



# ROC News

The Magazine of the Rampart Owners Club

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## CALINA 48FT 1971

RESTORED AND NAVIGATING THE FRENCH CANALS

### How I ended up as proud owner of Calina.

#### a 1971 Rampart 48

*By Stephen Kingsman*

The story started in the early 1960's when as a young boy, I went round the Rampart yard in Vespasian Road, Southampton, with my Father, who bought a 38 ft. I remember the yard as a very exciting place to visit. I saw the 48ft boats being built, and as far as I was concerned, the only boat to own was the 48!

A considerable number of years later, I joined the Rampart Owners Club to find out more about Ramparts.

I had in the back of my mind, that one day I would buy a 48. Time, and other commitments precluded doing much about the dream until I happened to be down in Cornwall at a friends birthday party and saw the details of *Calina* on the internet. She was then moored in Beaulieu. After much discussion, it was decided that we would divert to Beaulieu on the way back from Cornwall to Canterbury and look at *Calina*.

This was one wet Sunday afternoon in July 2010. After the usual negotiations with Kings Easton, the brokers, and another visit with much poking and prodding, I did the deal and bought her.

The question then was what to do next.

The people at Kings Easton, Janie and James, were really helpful and came up with lots of useful suggestions as to how to go forward.

The boat had been owned by Ray Williams of Williams Shipping, who had travelled far and wide around Europe in her. He had bought her in 1973, when she was only a couple of years old.

Co-incidentally, having had the job of sorting out my Father's old papers just recently, I saw that my Father too had also received the details of *Calina* in 1973 - presumably he was looking at buying her as well then. She was for sale at £27,500.

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I did a deal and bought her. The question then was what to do next!

The idea was that I wanted to keep her as original as possible but make sure all the things that were supposed to work actually did. After lots of years fixing boats I had really come to the conclusion that I wanted to spend time now actually 'boating' rather than fixing things.

So, the brief then was to firstly restore Calina to as good a condition as when she came out of the Rampart yard in 1971, 40 years ago, and then also to make sure that everything worked. This was a decision which was to cause untold problems and much head scratching later!

After much deliberation, talking to the Rampart Owners Club members, visiting Roly and Star of Killarney, a plan was starting to come together. I also found a five year old survey report on board from Adrian White. I contacted Adrian and we met up on Board.

Adrian very much shared my enthusiasm for the project and together we drew up an initial specification of what was to be done. We found an enormous shed at Trafalgar Wharf in Gosport where we could do the work. Liz from Roly recommended Chris Dann, who also shared our enthusiasm for the project. Adrian came up with John Desty, who was to do all the painting work. Incidentally, both Adrian and John worked in the Rampart yard as apprentices about the time Calina was built! Adrian also knew of a good electrician and two good engineers. So we had a plan and a team in place to make the plan happen.

So in September 2010 we set off from Beaulieu round to the yard at Gosport, where she was lifted out and taken into her new home for the winter, ready for the refit work to start. It soon became obvious that, if we were to achieve the vision of 'as good as she came out of the yard and everything working', we would have to think very carefully about what we do with the engines and electrics. I remember clearly my discussion with Stanley from Highland Beauty, who had sadly had a fire on board due to electrical problems.



After a lot of head scratching and further advice from Colin from Star of Killarney, a decision was made that we would install new engines, electrics and plumbing.

This was easily said but there were all sorts of consequences later!

In October 2010 work started in earnest. It was clear that the first thing we needed to do was to strip everything out that needed stripping out to establish exactly what needed to be done. Just as you might expect, the more we stripped out the more we found to do!

The planked teak decks were largely covered in a grey trackmark diamond pattern material.

It looked very workmanlike but wasn't really what I wanted for a Rampart, so we scraped it all off, which was a pretty tedious job.



The cockpit was designed to have a separate floor which was self draining. Clearly the drains had got bunged up at some stage, which had caused the cockpit floor to become rotten, so we removed all this. The galvanised water tank under the cockpit floor had seen better days and was leaking, so that had to go as well. We then exposed the rudder platform which was a large piece of Iroko across the width of the boat that held the top of the two rudder posts. This had also suffered from the rainwater problem and was rotten. Ultimately, we ended up stripping out the entire cockpit and taking out the rudder tubes and renewing them, although the rudders themselves were in an almost 'as new' condition.



Chris and his apprentice, finding time to smile for the Camera

We checked the Iroko planking on the hull, and the only area we could find that was rotten was on the starboard side at the water line next to the transom. It looked soft - and it was, so we replaced some short lengths of planking. Meanwhile, there was considerable head scratching about what to do about the engines. The fuel tank in front of the engines was also rotten, with diesel weeping at the bottom. One of the sea cocks to the engines simply fell off when we went to check it.

It appeared to be much easier to replace the fuel tanks if we took the engines out first so that's what we decided. Once we had worked out the costs of the new parts to refurbish the engines, we found that it wasn't that much dearer to replace them. When Chris managed to sell the old engines for £2,000 that finalised the decision! We checked the reduction gearboxes and decided they were fine and they also fitted the new engines.

Look  
No engines  
No Fuel Tank  
Spick & Span

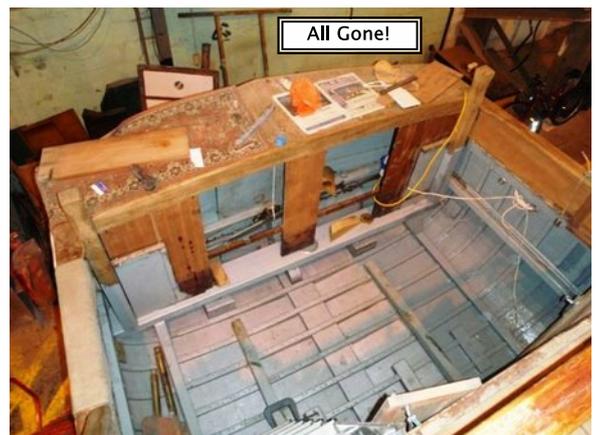


So, the engine bay and the wheelhouse looked very much like the cockpit, completely stripped out. We then painted it ready to receive the new plastic Tek Tanks and very shiny new engines - a pair of Perkins Sabre 130C's.

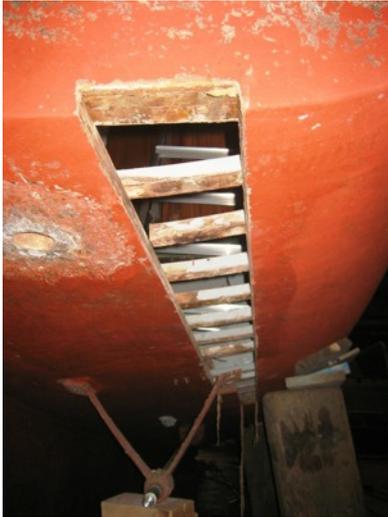
The electrics all appeared to work well, but it was very clear that there was a lot of electrolysis going on so there was electrical leakage from somewhere. The wiring was suffering from 40 years of additions and modifications. Again, the decision was made that the best thing to do was to take it all out and start again, so that's what we did.



Rot, rot everywhere.  
Rot in the pads, rot in the rudder bench rot under the leaky galvanised water tank!



All Gone!



A few new planks here and a few new planks there and hopefully the rudders won't drop off now.

John Desty looked at the propellers, which were in a very good condition, and suggested that they would be just right for the new engines, which were 130HP rather than the old 115HP. Apparently, all Rampart 48's were originally slightly over-propped. We then came to look at the skin fittings and found these were in very mixed condition, so whilst we were at it, we replaced all these.

Six months later, we got pretty well everything finished and Calina was launched as planned, ready for Easter 2011.

The first voyage was crossing the river from Trafalgar Wharf to Port Solent, where we held the customary launch party and dinner out for all those involved.

Finally, at the end of May we set off across the Channel via Paris and the Canal de la Loire to Aigues Mortes in the South of France. In case anyone doubts it, I can say that the steady sail does definitely improve the motion on a 48 – especially in a good breeze in the Channel!

