



The Seagull

The Journal of the Cramond Boat Club

December 2016

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The View from the Commodore's Window

As a Professor of Physics, I have a theory. Some of you might have heard of the *multiverse*, a concept invented to deal with some of the puzzling aspects of Quantum Mechanics, in which an infinite number of universes exist. The idea is that each universe represents an alternative path down which we might go. My theory is that, this year, we have slipped into the "*what-if*" universe. What if we had voted to leave the EU? What if Theresa May became Prime Minister? What if Donald Trump had been elected US President? What if Boris Johnson were our Foreign Secretary? I guess we are going to find out!

Despite all this, I take reassurance from the fact that Cramond Boat Club determinedly continues to exist; that the Scottish weather remains as variable as ever; and that Santa Claus will once again be coming up the river to the Children's Christmas Party. Thank goodness some things remain unchanged.

So the keel-boats concluded their season once again with a successful cruise to Aberdour and a convivial meal in the Cedar Inn (thanks to Dave Jamieson's organisation). Crane-out went smoothly, if a little slowly (thanks again to Jeff McLeod, the many other helpers, and the team in the kitchen). And now the dinghies' Frostbite Series is under way – with an excellent turn-out.

Greta and I are planning the usual Commodore's New Year's Day lunch (at a very modest price). This provides an opportunity for you to get up late, drift along to the Club, and wish fellow members a Good New Year. Between 1.00 pm and 3.30 pm we shall be serving Ploughman's & Pudding. Of course, the bar will be open. Do come and join us.

Meanwhile, I wish everyone a Merry Christmas.

Andy Walker



View from the Commodore's attic - spot the sandbanks

Diary Dates

Fri 1st Jan
Ne'er Day Lunch

Sat 8th April
Crane In



News Snippets

Crane-In 2017

Crane-in will be on Saturday 8th April. HW is around 1400 so it will mean an early start for everyone - be warned!

Club Work Parties

Winter work parties for moorings maintenance, mark laying, etc will take place on 4th/5th March, 18th/19th March and 25th/26th March, with 1st/2nd April as a fall-back. Look out for your personal invitation to attend!

In the meantime, Davie McKay's Dad's Army continue to beaver away around the clubhouse. Work has included external painting, rearranging the workshop and levelling of the ground in preparation for the new bike shed. Thanks are due to all those involved.



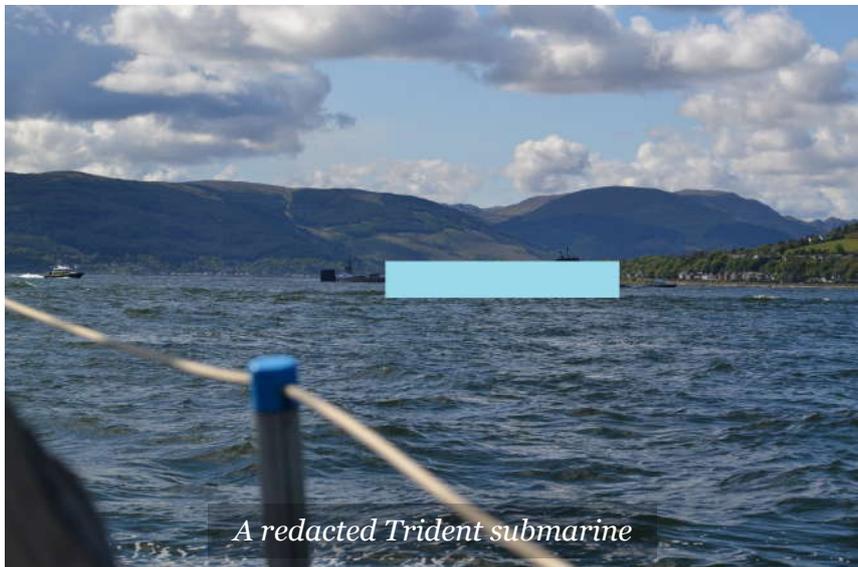
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Part 2 – The West Coast

September's Seagull told the story of Seahorse's journey through the Forth and Clyde Canal to Bowling. Now read on ...

