



## WIVENHOE SAILING CLUB

# MAINSHEET

2011 AUTUMN EDITION

Editor: Roy Crookes

### contents

#### in this issue:

	page
profile: Chris Mullins	1
club news	2
cadet camp	3
boat lifting	3
old gaffers	5
trip to Havengore	5
the broomway	6
not the wallet shield	7
the blackthorn	8
annual dinner form	9
winter programme	10
in and around the club	10
past perils at sea	12
for the diary	13
obituary	14
stern locker; stop press	16
small ads.	16

### editor's note:

Once again, many thanks go to club members, for their contributions to this issue. As usual we have items of news, views and information, as well as fun and games and sails, sales and whales. There are perils of sea and shore and more.

Sadly we pay our respects to yet another very great loss to our club membership.

### profile: Chris Mullins

Born in Nth Wales, in Wrexham, Chris moved extensively, world-wide before eventually arriving in Wivenhoe, in the seventies. He spent four of his early years in Australia and, travelling by passenger ships, in those early days of emigration made an impression on him, giving him a love of the sea and the desire to make a

living at sea. However it was at the cost of a disrupted education, having to keep changing schools, he incredibly attended twenty-three!



Chris was introduced to WSC when only 14 by his dad, Jack and his cousin, Jonny Girling. Jack had a *Hunter 19*, called '*Barangoola*' meaning 'flood-tide', later to be owned by Chris and by Phil Thompson, before featuring last year on the internet. Chris joined the club in 1968 and moved to Wivenhoe in 1976 having married Pat three years before. Though Chris has mainly made his living along marine lines and Jack had presented a trophy to the club, the lure of sailing has not been too strong, for the younger generation, Rebecca and Sean.

Chris says '*there has been tremendous change during my 43 years of membership much of it for the better but what we now have on our doorstep is as good as winning the lottery!*' During this time he has owned four cruisers as well as an 11 ft *Wensum* dinghy: other *Hunters*, a *21*, '*Rangatria*', a

**701, 'Lady Rebecca' and the current Sadler 26, 'Aurora'.**

Known as an 'activist' (my word, not his or yours? – Ed.) he has been a motivating influence, with others, behind a number of significant club projects, principally but not solely, to do with boat handling, during lift and launch. He admits to enjoying 'anything to do with small boats' and believes that the move to the new premises 'opened the way for the club to expand its potential and enhance its facilities to stake its place alongside kindred clubs.' He made a model WOD to commemorate this event as well as other features like the club name board.

But mainly he will be associated by his enthusiasm and effort, with **BULG** and the two tractors, the travel hoist, the work boat, 'Viking', the boat-shed design work and the storage racks, of the earlier tractor garage. The latest project was of course the new tractor shed and who could doubt Chris's commitment to convincingly making the case for it?

There will no doubt be things I have omitted to mention and one, my personal image, is of five empty fuel cans, arriving anonymously on my doorstep after each hauling season!

### club news:

Well, we've had lots of weather by now and some of us have been blown around quite a lot.

Here is a brief update of some of the items that crop up periodically:

**Pontoons** – The pontoons provide a great facility, this was highlighted recently when we hosted a club visit from Bradwell Quay Yacht Club, nine boats in all arrived on the Saturday. House and Wines laid on an excellent cooked breakfast for them before they departed on the Sunday lunchtime tide.

**WODs** – Recent years have seen a decline in the number of Wivenhoe One Designs (WOD) racing on Colne and concerns were raised as to the future of the class. However, a recent meeting of the WOD

Association showed that there remained a good deal of enthusiasm for the class, lets hope this interest translates in time to more WODs on the water.

**Safety Boats** – The smaller safety boat (Raven 2) engine was replaced at the start of season, like the replacement of Raven 1 before, this too is a more fuel efficient four stroke model.

**Cadets** – the cadet section is as popular as ever and this year's summer camp used the camping facilities of Ivy farm, a short walk from Mersea Stone on East Mersea. To improve the cadet tuition for the future, two of the cadet leaders will undergo RYA recognized training.

**Dinghy Park** – Various projects involving racks are underway. A mast rack for the wintering cruisers is at the design stage and will hopefully be ready this autumn. There are also plans to store the clubs Topaz fleet in a rack where the boats and launching trolley can be slotted into a horizontal slot arrangement. There is also interest to provide a canoe storage rack. These schemes should all help save space.

**Moorings** – The number of moorings remains unchanged and though there is a waiting list, boats are usually accommodated somewhere even on a temporary basis.

**Tractor shed** – Despite the skydiving antics of one of the key members of the Tractor shed project, progress has been quite remarkable with a team of talented individuals bringing the building close to completion.

**Lifting group** – various maintenance jobs have been identified and are underway with the tractor. The shed used by the group, will be handed back to the club soon with the essential equipment being moved to either the new tractor shed, for the more essential equipment, while the less regularly used equipment will be stored in a new enclosure beneath the boat shed steps.

