



# The Seagull

The Journal of the Cramond Boat Club

September 2017

## In This Issue

- [Commodore's View](#)
- [Dinghy Racing Roundup](#)
- [Cruiser News](#)
- [River Almond Project](#)
- [Dad's Army \(Again\)](#)
- [Cruiser Racing Report](#)
- [Eric and Denise Boyle](#)
- [Duck Race](#)
- [Queensferry Crossing](#)



## The View from the Commodore's Window

The Scottish weather once more played its part this season but it didn't stop us enjoying a broad programme of events in the course of the year. Last year I recall reporting a glorious sail with our son Eddie and family during their summer visit to Cramond. This year, the strongest memory is of going out with Eddie and friends – determined to get in a sail – only to have the forecast confirmed by tropical-style rain pelting down throughout. The party returned to the house as drowned rats, desperate for hot showers.

As well as learning to believe the forecasts, I can also confirm, from a more recent sail, that having sufficient water to get out of the river does not guarantee a passage through the gap in the teeth! Fortunately, it was a relatively gentle tap against the causeway.

This year we did manage to hold the CBC dinghy regatta but lost the Saturday to a near gale. Sunday turned out much better and the nine boats participating were able to complete three races.

The Family Fun Day was, once again, a victim of the weather, although the Scouts were able to take advantage of the shelter in land to run a successful Duck Race down the river.

There have been some good keel boat turn-outs on occasion. Just at the beginning of September we saw as many as a dozen boats sailing out of Cramond on a pleasant Saturday afternoon – of which eight were competing in a race. Unfortunately, very light wind resulted in a lot of retirements (sailors can never be satisfied). An active fleet of dinghies completed a lively scene.



*The Commodore's grandsons, recruited as the new crew on Exisle*

After a summer break the weekly work parties have restarted with Clubhouse maintenance and the new mooring boat fit-out project.

Many thanks once again to the group of members devoting significant time to these works under the leadership of Davie Mackay, our House Convenor. More assistance is always welcomed.

Forthcoming events, at the time of writing, include: the closing cruise across to Aberdour, Crane-out (on 7 October), and Prize Giving.

I look forward to seeing many of you on these and other occasions.

Wishing everyone well,

*Andy Walker*

## Diary Dates

**Sat 7th October**  
Crane Out

**Fri 10th November**  
Charity Night

**Sat 11th November**  
Annual Prizegiving

**Sat 18th November**  
Games Night

**Sun 26th November**  
Annual General Meeting

- [Commodore's View](#)
- [Dinghy Racing Roundup](#)
- [Cruiser News](#)
- [River Almond Project](#)
- [Dad's Army \(Again\)](#)
- [Cruiser Racing Report](#)
- [Eric and Denise Boyle](#)
- [Duck Race](#)
- [Queensferry Crossing](#)



If there was a prize for who won the battle of the weather in the first half of the race calendar, it would have to go to the Wind. As we approached the middle of the season, only 6 races in the DA, DS and DWA series were successfully completed, with no fewer than 9 races cancelled due to the weather.

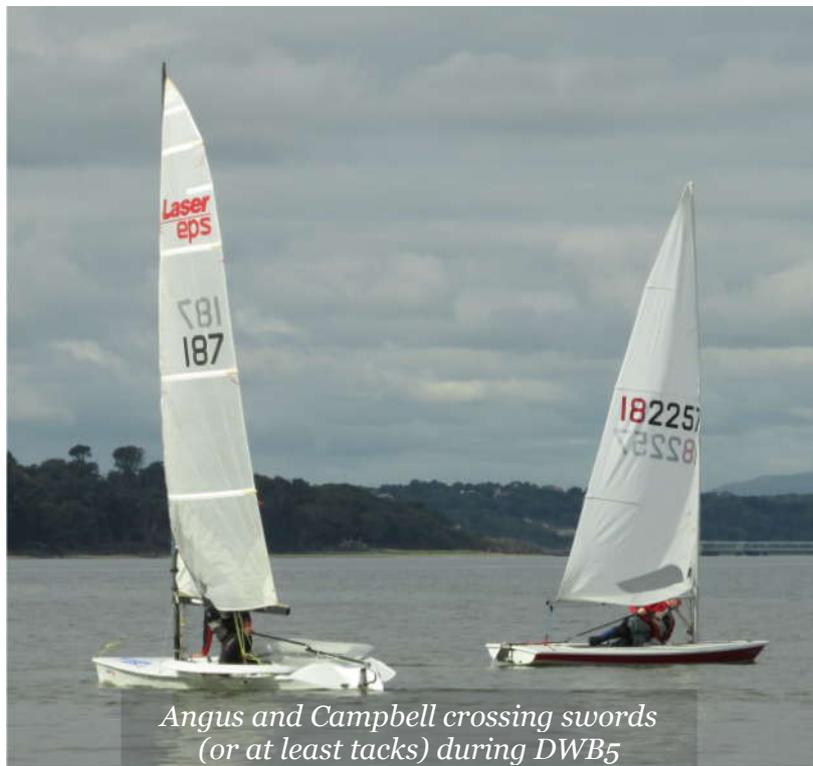
However, apart from losing the first day of the Regatta due to excessive wind, we certainly won the second half of the season.

