



Watermouth Yacht Club

Berrynarbor, Ilfracombe, North Devon, EX34 9SJ

51° 13' N 004° 05' W

AHOY

Newsletter July 2015

Commodore's Column

Dear members,

Summer is here, we have had some super weather and some not so super. The longest day has been and gone and so the days will start to shorten and how many of us have managed to enjoy our boats or the yacht club or indeed the harbour?

I have noticed how quiet the harbour seems to be these days, it doesn't seem to have the same 'vibe' as it once did. I feel sure it is because the average age of club members and indeed boat owners is increasing. I believe this is not a phenomenon found only at Watermouth but perhaps because we are so small and because we are in a privately owned harbour it seems to have a particularly negative effect. We are unable to attract the youth element of boat ownership and boat activities, boats of all types and sizes. What the solution is, I don't know, perhaps there isn't one! Perhaps you have some suggestions?

That being said, we have had wonderful support at our social events, thank you. I have tried this year to make it easy to attract members. e.g. our BBQs are the first Saturday each month, the Carveries were alternate Sundays, not always the most convenient for the Committee but along with the emails I have sent out as reminders, you have responded, again thank you. Truly, it is not a great deal more effort to provide for 40 than it is for 30 people, but of course that extra 10 are pure profit. Necessary as the club house roof needs repair, the electricity supply to the yard from the club has recently failed an insurance safety check, the outside of the club house needs maintenance. Details of all of this should be found elsewhere in this Ahoy!

We have a club cruise coming up, fishing competition, another BBQ, the Quiz Night and a Mega Book Sale (possibly with tea or coffee and cakes -depending upon how I feel!), please check out the details. Apart from the Dinner & Dance October 10th, in September (12th) we are so pleased to host the 70th birthday bash of Ken Smith. Ken and Cynthia have organised a Pig Roast in support of the club. Full details will be sent later.

There is plenty more going on, so don't be surprised when those emails hit your in box!

With best regards to everyone, **Maira**

My quote this time is this, because it exemplifies my sailing lack of expertise!

A smooth sea never made a skilful mariner

unknown

Treasurer's Report

It must be summer, the rain feels much warmer!

The boating season has been slow to start this year but participation in club social events has been very encouraging. Carveries and BBQs have been extremely successful and a vote of thanks must go to all who make them possible. There are more functions planned and I'm sure they too will be equally popular.

The club's financial position continues to improve but it is expected that a large outlay on roof repairs will soon be upon us. I anticipate that we will be able to take this in our stride and details may be available in time for the next 'Ahoy'.

Headline figures at the moment are as follows:

Cash brought forward:	£8,545.47
Income	
Subscriptions (inc mooring premiums)	£4,256.00 (7 membership subscriptions remain overdue)
Social	£1,270.00
Bar	£ 549.18
Expenditure	
Insurance premium	£1,032.00
Mooring fees	£ 720.00
Misc	£ 212.82 (includes planning application for shed)
Maintenance	£ 624.15
Sailing and RYA subscriptions	£ 164.00
Utilities	£ 247.00
Cleaning	£ 228.00
Cash at bank	£11,447.14

For a full snapshot of the account, please see the club notice board.

Thank you for your support and I hope that the remainder of the season is enjoyable and trouble-free for us all.

Steve Barron

Club Maintenance

I would like to start by saying thank you to Brian Stanton for all the work he has put into repairing the shed, it looks much more serviceable now. As I mentioned in my last report we have a leak over one of the front windows. I now hope that I have managed to stop this but will have to wait for the weather to test my repair. I have replaced the coloured light over the gable end of the club as the string of lights had failed due to old age.

The electrician has been in to carry out the three year test for the insurance company, unfortunately he found a few problems and needed replacement parts, I am sorry if it caused

problems not having some of the outside plugs in use, I hope that by the time you read this all will be working again. We have also had a problem with the fire alarm but that is now fixed. I have spoken to the builder and hope the roof repairs will be started in a couple of weeks time. Then we can look at putting the shed up and painting the outside of the clubhouse. Sue and I have been busy preparing this year's quiz, please make a note on your calendar for Saturday August 22nd it should be a good night particularly if we have plenty of teams. We look forward to seeing you all.

Simon Kemp

Ilfracombe Yacht Club Round Lundy Race 2015

Saturday July 4th and the day started a little grey and with mizzle at the start of the day but a fair wind was blowing which resulted in a good day's sail. Watermouth Yacht Club yachts Anastasia, Chaser and Rainsong crossed the start line with the other 40+ yachts in their respective classes.



The weather cleared as the day went on and all of our yachts

succeeded in completing the course, Alastair and crew on Anastasia and John, Wayne and their crew on Rainsong.

