

FAIRWIND

Summer 2019

Forth Corinthian Yacht Club

Across the Channel and round the Island

When Mik Gasz, with delivery crew Nick Janke and Jason Hamilton, relocated *Suspicion* in Brighton last year a plan was hatched for this year. Sussex Yacht Club run a cross-channel race, the Royal Escape, to mark the historic escape of Charles II on a commandeered coal caster lying

on Brighton Beach to Fécamp on the Brittany coast. The boys are always up for a great escape so we entered.

There were 72 boats on the start line off Brighton Pier on the morning of 23rd May and we were off in light and variable winds.

The fleet ghosted south trying to keep

Commodore's BRIEFING



Hello Corinthians.

We are more than half way through the sailing season already. I trust you all have made the best of the season,

either participating in the organised activities or enjoying your own adventures and trips further afield. I'm looking forward to the tales of trips to Orkney, the Western Isles, the Clyde and the Solent (in this issue). There is still time over the next few weeks to get out there and enjoy your own trips.

Improvements to the Bell Block and yard have been ongoing this season with new lino laid in the changing rooms and toilets and the outside painted. The break-in and attempted theft of outboard engines prompted the need for a new locking system on the pedestrian gate with the main gate padlock also being changed. I hope these new security measures will not be too much of an inconvenience.

On the social side Tom Lochrie proposes to have some unscheduled or impromptu BBQs in the yard after racing or cruising events during the remainder of the season. Please keep an eye open for these events.

To finish I hope you have enjoyed the season so far and hopefully get out on the water in the remaining time before lift-out now officially scheduled for Saturday 19th October.

George Mackay
Commodore



Above. Getting off to a good start at the Brighton Beach to Fécamp sail.

Below. Planned landfall at Fécamp.



NEWHAVEN COASTAL ROWERS

As usual, Newhaven Coastal Rowers have had a successful season, including rows for new members, general day-to-day rows and, of course, our highly successful Forth Midsummer Challenge.

Membership numbers have risen, partly as a result of the increasing interest in coastal rowing and partly because of our new member rows. We are open to all, and the first row is free of charge, so why not give rowing a try?

We have also attended a number of regattas, including the Shieldaig Regatta in early August. As this article is being written, preparations are underway for attending the Bell Raid on England, an eight mile row across the Solway Firth! Whether we win or not—which is extremely doubtful—we are certain to have a good time!

SEA CADETS

The highlight of the summer has been the return visit to the Sea Cadets Training Centre in Weymouth where cadets were able to take part in sailing, windsurfing and kayaking. Some had a close encounter with a dolphin (as in sea creature and not a pile for mooring to). There were also visits to a number of places including the Portsmouth Historic Dockyard. A great time was had by all as can be seen from the photographs on the unit's Facebook page.

Earlier one of our Cadets won gold at the Northern Area (Scotland, Northern England and Northern Ireland) rowing competition and will be representing the Area at the Nationals competition in September.

Another of our Cadets has just returned from an international exchange in Hong Kong along with Cadets from New Zealand, the USA and Sweden. It is great seeing our Cadets taking advantage of opportunities like this.

The weather has been mixed, as you will know but the unit has been active on the water at Granton. However, the Claverhouse Building was damaged in the heavy rainfall and we were unable to meet there for a time.

If you have a son or daughter, or grandson or granddaughter, aged 10 to 18 then consider whether they might enjoy joining the unit. Adult volunteers are also very welcome. I will be retiring from the post of Chairman of the Unit Management Committee next year and we urgently need new members of the committee.

Graham Russell, Chair, Edinburgh
Trinity Unit Management Team

Continued from previous page

a huge wind farm to the west and the Greenwich lightship marking the west end of a huge sand bar to port. Slow progress playing the tide and light variable winds as we nervously approached the busy shipping lanes. But the Gods were with us and the wind filled in from the West and we were soon skipping along on a broad reach happily avoiding the big

ships.