We left Bowling on 22nd May. I was chatting to the owner of a nice wooden motor cruiser who was getting ready for sea. "I'll be going out at high tide, shall we share the sea lock?" said I. "Can't wait that long, I am expected for champagne and canapes at The Royal Northern and Clyde in Rhu at midday," he replied, without inviting us.

So with a nice breeze right on the nose we motored down the sunny Clyde. Approaching fast from port were a flotilla of small grey boats and a long thin black shape with bits sticking up that was soon identified as a Trident submarine. Now it is reasonable to assume that something with enough firepower to obliterate half a continent is going to be stand on vessel. It was easily crossing our bow half a mile ahead anyway.



A redacted Trident submarine



Puilladobhrain anchorage

I was just attaching the telephoto lens to my camera when Michael said "there's a boat heading our way". Sure enough, a black rib crewed by large black clad and helmeted men and with "POLIS" writ large down the side was fast approaching. "Where are you heading?" was easy to answer, as we were heading straight towards Holy Loch. So with a clear warning to keep well clear of the vessels which we obviously had no chance of getting near to, off they went with a wave. Pity they missed our friend with the champagne and canapés at Rhu narrows.

From there we visited Rothesay and Tarbert before spending a night at Cairnbaan on the Crinan Canal. Then down the rest of the canal to catch the afternoon tide through a millpond-like Dorus Mor and up the Sound of Luing to Puilladobhrain which has an entrance no easier to see than it is to spell or say.

Then it was up to Oban, where the new Community Moorings are close to town; but you need to get there early and there are no toilets or showers. A visit to Linnhe Marine at Dallens Bay was ruined by a stiff northerly wind blowing onshore, but the staff were very helpful when I had dinghy and engine problems. Lochaline and Tobermory also have new community-run marinas with classy facilities.



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Arinagour on Coll

Having lain around in the sun too long earlier I did not have time to go north from Tobermory. Also, I was now singlehanded and the autohelm had stopped working.

I took the opportunity to go round the West of Mull, to Gometra, and then to Arinagour on Coll, returning to Tobermory in time for the sunshine to give way to the usual rain and cold at the end of June.



Easdale Harbour

On the way back we visited Loch Feochan, a lovely loch with a horrible entrance, and then Easdale, a fascinating place with a cosy drying harbour and a nice pub. Unfortunately the quay wall is below HWS so it was impossible to get ashore dry shod at high tide!

A potter round Loch Shuna followed, dawdling at Craobh Haven which has a good pub but lousy shop, then round to Ardfern which is better for both. Here it was good to meet Jim and Jenny Anderson on *Hannah*, just out of the canal. There are some very nice anchorages in Loch Craignish.

Several days of non-stop rain made us decide against going further south, so it was back into the Crinan Canal and Portavadie; a good alternative to Tarbert with excellent facilities. The Forth and Clyde canal through Glasgow is only open at weekends so more dithering

followed, including a night at James Watt Dock which is pretty good too if you like Greenock in the rain.

The return transit through the canal went without problem despite it being weed season. There were obvious signs of it being cut; we picked up some but a shot of reverse threw it off. After a final night at the Kelpies we blasted down the Forth with a beam wind and the ebb tide down to Granton, then up to Cramond the next day.



Loch Craignish

So, what hints and warnings can I pass on? Firstly, we spent a lot more time and money in marinas than we expected. Every anchorage with a pub is now full of pontoons or visitors moorings. Prices were from £17 - £20 for a pontoon with the fancy marinas quite competitive. A mooring was about £15. The return trip through the canals was £438 for our 7.5m boat. Also – take a cheque book for honesty boxes. And check if the tumble drier works, and its cost, before you put your washing on.

We had some great sailing, and I will remember drying off in the hot sun after a cockpit shower rather than sitting looking out at the rain!

