



Autumn 2010 Edition

Web Site: http://www.sailaquarius.org.uk
Email: mail@sailaquarius.org.uk

Editor: Richard Cannon 01932 786636
E-mail: editor@sailaquarius.org.uk

Publicity: Over Easy 020 8393 5495 E-mail: publicity@sailaquarius.org.uk

Contents

Commodore's Report 1
News Of Members .
Newsletter Printing .
Recipe - Joan Bray .
Big Cat's Maiden Voyage 2
Four Men In A Boat .
Two hulls, One Engine .
Chapter 5 - Is It The End .
Chapter 6 - Racing To Be last 4
SigneT Nationals .
Thameside Harmony Chorus .
Reminders From The Committee 5
Roaring Twenties Evening .
Bowl Water 6
Comments From A Frustrated SigneT Sailor .
Curry Night 7
Quiz Night .
What's Been Going On At AQSC .
AGM, Prize Giving & End Of Season Party 8
Aquarius Sailing Club Annual Dinner .
Kempton Park Fireworks .
Sale Of Existing Club Clothing .
Sailing Beyond The End Of Season .
Social Calendar - Dates For Your Diary .
Store And Changing Rooms .

Commodore's Report

This year's sailing season is drawing to a close but there is still time to get on the water and enjoy probably the best wind conditions throughout October. Alas this year's Bosun open event has been cancelled due to dredging works which is a real shame.
We have a working party coming up in November and will need to do a major tidy of the reach so please do come along, lunch will be provided..
There has been some theft of dinghies in the area, none at Aquarius but please do make sure that yours is secure, likewise with wet berths.
The main entry gate, the one with the combination lock, MUST be kept closed and locked after entry to the grounds, it is a stipulation from Thames water. Fly tipping in the past has caused lots of problems.
Although we have a set of club rules and regulations, I can already hear the yawns, there is need for a gentle reminder regarding some of them. It is imperative that anyone who sails/helms any club boat MUST wear a buoyancy aid! Also when on patrol boat duty it is necessary that 2 people are in the boat, one to helm and one to aid recovery. The patrol boat should remain at the bank until needed.
The kitchen refurb is well under way and Bodgit and Co have been on double time and are doing a fantastic job to the point of missing time on the water. Please feel free to pat them on the back when passing.
Great Sailing,
Tony Hopkins

Recipe - Joan Bray

Several members have asked for the following recipe.
It's very easy to make.

WHOLE ORANGE CAKE (Will freeze)

- 2 Small sweet oranges 50gr (2oz) melted butter + a little extra.
140gr (5oz) Caster sugar 3 Eggs
85gr (3oz) S.R.Flour 100gr (4oz) Ground Almonds
85gr (3oz) Icing Sugar Creme Fraiche to serve (Optional)
Oven 180c, Gas 4, Fan 160c
Buttered and lined base of an 8" round deep cake tin.

Method: Put 1 orange in a small saucepan, cover with cold water, bring to the boil and simmer for 1 hour. Remove from pan and when cool roughly chop, discarding the pips. Put into food processor including peel and whizz until smooth. Whisk sugar and eggs together until light and fluffy, sieve in flour and almonds and gently fold in with metal spoon. Add pureed orange and melted butter and fold in until just mixed.

Pour into prepared tin and bake for 40-45 minutes. Cool in tin for 5 minutes before removing. Put icing sugar into a bowl and mix with enough juice squeezed from other orange to make a smooth pouring icing and spread over cake.

N.B. This can also be used as a sweet by omitting icing, but dusted with icing sugar and serving warm with creme fraiche.

Joan Bray

News Of Members

Joan Bray

Congratulations and best wishes for a very happy future to Robert and Elizabeth Britton on their recent marriage.

Also a warm welcome to Frank Goodall we wish you a long, happy and successful membership

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.

The Big Cat's Maiden Voyage

Just as the summer newsletter went to print I received two versions of the above. One from Rodger Wheeler and the other from Gordon Courtney.

They both look at the trip from slightly different perspectives so I thought you might find it interesting to read both versions.

In fairness Gordon's write-up, being the designer, builder and owner should come first. Rodger's account is the more technical and includes navigation and operating issues. Enjoy ...

Two hulls, One Engine, a Near Gale and Not a Bad Word Between Any of Us

I have just got over my second cancer op and all I dreamed about was sailing my cat for a couple of miles, and it really happened.

We had a great send off and then we were away down the Thames at 5-6 knots, my big bell got rung as we went under each bridge; fantastic. Going down the Thames is not a 5 minute trip it really is a long way.

