

The Tomahawk

The bulletin of the Tomahawk Owners Association

November 2011

Contents

The Commodore's BITT, p1
AGM notice, p2 and p11
2011 East Coast Rally, p2
Keyhaven Rally, p6

Nokomis' sails, p7
A Summer Cruise, p7
London Boat Show, p10
A Look Back at the RTIR, p10

THE COMMODORE'S BITT

Where did summer go? We finally launched *Malibu* on July 21 and within two days I was sailing her single-handed down the Blackwater to anchor off Osea Island and act as start / finish boat for the BJRC's (Blackwater Joint Racing Committee) prestigious Krohn Cup. Start time 09.00. The fleet got off to a clean start (no recalls) and I then had six hours in which to do all those little jobs that there never seems time enough to do just before launching. *Malibu* certainly looked smarter by 15.00 hours when the first of the racing fleet received their finishing gun as they passed the line between her and the end of Osea Pier.

Then almost immediately it was time for the TOA East Coast rally, and we were on our way to Bradwell to meet up with the rest of the fleet. No fewer than seven boats arrived at the mouth of Bradwell Creek – six Tomahawks plus *Eos*, a Hunter Horizon 23. *Eos* is owned by good friends Mick and Karen who keep her in the Medway most of the year, with a berth in Chatham marina. Since our planned cruise was up the Medway, then up the Thames to Tower Bridge, we were able to benefit from Mick and Karen's experience. (They had done the Thames trip twice already.) I won't write any more about the East Coast rally, since Phil and Lynn (*Sequoia*) have written a full and well-illustrated account elsewhere in the Bulletin. But we were blessed with good weather (until the very last day) and for that we were all grateful. The planned South Coast Autumn rally to Keyhaven in mid-September had to be cancelled because of high winds, and again the UK weather played havoc with many people's summer / autumn sailing.

Penny and I were on *Hustler* that week, the lovely 1934 engineless, mahogany gaffer we hire each September on the Norfolk Broads, and even inland we suffered the frequent squalls brought across the Atlantic by the tail-end of hurricane Katrina. We had to reef every day bar one (when the morning brought a flat calm) and on the 12th / 13th we put three reefs in and scuttled for shelter before a F7 gusting 8. We found a secure mooring at *The New Inn* in Horning, and were safely wrapped up under *Hustler's* full-length awning by mid-day. The gale blew for a full twenty-four hours, and it wasn't until 14.00 the following afternoon that we were able to sail away, still with two reefs in, from our pub-side mooring. A snug berth, with excellent food and fine ale, but hard on both the wallet and on the liver – and a whole day's sailing lost.

I hope TOA members managed to get some good sailing in this season. In mid November, we are currently experiencing abnormally mild weather here in the south-east, but *Malibu's* insurance only runs from April to October so she is now ashore for the winter. I am hoping for some fine dry spells so that I can get on with her internal refit.

We welcome new members Graham and Sharon May (*Shangan*), and Vaughan Gibson (*Hawkwind*), and hope they find friendship with fellow Tomahawk enthusiasts – either on the water, or through correspondence via our website.

I look forward to meeting as many members as possible at January's TOA AGM, at the Excel London Boat Show.

Don Baines, TOA Commodore, *Malibu*.

Annual General meeting, 8th January 2012

Attached at the end of this Bulletin members will find a calling notice and agenda for the 2012 AGM which will be held on the 8th January starting at 12 noon. The venue is the Excel London Boat Show, specifically Room 33 on the South Gallery. We have found that this choice of venue allows members to visit the show, attend the AGM and find time for socialising!

Our Commodore, Don Baines, will be standing down at the AGM, having completed three years 'at the helm'. Doug Baynton (*Vandini*) has agreed to stand as Commodore but other nominations are invited; if you are interested please contact our secretary, Tony Hepworth on email: a.hepworth@ntlworld.com or telephone: 01252 655849.

In the meantime, many thanks to Don for his work as TOA Commodore; we hope you will continue to remain closely involved with the TOA for many years to come.

East Coast Tomahawk Rally, July 28 – August 4 2011: A Newcomer's Account

Having been members of the TOA for over ten years, we finally got round to attending an East Coast rally. *Sequoia* left her mooring on the River Deben, on Monday, planning to stop at Pyefleet anchorage, behind Mersea Island, then moving on to Bradwell Marina on Wednesday in good time for the start of the rally on Thursday. Having motored most of the way from the Deben to Pyefleet, we checked the fuel. The dip stick identified that we had the dreaded diesel bug, causing a layer of thick black slime at the bottom of the tank. We had a serious decision to make, to continue and risk the contaminated fuel blocking the filter, or to abort the trip. A hurried visit to the chandlery at Brightlingsea resulted in the acquisition of some sound advice, fuel de-bug liquid and enough equipment to rig an emergency fuel tank in case the contaminated fuel caused a blockage in the fuel filter. This, together with the support of Don, the rally leader, gave us the confidence to continue.

