

wavelength

csc magazine

Passage race:
the results

Musing on
the Med

New races
next year

Fireworks in
Cherbourg

Heading a Broads

A holiday in Norfolk





Wavelength
Marion
Tempest

Welcome to the latest edition of Wavelength. It has been a long time coming, but Simon has recently become a cruising instructor and busy in the Solent! He has persuaded me to assist in the collating of Wavelength so I would like to apologise in advance if you feel

the quality of the articles is not quite as polished as usual. Do keep on sending in your reports of events, photos and anything else you would like to share with club members, to wavelengtheditor@channelsailingclub.org, happy sailing *Marion*

CHANNEL SAILING CLUB COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2018



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Dick Beddoe



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wavelength The Channel Sailing Club magazine

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Marion Tempest and
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PLEASE SEND ANY LETTERS
AND PICTURES TO
wavelengtheditor@channelsailingclub.org

CLUB NIGHT
Channel Sailing Club meets every Wednesday at Ashted Cricket Club, Woodfield Lane, Ashted, Surrey KT21 2BJ. Doors open at 8pm. Prospective members welcome.

THE CLUB SENDS OUT EMAILS on a regular basis to remind members of upcoming events. Don't forget that if your personal information changes you can go into your personal account on the website and update it online. Check out the club's website for news and information www.channelsailingclub.org

PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN AT CLUB EVENTS may be used in Wavelength or on the club's website. If you do not want to appear in published photographs please inform the club committee and the person taking the photograph if possible.

THANKS to the RYA for permission to use material from their handbooks

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Winds of change

We do go out on the water in a wide range of conditions. Not many of us would happily set off in a gale, but a lot of us have experienced more wind than we might choose and anyone contemplating a longer passage or race would consider heavy weather at least a possibility. Some of our events this summer were certainly impacted by strong winds. Plans for a weekend trip to Yarmouth were very well subscribed, but in the end just a few hardy souls made it there by boat, whilst others got as far as Cowes and took taxis. Strong Westerlies at the start of the West Country cruise proved unpopular; an event organiser can only do so much! Our plans for Passage races to and from Poole were also curtailed in the face of severe gale warnings. As always, the responsibility for deciding on a course of action rests with the skipper of each boat, who is the only person who can judge the conditions, his boat and the crew and act accordingly.

Get out the spinnaker

Fortunately, as in most years, there have been some memorable "Goldilocks" moments, when conditions are perfect and we remember why we enjoy this sport so much. On the Bastille cruise this year we had great conditions from start to finish. The winds were generally fairly light but enough to sail by and even occasionally in a helpful direction, providing some memorable long spinnaker runs. We have also had some

great fun racing; you just have to remember the good bits!

This year we participated much more actively in the RYA "Push the Boat Out" campaign, which aims to introduce new people to sailing. We invited would-be sailors to come to the club house to meet us and sign up for a free taster session on the water. The response was



We are delighted to have a large influx of new members, who we welcome to join us both on land and sea.

outstanding and our hard-working Membership Secretary has been kept busy ever since. With a large influx of new members, the next challenge is training, for which we have long been famous. The RYA Day Skipper theory class is scheduled to run again this autumn and we also plan to offer First Aid and VHF radio classes. Introductory sessions on club nights for novices covering some basic crewing skills have also been well received. I'm sure that our more experienced sailors will all help in sharing skills and knowledge.

As we put together the schedule of events for next year we aim to include a wide range of cruising and racing events on the water, as well as some entertaining social events and instructive talks at the club house. The mix will include some old favourites but there's also room for plenty of new ideas on and off the water. If you have enjoyed a social or sailing event this year and would like to have a go at organising one, please talk to any member of the committee and we will be delighted to give you lots of support.

Whatever you do on or off the water, have fun and be safe.

Dark and stormy

The passage race had a heady cocktail of challenges, from freighters to fog

There were originally planned to be 2 Passage Races to Poole and back over the weekend, but gales were forecast early on Sunday morning so discretion over valour prevailed. We decided to hold a single race on the Saturday in the Solent with all boats returning to their home ports that evening.

