



Newsletter Spring 2023

Commodore's Comments

The season has certainly started off in a grand way, with the purchase of Capella. Much more on that below. Although the search and purchase of the new boat has been a team effort a special thanks must go to Paul Newman and Gill Green for their outstanding contributions. I hope as many people as possible will support the social event on the 14th May and take the opportunity to sail on her.

The summer cruise this year was deliberately kept short, and limited in area. It may now be possible to extend. Cliff is again organizing.

Interest in Ploes has picked up. The experience weeks have proved very popular, and we may even have some bookings in August this year.

Our membership is growing steadily, with now over 70. However, we are always looking for new recruits. With the recent change of UK boat our publicity is now out of date so please refer any potential joiners to the website, which now has an easier name - www.kssc.uk.

Social media is turbo charging activity in the club and that's all good. WhatsApp in particular has made it easier for members to request crew or a skipper and exchange news and ideas. So please make the most of it.

We all benefit from the legacy we inherited from the existing members of the dinghy sailing club. Next year will be our diamond jubilee and as a part of that I will be talking to some of our longstanding members and collecting stories, and hopefully any photos and documents for copying and archiving.

Some members may remember Bob Chapman who sadly died earlier this year, I knew Bob and sailed with him. I have paid tribute to him in this edition but if you have any recollections you wish to share, please let me know.

So, with two fantastic yachts, I hope you have a wonderful sailing season!



James



Capella



This year has seen one of those momentous events in the club's history. After 30 years we have changed our trusty Contessa 32, Explorer for a new, more modern and more comfortable boat. A boat which will ensure the future of the club.

Following the decision at the AGM in November, things moved fast. Key to our purchase strategy was funding by members loans together with the sale of Explorer and the cashing in of our existing investments. We set about finding the right sort of boat for the club, and in doing so we learned a lot.

Trawling through what brokers had on offer was dispiriting. In a strong seller market some boats were being bought unseen and the rest seemed tired. And then serendipity took a hand.

On 26th February, a drab Sunday morning, one of the purchase committee members took part in a walk followed by lunch with members of Adastral Park Sailing Club, to forge closer links between the clubs. Conversation inevitably turned toward the club's intention to change our club boat in the near future. Members of APSC were empathic regarding the frustrating search for the right boat, the differences between the solid and robust boats of Explorer's generation and the difficulties that some members might have in moving to a more modern, wider beamed boat.



We discussed potential models and designs but lamented that there was just nothing available on the market, forcing us to review our search parameters. So, a few APSC owners offered us the opportunity to view a variety of boats for our research purposes. Capella, at this point, was neither for sale nor within our budget. Her owners, however, Conrad and Alison were kind enough to offer a viewing in order for us to judge the build quality and interior of a Dufour 365 - a model that had not previously been on the Boat Replacement Committee's radar.

Extremely well cared for since her previous owners bought her from new, Capella shows her wide and uncluttered side decks allowing safe and easy access to the foredeck.



Once seen for the first time we realised that this immaculate boat, with such positive reviews all round, was ideal for KSSC's future. Within days the owners had considered their plans and had decided to sell in order to take up new opportunities. The committee decided to "reach for the stars", negotiations were concluded and a deal was struck.

Having agreed the purchase in principle, we organized a trial sail, initially delayed by some capricious East Coast weather but eventually, on a sunny though cold Monday morning, we set off. Footage of that sail can be seen on the Capella video on the website. Two things became apparent. Firstly, the sellers, Conrad and Alison, were engaging, open and helpful and had maintained Capella to a very high standard, and secondly, Capella sailed as well as she looked. Out beyond Languard point we had 20 Kts of wind with a full main and genoa and yet she was nowhere near having her lee rail in the water. The single line reefing system made life very easy and all can be



done from the cockpit. Tacking back up the Orwell showed her to be close winded and easy to tack.

The survey was completed the following day with a lift out at Shotley in appalling weather! No serious issues were found and the sale was due to complete a few days later. However we had not factored in the bank's anti-fraud measures meaning that as soon as the payment was made the funds were frozen until the bank had spoken to us. Had we seen the boat? Are we sure the people are real? Did we understand that if this was a scam the bank would not be liable! Reassuring it may be but with two payments going through this process and a number of bank holidays in the mix , eventual payment was not made until after Easter.

