



# The Seagull

The Journal of the Cramond Boat Club

March 2016

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## The View from the Commodore's Window

Wet and windy would be a good description of this winter. And, on the basis of the green mould re-appearing on Exisle's rubbing strake, the frosts have been few and far between. Here's hoping that we are getting the rain and gales out of the way, whilst higher than average temperatures extend through spring and summer (no harm in dreaming!)

Under Alan Hampson's supervision the moorings parties are venturing out on the river so we should have everything shipshape by crane-in. The slip cleaning rota for 2016 has been circulated by e-mail and copies of both this and the moorings party details are on display just inside the Clubhouse. Please check whether/when you are on duty (any swaps are the responsibility of the individuals concerned).

Meanwhile, the hardier dinghy sailors have been taking advantage of suitable tides and weather to manage some winter sailing, and in February power boat training kicked off, despite some challenging conditions.

On the social front, the children's Christmas party went very well. Phil Chester did a grand job as Santa Claus. Huge thanks to Gillian and Donna for all their work on this event; and to the team that put together Santa's spectacular waterborne arrival – particularly impressive this year.

After Christmas, Greta and I ran the New Year's Day lunch, with the aid of Christine Chester. Around 25 members came along to eat, with the event blending into a more general party in the course of the afternoon as more folk turned up to enjoy the facilities of the bar right through into the evening. A convivial start to 2016.

Burn's night this year turned into Burn's day – with a late lunch laid on, complete with piper and a suitably addressed haggis. Many thanks go to Bob Sharp and his publicist, Ian Hellewell, for organising another successful occasion.

Crane-in is on the 9th April – so, for all you boat owners, now's the time to finish off those last minute maintenance jobs. And don't forget to put the through-hull fittings back into position before being re-floated! (Been there, done that.)

Wishing everyone fair skies and following winds for the 2016 season,

*Andy Walker*

## Diary Dates

**Sat 9th April**  
Crane In

**7th & 8th May**  
Opening Cruise

**2nd & 3rd July**  
Cramond Dinghy Regatta

**4th - 8th July**  
ECSF, Tay

**Sat 1st Oct**  
Crane Out



*Cramond harbour with a sprinkling of snow*

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*Last September was the 50th Anniversary of the opening of our present clubhouse. In the December issue of the Seagull the Commodore reported on the party we held to mark the occasion, together with some relevant history and photographs – as were presented in the course of the anniversary event.*

*This prompted the following fascinating letter from Nick Thomson – a Life Member of the Club and a former Cramond resident (now living in Aberdour). As the architect of the new premises he is particularly well placed to fill in many of the details surrounding the early days of the Club and the construction of the clubhouse in 1965. His letter is reproduced below, and should really be read in conjunction with the photos in the last Seagull.*

Dear Mr Walker,

I was very interested in the article in the Club's December "Seagull" on the above subject.

Being brought up in Cramond in the 1940s, 50s and 60s, at 'Sea Yetts' overlooking the river, I developed a keen interest in boats and joined the Club in the late 40s, and can therefore fill in some more detailed information on the history of the Club premises.

When the Club was formed in the 1930s the only premises were the former Bowling Club pavilion at the South end of what is now our dinghy park. This was a very simple small corrugated iron building, with no services and facilities, and – not overlooking the moorings – was little used.

By the end of the war, when the Club came back to life, this building was in poor repair and the Bowling Green was overgrown. Little use was made of it, and the Club's main base was the public bar of the Cramond Inn!

In, I think, the late 40s, we finally acquired the "Green Hut" which had been used as a garage by a Mr Wilson, who had a butchers business in Inverleith. A very basic conversion was carried out, installing a lavatory and fitting a gas fire and gas lighting (there was no electricity in this area), and the building was mainly used for meetings and as a changing room.

The building to the South of the "Green Hut" belonged to Mr Jim Laidlaw, the Club's first Commodore, and the father of John Laidlaw, who also became Commodore, and owner of a motor launch called *Sharpshooter*, and subsequently an 18-foot Lynton Hope designed clinker-built sloop called *Mischief* which he eventually sold to me!

Beyond the Laidlaw's hut was another owned by Jimmy Cant, owner of *Iris*, a 32-ft motor cruiser, subsequently purchased by Norman Mackinnon of Drambuie, again a former Commodore and a substantial donor towards the cost of the present clubhouse.

