

FAIRWIND

Summer 2017

Forth Corinthian Yacht Club

Cancellation of Forth Midsummer Challenge

Commodore's BRIEFING

Shannon Tofts
Regatta organiser

Things were looking good at the beginning of my preparations for this year's Forth Midsummer Challenge. Kenny Allan was a great help with advance tide calculations and handicaps even though he was not going to be able to attend the race itself. The race officer's role was passed on to veteran of the

running order with several spectator boats to add to the mix.

Plenty of planning and preparations were happening in the background with medal manufacture and catering requirements being sorted out in good order.

The one small fly in the ointment was a slow-moving weather system that lurked out in the Atlantic. I always start looking at forecasts as far out as possible to get a feel for any possible issues. This year things looked good, then marginal, then



The first half of the season brought us many beautiful sailing days. Now we are stuck in constant heavy showers and very occasional sunny periods.

As you all know as Commodore I maintain a strictly non political position but may I offer a possible alternative fact from an anonymous source. Trump has re-routed the jetstream to show Putin who is boss.

But now back to the business in hand. East Coast Sailing Festival 17, Friday 1st to Monday 4th September is rapidly approaching. I am pleased to announce that Urban Union, a local affordable housing company, is the major sponsor this year. Our new member Stuart Shearer, owner of Brave, is an Urban Union man so let us show him our support!

ECSF is the biggest regatta on the Forth this year. Apart from normal racing there are cruising events incorporated so please check it out and get out there on the water, support your Club and above all don't miss the fun!

Frank Martin
Commodore FCYC



race, Eddie Myatt, to pick up loose ends and to the indomitable Frank Martin to be the chief of yacht and RIB chasing.

We had a skiff club sign up early from St Andrews in January, keen to experience another fun day with us all and the omens looked good. Steady progress was made with clubs signing up and the Corinthian contingency getting into race mode. We invited two participants from the Royal Forth Yacht Club this year and a list of well-matched yachts made the final

distinctly iffy.

I kept everyone busy with emails and to-do lists but the clouds just kept rolling in. The night before the event Newhaven Coastal Rowers met at the yard for our now traditional bunting hoist while I paced about with weather charts and local forecasts from the friendly pilot boat skippers.

With a yellow weather warning given out by the Met Office my heart and head

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NEWHAVEN COASTAL ROWERS

It's been another busy summer for Newhaven Coastal Rowing Club.

The Wee Michael has been out most weekends, usually on both the Saturday and Sunday, and also during the light summer evenings when the tide is right.

One new feature has been the early morning rows. A small gang of stalwarts has been getting up at 5am to start rowing at 6am, getting the day off to an active start. There have been about half a dozen of these early morning rows so far, with a small group of enthusiastic early risers rowing.

Last year's successful membership drive has continued into this year, and has featured a well-attended beginner's event which it is hoped will turn out a number of new club members. Other beginners rows are planned throughout the season. Already a number of FCYC members are also members of the rowing club. Anyone else who is interested in trying out rowing should contact John Hunter by email at membership@edinburgh-rowing.org.uk or by telephone on 07892 676492.

The construction of the new yet-to-be-named Wemyss skiff is well advanced. The plan is to launch it during East Coast Sailing week in September. Sensible name suggestions welcome!

TRINITY SEA CADETS

The Unit has been active on the water, rowing, sailing and power boating in spite of the weather. The highlight of the year so far has been the week spent at the Sea Cadet Training Centre at Weymouth where the water was much warmer than here and a wide range of activities was taken part in both on and off the water. Thanks are due to the staff for organising and managing the trip.

Talking of staff, Walter Lewis has handed on the position of Officer in Charge to Andy Wharton after more years than most of us can remember. Walter will not be retiring, however, as he will remain in charge of our boating activities and follow up on our plans for accreditation as an RYA Teaching Establishment. We wish Andy well.

Graham Russell

The Sailing

Kenny Allan Sailing Secretary

The first event of the new season—my, how time flies!—was the 'Commodore's Regatta' or 'Parade of Sail' where we had a great turnout. The conditions were grey, but dry and the wind was perfect for this first club sailing event!

Nine yachts raced. *Misty Blue* came in first, just 20 seconds in front of *Eclipse* who squeaked ahead of *Smij of Antrim* by ONE second!

It was my privilege to act as Race Officer for this exciting event. The following barbecue just finished

victorious, followed by *Malin*, *Kashangi II* and *Maxine*.

