



The Seagull

The Journal of the Cramond Boat Club

June 2018

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The View from the Commodore's Window

Writing back in February, I started my report in the last edition of the Seagull by saying "We've had a pretty normal winter". Talk about speaking too soon! By the time it was published we were able to include the photographs of the huge amount of snow that fell at the start of March. This marked the beginning of one of the worst early springs for many a year. With Crane-in scheduled for 31st March, all the preparations were greatly disrupted. The second moorings party was postponed to the middle of March, by which time the snow had melted – but then started falling again! The picture shows the intrepid working group taking advantage of the ice to slide the chain back and forth.



Moorings maintenance in the snow!

Meanwhile boat owners were desperately using gaps in the poor weather to get themselves ready in time. Come Crane-in, we were just about organised – except that the weather wasn't. For the first time for many years we had to postpone. A very unpleasant strong north wind was not only threatening crane operations but also driving breaking rollers up the river. Getting boats onto their moorings would have been extremely risky. So, we delayed 24 hours.

As it turned out the (Easter) Sunday was the only half decent day in a long run of poor weather and we were relieved to get all the boats into the water successfully. Many thanks to Jeff McLeod (Banksman), the excellent team of helpers, boat drivers, etc, and particular to the ladies who stepped in at short notice to run the kitchen and maintain the usual high standard of food and refreshment.

But, even then, the weather had not finished with us. Just when everyone was wanting to get their masts up there was more heavy precipitation – rain at sea-level but yet more snow inland (in mid-April!). This led to a spate on the river with the boats having to be pulled out of the main stream. As a result of all this, the season has been slow to get going. However, May proved to be very pleasant – dry with some very warm days and a chance for both cruising and racing to get underway, except for too **little** wind on occasions. Who knows what the rest of the season will bring!

This is the time of year that I draw to the attention of members with boats on the moorings the importance of tying back (frapping) halyards so they don't rattle against the mast. Whenever the wind comes up there always seem to be a few boats causing a nuisance with banging halyards. Please ensure yours is not the culprit.

Wishing everyone fair skies and following winds,

Andy Walker

Diary Dates

Sat 28th July

Family Fun Day

28th & 29th July

Anstruther Muster

11th & 12th Aug

Cramond Dinghy Regatta

Sat 6th Oct

Crane Out

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Dinghy Racing

Weather-wise, the season has got off to a great start, but in spite of this turn outs for racing has been mixed. The exception to this is when the Cadets are scheduled, where we have been getting up to eight dinghies racing.

The Sizeland family Wayfarer *Ketchup* and Alex Macaulay's Laser have been regulars and for those that have not yet made it onto the water, come on and join them, get that boat rigged and go for a sail.

Club Dinghies

With my Bosun's hat on, I am very pleased to report that we have taken delivery of a new suit of sails for the club Wayfarer and also a new Laser Radial sail for the club Laser, which has been in regular use since the start of the season.



Thanks go to Alan MacKenzie who has donated a Laser standard sail for the club Laser and also to Hamish and Dougie for repairing the club Wayfarer trolley which is much appreciated.

Can I remind members that that all club equipment should be looked after carefully, sails should be properly rolled and stored, dinghy covers should be properly secured. If you have any questions regarding club dinghy equipment please do not hesitate to ask myself, Lawrie or Alan, we will be more than happy to help.

New Members

Welcome to our new members:

Full
Angus Robertson

Family
Magdalena Jednorowicz,
Ian Christie & Ossian
Jednorowicz

Junior
Anna, Ben & Eilidh
MacRury

Dinghy Regatta

I would like all dinghy sailors to make a huge effort to support our Dinghy Regatta which is on Saturday 11th and Sunday 12th August. Mark it up in your diary now and let's see a big entry and do the Club proud.

See you on the water.

Campbell Calder



RFYC Sesquicentennial

Our neighbouring club at Granton, the Royal Forth Yacht Club, is celebrating its Sesquicentennial (that's 150 years to you and me.) They have a range of activities scheduled throughout the year to mark the event.

