



Isle of Man Yacht Club

Port St Mary

MAINSHEET

Number 69

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Commodore

First, I thank Chris for his commitment to the club over the last three years - he will be a very hard act to follow. I must admit I didn't expect to be writing for Mainsheet again as Commodore, however, I promise that with your support I will again do my best.

The new website is up and running and it looks great! Many thanks go to Gary and the team who have put such a lot of time into it. Our Facebook page is also popular, so don't forget search '*isle of man yacht club*', open the page and press '*follow*' to be kept up to date.

There has been progress with the moorings over the last couple of months. Hopefully, by the time you are reading this, the bay will be starting to look ready for actual boats!

Over the years, the club has nominated several individuals for the RYA Community Awards. We are delighted that last November, David Hill was presented with the

Lifetime Commitment Award in London by the Princess Royal. Many congratulations, David, it is thoroughly deserved.

As you will be aware, in recent years, club finances are steadily dwindling. The Directors are constantly on the lookout for various ways to reduce running costs without affecting maintenance and club activities. We really do need members' support - it's a great venue for parties and drinks with friends, so please attend the organised functions and support us in any way you can.

There are still a couple of social events before the season gets into full swing.

The Fitting-Out supper is on Saturday 22nd April (£15 per person) and, on Saturday 29th April, another (in)famous Pig Racing evening will take place. This is a great family night out with tickets priced at £6 per person, including supper. If you haven't seen the Grunt National

before, you really are in for a treat - and you need to book!

We are planning some general maintenance and decorating and would like to put together a working party to assist. If you can help, please contact either myself or Chris Williams-Jones. We will advertise the dates and times on Facebook and the website.

Our trusty committee boat "Yellow Peril" has been with us for fifty years! I believe it cost £160 secondhand in 1967 and has since been shipwrecked three times and broken its back twice-tough old beast! We've decided to hold a Golden Jubilee party for her on Tynwald Day, Wednesday July 5th. With a late afternoon start, there will be light-hearted fun racing for both dinghies and keelboats, with celebrations ashore afterwards.

Once again, keep an eye on our Facebook page and the website for further details but please put this date in your diaries.

We hosted a RYA Instructor Development Day mid-March, led by NW Regional Development Officer Adam McGovern, along with Alan Jones (sailing) and Gary Butler (power-boating). Over 30

people attended from all the RYA recognised centres on the Island. The first part of the day was taken up with RYA updates, followed by workshops covering a wide variety of sail training and safety-boat topics. Many thanks go to Adam and the team for a great day - and thanks to the Manx Yachting Association for its support.

Let's hope for fair winds and good sailing this season.

Cathie Ashurst

EASYFUNDRAISING

Please help club funds by logging in to: www.easyfundraising.org.uk Specify "Isle of Man Yacht Club" - then choose your retailer and carry on as usual. This is a painless way to accumulate admittedly small amounts of cash but every bit helps and it costs us nothing in time or money.

Social

Spring! The daffodils are nodding in the wind. Last Christmas is a distant memory, yet the Winter was punctuated by the usual popular run of social events. Thanks to all of you who have attended and supported us at all or even just some of these efforts.

In November, the annual dinner dance was a successful evening. Thanks yet again to Jan Sidebotham for putting it all together. December, the festivities kicked off with the Commodore's Christmas lunch – delicious! Thanks go to all those involved in the cooking and organisation. A couple of weeks later, we enjoyed the Carols and Quiz night with the superb Rushen Silver band followed by mulled wine and mince pies. The quiz, set by Phil and Ann Scott was won by 'The Shimmin team' and the annual raffle was also drawn.

In the New Year, the weather - although very cold - was dry and clear for all those who did the walking treasure hunt early February. Thanks go to Wendy and David Hill for setting it. The Three Commodores' Curry night proved as popular as ever – the hard work of Chris, PJ and Cathie was very much appreciated by all those sampling the various dishes.

The March Pizza and Quiz night was a big success with over 80 people exercising their brains and scoffing the yummy pizzas. Thanks to Helen Crosbie for organizing the food and Nick and Sue Woolard for being quiz masters. The excellent Victorian Breakfast was a sell-out - you

have to book very early to get into this one! Next up, we have the Fitting-out supper and the hilarious Pig-racing in late April.

