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Poole Yacht Club
Soundings
2025





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Welcome to the 2025 Edition of Soundings.

"Berth D11, will that be OK John?" Anne asked. *"Yes please"* I said. The odd side of D pontoon, that takes me back, it takes me back 41 years to when, in May 1984, I brought my Hurley 20 on to D9. What a privilege it was to be included within the new Haven and that sense of thrill and excitement was the same this time around too.

I've heard it said many times: once you've had a berth you'll never want to go out on to a swinging mooring again. And that becomes even truer when you're getting on a bit.

However we are all members, so the Club need to do everything in its power to make sure that there is good usage of those boats within the Haven. This isn't just about tatty boats; it's about people. If people don't use their boats they are not coming to the Club, if members don't come to the Club then it will die.

There has been a survey recently regarding bar and catering, it's giving you the chance to say what you think about the food and drink offerings. Please make your views known to the committee; they are looking after your interests.

On that note, I was interested in something Chris Playfair said at the AGM. I can't remember his exact words but it was along the lines of: if it's such a good job why aren't more people putting their names up for committee positions? Fair point!

If you don't like the way things are done you can say so: fill in questionnaires, write to Chas or the committee, even put yourself up for election. Being dissatisfied with the way things are and keeping quiet about it serves no one.

There is an eclectic mix of articles inside, but still the racing activities aren't well documented, with a few exceptions. One of those are the exploits of Team Duette: National Champions and Champion of Champions: well done Joe, Russell, Tim, Matt and Team Duette!

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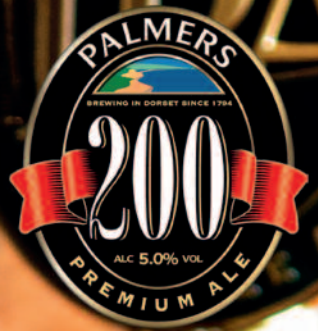
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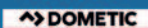
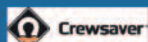


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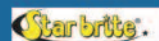
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Our Commodore

Tim Edom



Well, this was unexpected! Whilst I'd much rather Tracey had continued for her third year, I obviously respect her reasons for stepping down and thank her for all her commitment and great leadership over the past couple of years. I consider it a genuine privilege and honour to serve the Club as Commodore this coming year. For those that don't know me – this is a brief version of my Club CV:

- I Joined in 1993, crewed on and owned cruisers and dinghies for many years, cruising and racing. Current boats; Elan 36 Harrier cruiser and GP14 Mazoe
- As both our children started their sail training, I became increasingly involved as an instructor and ultimately RYA Training Principal for the Club between 2006 and 2009, working with the amazing team of volunteers to deliver safe and fun training for over 100 children every Wednesday.
- I have served on the General Committee for over a decade, initially as Sailing Secretary, before becoming Rear Commodore Sailing between 2012 and 2015. Since then, I helped to initiate the Membership Committee, as part of General Committee. I was Vice Commodore Services from 2023 till this spring
- In addition, I have thoroughly enjoyed other volunteering roles, which I have had at the Club, latterly as a Race Officer, Safety Boat Driver and helping out at events in whatever capacity is required
- I try to race the GP14 in as many evening races as possible, but also enjoy getting away on Harrier for short trips and more extended periods. On Tuesday nights, I sometimes race on Sea Thistle when time allows

Rather than look back, as I've only been in post for a month, I thought I would share some of my hopes and aspirations for the next year, working with this remarkable General Committee and General Manager:

- Costs down and Income up. Easy to say, harder to do but the team's focus and hard work over the past year is showing positive signs of paying off.

- Rebuild our reputation for being a friendly Club – this has taken a dent over the last couple of years and I hope we can all work together to restore it
- Bring back the Volunteers! A huge thank you for all the volunteers, on and off the water, who keep the Racing Programme, Nightwatch, social events, fuel delivery, and odd jobs going. Gaps are appearing in the rotas so I am keen to re-energise this core aspect of Poole Yacht Club, which can increase engagement and drive down costs
- Plan ahead. Combine the great work on the Masterplan and Asset Survey to produce a costed 10-year plan for the members
- Increase Sailing and Racing. Facilitate more members, their guests and especially youth to get sailing, both cruising and racing.
- Sweat our assets. A good thing that came out of the AGM was the mandate to trial large non-member events here to generate income. Our focus must remain on bringing large scale sailing events here but to augment our income, and keep our fees to a minimum, we do need to embrace all opportunities to help balance the books.

The Club exists in 'interesting times' currently, as it often has over the past 153 years. Staff costs have increased significantly over the past seven years (Minimum Living Wage is 49% higher than in 2019) and inflationary increases to our key services have been considerable. Pubs are closing at an alarming rate of 80 per month across England and Wales and the RYA tells us that sailing participation is only just about holding its own. We would all like to go back to the good old days, with huge dinghy fleets and a beer with a sandwich for two and six. Wouldn't it be great, but realistically it's not going to happen. However, I am committed to continue the work of previous General Committees, and to ensure that the appropriate changes are brought in to secure the long-term continuity of the Club.

I am passionate about sailing and The Poole Yacht Club. I very much look forward to working with our General Committee, to build on the successes of previous years for the benefit of the membership and the continued improvement of our great Club.



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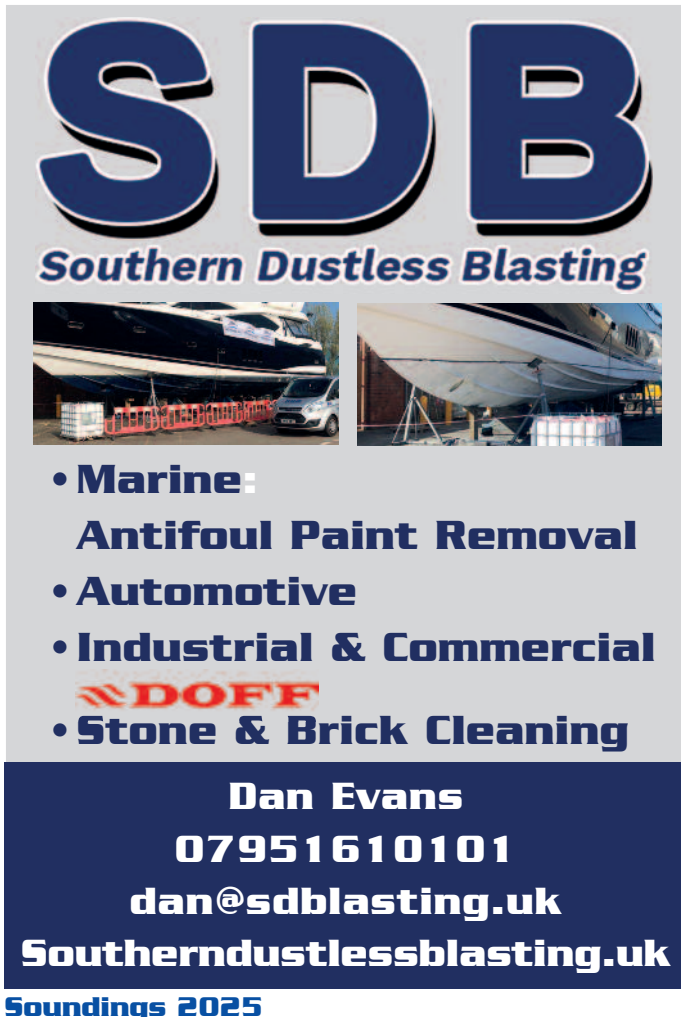
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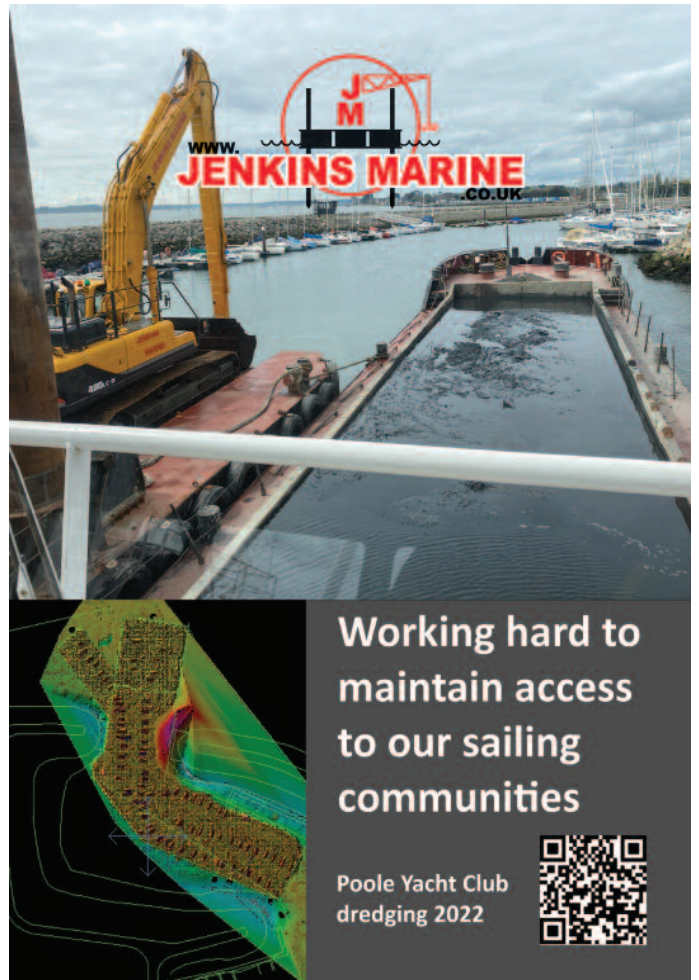
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Chris with his wife Jo

Vice Commodore Facilities

It was an honour to work as Rear Commodore Facilities with Tracey and her team. Thank you, Tracey, for all that you have given and are giving to the Club.

It is now an honour to continue the Facilities remit with Tim and his team and of course, working with the greatly experienced Chas and his staff.

We have had a number of successes so far that we hope to build upon. Bob Hazell's solar power input has been instrumental in the very significant savings on our electricity bills. We have explored the many slipway/haulout options and after investing in a professional survey are well on the way to a (hopefully) affordable solution that does not expose us to too much risk or cost. The roof remains watertight and we are looking into its future, as almost certainly, by sealing the surface, we have trapped water inside, something that we will not ignore.

One of my main motivations for being in this current role is to guide the Club away from the way that we have conducted recent general meetings, which have recently become quite heated.

A side-effect of our meetings being so argumentative is that many quieter members are now choosing to stay away. As a

result, their voices and votes are not heard and they are effectively disenfranchised. I would sincerely like us to return to being a truly friendly Club and allowing all eligible members to have a say in the running of the Club, be they loud or quiet, supportive or not. If we can achieve this, the volunteer leadership roles within the Club might become more attractive to willing members.

I would like to apologise that last year's accounts were not better but we were faced with the same external pressures that affected other organisations that employ staff and seek to function safely and ethically. The reality now is that as a team, very much guided by Chas, and led mainly by Tracey and recently, by Tim, we have turned our finances around. The positive effects of our solar panels, altering bar and catering procedures and looking very critically at whether each expenditure is justified are showing up in the regular profit and loss figures that we receive from Antoinette and the treasury team.

So, happy sailing and socialising in 2025. I look forward to harmonious meetings and discussions as we celebrate our good fortune at all being part of our lovely, friendly Poole Yacht Club.



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Update from Sailing



I'm writing this having just got off the water having done safety cover for Wednesday evening Youth Training in May, fantastic to see so many of our younger members learning to sail and race and also the volunteers giving up their time to make this happen, a real highlight of the Club for me! Great to report that participation in training is on the increase this year and helping to improve the sailing financials.

Cruiser Racing has completed the Sunday morning series and Tuesday nights are now up and running, although currently suffering from a series of light wind evenings! The dinghy racing season has kicked off, along with Youth Training on Wednesday nights, Hot Shots on Thursday nights and Big Shots on a Monday night. Our Cruising Section have commenced their busy calendar of events with 16 boats attending their recent trip to Buckler's Hard as part of the Solent Cruise, PYRA is back in full swing and Social Sailing is also under way. We've also added the Parent and Child Mirror sailing this year on Friday evenings.

We have another busy year hosting events, these include:

- Cherup / ISO Open – 12th & 13th April
- 420 Grand Prix - 17th & 18th May
- Osprey / Contender Open – 31st May to 1st June
- R19 Worlds – 14th June
- Mid Summer Marathon – 21st June
- Topper 5.3 Invitational Training Weekend – 5th & 6th July
- GP Cruising Week/GP & Dayboat Open – 19th & 20th July
- Hobie 16 Open - 15th to 17th August

In the middle of these we have our Club Regatta from Friday 11th July to Sunday 14th July, save this for your diary, although I have managed to book a holiday so will unfortunately be away.

Following on from the AGM, I'm joined on Sailing Committee by the following:

- Simon Philbrick – Sailing Secretary – Race Management
- Sarah Agnew – Assistant Sailing Secretary – Youth pathway RYA Principal
- Tim Lees – General Committee – Race Officers and Dinghy Racing participation
- Carloyn Corr – General Committee, Regatta and Volunteering
- AJ Windsor – Sailing Events Manager/RYA Chief Instructor
- Lottie Eyre – Youth Rep
- James Stafford – Dinghy Lead Rep
- Ian Aitken – Cruiser Lead Rep
- Class Captains join us for meetings in February, May and October

We're talking with the RYA on how we can work with them to become an RYA Pathway Club to progress the expansion of Youth Sailing and progress into racing. Over the winter we have invested in 4 x club 420s to support the development of our Youth sailors into double handers, thanks go to Simon Philbrick and AJ for tracking down these boats and to Jacky Hale for leading the class development.

Lastly, a big thanks go to our Yard Team, Dinghy Sailors and Cruiser owners that made the transition in the car park from Winter Cruiser Storage Area to Dinghy Park again so smooth this year, we even had the racking in place for the arrival of the first boats (as I write this, I can hear Steve Ehrhart saying that the hardy Laser fleet sailed throughout the winter).

Looking forward to seeing you out enjoying the water, Simon

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Dear fellow members



I'm pleased to be writing this article for Soundings as your Flag Officer Services.

I much appreciate being asked to take on the brief and I'm looking forward to getting back in harness; it having been two years since my term as your Commodore ended.

"Services" covers the range of activities that supports us, the members, running in parallel and working with both "Sailing" and "Facilities".

The brief includes membership services. An important aspect is meeting potential new members and assessing that they would be a good fit to join our Club and that our Club feels right for them.

Bar and catering are within the Services remit. Having been a member of the Club for many years, I have become very aware that bar and catering is a topic that members feel strongly about. I thank all in the bar and catering team under the direction of General Manager Chas Kirkby and Polly Bartlett for the work they do on our behalf.

Having worked in the hospitality industry all my working life, I know of some of the challenges we face. And quite a challenge it is.... what with the ever-rising costs of raw ingredients, providing a service acceptable to the membership and returning as low a catering deficiency (or subsidy) as possible. We will provide regular updates through our monthly general committee minutes and other briefings on the progress we are making.

Social activity, under the watchful eye of Amanda Jones, is second to none and Amanda, together with the Social team, are to be congratulated for the quality of the programme produced, and the way it is communicated to us members. **Well done indeed!**

We have such fantastic facilities here at Poole Yacht Club and I still feel, after so many years of membership, the sense of thrill and pleasure at being able to be part of it all. Over 50 cruisers racing on a recent Tuesday in the glorious evening sunshine, and me in the Race Hut with the delightful Tuesday team....bliss!....We just needed a tad more wind!

I do not own and race a Dayboat anymore (more's the pity). My on-the-water activity now includes owning a Drascombe Lugger which is in the Haven.

I am part of the Club's Race Officer team, usually on a Thursday and Tuesdays evenings. The occasional event or Saturday racing officer duty adds further interest.

I work on the Nightwatch Team. It is true to say that we would like to see a better take up by members to undertake a Nightwatch duty; but that is another topic for another day.

Outside of the Club activity, I am Chair of the RYA Southwest Region and in this way I meet many other Clubs' Commodores and keep close to developments within the Royal Yachting Association. Being Chair of the Poole Yachting Association enables me to keep in regular contact with other local clubs in the harbour nearer to home.

Enough from me.....

I will always welcome feedback from you, either face to face here the club, on the phone or by e-mail.

It's good to be back on the Committee

John Yonwin
Rear Commodore Services
07966 551038
johnyonwin3@gmail.com

Volunteering

Picture by Mike Millard

We've all heard it before at the various briefings; *"Volunteering is the lifeblood of the Club"*, but it's only when you start looking at the sheer volume of volunteers the Club needs every season that you start to appreciate how true this is.

For example, the Monday, Thursday and Saturday dinghy racing series comprise approximately 120 events that require nearly 1000 individual duties to be fulfilled. The Friday and Sunday Social Sailing events are another 50 events that need a further 200 duties to be filled. The Regatta needs 120+ people to ensure it runs smoothly – on both Saturday and Sunday. This is before we run Open Events, Trophy Races, Youth Training, Frostbite etc. so it's easy to see what a Herculean effort members make to ensure all of these events run smoothly.

The Club is always looking for more volunteers to ensure these responsibilities are shared equally. So here is a quick guide to the roles we need to fill each season.

Safety Boat Drivers

The Club is lucky to have one of the biggest fleets of RIBs and Rigidflex boats in the south and they are all used to good effect during our racing and training events. To drive a Safety Boat, you will need the RYA Powerboat Level 2 qualification, which can be done at the Club during one of the regular courses that run each season, the cost of which is mostly refunded after a certain number of duties. The Club also offers powerboat refresher courses and a one day safety boat course to practise recovering capsized boats.

Safety Boat Assist

Every Safety Boat needs both a driver and an Assist. Assist is one of the most important jobs on the water as it's likely you will be the one actually righting capsized boats or rescuing sailors from the water as the driver keeps the boat steady. No previous experience is necessary and it is a great way to spend time on the water.

Principal Race Officer

The PRO is in overall charge of each event, from completing a Risk Assessment to the organisation of the actual race. PROs may start races from the Race Hut or a Committee Boat but the PRO will always have a number of people assisting. It is a very responsible role but one that the Club offers full training for. The Club requires more people to train to be a PRO, so if you have experience of racing dinghies or cruisers at Club level or above, plus an organised mind, we would be very grateful if you could give up a few evenings each season to ensure our racing programme can continue.

Race Assist

Every PRO needs at least two or three race assists to help record

the positions and times of the racers, raise or lower flags or start the timing lights. No previous experience is necessary and this is a great way to learn about racing and meet new people.

Night Watch

The security of the Club is very important so we ask that everyone tries to undertake at least one night watch duty a year. You won't be expected to wrestle any would be burglars to the ground, but you'll walk the perimeter of the Club shining a powerful torch around the Haven and out onto the moorings.

