



Strand Sailing

Newsletter

Winter 2011

Jessie's Jaunts, 2010

by Henry

Regular readers of the newsletter will be aware of Jessie's gradual drift eastwards and southwards over the last four years. In 2010 the Browns joined her in Ajaccio in Corsica and proceeded in leisurely stages down its western side. They then crossed over to Sardinia; did an anticlockwise circumnavigation of that island; and returned up the eastern side of Corsica to a port about 30m south of Bastia where she will await the coming of summer. The annals of her voyage are on the website (www.strandsailing.org.uk) where space is at less of a premium. The Hon Webperson will be more than happy to include any other sailing-related contributions on the website. And for those without such 21st Century technology the Browns will be delighted to supply the gripping saga on paper.

South Bank Sailing 12th Sept 2010

by Paul

Our downstream visit this year was very successful, though it very nearly didn't happen at all. The outboard on the Safety Boat played up seriously, and was eventually only able to achieve forward progress at full revs. So our start from Strand was much delayed, made even worse by my shameful failure to tie a decent knot, so I was left behind when the tow eventually set off. Fortunately our late arrival at South Bank was not serious as their start was delayed anyway.

Chris and Andy were in Enterprises, Rob A, John and myself in Lasers, and Ian in his Solo, with Dave in the Safety Boat, particularly ably assisted on the tows with the dodgy engine by Rob.

There were 17 starters altogether, South Bank putting a Merlin, Lasers, Enterprises, Solos and a Byte on the water. The course was down to a mark near Vauxhall and back, around 10 ½ miles, with the run down in a mainly NW, but fitful F3. Altogether it took on average rather more than 2 hours. The ebb hadn't finished when I reached the turning mark in the lead, and as the wind dropped a bit, the whole fleet bunched up, and the race, in effect, then started again. Eventually it picked up to a steady F3, becoming a gusty F4 for the long beat back, much of it still against the ebb. A very well sailed South Bank Enterprise got ahead, followed by me on the other bank (we were hugging the slacker water), but eventually class told and Rob, and then a South Bank Laser overtook me, with John just behind. Though John and I both capsized once, we finished fairly clear of the rest.

However, on South Bank's sophisticated handicap system, which combines Portsmouth Yardstick with tidal allowance (our Master of Sums to investigate?) their Enterprise and Rob retained their finishing positions, so Rob most deservedly retained the Waterloo Tankard, as leading Strand boat. Ian came up to 5th, myself and John went back to 7th and 8th, and Andy and Chris a bit further back. So out of 17, we made a

Dates for your Diary

- Thursday 17 February 8.30pm
AGM meeting at 7 Strand on the Green
All members welcome.
- Saturday March 5th Annual Dinner dance
(see below)
- Sunday 13th March Working Party
 - Sunday March 20th 12.30pm
Grand opening of the new ramp and first race.
 - May 14//15th Stand to LCSC
 - 29th May LCSC/SBSC to Strand
 - June 12th 2011 Berlin trip
- 30th July (TBC) Summer Party at 2 Strand on the Green
 - 21st August Long Distance Race
 - 28th August Ginns Farm
 - 18th September Strand visit to SBSC/Waterloo Cup
 - 13th November Last Race and B&B:

good showing.

To complete a lovely sunny day, we were then treated to a really marvellous feast, barbequed foods of all sorts, other hot dishes, luscious cakes, beer etc. A really friendly club and venue.

Ijsselmeer 24 Hour Race 2010

Annual Dinner Dance

- Saturday 5th March 7.30pm
- Royal Mid-Surrey Golf Club
- Tickets £40 (£35 for students)
- Excellent Scottish Dancing with the Craigievar Dance Band
- Tickets from Marian Armitage : armitage-w4@gmail.com or 0208 994 4527
- Grand raffle to replenish depleted funds
- Suggestions/contacts for suitably grand prizes for the raffle!

by Chris

I had the pleasure of taking part in the Ijsselmeer 24 hour race last summer. It is somewhat unusual as races go, you can pick from one of six starts and choose your course to sail the most miles in 24 hours. There are 30 - 40 buoys dotted around the Ijsselmeer and extending into the North Sea around the Waddensee adding a tidal element to the calculations. The trick is that you cannot take the route from one buoy to another more than twice, so the 24 hour track you choose, which will depend on your interpretation of what the weather is going to do, is very important. If a yacht chooses to use the locks to move between the lakes or the sea then this time is taken into account.

Holland is a land dominated by water, and it boasts an excess of enthusiastic and brave sailors. There were 588 entries of which 91 did not finish. The field ranged from single handers to racing X-Yachts and large cruisers. The race start time was 5pm in the evening, we sailed our boat Stephen, a Bavaria 37, starting from Enkhuizen. Like many races the start was full of bravado and hope, milling from a sheltered port, then as we left on our first elected track the wind blew harder and the sea increased. Having rounded the first buoy our starting competitors split off in different directions and we set off on our course.

