



## Roach Sailing Association

[www.paglesham.org.uk/rsa](http://www.paglesham.org.uk/rsa)

### February 2009 Newsletter

#### In this issue

**Chairman's Report**

**2009 Subs and River Licence**

**2008 Racing Summary**

**Commissioning MOON DANCER**

**TRIUMPHANT Update 2008**

**2009 Sailing Programme**

**Bosun's Corner**

**2009 AGM**

**St Petersburg or Bust revisited**

**Two Men go Scilly**

**2008 Financial Summary**

#### Chairman's Report

*Rodney Choppin*

Dear Members

As we enter 2009 with doom and gloom apparently all around us our thoughts turn to fitting out as we ready ourselves for the new sailing season. Oh to be back in Yolksfleet Creek on those balmy sunny summer days! With January reminding us that we can still receive chilly Winters, very little activity has been seen so far in the boatyards, but I am sure once the sun gains strength we will be looking at the list of jobs to be done; the list seems to get longer every year.

Back in November we once again enjoyed the warm atmosphere of the Brandy Hole Yacht Club with shipmates, and a good meal was enjoyed by most of us. Congratulations to all the 'pot hunters'. Sadly gone are the days when tradition had it that the trophy winner would fill the cup he/she had won with some spirited concoction and pass it round the tables; by the time the tenth trophy had arrived there were many well and truly under the table. I suppose Health and Safety put an end to that tradition. What a pity!

Our AGM is on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2009 at the Creeksea Ferry Inn. I hope to see you all there as this is the opportunity to voice your opinion on Association matters.

There are three new members I would like to welcome to the RSA

*Paul Howard*

*Ron Parr with his boat NADETTE, a McWester 26*

*Graham Pelling with his boat BLUE MIST, a Sabre 27*

Finally I would like to wish you all, on behalf of your committee, a Health, Happy and Prosperous New Year. May fair winds and all those pleasantries associated with sailing go your way in 2009.

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#### Bosun's Corner

*John Langrick*

##### *Yard Update*

There is still no news of any potential buyers for the yard at Paglesham and so we anticipate business as usual in 2009. Steve is making a real effort to tidy the yard with the new toilet block being installed at the moment. He has requested all cars to be parked in the car park and not in the yard but of course you can still drive into/out of the yard to drop sailing gear off.

The dinghy park is now directly at the front of our shed and we will need to ensure that they are all kept tidy and with your boat name clearly marked on both tender and trolley.

DALLY is currently laid up just in front of the shed, she gave us good service last year with few problems. I have a couple of small service items to attend to on the engine and rudder pintles, but otherwise she will just need a paint and antifoul.

The shed should require minimal attention this year, just a tidy around. At the moment I have a few pieces of ply stored in there, but I will remove before the start of the season.

Rodney has also kindly donated us a vice that will be installed just inside the shed door to the right. Another job if any volunteer fancies it and thanks Rodney.

### Litter Pick Up

We plan a litter pick up on the saltings upstream from the Paglesham yard on 15<sup>th</sup> March. This is in conjunction with Rochford River Care and the Roach Area and Conservation Committee. Volunteers would be very welcome. We muster at 10:30 in the yard at Paglesham.

### Update on the Oyster Pits

The Paglesham Village Trust now have sufficient funds to purchase the land known as 'Gordons Patch' or the 'Oyster Pits', a big thanks to RSA members who have also contributed. Solicitors are working to complete the purchase. The RSA and Fairways Committee are ready to play a part in looking after the plot, and one of the first priorities will be repairing the jetty. We hope to be able to make an announcement at the AGM. If you have any materials such as large joists and boarding etc, it will be most welcome, but more than that your physical help would really be appreciated.



Villagers using 'Gordons Patch' in May 1993. Lets hope to see more of this in 2009

We will be organizing working parties on Dally, the shed and Gordons Patch early in the spring. Please make sure you monitor the Roach Group, or keep in contact with committee members.

### RSA 2009 Cruises

There are cruises planned for the East Coast on Weekend 27<sup>th</sup> June, starting at a Pyefleet weekend. I do hope you can make it. We start at Pyefleet with those who just want to spend the weekend, but the rest then cruise up the E Coast depending on conditions.. If you would like to attend please let John Langrick know.

We also plan a cruise up the Thames, staying in a marina for the week if you want, The current target date is 23<sup>rd</sup> May to 31<sup>st</sup> May, of course depending on weather. A number of members have expressed interest in this trip and would you please coordinate with either John Langrick or Richard Bessey.

A few people have also expressed interest in 'going foreign' this year. This usually happens towards the end of July and last year included France, Belgium and Holland. We never state an actual date as this will depend on the crew's convenience and also the weather. If you are interested, please let Richard and John know

### Latest 'East Coast Rivers'.

I have received the latest copy of East Coast Rivers. Jan Harber has made an excellent job of this latest edition detailing the latest information on the East Coast rivers we all love. This is essential reading for all those who cruise our area and I highly recommend your purchase.

### 2009 Subs and River Licence

2009 subs are now due. These remain at £6. It would really help keep the costs down if you could accept your newsletter by e-mail. If this is OK and you currently only receive hard copy newsletters, please contact [johnlangrick@aol.com](mailto:johnlangrick@aol.com). For the racers, please note there is an additional £5 subs which covers cup engraving and insurance.

