

**Roach Sailing Association**  
[www.roachriver.org.uk/rsa](http://www.roachriver.org.uk/rsa)  
**September 2014 Newsletter**

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**Chairman's Report**

*Mike Green*

I have just returned from 3 days at the Southampton Boatshow based in the marina trying to convince potential customers the benefits of owning an Ovni aluminium yacht. The weather was lovely, short sleeve shirts the whole time and a distinct air of optimism amongst the serious viewers and those selling, then, on returning home the announcement of the reduction in the unemployment figures. I really do believe we have turned the corner from the worst recession that I can remember.

HALLOWE'EN and VERLOCITY went on the Paglesham Gentlemen's Summer Cruise this year, and we reached the Tide Mill in Woodbridge after quite a windy voyage and overnight stay in Harwich harbour in the Shotley anchorage. We were very fortunate with the weather during our 5 nights away and arrived back at Paglesham just before the weather broke. We missed the company of Ivor and David (honorary member ) in MARSHMALLOW who were unable to join us due to other commitments.

It was good to have Rodney our ex Chairman skippering HALLOWE'EN crewed by John Wittingham, our other honorary

member from Australia and Robin Slater. Rodney was not well enough last year to go cruising but he more than made up for it this trip, we enjoyed good company, excellent food and wine including the the cheese and port. The traditional toasts were made, stories told and a good time had by all present.



*Mike sailing BUTTERCUP*

A meeting of the Roach Moorings Holders Association will take place shortly with Nick Barke to negotiate the renewal of the 23 moorings it rents for members downstream from the jetty. Relations with Gary the Paglesham yard manager are good and we look forward to a favorable renewal for another 2 years.

Ending this report on an optimistic note now that the Scottish referendum has been settled and we are to remain as Great Britain, we will see significant changes to the political scene. The one constant is our lovely sailing location on the Roach River; relatively unspoilt and long may it remain so.

A very warm welcome to the following new members:

Carl Leeding	FAHYDA
Mike Mangham	LADY BLANCHE
Igor Marjanivik	TARTAR
Brian Shanter	TBD
Kevin Skinner	TBD
Daryl Sullivand	SEABRIGHT
Mark Toulson	TBD

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## Laying up Supper

The laying up supper will be at the Thorpe Bay Yacht Club on Sat 22<sup>nd</sup> November. We suggest meeting at 7-7.30pm

The cost of the meal is £18 per person and details of the menu are as follows:

<b>Starter</b>
<b>1. Tomato Soup with roll and butter-</b>
<b>2. Prawn Cocktail</b>
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<b>Main</b>
<b>a. Roast Beef with trimmings</b>
<b>b. Fishermans's pie</b>
<b>c. Cream of Vegetable Lattice pie</b>
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<b>Dessert</b>
<b>i. Eaton Mess</b>
<b>ii. Apple Crumble</b>
<b>iii. Cheese and Biscuits</b>

Richard has again agreed to take the reservations for this and please send your menu options with your booking. We do need payment in advance with your booking. There are two methods of paying. The first and easiest is direct transfer to the RSA account of the Roach Sailing Association. If you chose this way to pay, please also send a mail to Simon, cc Richard.

The alternative is by cheque payable to the **Roach Sailing Association** at the address below. Please note either way we will need to know your menu options.

*Richard Bessey, 2 Research Cottages, Paglesham, Rochford SS4 2DS*  
 Roach Sailing Association  
 Sort Code 20-79-73  
 Acc 80751138  
[richard.bessey@btinternet.com](mailto:richard.bessey@btinternet.com)  
[simon.joel@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:simon.joel@hotmail.co.uk)

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## Racing Update

*Richard Bessey*



*Light wind racing, SCHERZO, VERLICITY and IMOTHEs*

We've had no less than 31 different boats entering RSA races this season, 13 cruisers and 18 dinghies. Both series are drawing to a close but there are contenders in both series for top points and another silver trophy on the shelf!



*The 'fleet' races upriver*

To extend the season we plan to have a couple of informal late cruiser races. Suggested dates are Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> November and Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> December, but keep an eye on the Roach email group nearer the time.



