



**Looking for an award
winning shipyard?
You've just found one.**

Not only is PETERS plc Europe's leading leisure boat retailer, it is also a major provider of shipyard services to hundreds of boat owners in the UK.

For whilst many yards repair and maintain boats, we actually care for them.

It matters not whether your boat is an old friend or the most up-to-date yacht or motor cruiser, because at PETERS Marine Centre we put all our customers first!

Can we be of service?

- New engines supplied and fitted
- Engine overhauls, spares and parts
- Electronics systems and maintenance
- Metal fabrication, GRP and carpentry
- Re-upholstery and valeting
- Worldwide collection service
- Very competitive prices
- Experienced professional advice
- Highest ISO 9004 standards
- Volvo Penta Main Dealer

Why not call us soon.

PETERS MARINE CENTRE telephone 01243 514632
Chichester Marina Chichester facsimile 01243 511447
West Sussex PO20 7EJ e.mail parts@petersplc.com

PETERS
MARINE CENTRE

www.petersplc.com



CCRC NEWS

Spring 2004



Chichester Cruiser Racing Club
**the club to join if you want to race with other
cruisers from Chichester Harbour**

FEATHERING PROPELLERS



MAX-PROP

The Gold Standard
Ultimate performance
Legendary reputation
2 or 3 bladed
For saildrives & shafts

J.F. Propeller

3 bladed
For saildrives & shafts

Maximum sailing speed through eliminating propeller drag.
Maximum motoring performance with 3 efficient blades.
Astounding reverse thrust and reduced "Prop walk" due to equal efficiency ahead and astern.
Adjustable pitch allowing "Fine tuning" for truly optimum performance.

Why compromise with anything less?

To transform your yacht and release its true potential talk to Darglow, the feathering propeller specialists.

T: 01929 556 512
F: 01929 551 956
E: mail@props4yachts.com



www.props4yachts.com



ALADDIN'S CAVE CHANDLERY Ltd.

**YOUR FIRST STOP FOR
QUALITY CHOICE AND VALUE**

**SOUTH'S LEADING
CHANDLERY GROUP
NOW ALSO AT
CHICHESTER**



Chandlery

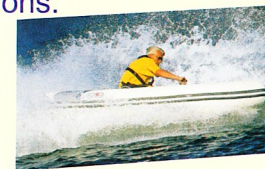
Our legendary and vast stocks of yachting equipment, covers the whole spectrum of yachting, from dinghies to superyachts. We are major stockist of all the best quality marine equipment, allowing us to offer the best value for money. Our staff have specialist knowledge in all areas of sailing from racing to blue water cruising.

Rigging Shop

In addition to all types of yacht rigging, our rigging shop specializes in architectural and industrial rigging. We also supply natural style fiber rope for gardens and other decorative situations.

Rib Centre (at our Swanwick Branch)

We are a major stockist of all Avon & Bombard Inflatables, including RIBs And Jet Ribs. We can quote for complete Rib Packages including Trailers and Outboards We are happy to offer Part Exchange and consequently often have various second hand inflatables for sale



If you visit the Hamble River find us at the following well stocked Marina Shops

New Megastore & Rigshop



Deacon's Boatyard, Bursledon 023 8040 2182
(Where the A27 crosses the Hamble River)

Port Hamble Marina
Satchel Lane, Hamble Tel 023 8045 4858

Hamble Point Marina
School Lane, Hamble Tel. 023 8045 5058

Mercury Marina
Satchel Lane, Hamble Tel. 023 8045 4849

Swanwick Marina
Bridge Rd. Swanwick Tel 01489 555999
OUR RIB CENTRE

OUR NEW SHOP IS AT Donningham Park Birdham Road
(A286) Chichester PO20 7DU

Tel. 01243 773788 Fax. 01243 778111

MAIL ORDER 01489 555908
RING fax 01489 555991 e-mail sales@aladdinscave.co.uk

CONTENTS

	page
Come and join us	6
2004 Programme	7
Sailing Secretary's Notes	9
The Little Britain	11
Round Ireland without a fridge	17
What a Cracker!	46
Five girls in a boat	48
Prizewinners	51

Cover: Sycorax shy reaching her spinnaker across the Medina in the 2003 Little Britain regatta

HAYLING GLASS FIBRE REPAIRS

Specialists in
Marine, Structural and Cosmetic Repairs

- Anti-fouling • Scrubbing Off below Waterline
- Osmosis Treatment • Painting & Varnishing

MIKE FRITH

SPARKES MARINA 38 WITTERING ROAD
HAYLING ISLAND PO11 OPD

TEL/FAX: 023 9246 4109 MOBILE: 07836 510657

H•G•F•R

CHICHESTER CRUISER RACING CLUB

Officers 2004

	Telephone
Commodore: Jacky Black	01273 464099
e-mail – jannebAc@netscape.net	mobile 0779 860 373
Vice Commodore: Rob McLeod	020 8998 4443
e-mail – ramcleodco@aol.com	
Secretary: Pam Marrs	023 9246 8885
e-mail – pam@marrsp.freemove.co.uk	
Sailing Secretary: Brian Dandridge	01273 846132
e-mail – brian.dandridge@btinternet.com	
Treasurer: Andy Reynolds	01903 775067
e-mail – andrew.reynolds@talk21.com	
Assistant Sailing Secretaries:	
John Lanham	01243 511251
e-mail – john.lanham@uk.zurich.com	
Bill Woods	023 9248 0384
e-mail – billwoods@ukonline.co.uk	
Guy McBride	01488 649771
e-mail – guy.McBride@easynet.co.uk	
Race results & handicapping: Pat Morrell	01273 845107
e-mail – p.morrell@sussex.ac.uk	
Crew Register: Hugh Caldwell	023 9247 3000
e-mail – hacaldwell@hotmail.com	
Webmaster: Richard Creer	01243 377099
e-mail – richard@radixsoftware.co.uk	
Website: www.ccrcc.co.uk	
Editor CCRC News: John Dunkley	020 8399 5993
e-mail – john.dunkley@rya-online.net	
Advertising Manager: Ann Jennings	01403 730021
e-mail – annjennings@coombdale.freemove.co.uk	

Come and join us

A message from Commodore Jacky Black

Welcome to the spring edition of CCRC News. I hope you enjoy reading about our activities and, for those who are not members, that it may tempt you to find out more about us. We are a friendly bunch and enjoy racing and cruising in and around the Solent, as well as across the Channel occasionally. We hope our programme has something for everyone. It would be great to see some new members taking part, as well as our usual faithful supporters. So get the dates in your diaries and organise your crews so that we have excellent turnouts this season!

In an attempt to please everyone (always impossible) we have decided to change the overall format. There will be a passage series, competed for over the whole season, and to accommodate those who can't manage to race on both days of the weekend, there will be two separate series for Saturday and Sunday races. The early May bank holiday weekend has a different format as the tides are unfavourable for heading too far west. Do try to attend this first weekend away as it is a great way of meeting fellow members and the social venues should be great.

The end of May cruise will be led by the Contessa contingent and details will be with you soon. Later in the season we have decided to reintroduce a fund raising event in aid of our local RNLI at Hayling Island. This will be a team race and all the other local clubs have been invited. The races will take place in Hayling Bay on 3 July and the prizegiving be at Sparkes followed by supper at Mariners Restaurant. We also hope to have plenty of support for another cross-Channel event over the August bank holiday, probably to Cherbourg. We will be joining up with other harbour clubs, in addition to our usual joint races during the season. I am looking forward to getting afloat again and seeing you all soon.

CCRC programme 2004

<u>Date</u>	<u>Tides</u>	<u>Ht</u>	<u>Start</u>	<u>Race/Social</u>
24.04				Fitting out supper HISC
25.04	15.41	4.1	11.00	Bay
01.05	09.21	4.0	10.30	Bay/Gosport/RN&A Gunwharf
02.05	10.10	4.2	10.30	Bay/Seaview/Haslar
03.05	10.55	4.4	09.30	Bay Return
08.05	14.50	4.7	10.30	Passage Cowes/Cowes Corinthian YC
09.05	15.41	4.5	10.00	Passage Return
15.05	09.43	4.1	13.00	Bramidge Trophy/Chichester YC
16.05	10.31	4.2	11.00	Bay
28.05	06.11	3.8	08.00	Passage France
19.06	13.13	4.4	10.00	Passage Wootton>Hamble/RVYC>Ferryboat
20.06	13.50	4.4	10.30	Passage Return
24.06	16.32	4.2		Corporate/Seaview
26.06	05.31	4.0		ISC Round the Island
03.07	12.50	4.8	12.00	RNLI open/Sparkes Mariners
04.07	13.43	4.8	10.30	Pursuit
10.07	18.43	4.1	11.00	Ladies' race Gosport/Hornet
11.07	07.01	3.8	11.00	Crews' race
17.07	12.21	4.3	11.30	Passage Cowes/East Cowes BBQ
18.07	12.57	4.4	10.00	Passage Return
15.08	12.03	4.4		HISC Regatta
27.08	22.08	4.3	20.00	Passage Cherbourg
04.09	15.37	4.5	12.00	Itchenor Casket, Wallace Cup/Itchenor SC
05.09	16.09	4.3	11.30	Bay
11.09	10.23	4.1	TBA	Channel SC Wooden Spoon/RAFYC
12.09	11.02	4.3	09.00	Passage Return
18.09	14.28	4.6	12.00	Passage Beaulieu/Master Builder
19.09	15.05	4.6	11.00	Passage Return
25.09	09.45	4.3	12.00	Sparkes Trophies/HISC (Continued)

26.09	10.40	4.6	10.30	Nab Cup Trophies
02.10	14.45	4.6	10.30	Bay/Bembridge
03.10	14.55	4.5	TBA	St Wilfred's Hospice Coastal Challenge
09.10	08.52	3.8	12.00	Bay/Chichester YC
10.10	09.46	4.1	10.30	Bay

IVOR'S ENGINES OUTBOARD MOTORS

SERVICING

REPAIRS

TUNING

SPARE PARTS

Tel (workshop)
023 9246 6999

Mobile
07901 930378

**HAYLING YACHT CO., MILL RYTHER LANE,
HAYLING ISLAND, HANTS, PO11 0QQ**

Sailing Secretary's Notes by Brian Dandridge

They say as you get older time passes faster. It seems like no time at all since I resigned as Sailing Secretary but here I am again - third time round! First, I would like to thank Trenter Ellis for all his hard work last season and for handing over his records in such a well ordered format. I am sorry he and Debbie have decided to move their boat to other waters but wish them successful sailing. They will be missed.

