

SPRING 2017

# wave length

**csc magazine**

**Foggy  
Frostbite**

**Speedseal  
for sale**



**RNLI drama  
on long race**

**AGM  
honours**



[www.channelsailingclub.org](http://www.channelsailingclub.org)

**Welcome to the spring 2017 edition of**

**Wavelength.** We cover two of the first events of the new sailing season, the Frostbite rally to Yarmouth and the Long Race to Littlehampton. The first was hit by fog and the second had an RNLI emergency when a crew member was injured during an accidental gybe. Let's hope the rest of the year fares better! Many thanks to contributors on both these events and to everyone else who sends in articles, including Swedish sailing with Nigel Barraclough and Barry Robertson for his tales from the Black Sea.

*Simon*

**CHANNEL SAILING CLUB COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2017**



Commodore  
Alick Fraser



Vice-commodore  
Clive Hall



Company Secretary  
Peter Denning



Treasurer  
Phil Martin



Rear-commodore  
Cruising  
Jeremy John



Rear-commodore  
Racing  
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Training principal  
David Surman



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Frank Gibson



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Teresa  
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Special events  
Debbie Wiffen



Bosun  
Norman  
Bowden



Wavelength  
Simon  
Worthington

**wavelength**  
The Channel Sailing  
Club magazine

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PLEASE SEND ANY LETTERS  
AND PICTURES TO  
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CLUB NIGHT  
Channel Sailing Club meets  
every Wednesday at Ashtead  
Cricket Club, Woodfield  
Lane, Ashtead, 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](http://www.channelsailingclub.org)

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COVER PICTURE: DAVID SURMAN



**Smooth  
move**

As you know, the big news this Spring has been the move of our Wednesday evening home to the delightful Ashtead Cricket Club, who have given us a very warm welcome. This new clubhouse offers us the facilities to hold all sorts of social events and I hope that you will join in as often as possible. I look forward to the summer for drinks on the veranda and a barbecue on the grass. I am very grateful to all those who have made the move as easy as it has been, and for the unprecedented level of local publicity that we have been able to achieve.

**The end of winter is also a busy time of year for boat maintenance; is there ever a time when a boat doesn't need maintenance?! This year we ground some of the many years' worth of accumulated antifouling off the keel and dealt with some spots of corrosion which at least hasn't made the boat go any slower. This year too one of the boat's lifejackets failed an inflation test and was duly binned.**

The club's sailing season has started in fine style, firstly with a rather misty trip down tide to Yarmouth, where we were welcomed by the Royal Solent YC and invited to use their lounge to watch some rugby and then to join an evening's entertainment with a live band and a splendid curry buffet. Our first club race was a hugely popular event, with eleven boats and 45

crew on the start line and perfect conditions for a fast trip to Littlehampton and the hospitality of the Arun YC. The mass departure at 06:00 shows what can happen when everyone reads the tide tables and draws the same conclusions!

If you've been in Portsmouth Harbour recently, you will have noticed the dredging work in preparation for the arrival of the Royal Navy's new aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth. Work to adjust the navigation buoys and port entry lights to reflect the changes is now complete, and a new chart has been published. Most of the channel marker buoys as well as the key directional lights have changed, so I encourage you to refer to QHM's notices and act accordingly.

We heard in January that Richard and Susan Kidd completed their circumnavigation in just under a leisurely fifteen years. Richard was the Commodore when I joined the club twenty years ago and they both welcomed me as a novice onto their wonderful boat Sea Bunny. This summer at least three boats from the club will be sailing off to Northern, Eastern and Southern Europe. Closer to home, our own plans have been laid for trips to France and the West Country, as well as many destinations around the Solent and nearby, and I am especially looking forward to visiting several places for the first time.

Wherever your sailing takes you this year, have fun, be safe and enjoy the adventure.

*Alick*



# Into the Mystic

What a weekend! Bonnie Brown recounts the thrills and spills of the long race



WHILE birds prepared their arias and adjusted their ruffs, 45 slumbering sailors wearily reached for their snooze buttons. Silent ruminations about why one would get up so early on a Saturday echoed far across distant lands.