*Paula Williams racing*



*And Paul trying to beat her!*

*Report of Paglesham Prat race (Steve Noble's race report after turning out a week early for the Oyster Cup)*

The start was set for 1400 & after discussions with the race officer a course was decided on, it would be there and back leaving in between to port .It was decided not to start on GPS time but on RSVP [more posh]. APPLE was over the start line and had to re-cross but still started first. Tacking down river ran aground shouting water! A tacking duel ensued with all boats on the same tack, every boat giving way on starboard. .APPLE rounded in between last, pumping hard to keep water below seats, [damp bum time]. Ran back to finish or when I had enough. The whole fleet finished together . Lets see the race officer sort out the handicaps on this one...

And finally, please can all cup holders return them to a committee member for engraving as soon as they can

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## **Bosun (and Editor's) Corner**

*John Langrick*

A big thanks for the articles this year and there will be a presentation for the best article at the laying up supper on the 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Also many thanks to our many members who have helped maintain our 'assets' during the year including the shed and surrounding area, the PVT plot, DALLY and our 'tea hut' at Sutton Wharf.

We have a new 'tea hut' that I hope to be in commission by the time we all lay up (any additional help with this would be very welcome).

*Laying up at Carter and Ward*

There are new rates for laying up and launch for our boats this year as follows:

40p per foot per week with a minimum charge of 25'

For haul out/launch, the charge is as follows:

14' – 19' £60  
20' – 24' £70  
25' – 29' £85

30' – 34' £90  
35' – 39' £105  
40' or over £125  
Push stick (for draught over 4') £25  
16 ton hoist £125  
Plant + driver, (mast raising and lowering), £60 per hour.

When members lay up, there will be the haul out charge immediately due. The storage and launch fee becomes due when you re-launch. If the boat remains in the yard for longer than 6 months then it will be subject to a 3 month billing. All the above are subject to VAT.

The lay-up dates currently booked at Carter and Ward are as follows. Thurs 23 and Fri 24<sup>th</sup> Oct  
Thurs 6<sup>th</sup> and Fri 7<sup>th</sup> Nov  
Mon 10<sup>th</sup> and Tues 11<sup>th</sup> Nov  
Mon 24<sup>th</sup> Tues 25<sup>th</sup> Nov.

Please remember to assemble cradles before you haul out. Of course you can lay up on other dates but please make your own arrangements if this is the case and note the yard do not haul out at weekends. Can you also let me know if you want your mast lowering?

*Laying up at Paglesham*

For those who wish to lay up at Paglesham, please note that if you lease a mooring from the yard, or from the RMHA (Roach Mooring Holders Association), that the storage is at no additional cost. Only the haul in or out must be paid for. Please arrange this with Gary.

*Paglesham Yard update.*

There is really little to report as we have had no problems this year and a big thanks to Gary and Essex Marina for this.

There will be work parties on DALLY, the shed and dinghy storage plus of course the PVT patch. Please watch the Roach Group for announcements and any help on these days would be appreciated. I know the shed needs some repairs to the door, floor and steps.



*The work party including villagers pause and pose while clearing up the PVT saltings.*

## 2014 RSA Cruises

*John Langrick*

### *Pyefleet and East Coast Cruise*

The first cruise of the year started at Pyefleet Creek and then moved on up the coast to the Deben and Woodbridge Haven and then back to the Orwell.

IMOTHES crewed by Graham Pelling, Simon Joel and me as well as INDI with Nigel Bishop spent the weekend and following few days exploring our favorite haunts.



*Lunch by the Deben*

While at Woodbridge we took a stroll up-river for a 'luxurious' lunch of Woodbridge pork pies and cold drinks and the highlight of Harwich was a stroll around the Redoubt Fort and a visit to see the MAYFLOWER project. The latter is the rebuild from scratch of the Pilgrim Father's MAYFLOWER.



*East coast cruising with Graham and Simon*

We stayed overnight on the very welcoming Halfpenny Pier.

### *August N Fambridge*

We had an excellent rally at Fambridge with a bumper crop of RSA boats tied alongside the jetty. These included: FULL CIRCLE, ZELIA, ULLABELLA, LOTUS, IMOTHES, REMIS VERLESQUE, AMBITION II, SEAJAY, PAKLJHAWA,

CORINNE and SWIFTSURE. 29 people sat down on Saturday night in the Conservatory at The Ferry Boat to an enjoyable 3 course meal efficiently served by their waiting staff.