Nine at the start

The race route was about 20 NM in length, starting at 1130 at E. Bramble cardinal and heading west with the tide (HW Portsmouth 1100 almost Springs) to Yarmouth then returning to finish to the southeast of the Bramble bank at Goodall Roofing (Mark 4W). Conditions were forecast to be rather wet but



benign (initially winds from the WSW of 5 to 10 knots then backing to ESE by about 1600 and strengthening to 14 – 18 kts). Nine club boats had registered to race, including 2 newcomers - Avocette and Wild Rover.

The first mark was Quinnell bearing due west. As committee boat Papillon laid a gate start line at 180 degrees from the cardinal and all boats appeared to

make decent starts, though Avocette was still en route and started 2 minutes behind the fleet. On the first beats the larger, faster boats started to pull away, with Wild Rover (an MG 346) in the lead with White Knight and Change of Course. Eagle, Caressa and Papillon exchanged places a few times as they crossed on opposite tacks while Myst and Matambu brought up the rear.

Trouble looms large

After Quinnell the next mark was Salt Mead about 3 NM south west – the wind started to drop and with over 2 knots of tide taking us west it was imperative to get across the Solent to avoid being swept past the mark on the wrong side. On Papillon we were

heading at least 30 degrees to port to hold our transit to the mark. Behind us a large freighter from the Wallenius line was coming up the Thorn Channel and causing all sorts of problems for several of our boats as they were trying to get across it in very little wind! Myst was taken past Quinnell and had to run back past it under gennaker after the freighter had passed.

Wild Rover and Change of Course both had to sail back to Salt Mead after being taken past by the tide. White Knight got clean away at this point. The wind then decided to back early by about 50 degrees to South then ESE so the “beat” to Charles Stanley buoy off Yarmouth became a broad reach then a run – so time for lunch.



Matambu came up at a rapid pace

To the finish

After this the course took us back up the Solent to Quinnell – a beat of about 7 NM. White Knight had disappeared into the rain and murk, while Papillon and Change of Course were joined by Wild Rover and Eagle. All boats had to tack at least once to clear Lepe Spit and the wind was steadily freshening towards 20 knots. After rounding Quinnell the finish mark was about 3.5 NM due East and conditions were still worsening, with winds speeds occasionally above 25 knots and much bigger seas. It was also still raining heavily – lovely! Myst and Avocette sadly retired in the conditions, while Matambu came up at a rapid pace.



On Papillon we were pleased to finish, get into the Hamble and dry clothes and off to the RAF club where we were joined by Oleg and the crews of Myst and Matambu for supper. Provisional results were computed by Oleg and put Change of Course in 1st place, Wild Rover 2nd and Matambu 3rd .

Simon Davey

Merci beaucoup

We have two reports on the Bastille Day cruise

Some boats wanted to do the annual Round the Island Race; others could set off early.

So the Bastille Cruise started at different times and from different places. Eagle set off early and enjoyed a wonderful overnight sail direct to Treguier, where we enjoyed the excellent seafood platter in the restaurant by the church.

Fair winds

With Neap tides and light winds, conditions were perfect for some fine anchorages and unhurried cruising, much of it under spinnaker. We anchored at the Ile de Brehat, the Ile de Hebihens and memorably at the Iles Chaussey, where fore and aft moorings have eliminated the threat of swinging onto the rocks. Finally we sailed to Sark, my favourite Channel Island, and walked over the island into Creux Harbour.

Other boats routed variously via Cherbourg, Alderney or Carteret to meet on Guernsey on Wednesday, where crews met up in the convivial Boathouse Restaurant on the pier in St Peter Port. Here we enjoyed the first of several cruise dinners, exchanged

stories and planned our further passages. Bonhomie continued after dinner aboard Moody Blue.

Strange ambulance

The following day, on passage to Dielette we heard Ron Hunt on Jabberwocky calling for assistance on Sark. We diverted to the Havre Gosselin to see if we could help in any way, but Colin Jackson, who had a broken arm, had already been seen by the Sark GP and transported (by tractor!) to the ferry, then to Guernsey, where there followed a blunt reminder that the UK does not share health care arrangements with the islands.