The trip through the canals went well with Calina being a conversation piece wherever she went, but maybe that's for another article!



Externally the varnish work was in pretty average condition, but we only need to make small repairs to the cabin sides and general woodwork. We stripped this all back and decided to Coelan this, including the decks, which will hopefully reduce maintenance later. We learnt a lot about Coelan, but that's another story!



Having made the decision on the engines, we then discovered that new engines came with flexible mountings, whereas the old ones had solid hard rubber mountings. This was to be a big problem as the old Hardy Spicer couplings, which transferred their thrust direct to the engines, clearly weren't going to be any good as the new engines were flexibly mounted. We then found that the stainless shafts had simply worn out where they pass through the white metal bearings on the 'A' brackets and in the stern tubes, so we ended up with new stainless shafts with thrust blocks and aquadrive units. As this turned out, it was a very much better solution, which is very much quieter than the old system.



One has to take a picture of the drips, doesn't one? Just to remember them by. Coelan can be forgiven everything as long as it stops those tenacious drips!



And finally off to Aigues Mortes. The centre of attention all the way with shimmering drip free decks two new engines, new stainless shafts thrust blocks and aquadrive units. Not to mention new tanks for fuel and water.



# COMMODORE'S LETTER

BY CHRISTOPHER MORRISON

Spring 2012

I write this during unseasonable March weather. It has been warm and sunny for about four weeks and the boatyard in Emsworth has come alive with owners working on their boats and hardly believing their luck. The queues at the chandlers have grown, with everyone wanting to enter into deep conversation over the relative merits of bits of kits, buying up the staff's time whilst poring over catalogues.

It has been relatively quiet on the Rampart membership front, although the flurries of emails on such esoteric subjects as holding tanks, and others, spark the interest. This is a wonderful forum and I am so glad we are using it. Do please alter the subject line if the email thread starts to diverge from the original subject, and please reply to 'Google group' if your answer is of interest to everyone and moves the topic along.

## Hail and Farewell

Over the winter we have said goodbye to Tom Wilcox as a full member, but he has reappeared as an associate - thank you for staying with us Tom. Stanley has sold one of the loves in his life, his Highland Beauty, and we welcome James Humphrys [yes that is the spelling] as her new owner. James is putting her into Tim Gilmore's yard in Emsworth for a bit of work and hopes to join us at the Rally in Gunwharf.

## Rally 2012

By the time you read this, the Rally will have happened or will be in the process of happening. We decided to move a bit further east this year, if only to try to prise Mike away from the Lymington/Yarmouth run.

Gunwharf Quays will be a different ambience from some of the sleepier places we have rallied to but there will be plenty to do.

We will be holding the AGM that weekend.

## Thames events

Ramparts will be represented by Simon Jones in Aureol [DLS] at HMQ's water pageant; although a number of other boats applied, they were not selected. The Queen doesn't know what she is missing. Roly is acting as a viewing platform for some Rampartees. Let's hope the weather is kind and the wind doesn't play havoc with the boat handling.

There are two more events on the Thames this year.

The Henley Regatta which Peter and Jill will be attending in Star of Kilarney in early July, and the Traditional Boat Rally of which we have received advance information by Googlemail, on 14/15 July. This latter event was great fun last year, in spite of the rain, and it was lovely to see so many Ramparts together. I do hope that the London Division of the Club will be there again in force this year.

I would like to repeat the ROC Cocktail Party which we held last year and this could be either at Henley [Jill is investigating] or at the Trad Boat Rally. If we have a good turn out of boats at the Trad Rally that might be the obvious choice.

## Yottie mags

I am sure most of us read at least one magazine and usually end up with a feeling of worthlessness after having read tales of derring-do or impressive accounts of DIY projects all completed with the use of some scrap timber and glass fibre. However, there is always one type of article which leaves me sorry for the poor unfortunates who have to put the teaching into practice, and that is the article which tries to explain how to work out tidal vectors and the course to steer across a tidal stream. They are illustrated with complex diagrams with many-arrow-headed lines, protractors and charts.



On the assumption that, in these days of chart plotters, people actually calculate the course to steer to cross the tidal stream, here is an easy way to work it out in your head:

Assuming the tidal stream is 90 degrees on your beam, then the 'aim off' can be found by multiplying the strength of the tidal stream [2 kts] by 60, and dividing the whole thing by the boat's speed [8 kts]. This gives  $2 \times 60$  divided by  $8 = 15$  degrees. It is not absolutely accurate, but OK within a couple of degrees, which is as about as accurate as you can steer anyway.

For the maths, I refer you to your O level Sine tables and I can bore you after the Rally dinner if you wish.

I wish you all a very good season, and a final word of thanks to Liz, whose hard work with the magazine is always much appreciated.

*Christopher Morrison  
Penny Jane*



It rained Friday, it rained Saturday and it rained Sunday! The only time it stopped was as Christopher and Cindy turned up with the baguettes for the party and a weak sun came out and shone on us until sunset.

This was just as well, as we had 50 people on board Roly having a very jolly time. There were nine Ramparts, in the raft up behind our Commodore Christopher & Cindy, his wife, are Ranoni, Sabi Star, Roly and Majonca. However, only two of us were around on the Sunday to do the Rampart sail past, although the Dunkirk Little Ships (DLS), Aureol, Revel, Winden etc, had done their sail past on Saturday afternoon. One has to admit, it was a wash out, all except for our party, so it was all worth it.

## THE THAMES TRAD BOAT RALLY

OH BOY, DID IT RAIN!



*Aureol arriving to start another raft of Ramparts.*

Fifty people on board Roly at Henley Trad Boat Rally, for an evening of Fun! And guess what? It stopped raining!!



Well perhaps not a complete wash out! There was all the fun of getting there (see below, the 'Gillies' account, p7 The Poole acc, PS Nicholson acc). There were the diversions, sitting with glass in hand watching others get in a muddle. Or relaxing, like Liz and Tony, here, who popped next door to Sabi Star's capacious awning for a lively chat with all who congregated there.



## THE ODYSSEY

(OR SABI STARS' SUMMER CRUISE 2011) BY JOHN & JULIE GILLES

When Homer described Odysseus's trip through the Mediterranean after the Trojan wars he must have had in mind the trials and tribulations of getting a Rampart to Henley and back.

It was always going to be an interesting trip as we were based in Dartmouth and while, in terms of distance, it is not particularly heroic, the vagaries of the British weather and the need to fit most of the trips into a hectic working life meant that some pretty serious planning was needed.

We had planned to go to France this year but events conspired against us and so, at the end of May we departed Dartmouth for the last time to head across to Portland for our overnight stop at Weymouth. Julie had other commitments so my daughter Jessica, active in the Royal Navy Reserve, and her boyfriend Pete, a lieutenant in the Royal Navy, were my crew.

Portland Bill is my personal Cape Horn and I have suffered some very rough and difficult passages around there. We decided to go round the outside of the race because of timing and on our way into Weymouth Bay a fishing boat on our course put out a pan pan for engine failure. We responded and altered course but several other boats did the same and we were stood down. Arriving at Weymouth Bay during the pre-Olympic regatta was an interesting experience, threading our way through international fleets of 49ers, 470s and Finns on the inner Olympic circle called for considerable vigilance and a degree of Greek hero second sight to guess where the fleet was heading next.

We entered Weymouth and the wind immediately began to pick up and with a force 7 forecast for the next day we stayed where we were enjoying the sights of a regatta being staged as a precursor to the Olympics.

We left Weymouth the next day in a 4 with a forecast 6 from the south west. We were heading for Gosport where we had a berth booked but as we were passing St Albans Point opposite Poole there was a pan pan from a motor boat ahead of us. He had suffered catastrophic engine failure and needed assistance. As he was 25 feet and we were 50 feet (yes we really do measure 50 from bow to transom) we were asked by the coast guard to take the boat in tow.