After leaving the Swale it was time, engine off, genoa up, all ok. main up, we are sailing, Mick and Tony alternately at the helm, Roger totally engrossed in my 'map tech' computer map and charts, calling out 10 degrees to starboard, now 5 degrees to port and so on. 'Saranchai' sailed beautifully, and why not, she was based on the Prout 37 and 50, two of the greatest catamarans ever built, my dream come true.

We should have gone further up the Swale, for if you have seen 'three men in another boat' they moored overnight, but further up the Swale where there are mooring buoys ready and waiting amongst the other yachts.

We must have picked up some sludge in the Swale as the engine soon started to overheat and I had to quickly turn it off to avoid an emergency, much to Roger's annoyance as he could see his well planned and executed track in ruins as we drifted while I made repairs. I had a very large pool filter to protect the cooling pump, and its final filter mesh was far too fine and was totally choked, once removed the Ford 1.8 engine stayed cool and just went on and on without a murmur doing 6 miles to the gallon.

We all talk of needing a bigger engine but that Ford plodded us along at 4-5 knots hour after hour. When wind and tide were in our face off Rye doing 1½ knots would we all have loved a big v8 diesel even giving 1 mile to the gallon, but no, I would have loved to have tacked into the wind to see what she would do, but it was too early in her life, why be stupid and have an accident lets just go sideways into Rye harbour. By the way, the Prout 50 normally had two 28hp engines, but we had one at 59hp.

I had a very robust steering system in the wheel house, but outside I had a very light weight system with steering wheels on each side, they were a last minute design and build. They were their own worst enemy, Roger and Tony loved them, I could not get them off especially Tony, even when the sea got rough and the waves were full of white froth. The outer steering did take a bashing with those big waves, springs broke loose wires got stretched, I had very badly burnt hand from the engine water the previous day and dropped a replacement steering bar over the side which did not help, never mind.

I was a little apprehensive when Tony insisted taking this big cat into Ramsgate harbour, but he did it perfectly right up to the pontoon. He did not do so well going in and out of Rye but it was more like landing a plane with only one wheel down, he did his best, and what more could I ask, just a bit of scraped gel coat, what the hell!!!

I thought I might get to steer my cat for once, but no, Tony was back on the helm, sails up, getting a bit rough,

engine off, big waves, Beachy head in the distance, wind behind us. Tony calling out 'we are doing 10 knots, woops my GPS just went overboard.'

Yacht sailors do not understand cats. When going with the wind behind you the genoa should be fully out but the main should be in tight acting as a stabilizer, but my crew did not understand that, in fact the main made little or no difference to our speed.

After Beachy Head we motor sailed, and got to Shoreham too early and waited for high tide. I will let you guess who took us into to Shoreham and he did it very well.

The voyage was more about how we all got on together, and what each of us got out of it, Tony most certainly enjoyed himself, Mick the same and he is pushing me to take the cat out again, Roger on the other hand took it all so very seriously, a magnificent navigator taking up the challenge of getting us to Shoreham, all so serious but perhaps that's what he enjoys doing and I cannot thank him enough, I only hope the stress levels I put upon him did not take away his enjoyment. I wish all my crew with all my thanks and next time perhaps we can take up a more challenging trip, perhaps the Azores and back.

Saranchai now sits happily at Shoreham Yacht club by the workshops and the foot bridge, being on a river she spends most of her time on dry mud. Her bent centre rudder was so successful that I am now making a new one and eBay has just provided me with a 64 sq metre genoa.

God bless all you sailors of Aquarius
Gordon Courtney

Four Men in a Boat: To Say Nothing of the Cat (or Saranchai to Shoreham)

Over a period of some 11 years Gordon Courtney has designed and constructed an enormous 50 foot sailing catamaran. He initially moved Saranchai down to the club in December 2009 and has been working on it ever since to equip it for a voyage to the Sussex Yacht club in Shoreham, where workshop facilities are available to complete the boat.

Nobody imagined that the maiden voyage of a new home-build yacht

would be easy and so Gordon, Tony Hopkins, Mick Rogers and I set off down the Thames with some trepidation.

To Gordon's surprise there was a little more than the expected few inches clearance between the gates as we slid into Molesey Lock so we put away our shoe horns. Just below Kingston railway bridge an attempt to recreate scenes from "The Spy Who Loved Me", swallowing up Bryan and the club safety boat between the hulls James

Bond style, was halted in the final seconds on health and safety grounds.

Rope working the boat through Teddington Lock into the tidal Thames was very successful. We thought that HF Channel 14 was remarkably quiet until it was noted that the radio volume control was turned right down. Once this was rectified we had a stream of communications from Thames Barrier control.

Having passed the barrier we tried to moor for the night to a barge below the Woolwich ferry. Unfortunately a sharp move on the Morse control rendered it useless and we had to be rescued by a Thames Clipper which was just finishing it's last trip. With bow thrusters and the like it placed us neatly against the barge and Gordon set about mending the Morse control.

