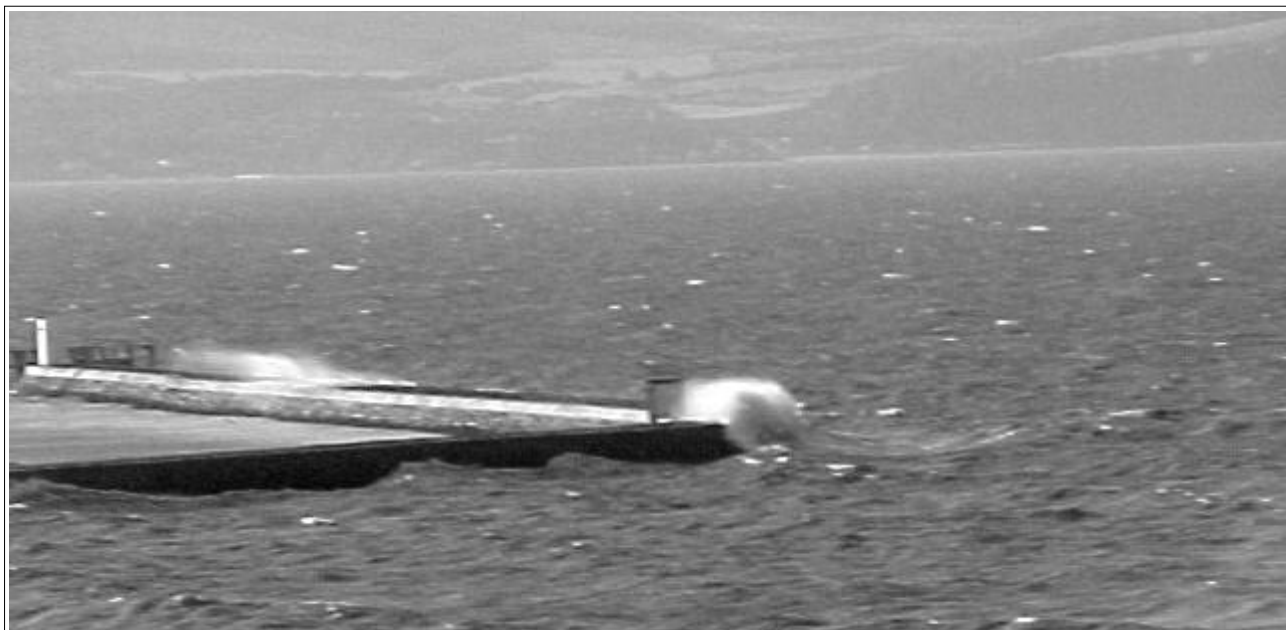


FA RWIND

Newsletter of the Forth Corinthian Yacht Club, September, 1999

Granton Harbour Update



Words: *Graham Russell*; Picture: *Archie Gray*

Many of you will have seen the article about the harbour development proposals in the Evening News of Wednesday August 25th (and available on our web page at <http://www.icbl.hw.ac.uk/~sprice/fcyc/harbour>). By the deadline, 102 objections had been received from individuals and organisations like FCYC. Granton Councillor

Elizabeth Maginnis said that the scheme "as it stands is not acceptable and there will have to be considerable refinement of the proposals". The next stage is that the developers have been asked to submit an environmental assessment under the 1988 planning regulations rather than the more recent EU Directive. When it is received, another advert will be put in the Evening News, the objectors will be notified and off we go again on another round of consultation although new players such as Scottish Natural Heritage and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds will come onto the scene. Thus a decision on the application may be some time off.

Forth Ports plc inherited various exemptions from planning regulations from the Forth Ports Authority, hence the building of the earth dam

in the West Harbour to allow repairs to the piling. These exemptions were intended to aid the safe and efficient running of a port. The destruction of a grade B listed structure (the esparto wharf) is not covered by these exemptions.

The current situation of dereliction and planning blight is not sustainable while the only plans put forward conflict with current planning guidelines. The Middle Pier requires investment to maintain it in good order for safety reasons and to comply with legal requirements for waste disposal. If the harbour is no longer to function as a port then perhaps there is scope for the creation of a Harbour Trust that would take it over and develop it for the benefit of local people and all harbour users while respecting its historical and wildlife importance.