The boat replacement team put into effect a massive list of actions: familiarization sessions were held for skippers living close by, operating instructions were produced at terrific speed (thanks Norman and Chris). A real team effort meant that by the time we had Explorer lifted out on 26 April the new boat was fully operational and ready to go.

Bookings have been flooding in and whilst the system designed for Explorer is coping, we will have to keep an eye on it to ensure that all members get a chance to sail her.



Gill



James

Explorer

Kay, Helen, and I wrote some last sail tributes to Explorer in her log. I have to say the last sail is bittersweet. I've covered the UK coast from Lowestoft to the Scillies plus visiting Holland, France, and the Channel Islands, over 3000 miles, on her since I joined.

Changing boats is absolutely the right thing to do for the club and will take us into a bright future. Being able to change the boat and having enough interest to want to





pudding on Explorer in Fowey last year with Cliff (left) and his folding table.

change the boat is a symptom that the club is healthy and fit for the future. A contrast today to where we were eight or so years ago.

Cliff



Explorer at liftout last month, before, during and after intensive attention to her topsides by dedicated members.



Ploes

Ploes is looking to be having an excellent year. In the middle of April we now have 16 weeks booked on Ploes and probably 18 weeks, I am confident that we could have 20 weeks or more booked by the end of the autumn period. There are 4 weeks available in October that are not yet booked and October is always a prime booking time. If we can achieve 20 weeks booked then that is £34,000 income, something worth aiming for to make an excellent year.

In February there were unexpected costs on Ploes, the servicing of Ploes engine had revealed pressurisation of the water hoses, this is now repaired and the engine is now running perfectly. The blown head gasket has been replaced and the skimmed head refitted, we hope that the engine is now good for at least another 10 years; the cost of this repair was very reasonable.

We have also now replaced the bow thruster battery (the old AGM battery was 10 years old), we have fitted the recommended 2 x 50a/h deep-cycle red-top Optima bow thruster batteries and we hope that the bow thruster will now perform perfectly. Every August we must remove the bow thruster propellers to clean them of barnacles. Last year they were not cleaned and they were heavily barnacled, this destroys their efficiency.

Ploes life raft was also due for servicing this spring, we had purchased it brand new in April 3 years ago. This servicing has been completed in April at a cost of £500. The main flare pack on Ploes is also very important and luckily these flares are not due for replacement until spring 2025. We have also replaced the fire extinguishers on Ploes, several dated from Greece and 2007, they were not fitted with pressure gauges and we were doubtful of their efficiency.

We also had plans to improve the passerelle. These plans unfortunately have not yet been completed but we hope that they will be completed in the next month. These plans involve widening the gap between the side stays, they are very narrow if you are getting a suitcase onto Ploes. We have also commissioned improved side posts on the passerelle.

Paul and I commissioned Ploes in the week starting the 11th March. This made Ploes ready for potential Easter bookings should they have occurred. Paul also organised two Experience weeks just after the commissioning and these were very successful. Although sleeping bags were needed as it was cool at night, it was warm during the day and we had good wind for sailing. Some restaurants were not open in the middle of March but they all planned to open for Easter.

We unfortunately still had weeks during the spring that were not booked, we will look at marketing these more next year. We noted that the flights to Fethiye are understandably dearer over Easter period and during May half term, this is a limitation but getting Ploes ready early this season means that there could be extra bookings.

Our main bookings occur in the period of June and July, this is before the normal August quiet period. Our new discount scheme in August has probably produced a



booking of 2 weeks and the flights then are a reasonable cost. This summer period is ideal for people with school children as it is during school holidays, but we unfortunately do not have many members with school aged children.

It is worth noting that if we did not have Paul's initiative to run Ploes Experience weeks, our bookings this year and last year would have looked very poor! The Experience skippers join the Experience weeks onto their existing bookings, that way we the Experience skippers (mostly) do not have to pay for additional flights out to Turkey. This helps us control skippers' extra costs.

Last year we sailed also during the first week of November. The sea was perfect for swimming and the temperatures were perfect, most facilities were open; this is another booking period in the year that we have not often used. Flights were cheap in the beginning of November, and this is a big attraction.