On to Dielette, if you get the tides right from Dielette, it's like stepping onto a magic carpet to ride round to Cherbourg. As the tide turns, you step off, say 'merci beaucoup', and moor up in the calm waters of the marina.

For this cruise, Cherbourg once again did us proud, reserving the exclusive "J" pontoon for our sole use, and giving us not only best access to the facilities, but also the best view of the fine fireworks on Bastille night.

Alick Fraser



If you get the tides right from Dielette, it's like stepping onto a magic carpet to ride round to Cherbourg

Motoring through mill pond conditions to Alderney, a huge pod of dolphins weaved round the boat



The weather was sublime, but not for sailing... with light winds and blazing sun. After 20 hours Moody Blue arrived at Dielette under motor, and enjoyed much needed refreshment, with the crew tucking into Pastis de Marseille – very French!

Next day we sailed to Cartaret, where we braved the chilly water for a swim off the beach. After stocking up in Carrefor we went to the local sailing club to watch France in the World Cup, fortunately the Gallic squad won.

On to Guernsey and due to crew negligence a lobster pot was snared. The next two hours was spent cutting it free with me donning trunks to dive under the stern.

A beautiful entry into Guernsey harbour, avoiding rocks and catamarans. Moody Blue was allocated a holding pontoon, unable to get over the ledge into the marina. Later we escaped by bus and joined Jabberwocky and the others for more drinks!

Motoring through mill pond conditions to Alderney, a huge pod of dolphins weaved round the boat. Once ashore we hiked to a stunning white cove for swimming and sunbathing.

At the final French destination of Cherbourg, the peace of the marina was shattered with an apparition - fellow CSC member Keith Gibbs. Light winds had forced him and other JOG racing crews to stop there.

Bastille celebrations kicked-off with a parade, marching bands, helicopter and D-Day vehicles, followed by fireworks which reflected beautifully in the marina waters.

David Surman





This is the third year we have wintered Celestine in Almerimar, Spain. We finally reached her in mid May having left her for far too long.

Our first short sail was to Almeria where we discovered that there is either too much or too little wind and this was definitely too much! We stormed into the harbour with 30-35 knots of wind swirling and entered the small marina. The marinero pointed to a small space in a cross wind berth and we attempted to swing the boat round to neatly reverse in. We ran straight over a rope holding a motor cruiser off the pontoon. Two RIBs and approximately 10 Spanish persons shouting unintelligible and what sounded like contradictory advice later we were pushed and shoved into a berth between two huge motor boats – the marineros insisted on dealing with all the warps and leaving us in need of a beer ... and then another etc etc

But it was early days and we did get better. On to Carta-

gena which was brilliant – we arrived in the middle of a racing regatta and were invited to join in – free of charge – the food and drink being provided for competitors. No second invitation needed and we kept the Cava bar busy all evening and ate from huge pans of fresh paella. Cartagena is a great city and as with so many Spanish cities has large pedestrian only areas full of shops restaurants and tapas bars and feels very cheerful and has the most amazing Roman amphitheatre in the middle of town.



Help is on hand

We also gave the engine a full service in Cartagena with some help from a friendly single hander who turned out to be an ex professional boxer, ex fisherman and ex lifeboat man. He was the designated swimmer on the Newhaven lifeboat and had pulled 37 bodies from the sea – unfortunately none alive.

We were behind schedule

as we wanted to be through the Balearics before 1 July when the prices go crazy and we are told you have to fight to get a decent anchor position and can forget the marinas. So we overnighted from Cartagena and arrived in Formentera early in the morning. We found some buoys that no one was charging for yet and stayed there 2 nights. We walked through the interior overwhelmed by the smell of pine, thyme and rosemary. Lovely little coves to go swimming in and a great – if expensive- fish restaurant.