During the past few seasons different harbour clubs have sometimes run individual races on the same day, each with their own start, course and finish. We have now taken steps to work more closely together and, whilst it was too late to make significant changes this year, I hope the outcome will be better co-operation with an increase the number of boats racing together. As a first step the two races on 8 and 9 May, the RNLI race in July, and the Itchenor Casket race in September will be open races. I hope we will have a number of boats from CYC, Itchenor and the two Emsworth Clubs in particular, as they are going to "embed" their races into these events.

When I joined CCRC in 1987 the programme was built on a Passage Race Series and a Bay Race Series, each spread over the whole season. The move to the Spring, Summer and Autumn series was relatively recent. For the coming season we will revert to the earlier format but with a slight difference. There are some skippers who, for various reasons, are unable to commit to racing on both Saturdays and Sundays. We have, therefore, split the Bay races into two series - the Saturday Bay Race Series and the Sunday Bay Race Series. I hope this will meet with everyone's approval.

Last season there were several occasions when our races criss-crossed the shipping lanes in Hayling Bay. I have, therefore, reviewed all our courses - Passage and Bay - and made a number of changes. Please ensure you do not in future use the old courses from previous handbooks. We are about to distribute new ones. To help plan and check courses I used a PC application which is distributed free by Garmin. I have loaded all the relevant waypoints and routes and, whilst we will be distributing the courses on paper, I am happy to make the programme and data files available to anyone who wants them. This enables you to see the course details, the lat & long of each waypoint, and the course laid out in a diagrammatic fashion with bearings and distances calculated. You can get this direct from Garmin's web site - www.gpsu.co.uk

This year I will be asking the Assistant Sailing Secretaries and Race Officers to ensure there is a report on every race. If you are asked to write one, please do it as soon after the weekend as possible and send it straight off to CCRC News. This is one of the best forms of advertising the Club has, but it needs your input.

Anne Jennings and Keith Feltham have been working hard on the programme for the Spring Cruise. The last one they organised was particularly successful and enjoyable, so I recommend you put it firmly in your diary for this season.

A big thank you to Pam Marrs, who has been of considerable help during the past few months in getting the programme together and to our Commodore, Jacky Black, for her help and support since we started working on it last autumn. I hope you all have a very enjoyable 2004 season and look forward to seeing you on the water.

A close run thing in the Little Britain by Brian Dandridge (Sycorax)

The Little Britain Challenge Cup is the largest annual corporate yachting regatta in Europe. Last year it took place at Cowes on the Isle of Wight from 11 to 14 September and is expected to have raised over £100,000 for the Jubilee and Cirdan Sailing Trusts.

Peter Thompson, Steve Green and Phil Davis, who were all consultants for the Little Britain Office Development on London Wall, did not know what they were starting in 1988. The original wager for the single race was the price of a dinner. Today it is the biggest regatta in England after Cowes Week, and is easily the biggest European industry sailing event. The success has been such, that 15 years later it commands the highest level of charter fees for the season and the Royal Ocean Racing Club has had to re-programme its events to take account of the gathering.

In 2003 the event was once again hugely oversubscribed with a lucky 211 boats selected to take part in the three-day regatta. It was based on the successful formula of a three-race series in the Central Solent. One short and one medium length race take place on Friday and one long race on Saturday. The Royal Yacht Squadron organises the racing and sets the courses - giving competitors the added excitement of Squadron line starts.

The Regatta is open to crews whose businesses are directly involved in the construction industry. In keeping with the spirit of the event, the number of professional sailors and charterers' representatives is limited to one per boat under 40 feet and two per boat over 40 feet and they are not permitted to helm.

Those are the facts you can read on the Little Britain Challenge Cup website - <http://www.littlebritain.co.uk>. I have worked in the CAD (Computer Aided Design) industry for the past 13 years and a major proportion of our client base comes from the construction industry. I was first invited to take part back in 1996 when Autodesk offered to pay for our entry and expenses providing their staff comprised half the crew. We had a reasonably successful regatta – eighth overall in Class 2 for IRC boats rating 0.999 and below. The following year we went even better and won Class 2. Unfortunately, the directors of my own company were not interested in sailing so when Autodesk didn't follow up the success we took no further part. That changed this year when my employers, Excitech Computers, took on two new senior staff members, both keen sailors. One of these, Bob Garrett, our new marketing manager, is a fellow member of CCRC and has sailed with me ever since I raced a Sonata in Brighton back in 1982. Together we badgered our MD into entering us for the 2003 regatta.

Since our last participation, the event has grown considerably and we now found ourselves in Class 3 – still for boats of 0.999 and below. It is an indication of how things have changed in that when I last took part there were 39 boats in this rating category; this year despite the fact that IRC entries were double, there were just 14 IRC rated boats below the split, and we were lowest rated but one at 0.900. My crew for the series included fellow CCRC members, Pat Morrell, Nick Colbourne, and Bob Garrett as well as Peter Fey (who often sails with us during CCRC races) and Leigh Atkinson, the brother of our MD. With the entry confirmed, I took the decision to retire my mainsail and No 1 from competitive racing as they were now seven seasons old and had given good service, and order new ones from Mike Mountifield. These were delivered in time to be used for the two CCRC race weekends prior to the LBCC. These races, including the Itchenor Casket, gave us the opportunity to gain familiarity with the new sails and work together as a crew.

The LBCC regatta has a tremendous atmosphere, as all the entrants come from the same industry. Inevitably we run into a lot of old friends, clients, and potential clients. Sycorax was allocated a berth in Shephard's Wharf and I found that we were alongside one of our clients.

The weather in mid-September can be a bit of a lottery. The year we won our class I remember winds were strong – F6–7 for all races. This year winds were light and I was concerned, as Sycorax has never had much success in winds of F3 or less. Fortunately, the combination of the new sails, excellent crew work and skilful helming by Nick saw us through. The first race took place on the Friday morning. Winds were light from the north north east but sufficient to enable us to race. With spring tides off Cowes, there were several general recalls as each fleet was sent on its way. We were in the fourth start, and, with the recalls, we got away almost half an hour after the original start time. At our first mark North Ryde Middle we arrived in a gaggle of boats all fighting the tide and trying to get clean air. Although our course to the next mark was almost due north on port tack, we tacked onto starboard to get to the windward side of the fleet. I was later given some excellent video footage taken from a RIB by the company making the official video of the event. It captured our tack and the ensuing panic and chaos on a number of other boats when they realised we had right of way. Our tactic paid dividends and we had an excellent race finishing under close reaching spinnaker in a close fought battle with several other boats in our fleet.

After a brief rest for lunch, the RYS made preparations to get the afternoon races under way. However, the wind had fallen even lighter and the tide had turned. We saw several Class 0 and Class 1 boats struggling to get into position but after several minutes' postponement the procedure for the first race got under way. There was a 10 minute gun, a 5 minute and then an announcement that racing would be abandoned for the afternoon.



We motored in to find out how we got on in the first race. At that time we didn't know how we had done and were a little concerned, as we had been perilously close to the line at our first start. There was a real fear that we may have been over as there had been an individual recall signal. After tying up I went up to the regatta office to sign the declaration. This gave me a chance to see the results. I was horrified to see that we were shown as a DNS. However, a boat that had been split seconds ahead of us at the start was shown in second place. I asked if the organisers would kindly look into this and went down to the beer tent to watch the results come up on the screens.

I couldn't bear to go back to the boat with the bad news until I had seen the matter resolved. I waited nervously and chatted to clients of mine who were also waiting to see how they got on. About 15 minutes later the results went up. I waited anxiously as they put up Class 0, Class 1, Class 2, and then Class 3. FIRST – SYCORAX – EXCITECH COMPUTERS. "YES!!!" I shouted leaping in the air. We had pushed Dick Dastardly back into 2nd and Workout, a particularly hot Sigma 33, back to 3rd. I was walking on air as I went back to give the news to the team.