However, I congratulate Geof Pierce with his Hunter yacht Chaser, crew Peter Slade and Simon Kemp. They finished 2nd in their class and 5th overall. They have put our club name on the results table again and for such a small club this is important, they really did us proud ! They are already planning for 2016 how to make Chaser even speedier!

Moira

Off the south coast June 2015

Sunday 14th June saw me able to join Trevor and Jane Richards on their Legend yacht, Cloudy Bay. There are several marinas in Plymouth and Mountbatten is located on the Eastern side of Plymouth Sound. Nice and modern, the facilities were nicer than you could have hoped for and there were lots of very large shiny yachts!



We caught the ferry across to the Barbican and meandered around the Hoe and surrounding area. We had a look at the Royal Plymouth Corinthian Yacht Club. Very nice, it was mid-afternoon but it was also very empty - apart from some staff. Beautiful outlook over the sound and it was obviously a very active club.

We discovered a Sensory Garden which looked a little forlorn. We watched several yachts and fishing boats coming into Sutton Harbour, they seemed to come in at quite a speed through the lock gates and then slam on some brakes!

In the evening we walked to the Clovelly Bay Inn in Turnchapel, for our evening meal. What a find! Wonderful food, lovely traditional surroundings, good prices and attentive staff. It was worthy of a mention on Trip Advisor.

Monday. We motored over to Mount Edgecombe on the West side of the Sound and anchored in Bury Bay (or Barn Bay?). The grounds are lovely, manicured close to the house but au natural otherwise. The ice creams were good too. After a lunch we had already decided to go East towards Newton Ferrer's and how glad were we? What a fantastic place to stop over or to stay? We moored up at one of the visitors pontoons and dinghied ashore to walk through Newton Ferrers. A pity really, the heart has gone. It appeared to be predominantly holiday homes. Some were big, some were huge and many were the original cottages which had been transformed into something they were never intended to be. We visited the yacht club; this was almost empty whilst the pub next door was spilling out onto the road! Whilst we enjoyed a shandy we could see across to Noss Mayo and the voss (causeway) which joins the two villages.



Tuesday. We decided to look at Noss Mayo more closely, found the church, both pubs but had previously decided to leave at midday-ish for Salcombe. Sails up, we enjoyed a pleasant trip up the coast, looking for land marks as we went. We were able to follow other yachts in and use the buoyage, which was just as well because the day marks were useless. I could see the lower triangle just above HW mark but the upper triangle was nowhere to be seen and as for the alternative conspicuous gable end of a house! There were half a dozen to



choose from. We mooched in amongst the many visitors mooring buoys, all were taken. We were directed to the visitors' pontoon in 'The Bag'. Moored up, we took the lines of an incoming yacht, Pip Johnson and his wife (Pip is the son of Neil Johnson a previous owner of Tir An Og) was so surprised to see us. They sail out of the Solent - what were the chances of meeting up with old friends like that? We went ashore but I was disappointed in Salcombe – again, no real heart. Money talks there. We looked at the pilot book towards Kingsbridge up river, but Cloudy Bay was at the limit being almost 11 metres long but Trevor wasn't inclined. I've been told since that we could have taken her up, but, you have to make decisions using the information available to you, and that was the pilot book.

Wednesday. We did go to Kingsbridge the next day, by bus and spent a wonderful day. What a difference Kingsbridge is from its downstream neighbour? A quirky little town, we spent quite some time wandering down river beside the exposed mud. It had been a significant port in the past, but that was gone now. The pontoons there were full with almost entirely small motor boats. There were a couple of yachts but the only one of a similar length to Cloudy Bay



was a catamaran which has significantly less draft. We returned to Salcombe and popped into the Yacht Club, this also appeared to be very affluent. Especially woven carpet with their club burgee - need I say more? It was a friendly club, and the ham, egg and chips looked lovely!

Thursday. We said goodbye to Salcombe and returned to Newton Ferrers arriving right at the bottom of the tide. For a few minutes we hummed and ha'd and then realised the tidal range was only 5 metres. Trevor took Cloudy Bay in, bypassing the bar where the buoyage was laying over in shallow water. What a delightful place, I loved it. We chose to eat in one of the two pubs in Noss Mayo, unfortunately the wrong one! Talk about chalk and cheese. One was full and was serving seriously interesting and appetising food, whilst the other (we found this one first) was almost empty, bar us plus a couple of other people, and served food straight from a cash and carry freezer!