Good planning depends on the availability of accurate information. The history of Granton Harbour has been quite well documented, for example in the centenary publication of 1937. However, I would welcome any information about the more recent history, instances of damage to boats due to bad weather, depth of water in earlier years and observations of birds

nesting or feeding in the harbour. Do seals come into the harbour regularly? Documentary evidence and photographs would be particularly welcome (send information to Graham Russell, c/o the clubhouse or by e-mail to g.russell@ed.ac.uk).

Joseph Gloag ran a coffee house on Granton pier in 1894. It would be nice to think that there could once again be a coffee house there together with an active harbour master's office, an expanded marina and other facilities all paying their way and providing long term local employment. *We can make it happen if we want.*

WOULD YOU BUY A HOUSE HERE?

The dramatic photo on this page was taken when the tide was *not* at High Water, and *not* in a gale. This harbour wall is where property developers plan to site lucrative new housing.

EAST COAST SAILING WEEK

ECSW 1999 started off with a bang - well, at least one spinnaker went that way in a feeder race to remember. In what has to be a record, *Absolutely* from Port Edgar made it to Amble in 10 hours, with *Roundabout* not far behind.

Unfortunately, most of the rest of the week was plagued with light winds and postponements. Everyday the sill at Amble marina collected a few notches. In fact, the more faint-hearted (realistic?) took to staying in the outer harbour to ensure a start. But brilliant sunshine kept spirits up, despite frustrating racing.

For Tuesday's race to Blyth the wind arrived - a welcome change, and a good race. Blyth was not so blessed with sunshine, but the daily postponements were still there along with two of the most efficient committee boats ever, HMS *Explore* and HMS *Endeavour*.

Social highlights of the week included a great mackerel BBQ, courtesy Maxine (who still claim they caught them all after the race finished). And pre-empting the official cabaret, the Corinthian entertainment was provided by Gabriel Noonan and Linda (boom-hudder) Thomson. Photographs are available in a plain brown envelope from Linda Pennycook.

Of the Corinthian boats taking part, *Roundabout* took line honours on the last day, and a fourth overall; *Siris*, *Maxine* and *Ommadawn* had mixed fortunes in very light airs; with *Early Bird* and *Belle Ile* keeping the shore end up.

Boat Jumble

- The Sailing Secretary has asked all race entrants to make sure their race entry fees are paid prior to the Club Prizegiving in November. Otherwise, no goodies for you!
- Edinburgh Marina have asked us to point out that if it is necessary for them to chase pontoon payments with a letter, a £5 surcharge will be levied.
- We've got about a gezillion club ties in stock. If you did not receive one when you joined, and if you are not female (assuming you don't want one), please ask at the Clubhouse. If, for reasons best known to yourself, you want to buy another one, they cost £3. There are also club burgees (£15), badges (£3), and caps (£5).

23 October LIFT-OUT

The infill of the West Harbour means that we will no longer be able to lift-out directly into the North Yard. The Council and Harbour Secretary have been looking at a number of options to get round this.

One is to ask Forth Ports for extra storage space opposite the Gunpowder Shed. George MacKay and Jack Haldane have met with Forth Ports, who have identified a site, and who have been made aware of what the club would require in terms of security, power and water.

At the time of printing *Fairwind*, negotiations are still on-going. **However, lift-out date remains the same for now - Saturday 23 October.** We will try to keep boat owners up to date with developments. If anyone has particular concerns, they should contact George MacKay on 663 7194.

Thanks Margaret

The Council would like to pass on our own thanks, and those of the membership, to **Margaret Stoddart**, who leaves the Forth Corinthian at the end of this month. Margaret has been with the Club for many decades, and has seen many changes over the years.

