the DVD of the pantomime. The fact that they'd missed Burns night by two days didn't seem to bother anybody.

The DVD was the first time that most of the cast had seen the show and I think they were enjoying it as much as the audience did on the day it was performed.

The impromptu 'Burns Night' supper was followed by Lorna Morris's chocolate cake with beetroot which, I was told, was very tasty.

Heaven only knows what 'Rabbie' would have made of it.

Mike (The Evil Butler) Baker

The magic spell, picture by Rodger



The End of 2009 & Pat Halling's Musical Extravaganza

Friday the 11th December 2009 began the Aquarius celebrations that ended the 2009 calendar for the club.

The evening was cool and dark but the clubhouse glowed warmly ahead as members navigated their way along the narrow upper path that remained open with the river at such high levels.

The cosy new entrance was lined with tables groaning with food and the main clubhouse was warm, friendly and prepared for the entertainment that lay in store for those who had ventured forth.

Chairs were arranged in two sets of arches one on either side of the music rostrum that waited for the five musicians scheduled to entertain us this frosty Friday. The stage was bathed in light from above and the area demarcated by gold streamers hanging from the ceiling. The whole place exuded warmth and expectation that resulted in an air of quiet excitement that increased as the numbers grew and the wine and spirits warmed us.

Pat Halling's wonderful String Quartet had Tony Coe as the guest star playing clarinet and saxophone. The music opened with the promises of "Spring" from Vivaldi's "Four Seasons", an event which we are informed will herald a Barbeque Summer in 2010.

The first half of the evening ranged over a selection of popular classics, some classy film music and some popular songs. Those who had not experienced the quality of the string quartet before were very surprised at the standard of the music and those who had enjoyed them previously were certainly not disappointed.

After what seemed just a few minutes the first half ended and we were presented with a sumptuous supper that included a fine selection of

cheeses, dips, olives, etc all beautifully presented to an accompaniment of fresh crusty bread.

The second half of the evening featured more of the magic of Tony Coe, both on saxophone and clarinet and we were treated to some very classy jazz. However the violins were not outdone by the soloist and they were all kept in time by Myrtle Bruce-Mitford who strummed her Cello like a double bass.

The pleasure on the faces of the membership was obvious but I could not help feeling that the musicians were being entertained as much by an appreciative audience as we were by their playing. Either way, a wonderful evening of great music was enjoyed by all.

As is usual in these events there is a small team of people whose efforts make them happen and for that we need to thank Roger Wheeler and his crew for organising, presenting and cleaning up after such a great evening.

Sunday saw many of Friday night's audience return for the "Cheats Christmas Lunch" and for this effort we have to thank our Commodore and his team.

As has been the norm for club lunches, the day was bright and sunny so we really should have been working outside but who cares! By noon the club was already bustling with volunteers and with the light twinkling and the tables set the place was again warm and welcoming.

Pre-lunch drinks gave many members the chance to meet, greet and mingle which is probably why club social activities attract more participation than our sailing events. It is certainly nice to see families all enjoying themselves at the club.

Although lunch is prepared under the watchful eye of the Commodore, serving is traditionally done by member's children. Perhaps with the success of this year's youth training programme, those children are likely to be better sailing members than their parents.

With everyone seated, lunch flowed from the galley like a rising tide and we were soon supping on soup, chomping chicken with all the trimmings and plodding through pudding. Just as space fillers, the tables all had a selection of fruit and nuts and to remedy a sudden drop in blood sugar, chocolates were stacked for emergency use.

I am told that this year's lunch fed more members than ever before so not only did Tony's team do a fantastic job, they broke a record as well. Thanks very much!

The afternoon passed from bright sun to early winter's dark and having stuffed ourselves full and perhaps imbibed enough liquor to be a bit fuddled, we all engaged in a bit of brain straining. In the end I got home before A, B, C, D and E, the men in the Five Routes puzzle had succeeded in reaching their respective abodes, although I did sit down immediately and get them home too.

As with all club events, there would be nothing happening if it were not for those who put in the effort to organise them and they do a tremendous amount of work. Equally, without the support of the membership there would be no appreciation of the events and thus no reward for the effort by way of "bums on seats".

In writing this article I convey my appreciation of the volunteers for ALL the work that is done for the club and to the members who support that work. I know that my appreciation and thanks is echoed throughout the membership so, thank you all once again!

Mike Hendra

Tony Coe



Pictures by Frank Rainsborough



Pat Halling



Sailing and Social Programme March - May 2010

The 11:30 am race will generally be a Spring or Autumn Series race and will start on time; races will not be delayed because competitors are not ready; race officers please note.

The 2:00pm event will be Training, a Fun Race, or Cruising (TFC) with emphasis on giving less experienced members a better sailing experience.

The 3:30pm race will generally be a SPA (Spring/Autumn), a Summer or 2 Sprint Series races.