I hope you enjoy the rest of the season and watch out for that weather there's a lot of it about!

**Vice-Commodore - Phil Thompson**

## cadet camp, East Mersea:

Friday, 8<sup>th</sup> to Sunday, 10<sup>th</sup>, July.

22 Cadets turned up to brave the weather, which was testing at times, even for the adults! Only two boats managing to sail all the way to the Stone, the rest were towed. Well done everyone for sticking it out. Wind SW 5 to 6. Only 2 reefs in the boats, as we needed power to punch through the steep waves off Alresford Creek.

A special thanks to the safety boat crews who themselves were nearly stranded on the falling tide whilst rescuing one of the boats. (no names!). The parents had driven down with all the camping gear to the campsite and we left the boats securely pulled up on Mersea Stone and walked the 20 minutes to the campsite, which is just perfect. We will be booking it again for next year.



all present and correct?

On the Saturday we sailed across to Harkers yard in Brightlingsea creek on a run with a WSW 4 to 5, which was exciting. This is the base for the Pioneer Trust. Many thanks Bruce for organising a tour of the Building sheds and the projects in hand. The return trip was hard work beating into the wind, which had stronger gusts at times. A couple of boats took a detour around the Pioneer and some of the boats were blown onto a lee shore and had to be towed back. (It is fun, isn't it!?) After a filling lunch of Bolognese (thanks Nikki), the cadets got on with the serious work of organising their teams of explorers

and eels. The poor human sacrifice wasn't too impressed! In the late afternoon we went for a sail up river behind Rat Island and up the Geedon Creek. We started off with 3 reefs in the SW5 wind but after a down-pour, the wind dropped (at last) and we had a good sail back. A quick trip back to camp to change, then back down for a trip out to Tony's smack, Lilly Anne for a barbeque. 34 people on board!

### A big thanks to Tony and Mandy.

Back to the stone, for a bonfire. We were entertained by Daisy, Becky and Rosie, who did a fire-dance (on *youtube*, I believe!) marshmallows and ghost stories followed, then back to camp for hot chocolate and bed. A lazy morning followed a full cooked breakfast (Nikki again!) then down to the Stone after lunch for swimming and mud surfing before a great sail back on a run with the SW 2 to 3 wind and sun. No dramas!



last one to the power boat is it!

Thank you to all the other helpers and parents who ferried all the kit there and back. Thanks Pauline for organising that.

A really great weekend! **Steve Hart.**

## Boat lifting

*Oh! no not yet – we've barely been in five minutes!*

**Meeting: 10.30am, Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> October** in the clubhouse of all those involved in having their boats ashore via the *Lifting Group*. Dates for lifting & helping can be booked on that day.

**haul-out dates Autumn 2011**

		HW/h	Depth/m
Tue	18 Oct	1625	3.79
Tue	25	1115	3.97
Wed	26	1205	4.17
Thurs	27	1255	4.33
Sat	29	1425	4.44
Thurs	10 Nov	1135	3.91
Fri	11	1210	3.96
Sat	12	1245	3.99
Mon	14	1350	3.97
Tue	15	1430	3.92
Thurs	24	1040	4.06
Fri	25	1135	4.21
Sat	26	1225	4.31
Tue	29	1445	4.16

**last lift**

There are 3 Saturdays and 15 weekdays. Trailers will need to be disentangled and lifted off each other during the first session. 29<sup>th</sup> November will be the last date.

**Ian Hunter**

mention one flying visit, from on high!) the project has progressed to a prestige acquisition for the club. **Thanks to all!**



not just a pipe dream?

Well there we have the proposed lifting schedule but the lads have been busy enough on shore. Thanks to an inspired vision, some first rate project development and a good helping of dedication from club volunteer-member constructors (not to

giz a job - I could do that!



so that's it!



(photo: LW)

and the tractor boys take a break

old gaffers



(photo: GW)

when are they coming?

Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> July saw the arrival at the club of the 'Old Gaffers' from Brightlingsea. There was much activity as assorted craft tied up in the river and on the pontoons at the club.



(photo: GW)

here they are!

On land, visitors and members were milling round the club house where the bar

was open and a hog-roast had been set up awaiting the arrival of the vessels.



(photo: GW)

I hope there's some roast hog left!

the trip to Havengore

Despite some blustery conditions, Bill, Bruce and myself set sail on the Friday. We were cruising in good company: Bob, Steve and Nikki were onboard Strider. After a few hours of exciting, and at times rather wet sailing, we arrived in the river Crouch - we had made good time and were soon in the Roach. Our plan was to anchor just inside Yokesfleet Creek. Bob went into the creek ahead of us and we were able to raft up for the night.