Saturday morning dawned with not a breath of wind and real concern that they might not be able to run any races at all. However, by the time we went to breakfast the flags were starting to flutter and they were even talking of running two races instead of the one long race previously scheduled. In the end they went back to plan A and just ran the one long race. Wind was again F3 from the north east. Our start was a little more cautious than on the day before and we were not so well placed during the first leg. If we were to win the series we had to beat Dick Dastardly and win the race. We fought a good race and were well up on most of our competition, but unfortunately, not the one that mattered. The penultimate leg saw us all beating over the Bramble Bank from Quinnell to Sunsail before we could hoist the kite and run for the line. As is inevitable in such

circumstances, the first boat round draws out a considerable lead while the next boats are still fighting tide. So it was, and Dick Dastardly romped home to a well deserved victory. On Sycorax we finished 2nd on corrected time – almost eleven minutes behind! This, of course, meant we tied on points, but the series went to the boys on DD. Nevertheless, we took away three trophies for the company's cabinet – one for Race 1, one for our 2nd place in the series and one for being the highest placed project management company. I think that justified the company's entry.

My thanks to Pat Morrell for kindly organising the accommodation for us throughout the regatta and to all the crew for their efforts leading up to and during a very successful and enjoyable event. And, of course, to Excitech and Autodesk who funded the entry and supplied our corporate shirts and jackets. I really hope we will be there again in 2004 and go one better.

Where's the catch?

There are reports that a prominent CCRC skipper got locked in the heads on a boat at the London Boat Show "along with the female sales person". It is alleged "that they were stuck in there together for 45 minutes before someone rescued them". Just like the "Two old ladies locked in a lavatory..... nobody knew they were there." There was clearly ample opportunity for a tête-à-tête! But what excuse did he offer for not buying the boat: inadequate facilities or poor performance? Surely not too expensive? Does this ring any bells?

Advertising in CCRC News

If you wish to advertise in the next issue please telephone our Advertising Manager, Ann Jennings, on 01403 730021.

Round Ireland without a fridge (part 2) by Hugh Caldwell (Mons Meg)

The first article on Hugh's singled-handed circumnavigation of Ireland in his Contessa 32, Mons Meg in 2003, was published in our last issue. Hugh had reached the new small marina at Caherciveen.

Sunday dawned wet, with a strong south-westerly wind warning, so I decided to stay put and do some planning. At this point in the voyage, I was faced with rounding the Dingle Peninsula via the Blasket Sound, and then a long hop to the Aran Islands off Galway Bay. There is shelter in the Shannon, once past the tide race, but many miles would be lost going in and coming out.

I also did some shopping, and changed the engine oil after topping up the main tank from cans. There is diesel in the town, but it's a long haul in the wet! I ate that evening in a fish restaurant in the town.

Monday 7 July was another Scotch-misty morning with forecasts of south to south-west 4 to 5, occasionally 6. But I decided that the time had come to move, albeit a shortish hop through the Blasket Sound and round the Dingle peninsula to Smerwick Harbour, a large bay on its northern coast, well protected from west through south to north-east. If sea conditions proved too rough out in Dingle Bay, I had the options of returning to some part of Valentia harbour (Glenleam perhaps), or of making for Dingle itself, which has a marina. After an early breakfast, I took my diesel cans to the nearest garage/supermarket, about ¾ mile down the main street of Caherciveen, and filled them with green diesel. Very casual: I was told to go round the back of the store and help myself, which I did from a pump that was unlocked, and as far as I know unmonitored. They took my word for the quantity at the checkout. Then back through the drizzle to the boat,

with occasional stops to let my arms get back to their proper length. I topped up my water tank, took a shower (€2.00 here, and no time limit), paid my bill and was off shortly after ten. Visibility was bad, and as it was high water I left Valentia Harbour by the principal passage, west of Beginish.

I had put a reef in the main as a precaution, but it was not really necessary. The west wind, more or less on the beam as I crossed Dingle Bay, was an easy 3 to 4; there was some swell, but long and comfortable.

Blasket Sound lies between the tip of the Dingle Peninsula, Dunmore Head, and the Blaskets, a group of small islands and rocks said to be the most westerly in Europe. They have been uninhabited since the 1930s, are fairly inaccessible, and presented as bleak a prospect as you could wish to see looming out of the mist. The sound is about a mile wide, but effectively reduced to half a mile by dangerous underwater rocks. I was meeting a foul tide with a fair wind, so there was a slurpy tide-race too. Needless to say, the leading marks for the passage were lost in the mist, so it was all done on GPS. Great Blasket took much of my wind, so I needed power to get through.

The tricky bit, by Stromboli and Theogh Rocks, was soon past, and I was able to shut off the engine to round Clogher and Sybil Points. The cliffs on the north side of the peninsula are magnificent, and kept the wind light, but there was a brief puff as I rounded up into Smerwick. I had selected an anchorage in the south-west corner, and brought up under sail in about ten metres (low water – there was not much rise of tide) and about 2 cables from some lower cliffs. The ICC pilot is rather dismissive of this anchorage, and no doubt it could be dodgy with the wind in the north. But with the south-wester I had, it was much more comfortable than, say, Braye Harbour in Alderney. Much of the bay is fringed with beaches, which are good absorbers of swell. And I had it all to myself! 18

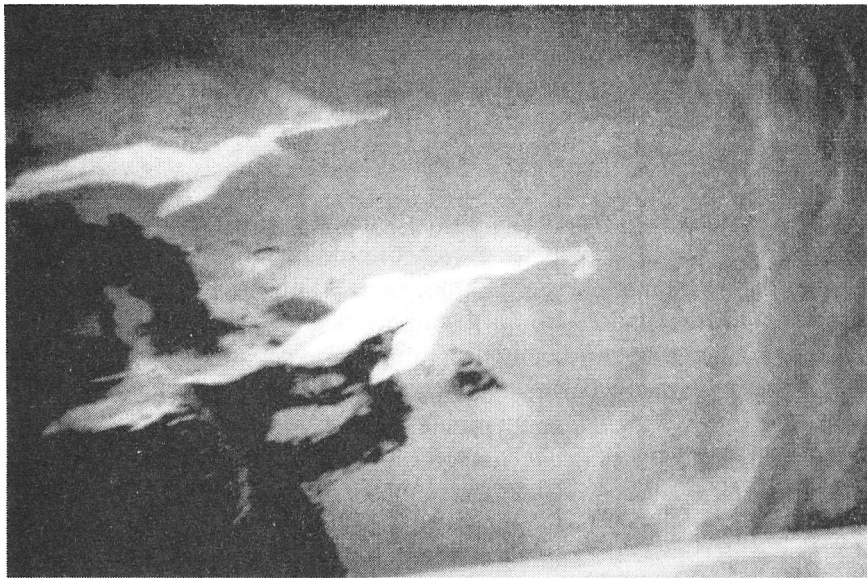
All in all, a perfectly reasonable trip, apart from the misty weather, which was forecast to intensify that night. But, on the positive side, the strong wind warning appeared to have lapsed, for that part of the coast at least.

TO THE ARAN ISLANDS

I was up early – 05.00 hours - on the Tuesday morning for the 60-mile leg to the Aran Islands, which lie across the mouth of Galway Bay. The weather was thick, and there was little wind. I got my anchor, a tough old haul in 10 metres, under sail, but I soon needed to start the engine. It ran all day. The wind was basically dead aft, and helped a little, but it was far too light. Once again, the forecast promised more, but it did not arrive. Shortly after leaving Smerwick Harbour, Mons Meg ran over the top of a salmon net, but because of her underwater shape she did so cleanly, with no snarl-up or damage to the net. I could see a small fishing boat heading for the spot, but did not hang around for a post-mortem.

That was the only other vessel I saw for the next 10 hours. Not long after this incident, I was delighted to get a phone call from Maggie, whom I had vainly tried to reach the previous night. She had managed to “top up” my mobile by credit card, something I could not do in Eire.

Around nine, the fog closed down until I could hardly see half a cable. The old foghorn came into play. It cleared somewhat in the late forenoon, when the dolphins put on a swimming circus for my benefit. They were swimming three abreast right under Mons Meg’s bow, then peeling off and coming back lightning fast in front of the boat. I spent half an hour up on the bow with my camera. They (or another lot) came back for another show after lunch. This time, I lay prone on the foredeck, looking over at them, and was able actually to touch the dorsal fins of two of them as they surfaced beneath me. 19



Dolphins swim alongside Mons Meg

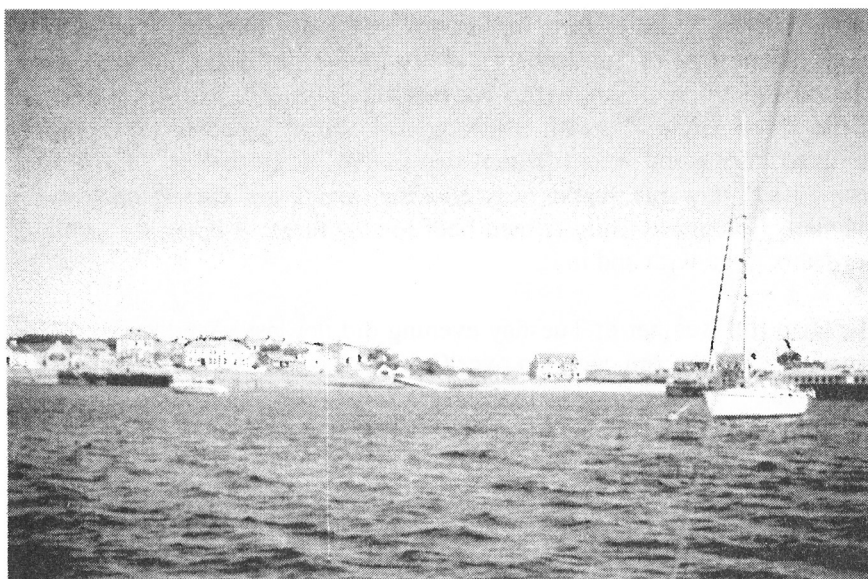
By the time I entered the Gregory Sound, which separates Inishmore and Inishmaan, it had become a beautiful sunny evening. I was a little anxious about the pilotage, since the only chart I had of this area was small scale, roughly two miles to the inch. But, aided by the ICC pilot, I encountered no real difficulty as I rounded Straw Island and headed into Killeany Bay on Inishmore. I was able to pick up a yellow mooring buoy not far from Kilronan Pier.