The next event in the closed series of passage races was the Wickes Stern Chase. *Apparition* took full advantage of a great head start and finished winner ahead of *Smij* in second and *Misty Blue* in third.

On 14th May we had our first club Cruise in Company. This was quite an eventful and to most enjoyable event. Some 12 boats turned out, but you can read more from Willy Barr's pen! Many thanks to Willy for engineering this success.

Friday White Sail first race next and again a good turnout was evident. This race series is proving to generate not only good attendance, but also a



Selkie and Eclipse.

everything off a treat.

In May we had our first Training On the Water session.

Seven folks turned up and in a reasonable breeze we practised starts on the beautiful Moody *Selkie*. The next two Training On the Water events were not well attended, so if anyone has any ideas on how we can revamp the format and increase attendance I'd like to hear from them.

Next came the Port Edgar Stern Chase and although I was not there personally I hear the wind was good. *Misty Blue* was

great social time after the racing at the prizegiving following each race. It was very quickly decided that we would try out personal handicaps in this series. This development is really in the experimental stage. So far we have had five races and handicaps have been adjusted on each occasion.

Turnout for the last race was nine boats. Leading the series at the moment is *Misty Blue*, skippered by the wily pair Eddie North and Brian Pennycook. We still have two more races in this series to come, so check them out in your diary

Programme so far

The Commodore's Regatta.



and come along to this most enjoyable event.

The first FIG (Forth Inshore Group) event was the Inchkeith Race which doubled as our own Inchkeith Race. This was also the first in our Joint Passage Race series with Royal Forth Yacht Club (RFYC). The Corinthians turned out well and one of our boats would have won had it not been for some dodgy navigation—sailing a different course from everyone else. You never stop learning when you are out on a boat! This time it was *Smij* which won the cup. Well done Frank Martin.

The next FIG race was the Four Inches at Dalgety Bay and we had admirable attendance at that race also, matching the local club and being only one less than the Port Edgar numbers!

Up to this point we have had two Joint Passage Races, the second being the Wilson Cup, defended brilliantly—but

unsuccessfully, alas, due to a technical problem—by *Apparition*. This had a nine boat turnout, the winner being the RFYC Dragon *Meteor*. Well done to them. The first boat for FCYC and winner of the Wilson Trophy was *Misty Blue*.

We had to postpone the third Race in this series and we have re-programmed it to be held on the evening of 13th August. So if you fancy a short evening Sunday race come along!

Sadly the Midsummer Challenge, probably the biggest event in our calendar, had to be cancelled because of the weather.

Last but no means least, 11th June was destined to be a nasty day of weather and so the Ladies Race event had to be postponed. Apologies to all who planned to take part. This race has now been re-scheduled to take place on 20th August, starting at 12.00. It will coincide with a Cruise in Company and it is hoped

participants from both events will meet in Aberdour afterwards.

There are still plenty of events on our programme. If you want to crew or are looking for crew, why not try BigTent. So far it has been used sparingly, but after all it is new. Alternatively, contact me by phone (07974 379254) or email (kennyallan@aol.com) and I'll do my best to get something organised.

Similarly, if you fancy taking part in a regatta or FIG event, if you want an experienced eye on your boat or if need some advice or just a chat, get in touch. I will try to put you together with someone who can help. We have much experience and willing (some very) advisers in our club.

Finally if anyone has any ideas on improvements to our programme don't hesitate to contact me.

I hope you all have a great second half of the season.



Silver Lining.

Three centuries



John Hunter
Editor, Fairwind

With work almost finished on the new Forth crossing, we review the major bridge building work which has taken place here during the nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

It all started in the nineteenth century—1882 to be precise—when work began on a railway bridge over the Forth between North Queensferry and South Queensferry. When the bridge was completed in 1890 it had the longest single cantilever bridge span in the world, a record it held until 1919 when the Quebec Bridge in Canada opened.

It was the coming of the railways that had given impetus to large bridge building in the UK. Prior to the opening of the Forth Bridge (now unofficially known as the Forth Railway Bridge), the only way to get trains across the Forth Estuary was by the roll-on roll-off railway ferry that ran between Granton Harbour (where the Royal Forth Yacht Club is now) and Burntisland.

Though highly successful, this method was seen as being inefficient, not least because the freight wagons (it only carried freight) had to be decoupled from the locomotive at one end and recoupled to another locomotive at the other.

The new bridge was to be the first major structure in the UK made of steel. Its Parisian contemporary, the Eiffel Tower, was made of wrought iron.