Over Thursday afternoon and early evening we gradually met all the other skippers and crew who were setting out to take part in the rally. Geoff and Senta on *Hawkeye*, based at Dovercourt, sailed to Bradwell and joined the festivities. Paul on *Wi Hio*, based at Upnor on the Medway, was a veteran of the previous year's rally and gave invaluable advice about the proposed trip up the Thames. Doug and Graham, long-standing members of the TOA, in their boat *Vandini*, Don and Penny in *Malibu*. Mick and Karen in *Eos*, a Hunter Horizon 23, based on the Medway and old friends of the East Coast TOA, joined us at the end of their holiday for the first part of our journey. Gordon in *Ceilidh* planned to join the rally, but had to abandon the trip due to a mechanical failure as he approached Bradwell Marina. As predicted, we memorized boat names before the names of their owners. We had a lovely evening in "The Green Man" at Bradwell, and all too soon were posing for the commemorative photo at the end of the evening.

Despite the joviality and refreshments on Thursday evening, we were awake at 3 am the following morning and made our way out of Bradwell Marina at 4 am, an hour before low water. A pink dawn started to light up the sky as we left. Being unfamiliar with Bradwell Marina and the channel out, *Sequoia's* keels touched the mud a couple of times, but we were soon out into the Blackwater with Tomahawks accompanying us fore and aft. The northerly wind filled the sails. The euphoria of the morning was soon dampened as fog descended at 5am. We kept seeing Tomahawks appearing then disappearing in the mist. The Swin Spitway was navigated with the aid of GPS. As we made our way along the Maplin Sands towards Queenborough the mist gradually lifted. When we approached the South Shoebury buoy the sun broke through and despite a residual haze, we were delighted by the sight of a square rigger, the *Tenacious*, travelling from the Thames out to sea. The wind dropped and we motor-sailed across the Thames' shipping lane to Queenborough where we picked up swinging moorings. Our evening excursion ashore was almost dashed as we learned that the water taxi was out of action having been burn out. Mick saved the day and *Eos* provided a ferry ashore. A second pleasant evening was spent getting to know each other and the delights of Queenborough's public houses and yacht club. On returning to our boats, on *Sequoia* we were lucky to have inadvertently secured a mooring buoy designed for one boat, others in the party were not so lucky and had a rocky and uncomfortable night sharing mooring buoys, often with larger vessels.

Saturday, another fine day, we set off up the Medway, heading for Chatham Marina. We sailed and motor-sailed intermittently up the river, seeing a collection of boats and fortifications along our route. As we neared Chatham, the Medway became busy with boats appearing from every direction, the banks increasingly lush with vegetation. We all motored to Rochester Bridge, where we mulled around for a while taking photographs of Rochester Bridge, Castle, Cathedral and each other. As we locked into Chatham Marina we were greeted with a welcome as warm and sunny as the day. We spent a few hours enjoying our surroundings, showers and for some, a little retail therapy.

East Coast Rally photos



At the Green Man



The 'ferry' at Queensborough



Sailing up the Medway



Rochester bridge



Chatham Marina



Twilight – Sharfleet Creek



Queen Elizabeth 2nd suspension bridge



Gateway through the Thames Barrier

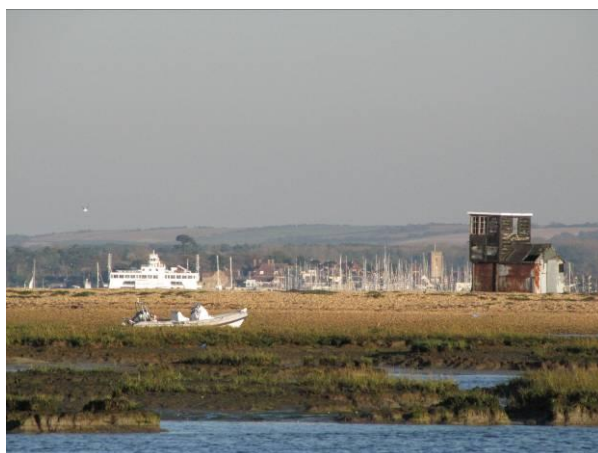


Tower Bridge



Leaving the Thames Estuary

Keyhaven photos



View of Yarmouth from mooring



Hurst Point lighthouse

Our pleasure at Chatham Marina was enhanced as, due to our RYA "Gold Member's" card *Sequoia* was eligible for a free mooring for the night. Another evening was spent pleasantly in a converted warehouse on the dockside where we all enjoyed good food, liquid refreshment and the company. A relaxing morning was followed by goodbyes as Mick and Karen ended their holiday at Chatham Marina, *Eos's* home port. Four Tomahawks retraced the route of the previous day towards the mouth of the Medway, to our mooring for the evening at Sharfleet Creek, off Stangate Creek. Another glorious evening: Doug took the plunge and had a swim. The calm evening was only disturbed by a police boat checking out the creek, and a distress call from further down the creek.