The leading boats were beating high on a course about 10 miles west of Fécamp to take advantage of the turning tide. We decided to split the difference and set a course to five miles west of Fécamp and keep up a good fast reach, on a hope and a prayer we could make up some ground. Big mistake! At sunset when the wind eased back to a light breeze the tide took her grip. The west headed yachts were carried gracefully to port on the tide and



*The actual landfall
at Fécamp*



*Start of the Round
the Island race.*



On the way to the Needles.

we were swept way east of the harbour mouth. We were not the only ones; some carried almost ten miles east of target.

We pressed on slowly west to the finish line and safe harbour and bonhomie. After a good shower and French doner kebab for breakfast, we went on to the prizegiving.

We were content to find after 38 retrials, over half the fleet, we had finished in the top half. But an even more pleasant complete surprise emerged: we

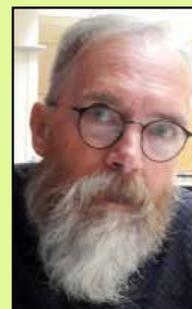
had won the Maiden Trophy, awarded to the fastest first-time entry in this annual event!

The doner kebab was subsequently washed down with free champagne ... and so to bed!

Next came the Round the Island Race around the Isle of Wight, just along the coast from Brighton.

First, a bit of history. *Suspicion*, a Sigma 33 OOD, was launched in 1980 in Cowes and was raced here with good

Editorial



It's been a funny old summer. As I write this the weather is warm, unseasonably warm even for August. But there have been periods of rain, heavy

raid—very very heavy rain.

As some of you will know I have a new boat, a wooden boat called *Mariposa*. You can see it in the north west corner of the yard. Before it was lifted out it was filling up with water, filling up quite alarmingly. Though folk with more experience than me told me it was fresh water I suspected a leak, and when I got the boat out of the water in the spring, I found just that—or what I thought was just that. So I pumped and bailed the water that was in the boat out, put the cover on and thought that was that. Next time I looked it was filling up with water again—in the yard! It was obviously the rain that was doing the dirty on me. So I pumped and bailed again, bought a tarpaulin, put that on, and thought that was that.

Next time I looked it was Groundhog Day. The blinking boat was filling up with water again! Time for some research. There are various grades of tarpaulin and stingy me had bought the cheapest. So it was back on to ebay to make an investment in a heavy duty PVC-backed canvas tarpaulin all the way from the Netherlands.

I pumped and bailed the water that was in the boat back out again and tied on the new tarpaulin.

Next time I looked—hey presto!—there was no water in the bilges. No more pumping and bailing, at least for the time being. The moral of this story is, of course, that when you buy cheap you buy twice. So I won't be making that mistake again ... at least not until the next time!

John Hunter, Editor

The crew enjoying a relaxing moment once round the Needles.



Kites flying on a downwind section.



The sun begins to set at Bembridge.

SNAPSHOTS! 1. The Corinthian spirit: *Misty Blue* being towed back to harbour by *Smij* after its engine failed in calm weather; 2. Coming into harbour at sunset after a white sail race; 3. Corinthians in 1890—anyone you recognise?



Continued from previous page

results for several years. Later she was sailed up to Scotland and spent almost 30 years away from home. For the first time since she left she was to be racing in the Solent again!

The crew consisted of skipper Mik Gasz, the aforementioned Nick Janke and Jason Hamilton, plus Frank Martin and Graham Archibald, a well-known Forth sailor before he moved south several years ago, recruited for old times' sake and local knowledge. The team was affectionately known as Miki, Niki, Dicki, Pricki and Graham. You can guess who held each handle?

There were over 1300 entries, 146 in our class, spectacular and probably the best Corinthian event in the world.

After a last nervous pee we crept up to the to the start line. The first running start in ten years—only 67km to go!

The line was about a mile long. Most of our fleet decided to start at the inshore

end, mid channel, in clean air and out of trouble on a broad reach and tide with us for four hours. Easy peasy so far.

