



The Seagull

The Journal of the Cramond Boat Club

March 2013

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Diary Dates

Sat 23rd March, 7.30pm
Nautical Nosh

Sat 30th March
Crane In

Sun 31st March
Post Crane In Work Party

Sat 6th April
Quiz Night

27th - 28th April
Opening Cruise



Commodore's Jottings

The nights are drawing out, preparations are in hand for the new season and crane-in is fast approaching.

Over the festive period we had a very successful children's Christmas Party entertaining 30 plus children not to mention some of the adults involved. At one point there was some doubt as to whether it would go ahead, but we're very grateful to Margaret Hutchinson, Ian (Santa's spokesman) Hellewell and the many assistants who ensured that it would happen.

Work has been going on around the Clubhouse with the south-facing window frames repaired and insulation installed. It was a lengthy task and special thanks are due to Eddie King, Hamish Sutherland and Davie McKay for their hard work. It was long shift!

New coat hooks have also been installed in the lounge next to the function room door. Please use them, it'll make the lounge so much tidier.

The pre-season work parties have been out and the mooring chains checked – there's still some work to be done but progress is on track so far.

On 16th February we hosted the RYA Sailability Scotland AGM. Apart from the fact that it was a great success, I'm relieved to say that the stairlift performed admirably, as it should for all those who required its use.

On the social front, we were entertained by "Stretcher Case" who returned to the Club on 16th February and played to a very appreciative crowd. Haven't heard "Shakin' all Over" played live in years! (haven't heard it since the 70s full stop). Special thanks to Gillian Muir who arranged an impromptu raffle for the evening and raised almost £100.

At Tom Brady's instigation, we intend to restart the Club Music nights beginning on 16th March. Bring your instruments, join in, do a solo spot – it's all very informal but good fun so don't hang back.

Nautical Nosh will be served on 23rd March, so get your names down in good time please. It's very hard to judge quantities of food required when you don't know until the last minute how many people are coming!

See you on the water soon – weather permitting PLEASE!

Euan Drysdale



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Back by popular demand – Shottie with a Yottie!

In response to feedback at last October's Sailing Forum, *Shottie with a Yottie* has been resurrected in this year's sailing programme. The session is scheduled to run alongside the freesail on Friday 31st May.

More details will of course be provided nearer the time, but the format will generally be the same as when we previously ran it: we will ask for the names of cruiser skippers who are willing to take people out for a sail in their yachts for an hour or two and match them up with dinghy sailors, cadets or other newbies who fancy a shot in one of the big boats.

Kay McBurney, on behalf of the Sailing Committee



Telephone Weather Forecasts

In the old days, if you wanted a sailing forecast, you looked out of the window. If you needed something a bit more sophisticated or long-range, you could phone up the Met Office at Pitreavie Castle and speak directly to a forecaster. Then the Met Office introduced Marinecall, a pre-recorded 5-day sailing forecast for different sea areas around the coast. In due course this was followed by Marinecall by Fax, Marinecall by SMS (text) and Marinecall by web. There was also a parallel series of phone numbers for general land-based forecasts called Weathercall.

Then in November 2011 it all stopped. Very little warning was given, but all Weathercall and Marinecall services abruptly ceased. What seems to have happened is that Bongiorno, the firm that ran the telephone service for the Met Office, decided they couldn't make money out of it any more and simply pulled the plug. Of course by then we didn't miss it much. The Internet had become the preferred source of weather information - much more choice, much more detail, and it's free. With smartphones and other handheld devices, it's more available too.

So now it is simply not possible to receive a weather forecast by phone. You can get apps and widgets but not a voice forecast unless you pay for a commercial subscription service. 2013 almanacs do not list any telephone forecasts at all, just radio, Navtex and Internet. And of course, you can still look out of the window.

