



The Seagull

The Journal of the Cramond Boat Club

March 2014

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Commodore's Jottings

The new sailing season is almost upon us and preparations are well under way for Crane-In. There has been a huge amount of work done around the Club in clearing out the vegetation behind the building, the gutters and under the stairs in the "link". New race marks have been acquired and prepared for placement. More in the House and moorings sections.



We were entertained by "Forever Young" on Burns Night along with Haggis for sustenance and look forward to the appearance of "Mike and the Mushrooms" on 22nd March. Their repertoire is apparently rooted in '60s and '70s music so it should be a great night and we look forward to seeing as many of you there as possible.

As always, thanks are due to all the many volunteers who've turned out for the work parties and achieved so much this year. Some of it has been pretty hard work but hopefully if we keep on top of the tasks they'll be easier in the future. Hopefully plenty of fair winds and good weather to come. Happy sailing.

Euan Drysdale



Sailing Committee News

Diary Dates

Sat 29th March
Crane In

26th - 27th April
Opening Cruise

10th - 13th August
ECSW

23rd - 24th August
Cramond Regatta

Sat 11th Oct
Crane Out

Welcome to the new sailing season! Although we unfortunately still have no Sailing Secretary, collectively the Sailing Committee has been hard at work on your behalf and individual members are handling various aspects of the job. The 2014 committee is as follows: Piotr Wojtczuk, Lawrie Elliott, Robert Wilkinson, Andrew Pratt, Annmarie MacRury, Darren Smith, Alex Tulloch, Kay McBurney (Sailability) and Paul Rogers (Scouts). If you have any concerns or suggestions to do with the club's sailing programme, you can contact the entire committee by emailing sailcomm@cramondboatclub.org.uk.

This season's sailing programme has roughly the same sort of shape as in previous years. Apart from the regular short A, S and B points series with 4-6 races in each, the cruisers have an 11-race Saturday series (W), plus the popular Middle Distance series and a couple of Long Distance races, including the Master Mariner.

As usual, there will be an Opening Cruise in April and a Closing Cruise in late September.

Joint pursuit races for both cruisers and dinghies have been reinstated in a 3-race series in the early part of the season.

Dinghy sailors also have the usual spring (DA), summer (DS), autumn (DB) and frostbite (FB) points series comprising 5-7 races each. The dinghy weekend series (DWA and DWB) will again feature 2 or more races on the same day and will incorporate cadet racing (with separate scoring and possibly separate starts depending on numbers). As well as counting towards the overall points series, events marked with an asterisk in the sailing programme will be treated like 'mini-regattas' with individual prizes on the day.

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A number of cadet sessions have also been scheduled alongside the general dinghy freesail sessions (mainly on Saturdays this year), and we hope to be able to provide a bit more in the way of informal but structured coaching on these days to help cadets improve their skills.

The Sailability group has 10 dates scheduled for sessions in the Hawk.

Our popular "Shottie with a Yottie" event returns this year on Saturday 24th May, and the Family Fun Day will take place on the last Saturday in June. This year's Ladies Race will be held on Saturday 2nd August.

This year's Cramond Regatta will be held over the weekend of the 23rd/24th August and will be a closed CBC regatta for dinghies only. It will include separate classes for cadets and novices (2 years or less racing experience). It will also incorporate the Cramond Sailability Trophy for the best-placed sailor with a disability. If any yotties would like to volunteer their services as Race Officer or offer their boat as a Committee Boat, the Sailing Committee would be delighted to hear from you!

On the weekend of 24th/25th May, CBC is also hoping to host a National 12 Traveller event. Alex Tulloch is organising this, so please contact him if you would like to offer assistance.

On the training front, powerboat training has already taken place in March, and dinghy adult RYA Level 1&2 training will take place over 2 weekends in April. The Sea Monkeys (for juniors up to RYA Youth Stage 3) have 8 sessions spread across the season.

Another date for your diary is the celebrations to mark the Forth Road Bridge's 50th birthday in September. Of particular interest to CBC members will be the flotilla on Sunday 7th and the fireworks display the following Saturday.

Now we just need to cross our fingers for fair winds and blue skies ...

