



JUNE 2012 NEWSLETTER

For all the very latest information, visit the website at www.pmsc.org.uk

Commodore's Corner

As I sit here typing, we are halfway through May and Harmony's bottom is yet to get her annual coat of "Cruiser Uno" - ever since the hosepipe ban was announced, it seems to have done nothing but rain every weekend! I am sure the more hardy souls amongst you have braved the elements and have launched - things can only get better....

The club house has had its annual spruce up and many thanks to all that gave up your time on Good Friday. The day started with a very long list of jobs to be done, but one by one they were all ticked off by the time the Bacon Butties came out and the Bar opened. Special thanks to James and Rick for marshalling the troops and Pennie and Romy for feeding them. The Fitting Out Supper was enjoyed by all, and Jo and Jackie did an excellent spread as usual. We have also had the re-arranged talk by Chris Green on films made in Suffolk, and the film clips shown captured the changes that are going on around us all the time, some you do not notice, and some you just forget. Finally many thanks for all the volunteers that have cooked the Fitting Out Lunches, which hopefully have many of you have enjoyed.

The sailing season is upon us, and hopefully we can get a decent representation in the Four Clubs River Series - the events are as much about fun as they are racing, so why not have a go and join in. The 2nd - 5th June is the Queens Diamond Jubilee and the club is holding a BBQ on the 5th, so hope to see some of you there. We then have the Smack race on the 23rd and at the end of June is the PMSC Barge Match, which this year has a very respectable 10:00 start for Class A.

The RYA / Honda Youth RIB Championship is once again being held, and is aimed at 8 to 16 year olds, in two classes. For our area, there will be a regional qualifier on the 9th of June at Ardleigh SC, a regional final at the (Canvey) Island SC on the 23rd June and the National Final is at the Southampton Boat Show on the 16th September. You do not need to have raced a RIB before, as training will be given - we can even offer some practice in our club Dory prior to the regional qualifier, and afterwards for practice should you get through! Why not give it a try. Contact Nigel Mower or myself for details.

Lee Foster - Commodore

Diary



June:

Saturday 2nd to Tuesday 5th
Jubilee Bank Holiday Cruise
Tuesday 5th
Jubilee BBQ
Saturday 23rd
Smack Race
Barge Passage Match
Sunday 24th
4 Clubs Race: No 2
Saturday 30th
Pin Mill Barge match

July:

Saturday 7th to Sunday 15th
Summer Cruise
Sunday 15th
June & Ward Cup race
Ewarton BBQ
Saturday 21st
4 Clubs Race: No 3
Saturday 29th
Dayboat cruise to Shotley

August:

Saturday 5th
Beach BBQ
Saturday 25th
4Club Race: No 4 + BBQ
Bank Holiday Cruise

For latest updates and copies of booking forms check the website.

The next newsletter will be in late July, for AUGUST. Contributions as early as possible please to;
circular@pmsc.org.uk

Welcome to New Members

Nick Markham of Chelmondiston

Derek Melton and Diane Oldroyd of
Smallburgh, Norwich, owners of Le Capitou, a
Pegasus 8m

Lost or stolen dinghy Can you help?

12ft GRP Orkney Star type GRP dinghy with
varnished gunwhales, white topsides and blue
antifoul. Stern adapted to fit outboard.

Went missing from Manningtree early May.

If you have seen it, please contact
suelucas@hotmail.co.uk

Annual Summer Cruise: July 7th to 15th

We are planning to hold our annual Summer
Cruise from the 7th – 15th of July, finishing up
at the club BBQ at Erwardon Ness on the 15th.
Please get in touch if you are intending to
come along for the week and I am looking for
some suggestions as to where you might like
to go!

Friday late afternoon DIY BBQ's

The Friday early DIY BBQ season is upon us,
there is a slight change of routine this year.

Please give 24hrs notice, so that staffing of
the bar can be arranged. Last year the number
of occasions that the early BBQ was used did
not warrant the cost of providing staff every

Friday, just on the off-chance. All that needs
to be done is for someone to contact the Bar
Sec -Bob Emmett- on 780692 by mid-day on
the Thursday before, a member of the Bar
Committee, or myself on 780857.

