

Seaward Squadron

Rally Report - Cowes and Bembridge I. O. W. June 6th - 9th 2013



This year, the annual Seaward Squadron rally was organised to run over three nights; Thursday night in Cowes and Friday and Saturday nights, in Bembridge Harbour. Bembridge is at the eastern end of the Isle of Wight and it is a pretty natural harbour, sheltered from the westerly winds but the entrance dries extensively and has limited access. Starting the rally in Cowes gave the opportunity for boats to arrive in the Solent during the Thursday afternoon and then to travel around to Bembridge, next morning, on the high tide.

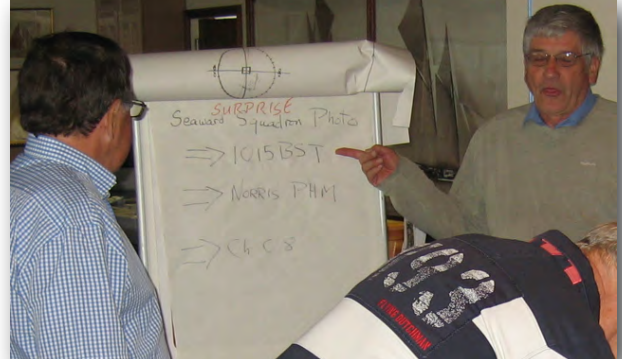
Fifteen boats gathered in Cowes Yacht Haven, mostly from around the Solent area. Kevin and Margaret Horton in Blue Dawn made the trip from Weymouth and four boats, Alchemy, Lady Ruth, Storm Rider and Sirdar travelled from Guernsey.

In the evening thirty-two skippers and crew met up at the Island Sailing Club for the evening meal. The I.S.C. has an impressive location looking out over the Solent and it was a fine evening to enjoy the views.

Prior to the meal, Gilbert Park explained his plans to take a 'group photo' of all of the Seawards, as they progressed towards Bembridge. This he would endeavour to get printed and framed in time to present to Barry Kimber on the Saturday evening.

The Seaward Squadron Rally 2013 was notable for many reasons, but first and foremost, because the weather, on the whole, was remarkably good. However on the Friday morning, just before the boats departed from Cowes, a thunderstorm raged and strong winds blew. Not to be deterred, everybody set off and although the conditions were far from perfect, Gilbert managed to get a great photograph.

After the photo shoot the boats proceeded to Bembridge where the efficient harbour staff assisted with berthing. They managed to get all the boats moored up together and



Gilbert explains plans for the photo shoot



Diners at The Island Sailing Club

Boat Name	Skipper's Name	Crew's Name(s)	Boat Type	Home Port
Alchemy	David Harland	Ann & Alan	35-004	Guernsey
Black Rock	Michael Strange	Tessa	29-020	Lymington
Blue Dawn	Kevin Horton	Margaret	23-085	Weymouth
Braveheart	Caroline Russell	John	35-003	Ipswich
Calypenta	Pat Mamalis	-	29-011	Cowes IOW
Dabulemanzi	Charles Egerton-Warburton	-	25-039	Bembridge
Elseaval	Hugh Eddowes	Ruth	23-105	East Cowes
Gullfoss	Steve Walker	Marion & Steven	35-015	Port Solent
Jumper	Michael Awty	Janet	25-040	River Hamble
Kipar II	Cristoforo Rocco	-	23-115	Port Grimaud, France
Lady Ruth	Richard Villalard	-	23-041	Guernsey
Larina	Jack Acres	Lesley	23-114	River Hamble
Merlin	Ron Foster	-	25-018	Yarmouth, IW
Morag	Douglas MacDiarmid	Margaret	23-091	Loch Creran, Argyll
Sea Otter	Gilbert Park	Maire	25-065	Emsworth
Sea Song	Michael Palette	Rosemary	23-110	River Hamble
Seaward Lass	Elizabeth Guy	David	25-022	Cowes
Seaward Marine	Chris Clayton	-	-	Cowes
Seaward Marine	Barry Kimber	Alison	-	Cowes
Serafina	John Foster	Marion	23-116	Lymington
Sirdar	Mike Snelling	Mary	35-006	Guernsey
Sirius	Euan McNair	Liz	25-027	Weymouth
Storm Rider	Fiona Russell	Patrick	25-029	Guernsey
Team Spirit 2	Dick Thorogood	Marion	29-031	Wolverston Marina
Third Eclipse	Paul Collard	Lynn	25-053	River Hamble
Verity	Felix Hetherington	Diana	23-103	Bembridge Harbour
Vikla III	Robbie McCann	Jane	35-008	Lymington
Vikla IV	John Webb	Sue Hayley	25-067	Hythe

The above is a list of the Skippers, Crew and Guests that attended over the weekend



Some of the Seawards moored at Bembridge

organised by size. Although rafting four deep, was not ideal, it did make for a very sociable gathering. During the morning the squadron was joined by Ron Foster in Merlin, Euan McNair in Sirius and Caroline Russell and John in Braveheart, making a total of eighteen boats.