Kay McBurney, on behalf of the Sailing Committee



New Members

Welcome to our new members:

Full
Douglas Barnes

Family
Darren, Claire, Finlay and Lily Richards

Andrew, Rebecca, Connel and Duncan McLennan



Commonwealth Flotilla

Commonwealth Flotilla
Glasgow 25-27 July 2014



To mark the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, RYA Scotland is organising a flotilla of boats - the largest in the Clyde's history - to sail into the centre of Glasgow. Towards the end of July, boats will gather in Greenock from feeder events, coming from the west of Scotland, the inland canal system and from England, Wales and Ireland.

There is a reception and party at James Watt Dock in Greenock on Friday 25th July, followed by a cruise up the Clyde into Glasgow on the Saturday morning. All boats will berth at Pacific Quay in the heart of Glasgow, opposite the SECC and Armadillo. There will be various festivities taking place over the weekend, including open air entertainment and live broadcasts from the BBC.

It all sounds great fun, but there is a limit of 250 boats on the flotilla, and places are filling up fast, so if you are interested, apply [here](#) as soon as possible. The organisers are keen to encourage groups of boats to take part together to represent their clubs. Robert Wilkinson and family have already signed up in *Shikari*, so if anyone else is interested, let him know and CBC can perhaps be registered as an entry.

Apart from anything else, getting there will be an opportunity to use the new Helix canal link to the Forth and Clyde canal at the River Carron, which is due to open in April. If you've driven up the M9 recently, you'll have seen the magnificent giant kelpies at the canal hub. I'm hoping to provide a full report on this in the next issue of the *Seagull*.

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There are two kinds of boat owners: those who like boat maintenance and those who don't. Your editor belongs firmly in the second group, as anyone at the club who knows me will attest.

I have never understood the enthusiasm that some people have for fitting, fixing and fine-tuning their boats. Almost all maintenance tasks on boats are ludicrously difficult to accomplish. Most boats seem to have been deliberately designed to make repair and upkeep as difficult as possible, with key components hidden in impossible-to-get-at locations at the bottom of deep lockers or behind immovable bulkheads. And even if you can reach the vital part without 6-foot long arms, you will invariably find that the nut doesn't fit the screw, or the bracket is rusted.

Even the simpler tasks like cleaning and painting are made more difficult by the weird shape of boats which means you have to poke around in strange cavities in the hull moulding, or scrape your knuckles on a lethal projection that has no obvious function, or lie in a puddle scrubbing an awkward surface above your head while debris or bilge water drips on your face.

And that's just the routine stuff. There are some people who seem to delight in making 'improvements' to their vessels, and will happily strip out the wiring, or replace the headlining, or install new through-hull fittings. Why do people do this? What perverse delight do they get from turning out on cold, dark winter weekends and freezing half to death in order to re-plumb an ancient sea-toilet or track down the source of that slow but irritating deck leak?

I'm afraid I just don't get it. I have owned my boat for 20 years and have never wanted to spend a sleety Sunday in January hanging upside-down in the engine bay trying to loosen a salt-encrusted jubilee clip. I have this naïve idea that boats are for sailing, and sailing should be enjoyable. There is no part of winter maintenance that could possibly be described as fun. I think that boats should be completely ignored for all the months with an 'r' in them.

Yet many boat owners seem happy to spend every winter weekend tinkering, pottering and poking around their boats in arctic temperatures rather than relaxing in a centrally-heated house watching The Antiques Road Show. Of course, some people just like the social side of it. You see them perched in the cockpit with a flask of coffee and a Greggs pasty, pondering a long list of boat jobs and chatting to all the dog-walkers and rambles who come strolling by.

But why are boats so hard to maintain? Compare boats with cars. When I started to drive about a hundred years ago, most drivers could perform basic maintenance tasks like drain the oil or bleed the brakes, because they drove around in battered old rust-buckets. But nowadays, motor cars are incredibly reliable and most drivers would struggle to know how to open the bonnet. Technology has moved on and owners don't have to be mechanics, just drivers.

Why is it not the same with boats? Well ok, I guess I know the answer(s) to that. Partly it's because we keep boats far longer than cars - many boats at Cramond are well over 30 years old, while we change our cars every 5 or 6 years at most. Also, boats exist in a harsh environment. Sea water is an enemy to almost every material in existence (natural or man-made), while wind and weather combine to ensure our beloved boats are under constant stress and strain, even when they are not actually sailing.



