

Jolly Roger meets
the Commodore



Mooring Mishaps



Tales of a Cornish Trader



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Introduction from the Editor, Andrew Powell:

As always, I would like to thank all those who have contributed to this autumn edition of the Jolly Roger. I am also grateful to our Commodore for agreeing to be interviewed and for revealing much about his interesting life. Many of you will be aware that, in 2014, Richard received the RYA's most prestigious award, the RYA Lifetime Commitment Award, from HRH the Princess Royal. Richard is fortunate enough to own a Contessa 32 which has an excellent reputation as both a very seaworthy cruiser and racer. I note that a recently deceased pioneer of high-latitude sailing, Major William Wemyss, would often voyage single-handed in his Contessa 32 *Assent*.

Due to a family illness I was forced to cancel my summer sailing plans. The nearest I came to the Channel was crossing it on the ferry from Newhaven to Dieppe! However, I was at least able to try out my back-up rudimentary chart on my mobile phone, courtesy of MX Mariner. I found that this worked satisfactorily all the way across "La Manche" except when I was in the bar, presumably due to the superstructure interfering with the satellite connection!

I had read much about the port of Sables d'Olonne on the West coast of France which has been the starting point for so many famous yacht races including the Golden Globe Yacht race and the Vendee Globe. Between hospital visits we were able to spend a few hours on a rain-swept day exploring the old port and marina where we came across boats preparing for the Transgascogne race (picture below). The Course runs from Sables d'Olonne across the Bay of Biscay to the Spanish Coast and back. However, my preferred nautical location in this part of France is definitely La Rochelle.



An Interview with our Commodore, Richard Hopper TD

Editor-Where did you grow up?

I was born in Addiscombe Croydon in 1937. I attended Whitgift School and left to take up a job with Midland Bank when I was 17. I was subsequently called up for National Service in Royal Signals where I become a Radio Technician Instructor. After finishing National Service I considered staying in the army as I was well qualified but, after a period of reflection, I decided to return to banking.

Ed-When did you move to Rye and what brought you here?

I came to East Sussex on the 1st January 1982, almost by accident. At the time I was a senior manager working for Midland Bank at Staines responsible for Staines, Ashford, Sunningdale and Egham branches. Sometime in 1981 the bank decided to redraw the boundaries of their London Region to coincide with the Greater London Area; this had the effect of making me a country banker. I had always worked in London before, mainly in the City. Those readers cognisant of the ways of banking will realise that this change had the effect of moving the debit and credit columns from one side to the other in ledgers! The window side doctrine had to be amended.

When the change came about my London General Manager offered to keep me in London but, having served him as a personal assistant for some time, I did not take up his kind offer. My new General Manager on the other hand offered me the post of Area Manager at Luton which I was due to take up on 1st January 1982. I was just about to sign contracts for a house outside Luton when the then manager of Hastings died.



I then had the option of coming here rather than Luton. Having seen Luton, I was not impressed. Luton used to be a very important centre for hat production and I think the population could still have been suffering from mercury poisoning (mercury was used to stiffen top hats)!

Thinking that I could be recalled to London I sought out the most expensive property I could afford under the bank's staff mortgage scheme. If my memory serves me correctly, it was a multiple of 4 times one's salary. I was advised that there was nothing for this price in Hastings and so I looked in Rye and Battle and finally purchased my present house in Playden in August 1982.

Interview with Richard Hopper TD

Ed- You have the Territorial Decoration- can you tell me something about your military connection?

After National Service I returned to Croydon. I found all my old school friends had departed and, on the advice of my father, I visited Armoury House, the HQ of the Honourable Artillery Company. I was made welcome and joined the Signals Platoon. Over the years that followed I rose to the rank of Colour Sergeant before being commissioned following a change of role for the Honourable Artillery Company. Later, I transferred to the 6th Battalion of the Queens Regiment (which later became the 6/7 th Battalion) becoming the Signals Officer and, after a time, a company commander. My last post in the Territorial Army was commanding the London District Specialist Training Team. Overall, I had some 26 years' service in the TA.

Ed- How did you first get involved in sailing? Did you come from a sailing family?

We were not a sailing family but my link with the sea goes back a long way. Sometime around 1970, I was an infantry officer of the Honourable Artillery Company (the term artillery in the title refers to handguns not canon) and was attached to a Marine Cadet unit based near Tower Bridge. The unit, supported by the foundation of Sherbourne School, possessed a 45' MFV named Dorset Commando which was berthed in Surrey Commercial Dock. The skipper was Commander Robin Gillett RN, a Master of Trinity House and a future Lord Mayor of London. The staff were insistent that the boat had to have an open bridge and an engine room telegraph. Whilst the open bridge was not normally a problem the telegraph was; very few people could or would remain in the engine room without feeling ill. I was the exception and became the engineer. In the two years I was attached to the Marine Cadet unit I got to know the Thames intimately as far as the wreck of the SS Montgomery, the sunken ammunition ship near Sheerness. We had to have special permission with the Captain on board to go out to sea. Previously, during National Service at Bampton near Brize Norton in Oxfordshire, I had canoed the upper reaches of the Thames extensively and so, apart from the bit in the middle, I knew the Thames and its facilities pretty well.

Ed-When did you first join Rye Harbour Club?

This was in 1985, following our move to Rye.

Ed-What boats have you owned?

My sister and brother in law had a caravan at Pagham and it was here that I learnt to sail a dinghy. I subsequently built a Mirror dinghy which I kept at Pagham Yacht Club. My eldest son and I subsequently learnt to sail cruisers. I bought an Anderson 22 (I think at that time there were four Anderson 22's owner by members of the Club). Later, I bought a Contessa 32, Mystic Sky.

Ed- Tell us more about that- how did you come to buy Mystic Sky and where you have sailed her? Were you looking for a Contessa?

At the Clubhouse one day my son Alan and I watched a Contessa 32 in the river and decided that we wanted one. We found Mystic Sky in Cowes, purchased her and sailed her back to Rye. We then became involved in

Interview with Richard Hopper TD

racing, both in Rye and with other Contessa's in the Solent. We took part in Cowes Week three years running. Contessa's race as a separate class and there were about 26 of them. We usually ended up in the middle of the fleet results.



Ed- I have read that the Contessa 32 is considered by some to be the most successful one-design cruiser-racer ever and that a Contessa 32 was the only yacht in the small boat class to finish the disastrous 1979 Fastnet Race. I have heard they can be wet boats. Is that right?

Contessas can be wet but that depends on the amount of sail you have up. Before we had a furling genoa, we could find ourselves over-canvased in Rye Bay sailing with our No1; changing the headsail in Club races takes too long.

Ed-Can you say something about the boats which were sailed by club members at that time? Was racing an important feature of the Club?

At the time I bought Mystic Sky there was a strong racing fleet at the Club. Clem Ramus sailing Bramley with his son James and Carey Marsh as crew were almost unbeatable!

Ed-I believe you have been involved with the RYA for some time. What has been the nature of your involvement?

Interview with Richard Hopper TD

We used to run VHF Courses at the Clubhouse and Eric Pilkington persuaded me to take over from him. When the RYA Short Range Certificate course was introduced I attended a course run by the RYA and became an SRC Assessor.

Ed- For you, what is the highlight of the sailing calendar?

In the early years it was Cowes week but it became too expensive and getting the right crew became difficult. In recent years Ramsgate Week has taken its place.