We also have river licenses and note that there is an increase from last year. The 2009 price as follows:

### Dues on Yachts, Recreational Vessels, Fishing Vessels, Working Craft, Houseboats

Vessel Length		Harbour Dues Payable
Feet	Metres	
8.00 - 15.5	2.44 - 4.73	£18.00
15.5 - 21.5	4.73 - 6.55	£25.00
21.5 - 26.5	6.55 - 8.07	£32.00
26.5 - 32.5	8.07 - 9.90	£33.00
32.5 - 38.5	9.90 - 11.73	£39.00
38.5 - 49.5	11.73 - 15.08	£44.00
49.5 - 59.5	15.08 - 18.12	£49.00
59.5 +	18.12 +	£64.00

### Waterskiing Vessels

Members of Woodham Ferrers Waterski Club	£ 49.00
Other Waterskiing Vessels	£129.00

### Personal Water Craft (PWC)

£129.00

### Junior Fleet Dinghies

£ 6.00

Sailing dinghies, max. length 16 ft, sailed only by 16 year olds and under

### Club Safety Boats / Yard Launches

£ 6.00

Launches/RIBs owned and registered to clubs and used solely for club activities & bona fide Yard Launches

Subs should be paid to our Treasurer Simon Joel, and if you would like to purchase your river license by mail, please include an SAE. Please send your cheque to Simon made payable to the Roach Sailing Association, Simon Joel, 28 Chapman Walk, Leigh-on-Sea, SS9 2XA.

### Facility Charge at Paglesham

For those who do not use RSA moorings managed by John Langrick, i.e., those on Rons moorings, Warrens or anywhere else, there is a facility fee payable to Steve Adams for dinghy storage, parking and use of the slipway etc. People on John Langrick's moorings have this facility fee included in their annual mooring fees which have all now been paid. For the last seven years the facility fee has been £150 and this year it has been increased to £200. Those who live in Waterside lane may be able to negotiate a better rate direct with Steve, but please do see Steve and pay your dues as soon as possible.

### 2009 AGM

The AGM will again be held at the Creeksea Ferry Inn on Sunday 8th March 2009. As usual, the current committee will stand down and we will need to re-elect anew.

Current members:

John Martin – President *Phone 01245231730*  
Rodney Choppin – Chairman *Phone 01702258332*  
Jon Walmsley – Secretary *Phone 07836344508*  
Richard Bessey - Race Officer *Phone 07773771715*  
Simon Joel – Treasurer *Phone 07721397317*  
John Langrick – Bosun, Membership Secretary and Newsletter Editor *Phone 07740 839410*  
Brian Brown *Phone 07714 697211*  
Mike Green *Phone 07950360115*  
Ken Wickham *Phone 07771995382*

Please note that Rodney would like to stand down as Chairman this year, so that post will certainly need to be filled. All nominees for committee should be sent to our Secretary Jon Walmsley two weeks prior to the AGM. Email [walmsley@jonj.freereserve.co.uk](mailto:walmsley@jonj.freereserve.co.uk) or by phone.

### 2009 Fitting Out Supper

This will be held on the 28<sup>th</sup> March at the Punch Bowl Church End Paglesham. You should settle your own bill on the night, but we would like to know if you will be attending. Please contact Richard Bessey to book your place.

## 2008 Racing Summary

*Richard Bessey*

### **Paglesham Pot**

The May heatwave continued, but with a light NE breeze as eight boats set off down-tide. MOON DANCER was quickly away, and stayed well ahead throughout. They tacked down to the Crouch, took the Clarks buoy to port, and ran back (carefully avoiding the sunken fishing boat). ULABELLA was second home, hotly pursued by MISTRESS, GLAYVA and SAMARA, but MOON DANCER gets the Paglesham Pot, with MISTRESS in 2nd place and ULABELLA 3rd.

### **Shuttlewood Cup** on 1st June

Six boats were out, but with negligible wind, the start had to be delayed for the crews to even reach the line. What there was seemed to be from the N, but who could tell.

HW was at 10:58 and in order that we could at least sail in the correct direction, the first leg was from the usual start in Paglesham Reach, but up-river (with the last of the tide), rounding the last of Ron Pipe's moorings upriver to starboard, and then down the Roach to the Roach Buoy nestled in the bend at Devil's Reach, then back to the start.

SAMARA, SURAH, MOON DANCER, ULABELLA, IMOTHES and SWANTI started with hardly a breath of wind and drifted up-river in the tide. Then down past the slipway and towards the final mark. It was suggested that contestants should time their arrival at the Roach Buoy as it became clear that once the tide turned, it was very unlikely that any way could be made against the tide.

In SWANTI, John was very upset by being overtaken by the ducks in Paglesham Reach, and was last to the final mark, passing the rest of the fleet who returned to Pag by motor and a raft-up by ULABELLA for 'after race' celebrations.

MOON DANCER was first to the mark, but on corrected time. IMOTHES takes the cup, followed by ULABELLA and SURAH third.

### **Paglesham Yacht Race**

A sunny day at last for the Paglesham Yacht Race, but not a lot of wind. With 2 hours of flood to come, the only course was up-river. Seven boats clung in a raft opposite to the Hard until Richard said "Go" and they set off on the stream. The wind did pick up occasionally, and all made the turning buoy upstream of Stambidge creek within the hour. Then the struggle back with some tacking to do against the flood.

Nemo had the lead throughout and made good time, with MERGANSER and then Mini in chase. On handicap STELLA MARIE had 3rd place with NEMO second, and Steve Noble's Tideway APPLE had first place.

### **Whitaker Cup**

Six boats set out from Quay Reach, on a course to the Foulness buoy and back to the Buxey No 2. At first there were occasional good breezes, but these died away as they passed the Outer Crouch, and they drifted on.

SWANTI, MISTRESS and LOTUS retired and anchored at the finish line, then IMOTHES gave MEMORY a tow to join them.

ULABELLA and SAMARA kept going and the course was shortened to finish at the Foulness buoy. SAMARA made it first, and wins the Whitaker cup.

### **Mudcatchers Cup**

The theme for the race was "hanging out the washing", and the course was to be clockwise round Potton. It was another gusty day and SARAH EDITH elected to row, (but flew a selection of undergarments from the masthead, and a jib downwind). In the unbroken Mudcatchers tradition, someone has to capsize at the start - this year it was WINKS turn, and the start was delayed while she was

towed ashore and emptied out. A shortened course was chosen, up Paglesham Pool and back, and they set off. Heather had more than one ducking as MINI capsized in the gusts, but made good progress until her rudder snapped. Luckily Nigel had come along in DALLY to keep an eye on us all! Gerald was rowing TT CATERAN and was close behind SARAH EDITH right to the finish. But WINKS, under reefed lugsail (and streamer), was first to the finish off Paglesham Hard, and wins the Mudcatchers Cup.

