

Social Calendar - Dates For Your Diary

Sat 16 Nov Working party 10:30am. Come along with gardening tools. "Barbeque lunch on the go provided" (Note that the customary sit down lunch will not be available because the kitchen and Clubroom will be being "deep cleaned" for the Dinner).

Sat 23 Nov Annual Dinner starting at 7:30pm; details below.

Sat 7 Dec AGM, Prize Giving and End of Season Party starting at 7:30pm.

Sun 15 Dec Cheats Christmas lunch 12:30pm and family games.

2014

Wed 1 Jan Hot Drinks Biscuits from 11a.m. New Year's Day Sail, subject to sailing conditions. Celebrate the New Year with a Soup and "Raid the Freezer" lunch from 1.30p.m. We may even prepare some mulled cider/apple juice.

Sat 25 Jan Burns Night Celebration, Haggis Tatties and Neeps from 7:30pm.

Sat 15 Feb Viennese evening

Sun 2 Mar Lunch 12:30 pm and frostbite cruise/scavenger hunt.

Sun 16 Mar Working party 10:30am. Come along with gardening tools. Lunch will be provided.

Sat 22 Mar Start of Season Party 7:30pm

Sun 30 Mar Start of sailing season

Aquarius Sailing Club Annual Dinner Saturday 23 November 7:30pm for 8:00pm

Price: £30 (£25 if paid by 13 Nov)

Dress: Smart

Includes:-

Reception drink at 7:30pm.

Four course meal by Professional

Caterers

Table Wine

Coffee/Tea and mints

Limited to 48 members on a first come first served basis. This is a very popular dinner so earliest booking is advised; by 13 November at the latest.

Please pay using online banking using reference AQSC +(your surname) to

Sort Code : 309693

Account : 00100373

Account name: GM & E Thompson then email confirmation of payment and your menu choices to

dinner@aqsc.org.uk. In case of difficulty ring Richard 01932 786636.

Alternatively post to Diana Carpenter
11 Chestnut Avenue, EWELL, Surrey,
KT19 0SY to receive by the

13 November, enclosing a cheque payable to 'Aquarius Sailing Club'.

If you don't receive a confirmation email/phone call by Sunday 17 November please contact Diana on 020 8393 8029.

Note: Booking forms are included with this issue of "The Mainsheet"

Please order by 13 November as any tickets not sold by this date will be offered to guests of members. Please include (G) against guests, they will be placed on a waiting list until 13 November when any remaining tickets will be allocated.

If anyone has items they would like to donate to the raffle would they please leave them at the club by 20 November.

AQUARIUS S.C.

THE MAIN SHEET

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Autumn 2013 Edition

Vice Commodore's Bit - *Graham Thompson*

The sailing season is ending not so much with a bang as with a blow. Three weeks ago members present sat nose to window watching the steady downpour and only one foolhardy member went out for a soak.

The following Sunday promised gusts of 30 mph, but coming from the south the trees caused such turbulence that three of the four boats struggled to find a consistent wind direction, while Pat Halling simply romped away.

Last Sunday saw the approach of the 'great storm' and only Bosuns ventured out for the first and only race - one capsized, one retired after an over-vigorous workout, and the third only survived by putting up no more than 'a pocket handkerchief' to drive his boat. And I see that a new major storm is being predicted for the first weekend in November.

Quite why members prefer the warmth, burgers, cheap drinks and convivial chat of the clubhouse I cannot understand, but then I do need my cobwebs to be blown away after each week chained to my desk in the city.

However, the reduced numbers sailing this year do partially reflect a change in the nature of the sailing undertaken. From memory six members have cruised in the Med this year, one couple twice, while

Nigel's exploits have taken him to the Scillies, the Shetlands and down the east coast. I suppose we are also seeing the club evolve to reflect the changing profile of the membership.

The social side, by contrast, had possibly its best event ever in the much acclaimed Russian night, which I missed due to a remarkable lack of foresight 30 years and 9 months earlier - it clashed with my son's 30th. And more is to come, with the annual dinner and cheats' Christmas lunch carefully recorded in my diary.