Our understanding of the weather was that the wind would back from North to East during the next 24 hours and would increase during the night with the possibility of thunder storms during the next day. Stephen has a big genoa and main and can be prone to broaching if too much sail is hoisted, but when the sails are well trimmed it can pull over seven knots even over the choppy inland seas. We made good progress until late evening when the expected wind shift had not yet materialised and we had to change our plan.

Sailing through the night is a very special experience. Although we planned not to go into the North Sea, some of the legs are still 15-20 miles and with variable winds and weather require constant concentration on course and sails to make the most of the opportunities. Although the yacht has a good GPS and chart plotter the exact interpretation of flashing lights at night can be somewhat uncertain especially as you can be suddenly joined by yachts from many directions appearing from the darkness and trying to round the same buoy in different directions and heading for different destinations.

As the welcome dawn revealed itself the wind moderated and we congratulated ourselves on being in the outer Ijsselmeer in better winds. Sandwiches, coffee and sleep passed the morning until the weather started to change.

At midday the wind dropped entirely, 500 yachts moved aimlessly in bright sunshine, propelled only by the impatience of their helms to paddle with the rudder. In the east there was lightening, from the west a large cloud started to form. It is without doubt that the so called mouth of God storm was one of the most exciting I have experienced. The great black face of a cloud with a curly beard of stormy energy and teeth from behind which the firemen of hell directed their hoses raced towards us. Fortunately we managed to furl the main sail but the genoa, with a life of its own, tied its sheets into a knot and clubbed holes in the spray hood.



Five minutes later we resumed our course. Around us other yachts had torn sails and broken masts. The rest of the day was less eventful, but there is an interesting penalty system, if you continue beyond the 24 hour then the additional mileage is subtracted from your total, on the other hand there is no advantage finishing early. In the event we sailed for an extra half an hour and managed a scoring total of 147 miles for the day.

The race management was excellent as all the yachts were accommodated into the harbour in Medemblik and a fancy scheme with self-adhesive barcodes listing all the buoys rounded in the correct order was handed in. We came roughly half way up the field in our class, which was slightly disappointing, but offers a clear opportunity to improve next time.

Racing Results 2010 by Henry

The season started well with a brisk first race in sparkling sun-



shine on 14th March. The five starters included a welcomed guest appearance from David Eccles who managed to finish despite some problems with his borrowed Solo. Paul finished first after staying ahead the entire race, but the Browns took the prize on handicap by seconds.

Paul continued the season in characteristically impressive form and finished with first place in the Class Cup and the Polly Prize and second in the Handicap Cup. He was also first in the Senior Salver. Rob Adams was first in the Handicap Cup, second in the Polly Prize and third in the Class Cup. James Armitage shared first place with Paul in the Class Cup while John Bull was third in the Handicap Cup and the Browns were third in the Polly Prize. The average number of boats in points races was up on last year.

The Long Distance race was a frisky one with a strong easterly breeze. The Browns started last and after an exciting final beat to Battersea Railway Bridge wore round for a white-knuckle run back up the river. John Bull, who started second, lost the lead with a capsized at Putney on the way down and had a few more dunkings before the end of the race. Ian, who started first, lost his lead in the hectic beat to Battersea and then had a catastrophic jibe turning under the bridge: his first capsize. He accepted help from David Jones in the safety boat and retired. So the Browns won in a fast time of 3hrs 6mins with John in second place.

The Waterloo Cup, reported on elsewhere, was won convincingly by Rob Adams with Ian in second place, and the last race, in typically frustrating Strand conditions, was won by James Armitage with Ian again second and Paul third. The LCSC/SBSC visti to Strand? Suffice it to say that, for the first time since it was first presented, SGSC relinquished the Strand Challenge Cup (a team prize) to LCSC after an epic race with 23 starters.

A personal memoir by Paul

In August 1946, aged 17, having been brought up in the depths of Hampshire, far from any water, but devoted to the Swallows and Amazons series, I hit heaven! We came to live at No. 5, Strand-on-the-Green, and the following is a precis of my early times here and quotes from my diary.

“Aug 6th. Went to new house. Wonderful surroundings: River wide. Lots of boats!”

“Aug 7th....still boats, boats, boats!”

In those days there was a mass of varied boats moored between the pier and the railway bridge, and above the bridge.

“Aug 8th. Met two girls from next door [The Clynderts-Marthe (to be Armitage) and Emmy] and Jane Lloyd.”

“Aug 9th. Given old canoe – canvas covered kayak – leaked. Heard Clynderts’ boat had capsized previous day, drowning their dog”.

This was a 16ft sharpie, the first “Porpoise”.

“Sept 1st. Was told I had been accepted for sailing club”.

So not quite a founder member. Started months of trying to waterproof canoe, without much success. Started converting for sailing – making mast, spars, sail, leeboards and rudder.

“Sept 11th. Watched part of Regatta-man-overboard competition. V. interesting sailing”.

“Sept 16th. Jane lent me “Winkle” [9 foot dinghy] in evening – tried sculling but no good”.

“Sept 28th. Finished rigging canoe. Tried sail in afternoon. Mast foot collapsed under Kew Bridge, rudder jammed, leeboards lifted up! Merely drifted!”

“Oct 19th. Went out in ‘Porpoise’ with Jaap [Clyndert] and Jane – great fun – steered for short time, and managed jib.”