New Members

Welcome to our new members:

Full

Alexander Robertson

Family

Keith and Heather Driver
David, Miriam, Amy and Ellie Newton

Social

Kit and Patsy Wallace
Fiona Bryce



Cruise Liners in the Forth

The following cruise liners will be anchored by Hound Point during the summer of 2013, if you want to sail out and have a look:

Date	Vessel	Length (metres)	Date	Vessel	Length (metres)
24 April	MSC Magnifica	294	01 Aug	Caribbean Princess	290
03 May	MSC Magnifica	294	02 Aug	Queen Elizabeth	294
15 May	Caribbean Princess	290	13 Aug	Caribbean Princess	290
22 May	Vision Of The Seas	280	14 Aug	MSC Magnifica	294
23 May	MSC Magnifica	294	21 Aug	Crystal Serenity	250
02 June	Caribbean Princess	290	24 Aug	Caribbean Princess	290
08 June	Caribbean Princess	290	26 Aug	MSC Magnifica	294
08 July	Caribbean Princess	290	03 Sept	MSC Magnifica	294
19 July	Queen Elizabeth	294	04 Sept	Seven Seas Voyager	206
20 July	Caribbean Princess	290	14 Sept	Mein Schiff 1	264
31 July	Marina	239	17 Sept	Carnival Legend	292



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Rescue Boat

A new 25HP four stroke outboard motor has been purchased and will be delivered to us any day now.

This will replace one of the 30HP Yamahas and will hopefully solve some of the reliability problems that we had last year.

We also hope that it will help to reduce fuel costs it being considerably more efficient than the older motors.



Black Smoke for the Cramond Conclave

I'm sorry to disappoint the loyal and supportive fans* of the Cramond quiz team who have come to expect a winning performance over the years, but some bad refereeing, the wrong questions and cheap beer (who can think clearly when they need a pee?) defeated us in this year's Brainwave Quiz hosted by the Forth Corinthian Yacht Club (FCYC).

Our team comprised Alastair Miller, Phil Chester, Don Graham, John Bean and yours truly. This year the venue was the Trinity Bowling Club's clubhouse which was warm and comfortable, and the volunteer bar staff were cheerful, friendly and efficient. So far so good. We were up against two teams from RFYC and three from FCYC and the quizmaster was FCYC Commodore Paul Taylor, assisted by his daughter. He had obviously put a lot of work into the questions with music, picture, trivia and nautical sections, at one stage combining music and picture rounds together.

Members may not know this but Don Graham has a bent for obscure songs and at one stage was our man of the match. But even he had never heard of "Sinking The Bismark" by John Hoxton. Now has anyone ever heard of either the song or the singer? If you have I'd love to meet you (that is if you are allowed out on your own.)

Strangely enough we did very well on the trivia questions where Alastair (joint man of the match) excelled. How on earth did he know who Jordon was and how many husbands she has had? Or what magazine has a section called "What were they thinking?" (see below for answers if you care.)

For three quarters of the quiz we led the way, by five points at one stage. Then came the nautical rounds and we bombed. Here is an example: "Put these lights in order from south to north: Tod Head, Rattray Head, Scurdie Ness, Buchan Ness, Girdle Ness." Worse was to come in the picture rounds ... it's still too painful to go into details, ask later when the wounds have healed.

The final results: we were third, one point behind the FCYC's "The Faeroes" who in turn were one point behind the winners, the RFYC's "Smithereens."

We were all a bit tired and despondent when the spokesman for the RFYC, in the course of inviting everyone to the RFYC for an open night said, "our beer is dearer but our ladies are better looking." Uproar. The faux pas to end foxes paws. He apologised of course but we left warmed by our justified sense of moral superiority.

Answers

The magazine is Heat.

Jordan has had three husbands.

* Only one fan and that's my wife and even she is not all that keen.