A long race to Littlehampton starting at Motherbank was the agenda of the day. Shortly after 10.30am was the race start time, allowing the multiple snooze button crowd a little flexibility in arrival time. At 10.40am most of the boats were heading for



the start line. Some at 330 degrees - others preferring the exhilaration of a near miss to start proceedings more formally.

Papillon was first over the line, followed closely by Eagle

and White Knight. Weather conditions prompted lively discussions around spinnakers, asymmetrics and what was for lunch. Thirty two miles later and the 10-strong fleet arrived at Littlehampton

Townside Marina to raft up under blue skies.

Change of Course's arrival marked triumph over adversity as they managed to finish despite an emergency call to the RNLI to take off an injured crew member. Joe Scantori was unfortunately hit by the mainsheet during a gybe and broke his arm.

## You can't keep a good man down!

He was taken to Worthing hospital for treatment, but bravely made an appearance at the evening function.

Joe has since had an op at



St Helier's Hospital in south London and is recovering well, if not rather painfully.

Arun Yacht club welcomed CSC members into their clubhouse for a three course meal with an optional battering at

the pool table. Their hospitality was much appreciated – especially to ferryman Mark, who took members back and forwards to their boats with a cheery disposition.

After final celebrations and >



congratulations to organiser Andy Struthers and race winners Caressa, the fleet slipped into their bunks knowing they wouldn't be there for long.

### Rise and shine

At 5.30am, the gentle morning roar of White Knight's engine filtered through Matambu's darkened shutters

in an attempt to wake the disgruntled occupants. By 6am, the CSC fleet were homeward bound and their sailing nourishment full to the brim.

As we watched the sun rise to shine upon our sails once more, the silent joy of feeling our souls and spirits sail into the mystic, reached far across distant lands.

### Race results:

- 1 Caressa
- 2 Eagle
- 3 Gilken
- 4 Papillon
- 5 Felix
- 6 Matambu
- 7 White Knight
- 8 Myst
- 9 Change of Course
- 10 Shubumi

# SPEEDSEAL CELEBRATES 21 YEARS

Club member Alex in hunt for buyer

When Alex Parker became frustrated at having to change failed cooling pump impellers at sea, he had an eureka moment.

A long standing Channel Sailing Club member, he came up with a revolutionary water pump cover which enabled quick and easy impeller changes, and now his Speedseal invention is celebrating 21 years in manufacture and tens of thousands of satisfied sailors worldwide.

With access often restricted in a marine engine compartment, replacing an impeller in an emergency in a pitching boat can be a harrowing experience. Alex said: "Twice while on boat trips with my family I had to change the impeller under pressure and I thought: 'This is crazy, there's got to be a better way'."

With the help of an engineering friend, his unique Speedseal design was patented, tested and on the market in about four months.

When an old impeller cover is removed, a Speedseal cover

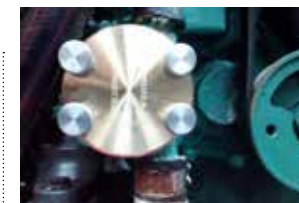
can be fitted using the existing holes with no modifications required. The cover is made of 1/4 inch naval brass with a high-spec nitrile O-ring in a machined channel. The back-pressure of the compressed O-ring locks the large hand screws without the need for gaskets, and slots in the cover allow simple location or removal, even in the dark.

Eight years ago Alex, who lives in Bookham, Surrey, came up with a new model called Speedseal Life, which uses a high-slip bearing to allow an impeller to run dry without burning out and to extend impeller life by about three times.

Alex said: "The average failure time of a dry-running impeller is about two and a half minutes, so frequently damage is done before a high temperature alarm goes off.

"This safety threat can be compounded by bits of broken impeller entering the cooling system and doing further damage."

In tests, Speedseal Life has achieved 10 minutes of dry-running without the



impeller disintegrating.

The Speedseal has revolutionised changing an impeller at sea - a product which has had enthusiastic feedback. Speedseal Life is now fitted on military and rescue craft around the world.

The basic Speedseal model costs about £49 while the Speedseal Life is about £70. Both come with full-instructions, hand-tightening nuts, lubricant and an impeller removal tool.