By this stage it was blowing a full force 6 with waves about 1½ metres high and it took over 2 hours of quite skilful boat handling to get a line aboard and commence the tow. At that stage we were set into the tide which was liable to take both of us past the Hurst narrows and down the south side of the Isle of Wight. See P14 for full story. After several hours of motoring we managed to avoid that and deliver the stricken vessel to Yarmouth harbour master. The effects of the tow are worthy of another article for this organ.

The following weekend was the Rampart Rally at Lymington and by comparison the trip from Gosport to the Dan Bran pontoon was simplicity in itself. I am sure others will have reported upon the rally so I will just say that the weather on the Sunday was so appalling, we left Sabi Star under the control of the harbour master and went home. The following Tuesday evening Julie, Pete and I went down there and had a beautiful sunset evening sail from Lymington to Gosport where we put the boat to bed for a couple of weeks.

Our planning for the Herculean trip then started in earnest. The long range weather forecasts were studied in detail and we realised that with no settled weather forecast, the probability of the needed week of settled weather was probably not going to be available. As it happened we were quite right. The week before we were intending to leave, the forecast was superb so we decided to move from Gosport to Eastbourne and in very light winds we had a very pleasant trip and experienced our first ever lock, to enter Sovereign Yacht Harbour. The wind was starting to pick up at that stage and I managed to enter the lock sideways and more bow and stern on opposite sides! I was trying to make it appear that that was the normal thing to do to the watching masses but the lock keeper didn't think it was so clever and assisted us in mooring in a more normal manner. However, I had made it sufficiently clear that our boat handling skills left quite a bit to be desired, so they gave us a nice easy mooring to get into.

We parked up for a week and the following weekend with a work colleague, Tim and a good friend Richard we left Eastbourne in a force 6 aiming at a single trip to Ramsgate. The trip was without incident with Sabi Star and the stabilisers performing wonderfully and we entered the fleshpots of Ramsgate at 21:30 on the Saturday night and strolled along the front to be assaulted by various hen and stag parties.

The following day we left Ramsgate at the bottom of the tide to take maximum effect round North Foreland and onto home territory (I live at Southend on Sea and have always sailed in this area).

We decided to travel up the inside route as it is more interesting to be able to see Margate, Reculver, Whitstable etc and had a very pleasant trip through the Margate roads passed East Last and Hook, through the mass of concrete lumps that were left there by the Dambusters practising their bouncing bombs, inside the wind farm and into the Medway through the southerly route. We had a very pleasant ride, reaching Chatham Maritime Marina to meet up with our friends who were going to bring their boat up the Thames with us. Richard and Tim departed and my son James and Julie then took over. After a good meal and re-reading Liz and Tony's advice on being off sea reach No. 1 at low London Bridge, we left our berth in Chatham at 5am and headed out. Our friends, Pete and Angela, in their 44 ft Dutch steel cruiser led the way and with only minor mishaps on touching the mud a couple of times we were out of the Medway. All the timing was absolutely perfect, the weather was superb with light winds and brilliant blue sky and bacon sandwiches at 7am. This was all working out too well.

At 7.30am Pete called to say that he was losing oil pressure on his port engine and 10 minutes later told me that his engine had ceased and he was returning to port. This was a great shame as we had a two week trip planned including getting through the Henley weekend.

It turned out that his newly serviced engine by the local engineers, had suffered an oil seal failure on the oil filter and dumped the whole lot into the bilge. Ouch!

We had a wonderful ride up the Thames exactly as Liz and Tony had described, arriving at Cadogan Pier at slack water with only a few concerns about head heights of some of the bridges. So far so good. The pier master was charming and we were allowed to moor outside Roly and were then able to take advice as to the best way to proceed. Roly was going to follow a day later with her contingent of naval officers. (see P7)

Continued overleaf...

We headed off aiming to pass under Hammersmith Bridge, the lowest on the tidal Thames, at half tide, and arrive at Richmond Barrier when it opened.

On one of the narrower stretches we were passed by two 44 ft broom cruisers travelling at planing speed. As they passed us they throttled back and created huge wash. We had moved over to one side to let them pass and were washed onto the bank where we stuck. Fortunately, the tide was rising and after 10 minutes or so we floated off, arriving at the Richmond Barrier about 10 minutes before it was raised.

This is a fantastic structure which is effectively the tidal control prior to the Teddington Lock which is the entrance to the formal non-tidal River Thames. Teddington Lock is managed by the River Conservancy while Richmond Lock is managed by the Port of London Authority. Both were extremely helpful and provided us with maps (they can't be called charts). It is interesting that the admiralty charts finish at Tower Bridge. The Port of London Authority publishes very similar and detailed charts from London Bridge to Teddington and had I been sufficiently aware I would have purchased a set prior to departure.

It should be said at this point that our greatest concern on this entire trip relates to our air draught. I read somewhere that Ramparts were originally designed to be able to cruise the French canals with their stated air draught of 3.5 metres. In addition to this height we have radar scanner, aerials and the usual spotlight. I removed these and we proceeded carefully at first and practised playing bumper boats off the lock walls. There were 19 locks to Henley and each of them has a piece of our paint.

Our first stop over was for lunch at Hampton Court and this was a delightful point at which to rest.

We had given ourselves reasonable time for sightseeing and the many free and interesting stopovers.

Having made it under several of the bridges I was gaining in confidence. I had not hit as many of the walls to the locks and things were going well. I had not counted on Windsor Bridge.

Windsor Bridge as you probably know is a stone bridge with lots of traffic and was quoted in my details and those given by the River Conservancy as having a head height of 3.9 metres. This would be fine for my purposes had it not been for the unknown fact that the river was running 11 inches (275mm) higher than datum. Bang goes one rather expensive high gain digital TV aerial.

After this I was rather more cautious through all of the bridges and on the second day we reached the dreaded **COOKHAM BRIDGE** which is quoted as a clearance height of 3.5 metres, exactly our height. In discussion with the very friendly lock keeper he said that he thought we were possibly too high to get under. This was bad news indeed but he had a plan.

The plan was that we would creep up to the bridge very carefully and as we got to it we should wave to him and he would briefly throw open the sluices which would drop the river by about 50mm for half a minute or so. We had to get under in that time.

I love it when a good plan comes together.

Having stripped everything off the roof, filled up the water tanks, the fuel tanks and everything else we carefully moved towards the bridge, Julie waved to the lock keeper and, low and behold(!) squeezed under the bridge with a gnat's whisker to spare.

The rest was plain sailing. We arrived on the Friday of the traditional boat rally and eventually moved into place. I am sure that Liz and others will have reported in detail on the very successful and very wet rally, the superb cocktail party in the evening and a good time had by all.

By Monday it was time to start to leave and many boats had already departed on the Sunday evening. We started to wend our way back in increasingly poor weather with relatively high winds and overcast skies. It was nevertheless very pleasant and by Wednesday evening, with our boat handling skills improving hugely, we managed to slip under the difficult bridges and moor at Hampton Court, intending to spend the day there. All was very pleasant and we moved on, entering the tidal Thames on Thursday afternoon and meeting family at St Katherine's Yacht Haven, having had a very busy ride down the Thames at rush hour, dodging ferries and all of the usual issues of a river in a capital city.

Another crew change took place. My youngest son, Jack, replaced Julie who took the dogs home. On the Thursday morning we took the first lock out at 6am and headed down river in a perfect blue sky and light wind. We had an easy ride down the Thames and again cut across the Cant from Medway No. 1 to the Spile, through the Horse Channel, the Four Fathom Channel and into Margate Roads. All was very easy and we were in Ramsgate by mid afternoon. The whole area was very busy as continental boats had started their holidays but we had a good meal and an early start to try to catch the tide gate going west.

As many of you will know, the tide gate to get around Dungeness is critical and we just made it and had a relatively easy ride up to Brighton.