Ed- Finally, what is your favourite tippie?

Perhaps because my maternal grandfather was a Spaniard born in Seville I enjoy their food and the good quality wines that can accompany the meal.

No Smirking Policy!

By Stuart Cleary

Our Is it me? Am I the only one? Surely not. Somebody else out there must derive the intense pleasure I get from watching other, unfortunate, people trying to moor up their hired yacht whilst on holiday!

It has to be the best entertainment; better than Candid Camera, Benny Hill, Harry Hill and all the other shows that revel in the idiocy of others. Is it wrong? Yes, but it's bloody funny as well. I can say all this and pick holes in other people's hard endeavours because I was (and probably still am) crap at mooring. So there! I can say what I want. Let me give you some examples:



No Smirking Policy! by Stuart Cleary

Fiskado Port, Kefalonia. 2017

Sitting at a bar/tavern for 4 hours whilst my family cavort in the water and the grown-ups sunbathe; I took it upon myself to have a cooling beer and try to finish my holiday book (something deeply intellectual, like "Cluster**** in Karachi" where Clay Denver, ex-US Navy Seal helps Tommy Cockles (SAS) stop General Ali Minium from taking over the world) You know the type of thing. As I got to the bit where they are talking about how some gun is better than another, my thought process was distracted by a Sunsail yacht in the harbour reversing towards me, at speed, with a petrified 10-year-old kid holding a rope, staring at me whilst his Dad, (a real t***er), screamed incoherent "Port/Starboard gobbledygook" at him, and his wife (holding a gin and tonic with a burnt face and an expression of total fear, whilst paying out the anchor chain on the windless at the "Front" of the boat).

Epic Sailing Images Of The Week



Dad, (let's call him Rufus) shouts "LESS CHAIN MARGOT! PAY IN, PAY IN...Toby, throw the Fu**ing rope!" and then, oblivious to the fact that everything that is going wrong is his fault, suddenly tries to avoid hitting Kefefalonia by turning the steering wheel thing! Only to crunch his 36' Beneteau, corner on into my Bar! Toby flies off into the drink! Margot's drink flies out of her hand as she tumbles over the foredeck and almost down one of the open shutters. Rufus loses it completely as the engine throttle hits full chat and the waiters run for cover. Wonderful stuff! And that was their first attempt! 3 times they tried, with less dramatic, but equal incompetence until Rufus gave up and engine off to find another place to spend their happy holiday experience.

Cavtat, Croatia, 2015

Sitting at a bar/restaurant watching the boats come in. A "School" of Neilson Jeanneau 36' flotilla victims hove into my view. What a treat I had in store. The Head Bloke, an Aussie named Danno and his No2 a fit South African blonde called Germolene (I think), had decided to moor up on lazy-lines about 50' out from the now full pontoons. The six boats were to come together side by side, tied together in a neat line (just in case Neilson himself might turn up unannounced singing "I can't live if living is without you"). Well, that was the plan.

No Smirking Policy! By Stuart Cleary

Danno, on the first lead boat, holds fast tied up fore and aft chain payed out, steady as a rock as planned, but boats three and four don't know what's going on, they tie up to each other and start drifting in the developing breeze, towards the pontoon. Germolene spots (sorry, couldn't help it) this and tries to get her, number six, boat over to assist. However, Danno has shouted at three to turn on engines and for four to cast off from three but the ropes have tightened with the forward motion and both boats start a slow dreadful cartwheel death-dance straight into Germoline!

Panic ensues and all novice skippers in charge stop doing anything immediately as instructed by Danno, the only d**k with a moored boat; until he spots Boat number five reversing out of trouble towards a very expensive looking 50' Gulett coming in for lunch. The Gulet Skipper, unaware of the fun ahead of him, or confident that the Jeanneau knows what's going on, keeps his speed and direction. They all piled into one another in the best bit of live cabaret I have ever seen. There was even a bit of blood and two fistfights.



"Ok everyone, Port side to..."

I could go on, but it would only show up my character failings even more than is necessary. In fact, I wouldn't be surprised if most of you have had good reason in the past to smirk about someone else's folly, although you probably went to assist, rather than enjoy the show to the bitter end. Ant on that point; this article is an invitation to you, the reader, to share your similar experiences of holiday sailing fun with the other subscribers to this fine Orb. If you feel the urge to share an experience or two in the jolly Roger, please email the Editor. No need to use your real name, if it's REALLY awful!

Stuart Cleary

With twelve boats competing over seven races, the first series of summer races was won by Scott Wilkinson sailing a Laser Dinghy, with John and Claire Powell coming second sailing the Club Wayfarer. Andrew and Mary Hewitt came a very close third (by 0.8 of a point) sailing a Laser Stratos. Summer Series 2 commenced on 21 July and has, at the time of writing, seen three races. It has been good to see some of those who have been waiting for the warmer weather venture out onto the water and we welcomed Matthew and Malcom Grant who have been racing for the first time as new members.

Concurrent to the main series is the Heavy Weather Bowl for those races sailed on the River Rother. Unbelievably, only five races have been held on the river this year; three were held during the Winter Series and two from the current Summer Series – compared with previous years we have been lucky to race so often in the Bay.

It is good to see so many taking advantage of the good weather to go out and have a sail outside of racing. Where possible it is best to go out in at least pairs but if that isn't possible then sailors are strongly advised to stay on the river and ensure that RYA SAFE TRX is used (the app is available free to RYA members). The Club has a lone sailing policy which is available in the documents section of the club website. With the revamped Facebook site becoming available club members should be able to publicise when they intend to sail outside of organised activities which might encourage others to join in.



John & Claire Powell in Rye Bay

If you do sail or carry out another activity (for instance maintenance of a boat); please do ensure that you fill in the activity in the red book kept on the bar in the clubhouse. This is important since it allows the club to accurately report activity within the club to the RYA in its statistical returns.

Those of us whose boats are not equipped with a windlass, manual or electric, generally manage to weigh anchor by hand without too much effort on the few occasions in a season when we drop the pick. An advantage is in having a competent crew so that one of you can give a nudge on the throttle if and when required whilst the other hauls the chain in.

However, the task of weighing anchor by hand can become more difficult:

when sailing single-handed, or

in deeper water, where the length of chain between boat and seabed is much greater and therefore much heavier

in a stiff breeze when a touch of engine power is needed but verbal communication between bow and cockpit is ineffective and hand signals cannot be given from the bow because hauling the chain requires both hands.

Age and fitness also play their part, as does sea state, tide and wind strength.

On two occasions at anchor in Rye Bay as Race Officer, I found it necessary to buoy off my anchor and chain because of difficulties in recovery after the wind “got up” over the duration of each race. The time left to complete this and return to the mooring on a falling tide was pressing.

