



EASTCOASTER

The Newsletter of the East Coast Old Gaffers Association

Feb 2017 Issue 110

Forestay

Welcome to the 2017 season! I hope this issue of Eastcoaster gives you a taste of what the East Coast OGA offers its members. Eastcoaster is published 4 times a year, with this issue going out in printed form to all members. If you would like to receive printed copies of the next three issues please return the form enclosed, with a cheque for £3 to cover printing and postage. Otherwise you will be notified by e-mail when the next issue is available to download from the website.

In the dark days of February the joys of sailing seem far away and this is not a time of year when I usually have a sailing event report to publish. Luckily Roy Hart came forward with his memories of the Swale Match, not just for last year's event but for previous years too. It makes a well timed reminder of what we have to look forward to in the coming season!

The East Coast AGM is the first of the winter events, and was held in mid November at the Walton and Frinton Yacht Club, with a reasonable level of attendance from the local area members, who enjoyed a meal at the club after the business of the evening.

The position of Area President (currently: Robert Hill) was due for re-election this year. Robert advised that he was happy to continue, and since no other nominations had been received or were made Robert will continue as Area President.



*Reverie's Passage Race ©
Rik Homan*

In this issue

Forestay

AGM

Swale Memories

Nottage Talk

How to build a mast

Upcoming Events

Teamac at Pin Mill

Fitting out supper

Burnham dinner

Tollesbury Rally

Backstay

Changes to the committee saw Keith Watson standing down as the Minutes Secretary since he has been sailing more in Dutch waters than on the East Coast for the last couple of seasons. He and Julie Osbourne will continue to organise the East Coast Race at Brightlingsea though, so is they are still active this side of the North Sea! His place is taken by Yvonne Graham who has been on the committee for a couple of years. Yvonne Mitchel has also changed her role, and will now be responsible for welcoming new members to the area. Thanks go to Bernard Patrick who has undertaken this task ever since stepping down as Eastcoaster editor.

East Coast President's Address

Robert Hill

I think AGM business goes down best in small doses, so I'll try to be reasonably brief. Last year's activities are well covered in Eastcoaster & on the website so I won't dwell on them for long.

Several members have cruised far from the local area this season, visiting the Brest & Douarnenez festivals, the Baltic & circumnavigating Ireland to name a few, so there are also a good selection of logs & blogs to read.

We had a modified format east coast race weekend this year, introduced by Julie Osborn & Keith Watson, who we must thank for their excellent & thorough organization of everything, with the one exception of wind!

An unusually sunny August Cruise generated on the whole very positive feedback from participants. Particularly popular was George Hutley's "Crazy Race", henceforth to be known as "Gaffeteering" which looks set to become a regular feature.

Plans are developing for next years cruise. Due to the popularity of sunshine we intend to start at Ipswich then sail south to seek more sun. So, Essex here we come!

Tides, higher sunshine hours & a clash of our "usual" week with Mersea Week dictate moving the cruise to a week earlier.

The aim is to give the fleet a change of scene, a hopefully relaxed week incorporating sufficient flexibility to cope with the vagaries of the weather,

some racing, & above all maximise opportunities to socialize.

Maldon Town Regatta & for those in the south of our area, Queenborough wound up our sailing events for the year, though the weather came close to winding up Maldon Town!

Blessed with much better weather was the other late season water based day, a paddle steamer trip to London on Waverley, which proved very popular & well attended.

Our biggest single sponsor this year has once again been Teamac paints & they are due our most sincere thanks. They seem keen to offer continued support next season and already plans are reasonably well advanced towards holding a winter event with Teamac. This looks like being a presentation & demonstration on the use of different marine coatings, followed by a meal, most likely on 18th February at Pin Mill Sailing Club. Please try to attend. Bring a friend. The best way we can repay their generosity is to turn up at their events in good numbers, & obviously to try using their products. If we don't show enough interest I don't see that we can reasonably expect their continued support.

Don't forget also the annual Burnham dinner, which this year is on the 4th March at RBYC.

An Easter Fitting Out Supper, with opportunity for those who may want to combine some sailing with it is also being planned.