On Sunday we awoke early to a bright still morning. Paul on *Wi Hio* rose early to wave us goodbye, as the diminished fleet, consisting of *Malibu*, *Vandini* and *Sequoia* left the anchorage at the start of our journey up the Thames to St Katherine's dock in the shadow of Tower Bridge. As we left the Medway and entered the Thames more boats joined us on our trip up the river, giving us the impression that we had joined a convoy. Gradually the larger sailing boats overtook us; however the number of larger cargo boats seemed to increase as we passed dock landing stages. The banks of the Thames sported several recycling plants. The first significant feature on the river was the Queen Elizabeth II Suspension Bridge, opened in 1992, and carrying London's orbital M25 over the Thames. By this time there was plenty of tide with us and we were cruising along at six knots over the ground. The next notable feature was the Thames Barrier. We followed protocol and called London VTS when we reached Margaret Ness and obtained permission to proceed. It was easy to see which route to take through the barrier as this was indicated by large illuminated arrows.

Once through the Thames barrier the shoreline became more interesting. As we progressed the water became increasingly choppy, particularly as the river became narrower. Large, swift, tourist vessels darted about, from one side of the river to the other. There were no obvious speed restrictions, despite the old buildings lining the Thames. Iconic buildings which make up Canary Wharf came into view, then the old Royal Naval College and Greenwich Observatory. Greenwich Observatory looks spectacular from the water, and gives the ultimate aid to navigation. The next prominent feature was the roof of the O2 arena situated on a bend in the Thames. We noticed boats which had passed us hours previously waiting to enter Limehouse Marina. Nothing prepared us for the choppy swell and chaos in and on the water as we approached Tower Bridge.

Boats sped in all directions, appearing at short notice from under the bridge. We waited for about 40 minutes to enter St Katherine's dock, as due to an exceptionally high tide, the lock took longer to fill and discharge. During our wait we had to stem the tide, avoiding the traffic, while being bounced around in the swell. The three Tomahawks were the last boats to enter the lock, positioning themselves as directed in the middle of the larger vessels, all of which were keen to fend us off. After thirty minutes in the lock we entered the tranquillity of St Katherine's marina and marked the occasion with tea and homemade cake on board *Malibu*. St Katherine's has several sections and is lined by buildings converted to restaurants, specialist shops and galleries. During the day there was a gentle clatter of shoes on cobbles as shoppers and workers made their way along the dock side. In the evening the noise was replaced by the constant hum of London. As novices to East Coast rallies we managed to keep up with the rest of the fleet while afloat, but were out of practice when it came to the social activities in the evening and had to opt for an early night while the rest of the party enjoyed a celebratory meal. Tuesday morning we wandered around Tower Bridge and the embankment. We stocked up at the local Waitrose and Graham showed us the pieces of Roman pottery he had collected from the Thames shoreline beneath Tower Bridge (it was an exceptionally low tide). We were fascinated by the cormorant on the end of our pontoon that spread out its wings to dry and gave us a withering look. We left St Katherine's late afternoon and picked up a swinging mooring at Thurrock Yacht Club in the evening. Wednesday we sailed to the Phoenix at Shoeburyness. Don anchored in the shallow water and we rafted along side. We had a relaxing couple of hours enjoying the sun. Unfortunately we relaxed a little too much and did not notice that we were drifting. Only when the tide started to flood and dug one of *Sequoia's* keels into the sand, tipping the boat, did we decide to move to deeper water. Although we planned to sail back to the Backwater on Thursday, after listening to the midday forecast we decided to continue our trip with an evening sail.

We had a wonderful trip in light winds sailing up the coast back to the Blackwater. First Don, then Graham and Doug reported porpoises swimming alongside their boats. As darkness fell

and we neared the Blackwater we saw flashes of lightning beyond Brightlingsea as we all pressed ahead under motor alongside each other. Entering the Blackwater *Vandini* bade us goodnight as Doug and Graham headed in the direction of their home port, while *Malibu* and *Sequoia* headed for shelter and a night in Pyefleet anchorage. After picking up a mooring at 2 am in Pyefleet we went below and could not believe our trip had come to an end. The weather had been kind, and we had enjoyed the rally and the company.