In around the mid-1950s, the "Tea Hut", lying to the North of the "Green Hut" and run by a Miss Hunter, became available when she retired, and was purchased by the Club. With help from Mr Jim Beattie, who was a member and Managing Director of Costain Concrete, reconstruction work was carried out to make it fit for use as a clubhouse.

Facilities provided included a large function room/lounge/dining area, a small kitchen, and changing rooms and lavatories. Heating and lighting were again by gas, and if power was required for special functions, a temporary electric cable was run down from my parents' house at 'Sea Yetts'! With this set-up the Club started to grow, especially on the dinghy side and we subsequently hosted the World Hornet Championship in 1957.



*Launching the airborne lifeboat*

## New Members

Welcome to our new members:

### Full

Craig Fleming  
James Kistrick  
Andrew Harris

### Under 26

Hannah Shaw

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The catalyst for the present clubhouse was a legacy of, I think, £1,000 left to us by the late Dr Wilcox, a Hornet owner, to be specifically used for new premises. After much fundraising and generous support from several members, the decision was taken to demolish the old "Tea Hut" and build the present clubhouse in its place. The design for this building was prepared by myself, assisted by Mr Penman, the Deputy City Architect, who was also a member, and the building was built by J Henry, Builders of Davidson Mains. The rest is recent history, which no doubt can be better recorded by many of our present members.

With reference to the photographs in the December issue the Seagull, the boat inside the "Tea Hut" was an airborne lifeboat, designed by Uffa Fox and being converted to a yacht by Jim Hunter – Miss Hunter's nephew. The boat being launched, *Miss Caledonia*, belonged to a Mr Fred Daynes, a haulage contractor who lived in Gamekeepers Road, and was used as one of the Committee vessels in the Hornet Worlds.

I trust that this spiel is not too long winded and may be of interest to you and other members, as I suspect there are not many of us left who can remember those exciting years of the Club's post-war development.

Yours sincerely,  
Nick Thomson  
NICK THOMSON



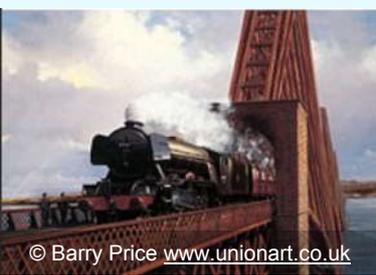
## Winter Work Parties

### Flying Scotsman

The newly rebuilt steam loco Flying Scotsman will be crossing the Forth Bridge on Sunday 15th May as part of a trip round Scotland.

The exact time of the crossing has not yet been published.

Unfortunately the tides are not great that day, but if you went out for a day sail, it would be a great opportunity to take unique photos of an historic event.



Thanks to good weather and no real problems (not to mention good planning and execution), this year's winter work parties are going well.

The first work party was held considerably later than in recent years in the hope of avoiding the worst of the cold weather. But best laid plans don't always work out and it was on one of the colder mornings of the year that the chosen few assembled for an 8am start. Thanks to Davie McKay, who organised a few of the regular helpers, the tin boat was already launched and waiting. As I was otherwise engaged, Jim Stuart led the mooring party out in the boat while Lawrie and Campbell, under the ever watchful guidance of Hamish, got on with the shore-based and channel marker jobs. By the back of 1 o'clock the West chain was finished and the gang were able to return to the soup and pies Anna and Dave had waiting.



Thanks to the shore-based team, which included strong representation from the dinghy sailors, substantial progress was made on the other winter tasks over both Saturday and Sunday including:

- Slip at club house cleaned.
- Race marks prepared.
- Missing channel poles 1 and 3a replaced. All others checked and OK.
- Old pole 1 removed to bank at the west of new pole 1. Concrete blocks removed and lying next to the old pole.
- Mark at west of Cramond Island removed for repair to link at the bottom of the mark.
- Mark at the east of the Island checked and OK.
- Cleared out behind club house.

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The second work party was blessed with warmer weather. Again the tin boat was ready and waiting and by just after 8 was heading down river with a full complement of crew and tools. After a little debate about how best to get the chain on board they were off. It's difficult to get the tin boat right to the bar at low water and we agreed later it would be better to have the split in the chain closer to the last mooring where the water is slightly deeper (I am noting this here in the hope that someone remembers).