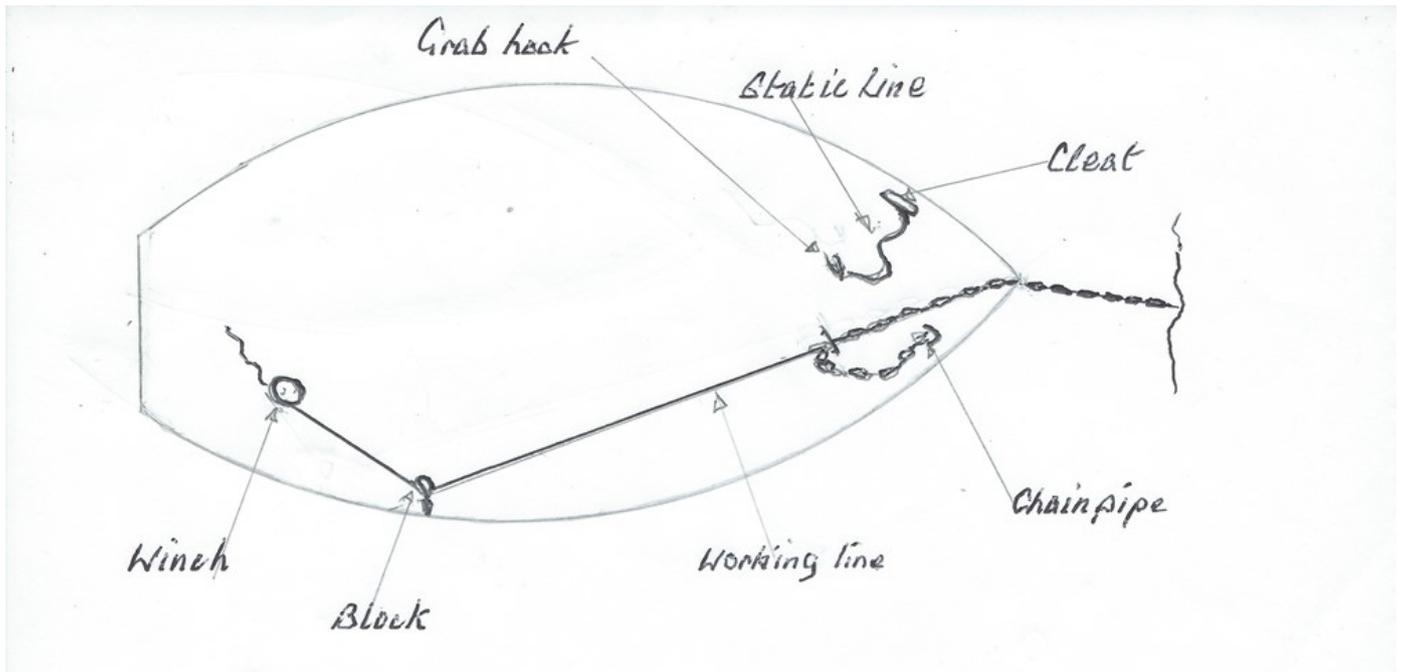
A windlass would have been a great help, but a couple of doubts held me back. One was the alterations that I would have had to make to the foredeck of Close Encounters and another was the expense; anyway, how often would a windlass be needed? I also reckoned that, since the boat was already kitted out with several pairs of winches, it should be possible to make use of them for weighing anchor on those odd occasions when doing so by hand would be too difficult.

On my boat, the chain pipe being to starboard, the starboard self-tailing jib sheet winch was the most obvious candidate in terms of position and operation. On my UFO 31, the sheet winch is 6-7 metres from the optimum point on the foredeck where a line (the working line) could be secured to the anchor chain. A second, static, line would also be needed to take the weight of the chain whilst re-attaching the working line. Alternating between the two, it should be a straightforward job to get the anchor in.

How does it avoid the chain chafing the deck and coach roof?

The working line is led through a block attached to the toe rail in close proximity to the winch. The point of this is to give a lead for the working line and chain which will take it down the side deck, clear of the side of the coach roof and the shrouds. Two or three turns of the working line are taken around the winch and it is hauled as though for a jib sheet. In this way, between 5 and 6 metres of chain is quickly brought aboard at a time.

DIY Windlass By Bill Lewis



The position of the block will need to be adjusted depending on the design of the boat. A foredeck hatch standing proud of the deck could present too big a challenge for this idea! The above sketch, purely illustrative and quite unlike any hull shape I know of for that reason, attempts to give a crude idea of the set-up and shows the procedure at a point somewhere between items 3 and 4 in the summary below. The working line is under load and winching in the chain, the static line is rigged and ready for use.

The winch position, being fixed to the cockpit coaming several inches above deck level, means that, once the tension is taken up on the working line, the block is lifted to the extremity of its attachment to the toe-rail and so the chain lifts clear of the deck and remains clear whilst the working line is winched in as far as the block allows. The height of the block above deck can be increased, if necessary, by adding a shackle or two.

Procedure

Having winched in all of the working line as far as the block, the tension must be maintained until a second line (the static line), attached to a strongpoint on the foredeck, is secured to the chain. (The strongpoint would generally be that which you use to secure the chain when at anchor, but could be a Samson post or a foredeck cleat).

The working line can then be veered (eased) on the winch so that the weight of chain is transferred to the static line. The working line (now slack), is re-attached at a point for'd or aft of the of the static line attachment. The working line is winched in until it has taken the weight and the static line becomes slack. The static line is then detached from the chain and winching of the working line resumed until a further 5-6 metres of chain have been hauled inboard. Repeat the procedure until the anchor can be brought on deck (see summary below).

Equipment

The lines can be tied or hitched directly to the chain, but by far the easiest and quickest way is to purchase a couple of stainless steel chain grab hooks of an appropriate size to match whatever size of chain you have. Attach the working and static lines to each grab hook using a bowline or other suitable knot.



Stainless steel Chain Grab Hook (£10-£11 each in any chandler)

The flat aspect of the chain link slides into the Stainless steel chain grab hook. Attach it with the opening pointing downwards to avoid it slipping off the chain

The rope should be of a suitable diameter if using a self-tailing winch. I use 8 mm braided. The working line needs to be about the overall length of the boat, whilst the static line needs only to be sufficient to connect the strong-point to the chain - perhaps 3 feet or so.

The block should be on a swivel and free to lift clear of the deck as tension is taken up by the working line; it should also be of a size to accommodate the rope of course.

Caution: When transferring the load between the two lines, make sure that the grab hooks are properly engaged with the chain. If one was to slip off the chain (unlikely but possible) you may see all your chain running out of your chain locker and over the bow. Assuming you have had the forethought to secure the bitter end, you'll get it back, but it's the sort of thing that can do some damage to the boat and would leave any skipper feeling rather inept!

I often sail single-handed and I have found this to be a simple and effective method of weighing anchor when circumstances make weighing by hand hard work. It requires no effort, very little preparation, and the job can be accomplished in a short time. Close Encounters has 30 metres of chain and 30 metres of warp and I can recover all the chain using this method in a few minutes. I first used this after a night at anchor in 11 metres and it was a relief not to have to lift it all by hand.

Summary:

1. Attach working line to chain with grab-hook and take up the weight. Belay the tail end of the working line.
2. Free off the chain from its securing point.
3. Rig static line ready for use by securing on foredeck.