After everybody had settled in they relaxed or walked around the harbour and along the coastal walk. That evening the Squadron was welcomed at Brading Haven Sailing Club, where a hot buffet was served.

Saturday morning dawned with a clear sky and light winds and after breakfast the more adventurous caught the bus to Ryde, others walked up to nearby St Helens Village or Bembridge Village. Felix Hetherington kindly offered to arrange a guided walk around the old Roman harbour wall and several members joined him. It was supposed to be a 5-mile walk. Judging by the comments when the party returned, it seemed a great deal further but everybody enjoyed them-selves.

Bembridge Harbour was very busy over the weekend with several other rallies, the most significant of these being the Nelson Boat Owners Rally. It was a unique experience to see so many boats all with the same DNA.



The Nelsons moored in Bembridge

The main event, of course, was the Saturday evening meal, which was held at The Bembridge Sailing Club.

It was a lovely sunny evening and pre-dinner drinks were served on the balcony. This gave a chance for everyone to renew acquaintances.





Photo by Gilbert Park

Before the party went into the clubroom for the meal, Gilbert Park organised the taking of this group photo. There were fifty-one people at the dinner and it was no mean task to get them all arranged.

Before the dinner was served David Harland said a few words to welcome everyone to the rally. He said, "it is a great pleasure to welcome so many people here tonight and in particular to welcome Barry and Alison Kimber, also Chris Clayton. (Chris Clayton is Chairman of The Boat Development Company who have recently taken over Seaward Marine.) He wished to extend a particularly warm welcome to Arthur and Susan Mursell." Arthur is the principle of T.T. Boat Designs, the company that has designed all of the Seaward and Nelson boats that are in Bembridge this weekend.

John Webb then kindly said grace and the meal commenced. The Boat Development Company kindly provided the wine that was served with the meal.

This will be the last year where Barry and Alison will have a full involvement with the company that they have built over the past 30 years and it was thought that this milestone must be marked in some way. The Seaward Squadron therefore organised a collection to purchase a gift and donations were received from many members from all over the world. The monies received were used to purchase a Lalique Glass bowl, some fine Châteauneuf de Pape wine and to pay for the printing and framing of the photograph taken by Gilbert Park.

These gifts were presented to Barry and Alison with the very best wishes of everyone present and the many Seaward Squadron members, who were unable to attend the rally.



Alison receives the Lalique Bowl



Barry and Alison receive the framed photo



The Seaward Squadron at Sea. A copy of this was presented to Barry Kimber - photo by Gilbert Park

The other presentation to be made, during the evening, was **The John Hickman Award for Achievement**. This is presented to the skipper, whom, it is considered, has made the greatest effort to attend the rally. It is based on a formula using boat length, engine size, skippers age and distance travelled. Often this can be a difficult decision, with boats just coming from the Solent area. This year it was an easy choice. Douglas MacDiarmid has his Seaward 23, Morag moored in Loch Creran, just north of Oban, Scotland. He had set off on 12th April to make the journey to the rally, travelling down the west coast of England and through the canals. Unfortunately he had become Storm Bound in Dover, but it was still considered that he was a worthy winner. In presenting the trophy, which is an engraved Dartington Glass tankard, David explained "I have corresponded with Douglas many times over the past three years with regards to the rally and had formed in my mind this vision of a wizened old Scotsman in a kilt and with a stick, I was most surprised when I first met Douglas in Cowes to find that he was nowhere near the idea I had formed of him."

David then handed over to Chris Clayton, Chairman of The Boat Development Co Ltd. to say a few words about the plans for the future. (a transcript of his talk is attached as an appendix)

This brought the evening to a conclusion and everyone slowly dispersed to his or her homes or boats.

The next day, Sunday, dawned to a fine day and the boats started to disperse as the high tide approached. Most craft returned to their home ports around the Solent. Gullfoss returned to Port Solent, for a quick crew change, before heading to the West Country. The Guernsey contingent, Alchemy, Lady Ruth, Storm Rider and Sirdar motored down to Yarmouth, where they spent an enjoyable night before crossing the channel on Monday.

During the time in Yarmouth they met up with Mark and Anne Paterson who are the proud owners of their Seaward 23, Dear Prudence, which is the latest Seaward to be launched.



Douglas receiving his award from David



Chris Clayton explained plans for Seaward

The venue for the Seaward Squadron Rally 2014 is yet to be decided. Over the past years we have visited most of the Solent Ports and have been west to Weymouth, Dartmouth and Plymouth and cross Channel to Cherbourg and Guernsey. Suggestions for next years venue will be gratefully received.