I decided to fit the sail cover, as I proposed to do some chores and explore the island next day. While thus engaged, I was visited by a singlehander from a neighbouring Nicholson 35. His name was Cyril Thomson, and he

came from the Kyles of Bute in the Firth of Clyde. He did not need to be home till the first of September, and was rounding Ireland anticlockwise. (He too had a non-sailing wife.) We had a quick G&T. He was a member of the Royal Highland, with whose annual "meet" I had become slightly involved during my round-Britain trip in '96, at Lochaline. Cyril went back to see how his supper was cooking, and I got started on mine, a spaghetti Bolognese using corned beef for the meat. I opened a bottle of Bordeaux to go with and in it.

The beautiful weather of Tuesday evening did not last. Wednesday 9 July dawned red as the sun came up over Galway Bay, but soon turned wet and gloomy as I went ashore in the dinghy to re-supply. I do not carry an outboard on these long trips – I don't want petrol on board – so all dinghy work involves rowing. I made fast initially to the main ferry pier, where there is stated to be a tap. There it was, but no handle – just a chewed-up stem! Fortunately a waiting taxi-driver had the largest Swiss army knife I've ever seen, and with the pliers on this we were able to turn the tap on and off. The same helpful chap also told me where to get diesel, at a garage across the harbour, behind the dance-hall. So I rowed across to the lifeboat slip, hauled the dinghy well up to allow for the rising tide, and duly collected two cans of green diesel. (I had previously topped up my tank after the long run of the day before – about four gallons used since Caherciveen.)

Finally, the shopping. Kilronan boasts a Spar supermarket, and I was able to get what I needed, including some fresh mince for another shepherd's pie. Fresh meat is not always available in these outlying settlements – often the butcher delivers just one or two days a week. I was also rather disappointed by the limited selection of bread available. I'm not particularly fond of soda-bread, and for the rest it was a choice between standard white sliced and some rather way-out black rye.



Kilronan and the neighbouring Nicholson 35

It was a hard row back out to Mons Meg against the wind with all this stuff. I lunched on board, and then rowed back ashore to explore. I particularly wanted to visit Dun Aengus, a stone-age fort on the edge of the cliffs on the Atlantic-facing coast of Inishmore. I had established that this site was 3.6 NM from Kilronan, a bit too far to walk both ways, so I hired a bicycle for €10. There are hundreds of bikes for hire on the island, from two competing firms, and trade was slack because of the weather. The bike was of the unsprung mountain variety, with 21 gears, and I needed them. Although the Arans look flattish from the Galway Bay side, the strata slope up towards the Atlantic cliffs, and the road (there is basically only one) is both bumpy and hilly.

22

When I reached the newly-built visitor centre for the fort, I found I still had a walk of about a mile up a rocky path to the fort itself. There was a capacious bike-park (visitors cannot bring cars to the island), and as the hire-bikes comprise a relatively small number of different models and cannot be locked, I decided to “customise” mine by removing the saddle and taking it with me! I did not want to be left with somebody else’s flat-tired wreck.

The fort is an astonishing work of dry-stone construction, more or less semi-circular in shape, with a sheer drop of the limestone cliffs on the south-west (straight) side. There are four concentric walls, a bedrock dais in the centre, and chevaux de frise in the outer rings (upright pointed stones) to slow down any assault. The cliff-edge is so sharp that you can crawl to the rim and peer straight down into the breakers 200 feet below.

After some sustenance at the café, I mounted my iron steed again and set off for the west end of the island. Passing Portmurvy, a pleasant anchorage, I noted a curragh (skin- or canvas-covered boat) afloat at a permanent mooring in the bay. I had seen a number of them, probably derelict, upturned on shore. These were used widely on the west coast for fishing, and still are, but with outboards these days.

The landscape of the Aran Islands is largely limestone slabs, rather like The Burren on the nearby mainland behind the Cliffs of Moher, which are visible from here on a good day. There are small fields, separated by dry-stone walls, these being I suspect a mere by-product of clearing the fields. Spreading of seaweed on bare rock was a method of producing fertile land in the past, and is still carried on today.

The final hill, to a point overlooking the small Rock and Brannock Islands, was a killer, and I did not fancy going down the far side. So I headed back to Kilronan, redeemed my deposit on the bike, and looked for a restaurant

in the village. I had "catch of the day" and two pints of Smithwick's, before making my way back to the dinghy, which was at the ferry pier steps and slightly "hung up" by the falling tide. The wind had got up slightly over the day but with a light dinghy it was not too hard a pull, knackered though I was.

Thursday morning was brighter, but the winds were the strongest since my first attempt at rounding Start Point. I had stowed the dinghy in readiness for an early departure for Inishbofin, another island, in Connemara, but with strong westerlies forecast I decided to stay where I was. I started the day with a bucket bath, and washed a few clothes, but deemed it sensible not to attempt a trip ashore. There was plenty going on – today, in addition to the frequent tourist ferries from Galway City and the aircraft landing at the strip across the bay, there was the arrival and departure of the supply vessel Oileain Aran, which brings in the islanders' motor vehicles, food and other requirements, and removes the refuse. Sundry yachts left for the mainland, and others took their places.

WEST CONNEMARA

Friday 11 July promised westerlies of 4 to 5. I watched Cyril Thomson set off in the early morning, presumably heading south, and decided to make a move myself. I cast off my mooring about 09.30 and headed out to round the starboard-hand buoy at the entrance to the roadstead. I then came hard on the wind, with a reef in the main and four rolls in the jib. A weary, frustrating time I had of it, beating out through the North Sound against a knot or so of tide. It was two in the afternoon before I had even cleared the Rock Island lighthouse, which marks the extreme north-western outlier of Inishmore. I could see the breakers turn translucent green before exploding to white on the rock base of the lighthouse. After that, the tide was neutral, or with me. I cleared the Skerd Rocks on the north (mainland) side of the sound, and could then set a course to round Slyne Head, which

is the seaward extremity of another chain of rocky islets. This whole stretch of coast is fringed with many rocks and islands in depth, with good smooth sailing water inshore of them; but you need to be sure of where you are at all times. Not for a singlehander in a bit of a blow!

The wind eased, but the Atlantic rollers were now reaching me, and I started the engine to make better progress through the slop. The wind also freed, to west-south-west, and by 17.30 I could stop the engine. Clearing High Island, I set course initially for the harbour of Inishbofin (the Island of the White Cow); but decided in the end, with the high swell and strong south-westerlies forecast, that the south-facing harbour might be tricky to leave next day. I redirected to Cleggan, the mainland ferry port for Inishbofin, set in a long bay facing north-west but protected by offshore rocks, shoals and islands. It was nine in the evening by the time I dropped my hook a cable off the pierhead. Eleven and a half hours to make good about 35 miles! I ate the second half of a shepherd's pie, and turned in, the only craft in that anchorage.

My decision to divert to Cleggan turned out to be providential, when fate threw a spanner in the works the following morning. I had taken a bucket bath, and was making some toast, when the gas cylinder started to give out. I changed over to the new, sealed one, relit, and after a few seconds, the flame blew out. No matter what I did, I could not get that gas to burn anywhere on my cooker. I can only assume that the cylinder had been filled with some off-spec mixture, perhaps rich in propane. Anyway, questions would be asked when I got back to Northney, but in the meantime I had no way of heating water or food. I rowed ashore with my empty cylinder and water cans, plus a shopping bag, and soon established that Camping Gaz could only be obtained in Clifden, seven miles distant by road. I was also warned of the water from the pier tap, so I got the supermarket to fill my cans for me. I also left my gas cylinder with them while I ferried the water and groceries back to the yacht.



Cleggan harbour

Ashore again, and two phone calls produced nothing by way of a taxi – they were all busy. I was lucky in one respect: because Cleggan is the ferry terminal for Inishbofin, there is something like a reasonable bus service both to Clifden and to Galway City. The next bus was at 14.30, with a return at 17.45. There was nothing for it but to go Irish, relax, and make the best of it. I had a good lunch at one of the pubs, took a short walk up the coast, and finally got to board Michael Nee's superb 55-seater Plaxton luxury coach for the 15-minute ride to Clifden. Two young lads were the only other passengers, at €6.00 return each. The driver knew the shop, Mannions, which sold gas, and kindly pointed the way to me as I stepped down. The gas having been secured, I was left with three hours to kill in Clifden. It so happens that I know my way around the town: Maggie and I had spent a day in the area while touring Ireland the previous summer. I did some food shopping (a wider choice here), took tea, and visited the local museum, which must be fascinating to anyone interested

in the Connemara pony breed. There are a few exhibits, mainly documents and photos, relating to Clifden's other claims to fame – the first Marconi transatlantic wireless telegraph station (early 1900s) and the arrival of Alcock and Brown in a nearby peat bog in 1919.