This year, Ichthus, Lafter and Melita were cleaned by professional sand-blasting



So the truth is that boats do require a certain level of regular care and attention, whether we like it or not. Assuming we are not rich enough to buy a brand new boat every few years, or pay someone to do all the hard work (and this is the Cramond Boat Club, so we're not) then we are stuck with our aging, decaying hulks which need increasing levels of effort in the winter if we are to fully enjoy the benefits in the summer.

In the meantime, I will stick with my tried and tested formula: make a list of essential maintenance jobs in the autumn then ignore it until a fortnight before crane-in, by which time it is far too late to do anything but slap on a coat of cheap anti-fouling and scrub the green slime off the deck. And I will continue to hope that someone invents a maintenance-free boat soon, before I'm too old to enjoy it.

Alastair Millar

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It is great to report that a tremendous amount of work has been achieved in this year's winter work parties. Members from across the club have joined in sprucing up the clubhouse, maintaining the grounds, servicing the channel marks and race buoys, and getting the moorings ready for another season.

The first work party on 25th January focused on the moorings and completed work on the East chain in one cold, very wet and very long day. All were rewarded with the opportunity for a long lie the next morning, especially welcome by those who were at the Forever Young/Burns bash on Saturday night. Few changes were made to boat positions, but the riser triangle shape has been altered for the boats in front of the clubhouse where things have not been right for a several years. Hopefully these boats will sit better on their mooring this year.



The following weekend a small party of dinghy sailors and Scouts (assisted by Dave J and Eddie) retrieved the remaining race marks. More had survived than observation from the shore had suggested.



The job of clearing out the front gutter on the clubhouse was carried out from the relative safety of a scaffold tower (kindly provided by Bob Sharp), while the rear gutter which was cleaned out by the precarious use of a ladder and three nutters (unnamed for health and safety reasons!)

The major job was clearing out the accumulated soil and rubbish behind the club buildings and carting it to the clearing beside the dinghy park. The collective wisdom is that this probably hasn't been done for 15 years! This is hard work, and special mention should be of the lady members (Anna, Susan, Kay and Katy) although the guys (Darren, Piotr, Hamish Henderson, Malcy and John Bean) did not badly either! Colin Haynes, Alvin, Reggie, Alan B, Lawrence, Eddie and others all helped out too.

Now that it's clear we need to stop soil and debris building up again. This should only take a couple of hours if we add it to the annual list of jobs.



Planning Application

The following notice was spotted in the February Cramond and Barnton Community Council notes :

Sale of Land on the Promenade

A request has been made by a resident on Cramond Glebe Road to buy land on the promenade from the council in order to build a studio and boat shed.

A number of the Community Council members have already met the developer and the estates department representative on the Council to discuss this issue.

The Council and the resident have requested a meeting with local residents to discuss the issue. This will be arranged once the developer has spoken to the planning department.

The two issues involved here are the sale of the land and the suitability of the development plans.

Wonder what this means?

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The race marks that were left out (and still there) have been retrieved and refurbished (together with those that were retrieved previously). New marks have been purchased, prepared and painted. Mooring buoys for each side of island have been prepared, and these together with the race marks will be laid nearer the sailing season to reduce the chance of them being damaged or lost.



Good progress was made with the refurbishing the channel marks during the work party weekends but the Neap tide limited access to the furthest poles. Lawrie and Campbell ventured out early the following weekend to take advantage of a good Spring tide and managed to complete the remaining poles without incident. They also found the ground tackle for C and E, and marked each before getting ashore ahead of the incoming tide. The same cannot be said of the family they advised not to spend too long on the Island, which ended up being rescued!

The RNLI have now been officially notified that the channel marks are all present and correct. Campbell and Lawrie returned at high tide and attached new race marks on C and E. Very smart they are too (the race marks not the afore-mentioned pair.) Big thanks to Hamish for preparing the marks and tackle.

It's really good to make so much progress this early in the season. Not only does it take the pressure off those responsible for these tasks, it avoids having to do the work during the sailing season, leaving more time to get out on the water. It all goes to show what can be achieved when we all pull together.