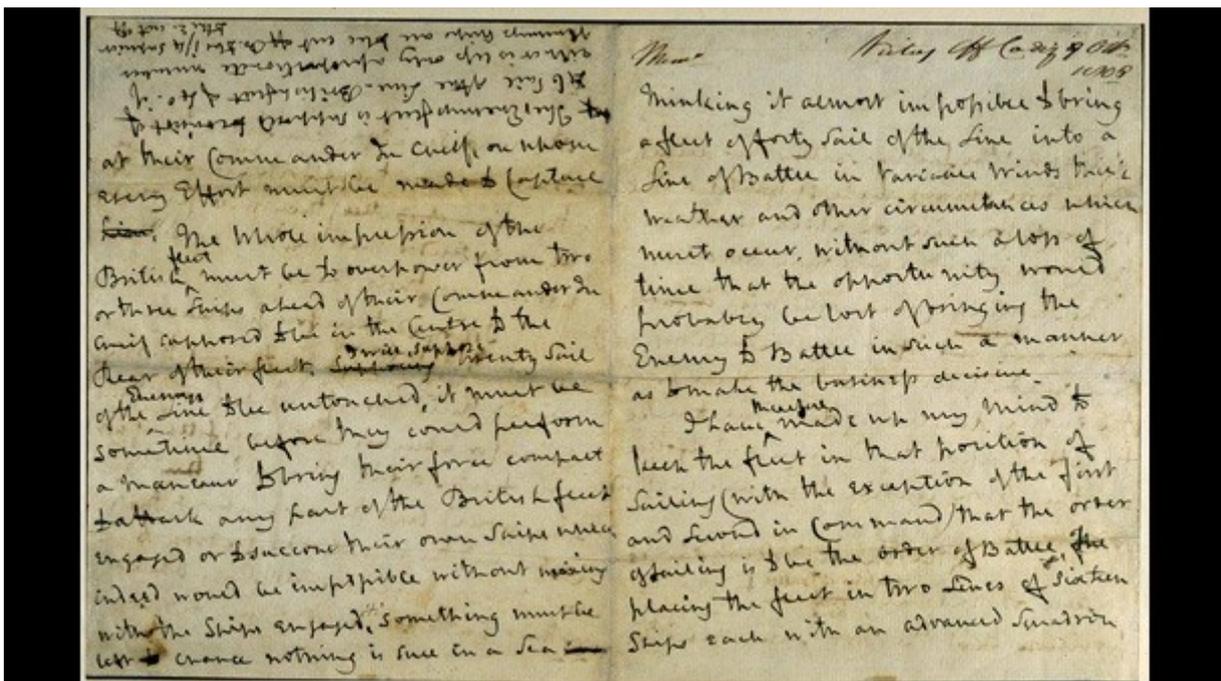
DIY Windlass By Bill Lewis

4. Winch in the working line as far as the block allows. Belay the tail end.
5. Extend the static line for'd and attach its grab-hook to the chain.
6. Veer (ease) the working line on the winch until the static line takes the weight. Disengage the working line and take the grab-hook for'd.
7. Attach working line to foremost part of the chain. Take turns around the winch and haul in until the working line has the weight. Belay the tail end.
8. Disengage the static line.
9. Repeat the cycle from item 4 above until all chain brought in and anchor is home.

Bill Lewis

Wanted– articles for the Jolly Roger!

If you would like to share any sailing experiences or your expertise with our readership or simply make a comment, your articles or letters to the editor will be gratefully received and considered for inclusion in a subsequent edition of the Jolly Roger, We aim to maintain a balance between material relating to dinghy sailing and cruisers and also between articles which are informative, educational or downright comical and so please do not be offended if an article you contribute does not appear immediately. Articles or letters should be submitted to the editor (apowell@lawdisputes.co.uk) no later than 14 days before the publication date (i.e. by 16th November for the Winter edition, 14th February for the Spring edition, 17th May for the Summer edition and 17th August for the Autumn edition).



A drink on the Editor at the Club bar for the first member to correctly identify the above document

Report of the Rear-Commodore Cruiser Fleet, David Preston

Three of our cruisers headed to Ramsgate Week Regatta with realistic hopes of achieving good results after doing so well last year. Alas, it was not Rye Harbour Sailing Club's year this year. The only result of note was from Luna skippered by myself, David Preston with crew Jim and club members Sarah and Noah coming second in Class 6 in the Round the Goodwins race on the first day although it was a little disappointing, having come first last year. That apart, the crews of Roxanne, Mallard and Luna had a fantastic week as usual, sailing and socialising at the Royal Temple Yacht club.



Above-the crew of Luna and, left, the Captain



Report of the Rear-Commodore Cruiser Fleet, David Preston

Roxanne and Luna then attended Sovereign Harbour Yacht Club's Land and Sea festival regatta on 24th and 25th August. One of the four races was cancelled due to lack of wind, the other three were challenging and a little frustrating with most of the time only 5 knots of wind. However the yacht club gave us a great welcome and it was a great event. Roxanne, racing under IRC against some stern opposition had a great result coming third in the series. Well done to Rick and his crew and they got a nice bottle of wine for their efforts.



RHSC Sailability welcomes the MoB!

Wednesday 19th June saw RHSC Sailability launching 4 Sailability boats as we played host to Mariners of Bewl (MoB), who are based at Bewl Water on the Kent/Sussex border. MoB is an RYA Accredited Sailability Club. We were delighted to welcome 11 sailors and crew from MoB and although faced with a dire forecast we decided that a decision to sail would be made on the day and encouraged everyone to attend. To help sailors get on and off their boats a gate has been fitted to the rail on the quay adjacent to the slipway. A large commercial vessel was due on the tide leaving only one option which was to sail up-river until the large vessel had berthed. After a light rain shower the sun shone and a breeze came up from the south west providing good conditions for a great



Sail. Duncan Curtis, The Chairman of Mariners of Bewl said “Thanks go to all the team at RHSC Sailability who made our day on the Rother so wonderful. Our Mariners of Bewl got a real whiff of sea air, and a true taste of estuary sailing! The forecast was dreadful the day before, and the morning didn’t bode well either, but after we rigged our 3 boats, amazingly the sky cleared and we were all rewarded with a lovely sail up river. What apprehensions we had about the unfamiliar surroundings were dispelled as we shared launching, sailing, recovery, and then a delicious high tea with RHSC Sailability members and friends. For us sailors from Bewl Reservoir, our day with RHSC Sailability was a real little adventure, and one we would love to be able to repeat. It goes without saying we would welcome visitors from Rye!”

Thank you for the invitation we shall start making plans!

Very many thanks to the volunteers who turned out on the day to make it all possible. RHSC Sailability are proud to be able to help people with disabilities get out on the water and enjoy the fun and freedom of sailing.

RHSC Sailability welcomes the MoB!



If you would like to get involved with RHSC Sailability either as a volunteer, to sail, or to help raise funds please email carolinewylson@btinternet.com or call 01797 223112. All sailors - please book in advance.

Caroline Wylson

Chair RHSC Sailability

Photos: Mariners of Bewl

September 2019

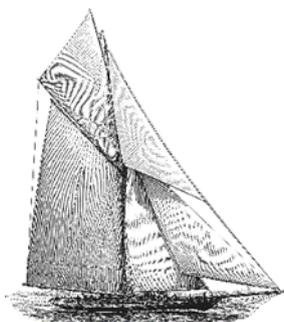
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
						1
						1230 Cruiser short race 1245 Dinghy Summer series
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
			1900 Management committee meeting		Sailability Try Sailing +BBQ 1135 Cruiser Short race	1205 Cruiser Short race 1215 Dinghy Summer series
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
			1340 Cruiser Short race		0415 Sovereign Harbour Long race & social 1900 Curry supper	1606 Dinghy race Summer series
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
					1035 Cruiser Short race 1930 Rye Bay Crew	1120 Cruiser Short race 1129 Dinghy race Summer s
30						

October 2019

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
					Sailability Try Sailing & BBQ 1030 Cruiser short race 1900 Laying up supper	1100 Cruiser Short race 1115 Dinghy race: Summer series 2
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
					1355 Cruiser Short prize race	1500 Dinghy race: Summer series 2
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
		1900: Management C'ttee Meeting			0930 Cruiser Short race	0915 Cruiser Short race
28	29	30	31			

November 2019

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
					Dinner & Prize giving– Fish Cafe	1300 Dingy race Winter series
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
						RYA Affiliates Conference
25	26	27	28	29	30	



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Along the Waterline by Florence Powell



Pyramid Orchid

On a slightly overcast June day we went on the Camber Castle Walk starting from Brede lock. We followed the Royal Military Canal path built in the 19th century to protect the coast against French invasions. The pastures alongside the canal were lush with wild flowers and we soon spotted the bright pinky-purple head of the pyramid orchids. Wild carrots were also growing there in abundance.