We moved on to San Antonio in Ibiza which was horrific and best forgotten and then sailed to a small cala – Cala Blanco on the north west coast where we anchored for the night. We were the only yacht there and it was beautiful

We left early the following morning to sail to Mallorca. We had a forecast for an enjoyable sail on a close reach in a F4 or thereabouts. We ended up fully reefed beating in a F7 with nasty short steep seas. We considered turning round but the yacht outside us was plugging in so we thought we would do the same. Close to Mallorca the wind eased and the yacht next door called up on



To the Med and beyond...

By Andy and Alison Struthers



VHF and suggested we race to the finish. We were first in and got to know our competitor well.

We had reached Andraitx in Mallorca and did what we always do which is check out the prices in the estate agents – we have never seen anything like it - £8 million euros for a nice house overlooking the sea with a small pool! We enjoyed it here and then went on to Soller. The north west coast of Mallorca is rugged, mountainous and spectacular. We walked up through the olive groves and forest to an old watch tower – it was hot but a great walk with wonderful views at the top.

No help at all!

We were improving our stern to berthing skills. There were a couple of small mishaps – the most embarrassing being when we came in stern to with wind blowing us on – the mariner wouldn't



hand us the line and the bow inevitably swung round until we lay alongside the pontoon. The mariner (who was not at the stage our closest friend) told us to start again and we pointed out that we could either ram the boat in front or the one behind but it was impossible to spring off sideways. Lots of pushing and shoving and we made it. But by and large we were getting our technique honed and were able to reverse in to gaps that we would previously have assumed were not quite wide enough for the dinghy

Anchors away!

We moved on to north west Mallorca and had planned to anchor in Cala San Vicente but as the swell was 1.5 to 2m and wind getting up we drove on round Cap de Formentor. We eventually picked up a buoy for the night. The following day we found a glorious deserted bay impossible to get to by land. It was popular with yachts, and we anchored there twice. On the second occasion the anchor down button decided to stick when we released the anchor. When we took the switch apart we found a tiny plastic switch which just seems to stick sometimes

- annoyingly stupid piece of plastic when you are dealing with a large lump of metal and chain. Anyway we sorted it and finally relaid on sand and not in the weed which is heavily frowned upon.

We moved on to Minorca - and this is being written near the very pretty little town of Fornells where we are on a free buoy. We hope to cross to Sardinia in about a week and continue onward to wherever it is we are going – we have both forgotten if we have a destination and also ceased to care.



THE FROSTBITE CRUISE

Gaius Hiscox thaws out...

I put my name down for the frostbite cruise knowing it might be cold. Originally I did not get a place because not enough crew berths were available, so as the last member to sign up, I was put on a waiting list. On the Thursday I received a message from Ken Wright (Gilken) asking if I wanted a berth. Despite knowing the forecast, I still said YES!! The number of participating boats was now 3.

I arrived in Gosport on the Saturday morning to a cold, windy grey day. The destination had been changed to Cowes, as it was going to be easterly all weekend, and a beat back from Lymington or Yarmouth would not have been pleasant.

Gilken sailed to catch the west going tide, and as prudent mariners, the decision was made to sail under headsail alone. The skipper and crew made various estimates of our arrival time off Cowes, but the sweepstake was rapidly amended earlier and earlier as we flew up the

Solent. It was quickly agreed that we would work 30 minute watches, one on the helm getting cold, one in the companion way, trying to get warm, and one in the comparative shelter of the spray hood. With enough layers of clothing it was a fast and enjoyable sail!

There were not many yachts

One on the helm getting cold, one in the companion way and one in the shelter of the spray hood

about, and we only had to keep out of the way of one commercial vessel that caught us up and passed us as we went south of Bramble Bank. Attempts to call the other participating yachts failed and as we entered Cowes it was obvious that we had arrived before the others. The water looked a little choppy inside Shepards Wharf Marina, where the others planned to moor, and, so it was a unanimous decision onboard, to head for the more sheltered East Cowes Marina.

We were alongside by 13:00, kettle working, and thawing out. We were warm overnight, but awoke to 2inches of snow on deck.

Salty sea dogs

This was truly frostbite weather and it was very slippery underfoot, particularly onboard. It was the crew's job to sweep the decks before laying table salt liberally; and we hoped that the salt water in the Solent would keep the decks ice free.