Alvin Barber



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On 30th October the Cramond Sea Scouts headed off to Lochgoilhead for the Scottish Scout Regatta. As winners of the competition for the previous three years they were looking forward to bringing home some more silverware. The regatta brings together over 100 Scouts from all over Scotland and is a great weekend of fun and well-fought racing. It is split between paddling (canoeing/kayaking) and sailing, with Cramond's dominance being in the sailing events.

However, the Lochgoilhead forecast wasn't playing ball and promised 1-2 mph if we were lucky! So when the forecast delivered on the Saturday the Cramond Scouts went paddling to salvage any points they could. But their main competitor was more than dominant in the canoes and started to rack up a huge lead.



Sunday arrived, but the wind didn't! As lunchtime approached all were resigning

themselves to no sailing, but with just two hours of competition left, a ripple appeared. We didn't think it was enough time to claw back the advantage but were delighted when the call came and the Scouts were allowed to slowly sail out to do what they enjoy and do best.



The race officer did a remarkable job running two races at the same time and somehow rattled through all but one of the sailing events. The Cramond Scouts swept up the race wins and lots of valuable points, but they thought it was too little too late. Well done to Euan Rogers and Hannah Kistruck who won the single handed sailing, while the crewed winners were Henry Smith and Alasdair McKay for the Scouts and Alan MacKenzie and Greg Smith for the Leaders.

Then the Scouts all got an opportunity to drive a powerboat around a cut-down RYA Honda RIB Challenge course. The Scouts love driving the powerboats. It's timed and has been a good event for Cramond in the past. The powerboating results were good with Euan Rogers and Hannah Kistruck achieving valuable wins. But without any wins in the paddling events, we were not hopeful of a good overall result. So it was a complete surprise when Cramond Scouts were awarded all of the winners' trophies: Scouts, Explorers, Leaders and overall winners for the fourth year running!

Clean sweep!
Amazing and well deserved for all involved.

None of this would be possible without the help, encouragement and support of Cramond Boat Club. So thank you to all those who put in the time to allow all of the kids to learn these new skills.



Lastly well done to Cramond Scouts for being the first group to win ALL of the winners trophies. An outstanding achievement.

Paul Rogers

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AGM and New Club Committee

The AGM was held, as usual at the end of November. Reports were provided on all the Club's activities and the accounts were approved. A moment was taken to remember in silence our former colleagues: Benje Dawson, Frank Milns, Jim Dougall and Peter Russell, who all sadly passed away during this year.

The Officers and new Committee members for 2016/17 were also approved. I take this opportunity to thank all the Office-Bearers and Committee members for their hard work. Mel Farquharson stood down in the course of the year and Stuart Ferguson, very helpfully, stepped in as Membership Secretary.

And very special thanks go to Keith Conway who stepped down after having been Treasurer for something like 20 years! Extraordinary service and hugely appreciated by the Club throughout. A special vote of thanks was passed unanimously. The club owes everyone who takes on these various responsibilities a great debt of gratitude. The new Committee comprises:

Office Bearers

| | | <u>email title</u> |
|-------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Commodore | Andy Walker | commodore |
| Vice Commodore | Dougie Pringle | vicecommodore |
| Rear Commodore | Hamish Henderson | rearcommodore |
| Hon Secretary | Stephen Aird | secretary |
| Hon Treasurer | Stuart Ferguson | treasurer |
| Sailing Secretary | Alvin Barber* | sailing |

Committee Members

| | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|-------------|
| Membership Secretary | Jim Stuart | membership |
| Moorings Convenor | Alan Hampson* | moorings |
| Dinghy Park Convenor | Alex Tulloch | dinghy park |
| Training Officer | Lawrie Elliott | training |
| Bosun | <i>vacant - duties shared</i> | bosun |
| Bar Convenor | Mike Haynes | bar |
| House Convenor | Dave McKay | house |
| Social Convenor | Stewart Coulter | social |

*Alvin Barber and Alan Hampson are continuing until replacements can be found (volunteers are always welcomed).