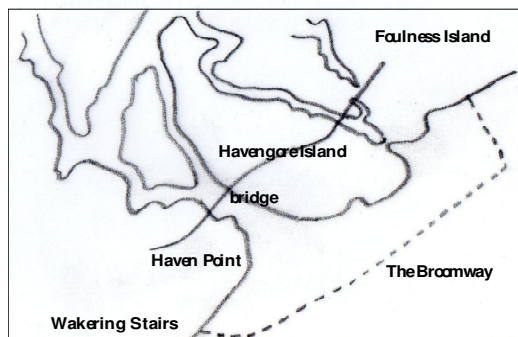
The following morning we took the decision to alter our passage plan, to take account of very rough conditions over the Maplin sands. Our revised passage plan was to see us going past the Havengore bridge and past Rushley Island - it was almost high-water and we found ourselves 'ditch crawling' around Potton Island and through the swing-bridge. We were able to sail through Paglesham Reach and back into the Roach. We were surprised by the amount of dinghies sailing in the Crouch, despite some very windy conditions. We sailed up the Crouch and spent the night at North Fambridge .

Next morning we enjoyed another exciting sail back into the Colne and, after a leisurely lunch, returned to the mooring. A great weekend all-round! **Gary Jobber.**

*And, while we are in the vicinity:*

## the Broomway

Who could help but be fascinated by the Broomway, a path, marked by brooms, from Wakering Stairs across Maplin Sand to Foulness Island. According to Janet Harber in *East Coast Rivers*, 'it is impossible for any other than light draught boats to get over the Broomway much before high water. The Broomway was originally a causeway, built along the Maplin Sand to connect Foulness Island, Havengore and New England Islands with the mainland at Wakering, before any bridge was constructed.'



### the *Broomway* location

[from Janet Harber in *East Coast Rivers*]

However, according to Peter Caton in *Essex Coast Walk*, 'though the Broomway may date back to Roman times or even earlier, its true age is unknown – the first written record is from 1419. To guide travellers, local people drove hundreds of wooden stakes into the mud at 30 yard intervals and tied bundles of twigs to them, giving the appearance of witches' brooms and the path its name. The postman came this way to deliver the mail by horse and cart, with delivery times dependent on the tides. For safety he would only undertake the journey as the tide was going out and if foggy would take a helper to look out for the markers as he drove. No-one knows the path's origins, or even if it was man-made or natural, but a possible explanation is a natural outcrop of chalk just below the surface.'

'Considered to be one of the most dangerous footpaths in England, it runs six

miles across Maplin Sands and is under water for 3 hours either side of high tide. To both left and right of the hard surface is soft sand and mud. The fast moving tides cover the mudflats as fast as a man can walk and the unwary walker can find water approaching from both sides, the conflicting flows forming whirlpools and blocking any escape to land. Disorientating sea mists often fall rapidly, leaving anyone on the path in a virtual whiteout and travellers have been known to have met their death struggling out to sea in rising water.'

Having first learnt of its existence from Peter Caton's book, I was delighted when my son produced an old volume, from about the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, of another coast walk and the following description of an incident involving the Broomway: 'Eastwards from Rochford, a long winding and ascending road leads to the little village of Barling. – Still further east is Great Wakering. A mile of lonely road beyond the village ends abruptly on the sea-wall at a point known as Wakering Stairs, over-looking the dreary expanse of the Maplin Sand. – At low tide you may cross the sands to Foulness Island. One of the most curious sights I have ever beheld was when, reaching the Stairs just before dusk, there appeared a procession of market-carts rapidly driven across the sands, amid much splashing, through water, about a foot deep, with two or three fishing smacks beyond and a distant steamer on the horizon.'

'Quite recently, the rector of Foulness, although he had often crossed the sands before, had a very narrow escape from drowning, which he described in a letter to a friend, since published. It was all in the day's work, as he was returning from a ruridecanal conference at Leigh: 'Leaving Shoeburyness at about 5.30 p.m.', says Mr. Marsh, 'I walked in a drenching rain to Wakering Stairs, reaching that spot about 6.30, almost completely wet through. Here I took off my boots for a four-mile walk across the sands, all under water. It was raining hard, and the sands were nearly

dark, but I thought if I could reach the first broom, I could find my way across. Brooms are placed about every thirty yards, and there are three hundred and sixty-six of them. I floundered through the deep mud more than ankle deep till I reached safely the first broom. I was wet through with fresh water downwards, pouring down from hat and coat-sleeves and salt water upwards, my boots slung over my neck, and in my hands, two heavy bags of books. – However, I trotted along very happily for a couple of miles. I had crossed one creek and reached the second, when suddenly the rain changed to a sort of Scotch mist and I could not see the next broom. But I trudged on in a straight line for ninety steps, when I found another broom. Two must have been washed away. I was very pleased, and went gaily on again, but it got hopelessly dark, and after going about forty steps and not finding the next broom, I turned back, as I thought, to find the next broom, but I missed it. The mist was then quite bewildering, and I thought I would make straight for land whatever happened. On I went for ever so far, quite lost, when suddenly to my joy I came upon a broom. Just then a black darkness came over, and I could see nothing, but I stuck to my broom, if only I could find the next. I knew the tide was rising, and unless it cleared a bit, my only hope was in feeling carefully which way the waves came, and so perhaps finding the shore.’