It was definitely a case of 'get home quick' so we sailed with a favourable tide, and quickly reverting to 30 minute watches, we headed against the wind, but with the tide, back to Portsmouth. None of us wanted to beat to windward, so the iron sail was used exclusively. Not the most pleasant of sailing days, but Saturday had been fun.

So in the end Gilken had had a solitary frostbite cruise, and you will have to read other reports to find out how the others got on!

Where's Mr Toad?

The Murfitts take an America class yacht holiday on the Norfolk Boards

Classic counter stern Broads design with a traditional gunter rig and genoa with Wykeham Martin furler

Sailing on the rivers is entertaining to say the least requiring many tacks if the wind is not in a favourable direction

Our trip started on a beautiful sunny bank holiday Saturday, with an early start to get the lowest tide level at Potter Heigham; America needs 6ft 3 clearance for the tabernacle and mast lead weight, although the mast can be lifted at the stern to get the lead lower as you enter the bridge. We set off concerned that we would not get through Potter Heigham Bridge as the tide gauge was showing 5ft 10 about 1 hour from low tide and the four of us can best be described as "light weights". The draft issue was solved with seconding 4 extra "rugby prop type" men (from another boat) and we made it through, but with little to spare. We raised the mast and hoisted the Gunter/gaff rig sail. Raising the mast is not easy, requiring at least 3 people. The counter balance weight isn't enough until you get past about 45 degrees and shrouds can get caught on the cabin roof corners. Once the mast is up the sail can be hoisted which is also a heavy job as there are no winches by the mast and there are two halyards one for the gaff gooseneck and one for the gaff. The jib is on a standard furling system.

After a gentle sail, beats and reaching as the river winds, we stopped for a picnic lunch near

St Benet's abbey and had a quick look at the ruins. Neatishead was our planned mooring for the night which meant we had the interesting sail down the narrow River Ant followed by the possible excitement with a stronger wind on the open Barton Broad. Ludham bridge also requires the mast to be taken down. We nudged the bow into the reeds at the start of the Ant to do this as there is often no mooring near the bridge- too many stink boats!

Crawling up the Ant

We managed to sail about half the Ant, wind shade by trees causing us to use the engine. We had a quant pole but! As we approached Barton Broad, the wind came up and enabled all of us to helm without the constant river tacking and need to keep every tack clean to maximise gain.

Sailing on the rivers is entertaining to say the least requiring many tacks if the wind is not in a favourable direction. Shaving corners is a must which poses a serious challenge for the 'motor boaties' who often get very concerned

about where to go, when we have right of way on their side of the river. Giving them hand signals is the best option, although sometimes that elicits another type of hand signal!

On arrival at Neatishead, down the very narrow staithe, we just managed to get the last mooring not far from the pub we had booked. The next morning it was an early start so we navigated with the quant out of our spot as it was before 8am. We did have an audience!

We set off again but there wasn't much wind. We stopped off at Toad Hole Cottage museum which the ladies misheard and thought it was Toad of Toad Hall! They were very disappointed to find it wasn't and so not to meet Ratty! By this time it was busy with motor boats - there were a lot of stag boats and some did not seem to understand the rules of the river.

Giving them hand signals is the best option, although sometimes that elicits another type of hand signal!

We had booked a pub for the evening but mooring was difficult so we moved on. We did eventually find a stern to spot at Malthouse Broad and had a walk to the old church with a tower which had amazing views over the broads. It was a beautiful evening so we decided leave the stern to mooring to anchor (which is in fact a very heavy weight) in the middle of the broad. We enjoyed drinks and dinner as the sun set and a drawing lesson from our friend who is an artist. We also used a fab app to name the stars and planets.

The next day - Monday we set off early again and made our way slowly back through the bridge, at low tide and with less natural flow as it had not rained for 5 days with some sailing up towards Hickling Broad, lunch and then returned America to Marthams Boatyard.

If you really want to learn windward sailing this type of river sailing should be on your list.