It is estimated that out of the 4600 people who worked on the bridge, 73 lost their lives, 36 by falling. Those were times when health and safety was much less of a priority than it is today.

By the 1960s, when the Forth Bridge had been in use for over 70 years, railways had been overtaken as the main means of long-distance transport by the roads. The need for a road bridge had actually been identified as far back as the 1920s, when the British road numbering scheme



Three bridges

was drawn up. Planners originally wanted the A9 to be routed across the estuary between the two Queensferrys, but due to reluctance to include a ferry as part of an arterial route it was re-named the A90!

Work began on the new bridge in September 1948. When it was completed in 1964 it was the longest steel suspension bridge in Europe, with a planned design life of 120 years. Seven lives were lost during its construction.

By the start of the new millennium, the planned maximum capacity for the bridge of 30,000 vehicles per day in each direction was routinely being outstripped to the extent that in 2006 60,000 vehicles were using the bridge on more than half the days in the year. This, and the fact that significant corrosion had been found in contemporary suspension bridges in the US, led to the setting up of an inspection regime to assess the condition of the main cables.

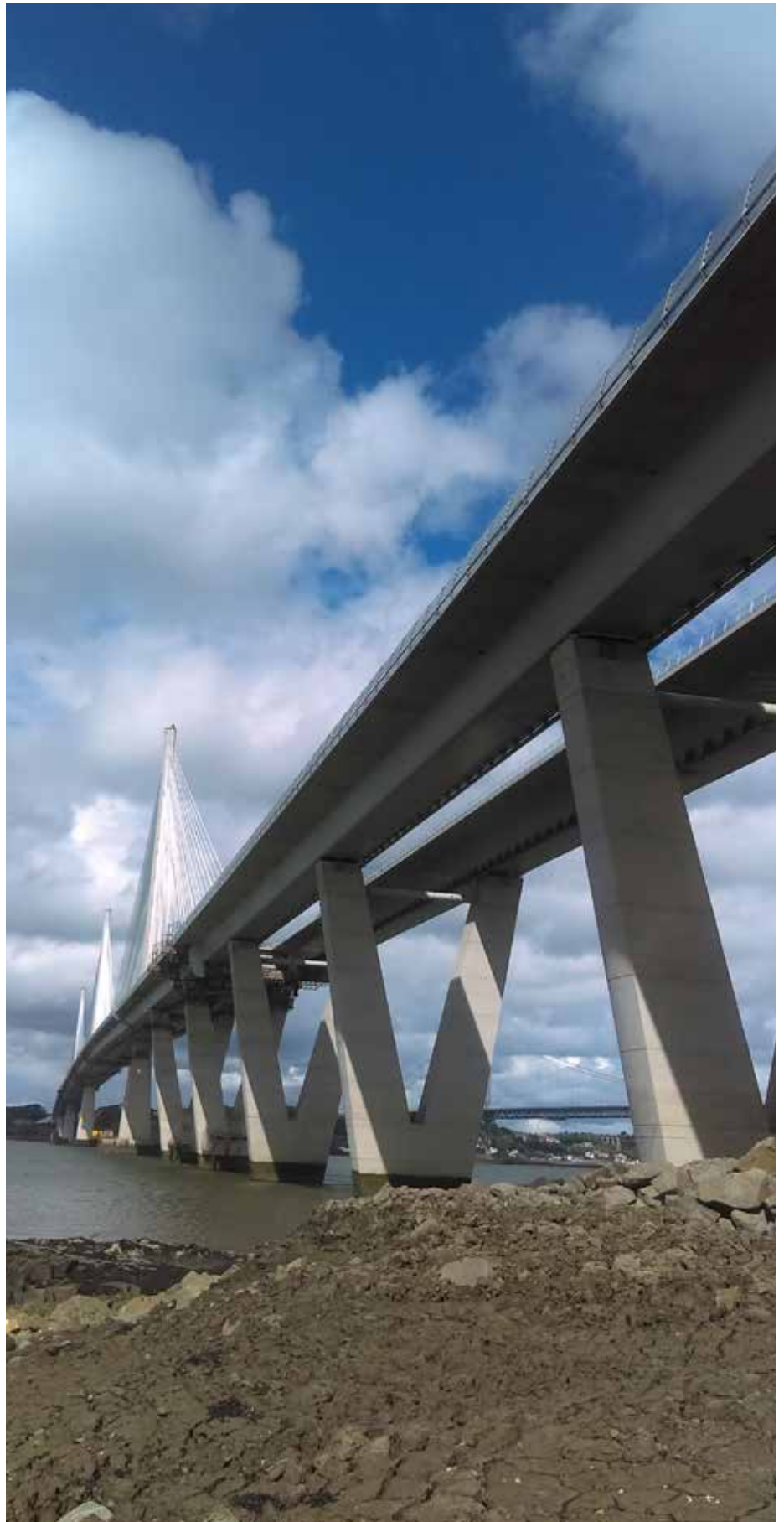
The results were not good. The cables had suffered 8-10% loss in strength. If unchecked, experts reckoned traffic would have to be limited by 2014 with the possibility of the bridge being closed completely in 2020. The corrosion is said to be the result of adverse weather and climate conditions, though surely the original designers knew what the Scottish weather was like before they built it.