On 2nd June they hosted a visit from their club patron, HRH the Princess Royal, who chatted to members, unveiled a plaque then boarded HMS Archer to take the salute for a Parade of Sail by RFYC boats. A week later, they had an anniversary dinner.

On 23rd and 24th June they are holding an anniversary regatta, to which visiting yachts are welcome. Cramond boats might like to attend this significant event.

Congratulations to the RFYC on reaching this impressive milestone.

Urban Union

Royal Forth Yacht Club
150th Anniversary Regatta

Granton Harbour
23rd - 24th June 2018
Informal social event Friday 22nd June

Information, Notice of Race and Entry forms:
<http://www.rfyc.org/2018/racing/enter-the-rfyc-150th-anniversary-regatta-22-24-june/>

Enquiries
rfyc150@gmail.com / royalforth@btconnect.com



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What does the word 'cruise' conjure up for you? Pina Colada served by a white coated Filipina waiter as you laze on your deck lounge contemplating passing tropical islands burning in a foreign sun and dreaming of the black tie dinner at the captain's table? Dump that dream in the nearest spoil ground (at the back of Inchmickery Island actually). Imagine instead small boats being tossed hither and thither beneath a dark grey sky spilling rain, then add a tearing, bitterly cold Easterly gale. Welcome to the real world of the CBC's opening cruise to Aberdour.



Six yachts braved that world on Sunday 26th May, casting off their moorings one by one to sail into what the good Admiral Beaufort suggested is a 'fresh breeze' but we know a Force 6 is a full yachtsman's gale. No need to describe the dangers faced as gallant crews hoisted and struggled to tame flogging sails and how helmsmen (sorry that should be helmspersons) clutched their tillers as they steered a safe course through the tumbling waves.

The six vessels and their heroic crew were: *Papillon* - Kenny and Sheila plus Kenny's sister and niece (kruel Kenny forced his niece to take the helm.) *Jay* - Doris and Margo (the dynamic duo.) *Decantae* - Stuart, Ernie and Ian (the doddering duo.) *Kiri* - Dave and Jeff (Jeff's wife and grandsons joined at Aberdour). *Melita* - Alastair and Samantha, rumoured to have a midnight feast of rolls. Don't ask. *Sanda II* - Reg. Single-handed in a bouncy wee boat, our very own nut from Brazil.

Fast forward, all the boats safely are tied up against the quay wall at Aberdour, tall tales have been told, time for grub. But there's a problem, the doddering duo from *Decantae* claim they can't climb the hill. From *Kiri*, Sheila, Jeff's wife, empties her grandsons out of her car to drive the undeserving pair to the hotel. The Woodside hotel is imposing from the outside and well appointed inside. Initially the bar was noisy as some football match or other was on the telly but it quietened when the match finished.

At last, in a private room, all are seated. Everyone agrees the meal is very satisfactory and reasonably priced and the service is quick and cheerful. A postprandial gathering in an adjoining lounge turns out to be a jolly affair with much chat and good humoured banter (or, if you insist, the usual drunken slaverings.) At this point your reporter's recollections are, like the weather, somewhat hazy. He remembers a noisy bar, a downhill slalom to the harbour, then *Decantae's* warm cabin with the crew of *Kiri*, being forced to drink, what? Surely not more beer or was it gin?



Came the dawn, when the righteous and the healthy were out and about for runs, walks and shopping. The lethargic and indolent made their appearance like weary hedgehogs after a particularly deep hibernation. No names, no pack drill - they know who they are. The return trip was like the outward but with a thicker haar which only started to lift as the fleet neared Cramond.

A hearty vote of thanks to the organisers had been given at the dinner, but it does no harm to repeat it here - well done Jeff and Stuart; we appreciate and are truly grateful for all your efforts.

A return to the Woodside has been booked for the Closing Cruise on 22/23 Sept, a note in your diary please.