The following day we headed under the QE2 bridge and having received clearance from London VTS, moored against an old fuelling jetty, Alpha. The process of raising the mast took some 3 hours and was even more difficult when tankers passed. The heavy mast swayed alarmingly.

Having reviewed the Notices to Mariners we then headed down past the many casualties on the Thames sandbanks towards Red Sands fort where the engine overheated. Rodger was frantically taking bearings on the fort's many towers as we drifted helplessly towards them. Tide and wind were fortunately on our side and the engine was restarted when we were a couple of hundred yards away. The new cooling system, pouring cold water over a hot engine, was not ideal and eventually the water filter was removed. Much delayed, the tides were now against us and having ruled out Whitstable we headed up the narrow channel of the Swale passing the treacherous mud banks to find a sandy bottom near Faversham on which to anchor for the night.

I was unsure of the security of the anchor and was concerned when the GPS showed that we had moved 4 times the length of the anchor rope. If we had dragged the anchor it was very little and it was merely a miscalculation of the length of anchor rope used.

A 5a.m. start was required to catch the tide and we weaved our way between the sandbanks and obstacles to Margate. This is where Gordon's laptop based charts coupled to a GPS came into their own. Moving sandbanks kept our eye on the depth sounder while nearby basking seals totally ignored us.

Gordon decided to kill the engine and put up the sails off Margate, but without telling us. Mick noted "I've never heard you swear like that before" as I found us drifting onto a rocky ledge. The engine was restarted and we headed west into the wind to raise the sails. The boat sailed very well around the North Foreland past Broadstairs.

We now found that the battery was low and although we could receive VHF

we were unable to transmit. I then used a mobile to organise our entry into Ramsgate harbour. I have to say that our entry and exit manoeuvres at Ramsgate were perfect.

We picked up water, had lunch and Tony headed back home. Progress from Ramsgate inside the Goodwin's but missing the shallows of Pegwell and a few other hazards was painfully slow. Even the Ramsgate harbourmaster was concerned.

We passed the South Foreland and obtained instructions to avoid ferry movements while crossing the busy Dover Eastern Docks entrance.

Unfortunately the Western Docks entrance was much more of a problem. The temperamental steering gear failed again and the engine ran out of fuel. The harbour wall was to the lee side and we were wallowing in a locally choppy sea. My concern was how to beach the boat to the west by balancing sails and if this failed the more difficult option of deploying the dinghy.

Fortunately the steering was repaired and the engine refuelled and we headed for the shelter of Folkestone harbour for the night. The chart said "dredged to 6 metres", but in practice the harbour had silted up following the closure of the ferry facility and we had 5 feet underneath us at low tide.

I was concerned about the noise of water in the bilges. It turned out that during filling water had overflowed into the bilges. Gordon estimated that we were carrying 3 tons of water extra in the aft sections of the two hulls. Bedding in the aft cabins was pretty wet.

The following day we were up early again to utilise the westbound tide. Passing Dungeness all seemed well until we ran out of fuel again and the steering control wire became entangled in the middle of Rye bay. We now had to use our last spare can of fuel and I insisted that we must take cover in Rye harbour as it was too risky to try to reach Sovereign Harbour, Eastbourne. At this point Gordon dropped a steering link arm into the sea. Having rigged the steering, recovered the errant outboard fuel tank, and after a courtesy visit from the RNLI., we sailed up and down until the tide was right for entry into Rye harbour, albeit now with poor steering control.

Just in the entrance to Rye harbour the steering failed again and I was continually changing the engine from forward to astern to hold us in the narrow channel while Gordon fixed the

steering. Unbeknown to me the RNLI had offered us a tow at this point.

We proceeded into Rye with Mick on the outer wheel steering and myself on the Morse control. We had been told to turn the boat in the harbour but as we entered and invisible to me those on the quayside were telling us to come straight in. They were dismayed as we motored past and then turned the boat. Unfortunately our stern drifted onto a fishing boat as we completed the manoeuvre. The Harbourmaster was not amused by our antics.

Peter and Diana rescued Mick and I from Rye but the captain remained with his ship.

Tony and I returned a week later to find that Saranchai now only had two rudders, one having been bent at low tide as the boat settled. Our departure was as eventful as our arrival. We tried to hug the port side against a cross wind from the East. It appeared that the harbourmaster was coming into the channel from the seaward end and as we moved away a little from the port side we were blown onto the submerged harbour wall on the starboard side. We had insufficient power to pull the boat off and eventually the harbourmaster pulled us out to sea probably cursing us under his breath.

The boat sailed well past Beachy Head and Brighton but the steering was inadequate by now and certain manoeuvres were quite difficult. We arrived off Shoreham ahead of half tide and had to wait an hour before entering the western arm "at our own risk".