Also if you have any notes or photos of your boating experiences they would also be gratefully received for inclusion in future newsletters.

David Harland

Details of the Seaward Squadron can be obtained by emailing davidharland@guernsey.net



Storm Rider leading Lady Ruth and Sirdar back to Guernsey

Photo Credits : The photos included in this newsletter have kindly been provided by Alan Jones and Steve Walker. The Group Photo and Squadron Photo are by Gilbert Park

Copies of photos taken by Alan Jones and Steve Walker will be made available on a web site where you will be able to download copies for your album. Details will be made available shortly.

Notes from Skippers

Gullfoss.....returning "home"(?)

After a very enjoyable time we departed Bembridge on Sunday 9 June arriving at port Solent just over an hour later, we immediately tidied up and changed crew to take Gullfoss to the West Country. Conscious that the earlier forecasts of a great week of weather had truncated, we departed Port Solent on Monday morning, catching the tide at the Needles Channel and the headed off shore to keep well off St. Albans head and then with all running well Portland Bill. We arrived in Dartmouth (the port of registration of Gullfoss where I have moored previous boats since 1988) at 19:00. On Tuesday we departed Dartmouth at 12.00 to catch the tide around Start Point and Prawle point with entertaining wind against tide overalls in the force 4 and freshening wind. We then took the direct route to Fowey passing just north of the Eddystone lighthouse, with visibility at about 1 mile we finally saw land about 3 hours after leaving Bolt Tail and arrived at Fowey at 16.00.

At 18.00 a Seaward 23 approach Gullfoss at our mooring in Pont Pill, "Grand Finale" skippered by Geoffrey Simpson and his friend Pat came aboard for a drink and then we were honoured to join the Vice Commodore of the Royal Fowey Yacht club for dinner with a splendid view over the harbour from our table. With the forecast still deteriorating on Wednesday morning we punched out of Fowey harbour into a force 4 with a promise of gusts to force 7, which hardly materialised. We arrived in Falmouth about 2 hours later in heavy rain. On Thursday we arose to the promised force 6 gusting 7 and watery sunshine for the first time in the week and great visibility, perfect for a cruise up the river Fal which becomes a different world north of the expanse of Falmouth roads as the deep river meanders towards Truro and around every bend there is a new surprise, abandoned large ships, chain ferries and secluded hamlets. I am thrilled to be back in the West Country for a few weeks cruising.

Statistics of the three passages: - 208 miles in three days, 600 litres of fuel cruising at 12 to 15 knots

Best regards, Steve

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Douglas MacDiarmid has provided these notes detailing his journey from Scotland on his Seaward 23 - Morag.

Departed Creran Marine, 20 miles South of Fort William, on Friday 12th April (now 8 weeks into the journey)

- Transited the Crinan Canal and waited there for a couple of days for our first SW gale to blow through
- Sailed down to Campbeltown and were obliged to await further gales (storm 10 Malin at one point....)
- Crossed the North Channel to Bangor, NI, on a beautiful sunny day with F4- 5 NW - perfect!
- Rounded the NE shoulder of County Down and stopped over at Ardglass Marina - after an exciting 20 minutes as we escaped the overfalls, 1.5 miles off Strangford Lough, caused by a Spring tide setting into a Sly F5
- Ran down to Dublin (Howth Marina) and thence down the Irish East Coast (inside all the famous banks - Kish - Arklow - India) and overnight in Wexford. The secretary of the boat club, when I phoned him at the Bar Buoy for reassurance about the channel, said "Sure, the buoys won't have moved over the winter - but the channel certainly will have - so just feel your way in!!"
- Sailed in a thick sea mist (vis less than a mile) from Tuskar Rock across St George's Channel, making landfall at Grassholm off the Welsh Coast
- Spent 5 days in Neyland Marina, Milford Haven, awaiting improved weather (strong NW winds)
- Cruised in fine weather to Swansea, then Cardiff, then Avonmouth - and on up the Avon to Bristol and the Kennet and Avon Canal
- Entered the Thames at Reading with much relief after 108 manually operated locks on a poorly maintained canal
- cruised up to Oxford and moored in a quiet millstream 10 minutes from Christchurch Cathedral
- Exited the Thames last Saturday and stopped over at Gillingham Marina
- Cruised in perfect weather around North Foreland to Dover
- Immured in Dover since!
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A few memorable aspects of a very memorable cruise so far:

- Irish humour - 'the craic'!
- watching the seagulls on a dry bank, a cable away, as we entered the uncertain channel at Wexford Lough
- making successful landfall by dead reckoning at Grassholm after 4 hours in the mist - with the GPS dropping out just when I needed it!
- leaving Cardiff on a golden dawn with the banks of the Severn golden in the morning light
- sailing past some of the masterworks of I K Brunel - the Clifton Bridge, SS Great Britain, the Great Western Railway
- cruising through the historic heart of London - past Parliament, The Tower, HMS Belfast, Greenwich, the Barrier - an unforgettable experience.