Some 65 options were investigated for solving this problem (including adding new cables to the existing structure or replacing the old cables) and these were eventually narrowed down to two: a new cable-stayed bridge, or a tunnel. The bridge option was chosen, largely on the grounds of cost. The new bridge would be up to 210 metres in height, with a length of 2.7 kilometres including the approach viaducts.

We have all watched the bridge gradually taking shape. By the time it is opened it will have taken six years to construct. There have been several delays, but it is now scheduled to open to traffic on 30th August. It will take general road traffic, with only pedestrians, motorcycles up to 125cc, buses and taxis using the original road bridge. Only a single life has been lost during its construction of the new bridge.

One interesting feature of the new crossing will be its 'windshielding' which will deflect winds upwards over the road deck creating, according to publicity materials, 'a low-wind environment in which vehicles can travel safely'. The idea of this is that vehicles will be able to travel safely across the bridge even in 'extreme winds'.

We shall see.



Choppy start for Cruising in Company programme

It was meant to be a gentle 'shake-down' sail to Cramond for our first Cruise in Company of the 2017 season. However, as often happens, the weather had other ideas!

Ten boats were at the muster on the pontoon in Granton on Sunday 14th May—all getting ready to beat against a steady 15kts westerly wind up to Cramond. After leaving the harbour mouth, things began to get a wee bit choppy! With gusts up to 28kts against a flooding tide (and a bit rain for good measure) it was a bouncy ride before we all circled just north-west of Cramond Island.

Who was going to be first?

Tam had already passed through the 'teeth' in *Lady Nadonna* while others edged gently up the river as it flooded. Due to the previous period of low rainfall the Almond was very low and the tide was pushing us up the river. A few boats bumped the pebbles and sand as we ventured towards the moorings, just as the boats from Cramond were returning from their overnight at Aberdour. It was a busy wee channel.

All in all, eight Corinthian boats were able to enjoy the legendary Cramond hospitality with some old sea-dogs like Ian Helliwell and Ernie Coulter catching a 'hair of the dog' after what had been a marathon session the night before!

At high tide we all set off through the gap in the teeth to enjoy a very brisk return sail to Granton.



Thanks to Cramond club and members once again—we might be back for a barbecue before the end of the season.

The next Cruise in Company was to Burntisland on Saturday 22nd July. A late decision to go because of dodgy weather provided a fast crossing to Burntisland for *Early Bird*, *Dorado* and *Kashangi II*. 'I was a bit surprised to find some of the others already there,' said John Anderson of *Kashangi II*. 'I stayed about 10 minutes and made my way back followed by the others.'



Regatta cancellation

continued from page 1

began to debate the outcome. I had very good counsel from Eddie and Frank on behalf of the yachts and a discussion with not only rowers from our own club but the other attending clubs who were due to drive some distance to attend.

Although we had plenty of energy and were gung-ho to go ahead, I had a sneaky feeling the weather would skirt the Forth and we decided to call a halt and abandon the race. The next day I went down to the yard to look out to sea and the absence of lightning and potential rain likely to cause flooding.

My heart sank and I felt gutted for all the effort spent and expectations raised. As consolation I received some very kind emails agreeing with the abandonment of the race and a sensible decision made. Thank you to those that got in contact. Had anything happened, however small, I felt the responsibility and goodwill developed over the last three years would all have been for nothing, especially after an official Met Office warning had been broadcast.

My thanks go to all those who helped me and those who signed up to participate. At time of writing no new date has been found that does not clash with other events or with a suitable tide.

But we will be back next year to battle it out on the water with bunting and BBQs, boats big and small and I look forward to seeing you all there.



All revved up and nowhere to go. The pontoon cleared and ready for action.

