

The 2016 Overnight Cruise

Friday 26th to Monday 29th August 2016



Background

The first recorded Seafarers' overnight cruise was to Bembridge in 1977. Overnight cruises first appeared in the Club annual programme in 1999. On Saturday 17th July that year, 4 Wayfarers sailed to Bembridge. The 14 crew had a barbecue dinner followed by drinks at Bembridge Sailing Club before sleeping in their tents erected, with some difficulty, on the sand spit. On their way home on Sunday, the overnighers stopped at Woodside where they rendezvoused with 6 other dinghies and a RIB from the Club.

Exactly one year later, 4 Wayfarers and a Wanderer sailed to Newtown Creek and pulled up on the edge of Shalfleet Lake. The 13 crew put up their tents at Corf (Scout) campsite. The 6 cadets found lots of mud to amuse themselves. The adults enjoyed a walk to the New Inn and all enjoyed the glow worm display on the way back. The return journey on Sunday began with no wind and looked like a scene from "African Queen"; 5 dinghies being "walked" along the beach toward Gurnard. Eventually the wind appeared and the overnighers reached Hill Head at about 4pm.

There were trips to Newtown in 2001, Bembridge in 2002 and Newtown in 2003. In 2004 weather reduced the planned visit to Bembridge to a day trip. This ended with 3 Wayfarers paddling across the Solent from Woodside. An ad hoc overnight cruise to Newtown was fitted in a month later. Since 2005 many of those taking part have elected to go for two nights. There were two overnight cruises in 2006, both windy!

Since 1999 there have been a total 17 overnight cruises, 12 to Corf campsite, 2 to Bembridge, 1 to Island Harbour Marina in the Medina River (2011) and 2 to Lymington (2014 and 2015).

For 2016 the new Cruise Secretary, Chad Kelly, planned a cruise to Corf campsite with the main party setting out on Friday 26th August and returning on Sunday 28th August.

Approximate Times

Friday 26th August

05:30 Group 1 sail from Hill Head
 08:00 Group 1 land Corf campsite (shore of Shalfleet Lake)
 09:25 Group 2 sail from Hill Head
 15:20 Group 2 land Corf campsite (jetty)
 15:20 Group 3 sail from Hill Head
 18:40 Group 3 land Corf campsite (shore of Shalfleet Lake)

Saturday 27th August

10:20 Group 3 sail from Corf campsite
 13:10 Group 3 land Hill Head

Monday 29th August

??:?? Groups 1 and 2 sail from Corf campsite
 From 13:15 Groups 1 and 2 land Hill Head

Boat and Crew List

Outward Journey			
Boat	Helm	Crew 1	Crew 2/3
Group 1			
Wayfarer "Golden Eye"	Tim Wadham	John O'Neill	
Wayfarer 10151	Andy Borham	Mike Couzens	
Club RS Venture	Clive Dakin	Luke (Cadet)	Viv Rance, Pete Gingell
Group 2			
Laser Stratos 467	Chad Kelly	Chad Kelly Jr (Cadet)	Chris Leary (Cadet)
Laser Stratos 564	Justin Churcher	Lottie Churcher (Cadet)	Matt Leary (Cadet)
Group 3			
Wayfarer "Little Gem"	Mike Burlingham	Mary Collins	John Leary
Car			
	Sam Leary		
Return Journey			
As above except:			
Group 1			
Club RS Venture	Clive Dakin	Luke (Cadet)	Viv Rance, Sam Leary
Group 3			
Wayfarer "Little Gem"	Mike Burlingham	Mary Collins	Pete Gingell
Car			
	John Leary		

Totals: 6 Dinghies, 1 car, 18 members of which 5 were Cadets

Individual Memories

Chad (Cruise Secretary) in Stratos 467

Out of bed by 5:30am, sleepless night spent thinking about all the things that need to go according to the plan. (Yes, I had scribbled some notes somewhere....). I decided to take the dog for a walk to the beach in the hope I could see off the stupid o'clock first flotilla that was due to be on the water by 5:30 ish!! Upon reaching the shore I was greeted with a few specks on the horizon vanishing rapidly towards the Island... a fair and favourable wind had indeed grabbed Tim's, Andy's and Clive's boats. Sitting down on the bench nearest the Club, I finished my coffee to go and decided it would be OK to wake my son Chad Jr a bit earlier than planned ;-) (How much sleep does a teenager really need anyway...?)

2 hours later.... back at the Club;

So... after much planning and deliberation (Seafarer salty sea dogs pitching in with much needed help), it was a hot and sunny day but with little to no wind that met the crews of the second flotilla as they arrived at 8:30am. Nevertheless, we soon had Sam Leary's car loaded with the "must stay dry" stuff. Then, a last minute text told me that one of our boats had to cancel. So, we redistributed the Leary clan; Chris and Matt to sail in the two Stratos and John leaving in the afternoon in "Little Gem".

Boats rigged and engine onboard, we cast off around 09:15am making slow but leisurely (cruising not racing) speed towards Gurnards for ice cream and coffees and lunch. (Thanks for the Magnum, Chris.. a small price to pay for a place in a luxury cabin onboard a Stratos;-)

With the wind disappearing for an hour or so, punching the tide along the coast towards the Creek was a job for the engine. We kept as close to the land as we could right up to the entrance to Newtown Creek. All the time I kept asking my crew, Chad Jr and Chris Leary, to check our progress using the waypoints in our passage plan while they tried, in vain, to catch fish with the chinaman/trawling line.