Breakfast was taken on board next morning and at 10.00 there was a very fast race back to the Branklet Buoy, mainly under Genoa, for the Don McDowell cup.



*Some of the fleet at Fambridge*

### *September Pyefleet Cruise*

We had an exceptional turnout for the last Pyefleet Creek rally. The boats included PAKLJHAWA, IMOTHES, CORINNE, AMBITION II and REMIS VERLESQUE. We also welcomed Peter Yerbury and family sailing his new Great Dane EOLA.



*EOLA at Pyefleet, airing sleeping bags!*

It was especially great to see one of our founder members Reg Seal with Paul Williams as crew in DORMOUSE and one of our latest members Carl Leeding in his Scarborough Sloop FAHYDA.



*Regseal and Paul Williams in DORMOUSE*

Both FAYHEDA and IMOTHES rafted alongside AMBITION II with the rest of the crews for a meal and 'afters'.



*Our 'restaurant' for the night.*

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## **Around Wallsea in WINKS (Sambucca Challenge)**

Richard Bessey

*Richard and Justine (with the help of Naomi and Tom) succeeded with their quest to circumnavigate Wallsea Island in their sailing dinghy WINKS. That and the fact that they chose one of the wettest bank holidays on record was indeed a creditable Sambucca challenge!*

August Bank Holiday Monday: rain. After baling out WINKS and fitting a new mast step, we (Justine and Richard) set off at 11:00 to circumnavigate that mythical continent, Wallsea Island.

The F3-4 wind was South and a bit East, so we were close hauled down Devils Reach and punching the tide, while the rain ran down

the sail and dripped off the boom. ULABELLA passed, disbelieving, on their way back from Burnham. But we made it to Quay Reach without a tack, and surged past the Jubilee buoy and the Burnham Week survivors with the wind on the starboard quarter.



*A very wet Burnham*

Slipping over the Branklet Spit into smoother water, we gybed and set course for Burnham. The wind wavered in the lee of the Crossrail ships at the unloading wharf, but the tide was now with us and soon we were amongst the moorings, sailing on to Creeksea. It was 13:00 when we turned into Lion Creek and bumped over a wreck, rowing the last few yards to the road.



*Navigating the road at Wallsea*

Naomi and Tom were here to meet us, along with Max the dog. We offloaded some of the gear, and hauled WINKS up to the road which was some 4 feet above the water (it was not yet high water and only a 5.3m tide). WINKS was walked across the road one end at a time, then slipped down into the headwaters of Paglesham Pool.



Back in Paglesham Pool

Naomi and Tom took command for the last leg, rowing into the headwind until they emerged into the Roach, then sailing up over the ebb to Paglesham, where we met them on the pontoon with a hot dinner waiting at home!



Home at last!

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## Plenty of Fish in the Sea

John Apps

One of the most important things I have found about ocean sailing is that you must keep things as simple as possible. Complex systems invite trouble when mixed with saltwater and complex systems are not easy for the non technician to fix.

It was a surprise to me that in terms of fishing in deep water simple works better than complex as well. I have crossed the Atlantic six times in my own boat as well as a few times in other people's boats. It has always been my practice to throw a line over on the chance that I will catch something. Over the years I have invested good money in various types of plastic lures with several hooks hanging off them. And in all those trips I caught absolutely nothing. It may not have helped that if I had birds in my wake or had dolphins playing around the boat I always pulled the line in until I was once again alone.

My wife and I were fortunate enough to spend five weeks on a friend's boat sailing around the Caribbean. Our friend, Ray liked to throw a line over each day and he found that the best lure for trolling was a teased out piece of string tied to the hook. Ray and my wife provided a number of meals of tuna with their simple

gear.

In 2013 and 2014 I completed a trip covering 22,000 Nautical miles and taking up over 9 months. After a few weeks of boredom I searched out and found my old handline. The previous owners of RAVEN had left a packet of 5 no. 5 hooks on board. I found some old cord and cut off 2 inches and frayed one end. I had no sinkers or trace. So I tried Ray's idea of a simple hook with frayed string dragged behind the boat. Based on my previous experiences with fancy lures and my inherent belief that I am an unlucky fisherman I expected nil result.