Friday. We explored up river on foot -it opened up as we went round a corner and was a revelation with loads of deep water moorings. There some seriously big yachts up there! Returning to Cloudy Bay, we left Newton Ferrers bound for Fowey. Jane and Trevor had stopped there on their way from Falmouth to Plymouth and wanted to return. Trevor went past all of the swinging moorings and the yachts to a pontoon opposite the clay depot. It may seem an odd choice, but it was really quiet and they had seen a deer enter the water and swim across the river at this point when they had last been there. It did seem odd when this large ship was eased out to sea by the Pilot and a tug, missing all of the yachts, both large and small. Whilst Fowey is a lovely place, its character also seems to be suffering at the hands of those who have a lot of free money!



Saturday. We had done some more creek crawling in the dinghy again. We found one of the harbour officials who told us there was an 18 year waiting list for a mooring and because of that it has been closed. This river also opens up into a broad expanse of water and so many moorings. Further upstream the river eventually goes right up to Lostwithiel. Drying moorings up river are there and the waiting list is only 2 years. We left Fowey bound for Plymouth arriving in the late afternoon. In the evening we returned to the Clovelly Bay Inn eagerly anticipating another fantastic meal, only to be turned away. We should have known that this place was not a secret.

Sunday. I packed up and caught the train back to North Devon. I really enjoyed my week thanks to Jane and Trevor. There are so many places to explore on the south coast of Devon and Cornwall and being totally selfish, I wouldn't be sorry if they decided to keep Cloudy Bay down there for a couple of years.

Moira



Coming Events

Sat 18 July Fishing Competition

Contact Colin for details Mob 07445 223790 eMail colingoodyear@btopenworld.com

Sat/Sun 19-20 July Club cruise, weather permitting

Destination and time to be determined at the Club on Friday evening or contact Moira for details on 01271 8650 or email allsford388@btinternet.com

Sat 1st August WYC BBQ Everyone welcome!

Sun 2nd August 10 til 12 'ish WYC Mega Book Sale + tea/coffee & cakes, perhaps!

For all details please contact Moira on allsford388@btinternet.com / 01271 865001

Sat. 22nd August WYC Quiz Night + Supper @ 7pm, Quiz @ 7.45 Teams of 4-6 people

Register your team with Moira on 01271 8650 or email allsford388@btinternet.com

Caption competition No 4

What's going on here ?



Dave, Martin, Geof & Simon are barred from this one

Suggestions for Caption Competition No 3



Do you think its nuts again	Philip Langford
When is it feeding time	Rachel Pierce
Where has "speak no evil" gone	Doug & Sally
It must be feeding time	Mike Corner
New career planning in progress	Steve Barron
Do you think they are coming to collect us	Kaye Corner
Thought you said the bars never close s	Kaye Corner
The next fish that keeper throws is mine	Alan Bosely
These are not the bars we were looking for	Graham Farmer
Up Periscope but Keith complains he can't see anything	Peter Slade
I can see the Pub but how can we get to it	Simon Kemp
A screen shot from "Return to the Planet of the Apes"	John Culley
Now we are behind bars, marriage doesn't seem that bad after all	John Culley

The best caption, chosen by Moira, (without knowing whose it was), is Susan (or is it Les?) Oldham

"Police have reported that the illegal immigrants apprehended attempting to breach UK Border Control are in secure detention"

Well done, remember there's a free drink for you next time you are at the club.

The Confessional

There I was in Watermouth Harbour aboard MINTAKA, my 19' Robert Tucker Caprice Mk 4.

I had made that classic mistake of thinking I could be so careful about backing up (with rear mooring rope attached) that it would not get snagged. So of course it did get snagged and the engine died. As I am leaning overboard trying to untangle the mess, it's of course at this point that the Ilfracombe Big Yellow catamaran full of day trippers / tourists comes looming around the corner and into the harbour. "Do they know what a total cock up this is?" of course came to mind immediately, to which my 'inner wise person' responded, "No, they'll all most probably think you're doing something frightful technical".



About a year later, as I was getting used to ZENQUEST, a 28' Macwester Wight, I also managed to do the same thing again but this time succeeded in shearing the rear mooring rope completely. Someone has to keep Keith gainfully employed and I am sure it's not me alone that's providing him with the occasional "extra duty"!

Dave Allen

A few personal memories of the men in this photograph



The man on the right is a bit of a mystery but both my brother and myself remember him as a character, known as Jock, who was in charge of the deckchairs which you could hire in those days, on Combe Martin beach.

The other two will be well known to members of a certain age, Bill Watkins on the left and Raymond Irwin in the centre.

Bill Watkins, of course, became Harbour Master at Watermouth; his son Michael has had various boats in the harbour, his present one being 'Tenerife', but at this time Bill spent winters as a Bosun on Elder & Fyffes Banana boats and summers running trips in his boat Lyn II.