“Oct 20th. Watched club racing around Island [that seemed to be a common racing course], went out in ‘Porpoise’ again – thrilling!” So I’d really go the bug.

“Oct 22nd. Helped get some club boats out of the water for winter”. All the boats were kept on moorings then as we didn’t acquire our present palatial Club House and boat park until 1964.

“March 16th 1947. Helped scrape ‘Winkle’”.

“April 3rd. Sailing club meeting in the evening, discussion of entrance rules, then talk on Y.R.A. rules”. There seemed to be a number of S.C meetings during the year, not just the AGM. Still repairing the canoe.

“April 7th. V. windy. Out in ‘Porpoise’ with Jaap, Jane and Emmy in afternoon for 3 hours. Terrific fun, sitting right out and healing right over. Ran into hawser, mast crashed down but no-one hurt-mended, and continued racing after reef.”

“April 14th. Offered loan of ‘Dolphin’ by ‘Mrs’ Brazier”. I was shocked to gather that she wasn’t actually married to L.G. They lived at the moorings.

“Helped Berlew Lasenby with ‘Windrush’ most of the afternoon – scraping – v. tiring”. Scraping was a recurring labour for years.

“Looked at ‘Dolphin’ [11 ft, slab sided lugsail dinghy] – lot to do”. Many visits upriver and even to Burnham on Crouch to find dinghy for sale, but no good, so soon after the war.

“April 20th. Had another sail in ‘Porpoise’, v.good and fun, healing over. Got ‘Dolphin’ out of water and into backyard”. There followed many weeks of cleaning, repairing and painting her.

“May 3rd. Launched ‘Dolphin’ - took v. little water. Struggled to starting line for race, no wind, gave up. More wind later [it always happens] sailed by self.

“May 5th. Out in ‘Dolphin’ got almost up to Isleworth and back. Wind tricky and squally but great fun. Number of sinking-feeling moments during sail”. Sailed several evenings after my days at R.A.D.A. “Superb sail in stiffish wind, gybed badly twice, taking lot of water over gunwhales”

“May 11th. Left in ‘Porpoise’ with Jaap, Jane, Marthe and friend for London. Got below Tower bridge by 12, back partly rowing”. No buoyancy for boat or crew of course. The detailed sailing diary finishes around here just notes of “Isleworth”, “Regatta”, “Round Island” or crewed in

'Seagull' – finished last. But also, on "Apr 19th", the laconic "'Dolphin' run down"! This was a well remembered drama of being hit broadside by the river steamer 'Viscountess' at Isleworth. The boat just bounced being so soft, but I and my crew were swept down the side of the steamer in the water, but avoided the propeller. Finally on Oct 16th, my sailing diary ended with the single word "Army". Though I'm happy to say that wasn't eventually the end.

Corinthian by Paul

Before your next visit to our friends at Hammersmith you might like to consider some of the following entries under "Corinthian" which I gleaned from my Chambers dictionary. "An amateur sportsman" – of course well and good; "an ornate style of (Greek) architecture" – well, it's a lovely building down there; but then, "profligate", "licentious", and finally "a brothel". So perhaps you might think twice about staying on after their bowl of soup and prize giving. On the other hand.....

The Ramp Reborn

by Henry

By the time the season starts the ramp will have enjoyed its greatest facelift in 50 years. The basic scaffold-pole structure that was built in the mid 1960s has withstood everything the Thames and SGSC has thrown at it in that time. But the scaffold board surface and its timber bearers have perished steadily over the years and have needed frequent replacement.

The week following the Last Race the basic structure was stripped bare of its slimy scaffold boards and rotting beams. Two weeks later we took receipt of four lengths of yellow bulau, an exceptionally tough Malaysian hardwood, that now forms the bearers on the sloping ramp, and four scaffold poles to be the bearers on the platform. The platform bearers were fitted at the end of November; the first two timbers were notched to fit the frame on 12th December; and on 9th January all four timbers were fitted and concreted in place.

On the next propitious tide, 23rd January, we screwed the new grating onto the timber bearers. This grating is a rot-proof GRP waffle with a very effective non-slip surface, now commonly used in marinas. At the time of writing we should finish the platform grating on 6th February and any finishing touches will be complete well before the first race.

All this work has been done in true SGSC style: a self-organising army of volunteers mucking in (the first session

Your Sailing Committee

Commodore:	Nigel Birch 0207 742 7613
Vice Commodore:	Chris Greenwood 07850 026593
Hon. Sec:	Henry Brown 0208 995 0853
Hon. Treasurer:	Kurt Berger 0208 994 2961
Hard master:	David Jones 0208 540 1725
	John Bull 0208 994 9113
	James Armitage 0208 994 4527
	Paul Williamson 0208 994 1802



was very mucky) and despite a superfluity of architects (is there any other kind?) completing a multitude of tasks effectively and harmoniously. [A special thanks must go to Henry as architect in chief! - Ed.]

The cost of the work has, however, robbed the club of its contingency fund: the materials came close to £3,000 and as a consequence we will be seeking ways to replenish the coffers.