Ian Hellewell



Forth Coastguard No More

This will be our first sailing season without the reassuring presence of the Forth Marine Rescue Co-ordination Centre (MRCC) at Fife Ness. The station closed on 28th September last year after 109 years in service, with all rescue and coastguard operations passing to Aberdeen MRCC. We are assured that there will be no reduction in service to mariners, but many observers fear that loss of local knowledge may prove costly. Most of the 12 staff at Fife Ness have retired or taken redundancy, although some have transferred to Aberdeen.

In practical terms, it should make little difference to us. VHF calls to Forth Coastguard will be handled by Aberdeen MRCC, and maritime safety information (weather forecasts and navigation warnings) will continue to be broadcast on the same channels and schedule as before. If you need to phone, the Forth MRCC operations room phone number is diverted to Aberdeen, or you can call Aberdeen MRCC directly on 01224 592 334.

The network of auxiliary and volunteer coastguards is not affected by the MRCC closure.



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In the 2011 spate, *Seahorse* was damaged when *Jenny B's* bow mooring parted and she was carried stern to the current alongside *Seahorse*, where her transom corner hit *Seahorse's* topsides. *Jenny B* also suffered damage to the rudder. Both boats are sturdy 1970's vintage; unfortunately *Seahorse* being much bigger, the impact was halfway up the topside, where it is most vulnerable and most visible.

Fortunately the damage was behind the galley, where removal of a lightly glassed-in storage bin unit revealed the damage with plenty of working space around. It was split right through but over a small area.

It could not wait till crane-out. I did consider drying out over a tide, and probably should have done since working on the outside from the dinghy proved difficult. A temporary gelcoat repair would have been possible, but I wanted to take advantage of the summer temperatures, so with considerable help from John Bean, I set about a "permanent" repair.

First I tried to "beat out" the damage with brute force applied to a large hammer, but being half way up the topside it just bounced, and there was a limit to how hard I was willing to hit my boat with a mash hammer. Perhaps if we had been out of the water with someone on the outside leaning on a heavy pad it may have worked, but instead I drilled holes at each end of the split and worked a hacksaw blade through. I then cut along the splits to make relatively smooth edges. Now it beat back into shape without too much drama.

With all that space it was easy to rough up the surface with a cordless drill (where would we be without them) and assorted rotating discs and files. Then I worked resin well into the cracks from both sides, and applied two layers of glass mat on the inside. Not being used to mixing volumes and drying times I did it in 2 mixes, but the first was still well tacky and one mix would probably have been ok.



So that was the easy bit, now for the outside. I chiselled off the crazed gelcoat, and roughed up the mat. Then I mixed the gelcoat and painted it on in layers. I think that's where I went wrong. Gelcoat does not go on like paint, and nothing would give a smooth surface. If you see the state of my dinghy you will also appreciate the difficulty of working while afloat.



So the final tarring up had to wait until ashore. A vigorous power sand got it back to this state (left.) Then another go at painting on the gelcoat got it as good as I could get (right.)

This is ok if the light is right but not exactly unnoticeable. Fortunately it is on the starboard side and not many of you will see it in passing (unless you paddle round to inspect it after reading this).



Main lesson learned: apply gelcoat the way it is supposed to go. If I was doing it again I would use a sheet of plastic on one of those flexible chopping boards and tape it firmly to the side once I had applied the gelcoat. It would need careful estimation of how much to apply. A professional would probably cut out the hole and do the repair right through from the outside in, but I was not prepared to carry out an assault like that on my boat without the confidence of knowing what I was doing.

Alvin Barber

Out of Date Flares

If any members have out of date flares which they wish to have destroyed, Dougie Pringle will collect them during the morning of Crane In, Saturday 30th March.

Place them in a clear sealed plastic bag, along with a list of their type (e.g. red smoke, white parachute), their expiry dates and your full name.

Dougie will then transport them to our nearest disposal site near St. Andrews.

Do not include any damaged or weeping flares.

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Thanks to the weather gods and plenty of hard work from everyone involved, the moorings are ready for another season. It didn't look too promising in late January with the river running high, snow on the ground and freezing temperatures, but by the first work party February the river had dropped to workable levels and it was all systems go - well Cramond style.