I was surprised at how large Brighton Marina was but nevertheless all operated smoothly. We again enjoyed the shore side entertainments, particularly the hen nights and after a pleasant evening retired in readiness for the trip round to Gosport with a forecast force 6 on the nose which turned out to be no more than a stiff breeze and we returned to Gosport.

So unlike Agamemnon we returned to our new home port for the next little while having had a thoroughly successful and enjoyable Odyssey to Henley.



Sabi Star would have liked to continue on up the river with Roly but the low bridges put paid to that. However, forward planning at least got them to the Rally.

Their covered aft deck was most welcome to other Ramparteers in the pouring rain, it's just a natural party deck, rain or shine.

On Roly, with stopovers without electricity, we vowed to beef up on batteries and have solar panels fitted for next summer!



## UP THE THAMES TO OXFORD IN ROLY

13.07.11 Cadogan Pier to Hampton Court for the night 2hrs  
 14.07.11 Hampton Court to Boulter's Lock overnight, with a 3 hr break at Dennetts Yard, 11 hrs  
 15.07.11 Boulter's Lock to Henley 5.5hrs  
 18.07.11 Left from Henley after the Trad Boat Rally 0800 - 1930 Benson Waterfront Restaurant  
 19.07.11 Arrived Oxford 19.07.11 1000 - 1400 Oxford - Folly Bridge  
 19.07.11 Returned to Abingdon 1700 completely full, moored against Big Dutch Barge.  
 20.07.11 Abingdon to Benson Waterfront Restaurant again 2.5hrs Overnight  
 21.07.11 Benson to Henley 6hrs (entertained on board) overnight.  
 22.07.11 Henley to Windsor 4.5hrs Two nights, Theatre and dining with friends.  
 24.07.11 Windsor to Hampton Court 3hrs Overnight  
 26.07.11 Hampton Court to Kingston 30mins Entertaining family and friends. Overnight  
 27.07.11 Kingston to Teddington Lock 15mins - Tidal Thames to Cadogan 1.5hrs  
*Fuel used 50galls/ 227lts £147.55*

*By Liz Poole*

There had been a lot of discussion on the Google Group about how far a Rampart 48 could get up the Thames. We were well advised by Peter Scott, Star of Killarney, that the Folly Bridge in Oxford would stop us in our tracks. However, there were still question marks over the 'actual' height of some of the bridges on the way to Oxford but we reckoned if we could get under the Cookham Bridge, we would be ok. To do this we had to take our radar dome down, that sat like a Trifid, on our wheelhouse roof. (Now banished in favour of a more modern one on the mast).

Sabi Star, who was well prepared for the Cookham Bridge, slipped under by a coat of paint and sadly had to decide, once lucky, stay lucky, and didn't venture further than Henley. The experience, probably has saved them the disaster of getting trapped half way up the French Waterways!

So our mission, come rain or shine, was to get to Oxford after the Henley Traditional Boat Show and Rampart party. But just to add another layer of complexity, our son Jason and son in law, Peter, both naval commanders based, coincidentally at Northwood Joint Services Base, suggested a joint services jolly was just what they needed in their office, so invited a dozen or so Admirals and Generals to come with us up the Tidal Thames to Teddington Lock and then have a party alongside at Hampton Court. Well, that's an exaggeration; they weren't all Admirals and Generals.

Catering then changed from a big shop at Waitrose, five minutes from us on Cadogan Pier, to numerous trips, laden with wheelie bags and back packs etc, to cover a party for 20 naval people; two of us to Henley; a Rampart Party for 'n' people at Henley and then 4 of us up to Oxford and back! I know there are shops on the way but you can often be moored miles away from them, as indeed we were.

Cattle taking a midday dip



The two hour trip, up river, locking in at Teddington and mooring up at Hampton Court was thoroughly enjoyed by all aboard. On arrival, the naval bods went below for a meeting to solve some inscrutable military problem for an hour, while food and drinks were laid out on the bridge deck in the sunshine, (Yes, sunshine). They all came up lost in thought and rather preoccupied but a few glasses of wine soon lightened up the atmosphere! The crew of Oyster Boy, who had come up river with us, came to join us and the evening bourgeoned into great party. Cedric, from *Jalda* was crewing for Oyster Boy, up to Dennett's Yard, where he had left *Jalda* in the hope of selling her. He duly collected the boat and with a friend sailed her back to France.

The following day, with all the guests departed Tony and I set off alone on Roly, in the company of Oyster Boy, and enjoyed the delights of the river to Penton Hook, Dennett's Yard, where Cedric reclaimed *Jalda*, and we waited for Hugh's Dad, crew for Oyster Boy, then on up to Boulter's Lock. We were all very tired and decided to eat in big restaurant beside the lock.

In a leisurely five and half hours the next day, we arrived at Henley and moored up next to Sabi Star, in pouring rain. The rest is history, as they say, all on pages 4&5.

We waved to a wedding party as they came out of the church



A happy crew, Barbara, Vernon and Tony but that Radar will have to go.

After the Trad Boat Rally, we were joined by our friends Barbara and Vernon. Barbara's husband Maurice, died shortly after our trip back from Pegasus Bridge for June 6th 2009. The last picture he had taken was in his MCC red and yellow cap, on the wheel of Roly, off Margate, swinging the compass (Iss5, Spring 2010). The great news is that Barbara, as wished by Maurice before he died, fell in love with a friend of ours the following year, coming back from Paris in Roly.

We left Henley, on the Monday after the rally and spent a drizzly day making our way up river. There were so many lovely places to stop but the weather was set in for the next few days. So the plan was just to get there and back, rather than dawdle over a week or so.

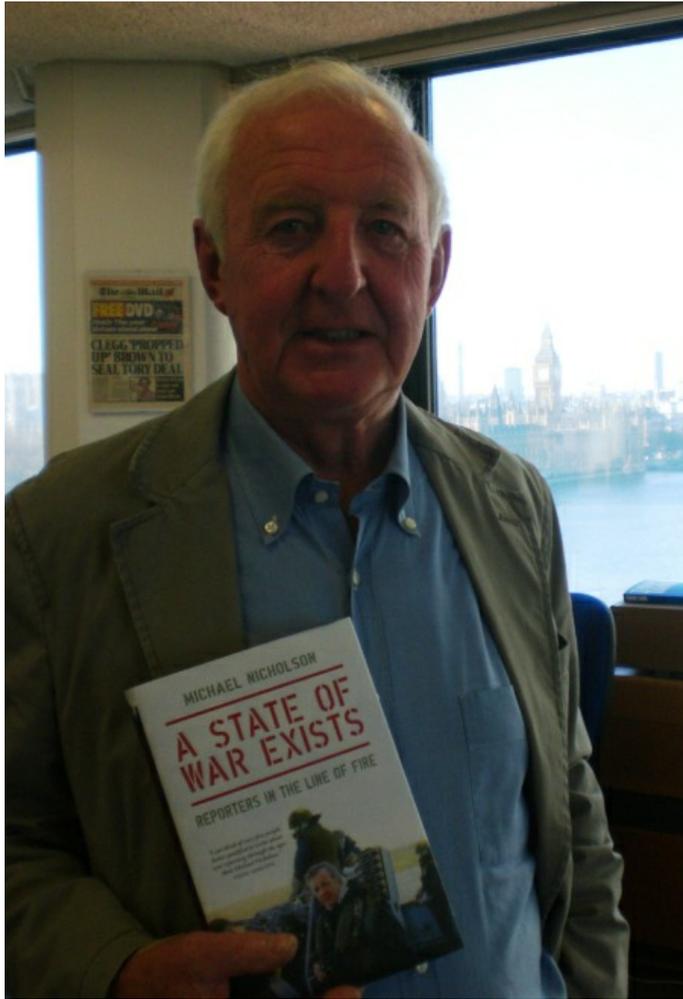
Continued P9

A Packed Lock



Waterfront at Benson

Continued at the bottom of P9



# A State of War Exists

## By Michael Nicholson

Michael is pictured here, at his publishers, high up in Westminster Tower, with the houses of parliament just visible in the background.