A big thanks to all those who have helped out, including those less visible behind the scenes. And special thanks to those who put in multiple appearances: Eddie King, Susan Nimmo, Andrew Wood, Paul Rogers, Tom Brady, Alan Mackenzie, Annemarie MacRury, Piotr Wojtczuk, Anna Basista, Katie Henderson, Darren Smith and Campbell Calder. We'll plan it better next year so no one (apart from the organisers) should need to be down for more than one weekend.

That said, there is still plenty to be done, including repairs to the tin boat (Don has kindly undertaken to fabricate new rollers), further work around the club house, and now doubt a never-ending list of repairs, so please keep sharing the load.

Alan Hampson, Eddie King and Lawrie Elliott

Club House

The following work has been carried out in the clubhouse:

- Faulty light fitting in Gents toilet replaced.
- Fan controller in Gents changing room repaired.
- Front door lock repaired.
- Panic bolt to fire escape door repaired.
- Scaffolding erected at fire escape stair to check window frames which were found to be completely rotten. Temporary repairs have been made to try to keep watertight, and replacement UPVC windows will be installed.



Sailability Update

At January's Cramond Sailability AGM, the current office-holders all agreed to continue in post: Graham Cullen (Chairman), Euan Drysdale (Treasurer), Kay McBurney (Hon. Secretary). Kay will also continue to act as the group's representative on the CBC Committee and the Sailing Committee.

On the plus side our finances are in robust health, but we are greatly concerned about the shortage of volunteers. We now have only 1 skipper (myself) to support sessions in our 20ft Hawk dayboat and we have no dedicated helpers on the dinghy side to assist our wheelchair-bound Chairman sail the Challenger. We therefore urgently need more volunteers, as otherwise our efforts to recruit more disabled members will be greatly hampered and we will be unable to expand our programme of supported sailing. So if you can spare even a couple of hours a month to help out, we'd love to hear from you! Speak to Kay or email sailability@cramondboatclub.org.uk.

We are also planning to circulate an appeal for volunteers and members at businesses and large organizations based nearby. If you work for such a company, we would really appreciate it if you could have a wee think about who might be useful people for us to get in touch with, e.g. in-house newsletter editors, charity committees, HR people, sports coordinators, etc., and pass on their contact details.

Looking ahead to the imminent new season, we have scheduled 10 dates for group sailing in the Hawk on Saturdays. This will give us the opportunity to hone our skills in some of the weekend cruiser races too. Additional taster sessions may be arranged as and when required.

Kay McBurney

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It was with great sadness that we learned of the death on 10th March of Katrina Dawson, long-standing member of the club, and husband of former Commodore Bengé.

Katrina had a degree in Philosophy and Mathematics from St Andrews University of which Bengé was very proud. She was kind and caring and always willing to share her wisdom giving a considered opinion on any subject. She was unassuming but commanded great respect and I never heard her raise her voice.

With Bengé she raised four remarkable children with an air of philosophical calm and composure. She was an intrepid driver of their small car ferrying their offspring on their various escapades, towing boats, etc. meeting any challenge.



Katrina was convenor of the Ladies Scottish Climbing Club and sometime treasurer of the Trefoil School at Gogarburn run by the Guides for handicapped children. She also enjoyed sailing with the family and later with Bengé in their small cruisers - she liked to be close to the water. They enjoyed a few sailing holidays to Greece and Yugoslavia (as it was then) in company with friends. Their cottage on Mull looking out to Iona was her favourite retreat.

Aided and abetted by Bengé, Katrina ran a series of Scottish Country Dance sessions at the Club with infectious enthusiasm, teaching us some less well-known dances and even inventing new ones relevant to our sailing.

In her later years she was a shadow of her former self but still managed to beat us at Scrabble. She was very well looked after by Bengé in their purpose-built addition to their son's home in Ullapool where she passed away peacefully at the age of 92. Katrina is survived by her sister Marjory and by her loving husband Bengé, who turns 90 on 20th March - she fended off his terrible jokes for more than sixty years. Besides their four children there are eleven grandchildren and a recent addition of a first great-grandchild.