### **Gracilda Cup**

Blown out

### **Don McDowell Trophy**

After the start was firmly announced as the Fambridge racing buoy at 10:30, there was still some confusion and they were well spread out at the 4-3-2-1-GO.

BRIAR ROSE was up for it though, and pursued PHILOMELLE with the following wind, almost catching up as they approached the Burnham moorings. But PHILOMELLE picked the quieter tide through the moorings and regained the lead. It was a great sail, with most people sailing from Paglesham to Fambridge in record time. BRIAR ROSE was going particularly well on her first RSA outing, under foresail only. The finishing order was PHILOMELLE, BRIAR ROSE, ULABELLA, MOON DANCER, SWANTI, HALLOWE'EN, VENTO MARA, GLAYVA, MARSHMALLOW, SAMARA, KETOS.

### **Lifeboat (RNLI) Cup Cruisers**

The start was only delayed for one minute, while ULABELLA got off the mud, and they were off with a following wind down the Roach, along Quay Reach and down with the ebb to the Inner Crouch buoy. Then a long beat back, but the neap tide was turning already. PHILOMELLE took the lead shortly after the start, and kept it throughout although IMOTHES was gaining on the final beat up the Roach, with ULABELLA tacking up behind.

On handicap PHILOMELLE was in 3rd place with IMOTHES 2nd and ULABELLA wins the Lifeboat Cup.

### **Lifeboat Cup (open boats)**

Hardly a breath of wind as they gathered at the Hard, but the course was down to Quay Reach with the last ebb, and back on the early flood. Seven dinghies and (for once) an orderly start, and a NE breeze sprang up as if to order - on the nose. Still tacking down towards the Wade, WINKS met NEMO coming back on the run, then MINI and MERGANSER. Paul's lugger, KATE is a welcome new addition to the fleet.

Corrected times made little difference to the finish order, with MERGANSER rd, MINI and NEMO first place.

### **Roach Plate**

Gales overnight and lashings of rain did not deter 5 boats from the start, and the all sailed the course to Horse Shoal and back in good time. Tacking back up Quay Reach, BRIAR ROSE made the Foulness shore and had to motor off, and so retired. ULABELLA lead the way throughout, with GLAYVA overtaking PHILOMELLE in the last leg.

On handicap, ULABELLA has first place, with IMOTHES 2nd and GLAYVA 3rd.

### **Blue Shoal Trophy.**

You could barely see the sea walls as they appeared, one by one through the fog, six boats at the start line. It was rumoured that the course was up river to Stambidge reach, so on the word they turned and disappeared again, just enough way to clear the moorings. The faint breeze was sometimes there, sometimes not, and the sun tried to burn off the fog. But it was more than an hour before the followers could see the leaders, 100 yards ahead. At slack water (or in some cases rather later) they turned at the pair of buoys, and were helped back to the start by a little more wind. All rafted up around ARABEL

(return of the Roach Café) for lunch.

On handicap GLAYVA has 3rd place, with ARABEL 2nd and ULABELLA wins again.

#### **Len Chopin Cup**

This cup is awarded to the boat with the highest tally of points from the season's racing. One yacht entered every single race and accumulated nearly twice as many points as the closest competition. In third place was SAMARA, hot on the heels of IMOTHES in second place but ULABELLA wins the Len Chopin Cup

#### **Seamanship Cup**

The Seamanship this year goes to one of our members who only underook the challenge to get to Brightlinsea a couple of years ago.

This year he also sailed to Brightlingsea, but upon leaving the Colne, forgot his directions and turned to port, returning to Paglesham the long way, a complete circumnavigation of the UK. Shaun and DESTAYE started the epic journey in the spring of this year with an occasional trip back to the day job and change of crew.

Many tracked his progress around the UK via his regular blog (internet to the uneducated), and we look forward to an account of his highlights in the next newsletter.

I think you will all agree that this was a great feat and well done to Shaun, family and DESTAYE and let's hope he get's his compass fixed for the new year!

#### **Bosun's Bell**

We searched long and hard for the recipient of this award. There were many calamities to choose from, you will see many members keeping their head low at this moment.

After careful consideration of all applicants we have made a decision.

If you lose your mobile phone, then simply ring it. If you loose your wallet or keys, then failing all else, ask your partner.

Have you ever back to the car park and forgotten where you parked your car? Well this award goes to one of our members who not only forgot where he parked his boat, but also two other member's boats parked nearby.

The occasion was the Thames rally to Benfleet creek where the crews were to tie up at Thorpe bay for a barbecue. Through no fault of it's own, the Havengore bridge failed to open – a frequent occurrence in recent months, and Swanti, Ketos and Blue mist had to sail the long way round the Maplins. This resulted in arriving at Thorpe Bay with the tide out and so anchoring by the Shoebury wreck.

Our Bosun (John Langrick) suggested walking ashore with dinghy and then returning when the tide started to make over the sands. A riding light was set and the crews marched ashore over the sands to the Barbecue. With the tide making, our bosun set off to find the three boats clearly visible at that time. However it is close to 2 miles of sand and after walking most of the way back, and then launching the dinghy, night had fallen.

And where were the boats? Just nowhere to be seen. After rowing aimlessly for over an hour, the search had to be abandoned and the crew had to spend the night Chez Bosun.

And so for mislaying not just one boat but three. The award goes to **John Langrick**

## **St Petersburg or Bust Revisited**

*John Apps*

Jon Walmsley delighted an audience at the Gerrards Cross Sailing Association (GXSA) in Buckinghamshire with a talk lasting an hour and a half on his 2003 trip to St Petersburg in 'Imothes'. Some of the highlights of his talk were his description of Paglesham and the River Roach, his escape under fire from Poland, and attempting to get into a Baltic Port amongst numerous ferries in an F7 with no engine. There was also much interest in his description of the narrow channels in St Petersburg, the ablutions block at the marina and the general way his boat and crew were dealt with by the Russian authorities. His visits to Finland and Sweden and the difficulties of navigating amongst rocks as opposed to East Coast mud caused quite a bit of laughter. Overall the GXSA marked Jon very highly and had a very good evening.