Meanwhile Jim Anderson and Alan Burnett headed off to re-paint the leading marks on the teeth and the island, while the remainder of the shore-based party set about trimming back the shrubby growth along the green strip. Thankfully Susan Nimmo stepped to collect the pies from Masons and just managed to get them and the soup prepared before the moorings gang were ashore looking for food before midday! Everyone agreed it was a Cramond first to have completed the checking of a trot by noon. The only slight downside was a rather long wait for enough water to recover the tin boat and get everything tidied away.

The dinghy sailors were also out on Sunday in the shape of Darren and James who spent about 3 hours out on the foreshore cutting up the limbs until their chain saw gave up. They also put a new buoy on the big tree trunk lying just west of the teeth.

## Frostbite Sailing

The last 2 races in the Frostbite series were cancelled - due to no wind on 12th Dec and far too much wind on 26th!

Well, weather interventions are to be expected in a winter series.

As with many race series, it is often consistency that counts rather than pure performance, so the winner will probably turn out to be the one who sailed most races!

There are still a few tasks to be done, including the laying of the race marks, but we've got off to a great start.

Thanks again to everyone who has helped out. It's really helpful to get as many jobs as possible off the list at this time of year leaving all the more time for sailing once the boats are back in. Here's hoping for a good summer.

*Alan Hampson*



## Cruise Liners in the Forth

The following cruise liners will be anchored off South Queensferry during the summer of 2016, if you want to sail out and have a look. There seem to be fewer than usual, with more docking at Rosyth - perhaps due to the new bridge construction.

Date	Vessel	Length (metres)	Date	Vessel	Length (metres)
18 May	Caribbean Princess	290	16 July	Caribbean Princess	290
26 May	Zuiderdam	291	28 July	Caribbean Princess	290
29 May	Caribbean Princess	290	9 Aug	Caribbean Princess	290
10 June	Caribbean Princess	290	17 Aug	Koningsdam	n/a
22 June	Caribbean Princess	290	21 Aug	Caribbean Princess	290
1 July	Zuiderdam	291	2 Sep	Caribbean Princess	290
4 July	Caribbean Princess	290			



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The September issue of the Seagull included a brief description of Alvin Barber's summer cruise around the Forth. But as his log subsequently won the Drambuie Cup for best cruising log at the annual prizegiving, we thought the full cruise log might be of interest to members.

### Friday 17 July

Engine started well. Motored to quay to load bedding, food, water. Added 4.5l diesel; tank nearly full, marked stick.

### Sunday 19 July

1615 Left Cramond, motorsailed to Aberdour.

1736 Moored well up harbour. Should have replaced waterproof trousers. Soaked from waist down so now only 1 pair of dry trousers. Oil light & alarm came on when throttling back on approach. Ok after slow approach & idle. Perhaps (hope) I just throttled back too quickly. Engine felt hot but not excessively to touch.

Took ground by 2000. No forecast received on VHF. Checked aerial deck plug; cable came away in my hand. Tried to fix plug and dropped bits in mud. Deflated dinghy and stowed it on deck.

2130 Cedar Inn for pint of St Andrews ale.

### Monday 20 July

0830 Woke up. Best night's sleep for ages. Must come here more often.

0945 Got train to Dalmeny, £4.30 return. Cheaper than sailing to Port Edgar. Bought new coaxial plug at BlueV with good instructions.

1420. Fitted new plug. No solder but I think it is quite good. Went for walk in rain round to Silver Sands. Wind cold from E about F5. If it's still like this tomorrow I am not going anywhere (except possibly the Cedar Inn).

1630 No coastguard forecast. Heard a bit of broken ship traffic. Radio dubious. Plotted waypoints and course for Anstruther. May head for Dysart instead, see how it goes.

1939 Coastguard forecast loud & clear! Seems they don't bother what time it goes out. The radio is fine – I was not leaving it on long enough.

2130 Cedar Inn again. More St Andrews ale.

### Tuesday 21 July

0819 Wind W about f2-3, dry, cloudy. Go for it.

0845 Left Aberdour. Set genoa. 3.4kn.ETA Anstruther 1530. No point rushing. Should be enough water to get into Anstruther by 1630. Plan B: if wind rises? Kirkcaldy preferred, otherwise Granton. Once past these, committed to Anstruther.

0903 Black Rocks abeam. Visual on buoy 9.

0925 Passed buoy 9, alter course to 060°M. Ship coming up channel, should pass to stb of us.

0930 Ship altered course towards us. Heading out of channel.

0945 Ship keeps changing course.

1020 Ship is at anchor. Left it to stb.

1130 approx. Nasty squall. Wind up about f5. Rolled in half genoa. Chucking down rain and can't see the oil rig off Methil any more. Funny how when you can see sod all you get very protective of the chart plotter. I am cowering over it to keep the rain off it. Glad I found the old pvc trousers under the fore bunk (for me, not the plotter).