With an easterly wind and a following tide access to Gordon's mooring would have involved destroying a footbridge so a rather bolshie Rodger insisted on taking the boat astern to the visitor's mooring.. We then repaired to the bar for a much earned drink before Linda came to pick us up.

Gordon subsequently moved his cat to it's mooring and we await it's completion and of course an invitation to his "Round The World Cruise" – well round the Isle of Wight to start with.

It has to be said that despite the little "snags" on the voyage Saranchai is an enormous achievement for one man. It sailed the 200 miles to Shoreham and Gordon is now considering modifications to give the "cat" more power and more reliable steering.

We look forward to the completion of the fitting out and perhaps a trip to France !.

By Rodger Wheeler

Chapter 5 - Is It The End Or The Beginning?

The build is at an end, it's time to begin to race. The SigneT ST 924 'SunseT' floats.

SunseT was launched at Aquarius (AQSC) on 25th April 2010. Her maiden voyage was uneventful. The club members in attendance (there were many) were generous to a fault with their kind remarks plus their hints and tips on improvements, which I could make. I have spent the last three weeks making all seventeen of them.

Straight away I am entering as many races as I can manage. Some are restricted by my availability and others by my (lack of) fitness.

The results so far have been:

1. (DNS) Did Not Start.
2. Never made the first mark. The river flow exceeded my sailing ability. (Place 24th with 5 others).
3. Capsized at second mark. (DAO) (Down And Out).
4. Blown into the trees on a lee shore (RTD) Retired.

So I guess that's the first four items on page one of book one dealt with.

Some of you guys and girls have been sailing for over 50 years and some sailing SigneTs since the 1960s. You are at one with the dinghy. You sail like a bare back horse riding circus act. Whereas I feel as though I am clinging on to one hair of the horse's tail by one hand while being dragged along at a gallop. I estimate I have got at least a year of learning how to come last.

This weekend Brenda (social) and I (helm/crew) are off to Paxton Lake for a SCOA National meeting - six off one hour races in all. So, sorry I must end now as I need to begin learning the RYA 'Racing Rules of Sailing 2009-2012' (Waterproof version of course).

By John S Panting

Chapter 6 - Racing To Be last

John S Panting

I enjoyed building SunseT the SigneT dinghy but maybe one in a lifetime is enough. It's been a romance which has blossomed into love.

Now, we are in the period of dinghy racing. I find it hard enough to sail a dinghy let alone race one. However, having thrown myself in at the deep end, that is straight into racing on day one, I intend to pursue this as it is a way of making the learning curve very steep. We have already been out in winds from, so light that I could only go backwards on the river, to up to force six. My results so far have been dismal but then, I have only been dinghy sailing since 25th April 2010. We have managed three races where we were not in last place, so I am getting there. I looked at this dinghy season as the year of learning how to lose races and so far I have met my objective. Next season, hopefully, we will be a contenders and not tail end Charlie.

I have many people who I owe a tribute to, in getting me this far. Some have helped a lot and some have given just one piece of invaluable advice but all have given freely and I thank them all again.

I am looking forward to participating in offshore cruising during the winter and early spring, as I have put this on the back burner while focused on building and then racing SunseT. Hopefully, now I will be able to accommodate both.

By John S Panting

SigneT Nationals

The 2010 SigneT Nationals were held at Bradwell in Essex. Ten boats entered including two Aquarius SigneT's. These were ST368 (June) crewed by Richard Cannon and Keith Hatton and ST924 (Sunset) crewed by John Panting and Ken Ayres.

Despite an early change to a 9 year old crew, caused by injury to Keith, Richard proved once again that he's a force to be reckoned with, winning four of the six races. This gave Richard his 15th (yes, fifteenth) nationals win.

ST924 came 9th, not bad for John Panting and Ken Ayres first ever Nationals. (see also article "Comments from a frustrated sailor").

Mike (Couldn't make it this year) Baker

28 July - Thameside Harmony Chorus

I don't suppose many of you knew that Pat Irving is a member of a ladies harmony chorus ensemble. The chorus was formed in April 1986. It didn't have a name for its first six months but was then 'christened' "Thameside Ladies Barbershop Chorus" That was obviously a bit of a mouthful so in 2008 the name was changed to "Thameside Harmony Chorus". The White House Community Association is their rehearsal venue which is shared with Magna Carta, the men's barbershop chorus.

On the evening of Wednesday 27th Pat brought some 18-20 members of her chorus to the clubhouse for a recital. Given that we had only been expecting half a dozen this came as a bit of a

surprise but AQSC is nothing if not flexible and they were all fitted in. The audience numbered about 30 members which was not a bad turn out for a Wednesday evening.