Richie Murfitt



Richie and Zoe Murfitt sailed with John and Debra Parkinson.



Gatherings and get-togethers

We've had a variety of social events this year, all of them well attended and adding much-needed funds to the CSC coffers

Mexican Night, March 28,

Over 50 guests attended a fun evening of chilli and cake followed by a mexican quiz hosted by a very Trump-like Dick Beddoe

Organiser Marion Tempest

CSC Quiz Nights, April 18 & September 12

We had 2 quiz nights, the first when Dick's PowerPoint skills were on display and the second had 50 thought provoking questions and a raffle!

Organisers: The Beddoes, Michael Holden and Tony Sparling



Summer BBQ, June 20

What a success! The hugely popular summer BBQ was virtually over subscribed. It was a lovely summer's evening, brilliantly catered and organised by David and Lisa with a team of helpers pictured above, a good time was had by all

Organisers: David Surman and Lisa Phillimore



This calendar is designed as guide only. Events may be subject to alteration. For full details of events and latest information see channelsailingclub.org

OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
1	1	1 Icicle rally
2	2	2
3 Briefing	3	3
4	4	4
5	5	5
6 Pursuit race/	6	6
7 rally	7	7
8	8	8
9	9	9
10	10	10
11	11	11
12	12	12 Tom Cunliffe talk
13	13	13
14	14	14
15	15	15
16	16	16
17	17	17
18	18	18
19	19	19 Mulled wine
20	20	20
21	21 Social event	21
22	22	22
23	23	23
24	24	24
25	25	25 Xmas Day
26	26	26 Boxing Day
27	27	27
28 BST ends	28 Briefing	28
29	29	29
30	30	30
31		31

Still to come!

Social event, Nov 21

Come and join us for an evening organised by our Austrian club members Christoph and Bernadette (whose reputation for fine baking is well known if you have sailed on Felix). The theme is yet to be finalised but its sure to involve chocolate! Further details online at channelsailingclub.org

Organisers: Bernadette and Christoph Friedrich

Icicle rally, dinner and dance Dec 1 tickets £40

Its that time of year again. A relaxed sail across to 'Winter New Orelans' (Cowes) followed by a riotous evening of Jazz themed boat dressing, sketches, rum rations and who knows what else!

Then, onto a new venue for 2018 – Cowes Yacht Haven for dinner and dancing into the Night.

Usually a quieter, gentler sail back to home port on Sunday morning!

Organiser: Bonnie Brown

Mulled wine and mince pie evening, Dec 19,

8.30pm Kick start the festive season with a complimentary mince pie and a glass of mulled wine. All club members welcome.

Organiser: Linda Varney

What's on?

An exciting year on and off the water is on the horizon next year

There are several first-time events happening over the next 12 months designed to test long-standing members and introduce new members to more challenging sailing events.

There are also a number of **winter talks**, including the ever-popular **Tom Cunliffe** who visits the club on December 12.

A new talker in 2019 is Westview Sailing principal and instructor **Duncan Wells**, who may be well known to members from his many informative articles in Yachting Monthly magazine. Other talks are scheduled from Dick Beddoe, Ken Fifield, Alick Fraser and Nigel Barraclough.

In order to cater for our new members, the start of the season includes **competent crew and day skipper practical training**, a Frostbite Rally and some scheduled day sails in May. Additional events may be added as the season progresses.

This year the highly-competitive and fun **Wooden Spoon race** is being organised by Chichester Cruiser Racing Club who have said it will take place in either June or September, hopefully on one of the dates we have reserved for racing.

New this year

There is an additional **cross-Channel race** next year, scheduled to coincide with the start of the Bastille Rally in July, which will go first to Cherbourg and then east to St Vaast and beyond.

Another **new event** is the **Whit Sunday cruise** scheduled to take place over the May Bank Holiday weekend at the end of May.

Social events already pencilled in include **Burns Night** in January - a massive hit earlier this year - and the popular **summer BBQ** in June.

Many thanks to Jeremy John, Oleg Lebedev and Dick Beddoe for their help in preparing next year's calendar.