Note that individual committee members can be contacted by email using their [title @cranondboatclub.org.uk](mailto:andy@cranondboatclub.org.uk), while the whole committee can be contacted using cbc-committee@yahoogroups.co.uk. In addition, you can contact the sailing committee using the group address sailcomm@cranondboatclub.org.uk

Andy Walker



Prizegiving

The club's annual prizegiving ceremony took place on Saturday 12th November. After many years' service, Ian Hellewell had decided to retire from MC duties while he still retained a little dignity, and was replaced by the Commodore, ably assisted by Sailing Secretary Alvin Barber.

Due to high winds and poor weather for much of the early part of the season, a number of racing events had been cancelled, including dinghy and cruiser A series and pursuit series, the Long Distance series, the Master Mariner race, the Ladies race, and the dinghy regatta. However, many events did run successfully so there were still many prizes to hand out, as listed below.

A special award was given to Hamish Sutherland for outstanding performance at East Coast Sailing Week where he won the Bell Rock Race (Duke of Edinburgh Trophy) and finished first in the Restricted Sail class.

The most anticipated award of the evening was the Wally Trophy for the most noteworthy deviation from seamanlike behaviour. This was voted on by members at the prizegiving evening from a list of 8 epic boating failures during the year, including no fewer than three unintentional swimmers, a dropped mast, an unexpected night spent on Cramond Island, and a lack of motive power. (Don't gloat - we've all been guilty of similar feats.)

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But the overwhelming winner of the Wooden Anchor was Ian Hellewell and Ernie Coulter who had the outrageous gall to hitch a lift all the way from *Dabchick* to the ferry steps (about 10 metres) aboard the RNLI Inshore Rescue boat, who happened to be delivering castaways from Cramond Island at the time. So much for the remnants of Ian's dignity.



The event was well-attended with buffet food provided by an excellent catering team led by Greta Walker.

CBC Prize Winners 2016:

Dinghies

| Series | Trophy | Winner | Boat |
|-------------------|---------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Dinghy S | H K Brown Trophy | Alan Mackenzie | Laser Radial |
| Weekend A | Pechoot Shield | Ed Willett | Mr Incredible |
| Weekend B | Cranmer Cup | Fergus Davidson | Laser Pico |
| Dinghy B | Matilda Cup | Campbell Calder | Boudicca |
| Frostbite Series | Brass Monkey Trophy | Lawrie Elliott | Salty 2 |
| Nat 12 Travellers | Cam Robbie Trophy | Ed Willett | Mr Incredible |

Cruisers

| | | | |
|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|----------|
| Cruiser W | Laidlaw Cup | Dave Jamieson | Talisker |
| Middle Distance | Inchcolm Plate | Andy Walker | Exisle |
| Pursuit B | Gunner Quaich | Andy Walker | Exisle |
| Special Events | Cramond Trophy | Hamish Sutherland | Kiri |
| Cruiser Log | Drambuie Cup | Alvin Barber | Seahorse |
| Wally Award | Wooden Anchor | Ian Hellewell | |



Frostbite Sailing

The Frostbite dinghy series, held in November to January, is always a bit of a risk. Most years, many of the races are lost to bad weather - gales, snow, and freezing conditions. But so far this year the Brass Monkey has had no cause to fear loss of his bits, with temperatures more like a Scottish summer, and light winds. Too light, generally, for the slowest boats to complete two full races each day but enough for pretty good racing.

The first day saw seven boats out, including the Club Wayfarer, Laser and Pico. Campbell Calder in his Laser *Boudicca* romped home first from Paul Roger's Laser in the first race. Then in the second race of the day, Lawrie Elliott, in his Laser Radial *Salty II*, sailed through to win with Andrew Harris and Ed Willett in their National 12 beating Campbell into 3rd.

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The second day managed one full race, in which Campbell took the honours, and a shortened second race then saw Alan Mackenzie, in his Laser *Strafos*, win from Lawrie.



On the third outing six boats were out in the sunshine, and this time Ed Willett showed what you can do with a proper boat with two sails, leading from pole in his National 12 *Dolly Blotter* but chased all the way by Lawrie.

So it's looking competitive, with Lawrie leading and Paul a consistent second, and Emma Wilkinson in the club *Wayfarer* third. Great handicap racing, and still two days left. So let's hope for more unseasonably good sailing weather.