Looking beyond the East Coast there is talk of an OGA cruise in company to the Scillies next year as well as developing plans for a 55TH Anniversary Rally in 2018. This would be lower key than 2013, but the hope is to bring together members from all areas, including France & Holland, at a water based event. Most likely this will be at Folly Inn on the Medina, which has the advantages of lots of mooring, catering facilities & accessibility from a lot of areas.

Options are being explored to enable members unable to attend with their own boats to participate, possibly by chartering pilot cutters & the like for the event. If anyone has any suggestions in this regard, perhaps they could put them forward.

If you are interested in either or both of these expeditions, monitor the OGA

website & Gaffers Log for updates.

I'd like to finish with an appeal to all members. Like other OGA areas & sailing clubs in general, we continue to see lower turnouts at events. We really need to change this.

When the OGA first formed gaff rig was in serious decline, but we have reversed that, so lets now reverse this latest trend.

People are often "spoiled for choice" as to what to do at weekends these days, many of our one time "regulars" are travelling far & wide, & some are just put off by bad forecasts.

This year the Maldon Town meal had to be cancelled at the 11th hour because we had more kitchen volunteers than people wanting a meal!

Please, please try to attend OGA events whenever you can. Encourage family & friends to plan weddings, christenings etc outside the sailing season. These are, after all, winter activities. But seriously, please do your best to come to our events. If you wish to suggest any improvements or changes we might make, please speak up at AOB.

A recent suggestion is that by using Facebook, members might organize informal last minute "get togethers", clearly not clashing with other area events. I believe this has been tried with some success on the Solent. Our committee put a lot of time & effort into planning & organizing activities, so please thank them by attending as many as you can. Finally, I would like to extend a very sincere thanks to the area committee for all their hard work during this last year & likewise to all our sponsors, volunteers & clubs who have hosted us.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Lorna Hill

Hello Everyone, and again, thanks to all of you for turning out on a rather damp November day.

As the President just mentioned we have enjoyed many varied and, hopefully for you all, enjoyable events during 2016. In a way, I think we are a victim of

our own success in that with so many events happening not just in the UK, but in Holland & France for example, we can end up being 'spread a bit thin' at some of our local events. Please do all you can to enlist any potential new members to the OGA to ensure that the Association can grow from strength to strength. You could keep a few copies of Eastcoaster on your boat to wet the appetite of any innocent passing gaffer sailor you may come across in your travels. We like to be 'inclusive' and welcome anyone whether or not they actually sail a gaff boat, if they have an interest in anything gaff OGA will be pleased to have them join us. We won't be building any walls to keep them out!

The East Coast successfully secured funding from the Youth Fund again this year, which with joint funding from Teamac we were pleased to have the sailing smack *Sally* join us for the The East Coast Race to enable a group of Mersea Sea Scouts to get on the water.

Please put your ideas forward for future Youth Fund events. We do need to have a strong H & S ethos, but with a bit of planning and thought, we can get these kids sailing.

Hopefully the E-mail Notices are well received by you, sending brief reminders or news between editions of Eastcoaster and highlighting forthcoming events and directing you to the web site for further information. If anyone isn't receiving E-mail Notices, please let me have your email address and we can add you to the list. You won't get bombarded with the things, just a few a year.

When we have a new member join the East Coast OGA, we write to them to welcome them and provide some information on what we get up to. Up until now, Bernard Patrick has kindly carried out this task, but regrettably has stood down just last week. Bernard doesn't make it to many OGA events these days and finds his new boat, a canal boat, taking up more and more of his time. However, as one door closes another opens, Yvonne Mitchell, having now sold *Kajan*, has kindly offered to be the new 'Welcomer of New Old Gaffers'. Thank you Yvonne, - just when you thought you would have spare time on your hands!

As mentioned last year, we have been trialing a new handicapping system

this year. Pete Thomas will give you a short update in a moment, but so far so good.

One last thing, a plea, yes there is always one! We are lucky to have Gaffers Log, Eastcoaster and the Website to keep you informed of events, news and 'stuff', but – we really do need articles to publish. A short write up of an event you have attended, or just a photograph would be good, so please, please, please rattle off a few lines now and then and help the Editors produce good copy. Also, don't forget the Photo Gallery is now up and running, so why not send a few pictures along to that for good measure.