They can be fitted to many of the cooling pump models which have four or six screw fixings.

After more than two decades, Alex is looking to sell his design to an organisation with the resources and distribution networks for expansion. He said: "I've had a terrific time coming up with the Speedseal design and selling it round the world, but now is the time for someone else to take over."



# HONOURS HAT-TRICK AT AGM

Rear commodore roles re-instated

It was a triple bill of honours at the Channel Sailing Club's AGM in January. Commodore Alick Fraser presented honorary life membership to sailing stalwart Keith Gibbs for his contribution to the club and members over many years.

And in a surprise move, Alick re-instated rear commodore roles at the club by making Jeremy John rear commodore (cruising) and Oleg Lebedev rear commodore (racing) in recognition of their hard work organising CSC events.

There was a lively discussion on the proposal from the committee to increase annual membership by £5 after Alick showed that club finances were on a downward slide. The increase in subs was voted through in a unanimous vote among those present.

Alick said 2016 had been an exciting year of sailing with members visiting ports from Brest to Brighton. Highlights included regaining the Wooden Spoon trophy, running a navigation course with our own RYA instructor, Ken Fifield, and securing Tom Cunliffe as a speaker.

However, the year had been tinged with sadness by notice to leave the Old Freemen's Association. Alick said he was looking forward to the move in March to the fine facilities at Ashted Cricket Club.

In his cruise report, Jeremy John said 2017 would see more rally/race combinations as

well as new destinations. He appealed for organisers to come forward early.

Oleg Lebedev said there had been 12 races during 2016 with 17 boats taking part in competitive events. Twelve boats had taken part in four or more races, with the highlight regaining the Wooden Spoon after six years. He said another 12 races were planned for 2017.

Training organiser David Surman said all those who took the Day Skipper course in October/November had passed with the club breaking even on costs. David said he hoped to recruit from outside the club and plan further ahead for future courses, including first aid, radar and diesel engine.

Membership officer Frank Gibson said he still hoped to strengthen links with local Sea Scouts and Kingston University in a bid to boost club membership and that despite a "maturing membership", CSC numbers were relatively static.

Alick Fraser presented a cheque for £356.72 to the RNLI, the commodore's charity. This was in addition to the £157.72 collected at their talk and the £183.45 worth of sales from Christmas cards, etc.

In the trophy presentation, Myst clinched a hat trick of awards getting the Regatta, Navigator's and Le Harlequin prizes.

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## Full list of 2016 trophy winners:

### RACING AWARDS

Two-handed and Round the Island - **Matambu**  
Wooden Spoon - **White Knight**  
Regatta, Navigator's and Le Harlequin (most improved handicap) - **Myst**  
Pursuit - **Caressa**  
Racing championship - **Eagle**

### CLUB AWARDS

Mizzen (most events attended) - **Orcella**  
Jacqui Sillance (best organised event) - **Bill Chalker**  
Seamogs (most miles sailed) - **Keith Gibbs**  
Sally Jennings (significant contribution) - **Ken Fifield**  
Commodore's Trophy (contribution to running the club) - **Debbie Wiffen**  
Cambrian Ball - **Bill Rawle**  
Icicle awards  
Midships - **Matambu**  
Topsides - **Zhivili**



# CHANNEL SAILING CLUB, SAILING AND SOCIAL EVENTS CALENDAR 2017

This calendar is designed as guide only. Events may be subject to alteration. For full details of events and latest information see [channelsailingclub.org](http://channelsailingclub.org)