More than that, a lot of the racing was quite close. The best attended series was the second weekend series, DWB. With 9 competitors entering various races and no one competing in every one, the final result will depend on discards.

Currently, we are still waiting on details for DWB4 along with 2 separate other events but the result is very close.

It was also good to see Angus Forsyth and Campbell Calder renewing their battle of wits – something to look forward to in future races.

To be fair to Angus, the Laser EPS is quite different to any of his previous boats and will take time to find the best tuning and handling but it may not be long before he is leading the fleet around.



*Angus and Campbell crossing swords (or at least tacks) during DWB5*

The Dinghy Regatta was scheduled for the weekend of 19/20 August, but started badly as it was blown off the water by a gale on Saturday. However, conditions were much more clement on the Sunday and we managed to fit in three races to achieve a successful event. Congratulations to Campbell Calder and Angus Forsyth for winning overall and to Henry Smith for being the top cadet.



Thanks are due to the many cruiser sailors who manned the committee boat and the race office to ensure the regatta ran smoothly, to the rescue boat crews and also shore teams for their organisation and catering.

All the summer events have now been completed and we look forward to the Frostbite Series.

## New Members

Welcome to our new members:

### Full

Thomas Nickson  
Alex MacAulay  
Matthew Lanigan  
Frans Bedford-Visser

### Family

Alberto Galilea & Laura  
Maillo

### Junior

Ewan Christison

### Student

Analaura Vacca

### Social

Kay Jackson  
Caroline Mansley



- [Commodore's View](#)
- [Dinghy Racing Roundup](#)
- [Cruiser News](#)
- [River Almond Project](#)
- [Dad's Army \(Again\)](#)
- [Cruiser Racing Report](#)
- [Eric and Denise Boyle](#)
- [Duck Race](#)
- [Queensferry Crossing](#)

### Troubles Come in Threes!

This year has seen several unfortunate instances of damage to keel boats. At the start of the season the mast on Roy Tatton's boat, *Ichthus*, broke in the process of stepping it. It's good to see that Roy has managed to get a new one fitted. Meanwhile *Ilala* broke its rudder. You may have come across Stuart Ferguson, our esteemed Treasurer, constructing a new one in the club workshop. And then *Dabchick* was dismasted while racing.



This time, unlike last year, Ian Hellewell had good reason to call the lifeboat, which shepherded him safely out of the shipping channel and back to his mooring in Cramond.

Apparently, the mounting for one of the back-stay chain plates had weakened and it gave way and the mast snapped in two. You will see that *Dabchick* now has a much shortened mast - mainly for decorative purposes!

Thinking that problems come in three, I was hoping that was the last, but subsequently George Laidlaw lost the rudder on *Honey* (formerly *Raggy*). No problem - he just steers with the outboard now!

### Old Boat, New Owner

Your editor is currently boatless, having sold *Knightmare* to Keith Millar (no relation to me). After 20 years of ownership, I decided I would either have to start doing some maintenance on her or sell her. Fortunately, Keith was looking to get back into sailing (some of you may remember his last boat at Cramond, the huge yellow concrete *Bananas*, or his racy yacht at Granton, *Silver Dollar*.) The plan is that Keith will sail *Knightmare* with his son Kris, helped and hindered by Ian Hellewell, following his mast problems on *Dabchick*. It is good to see that *Knightmare* has already re-entered the racing scene at Cramond under her new ownership.

### Horse Racing?



Now that *Talisker* has won all the Club's cups, David Jamieson has taken up racing against horses instead!



- [Commodore's View](#)
- [Dinghy Racing Roundup](#)
- [Cruiser News](#)
- [River Almond Project](#)
- [Dad's Army \(Again\)](#)
- [Cruiser Racing Report](#)
- [Eric and Denise Boyle](#)
- [Duck Race](#)
- [Queensferry Crossing](#)

If you haven't walked up the River Almond for a while, you really should have a look at the Fair-a-Far weir, where some major engineering is underway.

This is all part of a major 4-year project to improve the passage of migratory fish such as salmon and sea trout. The River Almond has a long history of industrial development, with weirs, lades and mills along its length. The downside of this is that the infrastructure has restricted the ability of fish to travel upriver to the better spawning streams in West Lothian.