After describing how he was completely puzzled by the unexpected positions of the ‘Swin, Mouse, and Nore’ lights, Mr. Marsh continues: ‘Soon, to my delight, I reached the black mud. I pushed through it, over my ankles in slime, and every now and then stepping into a small rill. At last I reached Saltings. They looked blacker even than the mud, and I was not certain of them at first, but sure enough I put my foot on firm vegetation. I was truly thankful.’

*Romantic Essex: Pedestrian Impressions* by Reginald A Beckett, published 1901.

**Val Crookes**

not the wallet shield:



(photo: NR)

should we try to catch them up?

oOo

Kevin Hoskins was surprised by what he saw from his mooring at Wivenhoe, one day late in July but not too taken-aback to miss a camera shot!



where and what do you think it is?

Later, at the weekend, off Pyefleet Creek, he saw it again but this time he was with son Simon, who got video-footage of it, darting through the surface – a harbour porpoise they suggest –

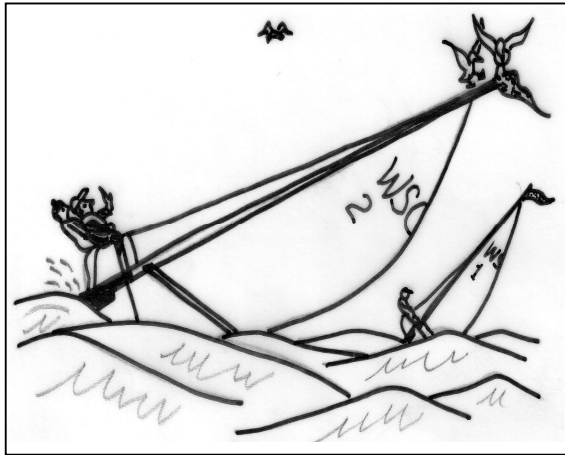
Terrific – I’ve seen the film! – Ed.

oOo

### Ostend Rally 2011:

On 5<sup>th</sup> August, about 20 assorted vessels and intrepid crews set off for Ostend and beyond. We now await, for those still not seen, after their safe return from the high seas with rumours of weather, to recant their tales of adventure!

oOo



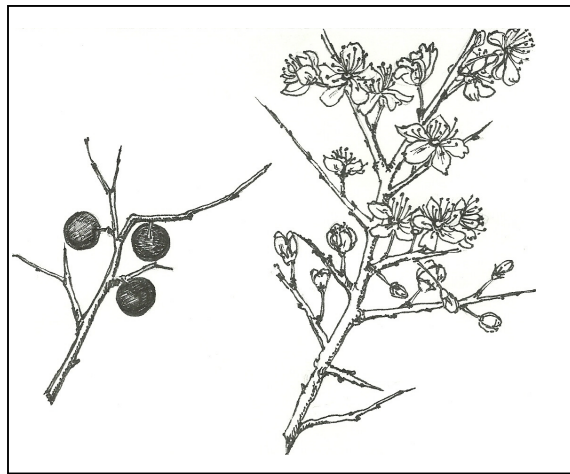
**No!.....go away!**

[idea from a card in a Nantes shop window]

### the blackthorn

Just below the clubhouse on the inside of the sea wall were wonderful clumps of blackthorn, a shrubby tree easily recognised by its black bark and long sharp thorns, now gone as a result of the environment agency's sudden concern for the state of the country's sea walls! No more easy pickings of sloes by club members and birds this autumn. However, a walk across the marsh and along the lanes soon tells us it is a very common small tree, up to twelve feet high growing almost everywhere often forming impenetrable thickets. Blackthorn is spread mainly by birds that eat the sloes flesh and drop or swallows the hard pip. The thickets persist as they spread by means of sucker shoots from the roots. You cycle or walk through a wonderful thicket on your

way to Colchester along the river. Wood from blackthorn can be turned on a lathe and polished stems make excellent walking sticks. Stout, knobby stems were used in the past as cudgels. In Ireland a cudgel strapped to the wrist is called a shillelagh. Blackthorn, an ancestor of our garden plums, belongs to the rose family. It flowers prolifically in the early spring, so much so that whole hedgerows can turn white for a brief period. The leaves are the food plant for a significant number of moth and butterfly caterpillars.



the blackthorn (Gill Maloney)

In late spring in past years cuckoos were commonly seen tucking into these caterpillars on the now absent seawall bushes. Blackthorn is an important source of food for insects such as bumblebees and a popular nesting place for chaffinches and yellow-hammers. As we all know the fruit, the sloes, can be collected for use in making preserves or country wines or for flavouring gin. In autumn the leaves turn a beautiful gold as well as crimson and purple.