Lyn II was a 24' carvel boat built for him by Hinks of Appledore around 1949-50, costing, I think, £500 plus £200 for the engine which was a Kelvin-Ricardo petrol/paraffin unit i.e. you start it on petrol then switch at the right moment to paraffin, a much cheaper fuel. This required quite a level of skill and experience to accomplish; a mistake in timing meant draining off the paraffin to start over again.

My brother was Bill's "Boy" ie first mate in the early fifties and must have a book full of memories to relate but my most memorable trip in Lyn II was when I was 15. The day after the Lynmouth Flood Disaster happened, the news gradually filtered through and I was with Bill and his brother Roy, Bill decided that we should go to offer our help. As all the road bridges were down, Lynmouth was effectively cut off so set off in Lyn II but the unimaginable amount of floating debris, which got progressively worse, prevented us getting into Lynmouth and we had to return. We only encountered dead farm animals floating amongst the mass of vegetation but during the next few days six human bodies were recovered in and around Combe Martin bay.

Raymond Irwin and two of his brothers Charlie and Sid, (who was always known as Squarey), ran tripping boats out of Combe Martin. Raymond was a lay Preacher and very respected in the village and by the other boatmen, the majority of whom pooled their earnings from the boats at this time and Raymond was entrusted to collect the cash on a daily basis. How it was later divided up, I'm afraid I don't know.

Raymond's boat was named Norma after his daughter, also a 24' carvel by Hinks in 1929, after Raymond's timber had been left to season in the boatyard from 1925. The original engine was an 8HP "Handybilly", replaced in 1949 by a 4 cylinder Kelvin.

Mike Corner, (Jeldi Jeldi), was Raymond's "Boy" and is much more qualified than me to tell about Raymond and "Norma" but I do remember what beautiful lines Norma had, a much finer bow than Lyn II making her faster, smoother and drier than Bill's boat. At this time Norma and Lyn II were the two largest boats in combe Martin and therefore did the longest trips, West to Lee where passengers were left ashore for a couple of hours and East to Woody Bay, these being the limits set by the then Board of Trade.

One of Bill's stories stands out and will be of interest to today's members surrounded by electronic aids to navigation. Bill and Squarey were in their boats below Lundy when the sea mist came down, a really thick one. Squarey, who had spent years in engineless trading ketches in all weathers and seasons in the Bristol Channel and elsewhere, now, with only a compass and local knowledge, told Bill, who was much younger and less experienced, to follow him closely. The first thing that Bill saw after leaving Lundy was the post, (the Weir Post), on the end of the breakwater in Combe Martin. That is seamanship !!!

Dave Gough

From Mike Corner

I can't add much detail to what Dave has written and I have no memory of engine details etc regarding Norma. As Raymond's "Boy" I would hold the stern straight with the boat hook while Raymond helped the passengers to board via a scaffold plank with a series of battens across the plank to aid grip with the plank secured to bow with a hemp rope loop. The fishermen had a series of boarding points as the tide fell and rose. We also used to row the bosses Appledore pattern rowing boats when not hired out to keep them afloat and all became dab hands at rowing and sculling. I'm not sure but I think we recovered two bodies from the Lynmouth disaster. I'll spare the details but just comment people didn't seem to be unduly shocked by death & bodies back then, probably because it was not long after the war.

I can remember bodies laid out on Combe Martin beach covered with canvas tarps. My father Arthur took me to visit Lynmouth as soon as the army opened up access to witness the devastation.

On a brighter note I can also remember a Mako and Thresher shark laid out on the beach with a piece of wood holding the jaws open. These had been caught accidentally in the herring nets. I also remember every summer when coming home from school in Ilfracombe seeing large numbers of pilot whales heading up channel.

We had a similar experience as Bill and Squarey return from Lundy in the fog when we brought Jeldi back from Falmouth. We'd taken delivery of her at Queen Anne's Battery and after fitting an autohelm and VHF radio, we sailed to Falmouth where she stayed on John Land's mooring in the Percuil until weather and opportunity allowed us to set sail for Padstow then Ilfracombe.

Myself, Tony Chapple and his sister Felicity left Padstow in thick fog with no GPS or Decca, just compass and depth sounder. We used these plus an admiralty chart to plot our course home, altering course when we were abeam of the fog horn at Hartland to cross Barnstaple bay. We gave Morte Point a wide berth but knew by the over falls when we were passing. We finally punched out of the fog off Ilfracombe and then were able to pick up our new mooring in Watermouth.

This was in 1991 and our boating priority was to purchase one of the new-fangled GPS's. We purchased a Garmin GPS 50 for just over £1000! It still works although now replaced by an AIS enabled chart plotter. Garmin's customer service and technical support has been brilliant.