It rained heavily most of the next day, while Don and Penny made their way back to *Malibu's* Blackwater Sailing Club mooring, we spent the day pleasantly reliving highlights of our trip. Our journey was completed the following day in good weather and under full sail as we returned to our mooring on the Deben.

Phil and Lynn Martin, *Sequoia*

Keyhaven Rally 15th & 16th October 2011.

Keyhaven is situated at the western end of the Solent behind Hurst Castle and the shingle bank known as Hurst spit. Hurst narrows is situated between the castle and light house on the mainland and Fort Victoria on the Isle of White. The entrance to Keyhaven is from the east.

The Rally organised by Roland Liddell, was originally scheduled to take place a month earlier but the weather forced cancellation. Of the members circulated only Ian Bremner in *Cochise* and myself in *Incamoon* were available to meet in October. Doug Eason was otherwise occupied that weekend so I invited Paul Jones, a former colleague from work to join me.

Cochise set out from Poole early on Friday 14th to catch the tide and *Incamoon*, from Warsash at 1500 on the ebb. We started out sailing well, but eventually had to motor sail once past Newtown. We arrived in Yarmouth at 17.20 and were directed to a berth next to *Cochise*. When we had made fast to the pontoon, Andrew Henegan and his crew on *Tawasa* greeted us. They had sailed up from Poole, but had to return the following day to race and attend a prize giving

We had dinner that evening at the Blue Crab in the high street and very good it was too. This was followed by a beer or three at the Kings Head before we returned to our boats for the night. Next morning was bright with hardly a cloud in the sky. Paul and I went ashore and walked down to the green before breakfast at Gossips cafe at the pier head. We then met with Ian to look at the charts and decided to leave at 1100 when there would be enough water to enter Keyhaven. Ian phoned the river warden who suggested we pick up any vacant buoy in the main pool, behind the castle, not going beyond number 22, as both our vessels are fin keeled.

The engine in *Cochise* was reluctant to start and I had to help Ian to get it going. The problem seemed to be battery related. We motored across the main channel and found the entrance. The leading marks are difficult to pick out. Moorings were soon found and we made fast and Paul and I inflated our dinghy and collected Ian. The trip up the harbour was very slow as the outboard which had not been used all season, must have had some dirt in the fuel and took some coaxing to keep it running slowly. The harbour was very busy with people of all ages sailing numerous small dinghies, mainly scows.

The quay at the top of the harbour was very busy. We sat outside the yacht club and enjoyed a pint in the sun watching all the activity, before walking the short distance to the Gunn Inn. The pub was busy, but we ordered our food which arrived very quickly; the meal and the beer were good. We returned to the quay late in the afternoon and found the tide well on the ebb which helped us back down the harbour to *Incamoon* where Ian joined us for the evening. We sat in the cockpit for a time watching the mud appear either side of us, the gulls and wading bird and the antics of the crew of a small Westerly, further down the harbour trying to pick up a mooring! The temperature dropped quickly when the sun went down so we repaired below to enjoy a bread and cheese supper washed down with a bottle of wine. I took Ian back to *Cochise* and we settled down for the night.

Next morning, it was very cold and there was a thick fog with visibility of only a few yards. We organised our breakfast and heard Ian start his generator to try and charge up his cranking battery. The fog gradually thinned as the tide came in and the sun came out. The Westerly that had provided the entertainment the previous evening decided to leave and went aground on several occasions near the entrance before making its escape. We also watched a lovely old gaffer sail out of the harbour. Clearly, the skipper knew the waters well, as the tide was still quiet low.

Ian had decided, in view of his battery problem, to return direct to Poole and abandon his plans to stay a few more days in the Solent. We recovered, dried and deflated our dinghy and stood by until Ian had, again with some difficulty, started his engine, before making for the entrance. Once outside, we said our farewells and headed for home. It was the first time I have been to Keyhaven in about thirty years and I will certainly be visiting again.

Peter Llewellyn, *Incamoon*

Nokomis' sails

At the start of the Round the Island Race earlier this year, *Nokomis'* main sail split from luff to leech (see July Bulletin). I was told the sail was not repairable (it was 20 years old!) and ordered a new sail from Kemps. This was completed by early August; I also ordered a 'Packaway' sail cover which I collected at the same time.