It's more to show a presence and let any would be thieves know that they will be seen and reported if they try to enter the Club. If you have PB2 and have completed the launch training, you can also take the Club launch out into the harbour. We try to encourage people to do this in pairs for safety reasons so why not do this with a friend?

If you are available for a Night Watch duty please contact Mike Jones on nightwatch@pooleyc.co.uk

Electronic Volunteer Forms

Lastly, a note on completing the electronic volunteer forms. These form the basis of every volunteer team leads rota and they save an enormous amount of time when scheduling events. Once completed, the forms are downloaded into Excel so they can be filtered according to the day and duty type, meaning each team lead has an instant list of volunteers to choose from.

Please fill out your electronic form every season, even if you have done the same duty for many years as it saves a huge amount of time emailing and calling people to see if want to continue volunteering. Forms are usually sent out in October after the volunteers "Thank You" meal and it really helps if you can complete them as soon as possible. By submitting this form every year, you guarantee your name is on the list of volunteers for the coming season.

The Social Team

The Social Committee is always on the lookout for new members, they bring new ideas and enthusiasm. These pluses, coupled with the experience that others have gained, creates a balanced blend that can achieve anything!

Thank You

Lastly, a huge thank you to everyone that has been involved with volunteering at the Club, either this coming season, or for previous seasons.

If you have read this and would like some more information on volunteering, feel free to look on the website for more information or email dutyman@pooleyc.co.uk

The Poole YC Youth Sailing Pathway

by AJ Windsor

For full up-to-date details see the Club Website



- Parent & Child Mirror Racing
- RYA Stage 1 & 2 (Oppy or Pico, depending on age)

The aim for all our new young sailors is simple:

FUN ON THE WATER!

Parent Mirror Racing is a great way to give your child the confidence of sailing whilst on the water with you.

From the age of 8, they can start their own sailing journey on the water with **Our RYA Youth Training Group**

Mirror Racing:
Fridays @17:45hrs
Contact: Matt Burge –
mburge@hotmail.com

RYA Youth Training (Manic Piranhas): Wednesday @ 17:45
Contact Sailing Manager:
sailing@pooleyc.co.uk



- RYA Stage 3
- RYA Seamanship Skills
- RYA Start Race

Once we have our excited new sailors, it's time for them to start understanding the technical and safe side of sailing.

One for parents to encourage as this is how they learn what to do in different situations. They also start exploring what sort of sailing is right for them. This could be solo sailing, sailing with a friend, racing or social sailing.

RYA Youth Training (Manic Piranhas): Wednesday @ 17:45
Contact Sailing Manager:
sailing@pooleyc.co.uk

It is possible for children to come straight in to one of these groups if they are competent with sailing. AJ can advise on the best courses for them



- Multihull Sailing & Racing
- Double-Handed 420 Sailing & Racing
- Youth Race Coaching
- Cruiser Racing – Commodores' Challenge

It is time to give them as many experiences as possible:

- Weekly Racing, on a specific youth only course. We would recommend this in a Topper, Laser or a 420.
- Multi-Hull or 420 Sailing. Learn the techniques for these performance boats and propel their enthusiasm for racing.
- Cruiser Racing: join the Commodore's race team and take part in the prestigious Commodores' Challenge against Parkstone Yacht Club.

RYA Youth Training (Manic Piranhas): Wednesday @ 17:45
Contact Sailing Manager:
sailing@pooleyc.co.uk

Hot Shots (Youth) Racing:
Thursday @ 17:45

Sailors must have Start Race or signed off by a Club race coach



- Competitive Weekly Club Racing
- Club Social Sailing
- Instructor Training

At the Club we are keen to grow our classes and ultimately have as many people as possible sailing each week. We offer Dinghy and Cruiser Racing, plus social sailing seven days a week!

We also have an Assistant and Dinghy Instructor Pathway, which offers many job opportunities within the industry.

Look at the Notice of Race Calendar for the year and see what takes your fancy... We have so many opportunities to get you on the water.

Any questions contact:
sailing@pooleyc.co.uk

Jan Thompson–Taylor, Elaine Hazell
and Gill Bodman tell us about:

The 40th Anniversary of the new Clubhouse



Tracy Deary's magnificent cake

The 40th Anniversary of the new clubhouse celebrations were organised by a team of four from the Social Committee: Elaine Hazell, Gill Bodman, Chris Kriek and Jan Thompson Taylor.



Tracey Lee, Caroline, Richard and David Cake



John Guess and Nick Kriek as The Blues Brothers
Soundings 2025

All Commodores and their partners, past and present, were invited and requests were sent out for memorabilia.

Photos were selected for a rolling screen, which included amusing film footage lent by John Greenwood of the last events in the old clubhouse.

Members were invited to wear 80's style clothes with some hilarious consequences, Tracey Lee even wore the blouse her mother had worn to the actual opening! There were prizes for the best fancy dress, these were judged by the Commodore and The Blues Brothers won.

Jan and Elaine took photos of everyone as they arrived and forwarded them by email, the nearest we could come to a Polaroid photo. Tables were decorated with Rubik's Cubes and faux cassette players full of sweets and we had an 80's themed raffle with leg warmers, blow up phones, bubbles and boxes of



Richard Cake cuts the ribbon

sweets, not to mention the 80's themed quiz.

. Tracy Deary made a magnificent cake in the shape of the new clubhouse with great attention to (edible) detail. Richard Cake cut the ribbon and Emma Griffin cut the cake. Emma was a child at the opening, 40 years ago, but remembered it well.

The meal was 80's themed and delicious – no Angel Delight though. There was plenty of time to reminisce about 40 years ago. What a wonderful evening, full of fun and laughter.



Gail Nuttall and Maggie Richardson (AKA: The Seaside Baker), Maggie was our Social Secretary 40 years ago.



Nick Harris, Nicky Noyce, Sophie and Steve Lawrence



Jan Thompson-Taylor and Gill Bodman



Yvonne and Dave Coward

Footnote: For those who were not there on October 26th 40 years ago:

- Members were led by the Sea Cadets' Band and walked from the old to the new club. After speeches and ribbon cutting by the Commodore, Richard Cake, and President, Bob Newton, we were all served with our first ever drink from the new bar.
- The Haven had been open for that season, so it was with much delight, happiness and pride that we were now able to get off our boats and walk just a few steps to our wonderful new premises.

Poole YC does the 24 hour dinghy race!



by Tracey Lee

A bit of history

The first 24 hour dinghy race took place in 1967 and it has been run every year since then, with two exceptions: 2000 due to the fuel crisis and 2020-2023 due to the Covid epidemic.

Following COVID WLYC decided to take a couple of years to take stock, reassess and excitingly relaunched the event after three years off in 2024. This was supported by multiple stakeholders such as other local clubs, the GP14 Class association and the RYA. It is most commonly known as the Southport 24 hour race and usually raced in three classes of dinghies: the GP14, the Enterprise and the Firefly. The average turnout is between 60 and 70 boats but has been up to 130 teams in years gone by, with teams mainly from northern sailing clubs. It has traditionally been well-supported by university teams. PYC member John Lloyd, who now sails the lovely Shimper Alix, took part in 1967. (See page 34)

The Race

The event always takes place mid-September, and the race runs from noon Saturday to noon Sunday. It takes place on the man-made marine lake in Southport (about twice the size of Poole Park lake) which is shaped like a thin rectangle, with islands in the middle and a concrete jetty sticking out on the north-eastern side. Because of the limited maneuverability on a lake with 60 dinghies racing round it, boats do not do penalty turns. Infringements are marked by the boat leaving a D mark to starboard as it passes in front of the race hut, and a time penalty is added.

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The Social

The event is hosted by West Lancashire Yacht Club, who have their premises on the side of the marine lake. It is a major feat of event and racing organisation! The club put up a marquee to extend the premises and bring in catering vans so there is hot food available any time of day or night.

Most competitors camp or have caravans and mobile homes parked in the car park adjacent to the marine lake. All of which makes this a very very social event! The main party is on the Friday night and with most teams setting up a “Base Camp Gazebo” by the side of the lake, complete with seating and BBQs, so there is always someone to chat to, food to eat and hot drinks.

The Poole YC team

Sarah and Aaron Agnew were key to getting the PYC team organised. Sarah has done the race as a child for many years with her family and as a student in a university team. Aaron set about renovating Sarah’s dad’s Enterprise which had been sadly neglected for several years and had a little tumble across the yard in a tornado, it was time for much needed glow up. He even bought a second Enterprise as a “donor boat”.

We had a team of 12 people racing so each person pretty much did two shifts of racing of two hours long. Friends and family were drafted in to help!

I raced with Jo Macgregor, with Jo on the helm and me as crew and “boat spotter”. It was very weird getting into a dinghy at 10pm and setting off with 50-ish other dinghies all around.



The boats pull into a designated change-over point to one side of the club house, one crew tumble out and the next pair climb in and sail off. There is a bit of light from the surrounding area, but not much, so you are essentially sailing in the dark. The wind had picked up to about 20 knots for our first slot and there is a great deal of tacking and gybing as you work your way up, down and around the lake. (No salty water when you get splashed as crew though!).

Every single time the Poole boat passed the Base Camp Gazebo, there were shouts and cheers of encouragement from whoever was there from the PYC team. We were the only team who did this all through the 24 hour race and it was lovely to hear as we passed by, again and again, although there is a fair chance our neighbors didn't appreciate Lee's enthusiasm for life at 2am! I most enjoyed our second shift from 6am to 8am, because the lake felt familiar, we were on the water for the sunrise, the wind had dropped a bit and it's a lot easier to sail a dinghy in daylight.

What is the most amazing thing about the event is the teamwork and the fact you enter a club. Some clubs enter multiple teams, catering to all levels when it comes to team members. From Olympians, World and National Champions to regular club racers and even those fairly new to sailing, the event provides excellent, fun, competitive racing for all.

Results!

We were thrilled to:

- Be 20th overall, achieving our goal of placing in the top half!
- Come 14th in the Dog Watch Trophy (fastest lap after 8pm).
- Claim 10th in the Heineken Cup (fastest lap after 10am by female helm and crew – shoutout to Amber and Kirstie!).



Southport 2025

Being part of the PYC team was amazing and it was a privilege to be part of it. The team work was great, everyone was looking out for each other and there was so much laughter. The other clubs were impressed we had all travelled up to take part from the south coast of England.

We want to take two boats this year! Yes it's a long way from Poole to Southport and in a way this makes being part of a PYC team who take part even more special. The weekend is Saturday 13th and Sunday 14th September and I understand there will be more camping pitches available this year. If you want to take part or to know more, you can ask any of the team: Sarah Agnew, Andy Macgregor, Lee Timothy, Toby Griffen, Lucy Griffen, Jo Macgregor, Tracey Lee, Amber Hale, Charlie Fitzgerald, Aaron Agnew, Ollie Waring, Elaine Macgregor and Emma Griffen.



Jo Macgregor tells us how
to find a crew and.....

Bluebell's Last Cruise

A ship in harbour is safe, but that is not what ships are built for: John Shedd

For a few years now I have sailed my 16ft open dinghy *Bluebell*, mostly singlehanded, along the coast from Poole. Reaching as far as Bembridge in the east and Start Point in the west. When asked 'why I sail alone', the answer is fairly simple; the number of people who want to sail a small open boat offshore and then sleep onboard under a tent are limited and I'd rather go alone than not go at all. Ernest Shackleton's famous crew advert for his fated Antarctic expedition read:

*(Men) wanted for hazardous journey. Low wages,
bitter cold, long hours of complete darkness.
Safe return doubtful. Honour and recognition in
event of success.*

I wasn't quite that desperate yet! I wouldn't say I'm a loner, but I don't have an issue with my own company. Sailing *Bluebell* had become refined, we had an ethos, everything on board had a purpose and a place, and every maneuver had a process that matched our ethos. Anybody joining us would need to slot into that jigsaw.

The idea of crossing the channel in *Bluebell* had been growing in my mind for a few years and by spring '24 I felt that *Bluebell* and I were ready to head for foreign shores, so started making detailed plans for a summer cruise to the Channel Islands and the Cherbourg peninsula.

Around June I noticed a post on the Dinghy Cruising Association (DCA) Facebook page from someone asking about slipways in the Poole area, as he was living in Wimborne (where I live) for the summer. I replied, not answering Oli's question, but instead offering to meet up, keen to chat to a fellow dinghy cruiser. I said that I was planning to go sailing that Sunday and that he'd be welcome to join me. I explained that, if it was just me, I'd probably be out all day and maybe head over to the Isle of Wight and back, but understood that that was quite a large undertaking so we could do something smaller if he preferred. Oli replied "No, *Isle of Wight and back sounds great!*". My initial reaction was "this guy is more nuts

than me!", I wouldn't want to head offshore in a dinghy I don't know with someone I've never met, but this guy was up for it!

Sunday arrived with 20~25 knots south-westerly wind, so we didn't sail to the island. Instead we headed out past Durlston Head into the open water, then had an exhilarating surf back home past Swanage and Old Harry Rocks. Early in the day Oli asked what I had planned for this year, "crossing the channel" I replied. The customary responses usually ranged from "that's brave" to "you're nuts", or technical concerns like "what about the shipping lanes" or "without an engine". Oli was the first person to respond with "Can I come to?". Green flag number 1.

Although I was still internally hesitant as to how Oli would fit into the Jo and *Bluebell* jigsaw. I remember being particular about the halyards, stating that on *Bluebell* they are tied off with an 'OXO', with no locking turns and the tails are flaked not coiled. We chatted almost nonstop all day, covering music, literature, politics, economics, adventure, religion, mental health – another green flag. We ducked into the shelter of Swanage Bay to change headsails from the working jib to the bright blue pico (heavy weather) jib (yes, actually the jib from a laser pico dinghy). We hove to and I clambered out onto the foredeck to unclip the old tack and clip on the new. As I slid back into the boat and turned around Oli was already rolling up the old jib, "this one's a keeper" I thought.

Over the next couple of months we had a few mini expeditions, mostly because they're fun but also as loosely disguised training, and for my own peace of mind that Oli would indeed fit into the jigsaw. We camped out both on land and on *Bluebell* and practiced sailing at night (nothing beats phosphorescence in a dinghy's wake as the mast sweeps a star studded sky!).

As is often the case, setting off on the long anticipated cruise was a whirlwind of preparations, the blurred space where 'land stresses and responsibilities' meet the unchangeable factors, requirements and space of the sea. With last minute changes to childcare arrangements, it was such a relief to be able to give

the shopping list to Oli and trust him to take care of provisioning *Bluebell*, complete with my particular preferences for specific hummus, although there was a slight confusion and panic when he didn't know what I meant by 'packaged olives'!

Stowing our gear it seemed that I had much more stuff than Oli, we tried to figure out where I had over packed but couldn't find any differences between our packing lists. In the end though, all our gear and provisions were stowed aboard and we had time for fish and chip supper on Poole Quay before taking the evening ebb tide out to Swanage Bay in the dusky dark. It was a calm sail out of the harbour and we anchored off Swanage beach in deep water. Getting into our sleeping bags in the bottom of the gently rolling boat under a canopy of stars we discovered the first area where my over-packing existed, as I changed into my silk pajamas!

August 19th dawned bright with a forecast of W or SW force 3-5. We were swiftly underway by 7am and I programmed the waypoints into the GPS as we sailed out past Peveril ledge as the Pirates of the Caribbean theme tune blasted out over the little Bluetooth speaker. We set a course of 190 degrees once clear of Peveril and heartily sang sea shanties to vent our electric nervous excitement. Our plan was to sail direct to Jersey, expecting the passage to take about 24 hours.

We had shortly settled into a close reach, with working jib and two reefs in the mainsail making a steady 5 knots. Oli took the first two hours on the helm, as I felt I needed to learn to relax with someone else 'driving'. This possibly was a mistake as it wasn't long before I started to feel seasick.

The next few hours was a blur of helming when I could, throwing up, trying to stay hydrated, checking the navigation and snoozing curled up in the 'princess perch' in the aft of the boat. Even feeling queasy, I love being out of sight of land on a small boat, there are few other scenarios where you can really appreciate the scale of the world we live on and the vast forces and systems at play, feeling so insignificant and yet totally free at the same time.

We had agreed to both be awake for crossing the shipping lanes, so I was slightly alarmed when I woke up to see a ship already astern of us and others ahead. But it was quickly apparent that they were widely spaced and Oli had it all in hand. I (needlessly) gave my opinion on one ship passing ahead of us, feeling very much like an 'idiot skipper' telling my crew what to do whilst they very capably do all the work and I snooze at the back of the boat.

At around 5pm, with my seasickness not improving and night a few hours away, Oli suggest we divert into Alderney, which was lying temptingly 15 miles away to our South East. We spoke briefly about the pros and cons, checked the chart and tides then changed course to 160 degrees for Braye Harbour, which within an hour had become 210 degrees to counter act the building east going tide. Surfing the waves close by the east side of Burhou I took the helm from Oli, my anxiety needed my years of experience with *Bluebell* to be helming her as we joined the maelstrom water of the Swinge. Now close to the island we could see the rocks were not 'just rocks', each one was sharp and jagged like a tooth, the water of the Swinge was white, like a fast flowing river. We braced ourselves as *Bluebell* was tugged and pulled about. The adrenaline banishing my seasickness to a distant memory. Unable to take my eyes of the turbulent water I asked Oli,

"What's our course over ground on the GPS?"

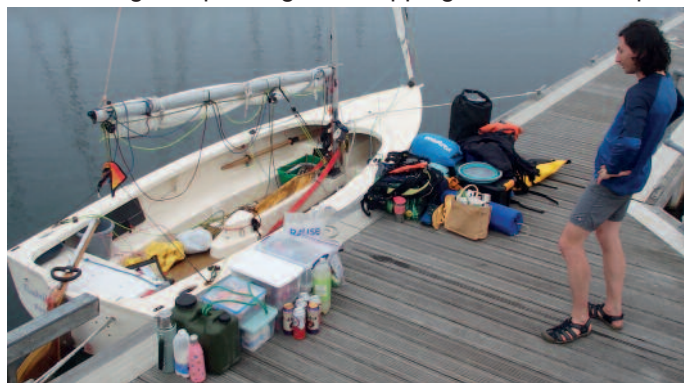
"100 degrees" he replied

"What's our compass heading"

"210 degrees"



Sorting and packing the shopping in the club car park



Gear and food for two people for a week



Bluebell anchored in Braye Harbour



Jo happy departing Braye

Alderney Lifeboat comes to our assistance





Life of a shipwrecked mariner, Oli cooks at the campsite



What was left



Jo inspecting the damage



Bluebell's final resting place

"Wow! OK. Take the hand bearing compass, what's the bearing to the end of the breakwater?" The adrenaline taking over, my thoughts were crystal clear.