The museum is situated in what was a loco shed of the Galway to Clifden railway. This line was constructed with British government money in 1895, about the same time as the Mallaig branch of the West Highland Railway in Scotland, and for similar reasons – to encourage the local fishing industry. It never paid its way, partly because many of its passengers were buying one-way tickets to Cork for passage to America. After independence, revenue declined to the point where it closed down in 1935. Strangely, the station buildings, including the water tower, survive to the present day, and have been successfully incorporated in a modern shopping and arts centre.

My return transport was more modest than that on the inward journey, a rather scruffy 20-seater driven at scary speeds along the narrow, bumpy road through the wilds. But we made it; Mons Meg had not dragged her anchor, and soon I was back on board for food and bed. The Sunday morning forecast was ambiguous, but I was going anyway. Under reefed mainsail, I got my anchor and sailed out of the bay. Once clear of the lee of Inishbofin and Inishturk, we had a dead-aft wind that got up to Force 6 at times, and I rolled up the jib to stop it flapping. I also put a preventer on the main, which pushed us along at 5½ knots. Skirting numerous rocks and shoals – the latter are known locally as “breakers” with good reason – I reached my first major objective, Achill Head, on the large island of the same name. The north cliffs of this headland are said to be the highest in Europe, and they had a cloud cap like that of Table Mountain. About this time, I had a bad fifteen minutes with the electrics; the GPS and autopilot went blank, and the instruments were giving odd readings. I realised that we were short on motoring during the last three days, and started charging.

MESSENGER MARINE LTD

SPECIALISTS IN

LIFERAFTS – SERVICING, SALES & HIRE
INFLATABLE BOATS & RIBS – SALES & REPAIR
INCLUDING RE-TUBING
LIFEJACKETS – SALES & SERVICING
MARINE SAFETY EQUIPMENT – SALES & HIRE

WE OFFER SPECIALIST EXPERT ADVICE & AN EXTENSIVE
RANGE OF PRODUCTS AT DISCOUNT PRICES

MESSENGER MARINE LTD
SOUTH LANE FARM, SOUTH LANE, WOODMANCOTE,
EMSWORTH, HANTS PO10 8PT
TEL/FAX 01243 379441

liferafts@messengermarine.co.uk

www.messengermarine.co.uk

My goal for the day was Portnafrankaigh – Frenchman's Port. I understand the dastardly French made a raid here sometime in the eighteenth century. It is a narrow bay with an alarming entrance – half the width, to starboard, were breakers, and the swell dashed against the lee cliff fifty yards to port as I came in. Once inside, I anchored close to a few local fishing smacks and curraghs, not far from a new pier and slip on the south side. It promptly started to rain, so I got on with food, passage planning and this account.

Oddly enough, while I was thus engrossed, two British yachts came in, anchored well out to the north of me, and remained for two or three hours – presumably for a meal in comfort – and then left at dusk. One was a Storm 33, Ceol Mor, owned, according to Glenn Jones whom I telephoned, by a Mr Slessor of Oban, and the other, Rubicon, a smaller yacht than Mons Meg, which was nevertheless equipped with radar.

DONEGAL AND BLOODY FORELAND

I set my alarm for 04.00, because I proposed to do a 70-mile leg right across Donegal Bay, to the "other" Aran Island, Aranmore, which is not far short of Bloody Foreland, the most north-westerly point of Ireland. As soon as it was light enough to see my way out, I got my anchor, set the full main and motored out against the lightest of northerly winds. I cooked breakfast, eating porridge direct from the saucepan because of the swell. My desired course for the north end of Aranmore was 058° compass. Pretty soon, the wind filled in from north-north-east, and I was unable to lay better than 070°. The wind strengthened to Force 4 to 5, and brought heavy rain. I put my wellies on, thinking that this leg was shaping up to be a really unpleasant day's work. There was a surprising amount of marine activity while I was passing Erris Head. I was chased by a fishing boat, and then realised why when I crossed a salmon drift net, again without doing any damage. I also saw a small coaster, apparently killing time, and I was

overtaken by a larger yacht, under power with no sail set.

Things gradually improved. The day became sunny, and the wind freed to the extent that I could lay my destination waypoint. I had changed my mind, in view of the northerly wind, about going round the north end of Aranmore into the North Aran Sound, opting instead for a harbour on the south side of the island, Rossillion Bay. With a northerly wind countering the underlying long south-westerly Atlantic swell, the sea was not rough, but somewhat lumpy; and with 12 to 15 knots of wind, I found it best to keep the engine running at about 1,600 rpm to keep the yacht going. There were a couple of hour-long periods when I was getting enough drive from the sails alone.

My chosen approach to my anchorage was "not recommended" by the ICC pilot, because it lay over a 2.4 metre shoal with 0.9 metre rocks less than a cable to port and starboard. But I was going in at high water, with little swell in the lee of the island, and, furthermore, I had two excellent sets of leading lights, clearly visible by day, even without the added assistance of GPS. Clear of the dangers, I headed up into the sandy bay and anchored in just over two metres LAT, which I deemed adequate given that the anchorage is protected from serious swell at low water by drying reefs and islets. Having phoned Maggie, I cooked my evening meal and turned in after setting a riding light. The anchorage was mainly occupied by local fishing craft on moorings, arriving and leaving at all hours. The next day involved a number of chores which occupied me until lunchtime – a bucket bath for me, then a big backlog of clothes washing. It was a misty start, but I had faith and by noon it was sunny. The wind, however, was light and moist, and even by the end of the day some of my laundry was not fully dry. I also topped up the diesel, to nine gallons. There appeared to be a small but irritating leak somewhere in the top of the tank; locating it was the problem, since the tank is tucked well up under the deckhead in a



Rossillion Bay

cramped cockpit locker. I checked all the hose connections: was there perhaps a crack where a nozzle was welded to the body? Anyway, a job for the winter, I thought. In the meanwhile, not overfilling the tank might help. I noticed the smell of diesel when sailing in a rough sea, whether the engine was running or not.

In the afternoon I rowed ashore with shopping bag and empty cans. No sign of diesel for sale, but I did find a water tap attached to the end of a flexible plastic pipe sprouting from a sand-dune. I was assured by a local man that this was good mains water, fit for drinking, and accordingly filled my cans. Then, having pulled my dinghy, as I thought, well up the beach,

I set off to look for a shop. In the end, I walked a couple of miles, up hill and down, to reach Leabgarrow, the village near the North Sound anchorage, where there is a lifeboat station and a slip for the small car ferry. Visitors can bring their cars over on the short and sheltered crossing from Burton Port, so there is no cycle hire on Aranmore. Here, I found a small shop, a post office and a pub, where I had a swift half of Smithwick's and a chat with a local man of 72. He had spent most of his working life in the construction industry around Birmingham, apart from "two good years" fishing locally. We commiserated on the state of the fishing industry generally in the British Isles, and the scarcity and price of fish. Then away back to my dinghy, and not before time – the waves were lapping around its stern as I arrived.

I was underway at 06.30 the following morning Wednesday 16 July, with almost no wind. My first mishap was the failure of my No. 1 autopilot. I hoisted the main anyway, and dug out the No. 2, which is an older ST1000 unit, rather slow but still effective. This was a bad start to what was to prove a rather frustrating and bad-tempered day.

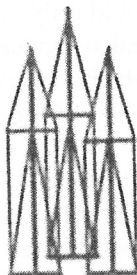
Having rounded the west side of Aranmore, I set course north-east to clear Bloody Foreland, Ireland's Cape Wrath, which takes its name from its red colour in the setting sun. It has a long, low aspect. I chugged past it, heading now for Tory Sound, which separates Tory Island from the mainland. I was still plagued by the diesel leak from my tank; it appeared to be at the vent hose connection. The hose is slightly too easy a fit on the nozzle, and it appeared that the hose clamp was not tight on it, but merely thread-bound at the end of its track. I could not find a smaller clamp, and as a makeshift I fitted a tapered wooden plug in place of the hose. This I had to withdraw from time to time while motoring, to relieve vacuum. While thus engaged, I was approached by a small fishing smack, its crew anxious to pilot me clear of their salmon drift net, which I allowed them to do: although I explained to them that Mons Meg was unlikely to foul it.

A few days earlier I had, with help from Belmullet Radio, identified a curious defect on my 22-year-old Quasar VHF set. On Channel 16 (engaged with an override pushbutton) I could transmit loud and clear, but could only receive a very faint whisper. No other channel was affected. A real nuisance, it meant that it was difficult for other craft to call me up, which these chaps may well have been trying to do. I could still use 67 in case of distress.

By noon I had some wind, but it was dead on the nose, and it varied in the most perverse manner so that I could hardly leave the autopilot alone for two minutes to go below without being put aback or heeled over as the wind headed or freed. I opted to go outside Limeburner Rock, a two metre submerged pinnacle dangerous at any state of the tide because of the swell, and wasted a lot of distance, in retrospect. Eventually, I cleared Fanad Head at six in the evening and turned thankfully into Lough Swilly.