As we made our way towards the ruins of Camber Castle built by Henry VIII to protect Rye from invasion, the vegetation became sparser on the shingle ridges deposited by the sea as it receded over the years. The yellow flowers of the low growing Biting Stonecrop formed a patchy carpet and in places the shingle beds were visible.

Along the Waterline by Florence Powell



After walking around the ruins of the castle, we headed towards Castle Water, a flooded gravel pit, now a haven for a large variety of birds which feed on the thriving wetland plants and insects. We could see, in the distance, Shovelers and Pochards with ducklings. However, we did not catch sight of any Little Egrets. We had hoped to see a pair which had produced two chicks this year in the Cormorant colony at Castle Water.



Close to the flooded gravel pit we came across a stone memorial to a Canadian pilot, Flight Lieutenant Harry Hamilton who died on 29th August 1940 when the Hurricane he was flying crashed near Camber Castle. This was a very melancholy spot to fall upon in an otherwise beautiful part of the Reserve.

Report of Rear-Commodore House, Mick Kirby

Members will be pleased to learn that plans are being finalised to convert the old changing rooms into a more usable space as a lounge / meeting room. Work on clearing should start in the autumn and as funds become available and will continue through the winter by our intrepid building team.

On another note could I mention that boat trailer/trolley maintenance is important to enable easy movement and access to allow site clearing to take place i.e. flat tyres, rusted wheels etc on some of the less well used boats.

If you stroll down Rock Channel in Rye after leaving South Undercliff, you come across a single-storey, black-tarred cottage dating from the late 18th Century and one which one could easily expect to come across in a scene from a Dickens novel. Now partly surrounded by rather characterless, 20th century industrial buildings and hemmed in on one side by what appears to be a World War II bomb shelter, this humble abode was once the home of the ferryman at Rye.

Until 1927, the site formed part of the bank of the River Rother. Until about 1890 there were no bridges across the river and the ferry was the only means of crossing. Romney Marsh sheep destined for Rye Market would swim across the river at this point whilst the drover would take the ferry. Apparently, his dog would not be taken on the ferry and had to swim too!



The ferryman's role was effectively in the nature of a sinecure. The rights were held by two families, the Crouchers and the Gammons, for over 100 years.

In 1927 the course of the river was altered. It seems these works were carried out to prevent the frequent flooding of the river at this point which meant that Ferry Cottage ended up some distance from the river. Hitherto, the river had flowed in a straight line beside Fish Wharf (to the north of Ferry Cottage) and joined Rock Channel to the South.



A 19th Century view looking across the river to the approximate position of the ferry



Rye circa. 1843-1893 showing the position of the river during part of the period when the ferry was in operation

WILLIAM
THE
CONQUEROR
AT
RYE HARBOUR



WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR

- AT RYE HARBOUR -

William the Conqueror is a traditional, friendly pub, boasting real ales, hearty pub food including home-cooked Greek specialities, and a warm welcome for all.

There's a large outdoor area here too with plenty of alfresco seating on the banks of the River Rother



William the Conqueror Rye Harbour TN31 7TU 01797 223315

Tales of a Cornish Trader Part 3: The Continued Story of “How not to buy a boat” By Gary Palmer

Previously, in Part 2... The evening before our new (to us) boat was due to sail from Belfast to Rye, a major steering failure occurred, with no parts available either locally or apparently world-wide...

September 2018 - Alan & Irene To The Rescue.

Alan and Irene (previous owners of Golden Nomad) were mortified to have found that the steering had failed so completely and, having found that replacement part was not available, took it upon themselves to remove the broken frame (not an easy or pleasant job, jammed in a quarter locker) and had a new frame fabricated, and refitted it. Not only that, but they refused any payment. Hero and heroine. Faith in human nature fully restored.



Alan & Irene: “Gary, this bit goes at the front...”

Winter 2017-18 - Ashore in Belfast

However, the work to complete the repairs took many weeks, and now we were well into October – not a favourable time to take on the Irish Sea. So it was either organise road transport or leave her in a Belfast marina until the following year. Whilst mulling over this, Alan & Irene negotiated that ‘Nomad’ could remain on her trailer at their sailing club for the winter. More accolades and thanks due to A & I.

February 2018 - My crew take shape.

With all the previous misadventures and difficulties of finding a crew for the passage home, I wasn’t looking forward to organising it all over again. But luck was with me this time, as a speculative call to a yachting enthusiast who I had met briefly in a chance encounter at a B&B some months before, turned into a solid offer of doing the trip.

And... he had a chum who was also interested. So enter Allan and Ken, both from Scotland who, with my son Michael and I, gave us a viable crew.

A tide-favourable launch date was set with Alan & Irene, flights were booked and with time in hand and with ‘Nomad’ out of the water I arranged for all the skin fittings to be examined and serviced / replaced as necessary and the prop shaft seal (found now to be well past its replacement date) to be renewed. So finally, with a feeling of slightly surreal déjà vu, I boarded the flight to Belfast (again).

April 2018 - Racing the last tide to get afloat.

On arrival, helped as ever by Alan & Irene, we got 'Nomad' ready for sea. But there was a problem; the new shaft seal hadn't arrived and we now only had a couple of days of the fast-shortening tides left to get her afloat – any later and 'Nomad' would be high and dry for a week, scuppering the passage home, as my crew's availability could not be deferred. When, two days later, the parts did arrive, the engineer, micrometer in hand, peered up from the engine bay and announced that they wouldn't fit... we looked blankly at each other, at the shiny but useless new parts and across at the ebbing tide. We had barely an hour of water left. But he had an idea; a different type of seal would (probably) fit. He made some calls, I crossed my fingers and he set off in his car to the chandlers.



Slipway Manoeuvres

'Nomad' was hitched up to the launching tractor in readiness and to save precious minutes. The engineer returned but... no part of the right size was available, and new parts for the original seal would take weeks to arrive. With my blood pressure rising in inverse proportion to the fast ebbing tide, I considered the options, which were few: replace the old seal and hope that it would work, or cancel the trip.

The old seal did not appear to have any signs of deterioration, so, with the tractor engine running and the driver looking questioningly at me, I decided to go with replacing it. At least we would have a few days afloat to test if it was holding before we were due to leave for Rye. It didn't take long for the engineer to refit the seal (during which he found that it had previously been installed with incorrect and below-strength bolts...), and 'Nomad' moved down the slip, a long, long way out into the now shallow Belfast Lough, and finally afloat - just.



On the slip, Alan & Irene still hard at work

We fired up the engine, churned up a lot of seabed mud and motored out into deeper water, and with a check on the replaced seal, headed off for Bangor marina, the meeting point for my crew and our passage setting-off point.