Nearing the Needles, with the wind dropping rapidly, most of boats ahead had started half an hour before us. At Yarmouth the wind died, We caught zephyrs and slowly cleared the headland only to be punched by a fierce tide. As the new wind slowly filled in from the east Graham excitedly screamed we were making two knots, only to be slightly deflated when he realised that was backwards.

After a long slow tack out to sea and back again against the tide we eventually cleared the Needles. Then we went inshore, catching a tidal back eddy beating up the Brightstone Beach. At Niton the wind swung back west and kites went up again. By sunset, with miles to go to Bembridge still, the wind swung east again and died. Round Bembridge at last we were back in the Solent with a new breeze from the west and tide

with us. We hit the absolute time limit of 22:30 with five miles still to go, and finally crossed the finish line at 23:10—no result but we were still feeling good that with tenacity we had rounded the Island !

Out of over 1300 starters there were only 276 finishers. We reckon that had we not timed out we would have ended up in the 280s. Not bad for a Hungarian in command of a bunch of Scottish old timers—a bit like trying to herd rabbits.

It is a funny old race. A 100ft state-of-the art trimaran tipped to break the all-time four-hour record took 7.5 hours to complete. The overall winner was a 25ft bilge keeler with a couple of lucky local oldtimers !

Without doubt the best sailing fun this year. Cowes is very welcoming and not a bit snooty as I had imagined it might be. Footnote for Joe Ramsay: the beer in the Cowes Corinthian Yacht Club is cheap as chips.

A great adventure and affordable sailing for all!

THE INTERVIEW: Paul Taylor

Q What got you into sailing in the first place?

A I was very fortunate to have grown up in a sailing family. My father sailed first out of North Berwick and then out of Granton. He was the first generation of his family not to have been a professional seafarer so I guess sailing and the sea are in the blood.

Q When and where did you start?

A I cannot remember a time when I did not sail. North Berwick and Granton, but perhaps most important was Inverleith Pond where I used to try to sail simple wee model boats.

Q What sailing do you do now?

A Lots of different stuff. This year I will spend three months doing 'skippered charters' in Greece, I'll spend a couple of months skippering for the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust on the Clyde and in the Solent and I usually pick up some delivery jobs or skippering 'mile builders'. In Greece and for the Trust I mainly sail boats around 45ft long. Deliveries range from 34ft race boats to 54ft cats.

Q What is it that you like about sailing?

A I like the whole universe of boats and the sea, the endless variety of boats, seas, places, ports and people. I like the lure of the horizon. I always want to get over it and get to new places. I like the adventure of making boats work, making them sail, keeping them going,

navigating, passage planning. I like the wind, the weather the waves ...

Q Do you prefer cruising or racing (and why)?

A Cruising: new places, new people: more chance of getting to the horizon.



No artificial stress, no competitive stuff but then when two similar sailing vessels are within half a mile of each other ...

Q What has been your most enjoyable sailing experience?

A I think arriving safely in Northern Spain after Ian Dawson and I sailed a 26ft boat across Biscay from Dublin. That was pretty good.

Q What was your most frightening sailing experience?

A Having to sail into and then through the maelstrom at the entrance of Brighton Marina in a strong onshore wind, with big waves and no engine. Thought I was going to lose the boat. Very scary.

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

A A Fireball racing dinghy. I loved the speed and trapeze but it was not much use for anything other than a quick blast round the estuary: you could not really go anywhere in it.

Q What other boats have you owned?

A I have owned and worked a 28ft fishing boat, a few miscellaneous dinghies, a very wonderful Invicta 26, and I currently have an equally wonderful Rival 34, a 17ft open boat and a very lovely 50-year-old wooden 11ft Gull dinghy.

Q What was your favourite boat?

A I really liked my Invicta 26 *Hyskeir* but my favourite must be my Rival 34 *Hirta* (and I really like the Gull *Soay*).