LF

Erwardon Ness Passage Race: Sunday July 15th

*An optional passage race from Pin Mill to
Erwardon Ness, prior to the lunch time BBQ
on Erwardon Ness beach. Competitors may
tow dingys during the race to give access to
the beach, and an allowance for this will be
made in the handicapping.*

Sailing Instructions

Rules - As described in the PMSC 2012
Almanac and amended in these sailing
instructions.

Entries - Entrants must complete a race entry
from (available on the club web site) and send
it, addressed to the sailing secretary, to arrive
at the club by the Friday evening before the
race.

Classes - there will be a single class and class
flags are not required.

Start - 10 am from the PMSC club line using
the 5 minute system and flags described in the
club almanac.

Course - Shotley Horse Racing Mark to
starboard, finish.

Finish - a line due south of the Erwardon Ness
beacon. Competitors to record their own finish
times and report these to the sailing secretary.

Handicaps - Handicaps are to be declared on
the entry forms, along with the source of the
number (Byron, RYA OGA etc). Any

deviations from published handicaps should also be explained on the entry form. Bermudan rigged boats must provide a number compatible with the Portsmouth Yardstick system. Gaff rigged boats may alternatively provide an OGA time correction factor which will be converted to a PY number by the sailing secretary.

Towing of Dinghy - Yachts towing a dinghy during the race will receive a 5% reduction in their corrected times. To be eligible for this the dinghy must be towed behind the yacht, not hauled up the transom. Towed dinghies should be visible at the start line.

NB

River Deben and River Ore latest plans available to download

www.eastcoastrivers.com

Pin Mill characters some more watery memories of the 50's from Mark Grimwade

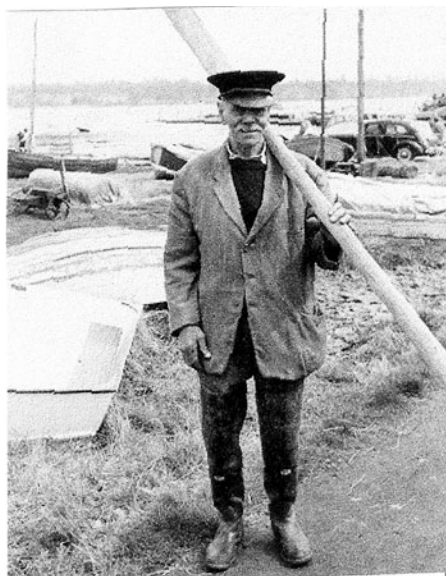
How I joined the PMSC:- *Hirta's* regular crew numbered about 6, and it was our habit to land at Woolverstone Pier and walk to the *Butt & Oyster*. One night we were joined by some 40+ members of the Ipswich Rugby Club and, having been ejected from the *Butt* at 10pm by the then Landlord Bill 'Pop' Watts (Pat Watt's father) with the traditional cry of "All the best people are now leaving", we started back, but noted the PMSC bar was still open. As "Visiting Yachtsmen", we all trooped in. Ted Jillings and Tony Cowley were on duty in the bar and Ted immediately pulled down the shutter, explaining that it was after hours; Tony pulled it up again on the principle that it would be good for turnover. Tony won. BUT, two days later I received a stiff letter from the Hon.Sec.,Kingsley Ballard,

pointing out that some 50 "visiting yachtsmen" from a mile up river was a bit of a liberty. I replied, regretting my action and stating that it was my intention to apply for membership – and by return I received a proposed and seconded application form signed by Arthur Davies and Kingsley. I joined!

Austin 'Clarence' Farrar owned and ran Woolverstone Shipyard. He was concerned about toredo worm attacking Woolverstone Pier and said he had heard that an underwater explosion would kill them – so he had 'come by' a couple of dozen rusty ex-WWII hand grenades. Pulling the pin, he dropped one down each side of the pierhead. WHOOMPH!! Muddy water and dead mackerel arose. "That should have fixed the worms at the bottom – I reckon the fuse is 12 seconds so if I pull the pin and count to 8 before dropping them, we should get the waterline ones!" He pulled the rusty pin and started counting, I started running! But over half a century later, Woolverstone Pier still stands (Note: *Austin 'Clarence' Farrar: An Eye for Innovation*, a biography by David Chivers, was published in 2007 by Bosun Publications. ISBN: 0-9554243-4-8 and 978-0-9554243-4-2. It's a very worthwhile read, covering the incredibly inventive life of an amazing gentleman – in every sense).