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## **Commissioning Moon Dancer.**

*Brian Brown*

How on earth did I get involved with importing boats, particularly boats from an unknown manufacturer in Argentina? Until a little while ago I owned half of a business that imported Malbec yachts into the UK. It was a strange choice of activity especially as my main business is Management and IT Consultancy.

I blame my business partner in this particular venture, Ian Murdoch. Interestingly, Ian blames me for it. Ian, a long time friend of mine, had a habit of 'away days' to the various European boat shows and dragging me along with him. Our favourite show became La Rochelle after one day in September 2003 with the temperature in the eighties where at the end of the show day we were given a test sail in a 24 foot cruiser racer called a 'Surprise' and also a demonstration in a 200hp Rib. This was followed by a lovely French meal washed down with some cheap yet very tasty Burgundy. Southampton Boat Show - eat your heart out.

At the time I was looking for a replacement for my ageing 23 foot Hunter Sonata, Saraband, and I wanted a modern version, something small, fast, new and good value.

The next year at the Barcelona Boat show, on a sunny warm November day, we saw the Malbec 240 and it seemed just right for me. Indeed it seemed just right for anyone wanting a smallish yacht. Neither of us had heard of the manufacturer, Oceantech, before but our research showed that they were selling lots of these boats in Spain. Encouragingly, they were designed by a protégé of German Frers who designs Swans and other well known boats.

A good look over showed that the 240 really did seem to be a modern version of the Hunter Sonata. Well built but sparsely fitted out, enough comforts for a couple for a weekend, fast and fun to sail. Above all it seemed unbelievable value for money at around 23,000 euros. A combination of low Argentinian labour costs, a favourable

exchange rate and being able to fit into a container for low shipping costs saw to that.

It was then that the madness set in. Ian's business, importing industrial power analysers, is handily located just by Carter's yard and he had plenty of spare workshop and storage space downstairs in his office unit. I don't remember who first suggested it, neither does Ian, but we decided to speak to the manufacturer about importing the range into the UK.

Five months later two Malbec 240s arrived neatly fitted in a container and, with lots of logistics help from Graham and Lee at Carter's yard, we quickly commissioned one of them, PUMA of PAGLESHAM, as a demonstrator.

So what was it like being a boat importer? Well we had two years of great fun and many interesting experiences and lots of lessons learnt. We got to know most of the yachting journalists by taking them out for test sails which ended up as boat tests in all the major UK magazines. I remember one test with a very well known journalist whom I won't name, where we went out in 30 knots of wind in Puma during which he insisted that we didn't reef as he wanted to see the boat 'over pressed'. Halfway through the test we were just by the Inner Crouch with large wind against tide standing waves starting to form. The boat was already surfing at nine knots and it was then that 'David' disappeared down below. Shouting at him above the howling wind I asked what he was looking for as I grimly hung on to the tiller and he yelled back saying he wanted to find the spinnaker! Luckily I was sitting on the cockpit locker and it was in there. I stayed sitting on the locker for the rest of the day. When we got back to dock he commented that the rigging seemed a little loose!

We also had great fun exhibiting at the London and Southampton Boat shows. An amazing variety of people came looking at the boats and it slowly started to dawn on us why people these days buy a brand new ben/jen/bav 42 as their first boat. We lost count of the number of couples who had chartered a 40 footer somewhere exotic and wanted the same boat for when they came back. They couldn't understand it when we hinted that something that works with four or five on board in Greece might not be the best yacht for a blowy UK day with only two on board. The idea of starting with a small boat and working up seems long gone.

Southampton is a much better show than London and I will always remember a huge cruise ship docked next door to the boat show being given a send off by every exhibitor's fog horn when she left. Even my little plastimo gas horn added its bit to the cacophony. Absolutely deafening! When it came for us to take the boat home we arrived later than we should have and we arrived at Mayflower Park to see our boat attached to a short length of isolated pontoon about 100 meters away from the shore. It was lucky we brought the rubber dinghy! The Southampton Boat show Marina is removed about 48 hours after the end of the show.

I was also amazed to see the speed of the London show 'breakdown' starting at 6.00 pm at the end of the London show with Excel looking like a building site fifteen minutes after the last 'punter' left the building with the carpets already rolled up. The Macgregor trailer/sailor was out the door with the stand packed away half an hour later.

Ultimately, we decided to stop importing the boats this year as the yacht sales did not cover the costs of marketing and establishing a new brand to the UK. Selling five boats did not justify keeping the business going. However, we had a great time doing it. All involved remain friends and I decided to purchase a Malbec 240 specifically for myself.

MOON DANCER, is my own boat. I spent two months with her in our workshop fitting a chartplotter, log and vhf. I changed the wiring so that the outboard plugs straight into a charging circuit and plumbed in a 12v outlet and a small solar panel. Also, she had no deck gear so I could design the mounting of the skin fittings and positioning of the

deck gear myself. The other addition was some tek dek 'fake' teak decking on the cockpit floor and seating area. Whilst some people think it looks a bit 'tacky' I think it looks a lot better than white fibreglass and is so much easier to clean than the standard stippled non-slip finish.

For my use MOON DANCER is the ideal yacht, small enough for me and the kids to handle, quick enough for some friendly RSA racing, along with the odd foray into Burnham Week, and with enough creature comforts for a weekend or two away. I prefer her to the bigger 29 and 36 footers, strange I know but I am really looking forward to the Pyefleet and Fambridge weekends in her.

Her commissioning hasn't gone completely smoothly though. We were sent a newly designed 'racing keel' which would draw well over two meters but apparently makes a difference to windward performance. Unfortunately, the shape of the keel stub was different, too different for me to modify, so it is back to the normal keel. The standard keel is more useful for the East Coast, anyway, as it only draws 1.4M.