Peter

Fitting Out Supper

We had a very enjoyable evening on Saturday 23 April, celebrating many things: a sad goodbye to Explorer, an excited welcome to Capella, the award of 3 life memberships to people to whom the club, thriving today, owes a lot – Harry King-Gardiner, Sid Pretty and Richard Debenham, recognition of 4 past commodores, all present – Sid Pretty, Peter Colby, Paul Noton and John Bird. And of course, an excellent meal by the RNSYC, as always! Our evening was rounded off with interesting and informative talks by Chris Jones and Graham Walters on areas many of us will never get to sail to – the Arctic region of Svalbard, and the Atlantic by rowing – amazing photography and engaging talks. Many thanks to both.



Harry



Richard



Sid





Peter John Sid Paul



Chris



Graham



Rose

Social and Sailing Open Day 14th May

We are holding an open day on Sunday 14th May to celebrate the acquisition of our new boat and to give members a chance to view and sail on her. We are having 4 “pick up and drop off” times at 10am, 12pm, 2pm and 4 pm for any members, particularly those who have not yet seen Capella, who would like to have a short trip on the River Orwell. This is a great opportunity to try out our new club boat for a free session before you think of longer trips this season- possibly overnight now that we have three comfortable cabins to accommodate crews.

We would love to have a barbecue or picnic in the green area at SYH with suitable beverages available, dependant upon numbers. If the weather is inclement then an indoor venue will be available close by.



Please do let me know if you intend to come down to Suffolk Yacht Harbour on the day and which time is most suitable for you to sail.

I look forward to seeing many of you there.

Gill (Email : geegee2000@yahoo)

KSSC Summer Cruise 2023

The summer cruise will take place on Capella over three weeks with an option to extend to a fourth if there is sufficient interest. There are crew places available and this would be a good opportunity to try her out. The space and comfort improvement compared to Explorer will be very noticeable.

Sat 24th June -> Sat 1st July. Skipper is Chris Jones. There may be a crew space available.

Sat 1st July -> Sat 8th July. Skipper is Richard Oliver. There are one or two crew spaces.

Sat 8th July -> Sat 15th July. Skipper is Andy Royall. There are three crew spaces.

Sat 15th July -> Sun 23rd July. James Parnell and family joined later by Cliff and Kay Pountney

Please get in touch with me if you are interested in taking up any of these opportunities.

Happy Sailing!

Cliff

Media Report

Our media accounts had been quiet as is normal during the winter months, but have sparked into life with the recent addition of Capella. I think it is useful at some point to have an overview of our media accounts. We have found many new members on Facebook in the last few years but this has been through our own personal Facebook accounts and by us monitoring various Facebook groups. If we find a likely club member we then direct them to our KSSC website as our main contact point and encourage them to email us.

Our main Facebook group is a private account and this is mainly only open to club members. It is the same with our Whats App groups, they are only for club members. Our issue is how to contact potential members without opening up these accounts. We do have a Public Facebook Account that anyone can see but we post little there, maybe I should post more promotional material there? We have however never (to my knowledge) found someone using this Public Account.



Our Whats App Group is our main club communication method, and I believe should remain so, we have common members in both Facebook and Whats App accounts, but they are also distinct Groups, we will be discussing these matters at committee or at a policy group later in the year.

We are considering next year running trips to explore the nearby Turkish areas away from Fethiye, areas like Datca and the area up to Bodrum are excellent for longer trips. The nearby Greek Islands are also an attraction, but these would need to be back to back trips of more than 1 week, we will also be discussing this concept later in the year.

We have updated our website and Facebook accounts to encompass Capella, the website home page now shows photos both yachts but only on mobile devices like tablets and phones? However, on a desktop computer it shows the photo of Capella but if I click on the photo it changes to the Ploes photo. It is interesting that they act differently?

I have also changed our Instagram and Twitter profile photos, I will start uploading more media to these sites as we receive it.

Peter

Remembering Bob Chapman



Some of you will already heard of the recent death of Bob Chapman. Bob was a member of the club back in 2009. He volunteered to help me sail my boat across the Bay of Biscay on the initial leg of our year afloat. Here Bob is on the foredeck on a shakedown cruise from Swansea to Lundy Island. Bob could fix anything and was a valued member of the crew. In the end he had to pull out of the Biscay trip for an unforeseen issue and we felt his absence sorely. He is remembered as a keen sailor and a very generous man.

James Parnell