Pop Watts, on handing over the *Butt* to his son Pat, took over as Steward at the RHYC (in its Nissen hut days, when its bar counter was the superb one we now enjoy at the PMSC – it originally came from Lloyds Bank). Pop enjoyed many a good night there and towards the end of one of them he managed to put an egg sandwich in the till whilst trying to eat the small change.

Bob Roberts owned the barge *Cambria* and lived at Pin Mill. My crew and I were invited



Ephraim Sharman

by him to act as his chorus at the *Butt*, where he was recording sea shanties for the BBC. In the loo, the producer suggested to me:

“You should

have your voice trained.” I was much flattered and immediately began thinking about a change of career. “Yes, to p**s off and not come back!” he continued. I decided to stick to plough-making.

In those days, Ephraim Sharman was the ‘Mayor’ of Pin Mill and wore a Tricorn hat in the *Butt*, broke up barges, emptied the village’s earth closets and sold firewood. He confided to me that he thought that George Burroughs, Pin Mill’s long late and lamented Harbourmaster, was pinching his logs. To prove his point, he drilled a hole in a log, inserted six 12 bore cartridges and ‘capped it orff’. “I were right”, he reported, “he’s still looking for his stove!”

George got his own back (one could say ‘literally’) on Eph. George suffered from loose bowels and on one occasion ‘dumped’ in Col. B’s dinghy. The Colonel found it and, unaware of the source, gave George a quid to clear it up. George gave 5/- to Eph for the job, thus making 15 bob a job (one might say!)

One day George noticed I had my first girlfriend and took me to one side to give me some advice: “You’ll be alright as long as you

always remember one thing: *That it ain’t just the plumbin’ what’s different.*”

An old Bargeman and his very jealous wife lived at ‘Clamp House’ – just below Pin Mill. She warned him that, if she died first and he went ‘orff’ with another woman, she would dig herself out of her grave and haunt him. She did die first and he soon took up with the barmaid at the *Butt & Oyster*. “Ain’t yew afraid she’ll come end haunt yer?” his friends asked. “Narr! Oi burried the owd bat face dewern, soo the more she scrabble, the deeper she’ll go!”

Back in the ‘50s when I was an apprentice with Ransomes Sims & Jefferies beside Ipswich Dock, a little bit of extra cash always came in handy. “Burn a wreck” suggested a boat builder friend of mine (the late Joe Elvin), “then, after the tide has come and gone, you can collect all the copper fastenings and make a few bob.” So I bought, for 5/- (25p), the sad remains of an old yacht in the Pin Mill saltings. After a very satisfactory fire and the tide had flushed away the ash, I sifted the mud only to find that she had been iron fastened. Oh well, it seemed a good idea at the time. Some weeks later, I bumped into the chap from whom I bought the yacht. “When are you going to burn my old yacht? Hurry up and do it, some vandal has already burnt the boat in the berth next door!” Oh dear! All I could do was to hasten back for an encore. This time the yield was about £25 (about 3 weeks wages in those days) in scrap copper.

Hirta was berthed alongside Ransome’s Quay

during the winter, and I once received a memo from the MD suggesting that, should I board my yacht again in the firm’s time, I should be wise to first remove



George Burroughs
Harbourmaster’s duties)

my white overalls...

And finally . . . In much more recent times, I needed to replace the ground chain on my mooring at Pin Mill so asked Tony Ward what size of chain he would recommend. Expecting questions about my yacht's length and weight, I was surprised to be asked how old I was! Having told him, his answer was: "Well, if you're that old, 3/4 inch will do!"

A long-forgotten type of dinghy

A rarely seen sight these days is that of a yacht towing a dinghy. It was very different in the two post-war decades. In those pre-marina and pre-inflatable dinghy days everyone had to use a rigid dinghy to get to and from their boat and to take it with them if planning to go ashore anywhere other than at their home mooring. With some boats, mostly the larger ones, it was possible to get the dinghy on deck. Most boats had to tow them with a consequent disastrous effect on performance. For all boats there was, though, an alternative to a dinghy which had to be towed – the Prout folding dinghy. With a wooden backbone and wooden sides allied to the bottom, forward and aft transoms being of canvas it could be folded flat to stow on the cabin top. It came in a variety of sizes from about 6ft overall up to about 8ft.