Sunday lunch of toasties, soup and sandwiches continues to be available throughout the year thanks to the willing band of volunteers. If you have a couple of hours to spare on a Sunday, perhaps once every 3 months, then please contact me and offer your services.

Finally, thank you to all those helpers who provide their invaluable support for our social functions – without them, these events would not happen.

Please check out the Diary page in the programme for the main social list and keep an eye on Facebook and the website for updates and extra events.

Pam Williams-Jones

Dinghies

The season opener for dinghy racers is at Ramsey - the MSCC's Easter Regatta. So, for those who didn't brave the chilly conditions at Injebreck over the winter, it's time to drag your hibernating boat out from under its cover and make a start on the bimbbling ready for the first outing. Halyards, shackles split pins and sheets often get

worn or lost to let you down at worst possible moment, so a check over everything is essential.

The weekend after the MSCC Easter regatta, we have a Laser open meeting at Port St Mary. The Island Games at Gibraltar in 2019 will require an IOM Laser team; so expect more Laser qualifying events over the next couple of years.

Our first handicap race session is scheduled for Friday 28th April at 1930 hrs. Everyone is welcome to join in and, if anyone would like to sail but not really race, we will have a separate hooter 5 minutes after the main start when you can then sail around the course, practice your tacks and gybes or just sail for fun in the company of the other boats on the water. We will also be organising a number of pursuit races to which everyone will again be welcome. These are great fun, where each class of boat gets its own start time (the slower boats set off first and the faster ones later so that every kind of dinghy can take part) and the object is be first one home at the pre-determined finish time. We hope to see as many dinghies as possible for all these events and look forward to seeing everyone on the water.

June Collister

Training

Spring has sprung, so it's nearly time to start our training season afloat. Wendy has taken an admin role for this season, so I'm attempting to fill her shoes. Children's dinghy sailing will begin just after Easter, running on Tuesday evenings for beginners and Thursday evenings for the more advanced. We still have places available, so sign your minis up ASAP.

We plan a powerboat course the first weekend of April and, at time of going to press, still have a couple of places available. RYA First-Aid will be run on April 8th by our excellent instructor Mr Steve Upsdell. This is a very informative course aimed at delivering first aid for the marine environment.

If you are interested in any courses, email:

iomyctraining@googlemail.com

Or contact Wendy Hill:

wendyhill@manx.net Tel 835646

We still need safety boat drivers for training, so please don't be shy and send me an email please if you are able to help.

james.walker@manx.net

Chris Hill is taking over from John Dowling as our new Chief Dinghy Instructor. We thank John for his amazing dedication over the years and hope he will carry on supporting us in the transition.

Early in March, we took a Tera dinghy to Port St Mary School to try to drum up some interest from the local kids - it proved very popular and 70 youngsters took home flyers to present to their parents.

The RYA ran an instructor development day on Saturday 11 March at the club that was very informative for all who attended. Thank you to Adam McGovern for his time.

See you all on the water soon.

James Walker

Sailing Secretary

Well, the sap is rising and the 2017 season looms with all the usual hopes and fears - more of which later.

Since the previous Mainsheet, three of our long-time members

have passed away and we send our sincere condolences to their respective families. These include Barbara Curtis, wife of one of our best ever sailors and former Rear and Vice-Commodore Peter and Leslie Hook, widow of former Commodore Ron and most recently, Des Collins.

Des owned a series of sailboats, starting in a GP14 out of Douglas. He progressed to a Hunter 19 for a while. Then, when Clarion of Wight came ashore on Gansey in the late 1970s, he and his business partner Percy Wilson, salvaged and re-built it, giving it the name Clarion of Mann. After selling this boat, Des bought a Dehler DB1, which he called "Billy Whizz"; then a Hunter Formula 28 (also Billy Whizz but known as Little Whizz). Little Whizz was replaced with a First Class Europe (another Billy Whizz) and finally a J35, which he called Billy J Whizz.

Through the 1980s in particular, there was a fair fleet of cruiser racers at the club and much offshore racing took place, both at home and away. This involved a huge number of very committed crew throughout the fleet and

many of today's sailors were those lucky young men and women.

Des was also very involved in motorcycle racing, sponsoring many successful riders and had some fine machines in his collection.

His interest in motor bikes and sailboats continues into the next two generations of the family as well.

I helmed for Des on the DB1, Formula 28 and First Class Europe and it was always great fun. He always said he had just two jobs aboard - "keep his mouth shut and his cheque-book dry" and he did like to win, that's for sure.