Keep it simple, handline with string tied to hook

My expectations were met the first day I caught nothing. However the second day is probably going to be one of the greatest highlights of my life. I was lying below reading and there was a repetitive clunk coming from the cockpit. My handline was bouncing around at the end of the rope I had used to tether it to a cleat. There was something heavy on the end of it. I pulled the line in to find a Dorado hooked through the eye. Perhaps not a very professional catch. But I was overjoyed and I enjoyed eating it as well.



A Dorado my first catch.

After that it seemed as though as soon as I threw a line in within two days I would have a fish in the pan. Yellow Tail was my favorite catch as I found they lasted for two meals or filleted in a pan nicely if you cut their head and tail off.

But the best eating fish I caught was a Blue Tuna. Caught, cleaned, wrapped in silver foil and baked in the oven for half

an hour. It is probably the nicest flesh I have ever eaten. The only unfortunate aspect of the Blue Tuna is that it was too big and without refrigeration I would not keep fish for more than two meals so had to throw away three quarters of it. Evidently the Japanese will pay thousands of US Dollars for Blue Tuna and I think I know why and theirs when eaten would by no means be as fresh as the one I caught.

Some of the fish I caught I don't really know the names of but based on fish I have eaten in restaurants I called them Perch and Grouper. But mostly Yellow Tail and Dorado.

As I approached the coast of Brazil I found I was down to only one hook. One of the first things I looked for when I arrived in Salvador was a fishing shop. Near the Marina I stayed at there was a small town centre without about five fishing shops so I managed to lash out and buy 10 no.5 hooks. It wasn't until I arrived in Cape Town that I thought that my success in fishing to date was worth me spending a bit of money on gear. I had to walk about 5 miles but I found a batch of fishing shops and bought pink squid lures that glowed in the dark. Trace wire to stop the odd fish biting through my line and taking my precious hooks. More hooks of course. Some sinkers to stop the hook bouncing on the surface. Some swivels and a gaff to help land the bigger fish. Big mistake.



*My Fancy Fishing Gear*

My first day out of Cape Town I didn't bother re-rigging my line with all my new purchases and just threw in the line with a hook tied on the end and a bit of string for bait. I didn't really want or expect to catch anything as I had three meals of Sirloin Steak that I had bought before I left. But as luck would have it a Yellow Tail that would have lasted 5 meals jumped onto my hook. I decided that cows in the ocean were rarer than fish so threw the Yellow Tail back alive. When I had exhausted all my steak I rigged my line with sinker, swivel, trace, hook and bright pink plastic squid. I think it is about 1600 Nautical Miles or 18 days to St Helena and I didn't catch a thing. I first thought it might be an oceanic desert, but I had seen a few birds and dolphins around so there should have been some fish. When I hadn't even had a bite on the next 700 Nautical Miles to Ascension Island I made a big decision. Abandon all my new purchases and go back to hook on the line with a bit of string that bounces on the surface as it crests a wave. Within five hours I had caught a pan sized Dorado. I was back in business as a fisherman. My big lesson as with all ocean related pursuits is **Keep it Simple**.

## Up the Eider River

*Richard Bessey*

On our way to Baltic Denmark aboard AMBITION II, Jon and Stephen, Justine and Richard decided to try the Eider River route, as an alternative to the Elbe and all 79 km of the Kiel Canal. Jon had been down the Eider previously in IMOTHES (RSA newsletter 2003).

The Eider river approach from the sea needs to be taken at half flood in good visibility, avoiding strong winds. To achieve this timing it makes sense to start from Helgoland, the distance from here to Tønning being about 34 NM. We purchased a new chart covering the estuary from the chandlery at Helgoland; this proved accurate, but older charts and the plotter were dangerous to use - the plotter showed buoys a mile from their currently locations and channels which simply no longer exist. Fortunately with a smooth sea and excellent visibility, the buoyage was easy to spot, essential as the channel is tortuous.

