Lower Halstow Yacht Club

Early Summer 2018

Commodores' Ramblings

By the time this goes out virtually all the boats will be back in the water. It seemed as though winter was never going to end. I was fortunate and able to take advantage of a few warm days in early March to get the antifoul on. I was getting a little worried if I would get the sails back on by my 2nd April launch date, but again I was lucky. The only thing that went wrong for me was it rained when I was planning to finish off polishing the boat. It was certainly good to have the boat back in the water again.

We had a visit early April from the RNLI for a Safety Talk. We had quite a good turn out and seemed well received by those who attended. It was hoping there may have been time for some lifejacket checks but time ran out. John, that did the talk was keen to return to carry out lifejacket checks if we would like. Maybe something to consider later in the year.

We had a fairly good turn out on the Saturday of the Spring Work party and quite a few jobs were cleared from the long list.
With the Sunday starting wet, the turnout was quite disappointing.
We ended the weekend with the new toilet in the old bosuns store almost finished and the new kitchen fitted but not plumbed. I understand both have been finished off in the last couple of weeks.
A big thanks to all of those involved at the work party and since.

I got out for a chilly overnight on the boat early in April and was treated to a sighting of two Harbour Porpoises in the mouth of the Medway. I have seen them in the past, but never managed to catch them on camera before.
So far the weather has been fairly kind to us, I bet that puts the mockers on it now.

The Round the Island Race wasn't as successful as we would have liked. Only three boats turned out and with a very early start there was very little wind to start with. By the time we got around the back of the Island there was very little water and we were sliding along the bottom, until Marie Louise came to an abrupt stop. With all three of us quite closely grouped, I was left with no choice other than a slightly more controlled grounding. We were able to motor off and had a futile attempt to pull Marie Louise off until the falling tide left us stuck mid channel. Azurian also I believe ran aground, but with a lifting keel were able to finish the race.
The Early May Bank Holiday weekend saw 5 boats head off towards the Blackwater for the weekend. Apart for a short sail when we got out of the Medway there wasn't much wind and a lot of motoring. It turned out to be a very enjoyable weekend. I'm not going to be able to go on the next one at the end of May, but hopefully there will be a few more trips as the summer progresses.
Hopefully, everyone will get out on the water throughout the summer and the weather is kind to us all.

David Metcalfe

Rudderless Meanderings from the Editor

Welcome back to the water members!
Nice to see my boat poised on the mooring ready for all the sailing adventures that have formed between my ears over the winter but realistically only have about a 15% chance of coming off. I`m feeling these days I can live with the 15% as long as it doesn't get any lower...

As the seasons and tides go by I find myself accepting that most of my sailing is basically a dream and it's a good plan to enjoy the dreaming as part of the package.
With the exception of anti-fouling - which one obviously actively loathes, I actually enjoy the time ashore, quite afternoons fiddling about with this and that, nothing actually gone wrong yet, and of course phantasying of the perfect sailing season ahead, and of course listening to the birds.
Ashore we can strive for dreamy boating Nirvana, A parallel universe where we have carried out all of our to do list and more, read all the latest tips on Practical Boat Forum, all software and devices are up to date,: a world where we have used (and naturally been able to afford) outrageously expensive boaty type materials such as a wonder oil for basic commercial diesel engines - engines used

and abused uneventfully up and down the country on building sites by numbskulls- luxury detergents and unguents that are the only ones suitable for the special plastic I understand yachts are made of ....all ready to set off with a friendly wind filling our perfectly trimmed sails, happily always in the correct position and timely reversing for a splendid evening reach to a peaceful anchorage , and then to go below, book and deluxe snifter in hand, to snuggle down to a peaceful night in a cosy cabin in which of course, we have perfect headroom and no mess everywhere.

I have come to like this dreamy wistful time in the yard -pregnant as it is with the promise of perfect days ahead - so much that I'm thinking of recording the birds so I can listen to them at home in my armchair reading The Magic of the Swatchways when the weather`s crap.

To think of it, perhaps that's what makes sailing and yacht ownership so involving, like a golfer perpetually one round away from a hole-in-one on the 18th - with all his mates watching from the club house- we are all only one pot noodle away from a dream cruise. Don't worry yachties, it will happen- though not as many times as we would like and then perhaps only to look back upon and realise how happy we were.

Stangate Aerodrome

You might have noticed a float plane landing in the creek, well here it is!

G-WATR (!) is a Christen A-1 Husky operating from Rochester. A friend has a microlight at Rochester and I got chatting to him about our "local" seaplane. He said he had probably seen it in his hanger and kindly sent me this picture. Nice to get a ride someday!

Club Discounts

I was in confusion mode recently (business as usual) as what my loyalty card at a local chandlery was actually giving me, so I phoned a couple of the nearest establishments for clarity and to see if any bargains were to be had for club members.

I'm sure other members will agree that any purchase I make on line is just slightly tinged with guilt as we wouldn't like to see our local places go out of business leaving us with nowhere to go for this and that.

Gillingham Marina

If you are a member of the club you have to register and then you will get 10% of most items, apart from items which are already reduced. Well worth it I think.