1200 Squall gone, vis ok. Unrolled genoa fully. 3.4kn.

1330 Went below to make jeely piece for lunch. Autopilot not doing very well in following sea. Be honest, it's rubbish. Felt a bit iffy, more sea now tide is making and more fetch. OK back on deck though. Glad I brought the jam.

1400 Passing Elie, East Vow bn. Rolled in half genoa to slow down. Tide is kicking up a bit of sea now, bit uncomfy.



## Boardwalk Beach Club

The old run-down café on Marine Drive at the foot of Silverknowes Road is to re-open as a trendy up-market eatery with an equally trendy name, the Boardwalk Beach Club.

This may sound as if it belongs in Atlantic City, or possibly the French Riviera, but the new owners hope it will help to re-generate the foreshore, a sort of Costa del Edinburgo.

Might be worth a visit by some of the club's retired members who have nothing better to do on a wet Wednesday.

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1500 Rolling around between Pitenweem & Anstruther. Rolled in genoa and lay ahull to put out fenders and warps. Stupid. 7th wave got us sideways and I nearly went over the side. What should I have done? Maybe start engine and motor back into wind, but don't like using the autopilot with all those pots around. Should have put up main and hove to (but couldn't be arsed). Before you condemn me, dear reader, I have jackstays and always clip on when single handed on deck.

Fishing boats coming & going from Anstruther, so here we go. Bloody lobster pots everywhere. Conversation with harbour master on VHF while dodging the pots. Go into any empty pontoon, he says.

1530 Berthed Anstruther.. Helped in by 3 members of ASC who advised that I move to different pontoon as boat might sink into mud on this one. Managed to get out with slight rub along unnamed boat but they promised not to say. Berthed at pontoon 91. On finding I am from Cramond, Dave Thompson says remember him to Mel, something about ten quid (only joking, Mel).



*A bit too cosy in Anstruther*

Reported to harbour master. It is pontoon 16, that's 91 upside down. £23 a night! Reduction for 2nd night, I should hope so! Went for a shower (which closes at 1900). Water fine but cleanliness dubious. Not worth £23. Fairground on pier, 20m from boat, is blasting out ghastly music which repeats on 30min cycle and is not worth £23.

1754 Radio4 forecast – W or SW 4 or 5, heavy showers. Queued 45mins for fish supper at the one which says it's best. Ate it on boat, and yes it was good. Very good. Went to The Boatshed for St Andrews ale. Excellent pub & beer.

2245 Still afloat.

### **Wednesday 22 July**

0730 Forecast W 3-4 bec SW 4-5 later 6. Feels cold too. Prob ok for Isle of May, but don't fancy the slog up to Elie! When I leave here, I am not coming back until after the Ainster Fair.

1052 Touching the bottom, looks ok. Went for a walk through Cellardyke, bought a cod.

1255 Returned to find *Seahorse* heeled over in mud, stanchion against pontoon pulling away from deck and rubbing strake broken. Should have put an extra warp out to keep her further away from pontoon. Put out warp and winched it in also levered with boathook to get out from under pontoon as she lifted with tide.

Walked nearly to St Monans, through Pittenweem. Had an ice cream at harbour while humming the song, "Pittenweem, Pittenweem, she's every fisher laddy's dream. She guts the herrin' down by the quay, and saves her kisses just for me". I had forgotten how lovely it is, but "Pittenweem Jo" was nowhere to be seen. No herrin' I suppose, but plenty of fishing activity.

On returning to *Seahorse*, found crack in deck below damaged stanchion. Was it there before?