The new sail fitted very well; it is loose footed so easy to feed along the rather narrow slot of my boom. Kemp's have sown in two black bands above and below the sail number which makes it easy to see the sail shape aloft. Being a new sail, I found it difficult to get enough luff tension with the result that I had a shallow crease running from the first (lower) mast slide towards the clew. Adjustment of the clew outhaul helped but I think a Cunningham is needed.

The sail had two sets of slab reefing points fitted and these work fine except that care is needed to ensure that the clew reefing pennants have a clear run through the slots in the 'Packaway' system.

Fitting the 'Packaway' was very straightforward and it is much more convenient to use than the old sail cover. On long trips the sides of the sail cover (normally held up by lazy jacks) can be furled using straps provided inside the sail cover – this still allows the sail to be lowered and held in place by the lazy jacks.

Subsequent sailing has included a local club 'round the cans' race in the Solent and a number of single handed cruises. One of these was a visit to Keyhaven – having missed the planned rally due to bad weather. My plan was to sail direct to Keyhaven but strong winds suggested an initial night in Yarmouth. The following day I motored (in a flat calm) to pick up a mooring in Keyhaven and spent a most enjoyable day exploring Keyhaven creek and Hurst Castle. On the following day the wind was SW F2 and I set off to Gosport with the genoa and mainsail goosewing. To my horror I saw that the genoa leech line had come adrift and the retaining UV strip was just flapping in the breeze. Although the wind was light, there was a fair amount of chop due to motor craft of various sorts with the result that the tangle of sail, strip and line threatened to wrap themselves round the cross trees. The genoa was carefully furled and the remainder of the journey completed under main alone.

A subsequent visit to a local sail maker revealed that the sail itself was fine but the UV strip had perished, both the broad strip that covers the sail when furled and the much narrower strip which retains the leech line. Both strips have now been replaced and the sail had a brief outing before *Nokomis* was laid up for the winter.

For me the lesson from all this is that it would pay to have the sails regularly checked by a sailmaker – especially if more than 10 years old!

Gordon Keyte, *Nokomis*



A Summer Cruise

(Note from Editor, this account was sent to me by Geoff Hilditch, our previous treasurer. Geoff is based in North Wales and I thought an account of his cruise would be of particular interest to our members in the 'North West'.)

Being based in the Menai Straits usually means that our 2 week summer cruise involves nipping over to Ireland, down to Cardigan Bay & Pembrokeshire or a slog up to W Scotland – this year we decided we wanted to do something "a bit different" so we decided to try the "new to us" area of the Cumbrian coast and the Southern coast of Scotland. Sailing alone on *Aslan* (a Sadler 29) I try to limit passages to maximum 10/12 hours in daylight hours which also suits Dave and Helen, the crew of *Simo* (a Sadler 34) with whom I cruise in company.

We set off from Caernarfon on Saturday at 0830 25/6, about 3 hours after high water, with a brisk SW breeze behind us (forecast as SW5/6 easing later and backing S3/4) to pass the Swellies at around LW slack (plenty of water on the neap tides) and, once past Menai Bridge, had the last of the ebb under us all the way to Puffin Sound and beyond. It was really quite

fresh between Puffin Island and the Great Orme, with gusts to about 30 knots, but we made fine progress under just partially furled genoas. I set "Sophie", my "Sea Feather" wind vane to steer, and it coped remarkably well with the following seas, which were quite large off the Orme - we were sailing at 6 to 6.5 knots most of the time. We made fine progress along the North Wales coast once the flood tide started. We passed close to the N of the North Rhyl and North Hoyle wind farms (pretty big structures close to!) and, by the time we were approaching the Hilbre Swash, the wind had fallen to a pleasant 10 knots still from the SW. As we approached Hilbre Island the seas in the Swash were still quite lumpy and Helen radioed me asking if I was sure that we were going to get a comfortable night in the pool close in on the E side of Hilbre Island - I have to say that I was a bit "dubious" when I told her "yes, it will be fine" but that is what all my memories and experiences of Hilbre had been in the 21 years that I'd kept my first 2 boats at West Kirby and when a night anchored at Hilbre had been the extent of my sailing adventures! We needn't have worried, once we'd anchored close in about mid way along the E side of the island the seas were flat and we enjoyed a lovely, comfortable night with only some seals for company - just as nice as I'd remembered! We dried out (both boats are twin keelers) at about half ebb and refloated again at around 0500 the next morning.