My next step is to cross to Calais and pass South through the Champagne region to H20's marina at St Jean de Losnes, near Dole/Dijon, where I will leave Morag (around end July) on the hardstanding for this winter. All being well, I shall press on to the Med next year in April/May.

We're looking forward to what I'm sure will be an excellent evening tomorrow.

Best wishes

Douglas

(the wizened old Scotsman on a stick.....)

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SEAWARD SQUADRON RALLY BEMBRIDGE 8TH JUNE 2013

Some words from Chris Clayton, Chairman of The Boat Development Co Ltd

"Thank you very much for inviting me as your guest to the Squadron Rally dinner and it is another wonderful turn-out. I would like to personally thank David for organising the event.

Apart from my new role as Chairman, I am also Managing Director of Bucklers Hard Boat Builders on the Beaulieu River. I joined the company during a transition period back in 1992; Mac was handing over the reigns to Nigel Rickman and my remit was to help out for a little while. After 21 years I think I've just about completed my probationary period! Until recently we have had a long tradition of boat building, from the BH46 Cruising Ketch to the Nelson Motor Yachts, the first of which was built for Lord Montagu who has always been a great supporter of the yard. In the last few years the yard has seen a transition from boat building to boatyard services, which was always the mainstay of the business. We now offer new equipment sales, such as engines, heaters, navigation equipment etc as well as BH Fabrications, our stainless steel and aluminium fabrication workshop based at Hythe Marine Park.

I have known Barry Kimber and Mike Burnham for a number of years where we have had similar business interests; we were building the Nelson 42 Motor Yacht whilst Barry was developing his range of Seawards. Mike as MD of VT Halmatic would supply Bucklers Hard with the mouldings of the Nelson 42 for us to fit out. Barry and Mike worked closely on several projects, such as the new Seaward 35 and other commercial ventures. Along with Arthur Mursell, we have all dipped our toes into the Nelson waters!

The Boat Development Co started life 28th March this year to carry on the building and promotion of the world renowned Seaward Boats. It appears that the fates conspired to throw Barry, Mike and me together again for yet another exciting voyage!

We are currently finishing Seaward 25 number 72 that we will be taking to Southampton Boat Show and have recently completed several refit projects and winter maintenance jobs. There are a number of other exciting prospects on the horizon but mum's the word for now!

I am very pleased to inform you that Sadie has returned (loud cheers from the audience!) to man the office and carry out brokerage for us. Ben is back running the boat building with Gary and Dave the laminator is also with us. Staff numbers will inevitably increase with orders.

And we are also very pleased to have Barry and Alison working with us for the next 2 years to ensure continuity with customer service and boat production. Any of you who have visited the factory will no doubt have seen Barry's excellent production control systems. It is our intention to build on the successes of Barry and Alison in the many years to come.

Clearly there are two main markets for these wonderfully sturdy and seaworthy boats; both leisure and commercial. They complement each other; we understand from our joint experience that leisure boat clients are frequently (but not always) ex-sailors who want a proper boat when they "retire" from sailing! Similarly port authorities require strong, seaworthy vessels for their pilots. These two inter-dependent markets are quite separate and will require differing approaches to marketing; so please don't be shy, all advice gratefully received!

After-sales and customer service is vitally important to us so you will be pleased to note that we shall continue to offer a full refit and repair facility. Alison and Sadie will operate the Seaward brokerage as before. The chandlery/stores are back up and running and any/all spares are available for shipping.

We shall be exhibiting our pilot boat range at Seawork 25th to 27th June; this is the main commercial boat exhibition at Southampton. We were unable to take a boat this time (already fully booked on the moorings) but we have a stand inside the main hall B69.

This year the Southampton Boat Show is 13th to 22nd September and we will be able to provide tickets for Squadron members who wish to attend. We shall have a 19 and 25 on show, in our usual spot, so please put the dates in your diary!

One of our objectives is to look to introduce new models to the factory at some stage, which we have already discussed with Barry. We will keep you informed of all the latest developments through the newsletters.

The response from all and sundry within the marine industry and out, to date has been very positive with offers of support from the IOW Council, UK DTI and regional funding LEP.

As for the Seaward Owner's Club we have been genuinely humbled by all of your wonderfully kind thoughts, and with David's blessing we shall look to keep you informed of all the latest news (and gossip!).

Many thanks to those of you who stayed a little longer to chat to me about their Seaward experiences, I do appreciate your insights and advice and value all of your comments.

Finally I would like to reiterate what a wonderful job David has done again in organising the Seaward Squadron Rally