*MOON DANCER's first introduction to the water*

Early March saw three of us pushing MOON DANCER on a wheeled cradle to the beginning of the unmade road at Carters yard. Graham backed up his small cradle and a few hours later we were ready to fit the keel to the boat. Four tubes of Sikaflex, a small bucket of epoxy, and much grunting on a torque wrench later and we now have MOON DANCER ready to launch. All she needs now is the Mast lifted and I join the ranks of 'normal' boat users again!

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## **Two Men go Scilly, (or Doom, Doom and more Doom.)** *John Langrick*

I was delighted to be asked by Shaun to join him on DESTAYE for one of the highlights of his 'round the UK' trip in 2008. DESTAYE had arrived at Penzance the previous week and Shaun had returned home. On the following week, I was to drive to his house and then we would both drive down to the West Country to start our cruise. Earlier this year DESTAYE had some major modifications for this trip with the help of Peter Edwards and myself, significantly a spray hood, stove and a huge fuel tank. We managed to get the spray hood to fit on the very last day DESTAYE set off from Paglesham after frantic trips back to 'W Sails' and with other 'last minute' mods, I was interested to see how they all fared so far on Shaun's journey.

We arrived late afternoon and started to get our gear on board DESTAYE where she lay, three 'bottoms' out and locked into the main harbour next to the Harbour Master's office. DESTAYE appeared to have fared very well so far as she tugged on her mooring ropes. She was laying alongside mostly traditional ex working boats, ketch rigged with lugsails. One came in single handed and very nearly 'T' boned' DESTAYE. The small crowd that gathered in the quayside were disappointed by a couple of sprightly RSA members who suggested an alternative manoeuvre and eagerly took lines for a

berth a few yards away on the wall. The Harbour Master laughed and said he always came in like that. The skipper looked and old salt, all he needed was a parrot. These damned pirates.



*PIRATES of Penzance*

After stowing gear, we set off to find a place for Shaun to leave his car for the following week and also a good local for a feed. This is where I was introduced to 'Doom Bar', an excellent bitter brewed in Cornwall. The name is from a tidal bar over the Camel estuary at Padstow, and certainly an excellent pint.

The lock gates would open at 8:00am, and retiring to DESTAYE after our 'refreshment', we lit the coal stove and planned our trip in the morning, to the frequent sound of water being pumped out from the pirate ship. The forecast was for easterly winds of about 8-10 knots and with the tide ebbing westwards, we should have an easy run. Shaun filled an additional 25 litres of fuel and settled his account at the office and we set back out via the lock into the river beyond

St Michael's mount was just visible through the mist to the East as we motor sailed in light winds towards the West at 4 knots. Our course would take us to the north of Wolf Rock and by 11:00 were off Lands End with the Long Ships light away off our Starboard beam. We were navigating using DESTAYE's excellent 'Standard Horizon' chart plotter and autohelm while we sipped tea and ate lunch. The VHF was alive with boats transiting the shipping lanes which run N/S between the mainland and Scillies, but upon checking with the Coastguard we were not required to make any special arrangements. We were very surprised to see a number of crab pots in more than 100' of water as we approached the shipping lanes and what appears to be into the lanes. We had to keep a constant watch and occasionally dodge many, which were covered in weed and quite difficult to see.



*Our 'Scilly' trip.*

At 13:00, we first saw the first of the Scilly Islands low on the horizon and changed course to clear the 'Gilstone' rocks off the shore at St Marys. We arrived at Hugh Town on St Mary's at 3:30pm and picked up a recommended mooring close to the jetty in crystal clear water, just under the harbour master's office in brilliant sunshine on a warm afternoon.

The guide stated that when in the Scillies, think small. There really are only a few hundred yards between many of the islands, the sea was beautifully clear and the air warm. Doom Bar called again and in the evening we went ashore to celebrate our safe arrival at a local pub with beer and excellent Shepherd's pie. The evenings were starting to get chilly so back on DESTAYE, we lit the stove and settled down to 'afters' of brandy. Shaun used wood he had 'reclaimed' from the jetty at Milford Haven. The jetty had been repaired with pieces of the old wood laying around. Pieces of this now lined lockers on DESTAYE and made a very cosy, if short-lived glow in the fire.



*Moored in St Mary's harbour*

In the morning we went shopping for supplies in Hugh Town. The jetty was starting to become full with birdwatchers preparing for a trip in the many boats that were constantly arriving on the quay. At the shops, we purchasing a gift for Mandy and Julie, a couple of woven carrier bags with 'Scilly old bag' printed on the side. Thoughtful eh? Hugh Town itself is just a scattering of small two-story stone houses and tourist shops. Up a small hill behind the harbour and within a couple of hundred yards, and the top of the hill, one looks out at a second bay to and anchorage the SE. But we wanted to press on to join the 'twitchers on the quay'

We set off among the trip boats to Tresco and our planned anchor between the islands of Tresco and Bryher in the New Grimsby sound. The chart shows a channel between the islands of Samson, to the South of Bryher and Tresco and many of the trip boats were taking this route and so we followed the local knowledge in seas that were crystal clear. A bit too clear at times as all the rocks were easily seen passing a few feet beneath the keel. We safely picked up a very 'business like' visitors mooring in the sound, just off Beacon Hill and with view of Hangman rock and Cromwell's Castle. At the top of the rock is a gibbet lovingly preserved.



*Very lumpy mooring in New Grimsby Sound, Cromwell's Castle in background*

We took the dinghy over to the island of Bryher against the small jetty where trip boats were landing, in water that was not as shallow as Shaun thought as he 'topped' his boots in true Paglesham fashion and nearly ruined his mobile phone.



*The 'squelchy' road to Fraggie Rock*

Of course I looked on in sympathy, almost refrained from laughing and we carried the dinghy up the white sand with Shaun's boots squelching. The island is covered with beautiful flowers amidst the hedgerows as we walked (squelched) to a tiny pub called 'Fraggle Rock' where the Doom was excellent.