**Tim Denham**



# WIVENHOE SAILING CLUB ANNUAL DINNER

**Saturday November 19<sup>th</sup> 2011**  
**At Wivenhoe Sailing Club, Walter Radcliffe Way.**  
**6.30 Reception for 7.15pm**

The Dinner will take place on the Upper deck.  
 Music on the Lower deck after the prize giving and speeches  
 Tickets £29.00

Dress: Gentlemen blazer or suit, Ladies lovely as always.

\*\*\*

Pumpkin, Honey and Sage Soup

Salmon, Prawn, Avocado &  
 Pink Grapefruit Tartare

Duck Confit with Smoked Chilli Jam,  
 Salad and Cobber Croutes

\*\*\*

Beef & Root Vegetable Bourguignon  
 With Horseradish Dumpling  
 (Served with creamy mashed potato and seasonal vegetables)

Chicken Forestiere  
 With a Herb, Bacon, Mushroom and Button Onion Jus  
 (Served with creamy mashed potato and seasonal vegetables)

Creamed Leek, Wild Mushroom & Artichoke Wellington  
 (Served with new potatoes and seasonal vegetables)

\*\*\*

Raspberry Brulee with Shortbread Biscuit

Double Chocolate Fresh Cream Roulade

Sticky Toffee Pudding with Dark Toffee Sauce

\*\*\*

Cheese board & Port

Coffee & mints

**Please return this form and cheque, payable to Wivenhoe Sailing Club, by 4<sup>th</sup> November 2010** to The Rear Commodore, Wivenhoe Sailing Club, Walter Radcliffe Way, Wivenhoe, C07 9WS (or put in the box provided at the club).

I/We would like to come to the Annual Dinner and wish to reserve .....places  
 I enclose a cheque for £.....

Please print all your names and your choice of menu.

FULL NAME	1 <sup>st</sup> course 1, 2 or 3	2 <sup>nd</sup> course 1, 2 or 3	3 <sup>rd</sup> course 1, 2 or 3	Cheese yes/no

I/we would like if possible to sit near.....

<b>Sailing calendar</b>					
			HW	start	food
Aug	21	Sun	17:20	15:30	
	24	Wed	20:45	19:15	
	28	Sun	12:20	10:30	
Sep	3	Sat			Scaly Capstan Evening Pursuit (5) Ladies Race WRYOA Autumn Rally Bradwell Open Day
	17	Sat	15:39	13:30	
	18	Sun	16:11	14:30	
Oct	2	Sun	16:19	14:30	May Mug/Sykes (5) and Farran Cup May Mug/Sykes (6) and Capriol Capstan Autumn Hard Working Party
	15	Sat	14:40	09:30	
	16	Sun	15:12	13:15	
	30	Sun	14:14	12:15	
Nov	13	Sun	13:17	11:30	lunch Rat Race lunch Glozier Laying Up Trophy Winter Series (1) Winter Series (2)
	27	Sun	13:11	11:30	
Dec	11	Sun	12:23	10:45	Winter Series (3) Winter Series (4)
	24	Sat	11:22	09:45	

<b>Social calendar</b>				
Nov	18	Fri		20:00
Dec	18	Sun		12:00
	24	Sat		11:00

**Annual dinner**  
**Children's party**  
**Mulled Wine/ Minced Pies**

### in and around the club

It's been another busy summer in the club for me as Rear-Commodore, with the Dinghy Regatta and 'the Old Gaffers' making the beginning of our sailing season memorable.



time for a song

Once again, the weather was good to us for both these events, and it was wonderful to

see the club full of members and their families enjoying the activities on the water as well as shore side.



burger anybody?

The Dinghy regatta DIY Barbeque was a very chilled out affair, thanks to Chris

Smith and his friends, who provided the evening entertainment. The men of the sailing club seemed suitably impressed also with the new barbecues, which were purchased to replace the old oil drum barbecues, which unfortunately have now seen better days!

The visit of the 'Old Gaffers' once again brought out the sunshine and as a result a crowd of visitors to the sailing club! Anticipating the numbers due to the weather, the House Committee had increased the expected numbers to 200+ for catering and Frank actually sold meals to 240 people that afternoon! Thank you all for coming along, and if you made a cake for the event.



go on then; I shouldn't

The turn-out was great and I know everybody from the Old Gaffers Association had another wonderful visit to Wivenhoe.



are you sure this is how to use a water-bed?

WS Club also made a big impression at the Wivenhoe Town Regatta thanks to a group of our members who took part in the 'raft' race with their lilo creation and won the race! Well done indeed to Andrew, Mark and Paul for entering on behalf of the club (especially as I had some doubts to its floatability-sorry and I take it all back!!). I know they are very much looking forward to the Annual Dinner now to be presented with the 'Pub Shovel' award! Is this the first time it has been awarded to our club?



told you it would float!