Alvin Barber



2016 - Annus Fatalis ?

As the Commodore reported at the AGM, this has been a sad year for the Club, witnessing the passing of four old stalwarts, including two former Commodores - Frank Milns, Benge Dawson, Jim Dougall and Peter Russell. These names may not mean much to younger members, but they were all extremely active sailing members in their day and contributed significantly to the life of the club - some until quite recently. It is, I suppose, a commentary on the ageing nature of the club membership, reflecting the population at large.

I am extremely grateful to Derek Ward for his contributions below, recalling his memories of both Peter and Jim.

Editor



Peter Russell

Peter was a member of CBC for many years, and an active racer, first in dinghies and then in his Mirage 28, *Eliza*.

He was a competent handy man, no doubt learned underground in the difficult world of mining. This stood him in good stead as he was able to strip his boat engine and fix things as he cruised *Eliza* - a skill he later transferred to his camper van when he swallowed the anchor! I remember seeing him in his garage at home with a new house door on top of the old one, ensuring that the measurements would fit.

Peter cruised *Eliza* widely, often single handed. One notable trip was to Sweden though he regularly cruised Orkney and Shetland waters. On one occasion up North with *Eliza* under auto helm and Peter below, wife Carole called out that they were headed for some rocks! Safely restored to a proper course, he went below then presented her with a bottle of whisky. Carole reported that "he didn't even ask me to pay for it!"

When Mel, Jenny, Big Jim, Janette and I arrived in Tobermory in *Hebridean Flame*, we found *Eliza* anchored nearby. At dinner that evening, Peter arrived with a contribution of his version of cauliflower cheese. It was so tasty that we now often have it at home!

My enduring memory of Peter is of him sailing Club races solo, almost completely hidden from sight by weather cloths surrounding the cockpit. Just as he missed us then, it is sad that he is no longer with us.

Derek Ward



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We were all saddened to hear of the sudden death of "Big Jim" in September. Although he had not been well, he still pottered around the place right up to the end.

I have known Jim for 60 years. One day he said, "I've bought a boat!" These four words have given us so much pleasure in the years that have followed.

Next Saturday afternoon, we stood watching *Tombaroli*, 17ft Silhouette, motor into Leith Docks. She was placed on the quay beside the dreams of men who tried to convert old wrecks into useable boats. Jim changed the name to *Trixie* and we worked on her for about two weeks until she was ready to move. We stood on the breakwater in a strong wind, watching Cruiser Racers whizz by, in a sea covered in white foam. Jim's first decision as a skipper was, "Let's wait till next week!" Later experience of her sailing capabilities showed that we would have needed passports for arrival in Norway!

Next Saturday was a fine sunny day and we motored to Cramond, though I admit to some worries when we passed between Mickery and the Cow. Safely tied up at the quay wall, Jim went into the Clubhouse. Left in the boat, I didn't know what to answer when Ronnie Mowatt peered down and asked if I expected a spat!

Jim had applied for a mooring and *Trixie* joined the three other boats of the same class. Unfortunately, her builder had dropped his picture postcard, then picked it upside down when fitting the port rubbing strake, so that it sagged down at the transom, unlike the beautiful sweep upwards of the "real" version. She sported a Loch Long mainsail and a Hornet jib! Because of the height discrepancy, we were nicknamed Bill and Ben.

Our first cruise was to North Berwick. I had read in books that yachts sailed round the world at 3 knots so I thought that, leaving at 7pm on Friday, we could sail to Portobello beach, anchor overnight and move on. However, Jim was late from work and we just managed to get to Inchmickery! Next day, a light westerly wafted us down to North Berwick, where we anchored in a pool off the harbour. Sunday gave us a light easterly, and we arrived safely at Cramond, pleased as Punch. Going towards the Clubhouse, Ian Gooch asked where we had been. "Ah!" he said, "It's quicker by bus!"