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Twice a year, at Crane-in and Crane-out, there is a good game to be had by guessing which boats will cause the crane's alarm to sound as it is too heavy for the length of lift. In years gone by, this was always Peter Russell's *Eliza*, which was heavily weighed down by crates and crates of whisky.

At Crane-in this year, the crane driver noted the weights of all the boats and passed them to Jeff.

The results are interesting. You would expect boats of the same make and model to weigh the same, but there are some differences. *Bramble* and *Robbo* are both Hunter 23s but one is more than half a ton heavier. *Hannah* and *Pegasus*, both Westerly Griffon MkIIs, weigh exactly the same, as do the two Westerly Merlins, *Artemis* and *Melita*.



But *Anthemis* weighs 0.7 tons more than her sister Westerly Pageant, *Hapidaze*.

And you can understand why *Talisker* wins races when you appreciate what a lightweight, stripped-out racing machine she is!

The prize for the heaviest boat goes to *Decantae*. How many kitchen sinks does Ernie keep in there?

	tons
Trivial Pursuit	0.7
Kentra	0.9
Sanda 2	1.0
Segue	1.2
Delphin	1.4
Ilala	1.6
Shanty	1.6
Itchthus	1.6
Bramble	2.0
Lucinda	2.0
Lady B	2.1
Talisker	2.5
Arion	2.5
Hapidaze	2.5
Robo	2.6
Golden Hynd	2.8
Sprightly Peggy	2.8
Sea Dancer	3.0
Stravaig	3.0
Knightmare	3.0
Jester	3.1
Anthemis	3.2
Jay	3.5
Exisle	3.6
Hannah	3.6
Pegasus	3.6
Kiri	3.8
Innisfallin	3.9
Papillion	3.9
Dabchick 2	4.0
Artemis	4.3
Melita	4.3
Decante	4.4

Dinghy Security

There was an incident in April when a group of youths tried to launch a tender which had not been properly secured.

Luckily Campbell Calder was on hand to diffuse the situation, although the gang were quite aggressive.

All members should be on the lookout for trouble-makers over the summer months when Cramond can get very busy and report incidents to the police.

More importantly, you must make sure that:

- All dinghies and tenders are secure
- Outboard engines are removed or securely locked
- Paddles and sails are not left on board boats in the dinghy park
- The dinghy park is locked when there is no-one inside



RNLI In Action

The day after our delayed Crane-in – Easter Monday – saw a work party cleaning up and sorting out, including the assembly of the mast crane, etc. Some of us were still around when, later that afternoon the RNLI arrived on one of their (all too regular) shouts, to return people ashore after becoming stranded by the rising tide on Cramond Island. On this occasion things were a bit more serious, with a young woman suffering from hypothermia. Apparently, she had spent quite some time in the water – trying to get back across before giving up and seeking assistance from the lifeboat.

Everyone came into the Clubhouse, and Sheila McLeod, who had been kindly helping with lunch for the work party, together with Doris Hunter, saw the casualty into a warm shower. Meanwhile the rest of the crew – led by Callum Calder – squeezed into the bar area (much restricted by the furniture that had just been moved out of the function hall). The offer of opening up the bar was refused (just testing!) and instead teas and coffees were supplied, together with the surplus rolls and cakes left over from weekend's catering. Much appreciated by all concerned.

In due course, the casualty joined the party and was further assisted by a mug of tea. It was apparent that she was well on the way to recovering. After the necessary formalities, she was able to leave and the coastguard and lifeboat departed. It was good to see the Club being able to provide practical help in this fashion.

Andy Walker

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W Series

After the Beast from the East and its wee cousins who brought violent surges up the river, it was nice to finally start the cruiser racing 3 weeks after Crane-in. The wind was a gentle force 3 from the NE on a clear, sunny but cold April day. Unfortunately, the race marks had not yet been laid but the Race Officer (Alastair Johnson on *Pegasus II*) improvised by setting a simple course from the start line to Channel Mark 16 and back. It was good to see Dave Jamieson back in a boat after his serious injury last year, and, aided by his crutch Eddie King, *Talisker* got off to a good start. *Exisle* (sailed single handed by the Commodore) was as usual to the fore, with *Pegasus II* snapping at their heels.