Birds came and sat on your hand eagerly anticipating a meal, but we went back to DESTAYE for lunch (after a beer) to allow Shaun to change into dry clothes. Later that afternoon, the Harbour Master came and took our mooring fee, but there was a heavy swell coming in from the north of the bay and we followed the example of other boats moored on the visitors moorings and moved to a vacant buoy close to the jetty on the Tresco side in about five feet of water. It would not matter if DESTAYE dried out as she has a triple keel.

That evening we had excellent fresh water Trout (and more Doom) in the 'New Inn', where we were also able to have a shower. I had the one with a 'rose' on the shower head. Shaun had to put up with a trickle out of the end of a pipe. Not really Shaun's lucky day.



*Just keep of my pint!*

In the morning and now again in brilliant sunshine, we set off towards St Agnes where we planned to anchor between the islands of St Agnes and Gugh. We sailed over the Tresco Flats and water of 15' covering beautiful light sand and between Bryher and Samson island. The rocks about were very daunting, but clearly marked on the chart so we easily navigated the channel and turned South to St Agnes. We hoisted sail, but with very little wind had to motor.



*Dodging rocks en route to St Agnes*

The plan was to anchor in the bay to the South and we would need to sail over a bar which joins the two islands at low water. On approaching the bar, we 'chickened out' and anchored in the deep water off the jetty at St Agnes, near the trip boats. On taking the dinghy closer to the bar, we found it had barely a foot over it and mostly rocks. An ashore and to celebrate with 'Doom' served up at an excellent if tiny pub called the Turks Head. The path to the pub was again lined by hedges with the most beautiful vegetation. A small shop offered lobster to order, but we would not have time to wait for capture. We were able to get a weather forecast on Shaun's mobile from high up on the hill behind the Turks Head. This showed the weather would be fair for the next 24 hours. The pasty at the Turks Head was disappointing, but the beer made up for it and so we retired to DESTAYE for lunch.



*The anchorage between St Agnes and Gugh*

We had planned to set off at 03:00am in the early hours to catch the tide back to the mainland, but the afternoon was fine and the forecast was good although the wind would be on the nose about 8 knots so we decided to make a start back. This would give us extra time to make it as far along the S coast as possible. Shaun wanted to try and get back to Paglesham in two more legs, it was getting late in the season, so the further we could make the better. Our planned destination for the first leg was the Helford river.

Passing St Marys, the apparent wind was between 10-12 knots with the sea getting more and more choppy and then larger seas as we left the Scillies far astern and night fell. As we passed a helicopter landed near St Mary's, what appears to be the simplest and fastest route. DESTAYE was doing well, crashing through the waves and throwing them high over the spray hood. We crossed the shipping lanes as darkness fell and far ahead we could see the Wolf Rock light ship and beyond that thought we could make out the shore at Lands End. A few large ships entered and left the separation zone, but none were much of a problem while we busied ourselves practicing light recognition.

The biggest hazard was that it was too rough to even attempt a cup of tea.

Continuing to bash through the waves a seagull came into view in the stern light and then was gone in the wake and darkness. Occasionally a crab pot came into the stern light, we must have sailed close to many, but we could see nothing in the blackness ahead. I was thinking of a really good use of the gibbet back on Bryher and the 'pirate' who left the pots.



*Drying out at Helford. Just look at the pick-up buoy!*

The seas grew less as we approached the Helford river and at about 8:00am we approached a most beautiful anchorage with woods sweeping down to the edge of the water. What a pleasure to be met by over 30 very sturdy and vacant visitor's moorings all with green pick up buoys. After a cup of tea and laying our damp sailing clothes around the rigging, sleep took over and we would have slept even longer but for the Harbour Master waking us up for his £14.



*Standing at the Helford Yacht Club looking at their new pontoons.*

Ashore there appeared to be dry landing on a new pontoon at the Helford Yacht Club and we took the dinghy alongside to 'explore'. The club would be open that evening for a shower and wandered further down the lanes into the beautiful Helford village with its thatched cottages and a pretty stream running through the centre. We selected the pub for later that evening, sampling the Doom, the second pint being better than the first (which was also good).



*Looking down river at Helford*

Back on DESTAYE, we moved closer to the jetty and onto a vacant club mooring in very shallow water. Had we thought, we could have saved the mooring fee. After a rest for a couple more hours, we took the dinghy back to the jetty, much closer this time. The showers were great, the club house being built like a log cabin. Feeling refreshed we wandered back through the beautiful village and across a small ford to our Doom at the Shipwright Arms and really tasty Monkfish before wandering back along the silent road under a clear starlight sky. Back at the jetty, Shaun was climbing back into the dinghy and there was an ominous 'plop' in the water. Shaun checked his pockets... mobile phone OK, wallet OK... what could it be? We took a note of where we were on the jetty and retired to DESTAYE for a nightcap.



*The ford in Helford Village. To the right is the estuary and DESTAYE's mooring*

The following day we planned to sail to Fowey, a shorter distance, but in the hope of arriving in the early afternoon. There was no need to set off too early so time to explore this beautiful village again and take some photos. It was then Shaun discovered the cause of the 'plop'. His camera was missing! Back at the jetty and at dead low tide, we could see the camera in about 18" of water. We managed to rescue it, but unfortunately it had taken its last pictures. We both could have spent longer exploring up river to places like Gweek Creek, but Fowey was calling and we slipped the mooring at 11:00am and with the wind on the nose again made about 5 knots with the east running tide under us. Yes, wind over tide again!

We had to dodge many a crab pot again, but eventually sailed into the very picturesque harbour at Fowey. A customs boat was just leaving as we searched for a vacant mooring and eventually tied up to a floating jetty anchored on the East bank of the river. Looking westward, the town rises up a hill with pastel painted cottages towering high. The quayside was bustling and all other moorings appeared taken. We relaxed watching a cormorant sitting on top of a navigation buoy. A little further up river we could see some sort of dock that I have since learned exports china clay.