Preparations are well under way for the forthcoming Annual Dinner on 19<sup>th</sup> November as well as the Wallet Ball on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2012, for which we are the host club next year! Information about the Annual Dinner can be found in this edition of Mainsheet. Please get your menu choices and payment to me ASAP to secure your place, as numbers are restricted to 80. Wallet Ball tickets will be available soon, so look out for further information via the 'e-mail alerts' as well as posters in the foyer.

I would like to finish with a big thank you to Tim for all his hard work with the bar. He has done a brilliant job as bar manager and I wish you all the best in your new job! Peter Goldsmith will be taking over as Bar Manager with help from Bob Baldwin to get him started! Kerry Gibby will be continuing to be 'in charge' of the bar sign up sheet, so please see her and sign up for a slot if you have not done so for a while!



knowledge transfer

Also, a big thank you to everyone who has contributed to the events in the club so far! You know who you are!

**Rear-Commodore, Louise Woods.**

**A few dates for your diary:**

Saturday, 17<sup>th</sup> September: WS Club Open Day: **Home-made cakes and helpers needed on the day - please e-mail or call me! Thanks!!**

Saturday, 8<sup>th</sup> October: *Itchy Feet* Barn Dance

Sunday, 16<sup>th</sup> October: Rat race + Sunday Lunch

Sunday, 30<sup>th</sup> October: Laying Up Race + Sunday Lunch

Saturday, 19<sup>th</sup> November: Annual Dinner

Sunday, 18<sup>th</sup> December: Children's Christmas Party

Friday, 23<sup>rd</sup> December: Christmas

Gathering & Ugly Mince Pie competition

Saturday, 24<sup>th</sup> December: Christmas Eve Race + Mulled Wine & Mince Pies

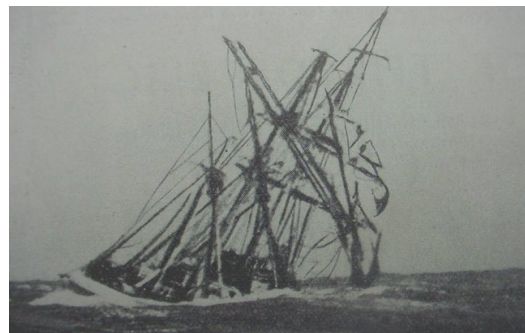
Sunday, 8<sup>th</sup> January: Early Row and Ramble!

Saturday, 21<sup>st</sup> January: Burns Night.

**past perils at sea**

Towards the end of the nineteenth century most commercial shipping was timber built and used sail as the means of propulsion. The life of such ships was relatively short, given the time and money lost in maintenance and the need to keep them at sea and earning their keep. The owners chased every penny available from their aging work-horses and the ships quickly

deteriorated. Many were to spend their final days afloat in the American and Canadian lumber trade, hauling deck cargos of timber to Europe. The north Atlantic seas and the hurricane alleys of the West Indies sometimes were too much for the old girls and many became victims to the atrocious weather patterns and in any kind of 'blow', were likely to be abandoned by their crews once they began to take on water. The irony of the situation was often that although appearing to be about to flounder with countless leaks and strained hulls it would be their very cargo of timber that would help many to survive, yet afloat without a crew and with no means of propulsion other than the winds and tides, they became a dangerous ship to encounter, especially on a dark night.

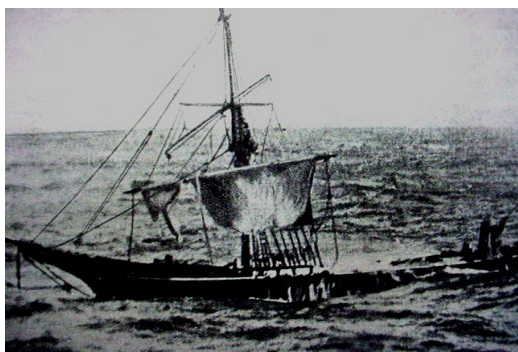


the barque, *Manica*, awash but still afloat: 1906\*

One of the perils of the sea were the numbers of derelict hulks, abandoned by their crews but remaining afloat in the shipping lanes, some of which, floated about the oceans for weeks or months and even in some cases, years, even with the sea-cocks opened by her crew and having been set on fire to assist her hasty demise to Davy Jones' locker, with a view to prevent her being a peril to other seafarers on the thriving Atlantic trades.