Because of the easterly, I had looked up potential anchorages on the east side of the lough, which is huge, and mostly 18 to 20 metres deep. But that wretched wind followed me in, going slightly west of north, and eventually I finished some twelve miles up the lough at Rathmullan on the west shore before I was satisfied. Here there are permanent yacht moorings, and also a pontoon; but the latter is hidden beyond a concrete frame pier of unwelcoming aspect and I did not find it till next day. Because it was too deep to anchor outside the moorings, I picked one up. The dirty condition of the strop indicated that it had not been used for some time. By the time I had cleared my deck of slime and sea-lice, and prepared a cold salad, it was near enough midnight.

Hayling Rigging Services



All types of Rigging Undertaken
Work Carried Out Ashore & Afloat
Sail Alterations Arranged for Reefing Systems
Full Rigging Quotes
Stepping and Un-stepping Masts
New Deck Layout
Splicing
Under Cover Storage for mast, boom and accessories

Sparkes Boatyard
38 Wittering Road
Hayling Island
Hants PO11 9SR

Mike Frith

Tel: 02392 464109 Mobile: 07836 510657 Email: hgfr@zoom.co.uk

LOUGH SWILLY, RATHLIN SOUND AND BELFAST LOUGH

At least, at Rathmullan, I could next day replenish with water and diesel and buy a few provisions. I went ashore by dinghy, and had a long row to the slip. It was a fair step to the shop and garage too, and of course I had to make a double trip of that.

Back on board, I had a determined attack on the diesel leak, "borrowing" a hose clamp of the right size from a less vital location. This appeared to cure it. I also opened up the No. 1 Autohelm, dried it out thoroughly, and put it back together: amazingly, it worked. Emboldened by this success, I tried my luck with the VHF, but could find no fault and failed to cure the problem.

Another piece of maintenance was to go half-way up the mast to replace a failed bulb in the steaming light. Rather annoying, since I had fitted a new one just before leaving Northney.

Around seven, I decided to get an hour or two's sleep, and to leave at 21.30 for Belfast Lough, about 100 miles distant. While preparing to leave, I was harassed by a jet-ski driver who insisted on slaloming repeatedly through the moorings, on one occasion passing within six feet of my quarter at full speed and throwing a couple of gallons of spray into my cockpit and down my companionway. My attitude to the users of these so-called "personal water craft" has now hardened: total ban, unless preceded by a swimmer carrying a red flag!


I cast off my mooring, and more or less traced my incoming track on the GPS down the lough in the dusk. The wind picked up, on the nose of course, so I motor-tacked until I could clear the eastern headland. Then I could bear away for Malin Head and Inishtrahull Sound, after which we were dead off the wind on a 25-mile leg to the entry to Rathlin Sound.

I rigged a preventer, and cooked an evening meal of potatoes, cabbage and cold corned beef. This was eaten around midnight, and followed at 03.00 by rice pudding and jam.

I took my foul tide during this stretch, and timed my approach to Rathlin Sound just about perfectly, i.e. as the tide was beginning to turn fair. There was some rain during the night, scotch-misty, dead-aft rain, so the washboards had to be fitted. The morning was murky. I missed the Giant's Causeway altogether, partly because I had somehow got it into my head that it lay to the east of Fair Head; but even if I had been looking for it at the right time and place, it would probably have been invisible in the mist at four or five miles distance.

Rathlin Sound was relatively calm, since the six-knot tide had not yet kicked in. The Rathlin Island ferry crossed ahead of me. I was amused to notice that although this is a motor cruiser of modern aspect, it was fitted with a mast and steadying sail aft – furled on this occasion. Rathlin Island, shaped like a reversed letter L, with limbs pointing west and south, lies about 12 miles west of the Mull of Kintyre and the same distance south of Islay. It has a population of about a hundred, and a reasonably good semi-artificial harbour at Church Bay, in the crook of the L, which I might have been tempted to visit in more inviting weather.

The wind picked up as I left the sound, and rounded Fair Head, which looks like a higher version of St Alban's Head. I stopped the engine, and we fairly raced down the north Antrim coast on a beam reach, doing ten knots over the ground. The wind disappeared as we rounded Black Head to enter Belfast Lough, and I had to motor up to Carrickfergus. I had selected this port, rather than the more obvious and direct Bangor, for the sake of interest, since I had visited Bangor twice before. I had expected a more rough-and-ready establishment, but not a bit of it. The marina may be smaller than Bangor's, but it is very efficiently run, and it is surrounded by



Dell Quay Marine

Some Of Our Marine Services

<i>GRP Repairs, ReStructuring & Restoration</i>	<i>Hull Servicing</i>	<i>Marine Engineering</i>	<i>Storage</i>
- Osmosis Treatment	- Scrubbing	- Inboard / Outboard Engines	- Craft 40 ft / 14 tons
- Topsides Paint Spraying	- Antifouling	- Servicing	- Collect & Return Service
- Cleaning & Stain Removal	- Anodes	- Winterisations	- Owner Access
- Bow Thruster Installations	- Grit Blasting	- ReCommissions	- Parking
	- Slip, Scrub, & Launch	- ReEngine	

Moorings at Dell Quay Reach - Half Tide

*** Other On-Site Services ***

- * Ryman's Forge - Wrought Ironwork, Metal Fabrication, Welding
- * Colin Rogers - GRP Specialist
- * Pro-Teach - Maritime Training

Tel: 01243 785964	Beta ReEngine Centre	Dell Quay Yacht Yard
Fax: 01243 781567	www.dellquay.com info@dellquay.com	Dell Quay, Chichester
		West Sussex PO20 7EB

a modern development of flats reminiscent of those at Port Guillaume at Dives in Normandy. The marina is run by the council; I paid £17.50 for a night, with a second night free.

The approach to the marina is exposed to the south, and a deep-draught yacht might be a bit short of water an hour or two either side of low water springs. Otherwise, no problems. The marina is separate from the old harbour next door, close to the castle. Yachts can berth in the old harbour also, and diesel is available there; but I could find no one to sell me some, and in the end I had to pay full whack for white diesel at a local garage.

I wandered into the town that first night, and found my way to Dobbin's Hotel. This looked a bit rough on the outside, and the bar was full of boisterous Ulstermen – Carrickfergus is a very protestant town, King William having landed here in 1690. But the restaurant was excellent, although surprisingly un-crowded for a Friday night. I chose confit of duck, followed by a massive portion of smoked haddock. I was eventually stumped by the quantity.

I returned to the marina via the old harbour, and turned in for a good night's sleep. The following day was a lay-day; I found two more good reasons for visiting Carrickfergus. First, there is an excellent supermarket just across the road from the marina gate, the best for choice and quality I have ever come across in Ireland, and I have to say that in this respect both the Republic and Northern Ireland seem to lag behind Great Britain. But the Carrickfergus Co-op was up with the best. Secondly, when I went up to the marina office to investigate what I thought was a laundrette, I was offered instead a laundry service. For a fiver, I handed over a big sailing bag full of grot, and got it back in two hours, washed, dried and folded. Well worth it.

I got my diesel with the kind aid of a member of Carrickfergus Sailing Club, who took me and my cans in his car to a nearby garage. In the evening, I visited the club for a drink, and was hospitably made welcome by a senior member. The club was founded about 1870, and was originally a working men's rowing club. Sir Thomas Lipton made his first America's Cup challenge under its burgee, and it has some extremely fine and valuable silverware. The impressive new clubhouse was built by the members' own labour. From the upstairs bar one can view the whole expanse of Belfast Lough, from the goliath cranes at Harland & Wolff in the distance on one hand to Kilroot Power Station nearby on the other. I did not make too late a night of it, as I proposed to leave early the next day.

TO HOWTH AND ARKLOW

My objective for Sunday 20 July was Howth, near Dublin, but Ardglass, just south of Strangford Lough entrance, had been recommended by two different parties as an intermediate stop (Howth being 100 miles distant, was an overnigher). I did not get away until 09.30, rather late on the tide, and so had some edgy moments getting over the bar outside the marina. I set a full main then, and headed for the entry to the Donaghadee Sound. There was a brisk Force 4 blowing (from the south, of course), but I could lay Orlock Point and the Briggs buoy.

I had been through this sound (which separates Great Copeland Island from the mainland) in both directions on previous occasions, but in less boisterous conditions. The tide was under me, and as I tacked to clear the red, the green and the second red buoy, guarding the Deputy Reef and other isolated rocks, I had no time for the GPS – it was all visual, and pretty rough, but this was what I had expected. I had put a reef in before the sound, and I put in another as the wind reached 30 knots apparent during the afternoon.

It was a dead noser, south-south-east, as I sailed down the Ards Peninsula, and it averaged 22 to 26 knots throughout the afternoon and evening. There were two other yachts heading south, one of which appeared to go through the Burial Island Sound (least depth 2.4m at LAT). This I certainly would not have been tempted to do in the circumstances. Eventually I lost sight of both of them.

Ardglass did not remotely attract me in the circumstances, either – a downwind run into a small, rock-strewn cove! So there was nothing for it but to plug on. About seven in the evening, I started the engine, partly to recharge the battery, but also to keep the boat moving better through the seas. These were equal to the worst I have encountered in over 30 years'

sailing, coming at all angles, heavy and steep. The boat's motion was so irregular that any significant attempt at cooking was out of the question – I would have spilt stuff all over the cabin. I did manage a cup of coffee, but even drinking it while holding on was a trial.