Sunday dawned bright and clear with a light breeze from the S and we set off at about 0900 bound for Piel Island on the approaches to Barrow. I motor-sailed until past the Liverpool Bar and then set a course to pass a mile inshore of the Jordans Spit W cardinal buoy (no problem in the flat conditions), stopped the engine and set full sail on a broad reach with once again "Sophie" doing most of the work. Blackpool Tower seemed to be in view for hours without ever getting much closer but, eventually, we drew level, a few miles offshore. Tempting fate I decided to fly my cruising chute and, true to form, after the 20 minutes or so it took me to get it all set and drawing, the wind fell away to nothing within 10 minutes. After some rude words I took it down and it was then a case of finishing the passage under motor as there was not a breath of wind (probably why we were plagued by a swarm of black flies - I'd have thought they would have preferred the fish and chips, candy floss and ice creams at Blackpool a few miles away!) We arrived at Piel Island at about 1830 and were directed on to 2 vacant moorings by a friendly local. I'd visited Piel Is as crew on a Westerly Centaur in 1981 and it didn't appear to have changed much in the ensuing 30 years! If you are unfamiliar with the area, Piel Is lies just off the main channel to Barrow and is sheltered from the prevailing winds by Walney Island - it dries at LW and is connected to Walney by a causeway and served by a small ferry from nearby Roa Is.

There is a ruined castle, a row of former pilot's houses and a pub, the Ship Inn, the landlord of which is officially crowned the King of Piel Island. We went ashore only to find that the pub is closed on Sunday and Monday but his highness, King Steve, kindly saw our plight and opened up to serve us a couple of pints - what more could you ask?

On Monday the 3 of us went on *Simo* up to the centre of Barrow and picked up a vacant mooring near the Vickerstown bridge and went ashore for some shopping and lunch in a pub - by the time we had returned to Piel Is, the wind was howling from the NW and the moorings were not comfortable so we decided to return back to Barrow where we knew it would be sheltered. It was a wet and choppy trip back up to Vickerstown under motor (*Aslan* is not at her best motoring into a short chop!) but we had a quiet night on moorings close to the massive BAE factory and even found an Indian restaurant where Monday night was "half price" night - very nice! I have to admit I had always had visions of Barrow being a bit "grim" but was pleasantly surprised - it's currently a "boom town" assembling, installing and servicing the hundreds of wind turbines which are being put off the Cumbrian coast - and a lot of money has clearly been spent on improving things - the Port museum is impressive and well worth a visit. By Tuesday afternoon the wind had moderated and was forecast to back W on Wednesday so we sailed back to Piel Is, picked up the same moorings, and enjoyed a very pleasant meal ashore that evening (note - don't sit in the "throne", unless you want to stand a round for all customers - oh dear, Helen!)

Wednesday dawned clear and bright and we set off at 1130, an hour after HW, for the 42NM passage to Whitehaven where we knew we would not be able to enter the sea lock into the marina until about 1900. It was quite lumpy motoring head to wind out past Walney Is with the wind dead against the 2.5kn ebb but it quietened down once we passed the halfway shoal beacon and bore away to the North. I pulled down the first reef in the main and set the genoa with a few rolls and had a splendid sail all the way to St Bees Head with, once again, "Sophie" doing the work as we passed Ravenglass, Sellafield nuclear site and, finally, St Bees Head all with the magnificent backdrop of the mountains of the Lake District - we were sailing on a dead reach in about 14 knots of wind - perfect conditions and, again, were averaging over 6 knots

through the water. (When using the Sea Feather wind vane it is vital to reef early and set a very well balanced sail plan – “Sophie” does not like weather helm!). Once past St Bees Head *Simo* and *Aslan* both had to hang around for a while as we had made such fast passages



Off the Great Orme



Hilbre Island pool



Piel Island



Reaching up the Cumbrian coast



Kirkcudbright



Approaching Douglas, IOM

that we were a little too early for the sea lock at Whitehaven. The High Pressure must also have kept the sea level down as there wasn't enough water in the approach channel until after 1930 to enter the lock (tip – good lines essential, rigged as slips to the floating pontoon in the lock – there is quite a turbulent rush of water in the lock) – we were in our allotted berths in the marina by 2000 and then went ashore for a meal. Thursday was a “rest day” for relaxing, doing “boat jobs” (a patch on my dingy in my case) – Dave and Helen visited the local mining museum which they said was interesting. We set off just after HW on Friday (no need for the sea lock to operate an hour or two either side of HW, when the gates are left open) bound for Little Ross Is at the mouth of the Dee Estuary on the approaches to Kirkcudbright, once again with blue skies and a fine breeze from the WNW and both enjoyed a super sail, a close reach, under full sail to Little Ross. I was again glad for “Sophie” to do all the work as I was feeling decidedly under the weather with a dose of “man flu”! We covered the 22 NM in under 4 hours (I'd set a course well

to the E of the island to allow for the strong ebb out of the Solway Firth) and we both dropped anchor off the mouth of Ross Bay clear of the charted gas interconnector, half a mile to the N of Little Ross Is, where we enjoyed a peaceful night in the isolated and beautiful surroundings.