Reverie on her mooring, complete with new mast

photo Julian Cable

Treasurers Report

Clare Thomas

A copy of the 2015-16 Accounts is available, please e-mail the editor at alison.margaret.cable@gmail.com if you require one. Income remains healthy, with a slight increase in the positive balance over the year.

Handicap Committee report

Peter Thomas updated the membership on the progress of the Handicap Committee following on from last AGM Presentation. He explained the different systems that were being considered seeking to obtain an equable system (Jauge Classique and VPRS). A change will require some measurement of boat and sail dimensions. There were a number of brisk debates concerning the alternatives. There appear to be x2 different TCHF Measurement Forms in use which would be looked into and rectified.

PT advised that handicaps would be published on the East Coast Area website prior to next season.

Annual Awards

Tom Felgate Gaff Points Series

- 1st *Crow*
- 2nd *Reverie*
- 3rd *Charm*

Roger Needham Award (1st Gaffer over 100 years old) Not presented

The **Bermudan Cup** was not presented this year due to lack of races / entrants

Small Boat Points Series *Neva*

Best Log / Blog Award

Mike Beckett of *Bonita* for his cruise to the Baltic.

Batemans Trophy (For services to East Coast OGA). Brian Hammett

Brian was unable to attend the AGM, so the announcement of the award was delayed until December, when he attended a committee lunch at the President's house. Brian has served the OGA in a number of roles, including as starter for the East Coast race from Bateman's tower, and has been considered for this award on a number of occasions, but his aversion to the size of the Bateman's Tower model was well known. This year a suitable photograph of the Tower replaced the model, and on first seeing the picture, before knowing she would be living with it, his wife Lorna was heard to say, "That's very nice." Hopefully both of them will enjoy it for the year.



Awarding Bateman's Trophy

photo Richard Giles

Central AGM

Full details of this AGM will be published in Gaffer's Log, but items of special interest to the East Coast are that Alistair Randall stood down as Membership Secretary to be elected as President. Hopefully he will still find time to sail *Witch!* His replacement as Membership secretary is also known to the East Coast. Mary Gibbs bought *Molly Cobbler* from Bernard Patrick (previous editor of *Eastcoaster*), and sailed on the east coast for a season before relocating to the North Wales area.

Brian Skinner asked for members views about forming a new area including the Eastern Solent, Kent & Sussex, with a trial Rally at Shoreham on 29 April 2017. See the website for details.

Plans and models of a new OGA 13' gaff rigged open dinghy, designed by Andrew Wolstenholme of *Kite* fame will be circulated to the areas over the year. The idea is to provide a stepping stone for younger members from crewing to helming, and so attract new young blood into the OGA. New blood on the East Coast includes Tibby Owles, who together with her father John, won the Grumpy II Cups for their exploits in their home built dingy *Summer*.



Launching Summer at Swallows & Amazons

photo Pete Sweeney

Sailing on the Swale

Roy Hart

I find it very hard to relax and meander in life as there is always a project under way, mainly business, local politics and prosecutions. Time is precious but heading to the Swale and Harty Ferry bring back many fond memories over the last 50 years.... wonderful sunsets, parties, great races, also walking into Faversham with pushchairs and three young children out and back in pouring rain.

The Swale Match, usually the second week of August, is probably my most enjoyable weekend of the summer.

In many of the trips to the Kentish shores for the match, I would leave Burnham on Crouch around 6pm on the Wednesday evening, anchoring in Yoke fleet which is the first inlet to port up the River Roach, and go through the Havengore Bridge very early on the Thursday morning. I would sneak across the Maplin Sands with 1" of water under the keel, and if making good time cut across Leysdown Flats and enter the River Swale N E of Shellness and anchor in the drying channel off Harty. No phone noise, only radio 4, nothing to do except sleep, swim, scrub off, fish and that wonderful feeling of the clean Kentish sand and clean estuary water running through one's toes, a pleasure which cannot be bought. In the evenings, around 7pm a few pints in The Ferry and a good meal followed by a peaceful night's sleep in my bunk.

Friday. I love watching old friends coming in on the tide, usually with a good afternoon breeze.

6pm. Sailing up to the Shipwrights Arms and the boatyard for the race briefing, and to pick up the Reed's race numbers, another couple of Shepherds and Neams and a meal in the Shipwrights.