It was almost 22.00 before the wind eased somewhat, allowing me to knock up some bacon sandwiches. I stopped the engine for a while. Between midnight and 02.00 on the Monday, the wind came down to Force 1 – 2, still foul at south-west, since I was now clear of Ards and trending west of south. I was thankful for a respite as the seas smoothed with the now foul tide! I restarted the engine. The BBC forecast at 00.35 had been "south-west or south 4 to 5, occasionally 6, veering westerly, showers, moderate to good". The forecasts always talked of westerly veerings, but they never materialised.

Dawn found me still some 10 miles north of Rockabill Light, wearily tacking, but the winds were 3 to 4. At 07.00, heading now for Lambay Island Sound, my second autopilot decided to go hard aport and stay there. I got out the No. 1, which had misbehaved again starting out from Rathmullan, but which could at least be used on standby as a tiller lock. With 10 miles to go, I continued on engine, eventually dropping the main. I passed Lambay Island to port, and then headed east of the small islet called Ireland's Eye, which shelters Howth harbour from northerlies. Howth has inner and outer breakwaters. The massive eastern mole was completed by the British government in 1817, with a view to making Howth a more sheltered ferry port than Dublin was at the time. But with the building of the North and South Walls at Dublin, and also the artificial harbour of Dun Laoghaire, Howth reverted to being a quiet fishing village and watering place.

I sorted the boat out, arranged a berth with the yacht club by radio, and in I went. A quick shower, followed by brunch, and I crashed out until 18.30

NEW BUSINESS..... NEW SERVICE.....

WINCH SERVICING

Onsite service. All makes and models

Strip, clean, inspect and reassemble

Advice on damage and excess wear

.....

Working all areas between Chichester & Lymington

Cliff Mogridge

Apprentice served engineer specialising in winches and anchor windlasses. 15 years experience at Lewmar, including building custom boat systems for large cruising and racing yachts, America's Cup & Whitbread Round the World winch systems.

E-mail. winch.service@ntlworld.com

Telephone 01243 430050 (evenings)

hrs. It had taken me 25 hours to cover a rugged 113 miles. I surfaced, and decided to eat on board – another double shepherd's pie.

Tuesday 22 July was another lay-day. I carried out the usual chores, bought two more cans of diesel from the club, and went for a walk in the afternoon. I struck west, towards Howth Castle, ancestral home of the St Lawrence family, who have survived there many centuries by enterprise and initiative – latterly, by the building of two superb golf courses and a luxury hotel on their demesne. The castle is also home to the Irish Museum of Transport: but this proved a disappointment, to me at least. It comprised only road transport, including trams, buses, lorries, fire engines and a few military vehicles of the Irish Army. Some of the exhibits were in good order, others very rough, but they were packed into a couple of

huge barns, in rows, with scarcely enough room to walk between them and certainly not enough to view them properly. I noticed that a robin had built a nest and laid three eggs inside the cutaway valve cover of a car engine. The young Spanish girl who had taken my entrance money was incredulous when I told her about it. (She was the only person on duty.) I said I thought it was a shame that the Irish or local government was not prepared to contribute towards the upkeep and display of this large collection. I took a walk up the Ben of Howth (but failed to reach its summit, ending up in a quarry where blasting seemed to be in progress). I made my way back to the village via one of the golf courses, noting en route the demolition of two Edwardian hotels along the seafront road. They were to be replaced by blocks of upmarket flats.

Since only "sailing suppers" were available at the Howth Yacht Club that night, I dined at a local pub, again good food and good value. I was prepared to leave early the next day, but the forecast was for strong southerlies in the morning, with heavy rain, followed by a veer to the west in the afternoon. This happened: even behind the Ben of Howth the wind was blowing 20 knots. But by one o'clock the wind veered and lightened, the sun came out, and I was off. The late start meant that I would be bucking a foul tide for most of the afternoon. But at least (and at last!) I had a free wind, quite a stiff one as I crossed Dublin Bay, and highly variable in the lee of the Wicklow Mountains. Eventually, I luffed up for Arklow, and started motor-sailing.

In Howth I had opened up and dried out both my Autohelms, applying Vaseline liberally to the seals. The No. 1 unit responded to this and appeared to be working normally; but the No. 2 was very wet, had a corroded patch on its logic card, and never moved again. I traded it in for a new ST2000 on my return to Havant. Clearly water ingress is the Achilles' heel of these tiller pilots, and I devised a mini-oilskin, or gaiter, for the survivor from a plastic bag.

Twilight was falling as I headed up for Arklow entrance, but I could see the local Wednesday evening race fleet finishing ahead of me. I dropped the mainsail outside the breakwaters, and sorted out the warps and fenders as I motored up the Avoca River. I passed some sizeable moored tugs and lighters; they are building an offshore wind farm on the shallow Arklow Bank, apparently.

I discovered that in addition to the long riverside pontoon, mentioned in Reed's, there is a marina in the small square basin on the starboard hand. In I went, and found a berth with no difficulty; but it was now 10 o'clock, almost dark, and I was once again thankful to have the second half of a shepherd's pie ready to heat and eat!

My plan for the following morning was to head south at a civilized hour for Rosslare, get some sleep anchored there, and start for Cornwall on the next fair tide. But this plan called for a 48-hour window of half-decent weather, which was not yet forthcoming. The BBC forecasts at 05.30 and at 12.05 spoke of southerlies up to Force 7 and 8. So I sat tight, and got this account up-to-date instead.

This marina is in a dockland setting, under development, but is well sheltered and has the best showers so far encountered in Ireland – the only ones where you can take your stuff into a private cubicle and strip off there, rather than leaving your pockets at the mercy of strangers.

The town is a very busy place, full of traffic like most Irish provincial centres. There is a 19-arch bridge over the wide but shallow Avoca River, where even the swans save the effort of swimming against the gentle current by standing on the putty. Looking upriver, you have the tranquil rural scene celebrated by Irish writers, while downriver there is a busy seaport. I would have explored further, but it rained steadily in the

Harbour Chandlers

In
Emsworth Yacht Harbour
Thorney Road, Emsworth
Stockists of
Laser, Topper, Mirror and Optimist Spares

Marlow, Liros and Herztog Ropes

Harken, Holt, Ronstan, RWO and Seasure

**Baltic, Crewsaver, Gul, Gill, Musto,
Magic Marine, Banks**

**Watches by Casio, Optimum and Gill
And much more.
Rigging Service, Sail and Drysuit repair
service**

Also at **HISC**

Tel: 01243 375500 Fax: 01243 379541

afternoon and evening. An attempt to get my electric fan heater going was a failure: there was something wrong with the thermostat, and after five seconds of glorious warmth it cut out.

I decided to eat ashore in the evening. There are plenty of pubs in Arklow, and I opted for Murphy's. The cod and chips were no more than so-so, but the preceding chowder was excellent. I got talking to a Scottish trio from Dumfries – man, wife and mother-in-law I think – over for their first holiday in Ireland. There was also the local pub character. He had an accent that suggested a Polish or central European origin, but was nonetheless clearly a local character. He had a fund of incredibly ancient jokes, but his delivery was good.

I had struck up an acquaintance with the couple on the Westerly ketch alongside Mons Meg – Barj III she was called, Tony and Ethel Humphreys were the owners. They were homeward bound to the Mersey, after a trip to the south coast of Ireland. Like me, they were waiting for a break in the weather.

A crush on Hanse

Two CCRC members were at the London Boat Show at Excel on the first Monday and found themselves alongside the Hanse stand. So they went up to the sales desk and said "Some friends of ours have ordered one of those," pointing to the imposing 411. "Ah," said the lady on the desk, "you're from CCRC. We've had most of your club here already asking to have a look. Go on up!"

What a Cracker!

by Denise & Bill Cartlidge (Penrose III)

It is the high point of the HISC Winter Series: The Christmas Cracker. Well, at any rate it's the last race and, as such, liberally laced with Christmas spirit. By tradition, anyone who has sailed on Penrose during the series qualifies for this last race of the year. Seventeen reported for duty and had had their bacon butties and coffee by the time we arrived for the start in Hayling Bay.

A good turnout of Xmas dressed yachts with Alpha and Beta boats starting together in fairly lively conditions promised a competitive jostle. The ten-minute signal: we ran the line between Lady G and the pin. Bill and I exchanged a glance – there was no way Penrose was going to get across on starboard with the present wind direction. The Foredeck Crew, Mike, Dermot, Gadget and Bart (Bart? When did he sneak up on the foredeck?) were having their usual post-coffee conference, blocking the skipper's view, as usual. The Navigators were hard at work below, keeping out of the way. The Tackers crouched in the cockpit like coiled springs. The Agile were on the windward rail and the less agile Advisors on the poop deck behind the helmsman.

The five-minute gun (or was it a squeak). "We're going to start on port," said Bill. "Oh Christ" said Pete, which seemed appropriate considering the time of year. "S**t" said the crew, which seemed less so, but just as heartfelt. Even the Foredeck paid attention. "We're going to hit the pin on the start signal and cross in front of the lot," said Bill, warming to the theme. "I want everyone prepared for a crash tack." A 'crash tack' on Penrose III? Is the man mad? Di went below. We hovered for a while, alone near the port end of the line. The one-minute gun. I caught a few

glances and tried to look confident. "Now," said Bill as he turned the boat towards the pin. "45 seconds," said Stu. "Keep the main full. Ease the headsail and stand by to haul it in."