At the river mouth, the Eiderdamm controls the tidal flow with sluices, and we entered the lock alongside about 2 hours before local HW. Immediately above the lock the channel crosses sharply to the S side, with strong turbulence from the sluices. The 5 miles from here to Tønning is well marked with buoys. We tied up at the W end of the town quay (clear of the ferry mooring). Nobody came to charge us for this spot, and we remained afloat. After dinner we walked around the town and inner (drying) harbour.



The bascule bridge above Tønning opened for us just before 07:00 next morning, giving us just enough time to get up to the next bridge as the tide started to ebb. One is supposed to sound a horn at the bridges, but I'm not sure if it makes any difference! The channel is well marked with brooms (brush pointing up to port, down to starboard) and occasional buoys, but the depth varies a lot so care is needed and a rising tide preferred. Sheep and cows graze the banks. The railway swing bridge opened and round the next corner we came to Friedrickstat and locked in to the harbour by 09:00. The marina entrance is narrow between trees and has only 2 m depth. The lock charge at Freidrickstadt was 14 Eur, and the marina for our 13 metres was 21 Eur (inc. shower tokens for 4). We spent a pleasant day exploring the town, built around canals in the old Dutch style like a miniature Amsterdam. At 16:00 we were just casting off when the Customs paid us a

visit, having tracked our progress from Helgoland and Tonning! However they were easily satisfied and we locked out into a shallow estuary (a good 3 hours before HW). We had to hover for a while at the bridge upstream, then went on to the Lock at Nordfeld, where we paid 14 Eur for entry to the non-tidal part of the Eider. It was at this point that the depth sounder went on the blink, and a reboot of the domestic electrics was needed to solve the problem. Exiting the lock we found the marks confusing, and having good depth measurement was essential throughout the Eider navigation.



*Freidrickstadt*

We followed the river meandering through this low country until 21:00 and began to look for a place to moor. At Bergen on the north bank lies a jetty with pontoons, and as we surveyed the couple of spare spaces we were waved in to the larger one. It was a tight berth for AMBITION II with a cross current, but as we nosed in a dozen helpers appeared, so we got in without any problems. They were members of the Rendsberg motor boat club, celebrating their 30th anniversary, and after a short walk around the village, we joined them at a trestle table for a few beers. Later a large group of them set off on a trip boat and, accompanied by an accordion, sang their way up and down the river in the darkness. They were great fun and most welcoming! The pontoons are set about with water lilies, and the village consisted of a group of farmsteads, great barns that were part farmhouse and part agricultural. On top of one stood an elderly stork, the first any of us had seen. It was altogether a charming yet unassuming place.



*Stephen at the helm, Jonathan and cows watching!*

We were away again at 07:00 to get through the bascule bridge at Pahlen, and onward to the Lexfahre lock. It turns out that each lock on the Eider costs 14 Eur, however if there is more than one

boat going through, the cost is shared, so if there are 2 boats each pays only 7 Eur! The last lock on the Eider at Gehstad has antiquated machinery and takes some time to operate (though interesting to watch). Also the opening times are quite restricted compared with the rest of the waterway.



*Gehstad Lock*

From here at around midday we joined the Nordsee-OstseeKanal for the rest of the way to Holtenau and Kiel fjord, which we reached at about 18:00, and checked into the British Kiel YC having negotiated one of their largest box moorings without too much embarrassment.



*British Kiel Yacht Club*

The trip from Helgoland via the Eider river to Kiel Fjord took us three days, admittedly with early starts and only one daytime stop, at Freidrichstadt. By the Elbe route we could conceivably have done it in two days, but the Eider was far more pleasant and interesting.



*On the quay at Sonderberg*

From the BKYC (the only establishment I know where the urinals are fitted with headrests) we headed north to Danish waters. Jon and Stephen left AMBITION II at Sonderberg, and we spent the next week island-hopping around the Little Belt in calm sunny weather. Later we met with John Apps in RAVEN, for dinner at anchor off south Langeland. With another week of favourable winds forecast, we then set off back along the Canal, and back to the UK East Coast via Cuxhaven, Norderney and Borkum. In Ipswich we rendezvous'd with LOTUS and ULABELLA, and had a pleasant few days together in the Orwell and Stour before heading home to Pag.