Some years parts of lady's underwear were draped on the Hern Bay turning mark. One year I lifted a very large brassiere 42DD off the mark with my boat hook. There was discussion, did I have a penalty for touching the mark?

It's always neap tides, ebb out and flood coming back. The match normally starts quite early on Saturday morning with lightish fair wind to the Spaniard and the wind picks up to Herne Bay and to the Whitstable street buoy, and

then quite often it's a full romp back up the Swale to the finish. This is the time for photos of Smacks, Bawleys and Thames Barges with great bones in their teeth. Taut weather rigging and clouds of billowing canvas. Also, joy of joys, steam tugs and Vic's belching clouds of black smoke, parades of Dutch barges and working vessels, and sometimes a very large gentleman's yacht called *Lilian* complete with a butler serving tea on the half deck, what wonderful days.



Alberta and Cygnet at the Swale match, 2013

photo Julian Cable

After a relaxing hour or two after the race, the Pilgrimage to the Prize Giving in the Tester's Family boatyard with the hog roast, oyster stalls, beer tent, a 7-piece band and the prize giving traditions. I well remember one year the landlord of the Shipwrights Arms smiled once, but this was only unreliable folklore, but even so, the Shipwrights Arms is one of the most unique old pubs on the Kentish shores.

From around 5.30-8.30pm a wonderful atmosphere hangs as an aura over the whole evening. It's the only time I meet with friends going back over a life time of sailing, and then it comes all comes to an end, like someone switching off a light.

The tide starts to ebb! We all make out of Oar Creek to our moorings in the Swale, and then it's usually the time for the bottle of port, reflections of the day with friends, and the riding lights and laughter until late, especially over your rivals or our own misfortunes. Usually the breeze stops and the last look out of the hatch before we all turn in is likened to a night scene of a Christmas card. Next morning, very early at first light, clank! clank! of the barges weigh and anchor in the stillness of the morn, or a large smack with elm staves leaving around the wooden anchor winch.

If I am in my Memory 19' *Greensleeves 1* drawing only 1' 6" with the plate up I too leave at first light and cut across the estuary leaving Ham Gap to port across the sands on course for Havengore, and Burnham-On-Crouch for breakfast. Draft boats like my gaff rig 'Dragon' take the ebb to the Whitaker Beacon hopefully catching the first of the flood up the crouch and to arrive in time for lunch.

What makes the Swale match such a success? Well several things.....first its location and secondly Leina Reike and all the helpers and committee, the wonderful free magazine with great sea stories and last year's match results also including a handmade beer mug for each boat is extremely good value for the two days of total enjoyment for only £15.00 This also includes rescue boats, buoyage etc. This year's numbers were well up, with twelve Thames barges and around seventy traditional gathering of all type of boats, some very large, and some very small.

The smaller craft such as barge boats and tideways etc. have their own races in a more sheltered part of the Swale but as I said before, it's two days of total enjoyment. Yes, there are number of classes even for motor barges. But the BIG difference is that, there are no **HANDICAPS** at all, the first boat home wins! There is no decent over this whatsoever, in fact it's a breath of fresh air, we all try to beat the boat which beat us last year or over many years.

Unfortunately, having been a race officer, I found there is more bad feeling within some clubs over handicaps than over any other subject. In fact, sometimes it is a race officer's nightmare. Long may the Swale match, which is a step back in time, last for generations to come.

A sincere fair wind to you all.

Sailing Round Ireland at the Nottage

Alison Cable

Julian and I arrived at the Nottage Maritime Institute on Saturday 21st Jan to talk about our voyage round Ireland last summer. We came armed with over 300 photographs, including two which won prizes in the Photographic competition the week before. Cheese and wine were served, together with a slice of Irish Coffee cake during a break in the talk.

As one of the people giving the talk I can only hope that everyone enjoyed it, and we were certainly encouraged to keep going! Despite taking over 2 hours we still did not manage to talk about all the photos....

Work commitments meant that the voyage was split into four sections of unequal lengths, but we were blessed with incredibly good weather for the longest (3 week) segment and made the most of it to travel down the remotest parts of the Wild Atlantic Way.