Between the two comes the more serious matter of the AGM, which gives about a month to consider how well the structure of 3 vice commodores and a troubleshooting president has worked. Certainly we have managed to better spread the load previously borne by commodores, but is there scope for the committee to better reflect changes in the profile of our members?

President Postscript - Rodger Wheeler

Very many thanks to all those who helped the club during the year with a special mention of An-Ony-Mous (alias Mike Hendra) who contributed all those unattributed stories in this Mainsheet and our 3 Vice Commodores who have successfully helmed Aquarius through 2013.

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Newsletter Format

Richard Cannon

Prior to this issue newsletter page size has been A4 with 2 pages per sheet of A3 paper and folded to create an A4 booklet.

There is a problem with the A3 printer used and they are less common than A4 so this issue has A5 size pages with 2 pages per sheet of A4 folded to create an A5 booklet.

I like the A5 format as it makes a more compact publication; The text size is the same and generally there are 2 columns instead of 3. More stories overflow on to a 2nd page.

Origin of the Speakies

The term "Pulling Your Leg" seems to have had a criminal origin. Apparently thieves in London used to trip people then steal valuables whilst they lay prone on the ground.

Over time the stumbling fall and the comical effect of tripping someone "Pulling Your Leg" altered to mean making fun of someone.

Interesting Statistics

A look at club statistics reveals some interesting facts.

So far as the records show the club has rarely been let down as a result of a member or members not turning up for duty, either in the ODD and support roles or for bar duty. Although it is true that the names that appear on the various duty rosters are not always the same as the individuals who attends on the day, arrangements have usually been made in advance to make a change or provide cover.

By and large about a third of those listed as club members turn up for working parties, on average that is about 23. The attendance record is fairly consistent as are the people who turn up on the day. Some members keep up their membership even though they rarely use the club so one might argue that paying your subs without using the facilities counts as volunteering. Of course some members do voluntary work for the club outside of working party days and some members are not fit enough to labour in the noon day sun but use the club socially so perhaps our adjusted average is close to 50% than 30%, not too bad by general standards.

The Power of Prayer

Mike Hendra

An odd title from me as an atheist but there is no doubting the power to influence events that occurs when a group of people combine their thought processes to influence a particular outcome. Membership and fellowship in a vibrant organisation is one of the keys to longevity and outside of the churches clubs like Aquarius can produce similar results so being a member aids the prospect of both a fulfilling and longer life.

At this time some of our members are "unwell" and some have partners and loved ones who also are ill.

These members need to know that the mental power of Aquarius is focussed on them coming through these difficulties and out the other side smiling again. Names and details are not necessary, just give a moments thought, a beam of Aquarenergy, to those who might need it and tell them when you next see them.

If you change any one of the above 14 you make another not quite 'unique' roundabout from about 86,000,000,000 possibilities.

Hence the above explains why drivers/riders never get the simple answer which serves all roundabouts.

If you want a simple answer then read the Highway Code sections 184 to 190 but as you know it really does not cover the question fully. You have to decide if, when and what to signal for every roundabout you negotiate - at entry, while negotiating it, and at exit. Safe Driving!

Wow! So now we have the experts answer. When I passed my test in 1958 things were less complicated and the answer I was given was: Always signal your intention to leave but never until you have passed the exit immediately before the one you are taking. It has worked for me on three continents over fifty five years. Go safely!

Mike H

Annual General Meeting, Prize Giving And End Of Season Party Saturday 7 December At 7:30 pm For 8 pm

Your presence is requested for the Annual General Meeting, the most important meeting of the year where the future administration of the club will be decided for the coming year.

Matters for discussion will include elections for Flag Officers and Committee, the club's finances and future plans.

The Annual Prize Giving and End of Season Party will follow including our traditional mulled wine, mince pies and other tasty fare.

JeAn Maracchi

Don't signal to the Birds - *John Panting*

I was approached to write an Article on Signalling at Roundabouts. You will probably know by now that I am a National Observer for the Institute of Advance Motorists (IAM). I mention this because it really in many ways makes the answer very simple. There is no precise answer. However, to explain this answer takes a little more effort as below.

So the first point to cover is really comes via Shakespeare's Hamlet.

To Signal or Not To Signal?

While you are behind the wheel you are constantly using your five senses to TAKE in information.

