

The 2005 Overnight Cruise

At an early stage in the planning of this year's cruise, it was established that most of those interested could get away a day early. So, two nights, rather than one, were booked at Corf Campsite in the Newtown Estuary. A total of 22 members took part in the overnight cruise over the weekend Friday 19th to Sunday 21st August. 17 travelled by dinghy and 4 by car via the Portsmouth-Fishbourne ferry. Barry Whybrow made the trip from the Hamble, single-handed, in his 24ft motor-sailer "Hideaway". The party included four family groups. The youngest to make the crossing by dinghy was 6-year old Luca Pearson.

At 0500 on Friday 19th, a vigorous thunderstorm passed though the area; winds in excess of 45 knots were recorded by the weather station on Bramble Bank! The forecast was for lighter winds and sunshine over the weekend so any suggestions of cancellation were quickly scotched. By 0830 the winds had abated but the rain continued to fall as the boats were loaded and then rigged. By 0920 we set off in five Wayfarers and a Wanderer. Fortunately the rain soon disappeared and the sky brightened. With a F4 north-westerly, the sail to Newtown was a fast reach on starboard tack all the way. All made the trip without incident. The first boat reached Shalfleet Lake at 1100.

After the earlier storm the campsite was quite muddy. We had been allocated an area overlooking Corf Lake. We soon had the tents up, tea brewed and a campfire lit. The brief rain showers during the afternoon and evening were hardly noticed as there was plenty of tree cover. Victuals were bought at a supermarket near Newport and we all enjoyed a barbecue with plenty of wine and ale to wash it down. The head chef and his assistant were a couple known as MemSec and RearComm. A few tree trunks were added to the bonfire to ensure that it survived through the night. Then the elderly and those with parental responsibilities turned in leaving the hardened drinkers, led by RearComm and MemSec, to set off through the fields to quaff ale at the New Inn in Shalfleet.

The following day, Saturday, was hot and dry. A barbecue-cooked breakfast was followed by a game of "cricket" played to "MemSec Rules". The game was won by Claire West. A group of eight set off to walk the 5 or 6 miles along the coastal path to Yarmouth. They returned mid afternoon, by bus, with food and liquid refreshment for the evening meal. The Pearson and West clans (less Sarah who was searching Yarmouth for tape to repair Steve's mainsail) had lunch at the New Inn and followed this with a swim in the waters of Corf Lake. After the evening meal, the beautiful sunset was enjoyed from the comfort of a log beside the bonfire. There was then the usual hike across the fields to the New Inn with a full moon lighting the way back at closing time. At 0230 Sunday, the sound of splashing and giggling of four "skinny-dipping" Seafarers could be heard across Corf Lake!

On Sunday, after breakfast, we broke camp and loaded the boats. At 1130, we lifted the boats one-by-one into the rising water of Shalfleet Lake. With light northerly winds and a flooding tide, it was 1230 before we cleared the entrance of Newtown River, a distance of about 1nm. By then the tide in the western Solent was beginning to run west on a day of one of the highest spring tides of the year. In light winds and under a hot sun it took almost 2 hours to reach the entrance to Beaulieu River; too late to make for Bucklers Hard.

The wind started to rise and back. The Wanderer had just raised its outboard motor when a sudden gust led to a capsize. Despite being crammed with equipment, the only thing lost overboard was the crust of bread that the helm was eating. This provided a passing seagull with a snack to accompany the entertainment! By the time Lepe was abeam the wind was southwesterly F4 with a tidal stream of 2 - 3 knots in the opposite direction! The water seemed "upset". At about this point, the tiller snapped on one of the Wayfarers. Fortunately a running repair was possible. At West Bramble we were joined by Mick Blackmore and Derrick Kensett. They had set out to rendezvous with us between the Beaulieu and Newtown. They were making their way home when they spotted us.

The final leg from West Bramble to Hill Head was dead down wind with the waves, tide and shipping all combining to keep the helms and crews on their toes. The first boat reached the slipway at 1600; the last at 1650. After an exhilarating, but tiring, return journey, it was warming to see the usual helping hands waiting for us on the beach. When the tractor appeared – well – I was overcome with Joy!

Crews and Phone Numbers

Overnight Cruise - Hill Head/Newtown 19th to 21st August 2005

Wayfarer Sail No. 2906

- (1) Steve O'Toole (Home 01329 667869, Mobile 07796 493854)
- (2) Peter Bowden (Home 01329 662597, Mobile)

Wayfarer Sail No. 3282 (Club WF)

- (1) David Grout (Home 01329 668803, Mobile 07715326684)
- (2) Tim Wadham (Home 01329 661030, Mobile)
- (3) Lawrence Wadham (Home 01329 661030, Mobile)

Wayfarer Sail No. 6990

- (1) Steve West (Home 01329 232102, Mobile 07754 761275)
- (2) Claire West (age 9) (Home 01329 232102)
- (3) Alfons Heinrich (Home 01329 310251, Mobile 07717 303412)

Wayfarer Sail No. 9153

- (1) Mike Burlingham (Home 01329 663532, Mobile 07751 835459)
- (2) Dean Sutton-Coulson (Home 01329 663310, Mobile 07810 832682)

Wayfarer Sail No. 10240

- (1) Paul Pearson (Home 01252 715127, Mobile 07976 987142)
- (2) Sasha (Paul's niece)
- (3) Luca Pearson (age 6)
- (4) John O'Neill (Home 01329 317712, Mobile 07714 158956)

Wanderer Sail No.

- (1) David Farr (Home 02392 799197, Mobile)
- (2) Martyn Sandford (Home 01483 428390, Mobile)

GP14 Sail No. 1900

(Saturday/Sunday only)

- (1) Bill Oswald (Home 01329 313309, Mobile 07786 126288)
- (2) Ian Johnson

Car Registration No.

- (1) Ariane Pearson (Home 01252 715127, Mobile)
- (2) Gregory Pearson (age 4)
- (3) Sarah West (Home 01329 232102, Mobile 07720 489743)
- (4) Callum West (age 6)

24 ft Motor-sailer "Hideaway"

- (1) Barry Whybrow (Home 01489 576734, Mobile and VHF Radio)
- (2) Phylis Whybrow

Friday : 1230 ferry from Portsmouth
Sunday : 1400 ferry from Fishbourne

Derrick Kensett 0232 511814