Q What is your current boat and why did you choose it?

A *Hirta* a deep keeled (5ft 10in) 1973 Rival 34. I chose her because she was the best R34 that I had seen. I wanted an R34 because they are fantastic sea boats that have been

MIDSUMMER CHALLENGE

Another great day for mucking about in boats

On the 15th of June this year we all gathered once again, rowers, yachties and all lovers of boaty, floaty fun, for the Forth Midsummer Challenge. The arrival earlier in the week of the Heligoland yachts (what a long way to come to watch our crazy race!) and possible inaccessibility of Newhaven Harbour due to the cruise liner schedule, meant that we spent some time tweaking the race.

Then, we spent more time tweaking it and tweaking it again. Why have a complicated race when you can make it a really complicated race! We had restricted the numbers of visiting rowing clubs this year due to concerns of available space on the pontoons, and then late drop-outs meant that we were down to five teams. Small, but (almost) perfectly formed!

Race day loomed and we were as ready as we were going to be. I threw in some course changes, due to inclement weather and not just to see if people were concentrating at the brief. And then then we were off!

Due to tide constraints and fueled by bacon rolls and coffee, this year's Forth Midsummer Challenge was started by the

runners. After their one mile run, the runners came back and jumped into their waiting skiffs. It started to appear that all was not as calm as we had hoped out in Wardie Bay. Breaking waves and gusting winds led to tricky turns for some very inexperienced crews and as the yachts headed out for their



race and skiff crews headed for soup and cake, we hastily threw together two more slightly less crazy courses, taking advantage of our empty west harbour and utilising the beach within the east harbour to drop off runners for a sprint back to waiting boat.

As the day wore on, the races were going as smoothly as possible. The weather was better suited for yacht racing than it was for skiffs, but everyone was smiling

and mostly dry when coming off the water! The catering team were doing a great job to ensure everyone was fed and watered inbetween racing legs and as the BBQs were lit, the final skiff race started. Timed, staggered starts meant the skiffs raced around the harbour to the cheers of the

crowd and all was finished just in time to recover the boats before everyone had to stay until the next tide! Final order of the day was some maths to work out the winners (for me) and burgers and beers all round. It was a really great day and once again, it was a full team effort to run the whole event. Many thanks to everyone who raced, rowed, sailed, ran, cooked, prepared, baked, washed up and turned up and held out in any capacity.

In the end, it was a consistently strong Anstruther rowing team and some excellent sailing from the crew of AI that were awarded overall winners and were presented with our unique Forth Midsummer trophies as well as medals for all. Another great day for mucking about in boats indeed.

Anna Cox, Co-Captain, Newhaven Coastal Rowers

Continued from previous page

known to sail through just about anything. On the 250nms passage out to Rockall last year she sailed comfortably and quickly into strong winds. I also think that a 34ft boat is about the biggest that I can comfortably sail myself. She is ashore in Arisaig this year but usually lives on a mooring in Loch Sunart.

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

A I've sailed all round Britain and other than the Baltic I think I have sailed most places in Europe and the Mediterranean. I've sailed on the East Coast of North America and the West Coast, in the South Pacific and the North Pacific.

Q What is the furthest destination you have sailed to?

A Washington State, USA, from Nuku Hiva, French Polynesia, about 2500nms with a stop in Hawaii.

Q What is your favourite place to sail and why?

A I like sailing most places except perhaps the Irish and North Seas. I'm doing a lot of sailing in Greece these days: the sun shines, there is an endless number of little harbours, the food is good and cheap, the beer is OK on a hot day. I like sailing in the Western Isles too. Very beautiful and very empty but the weather is usually a disappointment.

Q When did you join Forth Corinthians and why?

A In 2008. I was made very welcome by members of our club when I first brought my boat round to Granton.

Q Have you held positions on the Council of Corinthians and if so what?

A Yes, Council Member, Harbour Secretary, Vice Commodore and Commodore.