You USE this information to make a Plan.

The Plan will incorporate amongst others, the decision about signalling - To Signal or Not To Signal?

So when should you signal?

Well for a start Don't Signal to the Birds.

You should signal when it is a benefit to other Road Users. You may in some cases not be able to see them but could reasonably expect them to arrive on the scene. (Road Users include pedestrians, cyclist, motor cyclists and drivers of any vehicle etc.)

Once you are through this process you decide to or not to GIVE a signal.

The above is called the INFORMATION phase and includes TAKE USE GIVE (TUG).

OK now if we have decided to signal when and where should we give it?

When we approach a Hazard we have to consider where to POSITION the vehicle.

Once this is decided we need to signal in good time before we change position.

You have to repeat the above process

several times for a roundabout. On approach to it. While going round it. When about to leave.

What signal you give will depend but remember it must be appropriate and of benefit to other road users. This is not as easy as it sounds because a signal can confuse or mislead other road users.

So back to - There is no precise answer. We need to ask what a roundabout is.

The answer is reasonably simple. It's a group of roads that meet at a node (point) where traffic is required to negotiate it in a procession clockwise. (If you drive on the left).

The difficult part is that every roundabout is unique: i.e.

1. The number of roads that meet.
2. Where they meet and leave it.
3. The type of road (dual carriageway, single track etc.).
4. The size of the centre. (From enormous to a blob of paint).
5. The speed traffic negotiates it.
6. Whether it's lit at night.
7. It may have lane markings.
8. It may have dedicated lanes on the approach roads.
9. It may have dedicated lane markings around it.
10. It could have traffic lights to its approach.
11. It could have traffic light within it.
12. It may even break the basic rule of give way to the right and have give way markings within the roundabout.
13. You may be able to see over the centre of it or maybe not.
14. Two or three mini roundabouts may be linked together.

I think I could add more but the point is made.

Sunbury Regatta Fireworks

This event took place on a beautiful clear night on the 10th August. The wind was light and the temperature was "mild" in Weather Bureau parlance so a light jacket was sufficient for comfort.

To start there was a BBQ at AQSC and then the Patrol boat, full of members, left at 8:15pm.

The river events opened with a sail past by cruisers belonging to members of Middle Thames Yacht Club but it was not without Aquarius participation. Several vessels decked with lights, pictures, music and fancy dressed crews passed "Habari" the anchor boat belonging to Di and Phil Howley. Alan and Gail Mackintosh decked their boat out as Chez Flintstone and dressed the part as well whilst Stuart Shafer attempted to record the event on film.

Aquarius fielded the Patrol Boat with a motley crew of 10 whilst Graham undertook the task of rowing Trudi up river.

Keith Poncia equipped his Pacer with wife and an outboard and motored up river in a series of circular motions that were the best course he could steer.

Upon arrival we attached ourselves to "Habari" and were soon supplied with a good med-red from the galley.

Although it was rumoured that the firework display was to be shorter than last year, it was stunning. We were perfectly positioned for the event and the display seemed so close above our heads that one almost felt the need to duck.

Twice there was a lull in proceeding and twice the audience thought the event was over when again screaming rockets burst overhead. At each lull the audience clapped enthusiastically and no one thought the event was shorter than last year. What a spectacular evening and all included in the AQSC membership fee.

Thanks to Phil, Di, Alan, Gail, Stuart, Middle Thames Yacht Club, those who participated and or supported the event from Aquarius and of course, Sunbury Regatta.

Culinary Corner

Blackberry and Almond Cake	Try using: Apples, Cherries, Peaches, Plums, Etc.
Grams Ingredients	
20cm spring form pan	Grease pan
Heat oven	180 degrees
115 Butter	Soften butter
115 Sugar	Add sugar and beat till fluffy.
3 Eggs	Add eggs and almond essence whilst still beating
1 tsp Almond essence	Fold in flour and ground almonds.
40 Plain flour	
100 Ground almonds	NB.Hazelnuts work but change the texture slightly
1 Tbls Milk	Stir in milk add mixture to pan
340 Blackberries	Layer blackberries on mix and sprinkle on sugar
2 Tbls Sugar	
	Bake mid oven 30 minutes

The Cannonisation of 'Over Easy'

Having spent more time in the river this year than was usual for him, Richard Cannon discovered his old boat, "June" or more commonly ST368, was less buoyant when upside down than it should be.