On Saturday morning we went ashore on Little Ross by dingy and walked up to the lighthouse before motoring up the twisting channel to Kirkcudbright (very well buoyed) about 1-1/2 hours before HW and tied up alongside the pontoon in the town centre (good value at £15.00 per night including electric and water, with showers and toilets as well). We found Kirkcudbright to be a lovely, friendly town and well worth a return visit. Our next "leg" was to be to start our return Southwards via the Isle of Man – tide times meant we couldn't set off from Kirkcudbright until late morning and we cast off at around 1130 for the 48 NM passage to Douglas – there was little wind, 6/8 knots, and bang on the nose so it was a passage made under motor – I had hoped to maybe get a sail after we had altered course more to the W after having passed the King William Bank cardinal buoy but, as is often the case, the wind veered a little and fell light until there was none at all so it was a case of plodding on under motor – Thank God for autohelms!(Raymarine 2000+). It was nearly dark as I approached Douglas and requested permission to enter the Port. I tied alongside "Simo" on the pontoon on the Battery Pier in the outer harbour. As some of the other boats we were rafted against were going into the inner harbour on the 2345 bridge lift, when there was enough water over the cill, we decided to do the same and finally tied alongside the inner harbour wall at around midnight.

A quick look at "XC Weather" on Monday morning gave us a dilemma – strong S winds right through the week from Tuesday morning – what should we do, hang on in Douglas for a few days and hope the situation changes or leave straight away and head for Anglesey? It didn't take much discussion before we decided to go as soon as there was water over the cill, at around noon, and head for the N coast of Anglesey. This gave us time to pay the harbour dues, get some fresh supplies and for me to buy a replacement bottle of Camping Gaz (for some reason always much cheaper in the IOM than the UK). We went through on the 1215 bridge lift and, after requesting permission to leave the harbour, we were at sea by 1230 where there was no wind at all and a glassy swell. I set a course well to the E of Cemaes Bay to allow for the tidal set, cooked a full brunch breakfast and set the autohelm to steer the course. Visibility was very strange, far off hills looked close, but close to it was hard to judge distance and size – for instance a fleet of quite big trawlers about 2 miles away looked to be like small cabin cruisers and "Simo" about 1/2 mile away looked like a model yacht on the park lake. I kept my radar, AIS and "Sea Me" on for most of the passage, but only saw one ship, a ferry going to Birkenhead, close to the TSS N of Anglesey. I dropped anchor at Cemaes Bay at about 2130 and was pleased that my latest investment, a 10 Kg. Rocna anchor, set immediately in the hard sand bottom. (I have had trouble in the past at Cemaes with my previous 25 lb CQR)

The wind was howling from the S on Tuesday morning with gusts to 30 knots so we decided to head the short distance along the coast to the port of Amlwch, where we knew there would be good shelter from the S and good sleeps guaranteed. The new harbour master at Amlwch was very helpful and shuffled some small craft around and sorted us out berths alongside one of the "sausages" (3 foot diameter rubber tubes about 40' long, relics of the oil terminal days in the late 70's). Up until recently Amlwch was "pretty dire" but a lot of money has been spent of late smartening the place up and we spent 2 enjoyable and quiet nights there, with both fuel and water organised by the HM. By Thursday the wind had veered SW and was forecast at Force 5 or 6 so we decided to head on back to the Menai Straits and spend a night at Bangor. I tied in 2 reefs and set up a hanked on high clewed "blade" jib on "Aslan's" detachable inner forestay as I thought there would be "wind aplenty" between Point Lynas and Puffin Is. We cast off late morning so as to have the flood with us all the way to Bangor and, as thought, conditions once past Lynas were quite "boisterous" with the wind gusting towards 30 knots at times and short, lumpy seas – we covered the 11 NM from Lynas to Puffin in a record for me time of 90minutes and I hove to near the Dinmor Bank buoy to pull down the 3rd reef for the expected increase in wind usually encountered in the Menai Straits in fresh SW winds. I beat up the channel towards Beaumaris before dropping sail and motoring the last couple of miles to Bangor, where we both tied alongside the old breakwater wall at around 1500.

Friday was the first wet morning of our holidays but this gradually became showery by the time we set off at 1500 to motor back to Caernarfon, through the Swellies just after HW slack. I tied alongside "Simo" against the wall in the harbour at Caernarfon for the night to round off what had been a thoroughly enjoyable 2 week cruise – we had logged just over 300NM and enjoyed some really good passages under sail and visited some interesting and "different" places – all in all a very enjoyable and successful cruise!