A memorable early encounter with the smallest in the range came in the early 50's when I agreed to crew in a race from Erith Y.C down to Holehaven. The owner, usually the most pleasant of companions, had the unfortunate reputation of needing very little drink before becoming belligerent and awkward and so it turned out that evening when closing time came at the 'Lobster Smack' and we went to go back aboard. With such a small dinghy it was an essential that the heaviest person sat forward and rowed otherwise the transom could dip under.

Despite being much bigger and heavier than myself the owner insisted that, as captain, he was not going to row. After arguing without success for some time I finally rowed him off to the boat sitting just as far forward as I could get in order to keep the top of the transom well above the water. Safely alongside came the next problem. Again citing his status as captain the owner insisted on a right to board the boat last. Despite pointing out the danger of the stern going under if I moved first he remained adamant that he was not going to leave the dinghy first. Argument proving useless I pushed off and rowed around the anchored boats for a spell before going back alongside. Still he refused to move so once again we went for a row round. This went on for the best part of an hour before on the umpteenth visit alongside he immediately climbed out of the dinghy without a word being said. By the time I had got aboard and sorted out the dinghy for the night he was in his sleeping bag and fast asleep.

A few years later I acquired a small Buchanan-designed shoal-draft cruiser which came with a Prout folding dinghy as well as a beautiful varnished clinker-built pram dinghy. Being at that time footloose and fancy free I used to spend every weekend on the boat wandering on the East Coast, sometimes with a crew, sometimes on my own, leaving the boat where ever I happened to be when Sunday afternoon came. However, given wind against tide conditions some East Coast anchorages, Fambridge for example, can become extremely rough and though the Prout was adequate for when I was alone and the time came to go home there were occasions when I had a crew that getting ashore to go home was a nail-biting experience. Realising this I did the obvious thing and acquired a second Prout dinghy so that we went to and from the boat independently. It was a system that worked a treat!

With Prouts being based on Canvey Island it was, perhaps, understandable that Prout folding dinghies were more likely to be seen on the East Coast than elsewhere. Some did,

though, stray rather further from that natural habitat. In late June 1963 I joined a 30' bermudan sloop in Newport, Rhode Island, that was to sail alongside the Transatlantic race of that year although not accepted as an official entry. When preparing for sea I was, to say the least, surprised when the owner merely lifted his Prout dinghy aboard, turned it upside down on the cabin top, forward of the mast and put some lashings over it rather than folding it up and stowing it flat on the cabin top aft of the mast. I found it difficult to believe that it would still be there and in one piece once the Atlantic had had its way. 25 days and some 3000 miles later I had to accept just how wrong I had been. Within minutes of picking up a mooring at Cowes, IOW, the owner was in the dinghy and pulling for the shore to phone families and let them know of our safe arrival and also to contact HM Customs. That apparently flimsy structure had survived without damage all the Atlantic had thrown at it.

Ron Watts

**WANTED:
new Membership Secretary
we are still looking!**

This is a job that is fundamental to the survival of the Club and, whilst it is busy at the beginning of the year, the secretary then gets a nice rest with not much to do until renewal time comes round again! The basic requirements are access to a computer and the ability to:

- Maintain a very simple spreadsheet
- Run off labels using mail merge
- Give time when members renew, (mid December until the end of February, but only busy late December to the end of January)
- Help the Club Newsletter editor filling envelopes 6 times a year

- Occasional attendance at General Committee Meetings
- Greeting new members and processing a couple of letters for each one
- Sending out the invitation and coming to the New Members Evening in March each year.

The only skill there that I think might make someone wince a bit is mail merge but, hey, if I can teach myself to use it, so can you, particularly with my handy "step-by-step" guide.

An ideal job for someone who does not want to be in the front line but would like to have some involvement. Please give me a call.

Romy Blackburn

Coastguard News

Join a Club and your reward may be a trip out somewhere. It would seem that this is also true of the Coastguard.

Someone knew someone so the Holbrook team had an invite to Wattisham in March to meet some of the crew of the RAF Search and Rescue team and a flight over "our patch" in a Sea king.