The occasion was the book launch of his latest oeuvre, relating tales from his own experiences and other reporters in the line of fire.

Below, Michael relates a tale from another front! He tells how he valiantly battled his way round the coast in *Moombara*, only to be defeated at the last hurdle.

## “NOWHERE TO GO” OR “WHAT’S THE POINT OF A BOAT IN BLIGHTY!”

Planning is the essence of success. Who said it? Who cares! One week of a Beaufort 6 and you can throw your plans away with the stale tea grouts. I was looking forward to that Henley Rally in July, especially being part of a little convoy of Ramparts. I even went to our local charity shop and bought a multi coloured dream-coat and a tattered old piece of headgear with “USS Eisenhower” emblazoned in gold on the front. The Crew were at the ready and had enough readies to pay for the round trip. With diesel on the Hamble touching £1.20 a litre, no one comes on board nowadays with empty pockets. I take cheques but no plastic.

Liz and Tony had given us their old and well used charts with their pencil lines marking out the route still visible. They have done it enough times they should be in the Guinness Book of Records. I reckoned it would take us five comfortable days from the Hamble to Henley via Eastbourne, Ramsgate, then dodging the Goodwin Sands, into the Thames estuary to a spare mooring at Chelsea Reach. Hey Presto!

Having entered Paris with “*Moombara*” what fun it would be to pass under Tower Bridge and thumb our noses at those nerds on the House of Commons terrace.

First mate and chef Steve Cooper had packed “*Moombara*” with enough food to feed “HMS Ark Royal” and where there wasn’t food, there was bountiful booze. It was all systems go and on Monday morning 11<sup>th</sup> July we moved out into Southampton water and headed towards the Nab. The sea was smooth, the sky was blue and what happy mortals we five were.

We entered the Eastbourne lock on a glorious sunset, stuffed ourselves on the aft deck with crab, prawns and salad and emptied too many bottles of Sauvignon. All was well with the world. Tomorrow it would onwards and eastwards to Ramsgate.

I always tell foreigners (are we still allowed to use that word?) that we Brits have only two seasons. Winter and bad weather. I also warn them that our Island’s climate is not only unpredictable but bloody vindictive. And so it was the very next day.

There was only a slight breeze when we left Eastbourne but within a couple of hours we were rolling, (as Ramparts sometimes do), in a naughty sea that did its best to deceive us, coming head on and then abruptly hitting us off the beam.

We are all familiar are we not with the sound of chaos down below, the breaking glassware, the clattering of upset pots and pans, favourite books drenched in milk. There is always something you forgot to fasten. At times like that I tend to find a bunk, cover myself in the duvet and try to imagine that I am safely ashore and it is all a nasty dream. It never works.

“*Moombara*” was lifted high and dropped into a chasm. How would you describe the sickening noise when the hull hits water ...a thwack? It hurts just to think about it. Rampartees older than me and I gather there are still a few, will persuade you that you will fail long before the boat. Some comfort!

By mid afternoon and having slowed down to grapple with the waves, we were knew that Ramsgate was not to be our landfall.

*Continued from previous page:*

We were not alone. The marina was packed with yachts flying the flags of Germany, Holland and France, some on their way to a holiday westwards, some on their way home. It was re-assuring to know that I was not the only one who had chickened

Dover has a castle. And that's it! Should you ever be tempted in these stressful days of financial calamity, to do a cheap UK holiday and think perhaps Dover might be worth a visit, think again. We were trapped beside a stinking green slimed harbour wall for three days. And still the flags flew horizontally day and night. There was not let up and no prospect of one. No one left the marina and nobody came to it. It was that bad outside.

The only comfort in that strange little town of odd little people, was the Yacht Club.

It was tucked away behind what had once been a classic Georgian terrace and you entered through a narrow blue door with no markings whatsoever to indicate what was beyond it. We only knew about it from whispers in the marina. It was a marvel. It was opened in 1932 and boasted Royal visitors. Royalty had not returned since and the furnishings and fittings are today as they were when a prince had downed his pint all those years ago. But a lovely lady from Fort William, with an accent to prove it, served the best cheese and bacon burger we had ever tasted. Expensive? £2.35. The Yacht Club, shabby though it was, was our comfort for those three cold and blustery summer days and I thank it. On the Thursday, there was a weather window and it was decision time. Do we go for it, steam east and hope to make the Thames before the next front came tumbling in?

We would never make the Rally but we could still make Westminster. Or should we turn tail, accept defeat at the wrath of God Thor and make a run back to Eastbourne? "Moombara" is a democratic vessel and all hands were raised when I suggested enough was enough. We got to Eastbourne just in time to beat the next round of hurricane style winds. And we were obliged to stay there for another four days. No Yacht Club and burgers but it did have an Asda so I spent the Saturday morning when I should have been with the Toffs at Henley, walking the supermarket alleys, marvelling at the splendid things you can buy for under a £ 1. The crew wisely decided their frantic pleasures were over, did a cut and run leaving Steve and me to bring "Moombara" back to her home a few days later. That was the end of my cruising holiday and this is the end of my story. Fun wasn't it?

Continued from P7 UP THE THAMES TO OXFORD IN ROLY



The river is lined with beautiful dwellings. From summer houses and boatsheds to mansions.



Waiting at a lock can be a lengthy business

One thing that did hold us up for an hour or so, was, when we stopping to fill up with water, I went to put some dirty washing away, in the compartment behind the loo and was horrified to find that a fountain of poo had been spraying all the clothes in there, every time someone had 'gone'. OMG. Fortunately, we were still at the water stop (there's very little access to water up the river), so I had to get everything out, jeans, shirts etc, and hose them down. What a palava. A narrow boat behind got annoyed with us for being so long. What had happened was, the new electric loo fitted, just before left, at first kept filling up with water and in the process of sorting out the problem, Tony had lost a little tiny button that sat in a breather hole. We thought it didn't make that much difference until I found the explosion of poo!! Button found in the bilges toute de suite! The first night, we got to Benson, where there was a smart wooden Quay in front of a restaurant. It was well worth the £10 a night, in the pouring rain. We spent the evening in the restaurant and breakfast the next day.

Then off up to Oxford for the following night. We did have to duck under a few bridges but nothing worse than Cookham Bridge. At the last lock before Oxford, a workman at the side of the lock, made a disparaging remark about "What the hell is a thing like that doing up here" to which the Lock Keeper replied, "Well I suppose they've paid the river licence".

Oxford, before the folly bridge, has a long grassy tow path, a bit shallow to moor, with mooring pins. Barbara and Vernon walked up to recce the town and I lay down in the wheelhouse for a rest. Three lads walked past with beer cans in hand and, what they were talking about was totally shocking. It was racist, violent and profane. We looked at other people hanging around and started to feel nervous about staying there. Barbs and Vernon come hurrying back saying "Oh Liz, we can't stay here, you should see the youths up at the end". Without any ado, we started the engines again and went back to the last lock. The lock keeper said, "I didn't think you'd like it up there, they'd strip your boat while you were asleep!" A lovely town called Abingdon was on the other side of the lock but every inch of mooring space was full. Eventually, a Dutch couple in a big barge, called us over and invited us to moor alongside them. They were great. We spent two nights there and then made our way back down the river.

Abingdon, where a lovely Dutch couple offered us to moor alongside.



This year, we are going to do it again, hopefully with better weather, Solar Panels to keep the fridge and pumps going, a non poo spewing loo, a BBQ to cook on in little nooks and crannies along the river and a month to do it in. We will pop into Dennett's yard for a once over of the hull and a quick antifoul, hopefully for just a couple of days.

We'll let you know.....

By Liz Poole

Radar back up at Kingston, no more low bridges. Teddington Lock then home.