Geoff Hilditch *Aslan*

London Boat Show

Through the generosity of John Goode, members of the TOA are entitled to London Boat Show tickets at a reduced price; simply follow the instructions given below:

London International Boat Show – 6th to 15th January 2012

CLUBS & ASSOCIATIONS £12 TICKET OFFER

Valid any day including Preview Day on Friday 6th January

WEBSITE BOOKINGS: www.Londonboatshow.com

TELEPHONE BOOKINGS: **0871 230 7140**

BOOKING REFERENCE CODE: **Clubs 12**

IMPORTANT NOTES

Tickets can be ordered up to midnight on Thursday 14th January. They can be printed at home, delivered by post, or collected at the Show.*

A single transaction fee of £1.75 applies whether ordering one or any greater number of tickets.

Youngsters 15 years or under go free (up to two per accompanying adult) provided tickets for them are requested when ordering adult tickets.

The above phone number and website are for orders of less than 10 tickets. Group orders for 10 or more tickets (still at the same price) can only be made by telephoning National Boat Shows ticketing agency, Seetickets, on 0871 231 0828.

*Because tickets ordered via postal delivery could take up to 7 days to arrive, those purchased shortly before the show can be collected on arrival from the advance ticket box office at the main entrance. The most expedient option, for those ordering tickets over the Internet, is to use the website's 'Print at Home' facility.

A look back at the RTIR

Like many TOA members, I subscribe to the RNLI and was interested to read (in the 'Compass', a RNLI publication for the South East) some statistics for this summer's Round The Island Race (RTIR).

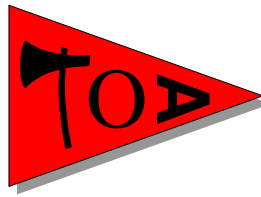
Competitors faced 3m swells and F6 to F7 winds and the race resulted in 23 call outs from 5 lifeboat stations. The Cowes lifeboat 'Tabbycat' was on duty for more than 12 hours dealing with several race incidents. Lifeboats from Bembridge, Yarmouth, Calshot and Lymington were also on the water – incidents included head injuries, overboards, collisions and breakdowns.

Gordon Keyte, *Nokomis*

And finally.....

Now that *Nokomis* is ashore, the bi-annual removal of rust (from the keel) and flaking antifouling has started. The keel only seems to develop rust along the leading and trailing edges so it is rarely necessary to remove all the old antifouling and primer. It did make me wonder though, what do other TOA members use to protect the keel? There used to be some really good rubber based primer which I recall using many years ago but that was withdrawn on 'elf and safety' reasons!

This must be a problem that faces all TOA members so let's hear your solutions – please send in your tips for keel protection to the editor on jengo@talk21.com



TOMAHAWK OWNERS ASSOCIATION

2012 Annual General Meeting

The Association's AGM will be held on Sunday 8th January 2012 at 12.00hrs.

The venue will be held at the **Excel London Boat Show**. We have been allocated Room 33 from 1200 until 1400hrs. The room can be found by proceeding through the aisles between the motor boat stands to a lift that will take you up to the function rooms. Room 30 will be labelled. We will be publishing the committee reports and agenda in advance of the AGM and these will be circulated by email so that members have time to digest the contents before the event. This should reduce the time allotted to the formalities and allow more time for socialising and/or returning to the boat show.

DRAFT AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of last AGM held 9th January 2011
3. Matters Arising
4. To receive the Commodore's Report
Presentation of the Commodore's burgee to an "ordinary member" who has contributed to the success of the Association over the past year
5. To receive the Secretary's Report
6. To receive the Treasurer's Report
7. Election of Commodore -
8. Election of Vice Commodore -
9. Election of Treasurer -
10. Election of Secretary -
11. Election of Bulletin Editor -
12. Election of Committee
13. TOA 2012 programme including dates of Rallies
14. Presentation of the Commodore's Cup for being first TOA Tomahawk in the Round the Island Race
15. Venue for future AGM's
16. Any Other Business (Motions, Website update, updates from regions)
17. Date and place of next meeting

Nominations for all posts should be either emailed or sent by post in advance of the AGM to the Secretary, Tony Hepworth, 75 Horn Rd, Farnborough, Hants, GU14 8RL. Email a.hepworth@ntlworld.com Telephone 01252 655849.

Any further items for discussion at the AGM should also be sent to Tony Hepworth.

Tony Hepworth, TOA Secretary, 21st November 2011