The first half was performed out on the quarterdeck which was a bit different and by the time supper was announced I think the members were beginning to get into this harmony chorus thing.

Diana's supper was excellent, as always. The ladies of the chorus and the members got stuck into various cheeses, French bread, tomatoes, grapes, sausage rolls, mini quiches and cakes. The chorus themselves seemed to favour water while the members kept the bar staff on their toes.

The second half was inside, the evening beginning to get a little cold and rain threatening. After a number of songs the evening ended with the chorus mixing with the audience and encouraging them to sing along. Some nervous faces to be seen at this point. Rodger and George then thanked the chorus on behalf of the club.

By 10:30pm everything was cleared up and the evening came to an end. Thanks to Pat Irving for arranging the Thameside Harmony Chorus visit, to Diana and helpers for supper, to George for handling the financial side of the evening and to Pete and his barmen for keeping everybody 'topped-up'. A very good and different evening.

Mike (Tone Deaf) Baker

9 October – Roaring Twenties Evening

This was another of Rodgers extravaganza's 'par excellence'. I think the publicity flyers just about said it all. Ambience, dress, music, food, entertainment, it was all covered. Even the price of Fifteen Guineas reflected the era.

The Friday before was spent frantically trying to get the clubhouse back to some semblance of order following the kitchen renovation work. Don Barnett ran all the crocks through the new industrial dish washer. Gordon Courtney, Nigel and myself cleared the clubroom and quarterdeck of building materials, tools and rubbish. Rodger, Diana and Pete arrived and set about laying up.

Troubles apart, on the night the club looked a picture, all we needed was a couple of steam launches moored up outside and the odd Duisenberg or Bugatti Royale in the car park to complete the effect. Certainly the members who attended entered into the spirit of the occasion. Or maybe they just need an excuse to dress up. Either way it was quite an evening.

It began with drinks at Shady Pete's bar. Next door his floozy Liz Archer mixed cocktails, no prohibition here, more a throwing off of inhibitions. Rodger (The Great Gatsby) Wheeler appeared agitated but Gatso always gets a bit wound up until the speak easy is humming. Pat (Fingers) Halling arrived with his mob. Their smooth exterior

masking an unrivalled degree of musical talent. The violin cases looked ominous!

Mike (Spats) Baker looked nervous. He'd seen the menu and was wishing he hadn't had the pickled eggs for lunch. His moll Marilyn also wished he hadn't had the pickle eggs, but for a different reason! The Ladies looked resplendent in a variety of feathers and pearls, some even wore dresses! The men looked mean and several were obviously packing. Hardware not suitcases, come on ... do try to keep up.

Richard (The Local Grass) Cannon was filming everything as usual. He got his name from the curious grass hula shirt he was wearing, no, don't ask! This made Nigel (The Fixer) Knowles uneasy. The last time someone took his picture it was full face, profile and was accompanied by a set of finger prints. Eventually Gatso indicated with his Chicago piano (machine gun for the less enlightened) that everybody should sit down for supper. Shady Pete dispensed the French hooch while Gatso and his gang dolled out the food from the soup kitchen.

Things finally quietened down and all that could be heard was the clatter of cutlery, clink of glasses, murmur of conversation and occasional burst of gunfire. The menus were not in English, causing some heated discussion as to what was on offer. For those of you still wondering what it was all about

here's a reminder. Crudités, Charcuterie, Les Petits Sauces, followed by Poulet a la moutarde ancienne avec yaourt, Judias verdes con tomate, Jeunes Carottes, Riz Chou-fleur et Brocoli Gratinées. Followed by Les Gateaux, Fromages Variées and Café et Delices de Turquie. Admit it! You still none the wiser are you!

Between courses and following dinner Fingers and his gang, consisting of Tony Kinsey, Dave Richmond, Max Britain and Tony Coe ambled over to the band area and made with appropriate era tunes. This was a rare opportunity to hear quality live music played by such distinguished musicians. To experience something similar I guess you'd have to go to Ronnie Scott's. Oh yes! Pat (Fingers) Halling wasn't bad either.

The evening was a great success. Well done Rodger for organising everything. Also to his gang of helpers, Linda Wheeler for the Chicken, Quorn chicken and carrots, Anne Bond for the Judias Verdes, Eiko Thompson for the rice, Eric Bridgewater for the Charcuterie and Mary Dennis for the Crudites all of whom helped to ensure everything ran smoothly and that a 'St. Aquarius Day Massacre' was avoided. The 'concrete boots' won't be needed this year.