Lonely Mooring, Robinetta at Clare Island

photo Alison Cable

Avast! Now! I need a Mast!

Words and photos by Pete Elliston

For some time now, *Reverie* has had a set of sails that we feared would bring the old mast down around our ears, or at least (if we were lucky) over the side!

Laying up at the end of 2015 saw the controlled lowering followed by close inspection with a small Opinel knife (well I am PTK after all) which clearly showed that the base 3 foot which took in the pivot pin; the hounds area on the mast; and the top 3 foot where all the flappy bits are shackled onto, were rotten! Yes, the mast which put up with the 2015 season in which we picked up 11 trophies including the Pinmill regatta; which saw the topsail stay aloft all race where others were lowered. Maybe it was not too rotten or maybe it would have taken a bigger jib which we do not have!

Anyway the mast was to be replaced which was a job I had always wanted to do but never quite had the confidence to tackle. This time was no exception as I asked James Palmer of *Kestrel* and Larkman's boatyard fame to source the materials and supply to me a baulk 28 feet long and 5" square with a big enough hole up the middle into which I could pull sufficient electric string needed for lights and radio.

James and I decided that we would review the progress at that point to see if he was to be commissioned further. The timber- close grained Douglas fir to be precise, was sourced from Thorogoods in Ardeleigh as this was seen to be excellent quality and was as close as could be to the boat and yard. James then worked his "magic", admirably scarfing great long joints which were located away from the loading points of hounds, gaff and gooseneck, while cunningly persuading all the routed grooves to line up and accept a good coating of resin. This allowed a rag plug to be drawn through the 28 foot hole leaving the inside resin treated against rot.

I met James "up the yard" to decide what happened next and was told to "take the mast away and deal with it as I was deemed by him then as perfectly capable of completing the job"- with the offer of help if required! So it was loaded onto my 2 tonne trailer and taken away, to my workshop.

Three of us managed to get it into the barn and into the woodworking section where it sat beneath the old mast which was suspended under the mezzanine floor as a pattern. It was not long before I soon realised that the mast should have been 4 ¾" square which was a bit of a set-back.

The thicknesser would have to be set up, clamped to a steel topped bench in such a position as to allow the blank to be easily passed through the machine on rollers, but of course the rollers had to be fabricated first! So, to the welding bench and a bit of a delay.

Two hours after starting and a lot of sawdust, the blank was reduced to the tabernacle thickness square, with the thought that there was a very expensive "pencil" we were beginning to cut up! Never mind work had begun.

The next step was to transfer the marks of all the salient bits from the old to the new mast and cut to length. Done, so onto the internet to find a way of making and using a spar gauge. The trick with this was to get a ratio so a gauge of the correct range of spars could be made- I ended up with one about a foot long which was easy to handle.

As the gauge is used for marking out before planning it was necessary to first set up how to taper the mast and from which point to start the tapering to the top. Firstly it was important to mark the centre of the mast at each end. The old mast was tapered from the hounds which, as the top of the mast was quite short, made for a strange taper which was not very aesthetic so I opted for starting the taper at a point just above the upper position that the gaff jaws would normally sit. This start point, gave a nice long taper, through the



hounds position to the 3" diameter at the top. This part of the job was done with a power plane flat, so the taper was from 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ to 3" square.

Now the spar gauge could be used. I had opted for using pens rather than scribes made the lines stand out well, which made for easy planning with the power plane set to a reasonable depth. But, after a sit down, coffee and a think (all of which were most important as it is essential



to think well ahead on this type of "one off not done by me before jobs") it was apparent that in order to fit the hounds to the mast a flat sided mast (in that location) would be easier. I figured that if the plane was "run off" the mast at a point before the hounds' position and then "run back in" it would leave the appropriate flat side upon which to locate the hound block. –A most useful coffee break!

The "eighths" were cut taking care that I did the same number of cuts for each angle, (running out and then in, at the appropriate places), finishing by just leaving each line marked. It was then clear that the next cuts, the "sixteenths" needed to be done by counting the cuts as



there were no lines to work to. Then the "thirtyseconds" and the "sixtyfourths" by the same method.

After some "rough" sanding with a handheld belt sander it was clear that there had to be a better way-a mechanised way.... It had seen a small spar being sanded at Rik Homan's yachtwerft in Holland using a small electric motor from a washing machine, I just had a 26 foot long very heavy mast....