The Wednesday afternoon Series will start on 12 May and end on 8 September; start time will be 5pm.

The Cundy Trophy long distance race will take place, on a day when the weather is suitable, concurrent with the scheduled Sunday afternoon race.

The OOD is responsible for organising the provision of cakes and milk for the afternoon tea at 3 p.m.

Saturday 1 May will be very busy; Aquarius are hosting the inter club

Mid-Thames Trophy event with up to five clubs visiting us.

The Aquarius Open Days are 8th and 9th May; members are asked to bring friends and neighbours who might be tempted to sail. Make this the day you get afloat.

On the Late Spring Holiday Monday 31 May, and the Late Summer Holiday Monday 30 August we visit the Bewl Valley SC who are having family sailing days and not open racing days.

Date	11:30am	2:00pm	3:30pm	Duty Officers, Evening & Notes
March				
Sat 20				Unfortunately there were many changes to the duties after publication of the newsletter, they have been corrected..
28	Spring Race 1	TFC	Spa Race 1	Start of Season Party 7:30pm, with guest speaker Richard Cannon, L Archer F Rainsborough , David Jennings
April				
4	Easter Egg Trophy, 4 races, best 3 count			G Bray C Bridger , J Bray S Herbert , T Adcock L Bridges
Sat 10				Indoor Olympics - Michael Chipps, Simon Lunniss
11	Spring Race 2	TFC	Spa Race 2	Mike Baker, Nick Hornsey, P Bryan T Adeock
18	Spring Race 3	TFC	Spa Race 3	Tony Hopkins, J Courtney Family Downes , Family Addouche S Schafer
Sat 24	Working party 10:30am' Come along with gardening tools and clothes. Lunch will be provided			
25	Spring Race 4	TFC	Sprint Race 1 & 2	B Clements F Rainsborough , Derek Brown, Graham Thompson
MAY				
Sat 1	Mid-Thames Trophy hosted by AQSC			F Rainsborough, L Archer, J Neale
2	Spring Race 5	TFC	Spa Race 4	J Botterill L Bond , T Hilton A Bond , Family Wild R Cannon
Sat 8	AQSC Club Open Weekend			Peter Carpenter, Family Grace, Rodger Wheeler
9	Open day, introduce new members to all club boats			N Knowles M Baker , Family Addouche Guldford , D Barnett J Botterill
16	Spring Race 6	TFC	Spa Race 5	L Bond L Bridges , A Bond F Addouche , Family Morris D Barnett
23	Spring Race 7	TFC	Sprint Race 3 & 4	F Rainsborough G Bray , Family Gatehouse J Bray , R Cannon D Jennings
30	Trying various boats for new members, and fun Sailing			C Bridger M Chipps , S Herbert B Clements , T Hilton R Cannon
Mon 31	Visit to Bewl Valley Sailing Club Family and Try Sailing			

Start of Season Party

On Saturday 20 March guest speaker Gordon Tripp will give an illustrated talk on Admiral Robert Fitzroy, Capt HMS Beagle, pioneering meteorologist after whom the shipping area is named.

Please arrive in good time and be seated by 8.00pm sharp!

Free refreshments etc

SigneT Open Meeting Sunday 4 July

Aquarius is hosting a SigneT Open Meeting on the 4 July. The SigneTs will race within our normal races and two sets of results will be evaluated; one for Aquarius race series results and one for SigneT results.

Members with SigneTs don't have to choose which to sail in because they will have results for both series.

The start times for the races will be earlier than our standard race times; they will not be before 11:30, 13:30 and 15:00

Richard Cannon

The Mid Thames Trophy 1 May

AQSC is hosting the Mid Thames Trophy this year on Saturday 1 May. We will be having visitors from four or five other clubs. As in past years clubs can enter up to ten boats and we need to get as many of our boats on the water as possible. As hosts, AQSC will be responsible for providing tea, coffee & snacks throughout the day and lunch for our visitors. Help is required on the day in the galley and at the counter. So, if you can spare some time on 1 May it would be much appreciated.

Richard Cannon

Club Open Weekend 8th/9th May

*Tony Hopkins
Commodore*

This weekend is very important to the club, it is our one chance to show the club off to potential new members.

With this in mind I would like to invite **ALL** members with sailable dinghies to **get them on the water**, not only to show the public what we have but also to encourage existing members to try other classes, we have a fair selection of classes and it would be nice to see them on the water, so let's get **Aquarius on the water!**

2010 Sailing Programme Notes

Last year holding the Training/Fun/Cruising (TFC) race at 2:00 was very successful; much easier to give new members and trainees a better sailing experience.

The same format will continue this year as follows:-

11:30am Series race
14.00pm Training/Fun/Cruising
15.30pm Series race

Please ensure that if you intend to compete in the series racing that you allow enough time to arrive, rig and be on the start line by the above times.