The Sargasso Sea is an area stretching from Florida to about half way to Africa, a place wherein the slack tide and circulating currents hold all in limbo and many ships wound up there before drying out in the relenting sun and eventually sinking through their opened planking. During this period, ships could have been drifting

around for many years; there is an instance of one vessel being sighted many times in various locations and yet still afloat over the course of four years, where she covered about 10,000 miles before disappearing for ever. The US Coastguard did what it could in sending these dangerous vessels to the bottom but it was never easy to get rid of one, once encountered. Shell-fire merely distributed the wreckage over a great area, burning them usually took the hull down to the waterline, making her a worse prospect to sight, torpedoes were too expensive and gun-cotton charges or dynamite needed to be laid low on the keel to ensure swift dispatch.



*Edward L Maybury*-N Atlantic: 1905\*

The USN even tried ramming, until in 1899 several warships were so badly damaged in this task, that they had to return to base for extensive dockyard surgery.

The icy regions of the Poles trapped many ships, although these were largely whalers or sealers; probably the most curious example was that of the fishing schooner 'Albion', which was carried the length of the Grand Banks channel, perched on the top of an ice-shelf of a huge iceberg as it was driven along by the Southward Drift.

There were 107 casualties to British ships from collisions with hulks or derelict wreckage over a ten year period and shipping Masters petitioned Parliament to have steps taken to ease the situation but despite warships being sent to clear the seas it was of little avail. Often when a hulk was reported by the mariner first making landfall, to the time when a

warship was sent to deal with it, a matter of weeks or even months had elapsed and the marauder had drifted sometimes hundreds of miles from the sighted report. No VHF in those days! Comically enough, in 1896 an Act was passed in Parliament, under the heading of 'Derelict Vessels (Report) Act' which fined a Master £5 for not so reporting a sighting of a hulk. A lot of money, in those days.



*Lysglint* -a charred ruin, she floated for about six months before sinking: 1921\*

In 1914, the Safety Convention Act was passed, following the tragic sinking of the 'R.M.S. Titanic' and although this issue was directed primarily at icebergs, it also loosely covered the problem of derelicts. The advent of effective ship's radios began to ease the situation for the better and then the trading world slowly called the transport of timber in wooden sailing ships to a gradual halt; eventually fewer and fewer ships became abandoned and a maritime danger and those that were, were always reported and tracked by both radio and with the new burgeoning arrival of the aeroplane. [\*Seafarers Weekly, 1907] **P.Cobbold.**

one for the diary:

**Autumn Working Party: Saturday, 15th October, 2011 - 9.30 onwards.** (Tea, coffee and a light lunch will be served.)

It's our regular opportunity to keep up with maintenance work on Club buildings and around the site. Details of work to be tackled will be posted on the notice-board and via email alerts from mid-September onwards.

The list will include:

1. Cleaning the hards (both of them) - activity may be cut short by HW which is 1430h.
2. Interior cleaning and redecoration of parts of the club-house - freshening up emulsion etc.
3. Repairing and refurbishing furniture - we have to apply some fire-proofing to curtains and chairs, also routine repairs to furniture, taps etc.



bottoms up 'three chairs' for the hwp!

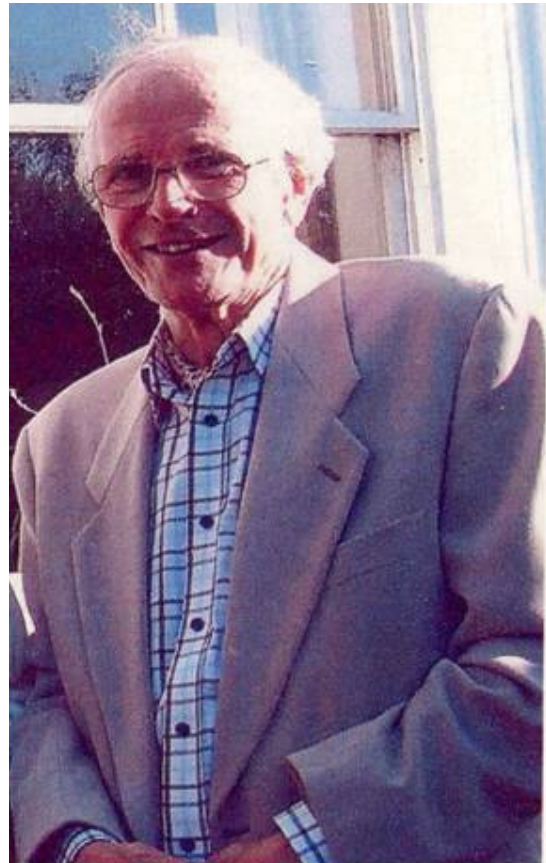
4. Keeping the garden (what's left) in trim, and planting along the new fence.
5. Outdoor tasks include installation of new bike racks and mast-rack, some work on the tractor-shed.
6. General tidy of the boat-storage areas, and moving stored trailers in readiness for winter laying-up.
7. A job for heroes - excavating shingle from the surface-drains on the car-park.

Do turn up with suitable working-clothes, bring tools and equipment if possible. Keep an eye open for details of these and other jobs, and please keep the date free.