A coffee and a walk around the workshop I realised I had the makings of a lathe so after hauling out the "Rapidor Manchester" reciprocating 3 phase power hacksaw, servicing it checking it over electrically it was run up and an RPM check done on the flywheel/vee belt drive. 120 RPM seemed ok.

The drive guards were removed and a chuck was fabricated from plywood and scrap studding and this was then bolted to the spokes of the flywheel. The mast butt was offered up and fitted in the chuck with the studding in one dimension and wedges in the other so it would rotate about the centre line. The hacksaw had its con rod disconnected so the saw did not reciprocate as I had no steel girders to cut at that time. (it would have been possible to use the saw for steel while turning the mast). The saw base had to be canted over with wedges so that the centre line was not parallel to the floor, in fact a slight downward line towards the mast top which was fitted with a loose fitting 1"



steel shaft which was greased and set into a workmate. The "lathe" was ready for a test run.- It worked so the next step was to fit a pair of finisher belts cut and fitted inside out with a lead

bar clamped to the bottom, just heavy enough to apply sufficient pressure to sand the wood without getting wrapped around the mast!

The inclined centre line and gravity ensured that the belts moved on their own down towards the top end of the mast. (Photo 7)

At the hounds at the appropriate time one belt was lifted over to continue to the end. When the top end belt got to the top it was just picked up walked to where the other one was, dropped, the other one was picked up and dropped at the base end. For 10 hours the "lathe" did not stop and all I did was pick up and move belts. The cut/runs took about 8 mins. A belt grade change at some point to 120 grit saw the mast finished for dressing with fittings at the end of the day. (Photo 8&9) The hounds area remained mainly square which allowed the easy fitting of the hound blocks the shape of which was taken by drawing around a Writtle Agricultural College shield-Who said gaffers were "Agricultural"?!

Sixteen coats of Woodskin later, (not applied by rotating the mast) and the mast was complete!



My thanks to James for the selection of the wood and the technical scarfing.

Teamac demonstration

On 18th February Teamac Paints have kindly agreed to send their Technical Manager to give us a demonstration, some technical advice, and top tips in an informal setting at Pin Mill Sailing Club. They will answer your questions and there will be an opportunity to try out the paint (so please dress accordingly!).

We'll kick off at 3pm with refreshments and the presentation/demonstration will start at about 4pm. To be followed by a social evening with supper at the Club.

Supper will be served at around 6:00pm and will consist of chilli con carne with baked potato. Cost £7.50 (per head) which will include a drink voucher to the value of £3.

After this is concluded we will have a social evening with maybe a couple of light hearted activities.

Teamac Paints have been sponsoring the East Coast OGA on a regular basis since 2013, when they attended the 50th anniversary celebrations in Cowes. The name Teamac comes from a shortened version of the company name Teal & Mackrill Ltd. Mr Arthur Teal and Mr Harold Mackrill established the company in 1908. Mr Teal left the company in 1941 at the age of 73, leaving the Mackrill family in charge but Harold Mackrill remained as MD until his son Benjamin Mackrill took over in 1962. The company grew and thrived and in 1999 Benjamin Mackrill died, leaving his son – the third generation Mackrill as MD. Geoff still remains as MD today. Their paints are manufactured in Hull, and exported all over Europe.

Booking forms are included, please return to Clare Thomas as soon as possible as numbers (limited to 60) are needed by Tuesday 14th February.



Annual Dinner at Burnham

Saturday, March 4, 2017

It will soon be that time of year again – when the days get longer and our attention turns to fitting out.

Have a break from all the hard work by booking your places for the East Coast OGA Annual Dinner on Saturday 4 March, 2017. The Royal Burnham YC make us very welcome and organisers Trevor and Elaine Rawlinson arrange splendid decorations and a sumptuous feast. This is a chance to smarten up a little from the usual "old gaffer" look and exchange a few tales of derring-do over dinner.

The price is £28 per head for a 4 course dinner with port and coffee.

The menu and booking form are included with this issue. The sooner we have the numbers the easier it is to arrange, so please book now!

Please bring along good (or quirky) prizes for the raffle.