*Nothing to declare*

The Harbour master came alongside to welcome us and charged us £13.50 for the night, probably the best rate so far. He also recommended good places to eat. Along the floating jetty was a large wooden traditional ketch and as night fell could hear a generator

running presumably to run the lights festooned in the rigging. 'MERMAID' was crewed by a 'not so young' bunch of what appeared to be hippies, (but then I also show my age), who seemed to having a great deal of fun. We chopped some more of the Milford Haven jetty to stock the fire for later that evening and motored ashore in the dinghy. We walked up some very pretty winding streets to look for the fish restaurant recommended by the Harbour Master, but it was full with many waiting. We walked back to another we had seen on our way and sat down upstairs to a very tasty cod and chips.



On the floating jetty at Fowey.

Shaun commented that the guy on the next table didn't half look like Lenny Henry and we both thought nothing more of it until they stood up to leave and I saw the lady next to him was indeed Dawn French. So we dined with Celebrities and they didn't even notice! Then back to DESTAYE to light the fire and a nightcap. During the night I was aware of powerful engines motoring past us up river. Rising from my bunk I saw a huge freighter towering above me and within yards, slowly moving up-stream. The nav lights were strange as it was clear that she was moving backwards with port nearest our side of the river.. I can only assume that there is not enough room up-river to turn, but I had to complement the skipper for such excellent navigation, and at night.

In the morning we ate breakfast and Shaun went ashore for supplies. I spoke to the hippies and asked where they were bound for. They were going for a day sail around the bay. I had hoped they would ask where we had come from, I would have explained that Shaun had taken the wrong turning when leaving Brightlingsea, but never got chance as we had to set off on the tide at 11:00 heading for Salcombe. This should take us a few hours and hopefully we would arrive before nightfall.

Again the sea was very lumpy and wind on the nose. However DESTAYE ploughed on relentlessly.... until the engine just died away. DESTAYE's fuel tank is greater than 90 litres and yet we topped it up just in case. Once more the engine started, but stopped again after a few minutes. Afternoon was dragging on when I asked Shaun when he last changed the fuel filter. He explained that he did this each year. It then dawned on me to ask about the CAV filter. This is fitted to the bulkhead with a water trap below. This was an addition to the new tank fitter a year earlier. Shaun admitted that he was not aware that this was a filter element and that he had never changed it. Throughout Shaun's trip, he will have filled up in many places and it could well be that some had dirty fuel.



Shaun's next project, a beautiful yawl laying neglected at Fowey

By constantly re-starting the engine, we appeared to be making progress although slower now. It was also becoming clear that we would reach Salcombe after dark and the shops would be closed. Shaun rang ahead to a chandler in Salcombe and managed to persuade him, (with the help of a credit card), to leave a new filter behind the bar in the Victory pub just behind the short-stay Normandy pontoon at Salcombe.

We arrived a in the pitch dark, navigating over a bar and then sharply to starboard. The town again towered on the port bank with a mass of sodium lights, but we could follow the navigation marks easily to the town pontoon where we made fast. We were told that the jetty was short stay and dinghies only, but this was an emergency (we would say) as we made our way to the Victory pub where we ate an excellent hearty meal (washed down with Doom). The filter was collected from the bar and then back to DESTAYE to fit. Finally and after the accustomed night cap, we hit the sack to be up at 4:00 am in the dark to set off for Torquay.

The morning was cold and clear and under a starlight sky we left our haven and dodging outfalls and crab pots, we were soon making excellent progress towards Torquay as the dawn broke and all the sea appeared quite turquoise around us. Again the waves were lumpy and breaking right over the top of DESTAYE. Brixham swept by to port and we could see our eventual destination and very soon tied up on the town quay at 08:30am. Our berth was next to the ferries that now run from Torquay to Brixham so it was just a bit lumpy.

There were festivities on the day as the Laser Nationals were being held and we ate breakfast as we watched literally hundreds on them being launched from the jetty within about 20 yards. Shaun's sleeping bag and clothes had suffered quite badly as the waves breaking across DESTAYE's bow had been dripping into the fore cabin. I laid out the cushions in the cockpit in the warm sun.



DESTAYE's arrival at Torquay

Rather than have a restful evening, the damp gear made up our minds that we would travel back that evening and I had a tidy around DESTAYE while Shaun caught the train back to Penzance to pick up his car. In all an excellent trip, with few problems but we could have done with a more favourable wind. That being said, we had seen some wonderful sights and also managed to bring DESTAYE much nearer home. Thanks Shaun and well done DESTAYE!

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## Triumphant Update at end of 2008

John and Sheila Quilliam

John and Sheila have updated us on the latest part of their adventure. The extract is rather long and was shared by members at Jon Walmsley's year end party. The full log can be seen on the RSA web site but here is an extract from the last section.

20<sup>th</sup> August 2008,

We spent about 2 weeks anchored in Texan bay after we arrived in the Rio Dulce where we celebrated our wedding anniversary and Sheila's birthday. They do throw a good party there and it was good to meet up with old friends from last year.



*TRIUMPHANT anchored in the lagoon at Texan bay*

To rest from the partying we motored on up river through the Golfete, a large inland fresh water lake about 12 miles long and 2 miles wide and surrounded by jungle with purple mountains in the distance, to anchor at Fronteras (2 ½ hours) by the bridge where the shops, bars, restaurants, bus station, hotels and most of the marinas are.

We anchored about 200 feet off the town. (For those of you who want to play with Google earth, our position was 15.39.69N 89.00.10W). It has been very hot and humid here recently maybe due to tropical storm FAY to the north of us which may be dragging all the moisture away.

We were trying to arrange to take the boat out of the water here (probably in October after we have popped to the States to stock up on parts) as we are have some welding that needs doing along with the usual rust work, hull painting and bottom painting .

We had a walk around the boatyard where we will probably haul out and spotted Oyragh who crossed the Atlantic with us in 2005, and a French boat BLEU NUAGE that we met last in Granada 3 years ago in the east Caribbean – small world!