**Alan Tyne**

**Obituary: Don Smith (1923 – 2011)**  
 Don loved the sailing club and for a great many years was one of its most supportive and enthusiastic members and as the years passed, it was no surprise that he became more and more respected. In his later years he was justly rewarded with a treasured 'Life Membership'.  
 In his early years in the club Don enjoyed crewing in the W.O.D.'s and then pottering

up and down the river in his little motor launch 'silver seal' with his family. In time he went on to the club committees. The House & Wines appeared his favourite! He served many years there enjoying the company of the ladies! He went on to become Rear Commodore and in 1975 was elected Commodore, an office he held for three years.



**Don Smith**

In past years, when clubs and boats were smaller and river and estuary sailors recognised each other, friendships were fostered with 'kindred club' nights. While Rear Commodore, Don fostered these enthusiastically. He encouraged activities such as Quiz Nights, 'Old Time Music Hall nights', Talent Competitions (Don had a fine voice and liked to belt out 'Old Father Thames').  
 During his years, Don saw and helped guide the sailing club through some of its many changes.

Firstly from primarily a dinghy sailing club with but a handful of cruisers, to what it is now – a club with thriving cruiser, dinghy and cadet sections. But always his overriding wish was to keep the club as a ‘family club’. And secondly, to its new home, the clubhouse below the barrier. Don was Rear Commodore at the time of the move and arranged with Paul Heiney, as guest celebrity, to open it.

Don was one of a team that worked hard to get the best for the club during a time of great change, coping with coasters through moorings, dirty cargoes, barrier builders, shipyard and boatyard closures, developers’ access roads and the list goes on. He realised that much of old Wivenhoe was disappearing fast. Someone had to record it and represent it to the old and new members of the club before it was lost forever and so started his marvellous collection of slides. His last show was just three months ago. The collection is now in the safe keeping of the Nottage Maritime Institute.

Don gave a great deal to the sailing club. We thank him for it. He will be sadly missed by us all.

**From original dedication by Tim Denham**

**And a personal reflection:**

From the moment Jan and I joined the club over 30 years ago, Don was a shining example of how to make a newcomer feel welcome. It was not easy for new members in those days and his way of introducing us to the real locals and getting us involved set the standard which his students have followed right up to today. Without question he was the man who wanted and encouraged WSC to be an affordable family organisation. He quickly became a ‘mate’ and regaled us with stories of old Wivenhoe, including the odd naughty tale (never malicious) which made me look at certain folk in a different light. His passion for local history caught us up in the net and whenever we came across an old picture we would pass it on. His means of copying photos with an Olympus OM 10 and a stand was efficient and that is

how his many slides came about. He even supervised me in making slides from throwaway camera prints when I had lost my slide camera in the Amazon.

As a Councillor my phone would regularly ring and I would hear–“Now mate what’s this all about and what are you going to do about it”? This was always about some local issue he had heard or read about. We helped each other and I was even allowed to assist with a slide show. To be part of encouraging his last slide show at the club not so long ago was a fitting tribute to having the honour of his friendship. Without his encouragement and push I would not have thought of becoming a flag officer of WSC and his support during our long negotiating process to obtain the new clubhouse was incalculable. It was fitting that he was once again Rear Commodore at the grand opening.

As we moved into the age of equality and political correctness, Don’s complete innocence of this so called new society was in many ways a delight. Whenever he stood up and spoke about a social function he always referred to “The ladies in the galley”, as if there was no question of male involvement. However, he was never disrespectful to the ladies and definitely loved being with them. You were guaranteed a laugh in his company. He passed on his dinner suit to me (for a price) and because it meant a lot to him from his flag officer days I did not have the heart to refuse or tell him I already had one. I still have it if anyone of not too heavy build is interested!

His last few months were fraught with anxiety and unhappiness and he became a shadow of his former self. Almost his last comment to us about the club was when we told him that it looked as if there would shortly be a stair lift. “Thank goodness mate. You won’t have to see a poor old man being carried up the stairs in a dining chair by a couple of strong blokes.”

RIP Don. We will remember you fondly.

**Brian Sinclair**

## stern locker:

Got a dinghy or tender for sale?  
Any reasonable condition, size and price  
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o0o



### *ffarffetched*

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## WSC: MAINSHEET

Member Address

### stop press:

**Saturday, 17<sup>th</sup> September: WS Club  
Open Day** - home-made cakes and helpers  
needed on the day – please e-mail or call  
Louise! Thanks!

**Saturday, 15<sup>th</sup> October: Hard-working  
party - 9.30 onwards.** Tea, coffee and a  
light lunch will be served.

**Tuesday, 18<sup>th</sup> October:** First haul-out.

**Saturday, 19<sup>th</sup> November:** Annual Dinner

**Next Mainsheet:** Dec 2011/ Jan 2012

### small ads:



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