A thousand apologies to Michael and Rosemarie Kratzner for not including Rosemarie in the last issue of ROC News which was dedicated to the smaller Ramparts. Michael has always been a good contributor to the News and was one of the first to send his article. My pathetic excuse is that I'm struggling to keep up with technology, which sometimes out flanks me.  
 Note to self; Must try harder, Liz



## ROSEMARIE 34FT 1935

I bought the 34 feet Rampart Gentleman's yacht (renamed from *Molly B* to *Rosemarie*) in July 2006 from Clive Ward, a retired Navy Officer. Built in 1935, the boat participated in the Dunkirk evacuation by the British and was attacked by a German Messerschmitt MF 109 aircraft. She received four machine gun rounds, as investigated by the Imperial War Museum in London.

I spotted *Molly B* in the romantic Wareham River (Dorset), where John Huston shot the famous film "African Queen" with Humphrey Bogart and Katharine Hepburn. Clive had refitted *Molly B* to an exceptionally high standard in four years of hard work. He eventually hunted down for a considerable amount of precious Honduras Mahogany timber at a dance hall, being demolished in the Scottish town of Dunblane. Clive bought the whole floor at salvage price and sold what was left over, making enough profit to cover all the material costs.



The finished boat was a real showstopper with many admirers. Day-trippers visited her and the guide portrayed her famous wartime history. When he was startled seeing the hoisted German flag at the stern, he reacted with quick-witted British humour; "Oh! The Germans couldn't sink her, so they have bought her".

Again alone (the real Rosemarie is not so seagoing), I moved *Rosemarie* across the Riviera - via Antibes and Nice - to Scarlino, opposite of Elba. On this journey I experienced the seaworthiness of the vessel in a 50 kn gale, as measured by the harbour master of San Remo. Having not being forced to start a rescue operation, he amicably waived the berth costs for the exhausted skipper.



A truck transported "Rosemarie" to Aprilla Marittima, located in the northern part of the Adria. In April 2010 I skipped her – after a four year Odyssey – to the final destination at Treporti, opposite of Venetia.

Our first journey in Venetian waters generated new adventures near the Marcus Place, no thrust, velocity 1sm/h and overheated engine! We survived dodging between huge cruise ships, "Vaporettos" and gondolas to San Giorgio Maggiore where I dived under the boat in the warm water to remove the heavy seaweed clogging up the propeller. I asked my wife to call for help if I don't surface within 10 mins! But all was well and needless to say, the return trip to Treporti was rather more relaxing.

## ROSEMARIE'S NEW CRUISING GROUND





# Stanley's War

by Stanley Ross

I lived in London throughout most of the Blitz. Even today, over six decades later, just hearing that long wail of the warning siren on old newsreels and movies, invariably gives me that same, cold knot of fear in the pit of my stomach, which I always felt, all those years ago. It reminds me too, of the huge sigh of relief we all breathed when the long, clear, beautiful, unbroken siren sounded, signalling the end of a raid. I was too young to fight in the war and Hitler's murderous decision to attempt to subdue our civilian population with a ferocious blitzkrieg, was traumatic for everyone but particularly so for us older children, as we saw people we had known all our young lives, killed, burned, maimed and buried, in the rubble of nearby houses.

I remember one morning, after a V1, struck, crying and half hysterical, helping to pull at the rubble of a house flattened just round the corner in Avenue Road.. I uncovered the head of a man, split right across with a zig-zag crack from front to back and I stood back and laughed frantically, till someone literally slapped me across the face, just like they always did in the old films, then he gently led me away for a cup of tea. I could hardly drink it, my hands were shaking so. I was thirteen years old.

Daily we watched those V1's, the 'doodlebugs' rattling across the skies and we held our breath in terror, as the absolutely unmistakable, mechanical roar quite suddenly stopped and if, instead of dropping straightaway as they often did, it flew silently on, we breathed again, since it meant that, mercifully for us, it would fall upon somebody else.

One night, asleep in our tiny Anderson shelter during a raid, a stick of eight bombs fell right across our council estate. One landed just a few feet from us, the massive impact of it tilting our heavily covers shelter right over on to its side. It was the only one of the eight bombs, which failed to explode. Had it gone off, I guess we would all have been vaporized. We lay there, trembling and terrified, too afraid to move.

Then, Dad's distracted voice could be heard calling to us from the entrance of the shelter, as he frantically pulled at the earth with his bare hands. He had run the two miles from Southgate Station, where he was on duty, having been told "Hood Avenue's copped it". When he saw we were alright, he broke down and I remember his shoulders shook as he sobbed. We children, who had never seen him cry before, were all very subdued and shocked, far more from just seeing Dad's tears than from the fear of that massive, unexploded bomb, lurking, just a few feet away.

It took a long time for the disposal squad to make the bomb safe and during that time, the Ross family slept deep down on the platforms of Southgate Tube Station. It was a curious business, having trains discharge passengers, who were then forced to step around the sleeping forms, sheltering from the vicious, nightly, bombing. At least with the V1's you could hear them coming, the sound was unmistakeable and of course there were always the Air Raid warnings but in 1944 the Third Reich dreamt up a new way to terrorise our civilian population. They sent V2's instead; Bombs delivered by rocket. There was no sound and no sight of them and thus no Air Raid Warning could be given. There was just the sudden, enormous, gut wrenching, shattering crump, as they detonated all over London, leaving massive smoking craters, where formerly whole rows of houses, full of families, had been standing.

It was at this time that the Government reviewed it's previous evacuation policy and decided that now, all children up to the age of thirteen should be evacuated. This time it included me and three weeks later I found myself on Liverpool Street Station, clutching my gas mask and case, sporting a large tag tied to my buttonhole. A few hours later we all arrived at a tiny village hall, in Smallburgh, North Norfolk. There, over cups of tea and buns, dozens of us were perused and

examined closely, by a throng of very curious villagers. You should remember that sixty odd years ago, most of those villagers had never even seen a Londoner, let alone been to London. One weird old girl came up to me, looked at me closely, probably looking for nits and announced "I'll heve thet one". I refused to go with her. So it was that some time later, I found myself in the house of one of the biggest farmers in the county and, being the son of a bus conductor coming from a small house on a council estate, there now began for me a whole new world of amazing experiences. Starting with their food, I was amazed to see that everyone had a whole week's ration of butter by their plate, at *every* meal! There were steaks and chops, delicious home made breads, bacon, eggs, cheeses, thick cream, ice cream and some things I had never even tasted before, such as venison, smoked salmon, hare, pheasant, partridge, pigeon pie, rabbit pie etc. etc., an unending cornucopia of delights.

The house was massive, with beautifully furnished sitting rooms, living rooms, breakfast room, family room, dining room, enormous bathrooms, the sheer space in that beautiful house was almost overwhelming. The farmer had a son, Gavin, a year older than me and straight away we hit it off. He showed me around their total of four nearby farms, over thousands of acres, all powered by a few tractors and in all, a couple of hundred Suffolk Punch horses.

I was taught to harness, handle, and work with the horses. To ride and to shoot, and with Gavin, I attended fairs and gymkhanas and entered events. I was given a half Arab pony and a 410 shotgun. Everywhere we rode, we went at the gallop, from the first moment the foot entered the stirrup we were galloping through bridle paths and across fields and pastures. Once, coming back to the farm we rounded up the whole herd of cows and literally galloped the poor creatures, bawling, heaving and steaming, to the very doors of the milking sheds, where milk yields consequently halved, to the fury of Gavin's father.

Gavin and I once rode our ponies to school, Paton Grammar, in North Walsham; imagine, the sheer joy of it all.

Each Saturday, in the huge red Buick, the family went to the stock sales in nearby Norwich and met up with other farmers. In a very short space of time I had the very broad Norfolk dialect off pat. The odd thing is, that although it was only one year out of my life, *more than seventy years ago*, I can immediately, effortlessly, lapse straight back into the dialect.

VE day came and went and one evening, having then spent over a year in that lovely Norfolk village, Gavin and I rode back into the yard for tea and found a large black car waiting. They had come to tell me to pack my bags. I was to go home, *first thing in the morning*. Try and imagine the shock. I remember actually finding it hard to breathe. There I was, thinking that all this was going to go on forever and a day.