The next race in the series took place two weeks later on a glorious, warm day with clear skies and light, variable winds. As there was only a breath of wind at the start, a very short course was set. Stuart Ferguson in *Ilala* was delighted to be a close third over the line and attempted to luff *Talisker*. This worked for a while but superior speed soon curtailed that manoeuvre. *Exisle* led from the start with *Talisker* not far behind, when a hole in the wind at D mark threatened to upset the apple-cart. However it was not to be, and as the sea breeze filled in, all the boats enjoyed a broad reach to the finish. It was nice to see a higher handicapped boat join the fleet and it is hoped that more will join Stuart in the future.

MD Series

The Middle Distance series got underway on 20th April in near-perfect conditions, a steady F3 from the east and clear, sunny skies with just enough chill in the air to keep everyone on their toes. The start was close, *Exisle* (with two crew for this race) led the fleet and stayed ahead to the finish. *Talisker* was close behind but never got close enough. *Pegasus II* made a radical decision to go straight over the sands to Channel Mark 16 but just lacked the speed to optimize her position. Meanwhile, Keith Millar in *Knight Mare* had high expectations after a series of performance-enhancing upgrades, including a sand-blasted hull, new rigging and sails (the largest to fit the boat), and all excess weight stripped out (including cushions.). However, they saw the fleet steadily draw ahead of them on every point of sail. Still early days of course, and "hope springs eternal."

Due to various weather-related reasons, it was two months before the next race in the series could be run. The weather on 17th June could be described as blustery but that didn't stop four boats enjoying the sailing.

Ilala sensibly reefed before the start but soon shook it out as she fell behind. As the smallest and slowest boat in the fleet, she soon abandoned the race and enjoyed a mini cruise instead.

Knight Mare started third and for the first time had a decent wind and a working log which enabled her to experiment with trimming the sails. However, the lack of a whisker pole severely hampered her downwind performance and she was too far from the leading boats to properly judge her pointing abilities. Overall the crew were happy with her performance but with still plenty of jobs and tweaking to do.

At the front of the race, *Exisle* and *Talisker* contested the start, *Exisle* just managing to get ahead, and the two boats remained close all race. At the first mark, *Exisle* dropped the jib pole too soon and *Talisker* gained a little but there was still a good gap. On the beat up the channel, *Exisle* tacked first while *Talisker* went on a bit further which proved the better choice. Approaching the next mark, *Talisker* was laying the mark on starboard, and *Exisle* had to duck his stern. On the next beat, *Exisle* tacked to get clear air, so this time it was *Exisle* on the starboard lay-line to the mark. *Talisker* was forced to tack earlier than they wanted to but then both boats got a lift from a wind shift and *Talisker* was round on the inside and back ahead. The reach to the finish saw *Talisker* stay ahead of *Exisle* for a hard fought win.



STOP PRESS

Commodores' Cup

CBC Member **Callum Calder** was part of an all-Scottish team which won the 2018 RORC Commodores' Cup in the Solent in June.

The Commodores' Cup is a Corinthian (non-professional) team event for teams of 3 yachts held every 2 years.

Based in Cowes, Isle of Wight, it consists of a mixture of inshore, coastal and offshore races.

The Commodores' Cup is considered one of the pinnacles of amateur yacht racing in Britain.

Although he now races mostly at Port Edgar, Callum appears sometimes at Cramond and still retains his membership of the club where he learnt to sail as a Cramond Sea Scout.

The Editor hopes to get a fuller version of this story for the next *Seagull*.

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In the last edition of the Seagull I described how I'd been contacted from America by Jim Llewellyn (Staff Commodore, Port Madison Yacht Club Bainbridge Island, Washington State) and had arranged for him to visit us at Cramond. His parents were friends of Benje and Katrina Dawson and he had come across a CBC burgee presented to them and kept in the boat that Jim subsequently inherited.