Oli hadn't actually used a hand-bearing compass before, but picked it up and figured it out. I've lost count of the number of green flags this guy has...

"100 degrees" came the reply after a few moments.

I breathed a huge, but still slightly anxious, sigh of relief. If everything remained the same for the next few minutes, we'd arrive perfectly at the end of the breakwater and not be swept pass by the tide, but there wasn't any room for error.

With (now full) huge relief we flew past the end of the breakwater and turned into Braye Harbour, waving to a couple of people fishing on the end of the pier. We threaded our way through the anchored and moored boats to the head of the harbour and anchored off the pristine sandy beach. We briefly discussed going ashore, but it was already getting dark and we were far too tired. My empty stomach swallowed the majority of a two litre bottle of sweet, cloudy lemonade, as we talked and laughed hysterically. We feasted on tinned soup, nuts, beer, ginger cake and custard, inside the cosy boat tent with fairy lights hanging from the boom. Bluebell and crew sitting proud and content having crossed 60 miles of open water in 13 hours straight.

We slept well and awoke excited the next day. Oli kindly passed me a bowl full of granola as I lay in my 'bunk' as we made a plan for the day. There was time for a quick walk ashore before catching the south going tide to Jersey, the forecast was for a Force 3-4 southerly wind, easing off as the day went on.

We quickly inflated the Lidl's dinghy, the dinghy for my dinghy, and rowed ashore to the beach. Ashore we found a fascinating mix of English and French influences. Neither of us minded when our time was up, the sea and new horizons were calling.

The final preparations for sea are a beautiful part of a multi-day cruise, the physical manifestation of anticipation. Packing gear into dry bags, filling thermos flasks, programming way-points into the GPS and pulling on still damp foul weather gear. I'd got it down to an efficient routine on *Bluebell*, this time even quicker with an extra pair of hands.

Out of the shelter of the island and into the Alderney Race we tucked a reef into the mainsail and sailed 'bow down' rather than close hauled to ease *Bluebell's* path over the intensely steep waves. We whooped with joy as *Bluebell* charged forwards. A set of waves swept green water right across her bow, water cascading into the cockpit. We bore away onto a beam reach to give the self bailers a chance to work.

Back onto a close reach the helm was heavy, I considered the second reef but wanted to make as much progress as possible before the wind went light later in the day, and one reef was still a normal sail plan for the conditions.

A couple of minutes later the tiller suddenly went completely weightless...

"****!" I shouted as I instantly looked behind and saw the rudder blade floating, streaming behind us on the uphaul/down-haul lines.

The rudder's broken. Main down. "Get the main down" I shouted as *Bluebell* spun into an uncontrolled crash tack.

I'll always be thankful for my pedantics now, halyards OXO'd with no locking turns, flaked and not coiled. I'll also be thankful that Oli didn't hesitate for a moment, within five seconds the mainsail was down and the imminent danger of capsize had been averted. I sat for a moment holding onto the

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Jo and *Primrose* getting to know each other in Poole Harbour, by Sarah Agnew



tiller, moving it by habit before releasing it as it was now completely useless.

I contemplated for a few moments if we could sail with a makeshift rudder, but in these waves and tides and an unfamiliar rocky shoreline I didn't fancy our chances. We were in no immediate danger so decided instead to issue a PanPan call on the radio and ask for a tow. As this point the topic of conversation was if we would be able to find a carpenter on the island to make a new rudder. We sat in the rolling boat drinking mugs of salty tea whilst I gave our position to Alderney Coastguard. Half an hour later we saw the orange speck, framed by a white V of the Alderney lifeboat.

The lifeboat crew took us safely onboard and *Bluebell* under tow, however in the steep waves and without a rudder or crew weight onboard she soon capsized and could not be righted from the lifeboat. The next few hours are still too emotionally raw for me to fully convey into prose. I can still vividly remember Oli's scratchy woolen jumper on my cheek as he held me in a strong embrace, the quivering towline that descended from the lifeboat transom into the water to an unseen submerged *Bluebell*, the sweet black tea that the lifeboat crew made for us.

The lifeboat crew were incredible, over the next week I would stay in two of their houses on the island, as they continued to look after us and help us get home long after we'd stepped ashore. They truly epitomize the very best of humanity and I cannot thank them enough.

I left *Bluebell* at the campsite on the island, where Oli and I stayed a few nights, with the stipulation that if you plant any flowers in her, they must be Bluebells!

With changeable weather, it was a struggle to get home, but thanks again to the lifeboat crew they found me a space on a flight back to Southampton before I needed to be back for work. Flying over the channel I realised the enormity of what Oli, *Bluebell* and I had achieved. That was a big bit of water to cross in a small boat! The plane made landfall over

The Needles and I had a prime view of *Bluebell*'s old stomping ground, I would sail these waters again – she would not.

Postscript

I want to say a massive thank you to all the Poole YC community who helped me in the aftermath of losing *Bluebell*. From kind messages and hugs, space onboard boats to bring me and my equipment home, picking me up from Southampton airport, to generous donations to get me back on water again. Such love and community is evidence of a beautiful and thriving club community, and I'm so grateful to have been shown such kindness.

I was out sailing again much sooner than I expected. A crowdfunder was set up on my behalf, with half of the donations going to me to help me buy a new boat and half going directly to the RNLI. So with a mixture of the insurance money from *Bluebell* and some incredibly generous donations I became the owner of *Primrose* last October. *Primrose* is a 1977, Mk2 Corribee. Corribees have a fine reputation for completing some impressive offshore voyages considering their 20ft length, so to finish with a quote from my favourite Disney film, *Moana*:

See the line where the sea meets the sky, it calls me.



At the Alderney Lifeboat Station Open Day



Making Waves for: You Row Girl

A Night to Remember at Poole YC

On the evening of November 23rd, Poole Yacht Club became the backdrop for a spectacular fundraising event hosted by PYC member Amy Sparks, and her team, *You Row Girl*, together with Hebe Hemming, Ruby Scholten and Tiegán Ball in support of an extraordinary cause. The air buzzed with excitement and anticipation as attendees gathered to rally behind our Atlantic rowing campaign, dedicated to raising funds for two incredible charities: CoppaFeel! and Women in Sport.

The evening was nothing short of magical. Against a canvas of twinkling lights and the crisp sea breeze, the event seamlessly blended elegance with purpose. From the moment guests arrived, they were greeted with a warm welcome, a glass of sparkling wine, and the promise of an extraordinary evening – a true celebration of courage, resilience and determination.

A Celebration of Courage and Determination

The highlight of the evening was the heartfelt speeches delivered by the team, *You Row Girl*. A team of four women under 30, united by the shared vision and grit behind the upcoming Atlantic Rowing Challenge in December 2026 as part of the World's Toughest Row. With passion and determination, we spoke of the gruelling physical and mental preparation required to tackle the 3,000-mile expedition, all aimed at creating lasting change for two causes. CoppaFeel! continues to empower young people with early breast cancer detection education, whilst Women in Sport advocates for equality and increased opportunities in sports for women and girls.

A Night of Entertainment and Generosity

Guests were treated to a sumptuous three-course dinner,

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prepared by the club's talented chefs, followed by a night of lively entertainment that kept spirits high throughout the evening. The raffle brimmed with exciting prizes generously donated by local businesses which saw a flurry of enthusiasm. From exclusive rowing experiences with the team to luxury artwork, hampers and even a paddleboard. The generosity of our supporters was nothing short of inspiring.

Adding a personal touch to the night was a poignant video montage showcasing the World's Toughest Row Atlantic 2023/24 race summary and our journey so far—from training sessions to moments of camaraderie. The montage was a poignant reminder of the challenges ahead, the significance of the cause and the profound impact of the evening's support.

A Community United for Change

What truly stood out was the incredible sense of community. From long-time friends to new supporters, everyone united in their commitment to making a difference. The evening raised an impressive amount for our campaign and ultimately our charity beneficiaries, CoppaFeel! and Women in Sport, bringing us closer to our fundraising goals and underscoring the power of collective action.

Looking Ahead to the Challenge

As the evening drew to a close, the message was clear: this was more than just a fundraising event. It was a celebration of resilience, a call to action, and a reminder that together we can achieve the extraordinary. The funds raised will directly support our campaign as we take on the Atlantic, ensuring we can shine a spotlight on the causes that matter most.



Amy Sparks and her team competing in the Port Montenegro Match Race 2022, sailing J70's

To everyone who attended, donated, and supported us – thank you from the depths of our hearts. Your generosity fuels our determination and strengthens our resolve. Stay tuned as we continue this incredible journey, and let's keep making waves for CoppaFeel! and Women in Sport!

How You Can Support Us

Join us on social media @yourowgirl to follow our journey, share our mission, and cheer us on as we prepare for the Atlantic Challenge in December 2026. You can also make a difference by contributing to our JustGiving page which can be found on our website; www.yourowgirl.com. Every donation, big or small, brings us closer to our goals and helps amplify the voices of CoppaFeel! and Women in Sport.

Amy's Sailing Journey into Rowing

From an early age, Amy found her passion for sailing at Poole YC, where she first discovered her love for the water. She progressed through Junior Sailing, competing for several years in Mirror squads before moving on to the 420 National Squads, representing at multiple European and World Championships.

Amy also spent many Tuesday evenings racing aboard Kudos, gaining valuable experience and refining her skills. While studying at Cardiff University, she raced for three years as part of the university's First Team in Team Racing, balancing her competitive sailing with academic commitments.

A pivotal moment in Amy's sailing journey came in 2019, when she had the opportunity to sail with the Macgregor's at the Women's Match Racing World Championships in Sweden. It was there that she discovered her love for match racing, a discipline that has since become central to her sailing career.

Since then, Amy has competed on both the Women's and Open World Match Race Tours and, in 2023, achieved a remarkable double victory by winning both the Open and Women's Match Racing National Championships.

While rowing has recently captured her interest, it marks a new passion project rather than a departure from sailing. For Amy, the water remains home whether under sail or with oars in hand.

Team You Row Girl would love you to join their journey as, together, we can achieve extraordinary things!'



Racing in the Solent, Amy Sparks and her team pushing the J70's to the limits.



Amy Sparks joins Team Absolute Match Racing at the UK Open Match Racing Nationals 2023

Team You Row Girl at their maiden ocean rowing boat launch in Weymouth, March 2025.



Hullabaloo (Long time Poole boat DB 650) sailed by Sue and Howard Clayton. Sue was leading lady helm at last years nationals.

75 Years of Dayboats

This year is the 75th anniversary of the first Dayboats being built in 1950. Almost since the beginning Poole has been a stronghold of the fleet. So where did they come from?

In the *History of the YW 14ft. Dayboat Association* we read

In the October 1949 edition of the *Yachting World*, details were published of a 14ft dinghy which Mr G O'Brien Kennedy, M.R.I.N.A., had been commissioned to design and which was to be known as the "*Yachting World 14ft Dayboat*". The requirements were a round bilge sailing boat which could be easily amateur-built by a number of methods, i.e. clinker, double diagonal, seam batten carvel, etc. The boat was to be of robust construction, suitable for family sailing and generally knocking about in open waters, estuaries and rivers. The boat was not intended for racing but should have the best possible performance under an alternative rig of either gunter or Bermudan. She had to be a boat which the crew sat in rather than on and have a reasonable amount of freeboard."

In 1950 around fifteen boats were built, although at this stage not at Poole. They were found to be excellent sea boats, strong and stable, manoeuvrable with a decent turn of speed. By 1955 around 30 boats were racing together in Bristol, but there were no class rules and boats differed significantly in weight and sail area. It was established that there was demand for a class association, which was formed and formally recognised by the RYA as the authority for administering the class throughout the British Isles. Class rules were finally approved in January 1957.

Are there any early Dayboats still around?

Yes! The association was recently contacted by the owner of Dayboat No2, *Pintail*, who has been sailing her on the Firth of Forth and has written an article for the class newsletter.

Soundings 2025



Pintail, DB2 still looking good. Pictured by Hamish Darrah



When did Poole get involved?

Richard Cake's recent book describing the history of the club from 1852 to 1987 is enlightening. The club adopted the class in 1957, 14 boats were on order at this time and in 1958 the club held their first Dayboat Championship week. By 1960 forty Dayboats were racing regularly, three times a week, at Poole. Competition was fierce. The boats were all living on moorings. From the first championship until 1989 the national champion was always from Poole and frequently since too. The current national champion is Poole's Pete Hewitt, crewed by Chris Lovett.

What does a modern Dayboat look like?

Very much like their predecessors. Materials have moved on, but nothing exotic! The vast majority nowadays are GRP. They are great boats to sail and still are excellent sea boats, strong and stable, manoeuvrable with a decent turn of speed. The hull plus metal centreboard weigh in at 204 kg, hence the excellent stability.

Is the class active?

Yes very much so, five clubs have a fleet. As well as Poole there is Bosham SC, Gravesend SC, and on the Severn Thornbury SC and Avon SC. All clubs run annual open meetings. Each year the class has a stand at the annual RYA Dinghy Exhibition. This year the class championship is at The Royal Cornwall Yacht Club in Falmouth with 30+ boats expected. After a break of several years the 2026 championships will once again be at Poole. Other favourite locations are Brixham YC and Rock SC.

Who is sailing Dayboats?

If you look at the Dayboat championships there is a wide age range out there competing. It is a class where you can continue to enjoy sailing and race competitively for far longer than in most classes.

Is the Dayboat something that will appeal to you sailing at Poole?

Cruising: If you want a stable well behaved roomy dinghy to cruise the harbour and maybe a bit beyond, perhaps taking children/grandchildren along they are ideal. Perfect for Friendly Fridays and Sociable Sundays. Also great for developing your sailing skills. Living on a pontoon berth means you get to sail with dry feet!

Racing: If you want excellent competitive class racing the Dayboat will test your skills. Despite their weight, in a decent breeze they will plane if you do the right things. We are a very friendly, sociable, bunch and happy to embrace/help/advise newcomers to the class whether you are experienced in racing or just starting out to race.

Would you like to try a Dayboat?

We are very happy to take you out individually or lend you one of our boats to take out and try. We have yet to see a negative reaction to them.

If you would like to try a Dayboat please contact the class captain, Steve Wilson, or any of the other Dayboat sailors. stevetwilson675@gmail.com or call/whatsapp me on: 07986 905940

Rebuilding a launching trolley

The Snipe combi trailer for our Shrimper is about 12 years old and, although properly maintained, has had a lot of use with the launching trolley going into the water several times a year. It has always been carefully rinsed off with fresh water after every immersion and, until recently, seemed to be in very good condition. However, after its latest dip I was dismayed to discover that, although everything else was fine, the galvanising on the spine was quickly deteriorating and it was becoming very rusty. It looked as if the original galvanising had not been very well done. (Although I now wonder if the galvanising had been acting as an anode for other rusty fittings). There is also no way of examining the interior where the corrosion could be far worse. If the metal was on a garden gate, you could probably rub it back to bare metal, treat it and it would be good for several more years. On a trolley that carries the full weight of a Shrimper over long distances, knowing the main part of it is



badly rusting (and which would get worse every time it is put in the water) is a big problem.

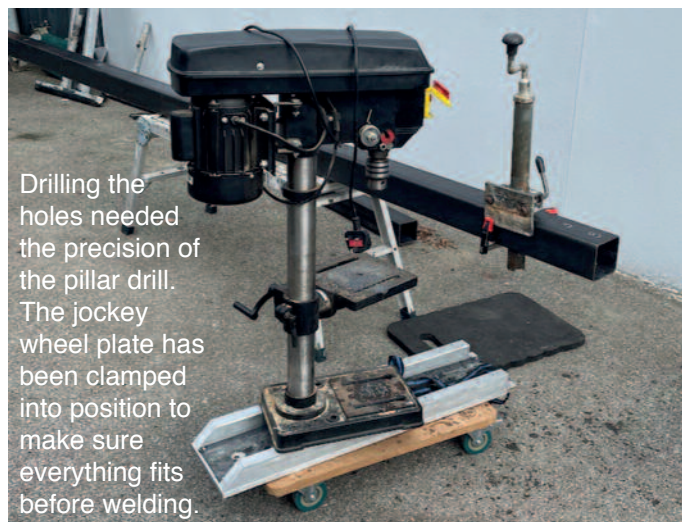
Those trailers are not made any more and finding an exactly compatible trolley in good condition (and at a sensible price and not too far away) didn't seem likely. However, eventually I realised that, apart from some holes and a simple plate welded on, the spine is just a long piece of 90mm x 90mm x 3mm galvanised box section. Everything can be unbolted from it, so making a new one is possible.

I ordered the steel from Brundle metals of Southampton on a Sunday evening and they delivered it, cut to the correct size of 5356mm, the following Tuesday morning! I then had to measure the original tube and carefully mark the position of everything



Photos 1 and 2 above: The galvanising was flaking off. (The hubs on the axle look rusty but are solid steel blocks.

Soundings 2025



Drilling the holes needed the precision of the pillar drill. The jockey wheel plate has been clamped into position to make sure everything fits before welding.

on the new metal. It was then on to drilling lots of holes, which was best done using a pillar drill outside. The hardest job was cutting the large 52mm holes for the jockey wheel. That was accomplished by using the drill's slowest speed, a new tank cutter and lots of patience. I then cut off the jockey wheel bracket (just a piece of steel plate) from the old trailer and, after cleaning it up, welded it into place.

The next problem was getting the large piece of metal galvanised. Wessex Galvanisers of Eastleigh are one of the few places that can do that sort of work. They said they couldn't collect and deliver to a residential address, so I had to carry the 65kg tube strapped to the road trailer to Eastleigh; not a pleasant journey with the empty road trailer ramps rattling behind. The galvanisers were also very efficient and four days later after another noisy drive to Eastleigh, I had my brand-new shiny trolley spine. Reassembly was easy, everything fitted and I now have a trolley that should last at least another 12 years as all the other fittings are easy to replace if the main spine is OK.

Was it worth it?

The bare metal cost about £115 delivered. The galvanising cost £150 plus two journeys Poole to Eastleigh. About £290 altogether. So, not cheap and quite a lot of work, but very reassuring to have a solid trailer again.

Jon Davies



Everything reassembled and looking solid again, the shiny metal will soon go dull and match everything else.

The Ian Wall Memorial
Trophy goes to:

Alan & Melle Laing



The Ian Wall Trophy is awarded to a person, or persons, who are involved with Cruiser Racing, either within PYRA or at Poole, or both, not for silverware for themselves, but to enable us lot to go Cruiser Racing.

This year we have awarded the Ian Wall Trophy to Alan and Melle Laing.