Raven at Langeland

## A quick once round Holland (with John, Peter and Clem aboard IMOTHES)

*Clem Freeman*

Originally planned as a longer more leisurely trip it was decided that as we had a good outlook for winds/weather that we could make the trip to Holland in the six days available. John had already provisioned for the trip with instructions for Peter and me to bring along any luxuries everything else already being provided. So we assembled Saturday morning, stowed our gear and set off.

The plan was to be at the Whitaker on HW and to cut across Maplin sands and Barrows, directly to Fishermans gat, intending to go to Dunkirk. The trip was going well so we decided that once we had left the Fishermans Gat it would be time for a celebratory drink and to have diner provided by Peter's wife Jean, a chilli.

This was my first trip across the North Sea so fate then decided to change our plans to see what my sea going ability was. All's well up to shipping lane when wind shifted to East and strengthened. Dinner was put on hold as the swell got bigger. We decided that the best bet was to change course and head for Ostend.

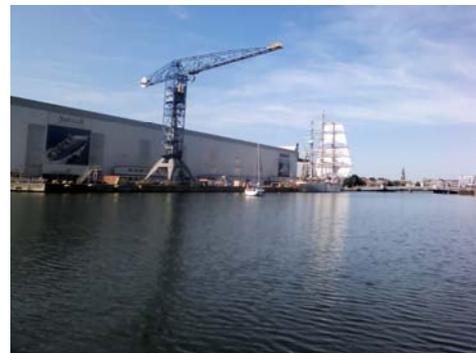
Things didn't improve and we lost the jib sheets, (we also "lost" the contents of my stomach, but I won't go into detail) as John put it, it was too lumpy to re-attach so motored with jib partially furled.

Things settled and at West Hinder where we headed south to cross shipping lanes off Ostend. A Large cruise ship was spotted which we thought would be well out of our way but she decided not to bother with the shipping lanes and cut diagonally across them. As she didn't turn west as expected but continued on her course we adjusted and went round her stern. Eventually we arrived at Ostend at 05:00 and berthed at the far end of harbour, made IMOTHES secure and all slept soundly for a few hours well earned rest.

Awoke at 10:00 when we showered and breakfasted before taking the best tide north. A lovely sail along the coast where we could watch the locals sun bathing, dog walking and horse riding along the beaches. By the time we arrived at Breskens the tides had turned and greeted us with a very strong ebb.

Entering the marina involved crabbing across the flow and at the last minute turning in, expertly done by John. We stayed on the waiting pontoon at Breskens and after a shower went into the yacht club for a meal where we were warmly welcomed by the staff. The menu options were explained to us and to John's disappointment, no mussels, we were two days to early! A good meal was none the less had albeit a bit pricey.

In the morning crossed Westerscheld (planning to avoid the ferries) to Flushing, against a very strong tide. There I encountered my first Dutch lock into Middleburg canal. All expertly handled, we could have passed for locals had it not been for a small faux pas. As we left the lock a boat motored across to us to point out we were flying our courtesy flag on the wrong side. He seemed quite upset about this so we quickly changed it over not wishing to further inflame the locals. Off our port side we spotted a Tall sail ship in dock drying sails on her yards so we wondered over for a closer look.



*Just inside the lock at Flushing*

We then had a slow but pleasant journey via various bridges and locks into Veresmere. We tied up against a reluctant motorboat who decide to move in any case (perhaps he'd heard about the flag incident).

We went ashore and had a wander around the picturesque town of Vere where Peter videoed our exploits, mainly eating ice cream. It was a short stop as our overnight stop at De Omloop (a small rectangular island) was still some distance

away. It was an enjoyable sail around to De Omloop where we crept in to the moorings as it was very shallow.

There were pontoon moorings on each of the long sides of the island with eco friendly toilets provided. The island could be walked around within ten minutes and the only advice given by John was that the toilets were ok but don't look down! An enjoyable evening was spent and after a meal cooked by John we settled down to a very tasty fruit cake (again provided by Jean), accompanied by cheese (John's suggestion) and a small drink. The evening was rounded off playing dominoes (sorry Peter), with a few more small drinks and a bit of rum for good measure. We all slept soundly that night.