Upstream to the pontoon was fun as we towed Stratos 564 and ghosted in along with the tide all the way to the pontoon. By 3:15pm the boats were secure and their contents emptied onto the pontoon. We strolled into an empty camp pitch and within minutes the "stupid o'clock" group walked into camp with provisions – beer, wine and plenty of food.



I would like to go into details of events over the weekend, but....
.. .. What happens on the Island, stays on the island
.. apart from one photo of Andy B washing up!!

(Quick somebody, send the picture to his wife, Gail)

The return cruise on the Monday was a hot and sunny affair with a nice reach across the shipping lane east of Cowes passing between the yachts racing just off our the beach. All in all a fantastic and relaxed bank holiday break with like-minded folk.

Life doesn't get much better!

Until the next Cruise that is!

Mike in Wayfarer "Little Gem"

No way was I getting up at 5am to see Group 1 off! In fact, by the time I reached the Club, they had reached their destination. However, I did postpone my breakfast to wave farewell to Group 2 at 9:30am.

An hour later, I returned to supervise the monthly "Coffee Morning" made especially pleasant by the relatively sprightly John and Sam complementing the regular clientele.

By the time I returned, again, to the Club at 1:45pm, Sam had set off with the car to the Red Funnel terminal in Southampton. John and I set about rigging and packing "Little Gem". Mary soon joined us having wrenched herself away from her tireless service to the animals of Gosport and Fareham.

Having refuelled the outboard kindly loaned to us by John O'Neill with fuel kindly supplied by Andy Borham, we found a leak. After a quick phone consultation, and noting there was an abundance of wind, we elected to sail sans-motor.

To the hearty cheers of Tricia and Roger who were spectating from their comfortable chairs outside the clubhouse, we set off at 3:20pm. Our destination was to the southwest; the wind was southwesterly! After 30 minutes, Mary took the helm so I could devote my brain capacity to calculating whether or not we would sink before reaching Newtown ... or Hill Head! In fairness, the water was only above the deck boards when the boat was heeled over! I tried each bailer in turn. There was some relief that water did not pour in. However, nor did it go out and we were making about 5 knots. Using the sponge and small hand bailer we managed to contain the flooding until I dropped the bailer overboard off Egypt Point. We turned back but our man overboard had sunk or did not want to be found.

Sailing from Gurnard Ledge to Salt Mead to the Newtown entrance, the wind veered slightly so that we were almost pointing in the direction we wanted to go when on starboard tack. Inevitably, the wind disappeared as we entered Newtown Creek and we had to paddle the final hundred metres to the oak tree in Shalfleet Lake. I have wrecked two masthead hawks in that tree. It was with some satisfaction that I noted as I beached "Little Gem" that she was hawk-less. The time was 6:40pm.



On landing, we were surrounded by friendly faces all offering to carry our kit to the camp site. Tim had dinner on the go so I postponed the challenge of putting up my tent until I had eaten.

A check on the weather forecast after dinner established that sailing home on Sunday was "a non-starter". After a brief con-flab it was agreed that all except "Little Gem" would stay until Monday. The "all" included the full Leary clan. Pete Gingell, who could not stay, agreed to return in "Little Gem".

I later managed to navigate in the dark to the showers; I had not been to Corf Campsite for 6 years but little had changed. The day was beautifully rounded off with a circle of faces illuminated by the light from the altar fire watching Tim making "eggy-bread" for all ... plus John O and Chad Sr illustrating that nautical expression "*three sheets to the wind*"!



At 10:20am on Saturday, Chad waved Mary, Pete and I farewell as we pushed “Little Gem” into the shallowing water (and black mud) of Shalfleet Lake; another 15 minutes and we would not have made it. Pete helmed us out of Newtown Creek with only a breath of wind but, fortunately, an ebbing tide. Although the tidal stream in the Solent wanted to carry us toward the Needles and the wind – easterly Force 3 – was less than ideal, we made reasonable progress by staying close to the shore. On one occasion we touched the bottom; Pete spotted signs of shallows but I had dismissed them ... and earned a very red face! The wind became fluky as we approached Gurnard Ledge. Mary decided that was an appropriate moment to hand over the helm! Soon after the wind steadied and strengthened to Force 4 and we managed to stay close hauled on starboard all the way from Gurnard to the Club. As we closed the beach, we were delighted to see Dave Grout charging down the slipway on the tractor with our trolley. He then waded out to receive us; we landed at 1:10pm.



I have not cruised for two years and I have not been on an overnight cruise for six years. In the past month I have been on two thoroughly enjoyable cruises making 2016 a very memorable year.

Cruising is not about the sailing or the destinations; it's about the companionship. My thanks to all of you for a fantastic experience with special thanks to my bailing companions, Mary, John and Pete.

Photographs

An edited selection of the photographs taken over the weekend are available at the Club website's Gallery (<http://www.seafarers-sailing-club.org.uk/FlickrGallery.php>).

Editor:

Mike Burlingham

13 September 2016