When you look at the list of boat owners and their craft in the last two decades of the twentieth century, it's quite impressive. This will no doubt become another project to cobble together a reasonable record of the period before the mists of time close over it. It's actually quite difficult to gather information beyond who won the trophies, as the race sheets haven't survived.

So, back to the future:

The 2017 programme has been trimmed in the light of recent experience.

Dinghies:

June Collister has taken over as dinghy captain and will be directly in touch with all dinghy sailors.

The dinghies will have some fun pursuit races in addition to usual series'. No racing is scheduled at PSM for August. It's not the first time we've tried leaving a blank month in the dinghy programme - brought on the fact that so many people are away at National and International events that month.

We are also hosting the IOM dinghy championship over the first weekend of September for the same reason.

Those dinghy sailors who don't feel quite up to club racing are encouraged to come out and sail with the fleet. We'll give them a beep 5 minutes after the race start and they can join in to hone their skills and check progress against the established sailors.

There's a huge number of good dinghies in the boat-park - it

would be great to see them all come out to play. It is the only effective way to learn after all.

June will be very glad to hear from volunteers for Race Officer on Sundays (I'm doing all the Fridays) and from willing safety-boat drivers.

Youth sailing:

The Manx Youth Sailing Squad has bought three new RS Teras with a generous contribution from the Eric Twiname Trust, which has helped clubs to buy over 200 boats in the last few years, in fact our boats are numbers 200, 201 202! The Squad is always on the lookout for further financial help if anyone is feeling generous. Over the winter, Teddy Dunn was invited to train with the RS Tera GB Squad and has attended a number of weekends "across". No wonder we never see hide nor hair of Andy - Daddy's taxi writ large!

Other entrants to the MYSS in 2017 are Nickolas Ellis (IOMYC), Archie Dunn (IOMYC), Jackson Katz (7th Wave) and Oscar Jackson (7th Wave).

Many of these kids will be off to their first International regattas this year and we wish them well.

Ben Batchelor and Matt Perry have got a grip of the 29er and will no doubt be missing most of the summer campaigning the flying machine. Good luck boys.

Keelboats:

Our keelboat fleet (as of mid-March when I'm penning this) is in a bit of a tizzy. Progress on the Dol moorings looks slow. I notice that Richard Baker has cleverly managed to retain Shellan's old mooring, despite the original intentions!

On top of that, the exact cost of the crane and its insurance is unknown. The club is of course doing its best to press for action and answers on all fronts.

The programme includes local activity on only one or two Sundays per month as many weekends are taken up with regattas both at home and away.

Wednesday evenings fill the season except for TT Week

We are very pleased that **EXCEL CONSTRUCTION** (thank you

Gary Proctor) is again sponsoring the Round Mann Race at the end of May.

The keelboat and dinghy regattas are separate, as so many people sail in both sections. Last year, the keelboat fleet was embarrassingly small.

Mike Stanton has included a race or cruise to Ardglass mid-August as well as a Peel and back day (a race each way) in June.

MSCC has shifted its Round the Island race to 2 July, so perhaps we might support them with a boat or three.

Other events:

In addition to the established Bart's Bash in September, the club is taking part in the RYA "Push the boat out" effort on the afternoon of Saturday 13 May. This will replace our former public invitation "open day" followed by a bit of a knees-up at tea-time.

An extra one-off event in 2017 will be the Yellow Peril's Jubilee. It's 50 years since the club acquired this launch, second-hand from Derbyhaven, for the princely sum of £160.

Actually, this was rather a lot of money in 1967 when there were 20 shillings to the pound and 12 pence to the shilling. A quid's worth of 240 pennies in your pocket would pull your trousers down!

I can see a yellow theme prevailing for this effort. Better start buying yellow balloons now, as there will be a run on them that week.

Like each contributor to Mainsheet and every club committee, I echo the plea for volunteers for the varied jobs that keep the club alive.

YOUR CLUB NEEDS YOU to pick up the phone or email the appropriate person and offer to help in whatever way you can.

Race-officer, safety-boat driver, boat maintenance, club decoration, BBQ stoker, kitchen helper, sandwich-maker, club director, event sponsor etc.

Or even just come and drink beer with as many friends as can bring.

Please, please help!

Mick Kneale