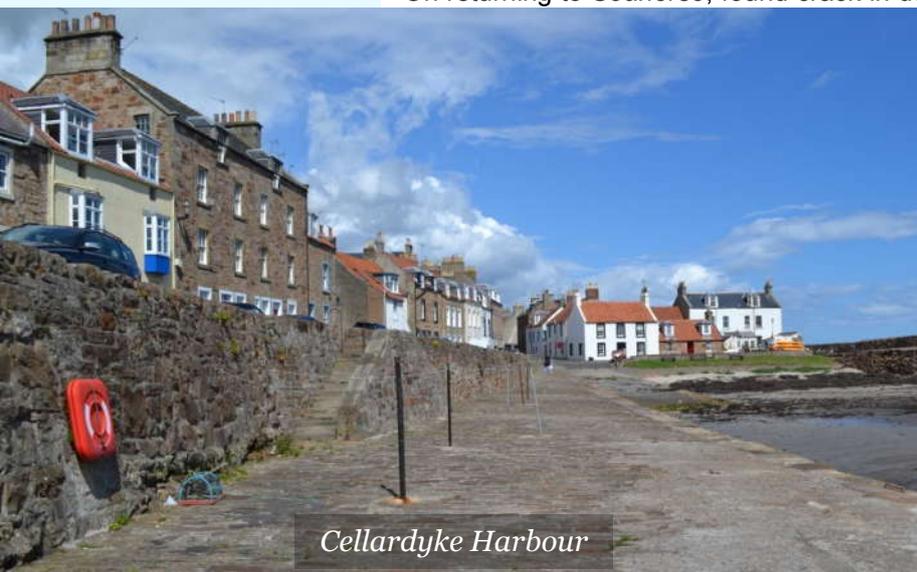
Looks quite dirty, so probably an old one. Fried the cod & had with boiled spuds. V good.

Went to The Haven Bar beside Cellardyke harbour. Caught up on news & mail with wi-fi. Nice beer, but atmosphere not as good as Boathouse. Would have had the mussels if I was not full of cod.

### **Thursday 23 July**

Must have dried out ok overnight as slept well. Now it does feel like a f6. Put extra warps out as wind is blowing us onto pontoon again.

1030 Strong wind warning. SW 5 or 6. Following 24hrs W-SW 4 bec var 2/3 then NE 3/ 4. That's more hopeful.



*Cellardyke Harbour*

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Cellardyke harbour would be worth trying – very quiet and handy to pub. Supposed to be rough in strong westerlies though, did not see it at high tide. Only 2 local boats there.

Went for walk to Crail. Lovely walk. Caves, rock formations and saw a kestrel hovering still enough to get photos. Large oil rig has appeared off Pitenweem – I suppose that must have been in the NTM's.

### Friday 24 July.

Looks good, W f2-3 sunny & warm! Will not get into Elie before 1900, but I refuse to spend one more night in Anstruther with that racket.

0730 Forecast W f5-6 bec var f4.

1000 Paid dues. Only charged £23 for 3 nights so not so bad after all.

1120 Started engine and left Anstruther. Sad to leave, as the music has not started up yet and it's nice and peaceful now. Lovely sail, full sail at last, to Isle of May. Sea on East side covered with puffins which have no road sense at all. Don't think I ran over any. 4 tour boats already there, 1 boat and 1 RIB each from Anstruther & N Berwick.

1330 Tied up across back of RIB with stern about 2m from the rocks, more at bow. Crew very helpful. Lots of people, face painting etc. Walked up past old lighthouse and over to cliffs on west side. Good view of puffin burrows, also kittiwakes on cliffs. Access much better than I expected and RSPB staff very helpful. Tried out the telephoto lens.

1438 Back to boat as need to leave before tour boats.



*Kestrel hovering*



*Isle of May from SW*

Motored out, v light breeze getting up from E so hoisted all sail. Making 2kn round South Ness and up closer to W of May. Still lots of puffins, but not as many as on E side. More gannets now, and terns too! (*Tern too* was Dougie Brown's boat at Cramond after Tern was lost in a spate. Dougie is no longer with us to witness my terrible pun. Sorry). At last, one of those days to be glad you are afloat. Worth waiting for, and glad I waited those 2 days.

1602 Fidra Lighthouse 2290M Bass Rock 1950M. Gps put us 0.4NM north of bearings. Course 275°M. Wind up a bit from E, now doing 3.8kn. ETA Elie now 1811 which is too early.

1627 Berwick Law 1990M May Lighthouse 0820M.

IDIOT! That was a Cockenzie chimney NOT Fidra Light. Actually it would not have made any difference since they were in line, but any fool should know Fidra Lighthouse is not that big. Crew

have resolved to mutiny and relieve Master of all navigational duties for rest of voyage.

Keep hearing *Free Spirit* calling coastguard for regular traffic. Must be that scheme I keep meaning to read about where you can bore the coastguard with your passage plans (if it's boring you must be ok). Must check up on it.