The funeral was held in Ullapool, but it is understood that a service of celebration for Katrina's life will be held in Edinburgh, date to be announced.

Doris Hunter

Sadly, two other CBC members have also passed away recently.

Jack Gillies was a Forth character who was a member of CBC as well as Forth Corinthian YC. A professional diver, he inspected ships and laid caissons at Hound Point. He was responsible for moving all the boulders from the East trot at Cramond to help boats lie more comfortably.

I am grateful to Dave Innes for the following report.

The name **John Ritchie** will not be known to many of today's members but when I first joined the club in 1953, John was already an established sailor and competed in club races and regattas around the Forth in a variety of dinghies and yachts, including *Ruineag*, an Olympic class Star yacht. I have a photo of *Ruineag* racing at Cramond with Sam Miller's aunt Val crewing for John and Eric Free when she was a schoolgirl. After he sold the Star, John bought a Dragon which he and Eric sailed regularly for a few years.

John and Eric decided to emigrate to the USA for better business opportunities, but retained an enduring love of Cramond and the club. Over the years they returned to Edinburgh regularly and always came down to Cramond to renew acquaintances. On his last trip over here a few years ago, Anna and I arranged a small lunch in the club for John and Eric to meet up with a number of former members, who were delighted at the chance to chat and reminisce. A unique and memorable occasion, which John later said gave him great pleasure.

Those of us who knew John extend our sympathy to his wife Roma and their family.

Dave Innes

Events at other clubs

Wed 26th March 7.30pm
Port Edgar YC

"Cruising around the Forth"
by John Murphy.

Very experienced Forth sailor will share his knowledge and experiences of cruising around the Firth of Forth and the East Coast.

Sunday 6th April
East Lothian YC

RYA Clubs Rules Advisor
Course.

All CBC members are welcome to attend these events.

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Burns himself would have 'Shook All Night Long' on a memorable night to celebrate the Bard's birthday at a packed CBC on the 25th January.



The return of ACDC tribute band 'Forever Young' cleared the wax from many an ear with faithful renditions of ACDC's best songs from the 70's and 80's played with absolute conviction and pinpoint accuracy that had many stomping to the beat. As usual Bob Sharp took to the floor and showed the youngsters present you are never too old to rock and roll (what a mover Bob!).

At the break the haggis was piped in and a stirring address delivered by Norrie Donnelly, after which hungry rockers tucked into their haggis, neeps and tatties traditionally prepared by Calum and Gillian Muir and a host of helpers. The show continued on with a string of ACDC classics from 'Whole Lotta Rosie' to 'It's a Long Way to the Top if You Want to Rock and Roll' (with appropriate bagpipe accompaniment!) If you want a flavour of the evening, Gordon Gooch captured a clip of the action on [YouTube](#).

Many thanks to Bob, Calum, Gillian, Ben, Colin, Dave, Donna and the bar girls Megan and Erron (who had a very busy night!) It was undoubtedly a fantastic evening and one that must be repeated soon.

Alastair Strong



Cruise Liners in the Forth

The following cruise liners will be anchored by Hound Point during the summer of 2014, if you want to sail out and have a look:

Date	Vessel	Length (metres)	Date	Vessel	Length (metres)
23 April	MSC Magnifica	294	19 July	Ruby Princess	290
02 May	MSC Magnifica	294	25 July	Marina	239
13 May	MSC Magnifica	294	31 July	Ruby Princess	290
20 May	Ruby Princess	290	12 Aug	Ruby Princess	290
24 May	MSC Magnifica	294	15 Aug	MSC Magnifica	294
25 May	Mein Schiff	264	17 Aug	Seven Seas Voyager	206
25 May	Queen Victoria	294	24 Aug	Ruby Princess	290
26 May	Ruby Princess	290	26 Aug	MSC Magnifica	294
13 June	Ruby Princess	290	04 Sept	MSC Magnifica	294
07 July	Ruby Princess	290	05 Sept	Ruby Princess	290



Acknowledgements

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

Contacts

Seagull Editor:
seagull@cramondboatclub.org.uk

Club Committee:
cbc-committee@yahoo.co.uk

Club Members Email List:
cramond@yahoo.co.uk