As the Signet Nationals were only a couple of weeks away he thought that a change of boat may be quicker than the repair job necessary to seal the buoyancy chambers around the gunwales.

He recklessly approached Mike Baker with a view to purchasing "Over Easy". Of course Richard had not matched the boat's name to the problem that caused ST368 to leak, basically going over too easily so oblivious of the possibility of exciting the gremlins embedded in the wind, Richard bought the boat.

The first members arriving at Aquarius for the trip to the Sunbury Regatta fireworks were greeted by a car-park cut off by Richard's boat bits. Trailers, masts, booms, sails were strewn across the parking area and the first arrivals were co-opted in to assisting with the restoration of order. By Sunday "Over Easy" was now partly ST 368 with the new hull joined to the new sails by 368's boom, main sheet and fittings, and genoa fittings.

For its first outing at Aquarius "Over Easy/ST368" was to be crewed by "Team 150", Richard and Mike Hendra. Both hoped that the first outing would not see a repeat of the ducking they had endured at the Hampton Regatta. Richard had suffered a disaster at the Signet Nationals, due to high winds and the different main sheet system, and his confidence was suffering a bit although neither he nor Mike had associated the new boat's name with the risk of a swim.

As the five minute horn sounded Richard saw that the mainsail tack pin had fallen out and was lost for the moment at least. Just before the 1 minute horn OE/368 left the dock still with the main un-tacked. The new boat had a different arrangement for jib sheeting than the old one which Richard did not like and with which Mike was not familiar.

Against all odds Team 150 had a great start and reached the top mark alongside the fastest boats. Richard was positioning and tacking well and soon the old confidence and competitive spirit returned. OE/368 sailed well and ended the race with a great tussle for the line with John Panting which John won by a nose.

Team 150 sat out the 2 O'clock race and by 3:30 "Over Easy" had a new main tack pin and ST368's jib sheet arrangement. In the gusty conditions the gunwale came close to the wave tips but OE/368 successfully returned to upright. In the end Team 150 finished well and Richard's confidence was restored. The Cannonisation of "Over Easy" and ST368 was complete, well at least for now!

Anyone want to buy a pile of Signet bits?

Newsletter Printing

The printing and paper costs of this Newsletter were met in full by JDC Independent Financial Advisers
69 The Green Twickenham
020 8755 5577

We thank Frank Rainsborough for setting this up. Apart from the cost saving, it is good to have this task delegated.

such as Doctor Zhivago. This was accompanied by enthusiastic clapping, foot stamping and singing by the audience.

At one point Bibs took time out to explain about the instruments and demonstrated their (and his) versatility. Towards the end, shot glasses of Vodka were handed around and the evening, the performers and the audience were toasted in traditional Russian fashion. We resisted the temptation to smash the glasses afterwards. A variety of desserts and cheeses followed by coffee rounded off a very memorable evening.

The Russian Night was a somewhat unexpected evening. Many people had said they were unsure what to expect, however, no one left disappointed and it was still the focus of much conversation at the club the following day.

Many thanks are due to a variety of people who worked long and hard to ensure the Russian evening was a success. These included Linda Wheeler who was instrumental in the planning of the evening and the preparation of the Stroganoff. Diana Carpenter also helped with the food prep including mountains of savoury rice. Joan Walkden and Pat Irving, Helen Barnett and Jean Maracchi amongst others all worked to help prepare and serve the food on the night. Thanks also to Nigel and all the lads who turned up on Friday afternoon to erect the Marquee and prepare the clubhouse; and last but by no means least a huge thanks to Rodger whose vision the evening was. You did well. Very well. Thank you from us all.

The Undertaker

Some of you may have heard the story of the Hon Sec passing a club member on the left on the A3. The member in question is elderly (situation normal for most AQSC members) much mindful of the rules of the road, who drives mostly in the middle lane at what he calls the speed limit. Of course the man (who HS??? had cared for after his knee surgery) made mention of the situation the following Wednesday and although teased mercilessly about the incident Jean managed it with her usual good humour.