1700 Nice pleasant sailing, wind has dropped a bit but ETA now 1820.

1820 Bang on ETA, approaching Elie there are yachts around but are they going in or out?

Called Elie harbour on VHF, did not expect reply but *Sundance* answered saying tie up to pier just past RIB as fishing boat away. Heard that one before. Only ever sailed dinghies at Elie and that was 40 years ago, so got a fright as I rounded the pierhead and saw all the boats high and dry with the beach awfy close. However the berth by the RIB was clear ok and I just got in through a tangle of ropes. Followed by a nice old Folkboat (*Chuckle*) crewed by family of young hippies with 2 kids, dog and lobster pot on cabin roof.

They rafted up to *Seahorse* to cries of "BT needs to go to the toilet". BT appears to be the dog (or it may be Beete from the Hunger Games). BT thrown onto *Seahorse* and carried up ladder, fortunately without using our mast as a toilet on the way.

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2000 Now there is enough water to get to the visitors berth. *Chuckles* not happy with depth at visitors berth so I go there, making a complete hash of reversing out and having to do a 360 off the pierhead as there is sod all room in the harbour. Not much room at visitors berth either, and only just enough water but bottom looks ok.

Headed up to Ship Inn which has gone upmarket since my last visit in about 1969. Fully booked for dinners, and there appears to be nowhere else in town. Makes the fleshpots of Anstruther seem attractive after all. Ok, back to *Seahorse* for the last of the pasta and pesto.



*Nice and snug in Elie*

Michael phoned to say his clutch seems to have gone. Gone where? To clutch heaven it appears, but at least he got the car home. Promised to try to get back soon as poss. Phone battery now dead. Plugged into 12V and it works but will not charge. Checked batteries; 12.2/12.0

### Saturday 25 July

0730 forecast: var 3-4 bec E/NE 4-5 for time. May as well head home Won't get into Cramond until 2130ish.

0940 left Elie under motor.

1140 Filled cap & greased stern tube.

1150 Cockenzie (definitely this time) 187°M; West Wemyss (probably) 287°M; Kinghorn Ness (maybe) 245°T. Nice cocked hat, but gps 56°07.28N, 02°56.22W, thats 0.4NM east this time. Must get a log sometime so I can do some proper navigation.

1330 No wind. Motoring in warm sun, down to t shirt. Rainclouds to the left, squalls to the right, here I am, stuck in the middle with you... Proves what they say in Fife "if you can see Edinburgh, it is going to rain. Or in Edinburgh, "if you can't see Fife, its already raining".

Around now I think I killed a puffin. There were 3 of them playing chicken in front of me, 2 dived and surfaced behind me; did not see what happened to the other but it/he/she did not appear anywhere, and I did look carefully. No sign of blood astern, but no puffin either. Not an albatross, but crew distinctly uneasy. Should I even record it in the log? Honesty is best.

1530 Getting hungry. Stores down to one tin of Tesco curry and some rice. Scurvy rife, rats leaving ship. Think I will anchor west of Inchkeith to eat (the curry, not the rat), and wait for the tide.

Spoke too soon about eating. As soon as we approached Inchkeith the squall from Fife came to get me, wind got up from NW, bloody cold and wet. Motored round in circles (small ones) between Inchkeith and those nasty looking rocks just to the south and decided this was not the time and place to drop the hook for a bit of nosh. So why not go over to Fife and anchor off Ross Point by Burntisland where it should be sheltered.

1545 Wind drops again, swings NE and sun comes out. Unroll the genny. Nice.

1600 Approaching Burntisland, wind drops to nothing, then gets up again from S, cold and wet again. Looks like the Edinburgh squall coming over to pester me. Sod this for a lark, Ross Point no good and Burntisland was not very welcoming last time I was there at low tide. Start the engine and head for Granton.

1700 Granton is nice at times like this (as long as you have some food since there is none for miles ashore). Plenty of room on the pontoon. Stopped engine. Finally broke out the curry which was better than nothing. Rather nice steel battleyacht berthed nearby. Looks like it would sink icebergs. And a nice little Twinkle Ten.

1830 Wind now W about F5, cold & wet. Added 4.4l diesel. Nearly back to level at start.

1942 Started engine and left Granton. Motored back to Cramond in flat calm and a nice sunset which I failed to photograph. Did a thorough bathymetric survey of the channel on the way in (slowly) to confirm that the chart is pretty damn well spot on and there is a good width of channel 3.5m deep east of pole 1.

2100 3'6" on bar marker, moored Cramond. End of Cruise.

## Acknowledgements

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

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