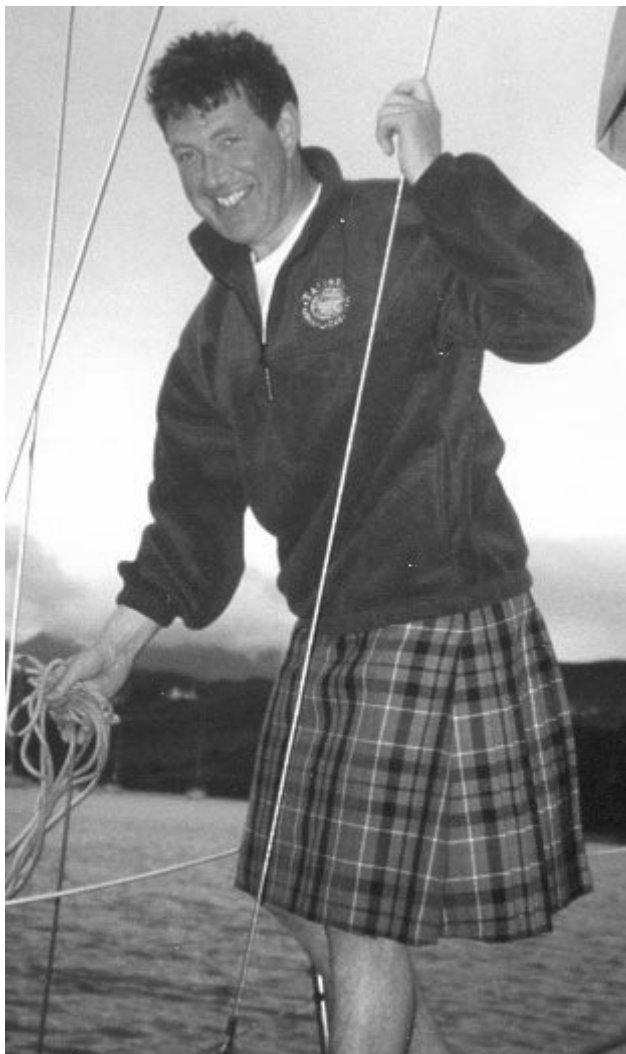
Margaret is one of the members who remember the area when the Forth came right up to the shore road. This explains to many non-locals why there is a light house on the road just past the Clubhouse. Margaret has managed the bar, and seen the Club through good and bad times. However with rising costs the Club can no longer justify a full time bar position, and Margaret is sadly our last full time employee.

We thank her for her tremendous loyalty and hard work over many many years.

Members are asked to give up a little of their time in order to help the Club forward. We intend to staff the bar on a voluntary basis, led by Council members. We are currently setting up a rota of "bar helpers". If you can spare an evening now and then you are asked to contact Linda Pennycook. You will be given lots of help and support, and be coached in the art of pulling the perfect pint for our discerning membership. All applicants welcome.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Forth Corinthian Yacht Club AGM will be on Monday 11 October, at the Clubhouse, 1 Granton Square, at 7.30pm.



Before the damage was done.... This handsome devil is ex-FCYC Treasurer, Tim Wright, on his way to the Talisker Distillery in Loch Harport.

The Classic Malts Cruise an account of summer sailing adventures by Ann MacNeill and Tim Wright.

Yet again *Blue Blazer* and her intrepid crew, decided to set sail for harbours new this summer. However rather than brave the rigours of the North Sea, this summers cruise was intended to be a mixture of good sailing and lots of relaxing. Amazingly it was!!

We decided to join the Clyde Cruising Club on their now famous *Classic Malts Cruise*. This fantastic endeavour is organised in combination with United Distillers and Vintners who produce many of the Classic Malt Whiskies, and who are generous sponsors of the cruise. Due to time constraints we decided to trailer *Blue Blazer* to Dunstaffnage (near Oban) where she spent six weeks this summer. This allowed us a few long weekends and a three week summer cruise.

Day 1 -Sunday. We decided on an easy cruise from Dunstaffnage up to the top of the Sound of Mull. We avoided the fleshpots of Tobermory (we were too embarrassed to go back after the last time), and instead went into Loch Drambuie. This is a lovely anchorage at the mouth of Loch Sunart. We arrived early afternoon, and had plenty of space to choose our spot. We spent the afternoon on the foredeck "taking the rays", a most unusual occupation on *Blue Blazer* where foul weather gear is the norm. That evening we were joined by about a dozen other boats. We indulged in that great sport of "watching others fanny around", which took up some happy hours. We were then entertained by the crew of a sail training vessel. They spent hours climbing their very tall mast and diving into the water. The youth of today! Aboard *Blue Blazer* it was lights out by 11 o'clock as we had an early start the next day.