Guess which one is Stanley at 14 years? Answer on the back page.

Yet in less than 24 hours, my life was to turn upside down as I was wrenched from that idyllic country life and in a very few hours, returned to my small council house, with its tiny rooms, with only a rusty bike to ride on; back to very meagre rations, to boiling the copper and climbing stairs with pails of hot water for Friday's bath; back to a tiny garden, with its small wooden shed. Leaving behind forever, those great golden fields of corn, the massive trees, the wide beautifully thick lawns, the tennis courts, the glorious house; back to life in a small council house, surrounded bombsites.

But there's always a tradeoff; ain't that the truth. My dear old Mum was there and, for me, she always made anything and everything worthwhile. When I look back upon it all now, from such a great distance in years and remember the amazing time I spent during that part of my war, I see it as perhaps the happiest year I have ever spent, at any time and in any place, throughout my entire life.

### *To Stanley, the Guardian of Highland Beauty*

*From Stephen Griffiths. Archivist*

*You gave, on the 12 March 1999, the first [of many] parties for Rampart owners on Highland Beauty. It proved to be an introduction to the extremely sociable side of our Club. I remember the owners of nine boats had gathered in the yacht club at St Katherine's Dock, London to discuss if there was as need for such a Club.*

*After your hospitality all agreed there was indeed a need, while privately hoping others would offer to put in the hard work that such an organisation would, and does, require.*

*Most of us know how much love, care and, not least, cash, a Rampart, as well maintained as Highland Beauty, demands.*

*Over the years her beauty and condition were well known as she is probably the second most featured little ship in the Club magazine; the most often featured is, who could have missed this, Roly, [having the Archivist and then the Editor as owners could have something to do with it!]*

*She will now be the responsibility of a new guardian who will find you are a hard act to follow. Owning a cherished motor yacht is a life changing experience, as my bank manager used to say, as is swallowing the anchor'. It now means you relying on good friends for a 'jolly', whilst looking forward to the next issue of Classic Boat.*

*Our condolences; Stanley. Now join the club of us ex skippers and look on the work of others.*

This report is prepared in response to a request by RATS for experiences following mechanical breakdowns.

In June 2011 I was travelling along the South Coast in my 22 ton wooden TSDY, *Sabi Star*, a displacement motor yacht from Rampart, 48 ft LOA. We were on passage from Dartmouth to Gosport but had ridden out two days of gales in Weymouth Harbour. On Thursday 9th June we left Weymouth to catch the wide up channel with a forecast south westerly 5-6. We set course outside of the Lulworth ranges and outside of the over falls at St Albans Ledge, about 5 miles off, on course for Hurst Narrows.

At approximately 12.30 with force 5 gusting 6 south west with waves approximately 1-1.5 metres there was a call for assistance from a motor yacht ahead of us and the coast guard asked us to assist with a tow.

The motor boat was a modern single screw planing deep V with the look of a RIB but in fact made of solid material, approximately 25 ft long. It had a single Volvo engine which had suffered catastrophic failure of the timing chain. It was lying broadside to the waves and I estimate the displacement at about 5 tonnes.

The coast guard asked us to render assistance and provide a tow.

We carry a dinghy on davits on the transom and have two wooden Samson posts on each stern quarter. The casualty had only a 20 metre mooring line of approximately 14mm which he insisted we took. It did not have eyes in either end. I decided that approach to leeward was safest as we had more top hamper and were affected by the wind when broadside on. When the casualty was abaft of amidships I turned up wind slightly to close our stern on his bows.

There was immense difficulty in getting close enough for the heavyweight line to be thrown aboard and in trying to avoid collision between the boats we were forced to shear away as soon as the line was aboard. The loads on the line were too great for us to secure them and we made three passes before it was decided that he would accept our tow line.

The wind was now a constant force 6 and both boats were lying across the waves so considerable rolling was occurring. We decided that we would pass close to leeward and throw our heaving line of 50 metre lightweight floating polypropylene with a quoit. This was surprisingly easy to throw into the wind over a gap of approximately 4 metres and we had secured one end to our 16mm tow line. At this point we discovered that the casualty did not have suitable cleats on the foredeck and although he tried to make fast, the line kept slipping off of the stag horn which was stainless steel and seemed to offer little grip for a wet jerking tow line. We eventually resolved this by recovering our tow rope and heaving line, tying a bowline to the end of the tow rope and repeating the process. In this way the casualty eventually had the tow line on board and dropped over the stag horn on the foredeck.

We were all very concerned that the stag horn would tear out of the deck.



## RESCUE AT SEA

BY JOHN & JULIE GILLIES OF *SABI STAR*

For our own part, we secured the tow rope on our rear port quarter Samson post with two turns and then led it forward to our own port amidships stag horn and in this way the load was adequately spread.

Taking the casualty in tow took over two hours from first establishing contact during which time the risk of man overboard was very high. My two crew were both Royal Navy officers wearing Crew Saver life jackets with clip on harnesses. I was wearing a Crew Saver life jacket with thigh straps and I found these extremely dangerous. They regularly snagged on all manner of equipment including hatch handles and the arm of the helmsman's chair when I was trying to move quickly. At Southampton Boat Show I discussed this with the RNLI reps who agreed, and directed me to the single crutch strap on the new generation lifejackets.

We eventually delivered the casualty to the care of the Yarmouth harbour master, having successfully negotiated the Hurst Narrows.

We learned a lot from this experience. Firstly, should we have accepted the coast guard's instruction to take the casualty in tow? It eventually was a successful operation but could easily have been dangerous if the boats had collided or anyone had gone overboard, which was a real risk with the jerky rolling motion.

The motor boats seemed inherently inclined to lie across the wind and the waves and this caused extreme rolling to the point where there was real risk of man overboard. Should the casualty have streamed a drogue to lie head to wind?

Should we have tried an alongside tow? I don't think so because of the sea state.

It was clear that the casualty was not carrying sufficient size of warps for a good tow. I think we should really have had a longer line on. Ours was about 30 metres and I think we could probably have done with twice that.

The casualty did not have sufficient strong points for us to be confident that they would cope with any major snatching and I think we were lucky that we managed the ride without any damage.

It is apparent that our motor boat does not carry fair leads intended for towing. Our fair lead off of the Samson post leads to the stern quarters and consequently was under extreme load with a line turned through 90 degrees. I have now created a bridle to rig across the transom to take a central pull should the situation occur again.

The two boats drifted approximately 5 miles during our attempts to connect tow lines. Fortunately we had plenty of sea room but it meant that we were at risk of being set to the south of the Isle of Wight and had to battle slightly northwards to get back into the main channel.

Were we correct in approaching the casualty on the leeward side? It certainly seemed to be safer than going to windward.

I have taken a number of RYA training courses over the years, but none have dealt with rescue of another boat. During 2011 I have heard a considerable number of Pan Pan calls (in one year probably more than my previous 40 years in total) and of these, the Coastguard asked the nearest boat to render assistance. If this is to continue there are training issues, and also insurance to consider. Is this reckless endangerment? Should we offer assistance to nothing other than life threatening issues?

Finally, having received a spoken thanks upon release of the tow line we suggested that the casualty make a donation to the local RNLI but we heard no further developments.

I think we managed to handle our boat with good seamanship and I would like to express my thanks to my crew comprising my daughter on the helm and her partner working the heaving lines who showed great skill and determination throughout the operation.

A few comments to get the ball rolling.....

First of all, well done Sabi Star and crew.

1) Three attempts to carry out an action that the disabled boat 'insists' on, is heroic. After the first failure, it would be more than fair to negotiate what's best for you, the ones risking life, limb and boat.

2) Ideally the towing rope should float, to avoid contact with propellers. But floating nylon line is difficult to throw, so ideally needs to be stored with a polypropylene heaving line.