A few years ago Melle headed-up The Lovely Ladies of the Race Hut: an all-lady team that ran Cruiser Racing for many years. Nowadays Alan and Melle do their OOD duties together as a team, quietly and efficiently, and we thank them.

Alan and Melle volunteer in so many ways too. Their yacht is often used as committee boat and they are at Youth Training helping with the Club's youngsters: the Cruiser Racers of tomorrow, as seen in my picture here. JW

The Lilla Trophy goes to:

Maggie Horsford



The Lilla Trophy is awarded at the Annual General Meeting to a member who has made an exceptional contribution to Poole YC life over the past year. In 2025, the Trophy was awarded to Maggie Horsford, who has been an active member and volunteer for many years and has been described as an “unsung” hero because she quietly gets on and does things, in a way that may not be noticed unless you are up close to the organisation of our Club racing and sailing events.

Maggie organises the Race Hut Team every Tuesday night and has done so for years. She also volunteers for virtually every open meeting and she is treasured by Race Officers as an accurate and experienced recorder.

Ken Morgan, who has known Maggie for many years, comments that Maggie could easily be a Race Officer herself but she prefers to stay in the background.

John Lloyd looks back at the Coddington Cup



In 1964 my family were members of Liverpool Sailing Club and the family boat was a GP14#5357. The LSC was a very new club having been built up from absolutely nothing by some very committed and capable members. In the early summer of that year the club secretary received an invitation from West Lincs Sailing Club, based in Southport, to participate in an annual dinghy relay race that was always held in September. It was called the Coddington Invitation Race where teams competed for the Coddington Cup.

The invitation gave details of the race, which was to be sailed on Marine Lake over a weekend and that there would be entertainment, described as a 'pop-group', on the Saturday evening. Now the inclusion of a pop-group gave the senior members of LSC a problem. The swinging sixties were well underway and they all knew that a pop-group involved loud guitars, long hair and over indulgence of alcohol. After sailing all day it would be 'A Hard Days Night' and not for them, so they threw open the invitation to the youth section of the club and I took up the challenge.

I begged the use of our GP14 from my father, filled in the application form, paid the entrance fee, gathered together five other youngsters from the club to make up three two-man crews, and declared myself Team Captain.

The weekend in September arrived and I towed our boat with my old banger up to Southport. My younger brother was with me as he was one of the team. The other four members made their way in a vehicle of similar vintage. As I remember the WLYC was well organised and extremely efficient with car parking and boat launching. There was a welcome introduction,

a check of the paperwork, an inspection of the boats and equipment. The relay race was then started and we were sailing; swapping crews every few laps until the end of the race.

Despite the very best efforts of WLYC archivist Tony Halliwell and Jeff Osment, PYC member, and Editor of *The Shrimper*, we do not know how long the race lasted other than from my own memory. It was for an extended period of time, but not 24hrs. Jeff found an article in a 1967 Liverpool Echo announcing a 24-hour dinghy relay race on Marine Lake as part of the 100th anniversary celebrations of Southport's Royal Charter as a resort town. Our best guess is that the Coddington Invitation Race was a forerunner of this event and was upgraded to a 24-hour race to gain greater public awareness of Southport, and it has been held annually until suspended during Covid and restarted in 2024 when Poole YC entered a team.

I do remember the Saturday and that evening. Of being short handed with just three crews. Of changing into my lounge suit in my car, which was the dress code in those days. Of the music, the beer and the girls, which to be honest was what we were all there for. Also, trying to get a few hours of sleep in my car. The social event was possibly put together by a department of Southport Council, or maybe the Prince of Wales Hotel, a large lakeside establishment. Southport, like many seaside towns, was suffering competition from foreign package holidays and was doing its best to reverse the decline. It was quite fortunate that we all took lounge suits with us because we won the race.

The cup presentation was on the Sunday. The Mayor of Southport, Alderman Phillip Switzer, resplendent in his chain of office, did the honours, with a press photographer in



attendance. The presentation was in the WLSC clubhouse, which was over Victoria Baths on the promenade. It was a relatively small place and not the splendid establishment that exists today. Tony Halliwell informs me that in those days ladies were not always welcome in the clubhouse, and my memory is of club members addressing the bar staff by just their surnames. How times have changed.

I would like to write that we returned to LSC to a rapturous welcome. Well we sort of did, but what I do remember is that the following year we were frozen out. There was no 'Ticket to Ride' for us, the invitation was hijacked by the older club members and we youngsters were given the cold shoulder! What gives me some satisfaction is the Honours Board for the Coddington Cup in the WLYC clubhouse, which shows that 1964 was the only year that LSC won it.



John sailing out from PYC in his Shrimper 19 Alix and above receiving the 2024 Peter Keeling Trophy from Poole SOA Hon Sec John Hicks



Peter Hayton in pursuit of the



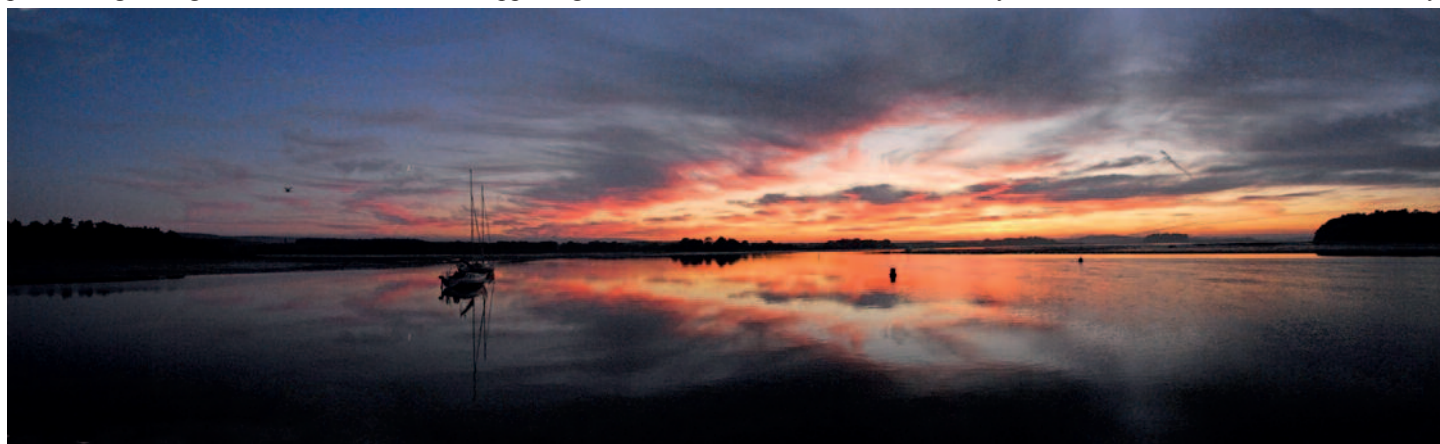
Artistic photography isn't just pointing a camera at a scene and going click!

A good artistic photographer has to position themselves in just the right spot to create what the artist would like to paint and then take the shot after setting up his camera for best affect. My wife, Anne, and I have spent a lot of time aboard, firstly, our powerboat *Work of Art* and now our Centaur *Kailani*, taking a whole host of marine subjects from coastlines to windsurfers leaping waves and elegant sail boats to jet skiers performing daring stunts. There is so much happening on the

to include yachts in my sunrises or sunsets when I take my photos because they give a depth and perspective to the photo.

Equally so I'll sit in the cockpit of our boat with Anne, having a lovely meal that she's cooked onboard, when suddenly I'll jump up with camera in hand having spotted the precise moment when the sun is setting with all the colour and power that makes it extra special.

Sometimes Anne says "*I should have done a salad instead of*



water, which so many people don't see unless they are there too. Anne and I have always wanted to show this side of life to as many people as we can so they can experience the fun and excitement we feel while being out there.

One of the things that we found sold very well in our gallery is the atmospheric sunsets and sunrise panoramics that we take while out on the water for a weekend.

Nature supplies such beautiful colours that inspire the soul and excites the eye that it would be a great shame if they were left alone with most people not seeing them as they sleep or sit at home in the evening. I have in my head an idea of the type of scene I want to capture that I see from the coming sunrise or sunset across the water. I spend a while rowing around in the early morning looking for the precise spot to take the photo of the scene.

Why row I hear you say....well, it's almost silent and at 4.45am in the pre-dawn morning rowing doesn't disturb people asleep in there boats at anchor as much as a motor would. I like

a mixed grill"....I've got used to cooler food and she's got used to the impetuous nature of a setting sun!! But it's all worth it and we love the results.

Some of the coastline along the south of England is awesome and the Jurassic Coast, in particular, is very interesting because of the variation of rocks and formations that have been created from the land upheaval millenniums ago. Anne photographs the formations while I drive along the coastline which makes for some amazing panoramics. These can make great paintings or large printed canvases. They also serve as a record for the future as the cliffs are gradually eroding with the south-westerly gales that hit the coast every winter.

Other things that we love to photograph are ships under sail. Whether it's yacht's or tall ships they all have a feeling of grace, power and beauty that have been the subject of paintings over hundreds of years. Our love of the sea, as an island nation, has been at the core of our being and it's no wonder that the sight of a sailing ship lifts the heart with thoughts of adventure.

Anne and I love to get up close and personal with them and often call up the captains of the ships or yachts we are photographing to ask permission to go under the bow to get a shot that makes the viewer feel the awesome power of a ship under sail.

Other times we motor closely alongside and have to take two or three photos and paste them together to get the full deck picture that shows the crew working the large sailing ships.

A few other things that catch our eye are the watersports community. Windsurfers and jet skiers to name but two. Their antics of daring and skill leave you with huge admiration and just a little thought of 'you nutters'.

Some seem to have no fear at all – or is it a profound confidence in their capabilities and love of going close to the edge?

The whole thing about photographing marine action and seascapes was brought about by my need for more subjects to paint but I soon recognised that people wanted the feeling of being there and seeing the fun through our eyes on the wide



range of subjects and the colour that so often comes into play at the right moment. I quickly learned to balance the subjects that needed to be painted as miniatures and the ones that people would enjoy as larger artistic photographs. I hope, in this article, that I've given just a hint of what can be seen when doing artistic photography on the sea.

It often takes longer to patiently wait, set up and get a great artistic photograph than it does to paint a fine detailed miniature, and they take many hours – food for thought?

Peter Hayton RMS, HS, PFGSA, SLm



James Stafford tells us why we should

Sail with PYRA!

Are you keen to learn how to get the best out of your boat, but don't have the inclination, or crew, to compete in "Round the Cans" racing? Then passage racing with PYRA may meet your needs.

The Poole Yacht Racing Association (PYRA) exists to "*Promote, encourage, and organise, racing for members of all Poole Harbour yacht clubs*".

Racing takes place mainly at weekends to destinations along the South Coast and sometimes across the Channel to France

and the Channel Islands.

Passage racing prioritises strategic planning to effectively utilise winds and tides for swift arrival at your destination. As these races generally last around four hours, there is less focus on being first over the start line, quick Spinnaker hoists, or large skilled crews. Many participants sail with relatively few crew members and a dedicated class (Class 4) exists for racing novices who prefer to avoid the complexities associated with flying spinnakers.



You can be sure that whether you arrive first or last there will be a warm welcome on your arrival. The PYRA rendezvous are renowned for their conviviality and rum tots. After the presentation of the prizes a party atmosphere develops and we often take advantage of the host club's hospitality and stay on for a meal.

So PYRA racing can perhaps be best described as relaxed racing or possibly competitive cruising.

This does not imply that crews don't strive to win, and the handicap system ensures a fair opportunity for all participants. Boats are categorized into six classes based on their handicap, and, typically, there is an award for every class in each race. These prizes are sponsored by the sailing clubs, with additional series awards presented by PYRA.

With 30 races in the 2025 series there are many chances to get some silverware for your mantelpiece! We also get sponsorship from several prestigious companies in the Poole area, who provide further prizes and hospitality.

PYRA membership normally costs £100 per annum for monohulls, and this includes a VPRS handicap rating, but new



members get this discounted to £65. Surely a bargain! (Multi-Hulls pay even less.)

All the details, plus all the dates and start times are published annually in advance in the famous PYRA Red Book. So you can plan your diary throughout the season and decide which races you want to do. Start times are tide dependent and are designed to ensure you can reach the destination at a sensible time. A further benefit is that the PYRA Secretary block books berths at the destination marina so you can be confident that you have a berth available even at busy times.

If you would like to know more, please don't hesitate to approach me at the club, or email me at poole-rep@pyra.org.uk

James Stafford (above left)
Poole Yacht Club PYRA Representative



The fleet preparing to race





Team Duette win the Robin Judah Trophy

Joe Cross, Russell Wheeler, Matt Hitt and Tim Lees, representing the Sonata class, won the 2025 edition of the Keelboat Endeavour, hosted by Royal Corinthian Yacht Club, in Burnham on Crouch.

Here is an edited extract from, and courtesy of, Yachts & Yachting online.

Six teams lined up to the start of the 2025 edition of the Royal Corinthian Yacht Club Keelboat Endeavour, to compete for the Robin Judah Trophy, commissioned in memory of Robin Judah, one of the founders of the original Endeavour Trophy for dinghies, an Olympic sailor in the Dragon class in 1968, and stalwart of the club.

The wind proved to be a tricky customer on Saturday, making the choice of course side instrumental, with the slightest change in wind direction making or breaking a race.

Despite the light conditions, with race eight being very close to being cancelled due to time limits, Edwin Buckley, the Race Officer, squeezed twelve races in the first day, with each team competing in ten.

The Sandhopper team: Peter Thompson, Howard Warrington, Alex Warrington and Clara Hunter, back after missing the 2024 edition, narrowly missed beating their sister class, the Squib, by only three points and finished the day in sixth place.

The day started perfectly for the Squib champions, Micky Wright and Alex Porteous, with help from Chris Agar and Dave Hyde, with a win in the first race, yet the wind conditions proved to be a bit trickier to handle and they had to wait until the last race for another win, finishing the day in fifth place.

Quentin Strauss, Sarah Burgess, Philip Catmur and Richard Tucker, the Dragon class representatives, needed a few races to get a handle on the 707 spinnaker system, but after the issue was solved, they finished just outside top three, by only three points, with a win in the sixth race.

The day didn't start well for the Flying Fifteen class, represented by multiple World champions Graham Vials and

Chris Turner and complemented by Andrew Lawson and Chris Waples, which suffered a few breakages, swiftly remedied by the race bosun Nick Milton, had to pick up the pace and finish the day in third place, with wins in races 3, 5 and 11.

The K6 crew, Laurence Crispin, James Bennett, Bertie Barker and Harry Barker, showed consistency to finish the day above the Flying Fifteens, by only one point, a huge improvement from the last edition.

Yet, the clear winners of the day were Poole YC's Sonata sailors, Joe Cross, Russell Wheeler, Matt Hitt and Tim Lees, runners up of the 2024 edition, which not only scored an impressive six out of 10 wins, but also never dropped below second place in the overall results table throughout the day.

Sunday morning brought dead calm, with the wind almost filling, but not quite and the Race Officer had to cancel the day of racing at noon.

So the Sonata representatives were awarded the Robin Judah Trophy, a half hull model presented by Robin's daughter, Catherine.

This year's Endeavour Keelboat Trophy was sponsored by Allen Brothers and Robline, while Ksail provided the live results platform.

While many of the competitors travelled from all over the country to attend the event, special mention needs to go to the competitor who was stuck in Spain on Friday afternoon, with no plane to Heathrow and had to take a flight to Paris, an Eurostar train to London, for a quick late night turnaround to collect his kit, before a dash up to Essex, with the club's breakfast saving the day.



Joe Cross comments:

Being invited to the Keelboat Endeavour is a massive privilege. Although the number of entries this year was a little down on previous events, a quick Google search of some of the competitors tells you there were some serious CVs in the fleet.

With a light and flukey forecast, which we wouldn't expect to suit us our aim was to put a consistent series together and see where that got us.

As mentioned, there were some breakages in the early races. Fortunately, I have a great team who picked up a few issues in our boat that we were able to solve before racing began. The racing was really close and intense with the start being crucial.

Our first stint of four races saw us with a mixed bag of results, which put us up there but in close competition with the Flying 15 and K6 teams. A race followed watching from the committee boat and then back on for another five races, where we started with a 3rd before hitting our stride and winning four

races in a row! Then another race-off before our 10th race of the day, with a recovery from a bad start to finish third.

Overnight that put us in the lead with a reasonable margin but, with more light and flukey conditions forecast and the closeness of the fleet, it could easily go wrong.

The aim during Sunday morning's postponement was not to fall into the trap of hoping for no racing. The team split up with Tim and Russell taking the opportunity for more sleep with Matt and I wore out the path down river of the club. At noon we were put out of our misery and it was a great feeling to be presented with the trophy as champion of champions!

A great event with a great team, thank you, Matt, Tim and Russell.

Matt Hitt added:

I was obviously delighted that we won on behalf of the Sonata Association, who kindly covered some of the cost, but it was also great to win with an entirely Poole Yacht Club team.



Tim, Joe, Russell and Matt

Jon Davies and Amanda Jones report on:



Sunday 15th December saw over 40 PYC boats turn out on a chilly but dry evening for an unusual and exciting Christmas treat; the PYC Flotilla of Lights.

When people use the expression ‘from little acorns grow big trees’, this is a classic example. The event started as the idea of Mike Jones about six years ago with just a handful of boats taking part. We even managed to slot a flotilla in through Covid – boats were social distanced! The numbers have grown each year, as have the efforts members have gone to decorate the boats. The RNLI asked to be involved and grabbed the opportunity to combine the event with bucket collections along the Quay. A brilliant fundraising opportunity for PYC to help support the RNLI.

The afternoon of the 15th saw crews working hard to prepare their boats, then as final glimmer of the departing daylight left the western sky, families came aboard, and the yachts left their berths. Very carefully in the increasing darkness they crept out of The Haven and formed up under the strict instructions of

Mike Jones on Channel 72! The area outside of the YC Haven entrance was soon full of yachts covered with LEDs providing a dramatic display of colour, and not just lights, but decks full of large floodlit father Christmases, snowmen etc. All accompanied, in many cases, with cheerful Christmas tunes.

The warm glare from the boats provided a sharp contrast to the chilly wind and the icy black drop of the waters around and it took a bit of concentration to remain on station, but it was all worth it as bright-eyed children excitedly pointed out the different spectacle to be seen on each boat.