Whatever you are doing, there is no excuse for not reaping the benefits of being a CSC member in 2019.

Simon Worthington

CSC to run RYA practical course

● An RYA practical sailing course will be run by the Channel Sailing Club next year, the first time in its history.

It is proposed to run a combined competent crew/day skipper course over two weekends in March 2019. They are planned for Saturday and Sunday, March 8 & 9, and Friday, Saturday, Sunday, March 22, 23 and 24.

In the past the club has run theory sessions only, so this move is a big step forward in its training agenda, said training organiser David Surman.

The practical training will be run by RYA instructor Ken Fifield, a member of the Channel Sailing Club.

He has arranged use of a fully safety-coded boat, enabling the course to be run

in the Solent area.

The cost has provisionally been set at £400 per person for the full five-day course. That is considerably cheaper than commercial sailing schools in the same area.

● If you interested in attending this course please speak to either **David Surman or Ken Fifield on a club night.**

Aground in the small boat channel

Mike Price comes a cropper in Cowes

July 2017- I left East Cowes early morning in order to return my yacht Moody Blue back to Eastbourne.

The photos below are the section of that chart magnified to show the supposed whole small boat channel and the Notes. The Lat/Long for Shrape Beacon is listed, but is off the chart.

The 4A Beacon-start/end of small boats channel is quite

clearly marked on the chart and says it has tidal height markings, but there is no mention of it all under Notes. I sent an email to Cowes Harbour-master who had never realised the two errors.

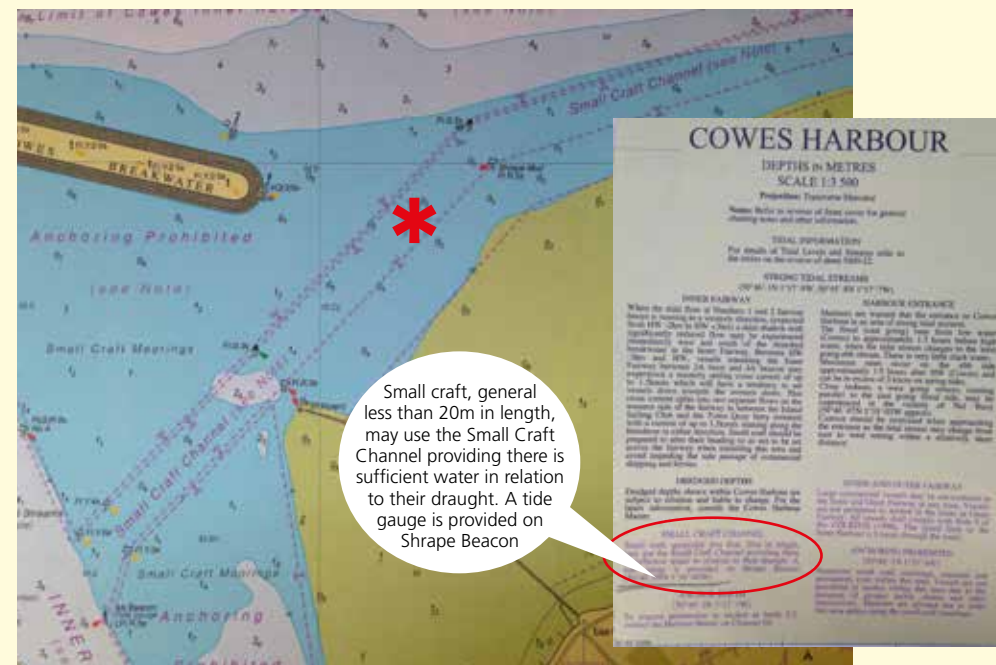
He also apologised that the posts were covered with thick seaweed and so depths were totally obscured-and had them scrubbed clean later that day.

Ok was totally my fault to enter channel without double

checking depths in whole channel when entered and to then go around where * is on chart!

Due to the falling tide we had no choice but to call out The RNLI-who happened to be on duty for later that morning for the annual cricket match on the Bramble bank.