Mike (Spats) Baker

Reminders From The Committee

a. Members are reminded that the green road gate **MUST** be kept locked **AT ALL TIMES**. When this gate is locked the two inner gates may be left open. Thames Water insist this is a mandatory requirement aimed at the prevention of both crime and fly tipping.

b. Members are also reminded that on leaving the club the doors/windows **MUST** be locked and **THE ALARM SYSTEM** activated. If you are still not sure how to set activate (or deactivate) the alarm system contact a committee member who will show you. (Both the above have sometimes not been done in recent weeks)

c. Members are reminded that tea and cakes are provided on a Sunday afternoon primarily for those people racing. Tea is **NOT** provided as regular Sunday afternoon social event. The charge of 50p is made for a cup of tea and one cake, not several cakes. Recently, sailors coming in late from racing have found everything gone.

d. Members are reminded that if they intend to remove a boat during the week it would be a good idea to let Rodger Wheeler know beforehand. Rodger keeps an eye on the club from across the river during the week and will ring Richard Cannon or advise the authorities of any suspicious movements at the club.

e. And finally ... Despite the TW 'no landing' notices along the waterfront boaters and fisherman do still occasionally come ashore at AQSC. They have been seen wandering along the bank where the dinghies are stored. Please make sure that valuables are not left on your boat and if possible that your boat is locked down. (See a committee member who will show you a relatively cheap and easy way of doing this).

AQSC Management Committee

Comments From A Frustrated Signet Sailor - *Keith Hatton*

“That’s impressive,” said my doctor as she took her first look at my severely bruised left leg, the colours resembling the work of a demented tattooist, “how did you do that”. “Picking up a table tennis ball I replied” “Dangerous game that” she replied with a smile on her face. Well when the floor is wet anything can happen, and it sure happened to me. One minute you’re flying around trying to win the next point, and the next you’re on the floor in bloody agony trying to do the splits as your foot slides away from you on a slippery floor.

Only two hours earlier I had been climbing up poles and ropes to a height of some seventy feet as a team building exercise, and then launching myself off the top of a post some forty feet above the ground to grab hold of a steel bar. They called it the leap of faith, mostly faith in the team who were controlling the ropes that were clipped onto my harness. The same Monday afternoon Richard Cannon and I had won the first of two races to decide who would be the Signet Champion for 2010 at Bradwell in Essex and by 10.30pm there I was lying on the floor immobile, and in agony.

With lots of help from those around I was soon lifted into my bed, and made as comfortable as possible for the night, which thankfully I managed to sleep better than expected. Come Tuesday and we made for the local surgery, but they were too busy to see me so we made for the nearest hospital some thirty miles away near Chelmsford. I was slid into the back of a Signet

sailor’s wife’s Mercedes and off we went with me making the best of a rather uncomfortable journey.

Much to our surprise the Accident and Emergency department was not busy, and a doctor and consultant soon examined me. Ruptured leg muscles was his diagnosis and I was issued with a pair of crutches and a strapping, plus pain killing drugs, and we made our way back to Bradwell in the same manner as our arrival. Madeline and I decided that we would stay at the sailing centre for the rest of the week, as the weather was not too bad and I would be able to see some of the racing. We had decided to bring our Signet “The Saint” with us as a back up boat, but alas it was not needed and sat forlornly in the dingy park.

The usual jokes soon started “ what have you done with your parrot Keith” and” you’ll do anything to get out of sailing with Richard”. Well I soon found out what you can and can’t do with a pair of crutches, and found the simplest of tasks taking four times longer to do and a lot more painful. But I managed to hobble round the corner to the local pub, for a meal and a drink, on two occasions and to the Chinese with the entire Signet crowd on the Tuesday evening. And as luck would have it I also had a novel by Dan Brown “Angels and Demons” to read while I was resting my leg. The week went by quickly and I was presented with a mug as my part in Richard Cannon winning the Signet Nationals again! well done Richard.

Whenever we had gone on sailing trips I had always towed the boat so it was now up to Madeline to do the honours at the end of the week and she made a great job of it. Our long time friend and Signet sailor Roy Melsom volunteered to lead us to the Queen Elizabeth bridge, and from there we would make our way home as he lives near Maidstone in Kent.

With me ensconced in the front passenger seat we started on our journey all going well until we got to the bridge and hit the traffic jams that build up because of the tollgates. We parted company with Roy and because of jams on the M25 we decided to take the A21 and then the A25 which runs parallel to the M25, picked up the A22 and in two and a half hours Madeline had got us safely home, Well done that girl, what a wonderful wife I have got, and she is still looking after me.

I have now been to see the consultant at Worthing Hospital and on Thursday I’m off to visit the physiotherapist in Shoreham, the leg is now a lot better with the bruising moving down my leg, and moving around is getting easier. With lots of ice packs, rest and physiotherapy, I hope to be back in circulation in the near future.