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
1	1 Talk	1	1 Long race	1	1	1 Round island	1	1	1 race	1	1
2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2 Cruise brief	2	2	2	2 Icicle cruise
3	3	3	3	3 Briefing	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4 One pot	4	4
5	5	5	5	5	5	5 Briefing	5 West country	5	5	5	5
6 Boat show wk	6	6	6	6 Two-handed	6	6	6 cruise	6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7	7 race	7 Briefing	7	7	7	7	7	7
8	8 Greek night	8 Briefing	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
10	10	10	10	10 Quiz night	10 Regatta	10 Bastille cruise	10	10	10	10	10
11 Talk	11	11 Frostbite	11	11	11	11	11	11	11 Race briefing	11	11
12	12	12 rally	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13 Rally brief	13	13	13 Mulled wine
14	14	14	14 Easter	14	14 BBQ	14	14	14	14 Pursuit race	14	14
15	15	15 Welcome night	15 cruise	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16 Passage races	16	16	16
17	17	17	17	17 Briefing	17	17	17	17 and rally	17	17	17
18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18
19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19 Experience	19	19	19	19
20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20 weekend	20 Briefing	20	20	20
21	21	21	21	21	21 Briefing	21	21	21	21	21	21
22	22 Catch the tide	22	22	22 Midweek	22	22	22	22	22	22	22
23	23	23	23	23 cruise	23	23	23	23	23	23	23
24	24	24	24	24	24 Wooden	24	24	24	24	24	24
25 CSC AGM	25	25	25	25	25 Spoon	25	25	25	25 Briefing	25	25
26	26	26 BST times	26 Briefing	26	26	26 Briefing	26	26	26	26	26
27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27 Briefing	27	27	27
28	28	28	28	28	28 Briefing	28	28	28	28 Experience	28	28
29		29 Briefing	29 Experience	29	29	29 Yarmouth	29	29	29 weekend	29 Briefing	29
30		30	30 weekend	30	30	30 race	30	30 Navigators	30	30	30
31		31		31		31 Cowes week	31		31		31

The Channel Sailing Club  
first rally of the season is nearly  
over before it starts!

# FOG HITS FROSTBITE RALLY

Jeremy John reports

**F**OUR boats and 16 club members joined the Frostbite rally to Yarmouth to kick off the 2017 sailing season in early March.

But the event was nearly called off due to a combination of a strong wind forecast and thick fog in Portsmouth harbour and the Solent.

At the event briefing on the Wednesday before, there was a lengthy discussion about whether the event should go ahead at all with SSW winds of up to 35 knots predicted.

However, by Saturday the forecast was lost in the mist of time as the wind was blowing NNE at only 8-11 knots.

Saturday morning greeted boat crews with a heavy blanket of fog, with visibility at times down to just two boat lengths. A VHF check on channel 65 with National Coastwatch at Portsmouth harbour entrance predicted the fog would lift at about mid-day and the consensus was to head out with tides in our favour till 2pm.

All boats readied to depart independently for about 11am and the crew on Matambu rustled

up a full English breakfast. However, the fog scuppered Storm Dragon's planned start when the Gosport Boat Yard ferry shuttle to their swinging mooring was cancelled due to poor visibility.

For those boats that did cast off, Portsmouth Harbour Master issued warnings that those navigating in the poor conditions should use radar if possible.

## Ferry shock

I fitted AIS to Matambu over the winter and was pleased to have it, as we could hear foghorns coming from a variety of directions. The AIS meant we were able to identify vessels and get guidance on their distance, speed and direction.

Storm Dragon finally got of its mooring later in the day, but on venturing out of the harbour the crew were shocked to look up to see one of the Normandy ferries looming over them. Skipper Steve Cole, with an inexperienced crew, took the sensible option of turning round and berthed overnight in Haslar marina and found a pub in Gosport to watch the rugby.



Matambu's sails were set off Gilkicker where a favourable easterly wind now enabled a goosewing westward through the Solent. Sadly the wind died off Cowes, when the fog cleared and the sun came out. So we motored for the rest of the cruise.

The remaining boats arrived in Yarmouth safely without incident. Ken Wright on Gilken was first to arrive, Eagle was second and finally Matambu, whose crew enjoyed a hearty spaghetti bolognese before entering the harbour.

We enjoyed a warm welcome at the Royal Solent Yacht Club where the Six Nations rugby was being shown. It was a great place to sit and drink a pint or two.

Then it was back to boats, for a shower before returning to join the members of the RSYC in their celebration of the refurbishment of the upstairs

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Storm Dragon's crew  
were shocked to  
see one of the  
Normandy ferries  
looming over them

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bar and dining rooms. On offer were two curries and a free glass of Beaujolais, followed by an evening of entertainment from the band Accelerators playing great tunes from rock n roll to the Eagles, Dire Straits, Paul Weller etc. all for a good value £17.50.