I will now give that channel a wide berth –unless it is close to high water due to shifting sands in channel.



Across to St Vaast

Report on the mid-week cruise by John Horne



St Vaast is famous for its oysters, which feature on the menu of all good restaurants



The original plan was that Jabberwocky would sail to Cherbourg on 3 June, to meet and greet Firecrest, Kalita and Skedaddle. We set off at 4am, had plenty of sunshine and good visibility but not much wind, and arrived at 6pm.

Firecrest had decided to go west instead, towards Poole and Weymouth, while Kalita and Skedaddle arrived in Cherbourg as planned. A welcome surprise visitor was Orcella, whose crew included three very proficient and experienced non-members.

The weather soon deteriorated and in Cherbourg there was little else to do but a bit of shopping and a visit to the marina bar.

By Tuesday the weather had deteriorated further, with poor visibility and strong winds. Orcella, Kalita and Skedaddle very sensibly decided to stay in Cherbourg. Meanwhile the cruise leader tried to show the flag and went as far as the harbour

entrance; with the tide beginning to flow strongly towards Barfleur and an easterly wind blowing directly against it the sea state looked rather uninviting and we turned back to Cherbourg. The following morning was still heavily overcast, with no sun but fortunately no rain. Jabberwocky set off towards St Vaast, keeping inshore and motoring from cardinal

We were joined by a single-handed sailor from Lymington who we had met in Cherbourg

to cardinal, arriving at 15:00, while Orcella stayed further off shore, arriving an hour and a half later. We were joined by a single-handed sailor from Lymington who we had met in Cherbourg and who showed an interest in joining the club. Meanwhile Kalita and Skedaddle decided to return home, with a passage to the Needles giving a better sailing angle.

The harbour at St Vaast is shared by pleasure yachts and fishing vessels, whose catch seemed to consist almost entirely of shellfish. As this area dries out the marina is protected by lock gates which are open at HW + or - 3 hours. When the gates are closed a footbridge is open, giving quick access to the shore close to the Capitainerie and visitors berths. The alternative when the lock gates are open is a walk round the entire harbour.

Caught short!

The marina facilities were disappointing; there were only three showers in a small and poorly ventilated room. The temptation to move out into the rather larger entrance hall to get dry and dressed should be avoided, as it also leads to the ladies' showers, as some members soon found out.

St Vaast is famous for its oysters, which feature on the menu of all good restaurants. At low water, just outside the harbour you can see the extensive oyster beds.



Beyond them is the small island of Tatihou, which can be visited by day trippers in a modern version of the old DUKW. This is parked on the sea wall; when filled with its forty or so passengers it trundles backwards along the sea wall and down a ramp. Raising its wheels and lowering its propellers it then motors off.

On Thursday evening the crews of Jabberwocky and Orcella joined forces for a cruise supper, to which the intrepid single-hander from Lymington was invited.

A foggy start

Daybreak on Friday revealed thick fog, with visibility down to 50 yards, with not a breath of wind; it was, however,

cold enough for the breath of the crew to be visible. We left early, navigating carefully by GPS from mark to mark until reaching the open sea, where radar came in very handy. The first large vessel we picked up altered course to pass well ahead, although neither of us ever saw each other. About half way across the sun broke through and for most of the way the wind was strong enough to allow a brilliant sail back to Gosport. Meanwhile Orcella opted for a night passage, leaving after midnight and arriving at Port Solent on Saturday morning.

And our intrepid single-handed sailor from Lymington? Probably still off sailing, but we would be delighted to meet him again.

● St Vaast offers little in the way of shops, but the emporium of Maison Gosselin should not be missed. At first it appears very ordinary but its intricate interior, extending far back from the street, contains everything to be found in a supermarket as well as an extensive wine cave.

● There are several restaurants. Pole position is occupied by La Criée du Tomahawk which is directly opposite the footbridge over the lock gates and a little further on is La Débarcadère. Just beyond this, on the wall of a house, is a ship's figurehead, a bare-breasted woman with a rather startled expression on her face, which gave rise to a few comments from our members. (No illustration is included as this is a family magazine.)





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