Although the industry itself is long gone, much of the impediments to fish migration still remain. So the River Forth Fisheries Trust, in conjunction with City of Edinburgh council and funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund has a long-term £500,000 plan to adapt weirs and barriers on the Almond to encourage fish migration up to the shallower tributaries which are ideal for fish reproduction. This should benefit many types of fish such as salmon, sea trout, brown trout, lamprey and eel. And in turn, it is hoped this will benefit other animals which rely on fish for food, such as dippers, kingfishers and even otters.

Before beginning any work, there was a lengthy consultation process involving local groups, including CBC. Various proposals were discussed, including demolishing the entire Fair-a-Far weir, which was quickly rejected. In the end, the simplest solution was agreed – to modernise the fish pass.



The Fair-a-Far weir has had a fish ladder since the 1970s, but it is in a sad state of repair and is no longer fit for purpose (or fit for fish). So work began in August this year to replace it with a state-of-the art 'larinier' fish pass.

The sheer scale of the civil engineering involved is impressive. First, a causeway across the river was constructed some distance downstream from the weir, built over large pipes to take the river flow. The causeway was then extended up the far side of the river, to allow diggers and machinery access to the fish ladder. Then a temporary dam was built across the far corner of the weir, just above the fish ladder, so it could be drained. Next, the old fish pass will be demolished and the new one built in its place.

The whole operation is remarkably sensitive to the fish themselves. A temporary fish barrier has been constructed downstream of the works to prevent migrating fish being distressed by the machinery. Not only that, but they are also conducting a 'fish rescue' operation every week to trap fish below the building works and carry them up above the weir to continue their journey!



Not only that, but they are also conducting a 'fish rescue' operation every week to trap fish below the building works and carry them up above the weir to continue their journey!

After completion of this phase of the project, the work will move up the River Almond to tackle the weirs at Dowie's Mill and then further barriers at Mid Calder and Livingston.

- [Commodore's View](#)
- [Dinghy Racing Roundup](#)
- [Cruiser News](#)
- [River Almond Project](#)
- [Dad's Army \(Again\)](#)
- [Cruiser Racing Report](#)
- [Eric and Denise Boyle](#)
- [Duck Race](#)
- [Queensferry Crossing](#)



## Dad's Army (Again)

The old boys have been busy again with their Monday work parties. The emphasis has been on getting the new moorings boat ready for the winter chain gangs. For those of you who have not seen it, this is a substantial new vessel to replace the old 'tin boat' which has served as the moorings maintenance craft for many, many years but is, quite frankly, falling apart at the seams. Literally.

The new boat is bigger, sturdier and probably floats more reliably than the old one, but it needed some serious modifications to take the platform and rollers to carry the moorings chain when in operation. The usual suspects (Hamish, Dave, Eddie, Jeff and others) led by Davie Mackay have done a tremendous job in designing, building and fitting all the constituent parts, despite giving the appearance of having no plan and no clue. A casual observer of their working methods might be concerned that they can never agree on the best course of action, or the appropriate design parameters, or the correct tool to use. They even seem a bit confused about suitable units of measurement, typically reporting lengths as "two meters and an inch" or "4 inches and 3 millimetres".

But it all seems to work, and the results are impressive. All those who will shortly be summoned to work on the winter moorings gangs will no doubt raise a glass of thanks to the old codgers for improving their working environment.



## Cruiser Racing Report

### W Series – Laidlaw Cup

---

"Go wisely and slow," as Shakespeare probably said, was the motto for the fifth race in the Weekend series on Saturday 9th September. The race was sailed (or more accurately drifted) in a series of light and changeable airs. The start was delayed and the original course reversed before the barest puff allowed *Exisle* then *Knighmare* to cross the line; however all eight yachts were still within a 100m radius of each other 20 minutes after the start.

The first movement came from John Dick in *Kentra* when he heeled to leeward and kept some shape in his sails as a light rain shower brought an all too brief burst of real wind. *Exisle* led the pack as first *Talisker* then *Artemis* with *Melita* on her heels swallowed up *Knighmare* and *Kentra*. With the air swinging back to WSW the fleet slowly rounded mark M and spread out as the ebbing tide took its toll.

When the wind dropped and the tidal flow increased (even *Talisker* took two attempts to round mark C) *Melita* followed the example of *Kentra*, *Papillon* and *Pegasus II* and sensibly retired. *Knighmare* hung on longest but 150ms from the mark it was all she could do to stem the tide. It was a lovely evening probably the last of the summer but it did lead to a frustrating sail.

### A Series - Belhaven Trophy

---

The final race of the 'A' series took place on Tuesday 12th September. Monday had been a miserable day weather-wise, and with a forecast of high winds from Storm Arlene, the prospect did not look good for A8. However as the start time approached the wind sank to another unsteady F1 and the race was on.