*One of our neighbours in the lagoon*

The bad news is that the welding that is required is inside the boat in the galley and companion way area and possibly in the aft cabin as well.

Because of the mess and metal dust that will result, we will have to take a lot of gear off the boat and find somewhere to stay ashore and store the boat gear whilst the work is going on.

We estimate the work should take about 2 months but this is Central America so if we complete everything in 3 months we will be ahead of the game. We will probably employ some local labour to help us (at a cost of between £7 - £11 per day).

The local guys can put in 8 hours a day in the heat, us gringos are lucky if we can manage 4 hours on a good (cool) day. We have not had to do major work on the boat since we left the UK 5 years and 15,000 miles ago so we cannot complain.

The last time we hauled the boat out of the water was just under 3 years ago. I just wish Eric the welder was here to do the work as he is the best and he speaks English. Our technical Spanish is poor.

Things here are much cheaper than Belize, a bottle of beer in a bar is about £0.75 and a good 1 course meal between £2.00 - £4.00. A Marina dock here costs between £75 - £175 per month. The range of fruit and vegetables sold on the street in town is impressive and very cheap as well.

#### **August update**

All is well, it has been VERY hot and humid here for the last 2 weeks (95 Degrees F) and no rain either, we are hoping the weather will break soon.

We were in the UK at this time last year so did not experience August on the river. J's birthday was spent in good style.

On the morning of J's birthday, to our surprise, they announced his birthday on the morning VHF radio net so everyone knew about it.

We took the boat back to Fronteras in the morning and went ashore for lunch with some friends and had Chicken curry for lunch, (the yanks still have to learn how to make a good curry!!!)

After that we wandered off to meet up with more friends at a bar right on the waterfront and ended up in a another very nice little bar called the Sundog run by a couple of Dutch people, a good time was had by all and lots of good music as well. Everywhere we went, the cruisers were called out happy birthday – quite embarrassing. After spending too long in the Sundog, we retired home more than a bit jaded in a heavy thunderstorm, well it is the rainy season!

We will stay in Fronteras for a few more days before returning to Texan bay for Sherries Birthday (3<sup>rd</sup> September) and Mike and Sherries 30<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary (4<sup>th</sup> September). Life is never quiet here

#### **December 2008**

We are in the process of getting all the welding work done by Carlos the welder in Fronteras but that is probably a story for the next news letter



*TRIUMPHANT's new air conditioning?*

**ROACH SAILING ASSOCIATION**  
**Income and Expenditure Account for the Year Ending 31st December 2008**

2007	Income	2008	2008
£		£	£
390.00	Annual Subscriptions	426.00	
110.00	Race Subs	70.00	
1140.00	Crouch Harbour Authority Disks	1251.00	
36.85	Profit on Sale of Flags and Burgees	10.05	
478.00	Donations to workboat upkeep	236.00	
276.46	Boat jumble proceeds	0.00	
0.00	Bank Interest	35.42	
950.00	Scrubbing post fund	0.00	
94.00	Excess Inc/(Deficit) for dinner (including flowers)	43.00	
	Excess for first aid training day	130.72	
3475.31			2202.19
£	<b>Expenditure</b>	£	£
84.00	RYA Subscription	89.00	
10.00	CAYFE Subscription	10.00	
85.96	Printing, Stationary & Postage (1 X 2007 and 2 X 2008)	160.92	
68.00	Cup Insurance	66.74	
101.71	Cup Engraving	94.00	
1160.00	Crouch Harbour Authority Disks (inc Dally disk)	1256.00	
30.00	Creeksea Ferry Inn	30.00	
270.25	RSA trailer	0.00	
25.00	Yard key	0.00	
	Donation to Paglesham Village Trust Waterside Fund	500.00	
	Return of scrubbing post fund	950.00	
138.00	Workboat repairs and upkeep	306.25	
0.00	Depreciation on stock of flags and burgees	0.00	
1972.92			3462.91
£		£	£
0.00	Excess of Expenditure over Income		1260.72
1502.39	Excess of Income over Expenditure		0.00

**Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2007**

£	<b>Assets</b>	£
2465.67	Balance at Bank 31st December	1030.29
209.61	Stock of Flags and Burgees	174.66
2675.28		1204.95
£	<b>Reconciliation of Assets</b>	£
1172.89	As at 1st January	2465.67
1502.39	Surplus Income/Excess Expenditure	-1260.72
2675.28		1204.95

Signed  Simon P Joel, Honorary Treasurer

## **Roach Sailing Association: 2008 Sailing Programme**

*All boats start races at 10:00, except where other times are given below, or on the day.*

*On the Saturday evening before racing on the Sunday, many will stay aboard overnight and if you wish to join in evening festivities, please contact Richard*

*If you would like to crew with one of the boats racing, again, please let Richard know.*

Sun 08 March 09	AGM
Sun 15 March 09	Litter pick up at Pag with Rochford River Care
Sat 28 March 09	Fitting Out Supper at The Punch Bowl
Sun 10 May 09	Paglesham Pot
Sun 17 May 09	Shuttlewood Cup
Sat 23 - 31 May 09	Cruise to London
Sun 07 June 09	Blue Shoal Trophy
Sun 21 June 09	Paglesham Yacht Race (open boats)
Sat 27 June – 4 July 09	Pyefleet weekend and East coast Cruise
Sat 11 June 09 (afternoon start)	Mudcatchers Cup
Sun 12 July 09 (11:00am start)	Gracilda Cup
Sun 19 July 09	Whitaker Cup
Sat 15 Aug 09	Fambridge Dinner at The Ferry Boat
Sun 16 Aug 09	Don McDowell Cup
Sun 06 Sept 09	Lifeboat Cup (open boats)
Sat 19 – 20 Sept 09	Blackwater Weekend
Sun 27 Sept 09	Lifeboat Cup (cruisers)
Sun 04 Oct 09	Roach Plate
Sun 11 Oct 09	Steak & Oysters Rally at Foulness
Sat 17 Oct 09	Laying Up Supper at Brandy Hole YC