It was lively evening with lots of laughs and good company. As usual our hosts were extremely hospitable and rearranged the table settings as we were now 10 sitting down to eat. They gave us an open invitation to return.

On Sunday the Solent was a mill pond with not a puff of wind, so it was a motor home in a slight drizzle.

We were happy that the rally had gone so well and are determined to encourage others to join us next year.

It was nice to see that showers at Yarmouth are now free, with the old token system finally being scrapped.





# SON OF A GUN

Leon Barbour unravels some nautical derivations

## Giving someone a bit of leeway

A ship being forced by the wind to be too close to a lee shore would be in danger of foundering and so it would be important that such a ship was given enough leeway.

## An unexpected windfall

A sudden gust of wind from a mountainous shoreline would help keep a ship offshore if sailing close to land. In other words, the ship would have benefitted from a windfall. (Not to be confused with windfall apples, grounded due to a gust of wind!).

## A first rate guy

Associated with excellence, a first rate battleship had around one hundred or so cannon whereas a second rater had sixty four to eighty nine and dates back to the sixteenth century when British naval ships carried a number of cannon on board.

## Straight as the crow flies

A ship having 'lost the plot' at sea would release a crow from the ship's highest point and the bird would make

straight for the nearest land. The highest point became known as the 'crow's nest'.

## Three sheets to the wind

A euphemism for being drunk! Sheets controlling tension on a sail could part and if the lower three on a three masted ship were not properly tied down, the sails would flap about and the ship wander aimlessly 'three sheets to the wind'.

## Being got 'over a barrel'

Being cornered, snookered, check-mated etc. with no way out derives from a form of punishment where hapless sailors would be lashed over a cannon barrel and flogged using a 'cat-o'-nine tails'.

## All above board

Warships hiding crew and soldiers below deck would suggest them being less well armed or manned pending a fight. If crew were all 'above board' then everyone was visible with nothing to hide.

## Footloose and fancy free

The lower edge of a sail, called the foot, if not properly

secured would flap around in the wind 'dancing aimlessly'.

## Toeing the line

Sailors lining up for inspection would ensure their toes were assembled along a seam in the ships decking.

## Son of a gun

Wives and passing 'ladies of the night' would often be allowed on board to keep sailors company, particularly when denied shore leave. A child born 'discreetly' between cannon on the gun deck would be described as the 'son of a gun' if no one owned up to being the father!

## Cut & run

A ship's Captain in site of a larger enemy would cut the lashings holding the furled sail and also the line holding the anchor, to allow the ship to quickly escape or run.

## Letting the cat out of the bag

Removing a whip called the 'cat o'nine tails' (nine strips of leather bound together at the handle and kept by the bosun's mate) from it's bag when needed for punishment (ie 'bad news').



# 2 000 islands and 30 000 rocks - but I didn't count them all.

Nigel Barraclough goes all Swedish on us

You might think that a place that can boast this little lot would be somewhere to be avoided! However if one is referring to the Stockholm Archipelago then I beg to differ, granted it has its quirks but it is wonderful place to sail.

To begin with the Swedes are a very welcoming people who speak impeccable English.

Mooring is interesting. If you are not lying at anchor in the usual way then the technique is to drop a stern anchor then motor forward as close as you can to the island where you wish to stay, (you can get inches close) a crewman jumps off the bow and ties your bowline to a nearby object – like a tree!

In marinas access to the boat is usually via the bow or stern, if there are finger pontoons then they are usually about 3 inches wide and only for tying ropes to. Another method is to hook the stern onto a buoy with a boathook

with an extended hook and tie off the bow to the main walkway.

Fuel is reasonably well available but on one occasion we saw a queue – which included a floatplane.

The main drawback (apart from getting there) is food and drink. Sweden is not cheap especially alcohol which (other than bars etc) is only available from Government shops and not general supermarkets.