Next Time: The Passage from Belfast to Rye.

Fireside reading- How Captain Cook escapes a grounding en route from Trinity Bay

Hitherto we had safely navigated this dangerous coast, where the sea in all parts conceals shoals that suddenly project from the shore, and rocks that rise abruptly like a pyramid from the bottom, for an extent of two and twenty degrees of latitude, more than one thousand three hundred miles; and therefore hitherto none of the names which distinguish the several parts of the country that we saw, are memorials of distress; but here we became acquainted with misfortune, and we therefore called the point which we had just seen farthest to the northward, Cape Tribulation.

This cape lies in latitude $16^{\circ} 6' S.$, and longitude $214^{\circ} 39' W.$ We steered along the shore N. by W. at the distance of between three and four leagues, having from fourteen to twelve, and ten fathom water: in the offing we saw two islands, which lie in latitude $16^{\circ} S.$, and about six or seven leagues from the main. At six in the evening, the northermost land in sight bore N. by W. $\frac{1}{2} W.$, and two low woody islands, which some of us took to be rocks above water, bore N. $\frac{1}{2} W.$ At this time we shortened sail, and hauled off shore E. N. E. and N. E. by E. close upon a wind, for it was my design to stretch off all night, as well to avoid the danger we saw ahead, as to see whether any islands lay in the offing, especially as we were now near the latitude assigned to the islands which were discovered by Quiros, and which some geographers, for what reason I know not, have thought fit to join to this land.



Replica of HMS Endeavour near Cooktown

We had the advantage of a fine breeze, and a clear moonlight night, and in standing off from six till near nine o'clock, we deepened our water from fourteen to twenty-one fathom; but while we were at supper, it suddenly shoaled, and we fell into twelve, ten, and eight fathom, within the space of a few minutes; I immediately ordered everybody to their station, and all was ready to put about and come to an anchor, but meeting at the next cast of the lead with deep water again, we concluded that we had gone over the tail of the shoals which we had seen at sun-set, and that all danger was past: before ten, we had twenty and one-and-twenty fathom, and this depth continuing, the gentlemen left the deck in great tranquillity, and went to bed; but a few minutes before eleven, the water shallowed at once from twenty to seventeen fathom, and before the lead could be cast again, the ship struck, and remained immovable, except by the heaving of the surge, that beat her against the craggs of the rock upon which she lay.

How Captain Cook escapes a grounding

In a few moments everybody was upon the deck, with countenances which sufficiently expressed the horrors of our situation. We had stood off the shore three hours and a half, with a pleasant breeze, and therefore knew that we could not be very near it, and we had too much reason to conclude that we were upon a rock of coral, which is more fatal than any other, because the points of it are sharp, and every part of the surface so rough as to grind away whatever is rubbed against it, even with the gentlest motion. In this situation all the sails were immediately taken in, and the boats hoisted out to examine the depth of water round the ship: we soon discovered that our fears had not aggravated our misfortune, and that the vessel had been lifted over a ledge of the rock, and lay in a hollow within it: in some places there was from three to four fathom, and in others not so many feet. The ship lay with her head to the N. E.; and at the distance of about thirty yards on the starboard side, the water deepened to eight, ten, and twelve fathom.

As soon as the long boat was out, we struck our yards and topmasts, and carried out the stream anchor on the starboard bow, got the coasting anchor and cable into the boat, and were going to carry it out the same way; but upon sounding a second time round the ship, the water was found to be deepest astern: the anchor therefore was carried out from the starboard quarter instead of the starboard bow, that is, from the stern instead of the head, and having taken ground, our utmost force was applied to the capstern, hoping that if the anchor did not come home, the ship would be got off, but to our great misfortune and disappointment we could not move her: during all this time she continued to beat with great violence against the rock, so that it was with the utmost



Capt. James Cook

difficulty that we kept upon our legs; and to complete the scene of distress, we saw by the light of the moon the sheathing boards from the bottom of the vessel floating away all round her, and at last her false keel, so that every moment was making way for the sea to rush in which was to swallow us up.

We had now no chance but to lighten her, and we had lost the opportunity of doing that to the greatest advantage, for unhappily we went on shore just at high water, and by this time it had considerably fallen, so that after she should be lightened so as to draw as much less water as the water had sunk, we should be but in the same situation as at first; and the only alleviation of this circumstance was, that as the tide ebbed the ship settled to the rocks, and was not beaten against them with so much violence. We had indeed some hope from the next tide, but it was doubtful whether she would hold

together so long, especially as the rock kept grating her bottom under the starboard bow with such force as to be heard in the fore store-room. This however was no time to indulge conjecture, nor was any effort remitted in despair of success: that no time might be lost, the water was immediately started in the hold, and pumped up; six of our guns, being all we had upon the deck, our iron and stone ballast, casks, hoop staves, oil jars, decayed stores, and many other things that lay in the way of heavier materials, were thrown overboard with the utmost expedition, every one exerting himself with an alacrity almost approaching to cheerfulness, without the least repining or discontent; yet the men were so far imprest with a sense of their situation, that not an oath was heard among them, the habit of profaneness, however strong, being instantly subdued by the dread of incurring guilt when death seemed to be so near.

How Captain Cook Escapes a Grounding

While we were thus employed, day broke upon us, and we saw the land at about eight leagues distance, without any island in the intermediate space, upon which, if the ship should have gone to pieces, we might have been set ashore by the boats, and from which they might have taken us by different turns to the main: the wind however gradually died away, and early in the forenoon it was a dead calm; if it had blown hard, the ship must inevitably have been destroyed.

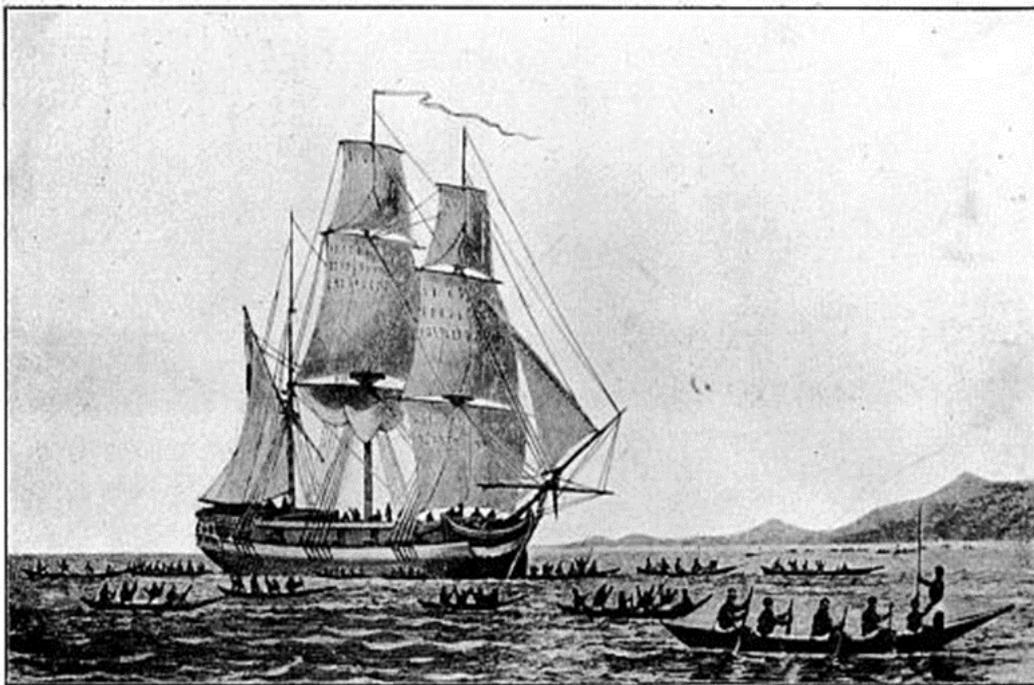
At eleven in the forenoon we expected high water, and anchors were got out, and everything made ready for another effort to heave her off if she should float, but to our inexpressible surprise and concern, she did not float by a foot and a half, though we had lightened her near fifty ton; so much did the day-tide fall short of that in the night. We now proceeded to lighten her still more, and threw overboard everything that it was possible for us to spare: hitherto she had not admitted much water, but as the tide fell, it rushed in so fast, that two pumps, incessantly worked, could scarcely keep her free. At two o'clock, she lay heeling two or three streaks to starboard, and the pinnace, which lay under her bows, touched the ground: we had now no hope but from the tide at midnight, and to prepare for it we carried out our two bower anchors, one on the starboard quarter, and the other right a-stern, got the blocks and tackle which were to give us a purchase upon the cables in order, and brought the falls, or ends of them, in abaft, straining them tight, that the next effort might operate upon the ship, and by shortening the length of the cable between that and the anchors, draw her off the ledge upon which she rested, towards the deep water.