We were joined by the RNLI Poole Lifeboats, a harbour launch and a Poole Harbour tug. The procession then slowly proceeded around to The Quay, where it was met by a large crowd and loud applause. The quayside was several people deep in places and it was lovely to hear the cheers. Following the tug’s example all boats sounded horns and whistles as they crept down towards Poole Bridge before returning for another circuit. There were so many boats this year that it took a while for each boat to make the circuit, what a brilliant problem to have! By the time we returned to the PYC Haven, the darkness had fully descended, and the light show that the Club flotilla put on was stunning and so very festive.

Thank you to the bar staff for extending the Sunday opening hours, enabling everyone to gather, enjoy a festive tipple and chat about this fitting ‘sailing’ start to the festive season.



Soundings 2025

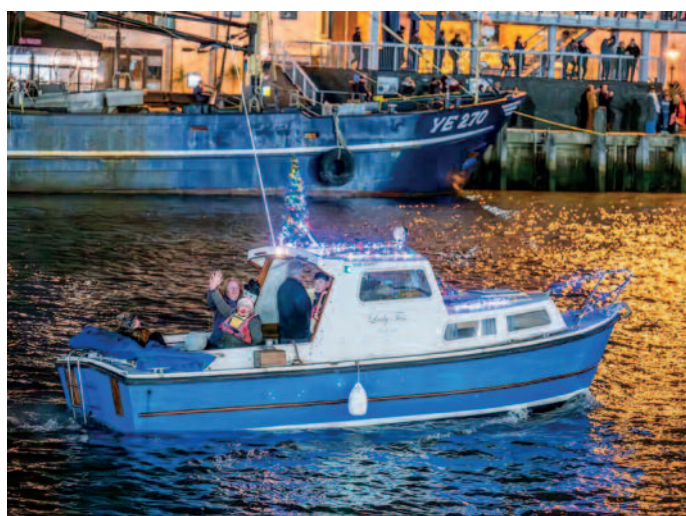
Flotilla of Lights 2025

Sunday 14th December

Make sure it is in your diary and start planning your decorations.



Most pictures courtesy of Lewis Johnstone Photography.
This aerial picture by Maksymilian Michalczewski



Waddenzee
(Werelderfgoed)

Twée mannen in een Boot

By Mike Everett
and Jeff Osment



Soundings 2025
Vechtplassen

- Vogelkijkhut
- Uitkijkpunt
- Bijzonderheid



Two men sharing a Cornish Shrimper 19 for a weekend in the Solent works perfectly well but sharing for 12 days in a foreign country and constantly on the move is a different matter. Two weeks worth of kit x 2 and associated supplies leaves little cabin space. So when I agreed for fellow Poole YC Shrimper owner, Jeff Osment, to join me, Mike Everett on *Alice Rose* (417), as crew for ISW 2024 in the Netherlands, expedition grade planning would be required

I needn't have worried as Jeff had already planned to find small B&Bs or campsites next to the various marinas that the fleet would be visiting, and as a last resort he would bring the cockpit tent from his Shrimper 19, *Natalie*, and stow it in the stern locker of *Alice Rose* along with his pop up tent and airbed. This left one side of the boat for two sets of kit and the other for my bunk.



Alice Rose boarding at Harwich

Tuesday 4th June found *Alice Rose* safely loaded onto the car deck of the Harwich ferry in line with fellow Poole YC Shrimper owner, Karen Macey *Camaron* (940), for the seven hour crossing to the Hook of Holland. Here it was agreed we would use the EU temporary import form required in France. Unfortunately Dutch customs had never heard of it and after an hour in the red lane they made up some numbers, stamped the forms and let us go. This delay put us into the ISW launching marina at Naarden Yachthaven around 2100 with the gates locked. So it was a night in our boats in the car park except for Jeff, who booked into his first Dutch B&B complete with four-poster bed, spa bath and breakfast served in his room by a lady in a silk jumpsuit!

Day 1 Wed 5th June - Naarden to Muiden

Wednesday 5th June was the first official day of ISW 2024 however Poole YC's Mark Jenkins, *Bluejay* (1152), was already moored in the fleet assembly marina of Muiden after sailing all the way single handed in unison with two other Shrimpers from Falmouth and the Solent. Over the preceding six weeks, they had sailed along the coast to Dover, crossed to Dunkirk on a windless day, and sailed up the coastline of northern France and Belgium before entering the inland waterways of Holland.

Muiden is just three miles northwest of Naarden and with the wind on the nose it was a sunny motor-sail all the way to the KNZ&RV Yacht Club although, as late afternoon arrivals, we missed out on the pontoons with the best view opposite Muiden Castle, although, on the plus side, we were invited on board a Shrimper 21 for supper.



ISW Shrimpers moored up opposite Muiden Castle

Day 2 Thursday 6th June - Pampus Island

Beyond the dyke protecting the town and just a stone's throw from the marina Jeff had found a 5 star AirBnB for two nights complete with fluffy dressing gowns, a coffee maker and many other luxury items missing on *Alice Rose*. As it was a free day there was time for short sail out to Pampus Island, part of a fortification system protecting the approaches to Amsterdam. Then back to Muiden to scrub up for the 'Welcome Dinner' at the Royal Netherlands YC. Hosted by ISW Netherlands organiser and incoming Hon. Sec., Marina de Kanter. We were treated to a three-course meal fit for a King. And with plenty of Dutch lager on tap, if this was a taste of things to come - roll on ISW 2024!



The Dinner with Marina de Kanter, welcoming the crews

Day 3 Friday 7th June Muiden to Amsterdam

After a bakery breakfast, it was time to set off for the short passage to Amsterdam by heading across to the north side of the IJmeer to take the small ships channel into the city. With barges the size of skyscrapers on their side running up and down the main channel this was sound advice. We passed Pampus Island again and gathered off Durgerdam, a pretty little red roofed town east of Amsterdam. There was still plenty of water to tack to the Schellingwouder Bridge, which was the point to down sails. From the bridge it was a short motor into the main lock, which easily took all 14 Shrimpers and a large Sea Scout training yacht, which caused a lot of fendering chaos.



Camaron (940) tacking towards the city

Out of the lock, a Netherlands SOA Shrimper led the way to Sixhaven Marina, a little oasis opposite Amsterdam station and a five minute ferry ride into the heart of Amsterdam. As a one time resident I treated Karen and Jeff to a whistle stop tour of the city by foot and tram, and the compulsory drinks in the sun by a canal.

Day 4 8th June Amsterdam to Edam

After a peaceful night in the cockpit tent for Jeff we retraced our route back into the IJmeer. At the morning briefing we were told that a planned stop at Marken Island would be impossible given the strong wind forecast so it was a 15 mile leg directly to Edam. We enjoyed a fast goose-winged run to the lighthouse at Marken but once around the headland we encountered the 20-25 knot wind and short chop that we faced most days. With only one reef *Alice Rose* flew ahead allowing Jeff to photograph boats on our inside who more sensibly had two reefs.

Although very breezy the sun was still shining as we reached the narrow entrance channel into Edam and tied up along the



The moorings at Edam

canal bank next to the campsite. Perfectly placed for Jeff to get out his tent before the rain arrived. Edam is a tourist town famous for its cheese factory and museum but, as it was a Saturday, these weren't open.

Day 5 9th June Edam to Hoorn

The original plan was to sail across the Markermeer to Lelystad but, with the wind forecast to stay in the NW most days, getting back would be a problem. So we continued our brisk close hauled sail a further eight miles up the old Zuiderzee to the city of Hoorn. The birthplace of the Dutch East India Company, Hoorn is named after the shape of its harbour, which is dominated by the 16th-century Hoofdtoren tower.

After taking down our sails in the shelter of the outer harbour, we formed an impressive line of boats on the park side of the inner harbour. Jeff had not factored Hoorn into his B&B plan but by the time we arrived his wife had found him a waterside hotel, with a panoramic view and breakfast included for just 90 Euros. Hoorn is the start of a circular steam railway and boat journey to Enkhuizen and Medemblik, known as 'The Golden Age' experience. Hoping for a ride on a steam train, once again we had arrived on the one day when it didn't run in the afternoon. More lagers in the town square!



Wet briefing at Hoorn



The ISW fleet tied up line astern in Hoorn

Day 6 10th June Hoorn to Enkhuizen

It was a very wet morning brief as Marina confidently predicted that with a brisk south-easterly we just had enough time to sail the 12 miles to Enkhuizen before the wind turned to the north west and the weather got really bad. *Alice Rose* still only had one reef in as we sailed out of Hoorn, but once around De Nek headland it was clear that photography was out of the question. The south easterly soon built up a vicious chop with some large waves crashing over the boat.

After a fast and furious sail to Enkhuizen, a sodden fleet of Shrimpers gratefully transited the huge Naviduct lock into the IJsselmeer and the shelter of Compagnieshaven. We all looked like drowned rats and drying out was going to be a challenge. However Jeff was back on his B&B schedule and this time it was a boat and breakfast, an old 50ft motor cruiser with plenty of room for two wet sailors. More to the point it had fan heaters and a long upper bridge house for drying our clothes. Let's just say I did not take much persuading to jump ship!



Marker Wadden

Day 7 11th June Enkhuizen at leisure

The sun came out, much to the relief of the crews who stayed on their boats and the Shrimpers were flying their wet clothes from every boom and furler. A perfect day at leisure for the exploring the Zuiderzee Open Air Museum and learning about the 1914 great flood which forced the building of the Afsluitdijk and the creation of the 1000 sq km lake now known as the IJsselmeer.

Day 8 12th June Enkhuizen to Marker Wadden

As we were a day ahead of schedule a favourable wind forecast gave us the opportunity to sail south east back into the Markermeer and visit Marker Wadden, a man made archipelago of low sandy islands which is now a nature reserve. It would mean retracing the eight mile journey back to Enkhuizen the following day and then onwards to our final destination of Medemblik. Half the fleet voted to go, so seven boats set off on a brisk reach and covered the eight miles in rapid time.

Marker Wadden was formed by dredging lake sediment and containing it in rings of sand dykes. It was teeming with nesting Avocets, Wagtails, Spoonbills and Terns but very exposed so Jeff erected the cockpit tent with extra ties in case the wind got up in the night – which it did! The Café closed early so I dipped into expedition supplies and conceived “Nasi Goreng – Shrimper Style”, which Jeff named Eggs Everett – avec du vin!



Day 9 13th June Marker Island to Medemblik

After a chilly night and despite having to retrace our eight mile journey to Enkhuizen, to go back through the Naviduct and out into the IJsselmeer for the final 12 miles to Medemblik, this was probably the best sailing day. It was only the last few miles of the 20 mile journey when the inevitable north west wind and heavy chop tried to push us away from our destination.

Camaron showed us all how to sail a tight course and made the harbour entrance on a single tack.



The ISW 2024 fleet members

Medemblik is another historic city and one of the main regatta centres in Holland, where we rejoined the other half of the fleet. There would be no more sailing but one more quirky B&B ashore for Jeff – a 16th Century house with a man's hand hanging down inside the chimney breast – despite being good at everything, the Dutch have a great sense of humour. And it was no surprise that Marina had organised a perfect end of rally dinner at a harbour side restaurant where presentations were made, the food was mouth watering and the beer and wine flowed freely. ‘Proost’ as they say in Holland.



Karen Macey thanking Marina

James Stafford tells us about



A Season of GP14 Sailing '24

Within hours of every race last season, I wrote a report and published it online. Here are some of these. Collectively they create a picture of what it is like to compete in a one-design dinghy series. Changing weather, winds and tides, make every race unique, but the joy and fellowship of friendly competition shines through. Surnames have been deleted to protect the guilty and innocent alike.

Monday 29th April – Sleepers Awake!

With the wind gusting to over 30 knots most of the crews were just as concerned about beating the elements as they were about winning the race.

On the reach to Mikey, Mike fell out of the boat. Martin did an excellent job keeping the boat upright whilst Mike drifted away down the harbour. We resolved to pick him up on the next lap, but before then the safety boat curtailed his swimming practice.

Overall, an exciting sail in challenging conditions. Meanwhile back in the yard the other GP 14s slept soundly under their covers, waiting for the summer.

Monday 6th May – In it to Win it!

In inclement weather, James and Carol deployed outstanding strategy and tactics by turning up, rigging the boat and starting the race. They sailed the course and were first over the finish line. Obviously, a winning formula. Did I mention they were the only GP14 out? The Key learning point was: you have to be in it to win it!

Thursday 9th May – To Err is Human

10 GP14s were on the start line, a record for this season.

Sailing upwind against a strong spring tide followed by a leeward spinnaker run is a great test of race strategy and execution and the fleet soon spaced itself out. It was generally agreed that the best positions were achieved by those who

made the least errors.

The poet Alexander Pope famously said “*To err is human*” and on this sunny spring evening many in the fleet fully demonstrated their humanity!

Monday 13th May – The Rain it Raineth!

We sailors are lucky as our sport is not really affected by wet weather. No need to worry about rain stopping play, waterlogged pitches, or uneven playing surfaces. Our pitch is always waterlogged and our playing surface often uneven. So despite biblical amounts of rain and some worrying wind forecasts the racing went ahead.

And still it rained, making the normal post-race washing of the boats more a ritual than a necessity. Special thanks to the safety boat teams this evening, who in the constant rain, probably had much less fun than we did.

Thursday 16th May – Tactical Dilemmas!

A light easterly wind and a slow incoming tide created a good test of tactics and patience for the 10 GPs racing.

Matt & Andy and Colin & Barry led the fleet down to the leeward mark TFF. But then came the dilemma!

At TFF Matt went out south to avoid the tide and Colin went north to the wall to find the fickle back-eddy. Who to follow? Colin the Mystic with his mysterious knowledge of tides and wind bends, or Matt the Boat Whisperer with his uncanny ability to make any boat go faster?

The answer in this case soon became apparent. The back eddy actually existed! Those of us who took this route had an easy beat back to Cakes, but those on the southern diversion mostly failed to match Matt's boat speed and struggled to get back through the Y gate against the tide.

The rest of the fleet, increasingly hampered by the dying wind were just happy to get back to the bar!

Thursday 23rd May – A good idea at the time!

A surprisingly strong north-westerly wind ensured that the GP sailors got plenty of kicks on Course 66!

Most of the fleet chose to start on starboard at the northern end of the white line to reach Ham, the windward mark, with minimal tacks. However, Colin and Barry judged the southern end of the line to be more favourable, and started there on port, and by the time they tacked on to starboard to round Ham they were significantly ahead of everyone else.

In the post-race debrief Colin summarised his tactics by saying *"Why would I want to start in the turbulent air close to the bund wall surrounded by other boats and in the possible shadow of the race hut?"*

Seemed a good idea at the time, thought the rest of us losers.

Thursday 30th May. Revenge of the Wind Gods!

In the Spring series, boats failed to capsize in a wide range of conditions. But tonight we had a cunning NW wind rolling off the shore and switching constantly between 12 and 20 knots. This created a number of spectacular capsizes in the GP14 fleet with three boats forced to retire and undo the usual knitting of spinnaker sheets, halyards etc.

Colin and Barry went over instantly when they hiked out under the vacuum created by James and Dan as they rounded the windward mark and later for a second time later under Spinnaker.

Mike and Sue encountered a series of death rolls on the way down to Oyster resulting in a spectacular spinnaker capsize.

Alex and Nikki hung on until Latch but then capsized and eventually had to be towed home.

In the bar afterwards everyone was smiling. What other sport creates so many thrills and laughter?

Monday 17th June-Summer at Last!

The first evening this year that actually felt like summer! A warm 9-11 knot breeze for the first half of the race fell back to around 7 knots towards the end but still allowed us to run one of the longer courses out to Balls Lake, Volunteer and Cakes.

This race was about detecting wind shifts early and tacking immediately to take advantage of them. In the end everybody enjoyed the chance to participate in a race that rewarded good tactics rather than mere survival!

Thursday 27th June-Limitations Discovered

With the SW wind gusting to 28 Knots only 5 GP14s were tempted to enjoy the pleasures of summer sailing. Trev Welton stepped into crew for Colin and commented that the last time he had been in a GP was in Barbados for the 2016 World Championship. Conditions were similar in the Caribbean, but with more rum!

Matt & Andy were the only team to fly their spinnaker throughout the race and were rewarded with a win. Most of us left it in the bag and concentrated on staying upright. As Clint Eastwood said in the movie Magnum Force: *"A man's got to know his limitations"*

July 20/21st GP14 Open Weekend-Local Heros

The Poole weather Gods appeared keen to show off their powers



Tom Cluett and Oli Hale win The Bell Trophy

by treating the visitors to everything from hot sun on Friday, when many arrived, to torrential rain on Saturday afternoon then back to cloud and sun again on Sunday.

Normally it would be pure hyperbole to say Oli Hale was so far ahead he was out of sight, but in the mist and rain on Saturday afternoon it was sometimes true!

On Sunday the honour of PYC was upheld in the serious racing for the Bell Trophy, which was won by Oli Hale and Tom Cluett with three wins out of four races.

This event is the highlight of the PYC GP14 calendar, and we are always keen to show off our beautiful harbour, great clubhouse and wonderful staff

Monday 29th July- Malignant Mullet?

A warm sunny evening with a light easterly breeze and an incoming tide.

Bizarrely an incident occurred just as the GP14s launched that caused Mike's centre board to disintegrate. Was this an attack by sea creatures similar to the attacks by Orcas on yachts around the Straits of Gibraltar?

No Orcas were seen this evening in the Haven, but could other marine creatures be copying the Orcas? Have the Mullet become malignant?

The mystery deepens, but in the absence of a definite threat the remainder of the fleet took the stoical decision to sail on. No further incidents of damage occurred.

Monday 19th August -Mistakes Happen

With a southerly wind gusting to 27 knots, many sailors decided the bar was more attractive than the water!

Luckily conditions calmed down a little during the race to a maximum of 20 knots although the sea remained lumpy.

It is often said, that your position in a race is governed by the number of mistakes you make, and this proved true this evening as we rocked and rolled around the top triangle.

Picture courtesy of Mike Mil-



The first rule of dinghy racing is to get to the start line on time, but this James and Carol failed to do, as they were delayed by a tangled spinnaker halyard only discovered as they were about to launch.

Mike and Martin had a good race as Mike avoided falling out of the boat (again) until they were returning to the slipway.

Top team, Colin and Barry, led from the beginning and managed to maintain their lead throughout the race despite dropping the spinnaker under the boat when the halyard became un-cleated.

This probably demonstrates that in sailing, as in life, we all make mistakes but success is about recovering and carrying on.

Thursday 29th August-Penalty Time

We were sharing the course with the Ospreys and at the leeward mark three GPs plus an Osprey attempted to round at the same time resulting in a chorus of cries for Water and Room!

Some on the outside of the pack failed to heed the message in time, so ended up doing penalty turns for touching the inner boat. Similar incidents occurred at the next windward mark as the GPs tussled for position before Spinnaker reaching down to Volunteer.