*At De Omloop*

After breakfast the next morning we left Veresmeer into Osterschedt to sail to the Zeelandbrug. As we were approaching the bridge we wondered why yachts were motoring at full speed past us as there was no sign of the bridge about to lift. Suddenly the bridge started to lift and we realised it was going to be a close call for us to get through, at full belt we just made it (although the lights may have technically been red), we were not the last to make the dash through though.



*Peter navigating the Zeelandbrug*

We motored up the short canal to Zierikzee and as instructed by the Scottish speaking Dutch harbour master tied up against large barge.

Another very pretty town that would be worth spending more time in. It was market day so we wandered around the market where we lost Peter for a while. As the mussel season had started investigations as to where to eat proceeded. After checking several restaurants it was thought best to eat back on board as the price for

mussels was very expensive, probably due to being the first day of their availability. It was not a wasted trip though as John picked up a couple of trailer wheels and we got strawberries and cream to supplement our stores.



*Pretty Zierikzee*

After lunch we left Zierikzee and sailed to Roompot marina (a holiday camp). Here we availed ourselves of the facilities, did a bit of gift shopping and had more ice cream. As internet access was available John caught up with the weather forecast from UK which was fine for our return journey. Was hoping to hear from Jon Walmsley but he was with Richard sailing up the Eider on AMBITION II.

We set off the following morning with a good easterly and made easy progress to this side of shipping lanes. I noted that cruise liners are massive and most cargo ships are just ugly and difficult to tell which way they should be heading. As usual we had the radio on once within range and overheard a message from Kent Diver to the coastguard saying they were bring up the divers and heading for shore as there were 50knt squalls.

We all looked at each other and decided we must of misheard and he had said 15knts, nothing like 50knts was forecast. We were off the Galloper wind farm when the sky to the south turned red and lightning could be seen. It didn't look nice and was heading towards us. John radioed the coast guard for an update of the weather forecast which was not bad but did say there was a squall heading our way. It was of concern that he did ask what size vessel we were. He also said he would monitor our progress.

John decided best to play safe and we dropped sails and proceeded under power. The first squall hit peaking at 47 knots, the main decided at this point to raise itself back up the mast and we were knocked down (explains why my arm got wet whilst sitting on the leeward side). We were pushed back up past the Galloper where we were treated to a spectacular lightning display. John spotted that when lightning hits a wind turbine it then arcs discharging to the neighboring turbines. There was a bit of a lull between the squalls, the second one being not quite so vicious which we cleared safely.

After this Peter appeared from the cabin having missed most of the excitement as he had gone for a lie down. The delay meant we crossed Long Sand with the last of the flood. Here

I must apologise to John and Peter for causing a bit of excitement. Whilst navigating by the autohelm I managed to hit the wrong button, got confused and we did a complete circle, not recommended at the Long Sand Head. We carried on now and as we reached the Whitaker the tide turned and we had a long slog back up the Crouch and Roach. We arrived home at Paglesham early morning tired and exhausted after a 26hr trip.

My thanks go to John for his amazing display of seamanship through difficult conditions and the excellent company of both him and Peter throughout the trip. My thanks also to Peter's wife Jeanie, feel free to send Peter down with cake any time.

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## “SPARKLE on the Roach“

*David Hanchet*

I was just parking my car at Paglesham to join Nigel Bishop, John Langrick and Ivor Jones for a trip over to Burnham in INDI for lunch at The Swallowtail, when my phone rang. It was the boatyard in Maldon. I was asked if I was having a good season and whether I would be returning my boat to the yard. It was one of the easiest decisions ever made. I was staying put on the Roach.

Avid readers of the Gentleman's Cruise Log of a few years ago may recall that I said that I had first sailed with Ivor Jones in MARSHMALLOW on the Roach in the mid 1970's – a time when his boat was but 10 years old and Ivor and I under 30. (Below is a photo taken on an East Coast cruise in July 1976 ). So, when I bought my own boat in November 2012 I began to set my sights on bringing her over from Maldon to Paglesham. The boat (SPARKLE ) is an early ( 1970 ) Elizabethan 23, similar but not identical ( I am told ) to the one that was owned by the late Tony Hudson.