Her version is that during her journey home from the club she was turning off the A3 at Malden Road New Malden. She says she was travelling at the speed limit per her GPS and she came up behind a driver who was hogging the middle lane at speedo speed 50 or less. In the circumstances she could not overtake before the exit so passed on the inside immediately before the slip road. She says that in Venezuela there is nothing wrong with "Undertaking" and she has been doing it for years without problem so what's fuss?

Now it has come to light that the poor member is suffering another structural malfunction and may shortly need further orthopaedic surgery after which he will require some more tender care. Now the question; Is he prepared for recuperation in the care of an undertaker?

AQSC Russian Night - *Mike Baker*

Over the years we have had some pretty interesting social events at Aquarius, but I have to say that Rodger Wheeler's 'Russian Night' on Saturday 21 September delivered something just a little bit different. Rodger had organised a four course meal and a Balalaika Group for the entertainment. Now you might be forgiven for thinking this possibly sounded a bit naff but you would have been very wrong. By general consensus this was possibly one of the best social events at Aquarius ever.

Rodger always seems to go for the slightly different/quirky despite the organisational problems this inevitably brings. Rodger and Linda had seen the Balalaika group perform in Sunbury in 2012 and had talked to Bibs Ekkel, their leader, about performing at Aquarius. This wasn't just any group. Bibs was a prima Balalaika soloist and one of the top masters of the instrument outside of Russia. He has entertained Royalty, and has an extensive repertoire ranging from cabaret to symphony hall and has performed in Russia, Poland, China, Britain the US and Canada.

Rodger had arranged for four performers to come to the club but in the event six turned up (at no additional cost). Five players and a singer, all in colourful traditional Russian peasant costumes.

During the prior week the new canvas marquee was erected over the quarter deck, the clubroom was cleared for entertainment and chairs and tables were set up on the quarter deck.

The evening started, as most do at the club, with a crowded bar. While the group set up, Zakuska (Russian hors d'oeuvre) were served to an audience which numbered some thirty five or so members. Shortly after, everyone was invited to take their seats in the clubroom and the musical part of the evening got underway.

The Balalaika is probably the most recognized of Russian folk instruments. To keep it simple the group played three different types ranging in size, and tone. They were accompanied by a guitarist (six string, not the traditional Russian seven string version), a domra and a singer. Two of which were his wife and son. The balalaika itself is a three stringed instrument, two gut and one steel. The gut strings are tuned together while the melody is played on the third steel string.

Bibs and his group played two sets with the main course of Beef/Mushroom Stroganoff with rice being served during the interval. They played a variety of traditional Russian balalaika music but also included many well recognised pieces which had been adapted for films



Club Management And More

Virtually nothing that happens at Aquarius comes with a cost for labour. Club members provide their services without charge for everything that is needed to make the club work. No one receives a salary or payment for running the club; the Management Committee is supported by an army of volunteers that does the job.

Management Committee operations are divided into three formal elements, Administration, Premises and Sailing.

GrahamThompson manages the administration supported by the Hon Sec Jean Maracchi - Hendra, WHS Pat Irving, Treasurer Joan Walkden, Bar Management by Peter Carpenter with Rodger Wheeler, and social & catering by Diana Carpenter.

Premises are managed by Nigel Knowles well supported by Bryan Clements and Ken Ayres and by a labourer often seen working late into the night who has a strange resemblance to Nigel himself.

Sailing is ably managed by our computer boffin Richard Cannon who also manages and edits the Mainsheet supported by Mike Hendra.

Eric Bridgewater keeps an eye out for happenings that might affect the club, Kath Bridger provides assistance to the committee in various matters and Michael Chipps keeps the meeting minutes to ensure the smooth running of the club.

No contractors are paid to maintain the club, no cleaners are engaged to clean the clubhouse. No barman is paid to serve drinks, no cook is paid to prepare meals, no waiter is paid to serve at table and no skivvy is paid to wash up. No washer woman is paid to launder the towels and tea towels. No grounds-men are engaged to look after the landscaping and no boats are maintained by shipwrights.