Sinkers, lift-out, pontoons

The fifteen sinkers cast in concrete and steel during rain and hail in March by the many work party volunteers are almost in their final position. Again in torrential rain and hail—this time in August!—the midweek volunteers managed to move the sinkers into the harbour and on to a temporary 'sinker field' east of the south slip moorings. They will finally be deployed for moorings replacing the Royal Forth ground chain hopefully by the end of September. Unfortunately volunteers will be required at weekends to complete the job. If we could each give up a day in the sailing season it might be possible to complete the winter servicing of moorings in the better summer weather so please look out for advice on work parties.

Lift-out will be later this year being scheduled for Saturday 28th October—again weather permitting. Please check with your insurance companies that you are insured to be on a mooring should we delay into November.

Rules for lift-out (and lift-in):

- Hard hats are compulsory in the yard and under the crane when stepping and un-stepping masts and also positioning and removing of slings in the water.
- Cradles and trailers must be in good condition to take the weight of the boat to be placed on it. Some need to be improved before lift-out and will not be deployed if deemed unsafe. Unnecessary construction of cradles when under the crane will not be allowed. We lost a lot of time last winter with cradles almost being reconstructed on the day.
- It is the boat owner's responsibility to check tides to ensure you are in position for your lift.
- A minimum of four people in a boat is requested to position the slings.

A lifting schedule is produced for the day but does change as problems are resolved. Please be aware of your slot and do not sit on your boats longer than necessary. Three boats before your slot should be plenty of time to prepare to queue for your lift.

When you are safely in position in the yard please be available to help others and leave the scraping and washing of your boat until the crane is out of the yard.

Yard space will be at a premium again this year so please advise your intentions for wintering by end August to allow for planning and contingencies should you not be allocated space at Granton.

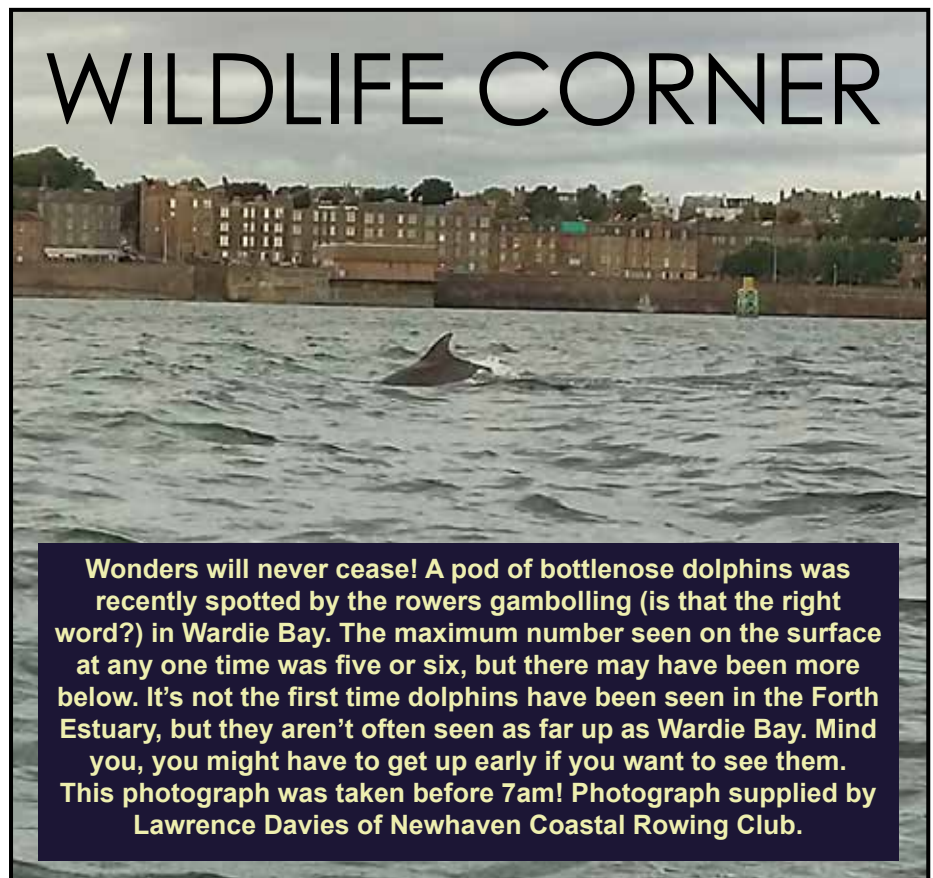
Yard gates need to be locked even when you are working on your



boats. There are different locks for the pedestrian gate, main gates and the engine shed with keys to match. The pedestrian padlock was recently accidentally swapped with the main gate padlock. The visitors requiring access to the Bell Block toilets could not open the padlock with the key from the keypad. More to the point the key in the keypad would have opened the main gate with the obvious risk of trailers and dinghies being removed. Padlocks need to be locked in their correct parked

position to prevent this happening again. An insurance claim may not have been upheld if we had lost expensive dinghies and ribs through that gate.