Despite the prophecies of the doomsters the east chain was split at the south end and the section down past the slip was dragged out. On close inspection the chain was deemed serviceable for another few years, but it quickly became apparent that the risers were of differing lengths. Hopefully this explains the difficulties experienced by *Jester*, *Innisfallen* and *Kiri* last season. It did take a bit of juggling to get the chain re-connected but the rest of the job went fairly smoothly.

Slipway Cleaning

The slipway has had its first cleaning of the season, and a rota will be issued for the rest of the season shortly.

As with all such tasks, if you're unable to fulfil your allocated slot, please arrange a swap with somebody else.

The second work party was blessed with a warmer and sunnier weekend and completed the checking of the west chain.

The final weekend took place in miserable conditions but a great effort by those involved meant that the channel poles are now all in place for the season.



We've moved a few of the boats around to try and better accommodate the shallow-drafted and less conventional craft on a trial basis for the coming season, but otherwise positions are mainly as they were last year.

Thanks again to all who helped out, including the shore team - Hamish and Jim were kept producing a steady supply of things to break - and the catering folks who made sure there were pies ready at the end of each session. Thanks also to Gordon for the photographs.

Alan Hampson, Moorings Convenor

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Sailability Update

At its AGM in January, the Cramond Sailability group elected Graham Cullen as its new Chairman. Euan Drysdale continues in post as Treasurer, while Kay McBurney agreed to stay on for another year as Hon. Secretary. She will also continue to represent the group on the CBC Committee and the Sailing Committee for the time being.

February saw CBC play host to this year's RYA Sailability Scotland AGM. Around 30 people from all over Scotland gathered at Cramond for the meeting, which was followed by a buffet lunch and prizegiving. The cup for the 2012 Challenger Traveller series went to our former member Liz Eaton, though sadly she was unable to accept it in person. The gathering also provided some valuable networking opportunities, and we are currently exploring the options for running a "Three Inches Race" for Challengers in collaboration with other Forth/Fife clubs.

Looking ahead to the 2013 season, 9 regular Hawk sailing sessions have been scheduled in the club's fixture list. Most of these coincide with the cruiser weekend race series on Saturdays, so hopefully we will be able to participate in racing more regularly. We hope to run some taster sessions as well.

As always, we are keen to recruit volunteers to enable us to support new members and expand our sailing activities, especially in the Hawk. So if you can spare a couple of hours a month, either for racing or even just the occasional recreational potter about the Forth, we'd love to hear from you! Just speak to Kay in the bar sometime or email her at sailability@cramondboatclub.org.uk.

*Kay McBurney,
Hon. Sec. Cramond Sailability*



Social Events

The Children's Christmas Party was a great success thanks to the combined efforts of so many members.

In addition to a number of members and others, we are extremely grateful to all the traders at the Parkgrove and Barnton shopping centres who generously donated some great prizes for the raffle: Scotmid, Cloudberry, Barnton Fine Foods, Barnton Pharmacy, Sainsburys, Omnicare Pharmacy, Tesco, Majestic Wine, and Keegan & Pennykid Insurance Brokers ensured that we had plenty of variety on offer.

A substantial number of tickets were sold as a result, and it was decided to hold over the raffle draw until the New Year Brunch. We don't know if that was what suddenly boosted the attendance but a most entertaining afternoon ensued. We must thank Gordon Gooch for his numerous ticket purchases which greatly boosted the funds though sadly he wasn't a prize winner. There was much hilarity but it was all taken in very good part.

Acknowledgements

Except where stated, all photos are by club members and reproduced with their permission.

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Nautical Nosh

Sat 23rd March 7.30pm

buffet dinner

£7 per head

Quiz Evening

Saturday 6th April

including food, raffle

£5 per entry



Watch the club noticeboards for further details.