Is there a moral to my story? Well, on the Saturday and Sunday afternoon Roy and I spent a few hours playing Boule on the lawn in front of the sailing centre, with no incidents or accidents other than nearly putting a dent in one of the parked cars. So if you want to play a game involving balls, make sure that they are made of steel, it’s much safer. Happy sailing to you all.

30 August – Bewl Water

Five AQSC boats went to Bewl on Bank Holiday Monday. Richard Cannon, John Panting and myself took our Signets and Nigel Knowles, Rodger Wheeler and John Neale took a couple of Bosuns.

The forecast was for 15 to 20 knts North wind which was great for some but a bit much for others; the 10 to 12knts we had most of the time provided some good sailing. Mostly it was warm and fine although very gusty and shifty for Bewl.

In addition to the above we were also joined by Brenda Panting, Liz Archer, Mike Rogers, Keith and Madeline Hatton and Andrew, Imogen

and Edmund Morris. Everybody that wanted to get out for a sail and those that just wanted to get out for ‘a thrash’ duly filled their boots. John Panting had already spent the week at Bewl doing his RYA 1 & 2, so he went off with a friend, who he met on the course, and entered the BVSC Novice racing, and managed to win a can of beer! Well done John!

We eventually came off the water at about 5ish and after packing up and showering made our way to The Grasshopper at Westerham for dinner. I won’t go into detail but it’s highly likely we will never return to that venue again. Bad would be putting it mildly,

in fact I think it’s been getting worse over our last three visits. If your wondering why we keep going there it’s because it has a massive car park that, in the past, has gobbled up eight to ten cars all towing boats with no trouble at all. Not many places can do that.

Anyway we had a great day and I would urge more of you to come with us next time we go to Bewl and experience sailing on big open water. If you want an unbiased opinion about the place talk to Imogen and Edmund. Many thanks, as always, to Richard for organising the day, good one mate!

Mike (Over Easy) Baker

17 July - Quiz Night

I knew that a number of people were away and couldn't make this event but seventeen people (plus me) did manage to turn up for the quiz night which was a bit disappointing but it was good to see everybody and while Diana took orders for fish and chips the bar worked overtime to serve an obviously thirsty crowd, well it has been a long hot summer.

The quiz itself was general knowledge and set by yours truly but with a few nastys thrown in to separate the men from the boys. Sorry ladies that's not being sexist but I don't think there's a feminine or collective version of that saying. Anyway, eventually everyone sorted themselves into three teams The Dragons, Hotch Potch and the Water Rats, hey their choice, and the first round got underway but not before everybody sang 'Happy Birthday' to young Noah Ashworth.

After forty or so questions we stopped for the answers while Richard and Diana went to collect the supper. The fish and chips were excellent and washed down with some Italian wine donated by Frank Rainsborough.

Once fed and re-watered the second round continued until about 10:15pm. at which point the answers were marked. There was a fair bit of negotiating over answers but the award of half points seemed to satisfy everyone. Final scores were Hotch Potch 291/2, Water Rats 351/2 and Dragons 401/2. The Dragons won the Quiz Trophy and a box of chocolates while the other two teams shared another box of chochs between them.

Everybody wins at AQSC quiz nights but I think it will be a while before we do another one. The bowling nights at The Grantley Arms went the same way.

Thanks again to Richard and Diana for organising supper and I hope everyone had a good evening.

Mike (Over Easy) Baker

Curry Night

This was held on the evening of 11 September. It was organised by Diana Carpenter with a little help from Richard and from what we hear was a great success. Some 31 members turned up and the curry came from 'The Riverside' down in Hampton. Members obviously like a bit of hot & spicy now and again. Well done Diana, long may your Popodums stay crispy.

Mike (Make mine Madras) Baker

What's Been Going On At AQSC

On the day of the Harmony Chorus visit Rodger, Dave, Bryan and myself dragged our safety boat out onto the lower slip to repair a serious leak in the hull. A number of rivets that attached part of the alloy hull to one of the frames had pulled through, allowing water to accumulate in the scuppers. This water was often up to the floor boards, that's several gallons.

On the Wednesday we chocked the boat, bailed it out, cleaned the area to be repaired and punched out the offending rivets. Actually they almost fell out. Dave then jet washed the boat and we left it to dry overnight.

On Thursday we injected marine mastic into the joint between the frame and the hull and then bolted the whole thing up. Once the mastic had cured the boat was put back into the water ready for sailing on Sunday.

On 17 August Nigel emailed to say that our Hampton Fuel Allotment Association grant had been approved. Together with our earlier grant from Grass Roots this now paves the way for our kitchen (galley) refurbishment.