3) If the casualty streamed a drogue to lie into wind, it would increase the difficulty of the rescue boat getting ahead of them and caused trouble with attaching the tow line. *In our experience, in difficult circumstances, extra lines trailing in the sea can be more trouble than they are worth.*

4) Alongside tows are great in calm weather but too dangerous in a swell. *We've been towed 10 miles alongside in the Med., very comfortable.*

5) Wasn't it possible to lead the rope straight back from the sampson posts and not through the fair lead?

6) A bridle across the sampson posts is a good idea. A suggestion for when caught on the hop, would be to attach the towing line to a loop, tied in the centre of a second line that is then make fast, like a bridle, to the port and starboard sampson posts. Each end of the second rope can then be lead forward to the port and starboard aft staghorns, to spread the load. This would keep the casualty in the centre astern. *We have found this method successful.*

7) Approaching from the lee side is good, as you can move away if the casualty drifts down onto you, the casualty can't. *This happened to us in the Atlantic, when an enormous container ship came to our rescue, leaving us in her lee. Initially, we had no steerage in our sailing boat and it was like a block of flats bearing down on us. Very scary! Fortunately, the skipper rigged up just enough steerage to enable us to circle round and round, keeping away from the giant propellers rising out of the sea!*

8) If the coast guards are going to ask us to make rescues at sea, we really do need to sort out the insurance issues. Perhaps it would be more economical for the them to give temporary cover to a prospective rescue boat, than to come out themselves. A training DVD, would be a great idea.

ANY OTHER COMMENTS, ANECDOTES OR SIMILAR EXPERIENCES, SENT TO ME, WILL BE PUBLISHED NEXT ISSUE.

## NEW FACES



Left:

At the winter meeting on Deborah S, we met Paul Kendall, who although busy in the RAF, has acquired Sea Dawn, lying in the non-tidel Thames, to keep him busy on leave!

Right:

Highland Beauty's new owner, James Humphrys, adding a touch of class to the ROC in Naval Captain's Uniform. Highland Beauty is at the moment of writing, having holding tanks fitted, among other bits and bobs but should be back afloat in time for the Rally in Gunwharf Quays.



Steve Dennett, Heather & Noah, of Dennett's Boat Yard, in the Thames. Among their personal collection of wooden boats, they own the Rampart, *Revel*



Noah, The Youngest Member

### THE WINTER MEETING

The winter meeting went well aboard the Deborah S on Cadogan Pier.

Ben and Debra, who had promised to cater for the event, months before, found themselves with all manner of commitments on the day but refused to let us down. While the atmosphere wasn't quite as relaxed as the year before, we were able to carry out our business, whilst eating and imbibing wine and coffee.

Our hostess with most'ess, Debra. She was Debra S before she married Ben and by sheer coincidence the boat they bought was called Deborah S.



Julie Gilles Sabi Star and John and Sue Ifton Pop Watts concentrate over coffee



### NEW VICE COMMODORE

Michael Nicholson bowed out of the role of Vice Commodore and passed the honour on to your very own editor, Liz Poole, along with his cherished hat, that he had acquired from USS Missouri, when he was a war correspondent during the Gulf War. Ooh, I hope I don't have to wear it every meeting!





## Chichester Harbour, its creeks and anchorages

Cindy and I are very privileged to keep *Penny Jane* in the beautiful, sheltered waters of Chichester Harbour. It is situated to the east of Portsmouth and makes a good stopping-off place for those heading up Channel and an opportunity to make a few miles of eastings into the bargain. However, it also serves as a quiet place to spend a few nights at anchor [all those who can't be separated from their shore power might not agree], as well as having some marinas, almost all tidally constrained and expensive.

This short article is not meant to replicate the Pilot but merely to let you know where you might find some interesting places to stop.

The attached chart shows the 'harbour' with a main east/west channel running nominally to Chichester in the east, with north/south channels dividing a number of islands or more realistically isthmuses. This description will follow the main channel towards the east whilst diving up each northerly channel as we meet it.

All channels are well marked with buoys or beacons.

### Entrance

Read the Pilot. Not to be attempted in strong onshore winds with an ebb tide. There are beacons marking the shoals to the west [not shown] and I strongly recommend no short cuts! The spring ebb can run strongly [5 knots] off Eaststoke Point, Hayling Island.

### Emsworth Channel

Once inside there is Sparkes Marina immediately to port, accessible at all stages of the tide, with fuel and water and a decent visitor's berth. The Emsworth channel then opens to the north. This channel is wide and is well protected the further north you go. We often anchor close to the windward edge of the channel between Marker Point and Wicker Point to starboard. There is passing traffic but the wash is negligible.

At the northern end the channel divides; Northney Marina to the west, accessible at most stages of the tide, and the Emsworth channel continues to the north.

This is crowded with moorings and there are two places to stop: the visitor's pontoon [no power] and Emsworth Jetty where you can lie for about 2 hours to go shopping in the town. It would be tight for the 48's.

There is a wooden boatyard at the top reachable at HW [although he might be moving to Birdham] and *Penny Jane*, *Star of Killarney*, and *Highland Beauty* have all been there.

Emsworth Marina rarely has visitor's berths and is accessible at HW +/- 3 hours.

Back to the harbour entrance, the main channel curves to starboard, passing north of the Winner. On no account cut these stbd-hand buoys too fine, and make sure you have counted all 3 of them.

East Head is a lovely anchorage with sandy dunes; ideal for swimming, buckets and spades, drying out to scrub off [not really a Rampart option!], lunch at anchor. It gets very crowded at summer weekends. The tidal stream runs fast in the main channel so get as far south as you can, but watch the echo sounder. It is fairly exposed to all winds and when the wind is against the tide can be uncomfortable.

### Thorney Channel

Turning north up the Thorney Channel, there is a lovely anchorage off Pilsey Island. The water is deep steep to the island, which is a nature reserve and people should not go above the high tide mark. Sheltered from the west it makes a good overnight stop.

Continuing north, there is sheltered anchorage as far as about one third up Thorney Island where moorings reappear. If you continue through the moorings there is a visitor's buoy at the northern

end, just south of the Prinsted/Nutborne Channels divide, which belongs to Thorney Sailing Club. Please don't hit Penny Jane whose mooring is just south of the visitor's buoy.

There is no point going up the Prinsted/Nutborne Channels. Thorney Sailing Club is open at weekends and is accessible by dinghy at all stages of the tide via a Hard.

### Bosham Channel

This is very tight with moorings, is shallow and requires a 3-point turn at the top. It is possible to go alongside the wall at Bosham but difficult and it dries. It is pretty and worth a foray up and back, if only to see where King Canute showed he could not control the tides, but not a priority.

### Itchenor Reach

At Itchenor Point the moorings start again as we go east, and they are stacked 6 deep across the Channel. It is relatively easy to negotiate them, and there are hefty visitor's buoys off Itchenor which take up to 6 boats each. We have occasionally picked up an empty mooring further east for the night.

The moorings extend up to Longmore Point to port. For a 32 footer, there is a tiny anchorage just NE of Longmore Point on the west side of the channel; best at neaps. We inadvertently dried out one early morning but remained perfectly upright and everyone stayed still in their bunks until the water came back!

Birdham Pool is said to be one of the oldest marinas in England. Stanley and Mike Nicholson know it but I have never been in there.

Chichester Marina is a huge complex, controlled by lights and VHF and normally has spare berths. Peter Scott is our resident expert.

There is no point going north of Chichester Marina, the channel is winding and shallow. It is worth an expedition to Dell Quay – where the dories came from – by dinghy for a drink in the pub there.

That completes a brief description of the Harbour. It is not quite like anything I have seen before. There are few creature comforts outside the marinas and the Harbour is very busy at weekends. Be prepared to be savaged by fleets of racing dinghies.

Nevertheless it is interesting; there are stacks of things to see and, as long as one is in a 'Maurice Griffiths' mood, it is a perfectly delightful experience.

*Christopher Morrison*

*Answer to the Stanley question. Stanley at 14 years is the good looking one, last but one clutching the girl! As Stanley said, "It's no fun getting old Ducks..."*