



SBC

The Small Boat Club Kingston upon Thames

Newsletter: 23rd May 2020

Commodore's Message

Hello everyone.

So here we are again, still under lockdown, albeit with some flexibility introduced by the government (leaving plenty of room for interpretation). The "Crew To" event to Hammersmith and the first Full Moon cruise are now victims to this year's situation, and those planned for June look at risk, if not of postponement, then severe curtailment.

Looking deep into the barrel for some light relief to scrape at, someone did point out to me that, with the devolved governments deciding that folk in Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland should stay at home, it was beginning to look like a football world cup.

Anyway, behind the scenes the committee are still looking keep the club ticking over. The WhatsApp group is in full swing and being used by many (let me know if you want to connect). Some of the posts are even boating related! We continue to talk to the EA about fixing the rubbing strakes on the Middlesex side of the island, albeit that may be a few months away. We are having discussions with contractors about what might be done with the loo, and maintaining a plan of maintenance work that we will need to catch up on when restrictions are relaxed. Plus mooring poles, day boat.....

Some folk have been managing to get over to the island to do a few bits and pieces to their boats, to do some work on tidying up the club house (in particular the fallen awning and cladding), as well as checking on the status of other members' boats. I won't mention them here (just in case they have breached some lock-down regulations!), but they know who they are, and I'd like to say a big thankyou to all of them.

I hosted a Zoom based "Honesty Quiz" on Thursday evening which was pretty well attended. It was a bit of fun that, I think, most people enjoyed (but I know how "diplomatic" you all are, so maybe I am wrong!). John Roscoe and his family won first prize (like the quiz, purely virtual!). Bill and Carol Benham get a prize for best fancy dress and best groomed, Adrian Gray and Deborah get the prize for the best "bookshelf backdrop"! It was good to see everyone on the call, especially Russell, making up,

in a small way, for not seeing folk face to face. I'd be happy to host a further one (in the same light hearted vein) if the demand is there. I'd be equally happy to work with any other ideas you may have or, better still, if you would like to host an event of your own, I can make my Zoom account available (unlike the free version, it supports up to 100 callers and unlimited duration).



For those of you who couldn't attend (and to be truthful, by way of a space filler), I have included the "Boatsman Ran A Gig" (Boat Anagrams) questions here. Answers at the end of newsletter.

ANAGRAMS

- 1 Scuba Balm Toll
Clue - *We're all in it now!*
- 2 Clotted Don King
Clue - *Up North, a bit!*
- 3 Me Yearning Convent
Clue - *Love 'em or loath 'em, we owe them!*
- 4 No To Parachute Clamp
Clue - *Nice pad out West!*
- 5 Cool My Keels
Clue - *River Bank character's security?*
- 6 Met Ravisher
Clue - *I'd like to be on it, or in it, now!*
- 7 Testes Envoy
Clue - *Surrounded by 6 above!*
- 8 Shady Groin
Clue - *Can't cross without them, bring your own!*
- 9 Gropes In Room
Clue - *Dom & Gerry have been known to give 'em a tug!*
- 10 Hi Cashew Organ
Clue - *We're done, let's go!*

Oh, and I mustn't forget to mention that, during the quiz, Sharon committed to pen a club song for us!

As a gentle nudge, if you have responded to our approval request to share information, thank you. If not, could you do so, even if in the negative? We plan to include the information in a mail shot to you in the next few weeks. Don't forget the work that Gerry continues to do:

(<https://www.facebook.com/SmallBoatClub.co.uk/>). As well as compiling a history of the club, there are photographs and video updates on our island.

And a couple of other snippets.....

Remember that all boats are required to display a current EA licence. I know it's difficult at this time to get across so, if you cannot, maybe get in touch with a member who plans to go and see if you can send your license to them to put on board? I'm going to try and get across during the week of the 25th if anyone is interested.

For those whose boats were due safety checks this year, the latest update from the BSC is

"Boat Safety Scheme (BSS) Examinations, suspended in the COVID-19 related lockdown, have now resumed for most boat owners, but they will happen in a 'new normal' framework based on the latest Government guidance"

I don't find this particularly helpful so have dropped them an email asking for clarification.

<https://www.boatsafetyscheme.org/about-us/news-and-press-releases/news-releases/>

There seems to be no change, yet, in the published guidance from the EA. It still states "You should not make any journeys on your boat other than to access essential services and facilities. We will not provide assisted passage or powered operation at locks. If you need to go through a lock, you will need to hand wind it."