Andy and Simon wisely hung back to avoid these conflicts

On the last run down to 36 Tony was still leading but being matched jibe for jibe with Oli. Unfortunately he managed to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory by miss-timing a jibe and causing a collision. The resulting penalty turns allowed Oli to gain a lead at the finish with Tony second and Amber sailing serenely into third place.

Great racing throughout the fleet and much to talk about afterwards in the bar.

Thursday 5th September - Brave or Bonkers?

The continuous rain, poor visibility and initial lack of wind meant that although eight GP14 teams turned up to race, only four actually took to the water and GPs were the only dinghy class out racing this evening.

Brave or bonkers? Depending on your point of view the participants were rewarded with some close racing in easterly winds of 10-12 Knots.

After the race it was hardly necessary to wash the boats down as the relentless rain had done the job for us and our water-proofs have rarely been so clean.

Thursday 12th September The End is Nigh

A bright but cold evening greeted the seven GP's who took part in the last Thursday race of the season.

Oli and Andrew took an early lead but were constantly challenged by Colin and Barry, who eventually got past them on the penultimate spinnaker reach.

James and Dante fought an extended duel with Mel and Tracy with frequent changes of position. On the last beat to 36 they ducked below the girls and then managed to get ahead, holding them off round the mark, and ultimately to the finish.

So ended the 2024 series.

Hopefully you have enjoyed these accounts of GP14 racing and gained some impression of the excitement involved in competing in dinghies, where the partnership between helm and crew is often the greatest factor in achieving success. Why not borrow our club GP14 and give it a try?



The Social Programme

Wow so much to keep you entertained!

Dates for your diary:

- Fri. 11th July – **Regatta Friday Music**
- Sat. 12th July - **Regatta Party Night**
Music provided by Wirefighters
- Fri. 26th Sept. – **Martin Clayton Jazz Evening**
with Stour Valley Stompers + Meal Deal
- Sun. 5th Oct. – **PYC Classic Vehicles**
- Sat. 1st Nov. – **Halloween**
Details to follow
- Sat. 8th Nov. – **Commodore Crafts**
- Fri. 14th Nov. – **Queen Tribute**
- Fri. 21st Nov. – **Le Beaujolais Nouveau Est Arrivé!**
French themed menu evening
- Sat. 6th Dec. – **The Annual Dinner and Dance**
with music from Curveball
- Sat. 13th Dec. – **Children's Christmas Party**
- Sun. 14th – **Flotilla of Lights**
- Fri. 19th Dec. – **PYC Does Xmas Dinner**
Book a table with your PYC pals

- Wed. 24th Dec. – **Christmas Eve Carols**
- Wed. 31st Dec. – **New Year Eve Party**
with the fantastic Defectors!
- Sat. 24th Jan. 2026 – **Burns' Night**
with music provided by Black Sheep.
- Sat. 14th Feb. – **Valentines' Dinner**

Keep an eye on the Website, the monthly What's On email, the Social noticeboard and Poole Yacht Club Social and Sailing Facebook page for updates on events throughout the year ... We wouldn't want you to miss out on these amazing events and watch out for:

Wonderful Winter Wednesdays!

Have you been given the challenge of planning your works Christmas meal or party?

This can be a thankless task but don't panic PYC can help you and have the solution. Members can hire either part or the whole of the Clubhouse for an event. So whether it is a family gathering or a work off-site meeting, just speak with either Polly or AJ about your requirements and the options available.



What better venue and view could you offer your guests?

Amanda Jones reports on the Social Scene



The Club awaits the guests for the Annual Dinner



I am writing this at the start of the sailing season and members should be being suitably entertained out on the water, as the Social team take a break. It has been a full-on social season, so much so I have had to refer to past committee minutes to remind myself all that has been organised, and there has been heaps.

Many highlights and personal favourites, which includes a brilliant Elvis evening with Garry Foley as Elvis. I am treasuring the scarf he handed to me, ready for his return visit in Oct 2026, I am sure the tickets will sell very quickly for this evening ...and yes that is how far in advance we are organising our events.

Talking about tickets, it still amazes me how many members still say, 'I didn't know an event was happening'. Posters, the Website, Facebook, Instagram and the regular 'What's on' emails are all coordinated to promote each event. If anyone has a magical answer, please let me know.

We have brought in several bands to entertain us with a range of music from Ska to Jazz and even our own home-grown talent who showcased at the Open Mic Night, wow we have some talented members!

Another evening which showcased some talented members was the Fashion Show. The Nest, a lovely boutique situated in Pamphill, were keen to help with a Fashion Show evening but asked if we could supply some models – a silly question! A fabulous atmosphere in the clubhouse as we supported our own catwalk of models. Thank you to everyone who 'volunteered' for this and The Nest are already asking for dates to arrange a return visit.



NYE 2024 and the Club awaits the guests

Soundings 2025



PYC Does Christmas Dinner



Chinese New Year



Afternoon Tea



French Beaujolais evening

To encourage more members to use the Club on a Friday evening, the Social Committee worked alongside Polly and the Catering team to plan a Friday Night programme throughout the winter. This saw the return of the amazing offer of a Friday Night Meal Deal, themed menu evenings, including Beaujolais Nouveau, PYC Does Xmas Dinner and Family Games nights. These worked well and more importantly we started to see improvements in the weekly takings. We are already planning the Friday evening Winter Programme and as a clue I understand Aiden is starting to practice his bingo calling skills!

The usual favourites were also included in the events programme i.e: The Dinner and Dance and NYE, which again the choice of bands ensured happy members were able to enjoy themselves. We also slotted in Chinese New Year celebrations, Après Ski evening and a special 40th celebration of the opening of the clubhouse.

The Film Night programme was extended to include a matinee showing, which proved popular and we also catered for the creative members of the Club with Xmas wreath making and willow sculpturing.

Phew – that is a lot of activity!

Look at the programme we already have planned for autumn/ winter (P51). Please make a note of the dates and watch out for the reminders to book your tickets! Remember we can't do these events without you.

Finally, a big thank you to Polly and her Bar Team, Elod and the Catering Team, the amazing Social Committee and to my husband Mike who lives every minute of the event planning. I keep a careful eye on the social pages of neighbouring sailing clubs to see what they are offering and PYC this winter was buzzing with a wide range of social activity, we are so fortunate to have this team to help and support us.

I hope you enjoy the selection of photos, a reflection on a fabulous social season – Amanda



Our models for The Nest fashion show



Willow Sculptures. Amanda and her mum, left, Sue Lee, right, and the sculptures with the Willow growing.



Team Duette: National Champions!

44 Years in the Making!

by Joe Cross

Above: Russell Wheeler who, having first sailed a Sonata in 1979 and first competing in a Sonata National's in 1980, with several 2nd and 3rd place finishes, has ended his 44 year wait for a National's title!

The 2024 Sonata National's were held at Medway Yacht Club in Kent. Two Poole Yacht Club boats Attended, Joe Cross, Russell Wheeler, Matt Hitt and Tim Lees on *Duette* and Steve Brown, Gary and Lorna Whitehead and Jackie Hale on *Aeolian*.

Despite Matt's cheeky question of "Has the campsite had been levelled by Stevie Wonder?" the welcome at Medway Yacht Club was as friendly as ever and the *Duette* team quickly pitched their tents on the on-site field with the Brown's campervan also parked on site.

Following a day of tinkering, tuning and frequent trips to Tim's well stocked campsite 'bar' on the Saturday, racing began on the Sunday with three windward-leeward races. The first saw *Aeolian* recover from an overly enthusiastic start to finish in the mid pack with us on *Duette* taking the lead from early on the first beat which we held to the finish.

Race 2 and the tide had turned against the fleet upwind, making the shallower left hand side of the beat favoured. Again *Duette* picked up some good shifts to get out ahead of the fleet at the windward mark, briefly surrendering the lead on the first downwind leg before snatching it back upwind and on to a second win of the day, *Aeolian* once again picking up a solid mid-fleet result.

By the third race of the day the tide had really started running making that left side even more precious. *Duette* won an early battle with the local boats for the left to streak into a commanding lead which we held to the finish with *Aeolian* picking up their best result of the day in 10th.

The fleet returned to the club for the first daily prize giving with a Quiz to follow, Matt will be very upset with me at this point if I don't point out that there was a miscalculation on the Poole Team's Joker round robbing us of victory, still after the day we had I wasn't going to complain. The side effect of a successful day on the water was prizes sponsored by a local fruit farm who make Rhubarb Fizz, this proved to be quite strong and resulted in an early night for one crew member who shall remain nameless.

Day two dawned with no wind and an extremely hot forecast. The fleet launched and, after a postponement, a light breeze filled in to allow racing to get underway. The first race was around the cans with a long first beat, which immediately presented a decision of which river bank to aim for to get out of the tide whilst trying to keep in the patches of stronger wind. *Duette* got this wrong with *Aeolian* getting it right, A subsequent recovery race through the fleet saw *Duette* hunting down local



Poole out in front: Duette (left) and Aeolian, above



boat (and ex-Poole boat) *BD2* for the win but it was not quite enough, *Duette* 2nd, *Aeolian* 13th.

This was when the weather got really strange with a strong breeze filling in that felt like someone was constantly passing over you with a hairdryer. *Duette* won the start of the second race and, following a close tussle with another local boat, *Watersong*, held on to win. *Aeolian* notching up another solid result in the mid fleet.

Race 6 saw 2022 National Champions on *White Noise* lead *Duette* home, however a protest from an incident with Parkstone boat *White Magic* at the start saw *Duette* inherit the win as *White Noise* was disqualified.

The Poole teams decamped to a local pub for a dinner that evening and had a quiet night following on from what was a long and hot day on the water.

Day three and another three windward-leeward races followed by the traditional long distance race. The wind had shifted 180° so with racing being held in the same race area as day one this time it was the right hand side that was valued upwind. A shifting breeze made starting tricky, *Aeolian* getting a good start with *Duette* in the mid pack. A short stint of sitting below above the keel and Russell was pleased to hear "You can come up now Russell, we are in third". Despite some place swapping throughout the next two laps the order remained the same: *Duette* 3rd, *Aeolian* 15th.

It was at this point that whatever Mrs Brown had put in the *Aeolian* lunch kicked in, Steve nailed the start at the pin end of Race 2 tacking to cross the whole fleet. *Duette* was the next boat up the stack from the pin and after a few cheers as *Aeolian* crossed ahead we set about closing the gap, taking the lead just before the windward mark. Some formation flying saw the Poole boats remain unchallenged to the finish.

The third race of the day saw a similar performance with *Aeolian* coming home 4th, *Duette* 2nd.

The distance race to end the day saw the fleet heading up a narrow creek which we subsequently discovered was littered with shallow patches and the occasional rock. Both boats escaped unscathed to finish *Duette* 3rd, *Aeolian*, having a tricky race, 17th.

On returning to the pontoon Team *Duette* were greeted by the race officer as National Champions with three races remaining, although with the outside possibility of a fourth race to catch up from day two it wasn't quite won yet. Still the atmosphere at the championship dinner and dancing to an excellent band soon

eased any tensions from the ghosts of 2023.

Day 4 dawned with a distinct lack of breeze. A nervy wait and a single race followed with *Duette* sailing a conservative race to 5th with *Aeolian* sadly missing the line upwind to record an NSC. Another long postponement and eventual abandonment of the day's racing saw us on *Duette* crowned National Champions, 28 points clear at the top of the table, with *Aeolian* finishing 13th.

The 28 point lead does not tell the story of the week, with a fleet as tightly packed as the Sonata fleet, where a few small errors could easily have seen that lead evaporate. Tim, Matt and I were delighted to collect the National's trophy again however the cat who got the cream at the prize giving was definitely Russell. Having first sailed a Sonata in 1979 and first competed in a Nationals in 1980 with several 2nd and 3rd place finishes this ended Russell's 44 year wait for a Nationals title, I really don't think I will ever forget that smile.

Returning home on the Wednesday evening reflecting on what a brilliant few days we had enjoyed as Team Poole and with the Sonata fleet was great. It really is a wonderful class with great people.

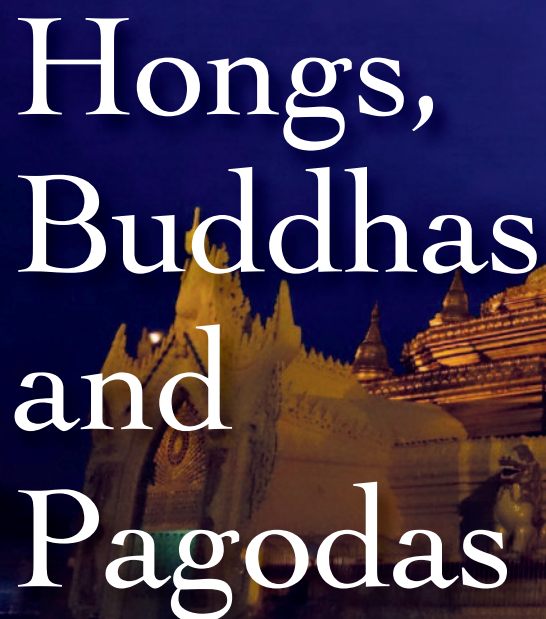
The 2025 Nationals are to be held at Castle Cove in Weymouth with the 50th Anniversary Nationals in 2026 to be held at the Royal Southern YC in the Hamble. The aim is for 50 boats so if you have ever thought about giving Sonata sailing a go or are looking for a 22 foot pocket rocket now is the time to do it I'll help you find a good boat. It would be great to have a few more Poole boats with us in Weymouth and the Hamble!

Russell Wheeler told me:

"I was extremely heartened to hear these brilliant young sailors express thankfulness for those members who have gone above and beyond to help and support them and their sailing."

Russell asked me not to publish their names: **They'll know who they are**, he said.





Hongs, Buddhas and Pagodas

We were weaving a course between the islands and were totally surprised to find that none other than the Red Arrows were practising above and around us, albeit with only white smoke as opposed to red, white and blue! Lasting for about an hour, it was like our private air show and made us feel almost at home.

[illegible]

We had an exciting time, meeting up with my friends who lived there, and visiting the aquarium, shopping for technology, visiting The Long Bar at Raffles, a sound and laser light show, as well as many other sights.

It was then time to move on and north up the Malacca Straits, which were teeming with fishing boats, shipping, barges dumping rubbish as well as tankers and tugs. We anchored overnight as it is dangerous to sail, and after one more stop it was on to Pangkor for two nights where we met friends, and then further to Penang where we arrived in November.



development and part of the retail complex of the same name to the northeast of Penang Island. The marina accommodates 40 boats, with only 10 being reserved for guests. It is enclosed on three sides by a shopping mall, restaurants and apartments. For us it was luxury. A five-minute walk took us to the local bus stop (and past a huge Tesco store – yes, TESCO) and Georgetown, the capital a 30-minute journey away. It was also the first western style marina we had experienced since NZ and is a credit to its manager at the time, John Ferguson, Commander RN retd.

Intending to stay for two nights, we extended to three and spent two whole days exploring the ‘city’ on foot, by ‘Hop-on-



hop-off’ bus and by trishaw. Rather like Singapore, this was a whistlestop tour, which whetted our appetites for more if the opportunity arose and left us exhausted. To put this into perspective, Penang is steeped in history. It was the oldest of the Straits Settlements, established by the British in 1786, the other two being Malacca and Singapore. All three were strategic locations on the routes from India to China. Today’s blend of Colonial, Chinese, Muslim and Indian cultures and architecture exists side by side and is a fascinating experience.

Hidden away among high rise blocks is a magnificent gold tower of the Wat Chaiya Mangkalam Thai Temple. Built in 1845, it houses the Reclining Buddha (above). At 33 metres long and completely covered in gold leaf this Enlightened One is said to be the largest of its kind. Fingers and toenails are decorated in striking mother of pearl mosaic!

Just opposite is the Dhammikarama Burmese Buddhist Temple founded in the early 19th century where halls, shrines, pagodas and goldfish ponds in the grounds are a haven of calm and serenity.

Noteworthy are a golden Buddha (left), standing about 10 metres tall with marble head and feet, and a hall of Buddhas in different facial and hand poses.

We returned to Penang on a separate visit to get our liferaft serviced. The cost in Phuket was extortionate, and we found



that we could get it serviced for about half the price in Penang, including the cost of a ferry and a hotel for two nights. We watched the liferaft being inflated and then had the opportunity to decide which equipment in the safety bag needed replacing, and which would last until the next service.



There is so much to see and enjoy in Penang, a place that we can wholeheartedly recommend.

After a break in the UK over Christmas we returned to Thailand and headed for Phuket and from there to the Similan Islands (above right) where we arrived in March 2014. The Similans were declared a marine National Park in 1982 and lie some 60 miles northwest of Phuket. ‘Sembilan’ means ‘nine’ in Malay and the group unsurprisingly comprises nine main islands. With their clear water, abundant marine life and remarkable topography they attract yachties as well as hordes of day-trippers who arrive at about 10:00, departing again about 16:00, when mooring buoys become available and tranquillity reigns.

We then returned to Phuket and sailed a short distance north-east into the area known as The Hong. A ‘hong’ in Thai means ‘cave’ or ‘room’, but this can be a tunnel through the limestone rock filled with sea water, a dry hong that you can walk or climb into, or a huge crater within the limestone open to the sky above.

Incidentally in Thai: ‘Koh’ means island; ‘Ao’ = bay and ‘Khlong’ = river or channel



This area is dramatic, with countless islands, nearly all of them rising directly out of the sea, and many of them being like columns towering hundreds of feet, with stalactites hanging off them. The sea is a pea green colour, and with blue skies, the greys, browns and reds of the limestone, with vegetation hanging on to the vertical face of the rock, the scenery is breathtaking.

There are many popular spots, and one that most people will associate with is Koh Phing Kan or ‘James Bond Island’ (above right), so called because parts of ‘The Man with the Golden

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Gun’ were filmed there in 1974.

We made a circular navigation of Phang Nga Bay, starting with Koh Phanak which has a hong running from one side of the island to the other, and filled with bats we understand. Koh Hong was our next stop (confusingly, there are two of



them), and this one has a hong accessible to dinghies, and I (Elaine) was invited onto the canoe of a guide to see the deeper recesses that we could not have reached otherwise. Our anchorage on the east was protected and stunning even though we didn’t have it quite to ourselves.

Then on to Koh Yang, with its spectacular pillar of rock so close to where we anchored, completely on our own. From here we took the dinghy to James Bond Island, but just looking from our vantage point at the hordes of holidaymakers crowding ashore was enough to encourage us to turn away!