On a broad reach, at full gallop we went for the line. At the gun we could have kissed the pin. Legless hauled on the main; Sue got the headsail trimmed. Everyone else held their collective breath.

It was immediately apparent that the line was skewed and we were miles ahead – everyone grinned from ear to ear. The Foredeck, who took all the credit, had to be shushed as they hurled abuse in the general direction of the distant oncoming traffic. The windward rail johnnies on the other boats returned the abuse as we came into their view with clear water between us.

Did we win? Well, after that start we didn't care. The excitement of pulling off such a stunt caused such hilarity that apart from Bill, everyone else rested on their laurels. The Downstairs Crew went below to prepare the gluwein. The Foredeck resumed their meeting to relive the moment. Scuttlebutt was exchanged on the windward rail and the Advisors sagely nodded. The Foredeck did consider a kite hoist but by then we had already reached the downwind mark and they voted for another glass of gluwein instead. All in all, a cheerful race and on Penrose III a race full of good cheer. Actually, the HISC Winter Series is a bit of a misnomer. It is hardly winter. Of course you get the occasional equinoctial gale but the water is warm along with the racing. It is a grand way to extend your sailing season right up to Christmas and in spite of their posh new clubhouse, HISC are still serving a terrific lunch. We have been sailing this splendid series for years. It's great fun, well run, and occasionally we even win a race – so there's hope for anyone. You should try it. P.S. We've rinsed out Pete's oilies and they are fine now.

Five girls in a boat aim at the Three Peaks

by Susan Rutter

This time last year I tentatively e-mailed Hugh Caldwell and he kindly put my name on the CCRC crew list. The 2003 season started and I was offered several opportunities to crew in CCRC events. One of these came from Patrick Marshall and his beautiful boat (I am biased) Mantra. It was Patrick's patience and encouragement that helped me develop confidence on board a yacht after a 20 year absence from the yachting scene whilst sailing dinghies in Chichester Harbour.

I have many fond memories of last season, the rallies and the races and hope to continue sailing with CCRC in the future.

Last season has acted as a springboard for a very special project - the 2004 Three Peaks Yacht Race.

In 2002 I was diagnosed with breast cancer and received extensive chemotherapy and surgery at the Royal Marsden Hospital in London. Loving family and friends helped bring me through one of the most challenging experiences of my life....so far!

It was while I was going through my treatment that the idea came to me to enter an all girl team for the famous Three Peaks Yacht Race - a great British yachting and running challenge (chemotherapy does have a strange effect on you), as a way of combining my passion for sailing, enthusiasm for adventure, and desire to support two charities that have been very special to me. Breast Cancer Care provided information and a 'buddy' who was matched to my experience, diagnosis and treatment programme. Bel kept in contact throughout my treatment and I always felt she really

understood what I was going through, as she had been through it herself. St Wilfred's Hospice provided, and continues to provide, care and support not only for me but also for my family and friends and I could not imagine how they could have done a better job.

5girlsinaboat have now officially entered for this exciting race, which will start on Saturday 26 June from Barmouth, Wales. The race is a gruelling combination of stamina, sailing and running skills, bloody mindedness and sense of humour! It is a serious challenge, involving 389 sea miles sailing, 30 miles cycling, and 59 miles of running, including climbing the highest mountains in Wales (Snowdon 3,560ft), England (Scafell Pike 3,210ft) and Scotland (Ben Nevis 4,406ft). The sailing is difficult, navigating some of the trickiest waters on the west coast of Britain.

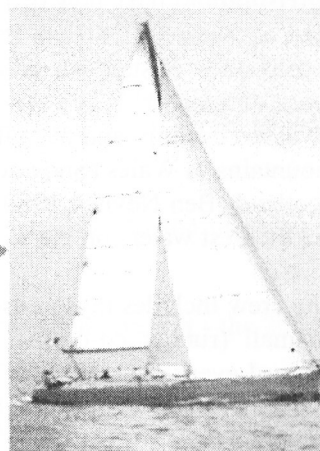
The crew includes myself as skipper, Julie Fawcett (navigator/runner), Ali Bramall (runner co-ordinator/sailor), Wendy Dodds (runner/sailor) and Nicky Lavery (runner/sailor). Wendy Dodds recently participated in the 'SAS - Are you tough enough?' broadcast on 15 February on BBC2!

If you would like to be part of the crew delivering the racing X332, Mardy Gras, to Barmouth or on the return delivery to the River Dart, please contact me on our website. If you would like to find out more about the project, or if you would like to make a donation then please visit our website www.5girlsinaboat.org.uk or, write to: '**5girlsinaboat**', PO Box 73, Emsworth, Hampshire PO10 7XF.

CCRC Spring Cruise

Members or potential members who are interested in joining the Spring Cruise to France on 28 May should contact Ann Jennings on 01403 730021 or Keith Feltham on 01403 790221 for details.

Sail with Tarka Yacht Charters



tarka, our newly acquired **First 40.7** is now available for Skippered Charter in the Solent and offshore

Please contact us to discuss the programme:

2004 in the Solent, France and Ireland

2005 in the Caribbean

Glenn Jones

e-mail

or visit our web site :-

01243 780880

glennpjones@btopenworld.com

www.tarka407.co.uk

CCRC 2003 Trophy Winners

Spring Series Alpha trophy

Gunshot	Cohoe Hook
Gunshot	Cruiser A
Gunshot	Gunshot Shell
Poulico	Coronation A

Spring o/a

Gunshot	Sea Trophy
---------	------------

Autumn Series

Sycorax	Kinross Bucket A
Jo Jo Gunne	Conservation A
Sycorax	Davis Trophy

Autumn o/a

Sycorax	Coffee Pot
---------	------------

Cross Channel

Gunshot	Jubilee A
---------	-----------

Round the Island

Arion	Courtney
-------	----------

Ladies / Crews

Sycorax	Ladies Salver
Sycorax	Goldeneye Decanter

Pursuit Series

Mantra	Citron Presse
--------	---------------

Summer Series (one fleet)

Gunshot	Goblet
Penrose	Rosebowl
Poulico	Mons Meg Ditty Box
Jo Jo Gunne	Shearwater
Excalibur	Cowan Trophy

Beta trophy

Sycorax	Quarter ton
Penrose	Cruiser B
Samurai	Bramidge
Samurai	Coronation B

Sycorax	Decanter
---------	----------

Kandy	Kinross Bucket B
Petra	Conservation B
Penrose	Harriet Shackman

Penrose	Silver Decanter
---------	-----------------

Rimau	Jubilee B
-------	-----------

Exeat	Marigold
-------	----------

Rimau	Ladies' Plate
Petra	Marrs' Mug

Miscellaneous Trophies

Exeat	Walter Brown
Gunshot	Boules
Aqua/Pepper	Golf
Arcadia	Driftwood
Perfect J	Storm
Rimau	Major Gamble
June Tong	Bukhara Bugle

<u>Series o/a</u>	Sycorax
-------------------	---------

Festival Cup



Jo Jo Gunne sailing in the 2003 J Cup race

CCRC News - next issue

Articles, race reports and other editorial copy for the next issue should be sent to the Editor by Monday 17 May. Advertising copy should be sent to Ann Jennings. Please see list of CCRC Officers at the front of this issue for telephone numbers and e-mail addresses.

Crew Register

Many of our skippers are looking for crew, so if you are interested in sailing with CCRC please join our Crew Register. Don't worry if your experience is limited – we were all new to sailing once. Please fill in this form and send it to Hugh Caldwell, 3 North Close, Wade Court, Havant, Hants., PO9 2TE.

Name

Address.....

Age.....Previous sailing experience.....

Telephone Home.....

Office.....

E-mail

Hayling Marine Carpentry

Yacht & Boat Repairs, Alterations, Renovations

Insurance Work Quoted For

For further information contact

Adrian Carter

Telephone 02392 461011 Mobile 07850 129303

Sparkes Boatyard, 38 Wittering Road, Hayling Island, Hampshire PO11 9SR

Chichester Cruiser Racing Club

Application for Membership

Name.....

Address.....

.....

.....

Telephone (day).....(evening).....

E-mail.....

Occupation.....

Name of yacht

(Please note multihulls are not eligible)

Class.....Sail number.....

Where moored

Membership of other yacht clubs

.....

.....

My cheque for £50 (full member) or £15 (crew member) is enclosed to cover my subscription for one year. I understand this will be returned if I am not elected.

Signature.....Date.....

Please send this form to the Secretary: Pam Marrs, 42
Bracklesham Road, Hayling Island, Hants PO11 9SJ.

CCRC News is published by Chichester Cruiser Racing Club and printed by Budget Print Shop, Unit 1, St Andrew's Road, Surbiton, Surrey KT6 4LZ. Care is taken to ensure the contents are accurate, but the publishers and printers cannot accept responsibility for errors and omissions.

sparkes marina



for boating at its best

sparkes marina

based at the entrance to Chichester Harbour



access at all states of the tide, this picturesque marina has 150 berths, dry boat sailing and cctv the home of Opal Marine with full maintenance facilities, friendly and with an excellent bar and bistro.

For further information please call tel. 023 92463572 or e-mail. info@sparkes.co.uk
38 withering road hayling island hants po11 9sr
www.sparkes.co.uk