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/river-thames-locks-and-facilities-for-boaters>

As stated in the last newsletter, when we get through the current restrictions change, we will schedule a number of working parties to catch up on maintenance which will culminate in a club funded meal to thank you all for your work and patience.

Keep safe, alert, and see you all later in the year!

AJ

From the Committee

The Committee is doing what it can to prepare for the 'new normal'. Dom and Andy J with help from James are looking at the moorings. They are planning to purchase some extra poles to ensure that every boat is safe from lifting onto the island especially where boats have changed position. If you have any concerns please have a word with Dom. But please remember your ropes mooring ropes need to be in good condition and tied to allow movement with rise and fall of river levels and variation in flow.

Groupings of boat owners on the Thames (including the Association of Thames Yacht Clubs ATYC) are getting together to put pressure on the EA to get work done quickly and open the Thames for navigation again. At

present it isn't possible to get above Sunbury Lock because of the sunken barge (the boat that was perched atop seems to have gone) and those locks with hand winding facilities have no electrics. I remember winding Molesey in the distant past before 'after hours power' and it isn't an easy task! You can only get through Teddington Lock by prior arrangement. The heron and grebe were enjoying the lack of traffic yesterday evening and didn't seem to know about the 'closed season for fishing'. We obviously support the ATYC action.

Please let AJ know if you think someone has tampered with your boat during the winter/lock down. If you think it involved theft please report it to the police – it means they have a better picture of crime in the area. Those living on the trots are good and keep their eyes open for any unusual behaviour on the island. We are looking to see whether we need other measures.

As we get back to our boats (fingers crossed) don't forget Sue has SBC fleeces and gilets and Club burgees. Requests to susan@slharmer.plus.com; she is also on the WhatsApp group for any queries.

Linda

Doug Steward, 1955-2020

Doug (or Dougie) joined the Small Boat Club in 1983 as crew to his friend and work colleague Rod MacKay and his family Marilyn, Bridget and Heather on "Knockrome". Doug told of downriver trips where it was a bit rough and the pie, carefully cooked by Marilyn, shot out of the oven onto the floor. Gerry also remembers downriver trips when they learnt how barges to which they had moored turn with the tide, leaving you exposed to passing cargo boats. Not just the wash afterward but also the suction water movement as they approached.

Sue remembers Doug was a great mate of her father Peter Fullick; they shared many a glass of cider or port together. One day up river they were sharing some scrumpy cider and



encouraged Sue to join them; she says her lips went numb!!

Doug got the boating bug and before long bought his own little boat "Dougal". "Dougal" was moored on the end of the island near Duck Island so Doug could indulge in his other favourite pastime, fishing. Eventually the little boat was sold (becoming "Trio" owned by Val Baldwin, Janet Jones & Peter – Jan's husband) and replaced by the

“Dougal” we know today, bought from Ken and Marion Leech. It was through Doug that Val Baldwin and her late sister Janet came to the Small Boat Club followed by Janet’s friends Val, Carey and Libby Mordue.

Over the years Doug made a great contribution to the Club. He held many of the officer posts several times and stepped in when we had difficulties. Gerry mentioned that Doug took part in many boat handling competitions with considerable success – Club regattas, inter club



competitions and the Association of Thames Yacht Clubs (ATYC) at its annual rally. As a Club representative he was also instrumental in obtaining the top end of the island for the SBC and the Enviroloo.

Doug was at the centre of both practical and social events; a recent picture posted by Gerry on Facebook showed him in the midst of the debris after the fire in 1993 helping the clear up. Doug took part in the Club’s Whitaker Cup performances at the RNLI Rallies – the photo shows preparation for the 1988 ‘Australia’ themed one. Club ‘folk law’ also has a tale of Doug (not a small lad!) sitting on a plastic chair with Sally Kane from Albany/TMYC on his lap at one of the BBQs and the whole thing collapsing, leaving them in a slightly inebriated giggling heap on the floor.

Doug took early retirement from his post with the Met Police transport section in 2012 and moved to Bracklesham Bay with his father John. John had a new lease of life watching the boats arriving and departing the



Solent from their first-floor sea front maisonette. It was through John that Doug met his partner Terri – she was one of his carers. Together they went on to cruise bigger and better things.