We used the hours around high water to cross a large area of shallows to the mainland side of the bay to the Northeast. We had been told by friends of a river with easy access and comfortable anchoring. The Khlong Marui was beautiful and is guarded by the Two Sisters Islands, spectacular limestone stacks soaring out of the sea at the entrance to the river. We were completely on our own and then used the dinghy to explore the river and its tributaries, including a dry hong where paintings on the roof of the cave have been dated back 3000 years.

Koh Muk is famous for The Emerald Cave. You either have to take a kayak through to the huge hong in the island, or in our case snorkel from *Pipistrelle*, and swim through with a torch held clear of the water to see our way. The tunnel is about 80m long, and as it does not run straight, is pitch black for a



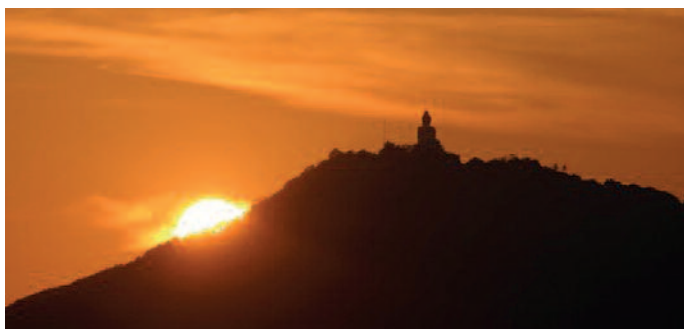
considerable time (probably a minute!) and leads to a completely enclosed and circular towering hong complete with a 60m sandy beach. Late afternoon we slipped the mooring to head around to the sheltered east coast, and the fairly shallow but protected bay of Hat Sai Yao. There we spent a couple of nights, dinghied ashore to the Sawadee Resort set on the flat, sandy peninsula where we had lunch and walked through the local Muslim village.

From here we motored back to Koh Lanta and then on to the Phi Phi islands. Phi Phi Le is where 'The Beach' with Leonardo de Caprio was filmed. Like the much bigger Phi Phi Don, it is a tourist trap, and several hundred speed boats make their way there every day crisscrossing in all directions, like bees to the honey pot. Both are busy, noisy and not our cup of tea at all, but we found an anchorage at Ao Yongkasem to the north of the main Ton Sai Bay that was peaceful from 17:00 onwards and offered clear water with reasonable snorkelling.

At that time, in 2014, the Phi Phi Islands had regenerated themselves and recovered to a large extent from the devastation and tragedy of the tsunami on Boxing Day 2004, caused by the massive earthquake west of Sumatra. Though large parts of the area were hit, Phi Phi Don was struck most severely. A popular Christmas destination, it essentially comprises two islands joined by a sand-spit marginally above sea level. The western cliffs were enveloped by two colossal waves that engulfed the north and south bays without warning, leaving the spit under water. In low lying villages signs now direct people to higher land – which could be up to 2 km away. Masts carry sirens that act as an early warning system for evacuation.

Back on *Pipistrelle*, the following morning we left to return to Ao Chalong, a 30-mile sail which turned into another few hours of motoring!

Just northwest of Ao Chalong and visible from about half the island sits the Big Buddha (below), which we visited one afternoon. With an outer coating of Burmese alabaster, this 60 million Baht Buddha was still under construction after 10 years and relied entirely on donations to fund its completion. The vistas from the top were splendid, with views of the Andaman Sea on one hand and Chalong Bay on the other.



We planned to return to the UK in June 2014, and so had *Pipistrelle* hauled out at Krabi. The climate in Thailand is so harsh at that time of year that covering *Pipistrelle* with tarpaulins as protection from the sun's UV rays and daily rain we understand in August and September, made a lot of sense. We also bought and installed an aircon unit that sat on the saloon deck, timed to come on twice a day, and keep the humidity under control. Added to these precautions we installed "Roach Hotels" and ant poison, to eradicate these insects, which are prolific. Thus, *Pipistrelle* had been thoroughly 'winterised' while we spent a few months in Europe.

Krabi Boat Lagoon had air-conditioned apartments in the marina complex for rent at The Cleat Condominium, which made life far more comfortable than living on board. The humidity in this season is thoroughly unpleasant!

We returned to Krabi in October via Hong Kong and then sailed to Ao Chalong again on the south of Phuket and returning for the third time we had the inevitable list of things to do, but knowing the lie of the land better, it seemed a whole lot easier to get ticks in boxes. Yacht Haven to the north beckoned once more, via the island of Koh Naka Yai, this time to the marina, where *Pipistrelle* was to undergo a refit. Extensive work was done there, replacing her teak deck, which was showing signs of age, and interior woodwork. Ideally, we hoped to return her to the pristine state she was in when she left the Wauquiez yard in 2000!

While the refit went ahead, we took the opportunity to explore the Far East, visiting Bangkok to start with, then Burma (Myanmar) which was open to tourism at the time and where we marvelled at thousands of pagodas, followed by Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. On 11th February 2015 refit was complete, and we were able to move back on board. The work was expertly done; the decks and woodwork below looked beautiful

See also: www.yachtpipistrelle.wordpress.com



The Cruising Section 2025 Programme

At time of printing the Cruising Section's Programme is in full swing, hopefully below is what's still to come:



Weymouth 1: May 23 - May 26

What better way to spend a weekend than a great sail down the Jurassic Coast and then having fun in Weymouth, with it's many shops, interesting variety of eateries, inns and bars.

There is also the wonderful beach spanning the whole bay, it's even got a Punch and Judy show every day. This is a great way to cruise in company, a good venue with great company.



Yarmouth - RIR: June 6 - June 9

Yarmouth is a great venue to watch the Round the Island Race from the Victoria Fort. We will be having a meal at the Royal Solent Yacht Club in the evening..

Yarmouth also has some lovely walks along the River Yar to Old Freshwater, Plenty of eateries and there are trips on the bus for all. We hope to bring new cruising members to The Solent to enjoy the delights of this lovely venue. It will be a great chance to chat with experienced cruising members and enjoy the company of other yachting people with all their stories.

Lymington: June 20 - June 23

This is one of our favourite venues for cruising. There are plenty of eateries, a great town with many interesting shops, and even two chandlers.

We will have full use of the Lymington Harbour's Dan Bran pontoon and the Lymington Sailing Club's facilities and bar. We will also have our usual pontoon party, which is a great favourite with all our participating members.

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This historic, coastal town offers plenty for the visitors. The colourful and vibrant town is an ancient seaport with a rich maritime history and with so much to see and do. Learn about the rich heritage of the town, enjoy some retail therapy, treat yourself to delicious food and drink and relax by the water.

The town began as an Anglo-Saxon village and is in the Domesday Book as 'Lentune'. From the Middle Ages and, up to the 19th century, Lymington was well-known for its salt making and from the early 19th century a thriving ship building industry.

Much of the architecture you see today in Lymington is Georgian and Victorian. The High Street, which looks predominantly Georgian, is in fact made up of an eclectic mix of Georgian, Victorian, Art Deco with some traces of Medieval architecture.

At the top of the High Street sits the Church of St Thomas. A church has been at this location since the mid-thirteenth century and parts of the current church date back from the early thirteenth century. This Grade II Listed building was badly damaged during the English Civil War. Over subsequent centuries architectural additions have been added to the building including the tower and cupola. When in the church take a look at the magnificent glass doors and needlework.

With its strong maritime connections, it doesn't come as a surprise to learn that Lymington was once famous for smuggling. The vicar of the Church of St Thomas once used to allow smugglers to store their contraband within the church's tower!



Bembridge: June 27 - June 30

This is the Rock The Boat weekend, with the event being run

by the harbour and all proceeds going to the nominated charity Sophie Rolf Trust, KissyPuppy; all the necessary information is on the Bembridge website.

The harbour is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and nearby Brading Marshes are home to the first RSPB site on the Island. There are many picturesque walks in and around the area, historic sites to visit, beautiful beaches to enjoy and a busy harbour where there's always something to watch. The villages of Bembridge and St Helens offer a rich variety of shops, restaurants and pubs and are well worth exploring.



Cherbourg & Channel Islands: July 5 - July 13

Guernsey is known for beach resorts like Cobo Bay and the scenery of its coastal cliffs. Castle Cornet, a 13th-century harbour fortification in the capital of St. Peter Port, now contains history and military museums. Hauteville House is the lavish former home of French writer, Victor Hugo. From St. Peter Port you can go island-hopping to Herme & Sark and go on outdoor adventures on both. There are a multitude of eateries, from beachside kiosks, cafés, pubs and award-winning restaurants. You can delve into the past to explore the islands heritage on guided walks or in museums. Take a bus ride around the coastline or hike along miles of cliff paths with views. It's wonderful to feel the sand between your toes on one of the many unspoilt beaches and take a dip in the crystal clear water.



Cowes: July 18 - July 21

Shepards Wharf Marina is just a short walk from the centre of Cowes with all its shops, restaurants, and nautical places of interests. There is a lovely walk along the foreshore past the Cowes gundeck with stunning views over the Solent. The marina has good facilities and an onsite, award winning, Basque Kitchen restaurant specialising exquisite cuisine from the Basque Region, well worth a visit.

Portland: August 8 - August 11

We'll be spending the weekend in Portland Marina enjoying the areas delights. There are a few interesting walks from the marina such as Chesil Beach, the Naval Military Cemetery, and a good climb up to the Verne where you have the most amazing views over the harbour and Chesil Beach. There are also some interesting places to visit, such as the American Military Normandy Invasion Museum in Charlestown, just a short walk from the marina, and Portland Castle (another short walk from the marina). There are a few eating venues in and nearby and a new Lidl's at the entrance to the marina.



On Monday 11th August, some members will continue to the West Country while the rest go back home.

West Country: August 11 - August 22

Possible venues could be:

Torquay, where there are many shops, restaurants and interesting places within easy walking distance. You also have the harbour area with lots of galleries, eateries and interesting places too, like the Living Coasts Aviary, where you can walk around the penguin area looking at the different species. There are other types of birds at this attraction, which were free to fly around. There are also otters, seals, fish, sea horses and bugs to look at.

Plymouth, berthing in the Queen Anne Battery Marina under Plymouth Hoe, where there is the Waypoint Bar and Bistro on site with a good menu if you don't fancy wandering off too far on your first evening. The Barbican is only a short walk from the marina with all its marvellous shops, eateries and galleries. The city is within walking distance too.

The beautiful town of **Dartmouth** is one of south Devon's most popular and enchanting towns. With its charming historic streets, scenic river location and surrounded by South Devon countryside you have to go a long way to find a town as pretty.

Brixham, isn't just about fishing. It's still one of the busiest fishing ports in the UK and a working town, but it's also a place where you can discover a range of arts and culture, excellent local food and some unique attractions.

Falmouth is famous for its harbour, together with Carrick Roads, it forms the third deepest natural harbour in the world. It has been the start or finish point of various round-the-world record-breaking voyages, such as those of Robin Knox-Johnston and Dame Ellen MacArthur.

Salcombe, the beautiful coastal town of Salcombe sits on the banks of the Kingsbridge Estuary making it one of the prettiest towns in South Devon. Located within the South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Salcombe is known for its outstanding coastal views and rolling surrounding countryside, as well as a centre for sailing.

Weymouth 2: August 22 - August 25

What better way to spend your August Bank Holiday than having fun in Weymouth, with its many shops, interesting variety of eateries, inns and bars and the Weymouth Quayside Music Festival?

Hamble: Sept 5th - Sept 8th

Mercury Yacht Harbour was a popular venue in 2024 so we've booked it again. Mercury Yacht Harbour is set in a sheltered wooded site where the shallow waters of Badnam Creek join the River Hamble. Originally built by Sir Robin Knox-Johnston, the marina offers berthing for 360 boats and enjoys deep water at all states of tide. Its excellent facilities include the Gaff Rigger Bar and Restaurant, and the marina is just a 20-minute walk from Hamble village. It is a scenic, peaceful spot, which is a wonderful place to relax with friends on a lovely balmy evening.

TO KEEP UP-TO-DATE SEE: pyccruising-section.co.uk

Jan Thompson-Taylor reports on the

Cruising Section's Winter Walks

Held on the third Sunday in the month, they have been a great success.



October Walk

The Cruising Section Winter Walks have been a great success, although the first one, from Worth Matravers to St Alban's Head, to be led by Roy and Wendy Davies, was cancelled due to heavy rain and very high winds! However our 16 intrepid walkers had a delicious lunch at the Wareham Golf Club as prearranged, which included a particularly yummy lemon tart with clotted cream ice cream!

November Walk – Hengistbury Head

Circular walk, led by Janet Coward.

19 of us started out from the Car park at Hengistbury for one of our favourite walks albeit a shortish one but with wonderful

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views from both the sea side and inland. Peter Hayton and Phil Hunt made contact with the National Coast watch personnel in their superbly situated 'hut' on the cliff top, which resulted in a talk at the Club...but that is another story!

We regrouped in the car park and drove back to the Spyglass and Kettle for a well deserved Sunday roast. Our merry band were joined by Jim and Kate Waterman who just happened to be there.



December Walk – Old Harry Rocks, Studland Church and The Bankes Arms

Led by Jan Thompson Taylor .

Another iconic walk on a fabulous winter's day, bright sunshine and no wind. About 20 of us met in the National Trust Car park at the Bankes Arms for the beautiful walk through woods and along the cliff, pointing out our summer anchorages, to the start of Ballard Down and the magnificent sculptural

chalk cliffs. I can't remember a winter's day so windless and sunny that we simply stood and chatted for ages as we admired the view.

We retraced our steps from half way up the hill and took the path through the car park to the church. Iain Dickie, wearing his 18th century Historical Reenactment persona, gave us a fascinating talk at the Graveside of Sgt William Lawrence who fought in the Peninsula Wars and Waterloo. He lived to a ripe old age and died in Studland!

I took people around the church, inside and out, and pointed out the extraordinary Carved Corbels below the roof, some are decidedly pornographic!

And so to lunch in the Bankes Arms.



An excellent lunch was had at Wareham Golf Club. Many thanks to Tony and Debbie for suggesting and researching this lovely walk.

March Walk – Brownsea Island

Led by Keith Taylor.



January – Worth Matravers – St Alban's Head

Led by Ray Floyd.

13 of us set out from the car park at Worth Matravers for a vigorous, circular, walk along the coastal path to St Alban's Head and back inland, encompassing the newly built steps down the cliff and back up again. This was the long awaited walk, which was cancelled in October as a result of extreme weather conditions. It was particularly challenging for brave Val Floyd, who is awaiting a new hip, and Keith who is still recovering from a patella injury. The thought of a delicious lunch at the Wareham Golf Club kept them going.

Seven of us met on Poole Quay on a bright sunny morning, the second day that Brownsea had reopened.

Keith and I had done this walk in February when we stayed over at the Castle as a result of the invitation from John Lewis partnership to members of PYC. In glorious sunshine we walked around the Island, taking in the stunning view points on the South side of the Island from Old Harry to the Purbecks, all the islands and the Wareham Channel. The red squirrels sensibly stayed at home. We explored the recently developed 'tree hugging' area, Maryland and finally Keith's Tree.

After a quick snack at the Villano Cafe, some of us visited the newly opened hide, just outside the area cared for by the Wildlife Trust. It is a beautifully designed building, with views out over the lagoon. An exquisite day.

February Walk – Blue Pool

Led by Tony and Debbie Raven

On Sunday, Feb 16th, a group of 12 PYC members met in the Cafe at The Blue Pool, outside Wareham at 10 a.m and spent a delightful morning exploring the many trails within the environs of the estate. The Pool was originally a hand dug clay pit dating from the 16th Century and the clay extracted was ball clay. After it was no longer used, the pit gradually filled with rainwater and the particles of clay still within the water reflect the light causing the unusual blue colour.

Altogether this year's walks were a great success and many thanks to the stalwarts who tested out and led the five walks reviewed above.

If any of you have a favourite walk which you would like to share for next season, please get in touch – Jan.



The Studland Bay Marine Partnership's Mission to:

Balance Boating and Conservation

by Howard Davidson, Poole Yacht Club Member

Back in 2019 Studland Bay was designated as a Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) and from a boater view came the threat of a ban on anchoring. With its golden sands and sheltered waters, it has long been a cherished destination for boaters from Poole and beyond. Yet beneath its surface lies a fragile ecosystem – seagrass meadows that serve as vital habitats for marine life, including the rare Spiny Seahorse. Recognizing the need to protect this underwater treasure and provide continuing

access to boating, the Studland Bay Marine Partnership (SBMP) was established in 2021. This collaborative initiative brings together conservationists, boaters, scientists, and local businesses to ensure that Studland Bay remains a haven for both marine life and maritime enthusiasts.

The Genesis of the Studland Bay Marine Partnership

The formation of the SBMP was a proactive response to the environmental pressures facing Studland Bay. In 2019, the bay was designated a MCZ due to its significant seagrass habitats and the presence of the Spiny Seahorse. However, traditional anchoring practices were causing damage to these sensitive areas. The SBMP was created to address this issue by promoting sustainable boating practices and engaging the community in conservation efforts.

The partnership, led and chaired by the National Trust comprises a diverse group of stakeholders, including the Royal Yachting Association (RYA), Natural England, Dorset Wildlife Trust, marina group boatfolk and academic institutions. Together, they aim to balance the needs of recreational boaters with the imperative of preserving the bay's unique marine environment. Without the significant efforts of the partners, we wouldn't have made the progress we have.

Jim Atkins, from Christchurch Sailing Club, and I were asked to represent boating interests on the partnership. At first there were many divergent interests on the partnership, but I have to say that working relationships are now very good and significant progress has been made. Little did Jim and I realize that we

SBMP signage at Baiter slipway. Picture: SBMP





would still be at it five years on!

It is true to say that there are still a number of people who take issue with the original designation of the bay, but these are now significantly outweighed by many others who understand the need to protect the environment that we all seek to enjoy.

Introducing the Voluntary No-Anchor Zone (VNAZ)

Following on from the designation the Marine Management Organization (MMO), after consultation, established a Voluntary No-Anchor Zone (VNAZ) within Studland Bay. Launched in December 2021, the VNAZ aims to prevent anchoring over sensitive seagrass beds, thereby reducing habitat disturbance. Studland Bay is home to Dorset's largest seagrass meadow. The voluntary no anchor zone is clearly marked during the boating season by 22 distinctive yellow buoys, installed with the support of the Ocean Conservation Trust and licensed by the Marine Management Organisation (MMO).

The VNAZ is not a prohibition but a request for cooperation from the boating community. By choosing not to anchor within the designated area, boaters contribute to the protection of the seagrass meadows and the species they support. This voluntary approach fosters a sense of shared responsibility and has been met with positive engagement from local sailors and visitors alike. However, should a voluntary approach prove unsuccessful in protecting the habitats the MMO have been clear that further strengthening of the protection could be possible which could be a ban on anchoring. This is what nobody wants to see happen.