Day 2 - Loch Drambuie - Loch Nevis. We had

decided we wanted to make some good progress today. The forecast was for the weather to close in from the West. Having checked out the pilot we considered Arisaig. Only for a moment, as the pilot makes the entrance look fairly scary. We were later advised that the approach is now fairly well marked, and that we worry too much. However as our next party was well up the West Coast of Skye, we decided that upwards and onwards was the best policy. Loch Nevis is North of Mallaig, and is home to the remotest pub in Great Britain. A good Corinthian venue if ever there was one. We left Drambuie at about 6a.m. to get the tide round Ardnamurchan. Our first trip around and we felt like we were about to round Cape Horn. With wind and tide with us, we had a great sail round, and were soon whizzing up the West Coast with Eigg and Rhum clearly visible on port. As ever we managed to be at Mallaig at the same time as the ferry, but it seemed to enjoy our company. Inverie was perhaps not the obvious choice in the forecast weather as it is fairly exposed. However as novice anchor types (see later) we were attracted by the thought of 15 ton visitor moorings. As the weather closed in we spent an excellent couple of days there. Our claim to fame was seeing two sea otters and goldcrests there (Britain's smallest bird).

Day 3 - Loch Nevis - Loch Harport. The need to join the party saw us sneaking out of Loch Nevis in a westerly and heading - yes you've guessed it....west. We crossed the Sound of Sleat in what was a F4. As we rounded the Sleat peninsula to head up the West of Skye the wind increased to F 5-6 which wasn't too bad. However the swell from a couple of days of strong westerlies made the first part of the sail pure *Blue Blazer*. As we got our harnesses on and tightened up our foul weather gear, the phrase "summer holiday" seemed a bit

inappropriate. However as with typical west coast sailing by the afternoon the swell had abated, and the sun was out. As we scooted up the coast with Rhum on port and a fantastic view of the Cuillins on starboard we couldn't believe our luck.

The approach to Loch Harport is fairly straightforward. We had identified the one rocky shoal to be avoided, and made sure we took bearings. Unfortunately an earlier yacht had failed to do so, and had been holed on the rocks with the crew being rescued. The boat was taking water, and was lifted out for a sorry return to Ardfern for repairs. About 50 of the Classic Malts cruisers had made it to the Talisker Distillery for another round of parties. The scene of the first nights ceilidh was classic "whisky galore", as yachts crews raced ashore to party and partake of copious amounts of "free malt". This proved to be our downfall. Like all Corinthians when faced with a free bar we assumed it would close PDQ. This led us to over imbibe early in the evening. Sadly (for us) the bar was free all evening. Whilst we frolicked on shore the wind was frolicking in the bay. A 90 degree wind shift, coupled with an increase to about F4-5 made the row back to the boat entertaining (for those who can remember it).

Once on board, Tim was quickly in his sleeping bag. I with my instinct for trouble (even when a bit merry), sat on deck for a few moments. What were those boats doing coming towards us? Yes, you've guessed it. We were dragging our anchor, through 50 shiny big white boats in the middle of the night, and to add insult to injury we were both just about seeing double. I (calmly) indicated to Tim that we were dragging our anchor. He suggested that as a female of the species, my sanity was often in question and that I was best ignored. I again suggested he get out of his sleeping bag to assess the situation. He again declined. Becoming somewhat agitated, I gave him two choices. (1) get on deck now (2) prepare to have the yacht *Pinnocchio IV* somewhere that the sun didn't shine. Not surprisingly he was quickly on deck, although sadly without clothes or deck shoes. The following 30 minutes saw some interesting matrimonial disharmony. The nub of the matter was that the helmswoman couldn't see a thing as it was pitch black and driving rain. The skipper (on the foredeck falling around amongst his anchor chain) felt that lack of visibility was an insufficient excuse for not being confident in boat handling. After many heated exchanges we got ourselves sorted out.

A long night on anchor watch was followed by a rather embarrassing morning. In our eagerness to hit the bunks, we had left the oars and footpump in the dinghy. As it had flipped and spun in the wind, they had both taken their chance to leave us. We sneaked ashore with the Donald Duck oars (size of soup spoons), and made for the shops to replace the pump. On our return our sheepishness left us, as we discovered that 18 boats had been dragging anchors at the same time as us. The best story was the ketch, whose crew had also enjoyed the hospitality and were comatose in the bunks as the boat did a "strip the willow" through the moored yachts. This spectacle was improved by tales of people banging on the coachroof and shining torches in an attempt to wake the poor crew. Several prangs were also reported but no major damage. Suffice to say the crew of *Blue Blazer* were on fruit juice at the next party at Talisker. Once bitten!! We partied on at Talisker for a couple of days, before taking our leave for the Outer Hebrides, of which more later.