The boats were well bunched at the start, *Exisle* again taking an early lead closely followed by *Pegasus II* and *Melita*. *Knighmare* sailed to windward of the fleet with the forlorn hope of stealing wind from the others on the broad reach to D. *Exisle* opted to sail off goose-winged to leeward a tactic that paid off as he then close reached to the mark at some speed.

The next leg was a dead run to M with *Melita* and *Knighmare* at the rear trying unsuccessfully to blanket *Pegasus II*. The prospect of trying to reach mark C against the tide with what looked like failing winds made the decision to shorten course at M an easy one. The reach back quickly became a beat as a violent rain squall snarled in from the South and with sympathies to single-handed *Melita*, sails were quickly doused and motors on.

So that's the 2017 A series done and dusted and with seven boat taking part. *Exisle* won the series convincingly, with *Pegasus II* and *Melita* finishing equal on points behind her.

- [Commodore's View](#)
- [Dinghy Racing Roundup](#)
- [Cruiser News](#)
- [River Almond Project](#)
- [Dad's Army \(Again\)](#)
- [Cruiser Racing Report](#)
- [Eric and Denise Boyle](#)
- [Duck Race](#)
- [Queensferry Crossing](#)



## Eric and Denise Boyle

It is with great sadness that we must report the deaths of two long-standing club members, Eric and Denise Boyle. Eric passed away on 4th July following a heart attack, and Denise, who had been seriously ill for some time, died just a few weeks later.

Over many years they both contributed greatly to club activities, particularly on the social side. They both served on the club committee, Denise as Social Convenor, Eric as Bar Convenor, and they could regularly be found in the clubhouse at weekends and supporting club events. They will be missed by their many friends in the club.



## Duck Race

The Cramond Scouts held a successful Duck Race at Cramond on 24th June to raise funds.

There were stalls and food as well as the race, and fortunately the weather stayed kind. The quayside was very busy and the whole event was a great success.

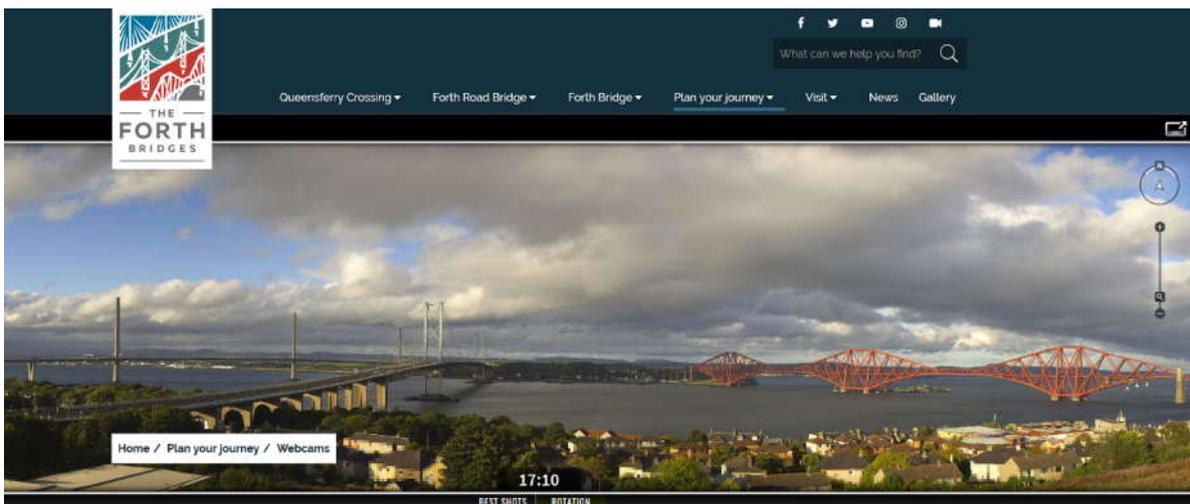
For those who are interested, the winning duck's name was Donald. Probably.



## Queensferry Crossing

Well, the new Queensferry Crossing (what a silly name, what's wrong with 'bridge'?) is finally open and we now have three iconic engineering structures across our little stretch of water. Has anyone sailed under it yet? The editor would welcome any photos from a boat underneath the new bridge for the next edition.

In the meantime, the Forth Bridges website has a pretty cool live panorama [webcam](#) panning over all 3 bridges from the south. Actually, this could be quite a useful weather resource, giving a clear picture of the current weather situation a few miles west of Cramond.



## Acknowledgements

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

## Contacts

**Seagull Editor:**  
[seagull@cramondboatclub.org.uk](mailto:seagull@cramondboatclub.org.uk)

**Club Committee:**  
[cbc-committee@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:cbc-committee@yahoo.co.uk)

**Club Members Email List:**  
[cramond@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:cramond@yahoo.co.uk)