It has always been the case that boats taking shelter in bad weather or in an emergency can anchor in the bay should they need to.

Progress in Eco-Mooring Installations

To provide an alternative to anchoring, the SBMP has implemented a network of eco-moorings designed to minimize environmental impact. These moorings use helical screw anchors and elastic rods that stretch and contract with tidal movements, preventing damage to the seabed.

The initial phase saw the installation of 10 eco-moorings in 2021, supported by boatfolk and the Seahorse Trust. Subsequent

Eco-mooring. Picture: boatfolk



funding, including £186,000 from the Fisheries and Seafood Scheme (FaSS) and other generous donations, facilitated the expansion of the network. By April 2024, the number of eco-moorings had increased to 87.

These moorings are available to all boat users, and their locations are integrated into navigation apps like savvy navvy and Navionics, making it easier for sailors to find and use them.

Each season the eco-moorings need to be brought in for inspection and servicing (we do leave 10 out for winter use) with the subsequent redeployment in the spring.

Funding and Community Engagement

The success of the eco-moorings initiative relies on both funding and community participation. In the first season a fee to use the eco-moorings was set at £10 per 24hrs regardless of how long you stayed. However following feedback from boaters, the fees for the 2025 season have been set at £7.50 for up to 4 hours, £15 for up to 24 hours, or £150 for a seasonal pass. These contributions support the maintenance of the moorings and ongoing conservation efforts. Rather than counting the days you use the eco-moorings the seasonal pass can be viewed as a contribution toward the efforts of the partnership to continue to provide access.

Payment is by an app provided by Sippi or by using the QR code on the pickup lines.

At this point I need to point out that in the first season compliance with using the eco-moorings or anchoring outside the VNAZ has been very good and the MMO have reviewed the situation and are happy to continue with the voluntary arrangements. However the compliance with paying for the use of the eco-moorings, which isn't voluntary, has been poor. This has meant we haven't collected as much income as we need to run the operation. I need to emphasize that message that no income – no buoys which could lead to a ban on anchoring. So please do your bit and pay the use of the moorings. Better still make an annual contribution and use them as many times as you wish.

Additionally, the SBMP has conducted community workshops and surveys to gather feedback and promote awareness. We have attended national conferences and carried out many presentations at clubs and boat shows to promote what we are doing and to spread the word. There are many notice boards around the locality promoting the need for conservation and the steps that have been taken.

Howard Davidson with the SBMP display eco-moorings on South Beach, Studland. Picture: DCF



Future Plans and Ongoing Conservation

Looking ahead, the SBMP aims to continue maintaining and promoting the work of the partnership with the goal of providing access and improving the conservation of the bay.

Restoring the seagrass meadows to their optimum health is a long-term commitment over many years. Research and monitoring will remain a priority, with ongoing studies assessing the health of the seagrass meadows and the effectiveness of conservation measures. The SBMP's collaborative approach serves as a model for balancing recreational use with environmental stewardship.

How Poole Yacht Club Members Can Get Involved

As members of Poole Yacht Club, we have a unique opportunity and respecting the VNAZ, we contribute directly to the preservation of Studland Bay's marine habitats. Additionally, staying informed through the SBMP's website and participating in community initiatives can further our collective impact.



For more information visit the Studland Bay Marine Partnership's website at:

www.dorsetcoasthaveyoursay.co.uk/studland-bay-marine-partnership

By embracing sustainable practices and supporting conservation efforts, we ensure that Studland Bay remains a vibrant destination for generations of boaters to come.

Amanda Jones reports on: Social Tuesdays

This season the Social Talk evening moved from Monday to the first Tuesday of the month. This enabled members to not only enjoy the Tuesday Meal Deal but also then have the option to take in a talk.

We have had a fabulous range of speakers this season and certainly diverse but all special in their unique way.



October, we welcomed Grace Lovelass, a young and talented opera singer and actress (above). A winning combination that was always going to be entertaining.



In November was a talk from the Blood Bikers, a volunteer group who also combine some key skills, a passion for riding a bike at speed and doing good in the community. I sensed there were a few in the audience that were considering whether to slot this into their retirement. I was just pleased Mike didn't come

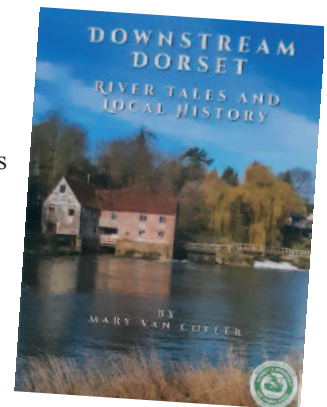


along that night as I could see him coming home and buying a motor bike – sometimes it is just in the blood isn't it, if you'll excuse the pun!

People often ask me how I source the speakers for these evenings, well December's speaker was very random. I trained with her at the gym, and it is amazing the sort of things you can get talking about whilst setting up weights! Over the past couple of years, I have been following Dr Anjana Khatwa's (below left) journey, researching and collating her book. I simply asked if she would come and do a talk, little did I know whom I was chatting with, and the level of experience and the huge sums Dr Anjana Khatwa would normally command for a talk on a corporate basis.

The talk about the history of our Jurassic coast was exceptional and it was a lesson in how to be a public speaker: calm, natural and pitched at the exact level for the audience. Anjana painted a fantastic picture of what life was like 170 million years ago and brought alive the magic of the 95 miles of rocks we sail past. The 65 people who attended that evening were all full of praise and agreed it was a most unique evening, and PYC had been very lucky to host such an event

January's speaker was again promoting her book but this time rather than about the coastline of Dorset it took us inland to the waterways through the county. It was quite simply a charming hour of learning some quirky tales and history about our fabulous area. Our speaker's name was Mary Van Collier, and the book was *Downstream Dorset* (right) – an excellent read.



The talk in February was a sailing theme as we welcomed Youtubers the Bennington-Turner family (below) who document their sailing adventures via the channel and are known as '*Sailing Melody*'. Thank you to Jacky Robinson for coordinating this evening whilst I was away on my travels. This talk included so many interesting elements, Boat renovation, life choices as Melissa and Andy sold up their home to start their travels on the water, home schooling of a teenager and then a special arrival of baby Oli.



Cynthia, designed by Thomas Wanhill and launched in 1849

19th Century Regattas in Poole Harbour

by Sue Thornton-Grimes

The 19th Century continued the tradition of local Regattas, which in some places had been established since the late 1700s. They were very popular events, much enjoyed by participants and spectators alike, encompassing a range of water-based entertainment as well as competitive sailing.


Places such as Portsmouth, Plymouth, Liverpool and many others regularly organised regattas, usually funded by public subscription and the occasional contribution by the local authority. The earliest reference found to a regatta in Poole is in 1827, which had apparently passed off with such 'great éclat and satisfaction' that subscribers resolved to double their subscriptions for the following year's event.

Advertisements giving details of regattas appeared in the local press and were often syndicated across the country. The Exeter Flying Post, for example, advertised the 1828 regatta in Poole and pointed out that 'Few harbours can boast such an advantage for a regatta, a delightful smooth expanse of water upwards of 30 miles in circumference'. Results were also widely publicised; Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle London on 14th September 1828 described the scene in Poole before listing the results:

'The town of Poole was, throughout the past week, crowded with fashionable visitors, and the beautiful harbour presented a most interesting and picturesque appearance, it being thronged with yachts and boats of every description, containing a numerous assemblage of the admirers of aquatics, who arrived from all parts to witness the Regatta.'

The weather was extremely propitious, and the bands of music from several yachts, and the merry peal of the bells gave additional éclat to the scene.'

Soundings 2025



POOLE REGATTA.
MONDAY, September 7th, 1829.
FIRST CLASS,—Consist of PILOT BOATS.
SECOND CLASS,—CUDDIED YAWLS.
THIRD CLASS,—CLAY and MARKET BOATS.
FOURTH CLASS,—14 to 16 feet YAWLS.
FIFTH CLASS,—ROWING BOATS.
SIXTH CLASS,—CANOES.
Sailing Rounds: From the Starting Vessel to Brownsea, and up the Wareham Channel.
Rowing Matches: From the Starting Vessel to above Ham Passage Boat and back.
J. MANLAWS, Steward.

The 1829 Regatta was run exclusively for boats belonging to the port, but this was not always the case. The 19th Century was a period when wealthy landowners and industrialists bought large yachts and had paid crew to enable them to sail to a variety of ports and take part in various regattas. Joseph Weld of the Lulworth Estate was one such. The arrivals and departures of these yachts was often publicised in the press and considerable interest was maintained in the winning exploits of many well-known yachts. Occasionally, however, this meant that if the weather was bad, they were unable to arrive at a particular port in order to participate in the Regatta. It was also vital that the dates of regattas did not clash. Poole was roundly criticised in the press one year for having set their regatta for the same day as Dover!

Zadora, Champion, Alarm, Cynthia and many others are names which regularly appeared in the reviews and results of regattas all over the country. And when we are talking yachts, we are talking big yachts, as shown by this picture of the Cynthia, designed by Thomas Wanhill and launched in 1849.

Courses for these yachts spread over many miles and took several hours to complete, as shown in this report of the 1840 regatta:

'The starting for each match was a very pleasing spectacle. The course allotted was from the starting vessel at the Stakes, out of the harbour, round a vessel in Swanage Bay, thence to Bournemouth, round a vessel stationed there, and back to the starting vessel, a distance of about 44 miles, which was performed in less than six hours, a great portion of it against wind and tide, so that the capabilities of the various contending yachts were well tested. Great numbers of spectators were assembled on the Purbeck Hills and on the cliffs ranging from the entrance of the harbour to Bournemouth, which offered a very fine point of view, the whole of the course being within sight. The harbour and bay were also exceedingly gay with the immense number of craft of all descriptions that were floating about crowded with parties witnessing the sport of the day.'

POOLE REGATTA will take place on **THURSDAY, September 17, 1840**, when it is proposed to offer the following **PRIZES**:-

First Prize—For Yachts not exceeding 46 Tons, a splendid **SILVER CUP**, value 35 Guineas.

Second Prize—For Yachts not exceeding 25 Tons, a **SILVER SALVER**, value 25 Guineas.

Third Prize—For Yachts not exceeding 16 Tons, a **SILVER SALVER**, value 20 Guineas.

Fourth Prize—For Yachts, not exceeding 10 tons, a **SILVER CUP**, value 12 Guineas; a time race.

Open to all Yachts. Three to start in each class, or no race.

Rowing and other Matches.

63 Entrance-Money, One Shilling per Ton.

All Yachts to be entered on or before Wednesday next, at Mr. Sydenham's Library, High-street.

Printed Cards, containing Rules and Regulations, will be ready on the day of Sailing. [6112]

Vessels not taking part but out watching the racing were a mixed blessing – particularly when there was activity within the harbour. In 1828 it was reported that two young men who had gone out to witness the racing in a canoe capsized and drowned. In 1830 the organisers regretted: *'the obstructions met with by vessels with parties on board, by cruising and anchoring in the course'*.

Trophies became an increasingly important feature of the regattas, in order to attract as many participants as possible. In 1829 a Gold Cup was awarded to the winner of the first race and in 1830, new sails of the winner's choice featured as prizes alongside other silverware. In 1849 the local MP, Sir John Guest donated the Canford Cup for yachts not exceeding 15 tons. This cup reappeared in 2015 and was purchased at auction by Poole Museum, together with donations from Poole Regatta and various sailing clubs.

So if spectators did not have friends with boats to take them out, or did not travel to the Purbecks or other viewpoints, what was there to entertain them in the hours while the yachts were out of the harbour? In some years local boats of various kinds raced in the harbour, so there was plenty to see then. However, once the big yachts had disappeared for a few hours, and the in-harbour races had concluded, various other pursuits were provided for the delight of those thronging the Quay. At various times, the following activities were offered, which provided much amusement for the watching crowds:

- **Rowing matches**
- **Duck hunts**

- **Tub racing**
- **Mud racing**
- **Walking a greasy bowsprit**
- **Tug of war on rafts**
- **Climbing a greasy pole for a leg of mutton**
- **Swimming matches**
- **Canoe races**
- **Boxing on rafts**
- **Treacle buns on rafts for boys under 14**

These largely involved human participants, though the ducks could not choose whether to take part or not. A prosecution for cruelty in 1877 largely saw the end of this as a spectator sport.

Once the racing yachts had returned to their moorings and the various water sports in close proximity to the Quay had finished, the proceedings were not yet over. For most regattas the day ended with a large firework display, featuring many set-piece displays such as the arms of the town, or the words 'Poole Regatta' surrounded by relevant symbols. In the evening, there were often dinners at one of the local hotels, and frequently a Regatta Ball, which had people dancing until well into the early hours.

In 1851, the One Hundred Guinea Cup race was sailed around the Isle of Wight. Of the 15 boats that entered, three had been designed and built by the Wanhill boatyard in Hamworthy. The yacht America won the race, and ever since then it has been known as 'The America's Cup'. This race seemed to inspire further interest in racing yachts and the various techniques which were being employed to make them go faster.

The following year saw the formation of The Poole Yacht Club on 1st June 1852. The first acts of the newly-elected Committee were to ask one of the local contestants in the previous year's race to become "Commodore Captain" and to set a date for a Regatta.

The regatta date was set for 28th June 1852 – which immediately engendered howls of protest from the local populace. This date was the anniversary of the Coronation of Queen Victoria and was celebrated as a holiday every year. Regatta days were also classed as holidays, so to put the two together meant the locals missing out on one of them. Common sense prevailed, and the regatta was moved to 7th July – only to be moved once again to Friday 9th to avoid the General Election of that year!

One feature of the time was the growing interest in the boats that were being produced by various boat builders in Hamworthy – among them Messrs Wanhill, Meadus and Son, and Saunders. The cutting edge design of some of their yachts caused great excitement, as several of them were launched straight into a Regatta to compete against each other. One of these was the Lilla, built by Wanhill for Mr Gee, the Vice-Commodore of the Royal Yorkshire Yacht Club. The picture shows the trophy he won in 1852, which is now in the possession of Poole Yacht Club.

Regattas continued throughout the second half of the century,



The Lilla Trophy and The Canford Cup

although there were some years when no event took place. Fireworks were often provided and various town bands began to make regular appearances playing throughout the day. Public transport, such as trains or steamers, was often laid on to enable day visits to view the sailing.

Regattas were organised by a Committee of local dignitaries and paid for by public subscription. In 1869, regattas were held in Poole, Bournemouth and Swanage, all within the space of a fortnight!

In 1875 there was no regatta, so the fishermen of Hamworthy got together and ran their own. About this time, comments appeared in the press, bemoaning the lack of support shown by

from local sailing clubs and civic dignitaries. Clubs were also increasing the amount of yacht and rowing races they were organising, so there was much activity throughout the harbour. The prizes, however, seemed to be nowhere near as generous as in the past – not a silver plate in sight and prizes ranging from £2.10 to a 3rd prize of 10 shillings.

However, as the new century dawned, a regatta took place in September 1900 under the auspices of Poole Yacht Club and Poole Amateur Rowing Club. Various handicap matches were

BRANKSEA BAZAAR, under the Patronage of
Her Majesty the Queen, and **POOLE REGATTA, WEDNESDAY, 29th August, 1855.**

SOUTH-WESTERN RAILWAY.
On the above day, at 11.30 a.m. a **SPECIAL TRAIN** will Leave Southampton, calling at following Stations, to take up passengers for Poole, returning from Poole at 7.30 p.m. same day :—

Leave	A.M.	Fares to Poole and Back.	
		1st Class.	2nd Class.
Southampton at.....	11.30	s. d.	s. d.
Blechynden at	11.36	8 0	4 0
Redbridge at	11.44	7 6	3 6
Lyndhurst Road at	11.54	7 0	3 0
P.M.			
Brookenhurst at.....	12.11	5 6	2 6
Ringwood at	12.31	4 0	2 0
Wimborne at	12.49	2 6	1 8
Arrive at Poole about ..	1.10		

ARCHD. SCOTT, Traffic Manager.
Waterloo Bridge Station, August, 1855.

the people of Poole and civic dignitaries, so interest appeared to be waning. By now, other yacht clubs had been formed and the Isle of Purbeck Yacht Club, formed in 1876 and based in Swanage, also ran regattas. The Poole Amateur Rowing Club joined in regatta activities in the 1880s and contestants from other local rowing clubs also began to compete.

Gradually the nature of the regattas appeared to change. Sailing yachts were getting smaller, as more people became engaged in the sport but did not have the funds to purchase such large yachts as appeared in the earlier part of the century. Rowing matches, which could be seen in the harbour, were taking up much more time and space. Indeed, one of the reports of the Regatta in 1896 stated that the sailing matches were of no interest to the general public and that the main focus of interest was in the rowing!

In the 1890s, the Poole Town Regatta Committee was formed to ensure the future of the regatta, made up of various people

POOLE REGATTA.

THE above REGATTA will (weather permitting) be held in POOLE HARBOUR on
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3rd, 1884,

Committee : W. D. Dugdale, W. A. Stone, C. E. Robinson, R. Aldridge, H. S. Dickinson, C. T. Marston, J. Perston, Broster Hill, C. D. Webber, G. B. Aldridge, P. E. L. Buge, H. A. Lawton, W. Meadus, G. F. Wanhill, W. Yerbury, F. G. Wheatley, J. Hoskins, W. J. Bacon.

1.—Yachts not exceeding 30ft. First prize, £5 ; 2nd, £2 10s. ; 3rd, £1. Entrance fee, 5s. Start at 10.30 a.m.

2.—Pleasure Boats not exceeding 21ft. First prize, £4 ; 2nd, £2 ; 3rd, £1. Entrance fee, 4s. Start at 11 a.m.

3.—Sailing Boats not exceeding 17ft. First prize, £3 ; 2nd, £1 ; 3rd, 10s. Entrance fee, 3s. Start at 11.15 a.m.

4.—Fishing Boats, not exceeding 18ft., belonging to Poole Harbour. First prize, £3 ; 2nd, £1 ; 3rd, 10s. No entrance fee. Start at 11.30.

Committee Vessel off Stakes

held for boats of varying sizes, including fishermen. Regattas continued throughout the 20th century, apart from the periods 1914-1918 and 1939-1945, when no leisure sailing was permitted in the harbour.

A century later, to celebrate the Millennium in the year 2000, the Combined Yacht Clubs of Poole organised the Poole Keelboat Regatta. The Poole Regatta Committee still works across the clubs to provide a regatta for keelboats in the harbour every two years. The winner's name is inscribed on the Canford Cup – first presented in 1849 and now on permanent display in Poole Museum.

Thus, after more than 200 years, the tradition of regattas in the harbour lives on.



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