On 22 August Nigel undertook what must be THE worst job ever done at AQSC. Because of the increasingly bad odours coming from underneath the clubhouse he delved into the septic tank to ensure that the float switch and pump were working. The problem seemed to be the float switch, which had stopped working enabling the tank to overflow. Nigel managed to get it working again and at the moment sanitary disposal is working as normal. A BIG thanks to Nigel for doing this VERY unsavoury job. Well done mate!

Also on 22 August, using our chain hoist Nigel, Bryan and Ken managed to remove from the river the assorted metal work in front of the reservoir outflow, located at the bottom of the ramp down from the car park. This was a hazard to boats moving along the Middlesex bank and was best disposed of. Well done guys!

On Tuesday 14 September Bodgit & Son started the kitchen (galley) refit. Much of the first day was spent clearing the area and stripping the room back to floor, walls and ceiling. That included electrics and plumbing. Next the existing floor was taken up ready for the installation of a new floor on the same level as the main clubroom. This entailed pouring a concrete bed under the floor to support the joining of the old and new joists.

On Wednesday the new joists were laid and levelled and a fully boarded 18mm WPB floor put down across the joists. Three of the old walls were then ripped out and the exposed structure battened out to take new thicker wall boards. This took a while because the walls had to be perfectly straight, at what will be work surface level so that the new work surfaces would fit exactly. The galley electrics and plumbing were run at this time. On Thursday and Friday the new 12mm walls were installed together with the electric outlet boxes for power and switching.

On Saturday 18 September a Social Committee meeting was held at the club. This had to be 'Al Fresco' because of the work there was limited room inside, but the layout of the new galley and the budget were discussed and approved. Nigel worked on in the afternoon and installed a working sink, the dishwasher and fridge. On Sunday a limited amount of work was done being mainly concerned with clearing up the galley and clubroom and removing the vast array of building materials and tools.

During the next week the new equipment was ordered. On the Thursday the dishwasher, water heater and water softener were delivered to Nigel's. We then loaded it all up and took it to the club. On Monday 26 Nigel worked on the electrics, plumbing and started laying the hardboard floor covering on which the vinyl floor will be laid. On Wednesday 28 September B&S, ably assisted by Pete Carpenter, work started again. Pete plumbed in the water heater while B&S continued with the electrics, finished laying the floor, lined out the wall between the galley and the sail loft and started installing the structure for the new ceiling with its down lighters. During that same morning the Bain Marie was delivered, unfortunately this turned out to have quite bad panel damage and will have to go back.

With Rodger's 'Roaring 20's Night' looming and the need to have a working kitchen up and running by then it looks like B&S will have to work overtime on Sunday to have any chance of providing this. Once that event is over we then have a little more time before the kitchen's needed again for the Annual Dinner and the AGM.
Bodgit & Son (Building & Maintenance Contractors to AQSC)

Social Calendar - Dates For Your Diary

Sat 6 Nov Fireworks at Kempton Park then soup & victuals at Club; details below.
 Sat 20 Nov AQSC Annual Dinner starting at 7:30pm; details below.
 Sun 28 Nov Working party 10:30am. Come along with gardening tools. Lunch will be provided
Sat 4 Dec AGM, Prize Giving and End of Season Party starting at 7:30pm; details below.
 Sun 12 Dec Cheats Christmas lunch 12:30pm and family games.
2011

Sun 16 Jan Pantomime.
 Sun 13 Feb Ladies Day Lunch.
 Sun 27 Feb Lunch 12:30 pm and frostbite cruise/scavenger hunt.
Sat 19 Mar Start of Season Party 7:30pm
 Sun 27 Mar Start of sailing

Aquarius Sailing Club Annual Dinner Saturday 20 November 7:30pm for 8:00pm

The annual dinner will be held in the clubhouse:
 Dress: Smart
 Discounted price: £24.50 (£25.50 after 13 November)
 Includes:-
 Reception drink at 7:30pm.
 Four course meal by Professional Caterers
 Table Wine
 Coffee/Tea and mints
 Candle light, soft music and good company
 Limited to 48 members on a first come first served basis. This is a very popular dinner so earliest booking is advised by **13 November** at the latest.

A print of your booking form, together with a cheque for £24.50 (or £25.50) per person and made payable to *Aquarius Sailing Club* should be put in an envelope and posted to Diana Carpenter at:

11, Chestnut Avenue, Ewell, Surrey, KT19 0SY
 Tel.No. 020 8393 8029 email dianamcarpenter@tiscali.co.uk

Note: Booking forms are included with, or attached to, this issue of "The Mainsheet"

Please order by 13 November because any tickets not sold by this date will be offered to guests of members. Please include (G) against guests, they will be placed on a waiting list until 13 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 13 November for Leo and Anne to wrap.

Annual General Meeting, Prize Giving And End Of Season Party Saturday 4 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 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 Gray