About five o'clock in the afternoon, we observed the tide begin to rise, but we observed at the same time that the leak increased to a most alarming degree, so that two more pumps were manned, but unhappily only one of them would work: three of the pumps however were kept going, and at nine o'clock the ship righted; but the leak had gained upon us so considerably, that it was imagined she must go to the bottom as soon as she ceased to be supported by the rock: this was a dreadful circumstance, so that we anticipated the floating of the ship not as an earnest of deliverance, but as an event that would probably precipitate our destruction. We well knew that our boats were not capable of carrying us all on shore, and that when the dreadful crisis should arrive, as all command and subordination would be at an end, a contest for preference would probably ensue, that would increase even the horrors of shipwreck, and terminate in the destruction of us all by the hands of each other; yet we knew that if any should be left on board to perish in the waves, they would probably suffer less upon the whole than those who should get on shore, without any lasting or effectual defence against the natives, in a country, where even nets and fire-arms would scarcely furnish them with food; and where, if they should find the means of subsistence, they must be condemned to languish out the remainder of life in a desolate wilderness, without the possession, or even hope, of any domestic comfort, and cut off from all commerce with mankind, except the naked savages who prowled the desert, and who perhaps were some of the most rude and uncivilized upon the earth.

To those only who have waited in a state of such suspense, death has approached in all his terrors; and as the dreadful moment that was to determine our fate came on, every one saw his own sensations pictured in the countenances of his companions: however, the capstan and windlace were manned with as many hands as could be spared from the pumps, and the ship floating about twenty minutes after ten o'clock, the effort was made, and she was heaved into deep water. It was some comfort to find that she did not now admit more water than she had done upon the rock; and though, by the gaining of the leak upon the pumps, there was no less than three feet nine inches water in the hold, yet the men did not relinquish their labour, and we held the water as it were at bay; but having now endured excessive fatigue of body and agitation of mind for more than four-and-down upon the deck, though a stream of water was running over it from the pumps between three and four

How Captain Cook Escapes a Grounding

twenty hours, and having but little hope of succeeding at last, they began to flag: none of them could work at the pump more than five or six minutes together, and then, being totally exhausted, they threw themselves inches deep; when those who succeeded them had worked their spell, and were exhausted in their turn, they threw themselves down in the same manner, and the others started up again, and renewed their labour; thus relieving each other till an accident was very near putting an end to their efforts at once.



CAPTAIN COOK'S VESSEL 'THE ENDEAVOUR.'

The planking which lines the inside of the ship's bottom is called the ceiling, and between this, and the outside planking, there is a space of about eighteen inches: the man who till this time had attended the well to take the depth of water, had taken it only to the ceiling, and gave the measure accordingly; but he being now relieved, the person who came in his stead, reckoned the depth to the outside planking, by which it appeared in a few minutes to have gained upon the pumps eighteen inches, the difference between the planking without and within.

Upon this, even the bravest was upon the point of giving up his labour with his hope, and in a few minutes everything would have been involved in all the confusion of despair. But this accident, however dreadful in its first consequences, was eventually the cause of our preservation: the mistake was soon detected, and the sudden joy which every man felt upon finding his situation better than his fears had suggested, operated like a charm, and seemed to possess him with a strong belief that scarcely any real danger remained. New confidence and new hope, however founded, inspired new vigour; and though our state was the same as when the men first began to slacken in their labour, through weariness and despondency, they now renewed their efforts with such alacrity and spirit, that before eight o'clock in the morning the leak was so far from having gained upon the pumps, that the pumps had gained considerably upon the leak.

How Captain Cook Escapes a Grounding

Everybody now talked of getting the ship into some harbour, as a thing not to be doubted, and as hands could be spared from the pumps, they were employed in getting up the anchors: the stream anchor and best bower we had taken on board; but it was found impossible to save the little bower, and therefore it was cut away at a whole cable: we lost also the cable of the stream anchor among the rocks; but in our situation these were trifles which scarcely attracted our notice. Our next business was to get up the fore-top-mast and fore-yard, and warp the ship to the south-east, and at eleven, having now a breeze from the sea, we once more got under sail and stood for the land.

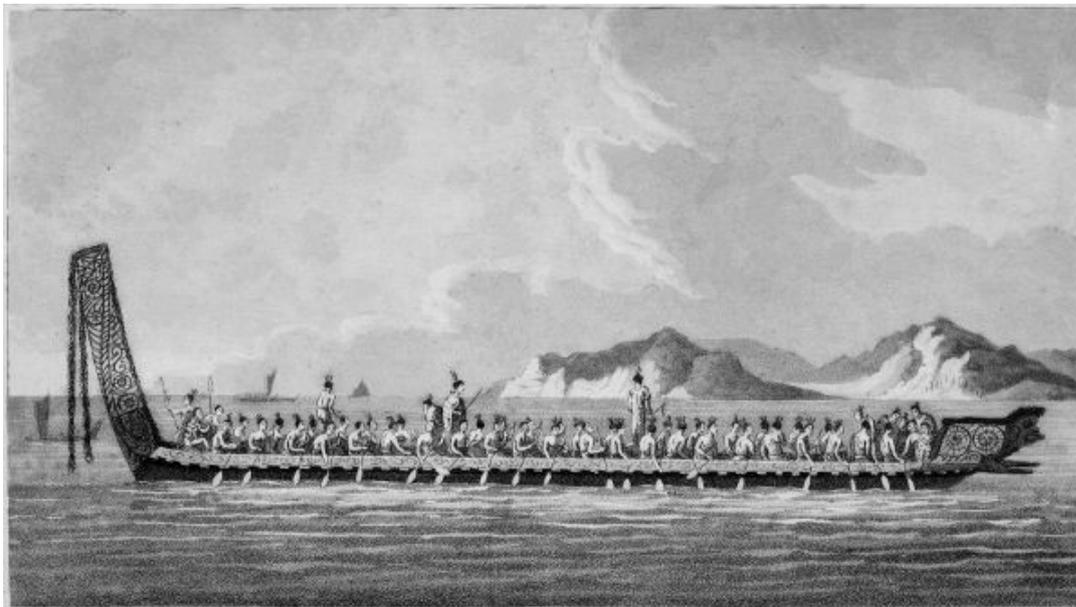


ONCE MORE CARRIED BACK TOWARDS THE CORAL REEF.