We were very sad to hear of Doug’s untimely death. The SBC owes Doug a big “thank you” for all he did over the years. Our thoughts are with Terri and his brother Michael.

Linda, Sue and Gerry



The Small Boat Club 1958-1993 (Continued).

Over the years several club boats were used. The first was an eight-foot dinghy bought from a member for five pounds and others included an inboard powered launch and now the aluminium dory bought in 1982. Boathouse lighting was first provided by Tilley lamps but in January 1965 the TC gave permission for a generator. The first one was bought that year for ten pounds and generators have been regularly replaced and upgraded to the present day.

Funding over the years was mainly from membership, mooring fees, events and raffles. In 1970 money was needed to campsheds the creek. This was raised by interest free loans from members in units of five pounds. As the Club received funds a draw was held, and the winners paid back and so on until all the money had been refunded. Earlier in 1969 Club books were in a mess and we were short of money. Robert Parvin volunteered as Honorary Treasurer and was elected at the AGM. He sorted out the previously haphazard accounts,

reorganised moorings to maximise income and started charging for them quarterly in advance instead of annually in arrears as had been the case before. He served as Treasurer for fourteen years, stepping down in 1983.

Whilst all this was going on the Club became steadily bigger and better organised, membership eventually reaching over 130. In 1961 a sailing section was formed, and

advertisements placed in boating magazines by the Publicity Officer, to which there was a big response. The maximum number of sailing boats allowed in the club was limited to ten. A Sailing

Master and Sub-Committee of three and a Cruiser Committee both with a member of the Executive Committee looked after their sections' interests. By 1963 the Sailing Section had grown and the Club decided to limit its size. Long arguments took place culminating in a disagreement and the Sailing Master resigned. From then on the Sub-Committee was retained with no Chief Officer until April 1964, when a Sailing Secretary was appointed.

There were many ups and downs over the years showing that, as always, a group of dedicated people each with their individual opinions will create friction, but it also emphasises the enthusiasm that there has always been in the Club.

Competitions were attended and we came third at the ATYC Rally one year and were well placed in several others. The RNLI Rally was popular, and we won the Whittaker Cup many times even carrying off both the Cup and the Eslick Shield in 1971. Club cruises were also popular as were Club nights, originally held on the Island on the third Thursday of each month. Cruisers length limit was redefined as 26 foot 11 ¼ inches in March 1965.

In the sixties there was a rash of sub-committees. They were formed for ATYC Rallies, Boathouse maintenance, Cadets, club boat purchase and fitting out, social and catering, motor cruisers, RNLI Rallies and sailing cruisers amongst others. Whether the Executive Committee was over-zealous or that this was the best way of dragooning members into giving of their best is not recorded!



Hugh Walton, Martin Farvin, Nigel Walton and Jack Shiners on the newly acquire Club Ferry collecting wood on Saturday 29-10-66 for the "Guy Fawkes Night Bonfire"

Members varied, some became good committee members, some just good members, others hardly showed up at all and drifted away. Several had their membership withdrawn when they failed to pay moorings or mooring fees, many because they had moorings but didn't attend club meetings or events and on a few celebrated occasions the odd member gained a dishonourable discharge for conduct prejudicial to the good of the Club. The Minutes make for dry reading, but they hint at more interesting moments.

Fourteen to fifteen thousand man/woman hours have been spent at the committee meetings over the last forty years, so just think of the hours of enjoyment members must have had during this time.

You will notice references to Jacko Jackson and Don Bridgeman (TC). I'm pleased to say that their wives Dorothy and Mavis Stayed active interest in our Club for many years. as did Robert and Mildred Parvin; all were Honorary Life Members. But sadly are no longer with us.

The "Great Fire" is not included, I'm sure you will agree that the story is better told when our boathouse is up and running. Whilst I have made every effort to describe events accurately my natural incompetence and the not too distant approach of senility may have made their own contribution.

Thanks go to John Chance for his patience and time in compiling these notes. (Sadly no longer with us)



Please remember that quarterly mooring fees are due at the start of June. Thank you

- ANAGRAMS – Answers
- 1 Small Boat Club
 - 2 Teddington Lock
 - 3 Environment Agency
 - 4 Hampton Court Palace
 - 5 Molesey Lock
 - 6 River Thames
 - 7 Stevens Eyot
 - 8 Dinghy Cars
 - 9 Mooring Ropes
 - 10 Anchors Aweigh

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