Annual Dinner in 2016

photo Trevor Rawlinson

Accommodation nearby

White Hart: +44 (0)1621 782106

Anchor: +44 (0)1621 782117

The Star Inn: +44 (0)1621 782010

Venue:

Royal Burnham Yacht Club

Royal Burnham Yacht Club, The Quay, Burnham on Crouch CM0 8AU

Organiser: Trevor and Elaine Rawlinson

Organiser phone: 01621 783969

Organiser email: elaineelsbury@hotmail.com

Also on this date is the all day Medway/Swale boating conference at Chatham. It might be a bit of a dash to make both events, but for those members who live south of the London River this is an opportunity to learn more about the history of their cruising area. Information on the website.

Informal fitting-out supper

Sat 15th April - Easter Saturday

Although this supper will be held on Sailing Barge *Victor* this is not a voyage - just a comfortable and appropriate venue for an informal supper to meet up, socialise and compare notes on fitting out. We're hoping there might be a few songs too but that won't take over the whole evening.

The bar opens on board at 7pm with bottled beers and wine available, then a so-called "fork supper" will be served around 7.30 with a choice of dishes such as chilli, curry, corned beef hash and macaroni cheese followed by a choice of puddings for £15. We are subsidising this evening from Area funds to keep the cost down and we hope lots of you will be able to come.

Victor is moored at Custom House Quay in Ipswich and if you wish to sail to the event then please do! Book your own berth at one of the marinas inside Ipswich Dock. If you decide to come by boat why not try telling people via the East Coast Gaffers Facebook page. A rally might happen!

Tollesbury Rally

29th-30th April

The first sailing event of the season is the now traditional small boat event organised together with the Tollesbury Sailing Club over the early May bank holiday.

On the Saturday the Old Gaffers will be racing against the local dinghies for the Kings Head Trophy. The race will have full safety boat cover provided by Tollesbury SC, and run over one of their courses. The prize giving will happen at the Club this year to make it easier to hear the results. Last year the event was won by Clive Church, sailing for the Tollesbury Club. Maybe this year the Gaffers will win it!

Camping is available at the Yacht Club for £20 per tent, but camper vans are welcome to stay at the Sailing Club overnight ready for more racing on the Sunday if the weather permits.

Please watch the website for entry forms and more details closer to the time.



Tollesbury at springs

Photo Alison Cable

Other Events

Details of the late May bank holiday Fambridge rally will be printed in the next issue of Eastcoaster, but for now it is worth noting that once again it coincides with the Fambridge River Festival, making it a weekend with more than just us Old Gaffers to see!

The President previewed some of this year's other sailing events in his AGM report, but the new arrangements for the August Cruise deserve another mention. One of the reasons for bringing the cruise forward a week is that OGA boats have been invited to attend Burnham Week in its 125 Anniversary year. There will be free moorings available for the days between the end of the cruise on the Blackwater and the initial weekend of Burnham Week which will include a parade of sail. The organisers hope that we can provide a fleet of boats to illustrate the history of yacht racing. Exactly what the event will entail is still unknown, but if enough Old Gaffers turn up I am sure there will be a race for them!

The Southwold Rally is back at the end of July, the Trailer section is organising events on the Norfolk Broads and at Rutland water... 2017 is shaping up to be another exciting year for the East Coast OGA. Or maybe I should hope for relaxing and sunny...



Slack Nav, OGA photo competition 1st prize

photo Rory Howlett

Backstay

I hope you have enjoyed this issue of Eastcoaster. It is wonderful to receive content from the members, and my thanks to Roy Hart and Peter Elliston. Some contributors, namely those whose web site articles I have paraphrased, are not named, but thanks to Sue Lewis, Richard Giles, and any one else who may recognise their own sentences! Although I attend many of the events, commitments to *Robinetta*, currently at Holyhead, means I can not get to all of them, and I do not think my voice alone would make for a good newsletter anyway!

Please let me have your articles and comments to be published in the next issue by the 2nd May. The May issue will be published slightly later, to allow write ups of the Tollesbury event to be included. Send your submissions to me at alison.margaret.cable@gmail.com. Happy Sailing in 2017.

Alison Cable, editor



Alison tanning her toes, Ireland 2016

photo Julian Cable