The ongoing pontoon maintenance schedule is progressing. Two pontoons have been replaced with new ones and it is the intention to replace two a year. Heavier hinges have been fitted throughout as required. Power and water posts are also scheduled to be installed to improve the facilities for both members and visitors.



Wonders will never cease! A pod of bottlenose dolphins was recently spotted by the rowers gambolling (is that the right word?) in Wardie Bay. The maximum number seen on the surface at any one time was five or six, but there may have been more below. It's not the first time dolphins have been seen in the Forth Estuary, but they aren't often seen as far up as Wardie Bay. Mind you, you might have to get up early if you want to see them. This photograph was taken before 7am! Photograph supplied by Lawrence Davies of Newhaven Coastal Rowing Club.

INTERVIEW: GEORGE MACKAY

Q When did you start sailing and why?

A A mate had a Silhouette 11, keeping it on the club moorings on Coniston Water in the late 60s. We spent many enjoyable weekends racing and cruising in company on the lake. In these days the largest boat allowed in their club was 23ft.

Q What do you like about sailing?

A I was a FCYC dinghy section member when I joined our club. Dinghy sailing took away the day-to-day stresses. If you were not concentrating 100 per cent you ended up swimming so it was a great way to relax and get the adrenalin rush as well. The polluted water in the Forth in these days also concentrated the mind.

Q What was your most enjoyable sailing experience?

A Not easy to pick out a best experience. *Apparition* was a regular visitor through the Caledonian and Crinan canals to reach the sailing waters on the West and Clyde so these trips spring to mind. Also thanks to Pete Sherlock and Ian Gray and John McLaren I have been crew to the Isle of Man, Ireland, Orkney, Holland, Denmark and St Kilda.

Ten days sailing in and around Vancouver Island and Canada with Duncan McMillan and his family on their brand new 35ft yacht must rank high in best experience.

Q What was your most terrifying sailing experience?

A An electrical storm as we approached Holland aboard *Aros More*. We were able to smell the ozone gas as the forked lightning hit the water all around us.

Q What was the first boat you owned and what did you like/dislike about it?

A A Hunter Sonata with a lifting plate. The plate that kept sticking up with the then black oily Granton, mud but it was great fun to sail and not so hard on the pocket.

Q What other boats have you owned

A Mirror dinghy, International Laser, and *Apparition*, a UFO 31, for last 23 years.

Q What is the furthest destination you have sailed to?

A If you mean skippered rather than crew it would be to Rothesay via the Caledonian Canal on *Apparition*.

Q What is your favourite place to sail and why?

A The West of Scotland via Caledonian and Crinan Canals. It's great fun motoring and walking boats through the lock flights with the tourists taking photographs of what they think are hired professional crew. Oh and of course the scenery and wildlife on the way.

Q When did you join Forth Corinthians and why?

A I'm not sure but I have a RYA certificate for dinghy level one dated 1989. Ernie Coulter, a work colleague at the time, persuaded me to join the Dinghy section. Dinghy members were invited to crew on the club racers and I was a regular on *Blue Blazer* skippered by Helen and Tom Brodie. Joining the Corinthian Club was a great way to sail on boats I could not afford myself.

Q Do you prefer cruising or racing?

A I'm very competitive so it would be racing but I like to cruise with land not too far away to enjoy the



Q Apart from the Firth of Forth, where else do you sail/have you sailed?

A Orkney, St Kilda, Western Isles, Ireland, Isle of Man, Holland, Denmark but mainly as crew on members' boats. A friend has his boat in Torreveija in the Mediterranean. We have had trips to the Balearics, the Mar Menor and most harbours on the Alicante coastline. Canada will be most memorable sailing including the Strait of Georgia, Queen Charlotte Strait, Desolation Sound and Discovery passage.

scenery.

Q What would you like to do in future, sailing wise?

A Nothing planned but *Apparition* needs a visit to West Coast and the Isle of Man before I give up.

Q What do you do when you're not sailing?

A Caravanning and walking but confined to trails and passes rather than summits these days.