Look out for the next stage of the cruise: from Skye out to Uist and on to Coll, Colonsay, Islay and Jura.

The Isle of Skye Edinburgh Regatta 21-22 August

by Tom Wilson

The Isle of Skye Edinburgh Regatta is hosted and organised jointly by the Forth Corinthian and Royal Forth Yacht Clubs. This year's regatta attracted an entry of over fifty boats from around the Forth.

Saturday's first race started in a light W wind which at times died away to nothing. The fleet was well spread and the Race Officer decided to shorten the course for all classes. Even then it took some of the boats over four hours to complete the course. Luckily (good planning actually) a sea breeze picked up. Unfortunately, from the Race Committee's point of view this caused over thirty boats to converge on the finishing line at the same time. The Race Committee somehow managed to time all the boats, with the exception of one, over the line. In fact, twenty-six boats crossed the line in the space of two and a half minutes.

The second race was sailed in a fresh E wind and gave some exciting spinnaker gibes at the wing mark. Both *Apparition* and *Scimitar* now know how to apply an air brake.

Saturday evening was spent in the Club dancing the night away to disco music past and present. Brian Pennycook was heard to complain that Dave Suttie from *Rhett Butler* wouldn't dance with him. I hope the head is better now Brian.

Sunday is traditionally the Corinthian race day and the courses chosen reflect this. The morning dawned bright but windless, at least on the water.

The Race Officer decided however, that the race should start, wind or not. It's amazing how you can confuse some people when you postpone a race six seconds before the start. The race was in fact postponed several times which meant that more ammunition was required for the starting cannons. I am told that some people ashore thought that they were in a war zone with all the gunfire that was going on.

The race eventually got underway in a light breeze that filled in from the NE. It was a spectacular sight seeing a line of spinnakers stretching from Leith to Cramond Island.

Whilst this race was going on, Stewart Boyd was in charge of the Sea Cadet Corps Pulling Race which was won by TS Forth. Our thanks go to Stewart for all the work he puts into this event which is growing in popularity.

Also at the same time the Port O Leith Motor Boat Club held a Predicted Log. This was won by D.Emslie with Princess M.

I think it is safe to say that we now have one of the most successful regattas on the Forth and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the club members who helped with the organisation and all those boat owners who took part. Thanks also to our Sponsors and all those that advertise in the Race Programme. Without their support the event would not be the success that it is.

WORK PARTIES

If we are to persuade anyone that Granton should be developed for sailing, we have to show there is a thriving, active sailing community in the area. Do the FCYC yards do this?

It's always better - and safer - to work in tidy yards, but it's more vital than ever now that we demonstrate our commitment to sailing and the area.

To this end there will be two work party days, on **Sunday 26 September** and **Sunday 3 October**, to get our yards in shape. You can show up from 9am, and if you can bring any useful equipment, please do. A petrol (or any) strimmer would be useful, as would any sort of weedkiller machinery. A skip will be in place for the week. Dave Haldane will be the Foreman.

There will also be work done on the club workboat on these days, co-ordinated by George MacKay. Please try to make one of the days - it will make a difference.

Unmissable Diary Dates

- **AGM: 11th October**
- **Work Parties: 26 Sep, 3 Oct**
- **Lift-Out: 23rd October**

See FCYC on the Web:

<http://www.icbl.hw.ac.uk/~sprice/fcyc/>

To add your email address to FCYC internet news mailings, please mail sprice@icbl.hw.ac.uk

The deadline for the next issue of *Fairwind* is 31st October. To submit writings, please contact: **Sarah Price** (0131 229 0029 or sprice@icbl.hw.ac.uk) or **Fiona McIntyre** (0131 313 2488 or FionaMcIntyre@compuserve.com).

Contributions should be on disk or emailed and saved in ascii or text format. If this is not possible, however, please phone to discuss and send your writings to the Clubhouse.

If you buy bits for your boat anywhere else in Scotland you're probably paying too much!



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