Most building work is done by Bodgit & Co principally Nigel Knowles supported by Bryan Clements and Ken Ayres. The club is opened by volunteers and closed by volunteers. When you enjoy a meal or buy a drink they are prepared and served by volunteers, the dirty crockery, cutlery, glass etc is collected by a volunteer, washed and dried by a volunteer and replaced for future use by a volunteer. The same goes for tables and chairs. For the most part the work is done without complaint because those who do the work enjoy and value the club sufficiently to want to keep it going.

PLEASE REMEMBER - No rubbish is removed by the bin men so any rubbish produced by the club or left behind by members, either in the clubhouse or anywhere outside, is removed by volunteers. Please don't add to the burden.

Brilliant, Beautiful Bewl - *Brenda Panting*

Weather met-check not looking good for Saturday, ok Sunday and lots of sunshine for Monday. Being optimistic we thought they could be wrong with the first prediction. Jumped out of bed on the Saturday morning at 6 a.m. and with nose pressed against window pane saw alas they were correct – it was pouring. Looked around at my semi packed bag and decided that it was in need of warmer clothes. Then it was a dash down to the hall for wellies and waterproof coats.

Left at 9 a.m. with John muttering that we should have gone at 7.30 and me with fingers crossed praying there would be no traffic hold-ups. Could not believe my eyes when I actually saw Richard turning into Bewl just in front of us.

Onto campsite and a warm welcoming smile from Mike, with Jean inside their fold up caravan with a light under the kettle. They had arrived on the Friday. We sat under their awning eating biscuits and drinking coffee peering out gingerly to see if the rain had stopped.

Over an hour later it did – so all action to get Richard's and our tent up which we literally just finished before it began to pour again. Although there were about 20-30 youngsters out on the water – Richard and John were not inspired to get their boats out and do the same.

In the evening we went to Jean and Mike's welcome café again, this time armed with goodies for a barbecue. Wine and beer was available to add to tasty accompanying dishes prepared by Jean with meat cooked by masterchef Mike. After an evening of chatting and more drink, at 10.30 John, I and Richard left for our less welcoming dark tents.

Next morning with the sun shining it was down to the launching pad with John, Mike and Richard to get the 2 boats ready for race day. Jean joined later. There we met Darren and Sylvie. Darren who had kindly come to sail with John.

We on shore, had a lovely morning chatting and watching the racing then it was all back to the campsite for picnic lunches (guess where) Afternoon still more chatting and sailing. At the end of the day Darren and Sylvie left for home and it was showers etc and back to J and M's for another barbecue. We were also joined by Paul who had arrived earlier and was assisted by Richard to put up his tent. So the end of a great day.

Monday and 'oh boy' were the weathermen correct. It was such a picturesque site with the still, calm water. How could a walk around it be resisted. John and I decided to go and enjoy the surrounding area and found it to be breathtaking. Definitely another day needed to complete the circuit. When we arrived back more members from Aquarius had arrived. Rodger, Mike Nigel, Keith and Madeline, all with boats, then Bryan, Trudi and Liz. It had been designated a family sailing day. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves sailing, as well as changing boats and the helming or crewing.

Alas 4.30 whizzed in and everyone had to be off the water. Then to the mundane things of packing up of the boats, showering etc. Those who had sailed on Saturday supported the prize giving, although sadly no prizes for Aquarius this time.

Pure Poetry from Middle Thames

Alan McIntosh

Don Barnet is a lively lad but he'll never get to Heaven
Cos whilst his boat is thirty foot he only pays for twenty seven.

And on Stuart Schafer.

If I were not upon the stage a boater I would be,
If I were not upon that stage
On CAVATINA you'd find me,
And as we gently sailed along
You might just hear this lovely song.

Its poxy this and poxy that and poxy I don't care
I don't mind whose boat it is, it can't moor poxy there!

AQSC Quiz Night - 19 October 2013

With others I have organised a number of quiz's for the club over the years and the latest one was attended by some twenty-four die-hards, who can't seem to get enough of them. Now, it has been said that I don't do easy quiz's and I guess that may be true. I tend to think of them as challenging.

The evening kicked off at 7:30pm once everybody had placed their fish and chip orders with Di Cowley. Each of the three teams were then given a sheet of 20 film title anagrams to complete during the first half of the evening.