Q What important piece(s) of advice would you give to newcomers to sailing?

A Keep warm and dry and don't fall overboard, otherwise just enjoy it.

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

A I'm quite happy doing what I do at the moment, at least for another year or so, but I quite fancy going north of Iceland to be in the Arctic Circle for the solstice then maybe heading over to Nova Scotia. The sailing there sounds excellent. I'm also beginning to get interested in canal boating. Weird or what?

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

A Family, friends, food and drink. I spend a bit of time up on the West Coast, a bit of time skiing, watch a bit of telly and dream of new adventures on the sea.

RACING AND CRUISING

It's been a good season!

Well the 2019 season looks to be going well for our sailors. We are more than half way through our programmed events and, unlike some previous years, have had very few cancellations or postponements. That said at the time of writing this I have just had to postpone the Wickes Sternchase.

It has been a good season for those that chose to sail further afield. We have members who have travelled far and wide, I am sure that John Hunter will catch them and that we will have their adventure stories in the next issue of *FAIRWIND*.

For those that have sailed closer to Granton, I am sure that there has been something to suit them all. We have had some keenly contested races, some very close finishes where the results were down to the mathematics in the handicaps rather than the wind and tides. This is where I must thank Colin Dunnett. Without Colin we would not be operating the progressive handicap system; he has been a stalwart in his conscientious application of the handicap system.

There have been a couple of cruises in company though we did have to lose one due to the holidays; I will have to take the Edinburgh trades holiday into account next year.

We had our Midsummer Challenge, which turned out well again, a big thanks must go to the Newhaven Coastal Rowers and to all of our participants / helpers. It should be noted however that we were well outnumbered by the rowing fraternity, so I would like to see a better turn-out next year to what is continuing to be a great social family day out at our club.

Whether you are racers, cruisers or just like to potter I hope that you are having a good season, I hope to see you out on the water soon.

Eddie Myatt, Sailing Secretary



Workboat available for fun-filled winter boating!

When taking on the duties of harbour secretary I was blissfully unaware that I would have to write something for *FAIRWIND*, so my apologies in advance for this ineloquent effort.

Having spent the winter being refurbished, the workboat will be available for a fun-filled winter recreational boating programme. We are intending to service one third of all moorings each year on a rolling maintenance programme. Any members who wish to participate in exciting harbour cruising combined with an exercise programme (save on your gym membership) let me know.

The club have moorings to lay once the Royal Forth clear away the old ground chain. We'll let you know as soon as we are ready to go. Once again yard space over the winter is at a premium, so please advise the Harbour Secretary if yard storage is required ASAP and look out for winter pontoon applications. Don't miss the boat.

The harbour team are currently working on a set of guidelines covering the members' use of the club's facilities, boat yard and moorings. The intention is to ensure all new and existing members are aware of how the club runs and what their responsibilities are. The guidelines will be updated as issues arise and will be ready

for presentation at the AGM.

Anyway, here's hoping the current heavy rain eases off for the rest of the

sailing season, as I have noticed the harbour filling up with water.

Andy Gunn, Harbour Secretary



LUXURY ON THE WATER

In an earlier edition of *FAIRWIND* we showed the ex dazzle ship, ex *Windsor Castle* in the process of being converted to a floating hotel. The floating hotel is now, well, floating in Leith Docks and offers 'elegant dining, a cocktail bar and a ballroom', not to mention rooms costing up to £1000 per night. So if you fancy a wee bit of luxury and you have very deep pockets, this hotel, now re-named *Fingal*, could be just for you.

DAZZLING NO MORE!

Would you believe that until recently this was the Dazzle Ship, colourfully painted in memory of the camouflaged dazzle ships painted during 1916 to confuse enemy navies? Owned by the Britannia Trust—which also owns the Royal Yacht Britannia—it has now been repainted prior to becoming a floating 'boutique hotel' (whatever that is) adjacent to the Royal Yacht.