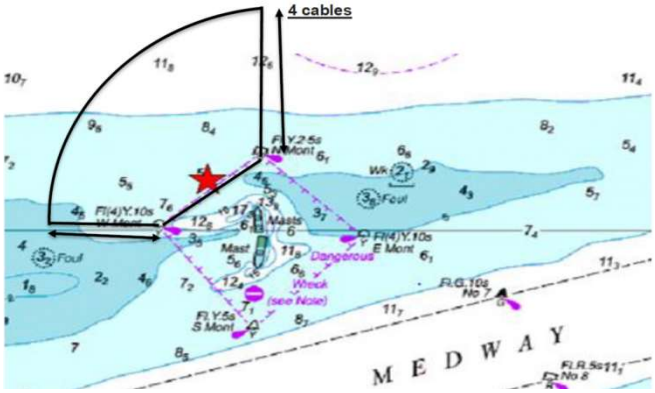
Pirates Cave

No extra discount here for LHYC members as I think there used to be some time back, but they do operate a loyalty scheme which operates as follows.
You register for the scheme and obtain a loyalty card.
Each pound spent earns you one point. When you reach 195 points (£195) you get a voucher for £7.50.
Some items might be on promotion and you get double points.
This equates to 3.8% I think but you have to spend £195.

In addition I understand club members can negotiate discounts at The Battery Specialists, 35 High Dewar Road, Rainham tel 01634 262343 and ask for Dean (lives in L.H.)

Any others please let me know.

Worth A Second Look at This



[Keep 800 yards NW of Montgomery wreck buoys]

To clarify the previous article on our website, Peel Ports Notice to Mariners No 20 of 2018 warns us to stay at least 4 cables (approx 800 yards) to the north west of the restricted area marked by the yellow danger buoys around the Montomery wreck until 1st June 2019 (i.e. next year)
Full details on MBSA website.

Keep sending me nice pictures please!

These first two would be ideal for club Christmas card I think.

Thanks go to John Knight
for these snowy scenes of the yard

And to Peter Taylor's for this picture of
Enliven at the Dartford Barrier

Pip Pip!
The Editor

Blackwater Cruise

On the Friday afternoon of the Early May Bank Holiday weekend Lethera, Nerides 3, Touché and Jeddo rafted up in Stangate Creek ready for an early start Saturday morning.

After alarm clocks going off at about 05:00 we awoke to find we had been joined by Daydream. We all set off on a windless morning. Just outside the Medway a slight breeze picked up and sails were set. With about 12 knots of NE breeze and about a knot and a half of tide, Jeddo seemed to take off. The GPS was constantly reading 8.5 knots. I know we were sailing in company, but it was too good to slow down for a while. I soon pulled away from the others. I was getting close to needing to tack across towards the Essex coast so rolled up the Genoa to give the others a chance to catch up.

We regrouped and headed across the estuary towards the Maplin Sands. From then on we were head on into the wind so that was the end of the sailing. We had no real plan as to where we were heading other than the Blackwater. It was decided we would try Wivenhoe as a couple of crews had been made welcome there in the past. Once a bit closer a phone call to the club and we were told that there should be room for 5 boats. On land the sun was warming everyone one up. Out on the water we were being kept chilled by the NE breeze until we got into the sheltered Colne at Brightlingsea. We wound our way up the River Colne and managed to squeeze the 5 boats into the available berths.

We went to the club house and made very welcome. Given keys to get in to the toilets and shower out of opening hours.
We spent the evening at the Black Buoy that was holding a beer and cider festival so very busy. We didn't think we had much chance of getting a table for 9, but a small function room was made available for us.
Daydream had to return back to Lower Halstow on Sunday so departed on the early morning tide. The rest of us explored Wivenhoe on Sunday morning and enjoyed the hospitality at the Sailing Club whilst we waited for the tide.
Once all afloat we set off on the short trip down to Pyefleet Creek where we rafted up for the night.

Monday morning arrived without any real breeze, so engines on again for all but a short sail across the Swin Spit way. With fewer breezes it was a warmer trip than the journey up. Another very enjoyable weekend. Looking forward to the next.

Message from the Yard Master

Regarding MEMBERS dinghy/tender/canoe/trailer/cradles/ supports etc. currently on site. You may be aware the club is getting requests from prospective members whose current mooring sites are under threat.
To maintain control of our yard and maximize space for winter storage we need to establish what items belong to which member, what needs to be on site and those items that are not in use/abandoned requiring removal/disposal.
At the next work party on 27th/28th October a team will move any item not **VISIBLY** marked with the owner's membership number to a holding area. Unfortunately history shows damage could occur in this process.
The items not clearly marked with the members number will be held for 4 weeks while the **committee** decide on appropriate action.
Previous attempts to have members identify their property have been only partially successful hence the 5 months' notice.
To assist I have a stencil set should anyone wish to borrow. If you need advice 01795 843136

John Knight

Message from the Mooring Master

We're well into June and so far I've received less than half of the mooring condition reports that I would have expected. Thank you to those that have sent me details. For the rest of you if you have already checked your moorings please send me the results. If you haven't, it is your duty check and maintain your moorings, it really is easier than recovering a boat from the shore. If you have difficulties please advise.
There is a form on the website, which is easy to fill in with tick boxes and comment can be made were necessary. I get sent the form when completed. I'm not against email if you prefer. There is also a notice board in the hut for those without internet."

Graham Leighton