Some fifty questions later supper arrived and there was a halt to proceedings while everybody descended on the kitchen to find what they had ordered. Evidently Diana had got it right and there were no complaints. Well done you!

The second half of the evening got underway with the distribution of another sheet of 20 'ology' questions to be solved. The look on some people's faces was a picture (as in I didn't know there were that many 'ologies'). There were another twenty five questions before the evening was wound up and the scores counted.

The winning team was then presented with the AQSC Quiz Trophy (you didn't even know we had one of those did you?) and a large tin of chocolates. These were graciously shared with everyone.

My thanks to everybody for coming and especially to Di, Pete, Diana, Richard and Gordon for helping with the supper and the clearing up afterwards, much appreciated. I'm off to start compiling another quiz to torment the members with perhaps sometime next year.

Mike Baker

Dangerous Waters – *Jean Maracchi*

There has been some discussion in AQSC regarding the different abilities of our male and female members. Some of you will wonder how anyone could possibly wish to stray into these dangerous waters, but we are a plucky lot and do not fear to tread into the shoals of political correctness.

There have been frequent long and detailed discussions regarding the vessel AQSC requires as a stand in for the current patrol boat, should this vessel be so inconsiderate as to malfunction and leave our brave sailors abandoned in mid Thames. A new type of ladder for hauling sudden and reluctant swimmers out of the river is under construction, and now the thorny problem of tillers v steering wheels must be decided, not to mention the method and strength of propulsion to be implemented for the engine of this replacement vessel.

So I turn to my readers to solve the problem of tiller v steering wheel and the abilities of our female members to handle the different steering methods. It has been suggested that the delicate female is better off with a steering wheel as females are used to using one whilst driving a car. Cars are not supplied with a tiller, so a female would not be able to fathom out how to operate one in a boat. This naturally implies that should a car be fitted with a tiller, our male members would be more than capable of handling this change, but the weaker sex, i.e. females, would not. We of the gentler sex would by default of course prefer a steering wheel over a tiller. What brave words.

Then there is the vexed problem of putting the boat into reverse. This might tax female abilities far too much, and general panic would ensue on the water once again endangering the lives of our plucky sailors. Which way to face when undertaking this operation? How fast should the boat go when in reverse? Which way to turn? Mind that rower!! Watch out for the shallow water!!

It is up to you gentle reader to resolve this sticky situation before war is declared between the sexes. Tiller or Steering wheel? Let me hear you then, Watch this space.

Cheats Christmas Lunch 15 December

This will be organised by Nigel Knowles and Rodger Wheeler. These lunches have proved very popular in the past so early booking is advised. Watch out for advertising via flyers, email and our website.



Quiz night

Next an invitation for those who wished to go to J and M's for tea and biscuits. It was a great way to nearly end a beautiful day, but then for those who wished, it was off to a local pub for an enjoyable evening meal.

With Jean's help John and I packed our tent away. Jean could not believe that such a huge tent could fit into such an ordinary sized bag. That was after John rolling over it to let the excess air out.

Richard, John and I left the site waving goodbye to Jean and Mike, who we were in no doubt had, with their generosity of 'open' caravan, added to the enjoyable time at Bewl. We take it they probably sat for a while enjoying the peaceful, beautiful evening and reflecting on the few days, whilst watching the sun go down.

Please watch out for Bewl visits next year. Great days for sailors and non-sailors alike. Lovely club house with all the facilities and beautiful countryside. We had a really lovely time with only a few ????. So here's to the saying 'the more the merrier'.



Bewl camp site

Who Do You Think You Are?

We often hear it said that we have too many people in the UK and the immigrants should all be sent home. This of course prompts the question who are we talking about, since we are all immigrants in some way or other.

As we were last successfully invaded in 1066 then perhaps we should redress the invasion and return all those who were not here before William murdered our King in 1066. This would surely restore some Anglo Saxon decency to the place. So, if your mob weren't here before 1066 should you be on the list?

I checked the 1086 census or the "Doomsday Book" to see if my name was listed but fortunately no surname similar to mine was found. Ergo I am an immigrant and thus a likely candidate for deportation and as an Australian Citizen that's Queensland so its goodbye from me. I wonder how many others of us are in the same situation?