*East Coast Cruise '76s. Could this be Dick Churn, Ivor Jones, Simon Martin, George Ventris John Martin and Reg Seal?*

I decided to winter her over at Shipways Yard ( the one directly behind the chandlers ) at Maldon and start on some of the items which were flagged up in the survey. This worked well as, living as I do in Bristol, it was very useful to have the facilities of the yard on hand ( not to mention Maldon itself ) for my visits. I kept her on the Blackwater ( at Maldon ) for the 2013 season. Although this was a good “ shake down” for both the boat and her

owner the tides at Maldon severely restricted sailing periods – but the hot showers, and water and power on the pontoon was rather nice! So I decided to lay down plans to bring her over to the Roach, where I already knew a good few fellow RSA Members.

I well remember the trip over in early May of this year. Ivor and I sailed SPARKLE down the Blackwater and rendezvoused with Mike and John L aboard VERLOCITY at Pyefleet. The plan was that VERLOCITY would escort SPARKLE over to her mooring. But bad luck had struck VERLOCITY on the outwards passage and she had lost her propeller. Thus next day the trip over was not quite as planned as VERLOCITY had to get ahead and over the Spitway as she had no engine back up. So Ivor and I made our own way in SPARKLE and even though the sea was lumpy we made a reasonable trip.



*Could this be Ivor, Simon Martin and John Martin?*

Since then, I suppose you can say I have never looked back. I have enjoyed great support from the RSA and its Members. I have been offered generous advice and friendship, as well as practical help from John, Mike and Ivor. John has pretty much conquered the wiring ( which was chaotic if not dangerous ) and if you ever want your boat “ de-cluttered” Mike Green is just the man to invite aboard for a cup of tea. For example, before you could say one lump or two he had more than halved the number of fenders kept aboard and the excess duly found themselves underneath the hut. John Walter ( aka John the Bridge ) sorted out my outboard and the 5HP Yamaha 2-stroke which I now use ( an ebay purchase ) runs sweetly and is proving man enough for the boat without causing permanent personal damage when you try to lift it on and off the transom.

Alongside making good progress with the repair and maintenance of the boat and in my own handling of her, I have enjoyed some fantastic sailing ( although Ivor and I didn't do too well in the Whitaker Cup !). Long may it last!

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## PAKLJHAWA Ping!

*Jonathan Walmsley*

PAKLJHAWA had a month off mid season when she broke her mast on the way back to her mooring after the Whitaker Cup Race. She was close hauled with the

main sheet pulled in very hard. The wind was gusting under some very black stormy clouds. I was in a rush to get back to the mooring before the rain hit. Another boat down river recorded wind speeds up to twenty eight knots. The wind direction was also changing with the strength. PAKLJHAWA's mast was already under a lot of compression from the multi part main sheet tackle, when a big gust hit her abeam, folded the mast and waking Dawn up from her slumbers in the starboard hull.

I dropped the anchor and assessed the damage. First on the scene to assist us was a dinghy from a motorboat anchored and waiting for the tide to Wakering. He was quickly followed by Vince in his dinghy and later John L in his. The RNLI also turned up as someone had reported a capsized catamaran. The boat was methodically tidied up before motoring back to her mooring with the RNLI RHIB as a shadow. Many, many thanks to all those who assisted us.

After a week of research, I ordered a new mast from Sailspar, in Harwich, with a doubled middle section for added strength.



*Overhang? What overhang!*

I picked it up three weeks later with the Land Rover and raised it on the slip at Rochford. So far so good.....

## Master of all he Surveys?

*Annie Boulter*

BARNACLE's just a little boat  
With room only for two.  
HALLOWE'EN is much bigger  
For Rodney and his crew.  
But if you really want to sail  
Here home or abroad,  
Then MERCEDES is your tall ship  
With a hundred souls aboard.

He had to go down to the crowded sea,  
The busy harbour and sky,  
And all he wanted was a tall ship  
With the wind to make her fly.  
Out of Falmouth into the bay  
The sails unfurled – so neat.  
He stood at the prow in charge of the jib,  
His day, at last, complete.



*Master of all he Surveys?*