The sun shone and we arrived at Wattisham, our driver's credentials were checked whilst we sat nervously in the car watching the armed guard with his finger on the trigger – "you would think his finger would get tired" someone commented. Then off, past the parked Apaches, to the Sea king hangar. We were greeted at the door by the cleaner... She seemed to know we were coming and took us straight to the wardrobe master. And Master he was of all sizes and kitted us out with fire retardant suits, lifejackets, gloves and helmets in what seemed like seconds having a practised eye on sizes. The only slip up – my hands – bigger than he expected. Somebody has noticed at last. The helmet offers a choice of two visors, communication stuff, and ear

defenders (absolutely vital). Only thing about the helmet is that it is so heavy, I felt like a nodding dog. The happy parting words – you will come back looking the same colour – obviously a favourite joke.

We were then taken off to meet Greig the winchman. This at some speed. Everywhere we went was “double quick” with me tiptopping behind trying to keep up – big hands, short legs.

Greig was a delight. You could not want a better person to take care of a casualty. He looked after us with humour and enthusiasm for his job. His first task was to sit us in front of a safety video – leaving out the “what to do if the helicopter has to ditch into the sea”. We were not going to fly beyond Felixstowe. He then got us to fill in a form, exonerating the RAF from all responsibility and giving them our next of kin. Filled with confidence, we were then led at top speed out to the helicopter to be shown more safety stuff, how to put on the harnesses etc. “If you want to chat to the pilot, that is fine, just don’t touch that lever”. Then, at speed, we were taken back to the ops room, where we met the rest of the crew: pilots and radar operator (Jabba!). We listened to their briefing – so professional and totally incomprehensible.

Then out again to the helicopter, 6 minutes of checking everything works, and then up and away towards Ipswich, the Felixstowe cranes in view within seconds, then the Orwell Bridge. The Orwell looked absolutely stunning, the sun glinting on the saltings, the colour of the river from blue through to yellow and brown. Greig kept the door open so that we could get the maximum view. And what a good view they have – just remember that when you contemplate any risqué activity in your garden. We turned back from Felixstowe, over Manningtree. Jabba seems to have a mate working at the Manningtree surgery, so we flew lower over the car park and Greig and Jabba waved furiously, then back over Holbrook and Wattisham. All over in around 20 minutes but never to be forgotten.

Meanwhile, after a very quiet winter, we were called out on 5 March to an incident at Pin Mill. Our role in this instance was to relay information between Thames Coastguard, the ambulance, fire service and inshore lifeboat. This was to help a casualty who had suffered a cardiac arrest.

Since then we have attended four incidents at the Orwell Bridge. The Sea king rescue helicopter was on scene for the second incident. It is always impressive to watch the pilot’s skill, as they fly close to, under and hover beside the bridge.

We were asked to assist an elderly gentleman in a dinghy at Shotley. His outboard had failed and he was rowing back on shore but the tide was too strong and he was steadily drifting seaward. The lifeboat was on standby but fortunately a passing boat picked him up and towed him ashore.

Romy Blackburn
Coastguard Rescue Officer

Julia Jones and Claudia Myatt visit the club

Author Julia Jones and illustrator Claudia Myatt came to the club on Sunday 13th May.

Members aged from 8 to 80 filled the Games Room for a talk on Julia’s Arthur Ransome-inspired novels the Strong Winds trilogy. She also talked about owning the original, Pin Mill-built Peter Duck.

Claudia Myatt’s work features in both Julia’s books and the RYA children’s publications.

www.eastcoastrivers.com

Smack Race 2012

June 23rd - HW 14:57

Time has slipped past and we find ourselves only a month away from the spectacular site of many East Coast based Smack's and Bawley's participating in the clubs annual event. The race will start at Fox's Bottom, nr Clamp House at 10.00. Start time may change due to weather conditions.

As in previous years, the course set will take the craft down the Orwell, out to sea and back into the Stour before finishing on the club line. Members are welcome to follow the fleet in their own craft, taking the opportunity to snap some stunning photographs but do please allow these craft plenty of sea room, Bowsprits can be very unforgiving!

Good viewing area's from the shore are from Clamp House, Pin Mill, Shotley Gate promenade, Halfpenny Pier, Harwich and the public viewing area at Felixstowe Docks.

A Prize giving will take place from 20:00hrs along with a supper Buffet served from 18:30. Club members are most welcome to join in.

Jon Humby

Fancy a sail aboard a classic East Coast Smack?

If so, there are places available aboard the 70' Smack 'Pioneer' participating in the annual PMSC Smack race on Saturday 23rd June.

£50 a head including evening BBQ at PMSC

For further details please call or email
Jon Humby

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