Bewl AQSC club house

Steering Backwards

Debate about the merits of various types of marine steering gear has taken place in Committee recently. Some prefer a tiller and some a wheel. Here the wheel in question is the type rigged to an outboard motor powered boat.

It would seem that of the club members, the Hon Sec is the reverse park expert. She has steered a boat with a marine type wheel, a tiller and a big silver one used on proper yachts. Jean actually won the Reverse Yacht Parking award on our North Ionian Flotilla some years ago.

So here we have an expert not only on steering gear but steering astern as well. For wheel preference she says she likes the big silver one, not only do they work well, they match her taste in earrings so they are doubly favoured.

When asked she says: Whatever system you are using, face the way you wish to travel. Take care of ropes chains buoys and other obstacles. Go slowly and aim towards your desired destination steering as you would when driving a car forward. With a tiller, point to line the stick towards your desired destination and in either case but don't move the rudder too far off line as it will usually stop the boat.

If the wind is blowing hard, make a gesture of help to your own version of a personal saviour. Don't listen to the crew, they can always do it better till they try. Remember you can always stop and start again if necessary and most of all: "Don't panic".

So there, a big silver one, will look good on the patrol boat and the patrol helmsman will look very professional in a flash sailing suit and it would certainly improve the image of Aquarius!

Farewell To John & Brenda

Perhaps the saddest day of the latter part of summer was Sunday 8th September when many Aquarians found out about the decision by John and Brenda Panting to change sailing clubs.

Whilst we all understand John's reasons for the decision, reproduced within this edition, losing 50% of our SigneT racing fleet in a single blow was quite devastating for those of us who had enjoyed the Panting challenge.

Equally the loss of Brenda's smile and enthusiasm was not something that the Galley crew and the Sunday afternoon brigade were overjoyed by.

I suppose club members tend fade away or become sunbeams rather than leave suddenly so to have such high profile members leave is the kind of shock that takes the wind from our sails.

However, we have refused to let them leave gracefully so they will remain members until March 2014. As a penance Brenda was bludgeoned to writing her Bewl story and John to do his bit about signalling on roundabouts.

All jokes aside, thank you both for being such great members and for carrying the Aquarius banner every time Sunset is launched into the stream. Of course we wish Brenda and John everything of the best and our message is; Don't be strangers!

Goodbye - John & Brenda Panting

December 2008 and it was no surprise that it was John's birthday. He was 60. The surprise was that his present was a kit to build a SigneT.

The above had followed much effort by Brenda to locate a suitably challenging kit and to ascertain where to sail her. One contact led to another and soon the existence of the SigneT Club Owners Association came to light and also a club near where they lived who had a number of SigneTs being sailed by Laurie, John, Richard and Mike.

Aquarius it was to be. This gave plenty of scope for plagiarism during the build and plenty of competition while racing. Brenda settled in to doing this and that. In due course we joined the Committee.

We would like emphasise that we were and have always felt very welcome at Aquarius. In fact, we were so impressed on our first visit 5th April 2009 by the friendliness and warmth of those present. It is noted in Brenda's diary, "Lovely club warm and friendly atmosphere." On the day of the launch of SunseT, on 25th April 2010, all those around at that time were extremely complimentary on the standard of work demonstrated in building her.



We have thoroughly enjoyed our time socially and on race days. However, things have changed. We live less than a mile from Papercourt Sailing Club. The close locality of this club gives us more flexibility at weekends and is clearly close enough to us that we can pop in on Wednesdays for a cruise and/or a drink with the added benefit of Saturday and Sunday racing plus a winter series.

The real thing which has changed is that the club in 2008 would only entertain boats in certain classes but is now welcoming other boats within a general handicap range into which the SigneT falls.

So it's not so much that we have been in any way disillusioned with being part of Aquarius but that we have been attracted by a situation we could not refuse. Given the above you will not be surprised to learn that SunseT is now berthed at Papercourt and will not be returning to Aquarius. However, the same cannot be said for us as we have a Duty to complete as OOD + AOD on the last race in November. Sadly though we confirm we will not be renewing our membership.

Wishing Aquarius and all those aboard her much success in the future