## Navigation

Well you are in CEVNI territory and some of the marks may be posts or little marks on the land the size of beer barrels. Charts often contain a "recommended route" which folk tend to follow. Some of the channels are very tight especially when you see a steamship coming through which incidentally might be using tree trunks for fenders. Sailing at night is probably not recommended as there is not the plethora of lit marks we are used to; if you do see lights on an island chances are it will

be a house.

The islands might be very small but are worth a bit of exercise to explore. We arrived at one called Uto and heard the sound of someone singing in the restaurant, interesting as it was mostly in Swedish but with the odd bit of English thrown in. It was here that one of our crew Angela made a request to hear "Alabama", - "fine but I want to see 20 press-ups!" The rest of our crew suddenly became rooted to the spot but me and another Swede went down and did 10 each – Angela had her song!

It can be windy with some long fetches depending upon where the wind blows or if it is being funnelled through gaps in the islands and we were unlucky getting autumn-ish weather in July.

Shore side facilities are good but you will either need holding tanks or a portapotty.

Don't expect hordes of people but do expect some wonderful scenery and if you get the chance then go!





We averaged about 100km a day and where we found a safe mooring, for example in Vienna and Budapest, we would stay for a few days

# Danube days

Barry Robertson reports on his Black Sea voyage

A belated update for those who recall my 2015 Wavelength article in which I advertised for crew to join me on a trip down the Danube.

I am pleased to state that the trip went ahead as planned and after four weeks and a day I reached Constanta on the Black Sea coast in Romania. I had set out on June 26 from Donautal marina, about five miles downstream from Kelheim in southern Germany.

My boat, a Dehler 25 trailer/sailer, had been moored there for a month while I prepared for the journey. I had fabricated some 'A' frames in order to raise the mast to a horizontal position

to enable safe passage under the numerous bridges, while at the same time allowing headroom for access to the foredeck for mooring and anchoring. My intention was to use the inboard 2-stroke Dolphin 12hp engine for the entire length of the Danube, but soon after departure a water leak appeared and proved impossible to trace, necessitating the use of a new 5hp Honda outboard. This turned out to be a blessing in disguise for not only was it a most frugal motor in terms of consumption but, combined with the flow of the river, we were able to maintain around 7 knots.

It came as an unpleasant surprise to discover that of the few marinas available none

were able to accommodate my draft or length so anchoring in backwaters became the norm from an early stage. The Danube is a purely commercial waterway and all locks, pontoons and facilities are designed for the huge steel barges that constantly ply the river. In practice this meant that there were very few stopping places available for us to purchase food and fuel or for recreation.

The river water became progressively dirtier once the upper reaches were left behind. It would take a brave or foolhardy soul to take a dip and there was a strong probability that you would come out in a less healthy state that when you entered.

We averaged about 100km

a day and where we found a safe mooring, for example in Vienna and Budapest, we would stay for a few days to explore and stock up on supplies. From about half-way through the trip, between Budapest and the Black Sea, there were no opportunities for showering facilities so the occasional pontoon hose came in as a welcome makeshift alternative. We decided to use the 64km long Cernavoda to Black Sea canal and shorten the trip by about a week, but missing out on the Danube Delta world heritage park.

We had erected the mast in Ruse, Bulgaria, when all subsequent bridges were high enough to permit it. I left the boat in a comfortable marina in Constanta for a couple of months and in late September

returned with fellow CSC member Alex Azzalini.

We sailed and motored across the Black Sea, taking three days, encountering dolphins and playing host to lost land birds. We reached the Bosphorus and passed Istanbul, but found the formalities difficult to comply with. We decided to cross the Sea of Marmara heading for Greece but had to seek refuge in a small fishing port from a storm that lasted a few days.

Alex had to go back to work so I decided to leave the boat in West Istanbul marina and later return with my trailer to collect it. In late October I drove to Istanbul, loaded the boat and slogged the 2000 miles back to the UK, arriving safely in mid-November. A neat ending to an epic trip.





## Calling channel 65!

NCI: the 'eyes and ears along the coast'

Have you tried calling VHF channel 65 on a recent trip? Some boats on the recent foggy Frostbite rally tried it and got useful weather information.