Having noted the club's name inscribed on the edge of the burgee and having successfully tracked us down, in April he and his wife, Sue, duly arrived in Edinburgh.



We arranged a small, early evening, social event in the Clubhouse at which Jim formally presented a PMYC Burgee and a letter, extending rights for any of us who just happen to be passing along the west coast of the USA to enjoy the facilities of the Port Madison club!

Many thanks to the members who joined the event. Dave and Anna Innes took the opportunity to bring along photos and memorabilia recording some of the past days of the club and former Commodore Dawson's part in them. After the speeches, drinks and nibbles – and much chat – a small group of us took Jim and Sue out for dinner.

Earlier in the afternoon, I was particularly pleased that I had managed to have *Exisle* ready in time to be able to take Jim for a sail. A quick passage around Inchcolm gave him a flavour for sailing on the Forth – a long way from the Pacific! Altogether an enjoyable day for all concerned.

Andy Walker



A reminder of the joys of winter moorings maintenance weekends!



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For the last couple of years we have been endeavouring to modernise our club's IT systems. The current membership database has been around for over 10 years and while it works well and delivers what is required, it is a bespoke, homebuilt system, and the 'Access' database software is nearing the end of its life cycle and will soon no longer be supported by Microsoft.

As well as the need to update our membership system we are also looking at better ways for the club to interact with its members. We have had many frustrating issues with our group email lists which need to be addressed. And for a while now members have been asking about paying their club membership subscriptions via digital banking. This is something the club would like to offer and we hope to have this available in time for our renewals in October 2018.



Another consideration was that our present IT systems, membership database and club website are maintained by a few dedicated members in their own time. This is very time-consuming, and upgrading to a new generation of bespoke IT systems will

require significant extra time and effort as well as prolonging the maintenance burden.

So after much deliberation we decided to investigate commercial applications that would provide us with a platform on which we could build the new desirable features (such as digital banking etc.) but still maintain the excellent qualities of the legacy systems.

The club has settled on a package called **Sailing Club Manager**. This is a commercial application designed specifically for sailing clubs, which manages membership, subscriptions, moorings, race results etc. It also provides the facility to easily build and maintain a new website. We were very impressed with the web pages other clubs have designed on this application.

Sailing Club Manager is used by more than 60 sailing clubs, mostly in



England where the company is based but there are two in Scotland – Loch Tummel Sailing Club and Loch Venachar Sailing Club. As a commercial product, it fully complies with necessary regulations like GDPR (data protection) and child protection legislation.

After a period of evaluating the package, we have signed up for it and over the next few months we will be migrating our current systems and data to the new application.

Sailing Club Manager is accessed via a web browser, which means it can be used anywhere on a PC, tablet or smartphone. It will be much easier for the club's officers involved in membership, dinghy park, training, etc. to interface with the club systems without having to be physically in the committee room hunched over the club's ageing PC.

If you would like to know more about Sailing Club Manager, please use this link to their website: <https://www.sailingclubmanager.com/>

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the contributors to this initiative, without whom it would not have been possible:

- Alastair Millar – responsible for much of the club's current IT systems, and key to evaluating the new system
- Jim Stuart (Membership Secretary) – involved in a lot of the Sailing Club Manager testing during the trial period.
- Stephen Aird (Secretary) – provided much of the requirements of the new software
- Piotr Wojtczuk – our webmaster who maintains our current website and will be instrumental in the new web pages design
- Alex Tulloch – whose commercial experience in IT has proved invaluable
- Andy Walker (Commodore) – pulled it altogether and gave it direction
- Stuart Ferguson (Treasurer) – ensured it is all consistent with our financial systems.

This is a big step for the club. We think it's the right one and puts the club's IT systems on the right footing going forward.

Hamish Henderson, Rear Commodore

Acknowledgements

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

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