Jim's next boat was a Vivacity 650, which Jim named *Catriona*. Bengy and Katrina rowed out and hanelled her with a nice cake, which we shared together in the cabin. *Catriona* was a real boat - 4ft headroom, cooker and a pump toilet which gave one a view of the sea, when you raised the lid. Slowly, we learned to sail.

On one local cruise, we visited May Island, tied up at the jetty and were met by a couple of RSPB chaps who told us we couldn't land. As we chatted, an alarm clock in the cabin advised us that it was time for a forecast. "Your phone is ringing" was the comment. When the tide dropped, we were not convinced that we had found the correct line across the rocks!

Bob Cherry at Bo'ness made a trailer so the west coast was now available. Jim's car was a Sunbeam Rapier which struggled with the hill at traffic lights in Great Western Road. I had to jump out, push the trailer and then run up the pavement chasing the car!

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The first trip was to Rhu. As we left the harbour, we passed a large schooner-rigged vessel, so different from our local boats. This confirmed for us that we were on different waters. On another trip, we towed to the seaplane slip at Gannavan, to experience the waters around Oban. When we achieved Tobermory for the first time, we celebrated with a "Tobermory dram", which became a feature to celebrate future events. We cruised across to Loch Dram na buie, anchored near the shore and battened down the hatch as a severe storm raged. When we returned to Gannavan, we had been three days on the boat.

Jim's next boat was *Pegasus*. She was perfect! 6ft headroom was nearer Jim's height and she sailed like a dream. We went out for a sail one day in a bit of a breeze. "Did you realise that Turnhouse recorded 55 knots?" said Douglas Henderson afterwards.

Jim was happy in *Pegasus*, enjoying racing, with regular success, as many trophies bear witness. She was a good cruising boat but Jim's job commitments meant that most cruising was done locally for lack of available time.



He managed one trip on the West with *Pegasus*: lorry to Kip, where Maida, Dan and I met him. Frank Milns and two nephews joined us in *Belle Amie* then we set off to the Crinan canal, Caledonian canal and Moray Firth, where we stopped at Fraserburgh.

Next weekend, we set off for Stonehaven. Rattray Head was silky smooth as we rounded and headed south in the dark. Fog set in but cleared around Aberdeen and then thickened. When the distance log suggested we were near Stonehaven, we saw some dinghies ahead. "Where is the harbour?" we asked. They pointed and we entered in bright sunshine.

Next day, the forecast was for fog. As we moved past Montrose, it thickened with little visibility and no wind. We decided to motor, stay close and "borrow on the bank", tacking along a depth contour. This worked well until on one tack, *Belle Amie* disappeared.

These were the days before VHF or GPS. Luckily, I had a Hitachi RDF receiver and this was used to plot our position on the chart as we eased towards May Island signal and then towards Inchkeith signal.

As we motored along, hopefully towards Anstruther, the stars suddenly appeared and then we saw a line of sodium lighting. Maida said, "It's like Musselburgh!" We took a quick bearing on it and breathed a sigh of relief as we passed through Anstruther's welcoming entrance about 2am. We tied up just inside, dashed up to the wall and looked for *Belle Amie*. No sign! We went to our bunks, worried. Next morning, as I was about to go to report the boat missing, a glance over the wall gave the pleasant sight of Frank's yacht approaching. They had seen the lights and had chosen to anchor overnight, off Cellardyke.

I tell this story to exemplify Jim's character. He was always a calm, competent, thoughtful skipper. He loved his boats and Cramond Boat Club. He gave unstintingly of his time and energy to the running of the shore side of the sport. For years, he and Hamish prepared the moorings, planned the layout, readied the moorings boat, acting as Moorings Convenor in all but name.

Jim had no ambition for rank but his election to Life Member was truly merited. His absence from AGMs, I think, was a defence against unwanted proposal for Committee from the membership. All Club members liked him and certain ladies loved him! Those of us who were lucky enough to sail with him or be invited to share a drink aboard *Pegasus* know his generous nature! Each time we drink a rusty nail or three, we will rekindle our memories of a truly lovely person, the gentle giant that was Jim Dougall.

Derek Ward

Acknowledgements

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

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