Channel 65 is now dedicated to the National Coastwatch Institution (NCI) volunteer organisation and facilitates communications between lookouts and seafarers on a variety of routine matters.

The NCI will respond to radio checks (rather than bothering the busy coastguard) from sailing and fishing vessels as well as provide actual weather and sea state conditions.

They can also provide information on a range of facilities such as moorings, charted anchorages, water taxis and local hazards.

Tim Colquhoun, of the NCI, gave a fascinating talk to members of the Channel



2,500 members are located in 51 stations round the coast of England & Wales

Sailing Club earlier this year, outlining its role as 'eyes and ears along the coast'.

Its 2,500 members are located in 51 stations round the coast of England & Wales and are vital in reporting accidents and incidents to the coastguard and search and rescue organisations.

The busiest watch keeping station is located in Calshot Tower, which may be of some comfort to sailors in the busy area round the entrance to

Southampton water.

The NCI was set up as a charity in 1994 to restore a visual watch along UK shores following the closure of small coastguard stations.

### Telescopes

When two fishermen drowned off Cornwall, local people decided to restore the visual watch and the first station opened at Bass Point on the Lizard.

Each NCI station is manned by a team of trained volunteers who keep a day-light watch up to 365 days a year. Stations are equipped with telescopes, radar, telephone and weather instruments as well as charts.

The number of incidents logged by NCI staff increased to a record 500 last year, involving vessels, yachts, divers, surfers, small craft and coastal walkers.

The NCI is also on the lookout for volunteers who are given full training to bring them up to a high standard.

Regardless of personal background, watch keeping is usually a new experience for NCI recruits.

More women are signing up to be watch keepers and they now make up 17 per cent of volunteers, keeping a lookout for thousands of hours a year.

For more information visit the website [www.nci.org.uk](http://www.nci.org.uk)



## Sad death of William (Bill) Sandford

Tony Sparling pays tribute

Bill Sandford may have been modest in stature, but his determination and knowledge was impressive.

Bill, who has died aged 89, liked to talk and he knew a lot about quite a few subjects! He was always happy to help fellow club members especially in the developing world of electronic navigation. He was a member of Channel Sailing Club from 1983, a senior member of the Royal Institute of Navigation and of Chichester Yacht Club.

He owned two yachts, a 27ft Vancouver and afterwards a 34ft Vancouver Pilot, both kept in pristine condition. Everything usually worked and the boats were as tough as their proud owner.

### Successful career

Bill's introduction to the high seas started in 1947 during

National Service on HMS Battleaxe, where he specialised in radar. It sparked a lifelong interest in navigation and electronics. After two years with the Royal Navy, Bill entered the hallowed portals of the Bank of England where he worked until his retirement in 1980.

During his successful career he was seconded to the International Monetary Fund to assist with several overseas projects. One of his first secondments was to Africa, to oversee Swaziland's change to a central bank. Bill enjoyed his tour there from 1975 to 1980. Afterwards he worked in Uganda for six months dealing with its currency conversion.

During retirement, Bill continued his interest in sailing and navigation with CSC on Black Duck, the Vancouver 27. Together with his wife Sandra, they joined in with many club

events around the English Channel. After many happy years sailing Black Duck out of Birdham Pool in Chichester Harbour, Bill decided to "trade up" to Blanik the Vancouver Pilot, another tough sailing boat which was packed full of navigation electronics and machinery, such as a fresh water maker, which delighted its owner. Thankfully he knew how to operate them all, while his crew assisted with sailing.

### Great expertise

During all this time Bill was a key member of the Royal Institute of Navigation – a council member for several years and junior vice president. He served on many RIN committees, including the Small Craft Group, RIN's representative to HM Government, UK satellite coordination and GMDSS to name but a few. In 2006, for outstanding services to navigation and RIN, Bill was awarded the J E D Williams medal by the Duke of Edinburgh.

Bill was a clever man who dealt at national and international level in a science he loved.

Bill's twinkling smile and great expertise will be missed by all in Channel Sailing Club and beyond.

Our condolences to Sandra and all his family.

William Sandford  
Born September 8, 1927  
Died March 15, 2017



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