It was, however, impossible long to continue the labour by which the pumps had been made to gain upon the leak; and as the exact situation of it could not be discovered, we had no hope of stopping it within. In this situation, Mr. Monkhouse, one of my midshipmen, came to me, and proposed an expedient that he had once seen used on board a merchant-ship, which sprung a leak that admitted above four feet water an hour, and which, by this expedient, was brought safely from Virginia to London; the master having such confidence in it, that he took her out of harbour, knowing her condition, and did not think it worthwhile to wait till the leak could be otherwise stopped. To this man, therefore, the care of the expedient, which is called fothering the ship, was immediately committed, four or five of the people being appointed to assist him, and he performed it in this manner: he took a lower studding sail, and having mixed together a large quantity of oakum and wool, chopped pretty small, he stitched it down in handfuls upon the sail, as lightly as possible, and over this he spread the dung of our sheep and other filth; but horse-dung, if we had had it, would have been better. When the sail was thus prepared, it was hauled under the ship's bottom by ropes, which kept it extended, and when it came under the leak, the suction which carried in the water, carried in with it the oakum and wool from the surface of the sail, which in other parts the water was not sufficiently agitated to wash off.

How Captain Cook Escapes a Grounding

By the success of this expedient our leak was so far reduced, that instead of gaining upon three pumps, it was easily kept under with one. This was a new source of confidence and comfort; the people could scarcely have expressed more joy if they had been already in port; and their views were so far from being limited to running the ship ashore in some harbour, either of an island or the main, and building a vessel out of her materials to carry us to the East Indies, which had so lately been the utmost object of our hope, that nothing was now thought of but ranging along the shore in search of a convenient place to repair the damage she had sustained, and then prosecuting the voyage upon the same plan as if nothing had happened. Upon this occasion I must observe, both in justice and gratitude to the ship's company, and the gentlemen on board, that although in the midst of our distress everyone seemed to have a just sense of his danger, yet no passionate exclamations or frantic gestures were to be heard or seen; every one appeared to have the perfect possession of his mind; and every one exerted himself to the uttermost, with a quiet and patient perseverance, equally distant from the tumultuous violence of terror, and the gloomy inactivity of despair.



In the meantime, having light airs at E. S. E., we got up the main-top-mast, and main-yard, and kept edging in for the land, till about six o'clock in the evening, when we came to an anchor in seventeen fathom water, at the distance of seven leagues from the shore, and one from the ledge of rocks upon which we had struck.

This ledge or shoal lies in latitude $15^{\circ} 45' S.$, and between six and seven leagues from the main. It is, not, however, the only shoal on this part of the coast, especially to the northward; and at this time we saw one to the southward, the tail of which we passed over, when we had uneven soundings about two hours before we struck. A part of this shoal is always above water and has the appearance of white sand: a part also of that upon which we had lain is dry at low water, and in that place consists of sand stones; but all the rest of it is a coral rock.

How Captain Cook Escapes a Grounding

At three o'clock, we saw an opening that had the appearance of a harbour and stood off and on while the boats examined it; but they soon found that there was not depth of water in it sufficient for the ship. When it was near sunset, there being many shoals about us, we anchored in four fathom, at the distance of about two miles from the shore, the land extending from N. $\frac{1}{2}$ E. to S. by E. $\frac{1}{2}$ E. The pinnace was still out with one of the mates; but at nine o'clock she returned, and reported, that about two leagues to leeward she had discovered just such a harbour as we wanted, in which there was a sufficient rise of water, and every other convenience that could be desired, either for laying the ship ashore, or heaving her down.

In consequence of this information, I weighed at six o'clock in the morning, and having sent two boats a-head, to lie upon the shoals that we saw in our way, we ran down to the place; but notwithstanding our precaution, we were once in three fathom water. As soon as these shoals were passed, I sent the boats to lie in the channel that led to the harbour, and by this time it began to blow. It was happy for us that a place of refuge was at hand; for we soon found that the ship would not work, having twice missed stays: our situation, however, though it might have been much worse, was not without danger; we were entangled among shoals, and I had great reason to fear being driven to leeward, before the boats could place themselves so as to prescribe our course. I therefore anchored in four fathom, about a mile from the shore, and then made the signal for the boats to come on board. When this was done, I went myself and buoyed the channel, which I found very narrow; the harbour also I found smaller than I expected, but most excellently adapted to our purpose; and it is remarkable, that in the whole course of our voyage we had seen no place which, in our present circumstances, could have afforded us the same relief.

In the morning of the 17th, though the wind was still fresh, we ventured to weigh, and push in for the harbour; but in doing this we twice run the ship aground: the first time she went off without any trouble, but the second time she stuck fast. We now got down the fore-yard, fore-top-masts, and booms, and taking them overboard, made a raft of them alongside of the ship. The tide was happily rising, and about one o'clock in the afternoon, she floated. We soon warped her into the harbour and having moored her alongside of a steep beach to the south, we got the anchors, cables, and all the hawsers on shore before night.

From the Three Voyages of Captain Cook Around the World Vol. II

If you have narrowly escaped death running aground off the coast of Australia, in the West Indies or perhaps as you have been leaving or entering Rock Channel why not write to the Editor (anonymously if you prefer) with a note of your experiences.....



INTERESTED IN BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE RYA?

The Royal Yachting Association (RYA) is the national governing body for dinghy, yacht and motor cruising, all forms of sail racing, RIBs and sports boats, windsurfing and personal watercraft.

The RYA is the leading representative for those involved in boating and helps protect and advance the interests of sailors at both national and local levels. With more than 1500 affiliated clubs the RYA sets and maintains recognised standards for training for both leisure and commercial boating through a network of more than 2,400 RYA Recognised Training Centres across 58 countries. The RYA is also responsible for one of the UK's most successful Olympic medal winning sports and its coaching and development schemes actively support 800 of our country's top sailors, from talented juniors to Olympic and World champions.

Although Rye Harbour Sailing Club is an RYA affiliated club this does not mean that you are automatically a member of the RYA! The benefits of being an RYA member include access to:

specialist cruising, legal and technical boating advice from RYA in-house experts;

exclusive offers and discounts from over 80 member reward partners, from clothing, personal and boat equipment, to the latest technology, holidays and travel, insurance, magazine subscriptions and boat show tickets, helping you keep down the cost of your boating;

all the latest news and information via the RYA Magazine, website or direct to your inbox with a host of eNewsletters.

Our club is now a joining point for the RYA. If you join through us the Club will receive a financial benefit by way of commission. You can join through the Club by one of the following methods:

By completing an RYA Application form which will shortly be available at the Clubhouse and returning it to the RYA;

By Phone – by calling the RYA's Member Services team on 023 8060 4159 who will happily talk through the benefits of becoming an RYA Member. Don't forget you will need to quote the Club's Joining Point number (008101027) to ensure the Club benefits from your application.

Online at www.rya.org.uk/go/join by selecting your reason for joining as 'Joining Point' and you will then be prompted to enter the Club's joining point number.

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