

Dear Member,

TIME TO WINTERISE

Southern Coaster is in its cradle in Larkman's Yard in Woodbridge and I've started on my list of off-season tasks. Laid out the anchor and chain and decided to cut off some rusty links at either end. Started struggling with a Junior hacksaw then on prompting from the yard expert remembered I had bolt croppers on board which I'd never used in earnest. Easy job! Except I then attempted undoing the Allen keys on the anchor connector. Impossible in the yard so took the anchor home, applied heat etc but to no avail and had to resort to the Junior hacksaw again. Now need a new anchor connector, which was not in the budget! Welcome to boat maintenance!

Second task is to remake all cooling water connections which look rather tired. Able to simplify the layout and reduce connector pieces, must be the right thing to do. Next tasks are emptying and cleaning out the water tanks and winterising the engine.

This time last year I bought an ex-Coaster boom-up boat cover. This saves the yard taking down and storing the masts; In theory I'll save the cost of the boom-up cover this off-season.

ANOTHER STORMY SEASON

This time last year I was writing about Hurricane Katia, by those Standards the 2012 season has not been too bad, but we seem to have suffered with much rain [which ended the official drought and hose ban] and strong SWs which hampered coastal sailing plans. We can use the excuse of family commitments hampering long cruises. In addition the restrictions in the Thames caused by the Jubilee celebrations and Olympics prevented our usual stay in St Katharines at Tower Bridge.

So we contented ourselves in exploring the East Coast rivers, the Medway and almost a week in Southwold. I suppose 21 nights on board was average for most yachts, our walking gear and collection of OS Landranger maps enabled us to get out and about when sailing conditions were not ideal.

Our visit to the Blackwater entailed three nights in Heybridge Basin near Maldon, our visit coincided with the local regatta where we were entertained by rowing races and greasy ploes across the lock. A delightful location where we happened upon a local cruise by members of Woodbridge Cruising Club, many of whom we knew. They were due to leave on Sunday morning and I was involved with mooring ropes to allow an inside boat to get out from the raft when a shout went up from the crew of another boat that her husband had fallen into the water and help was needed.....

A NEAR FATALITY

With that she began sounding really panicky, shouting that her husband could not swim and did not have a lifejacket on. There were others around out of her earshot so I yelled top of my voice MAN OVERBOARD - HELP NEEDED NOW - HE CAN'T SWIM. That did the trick.

The lock-keeper came running and jumped straight in, someone dived in from the other side of the basin and others appeared out of the woodwork. The casualty was underwater and was lifted by the two lifesavers to get his head above water, but he was unconscious. There was lots of shouting going on but panic seemed to prevail. The casualty was a very heavy man with a heart complaint, how were we to get him out?

The lock-keeper suggested getting a long ladder from the adjacent yard; this was fed down thro about three metres of water and a metre of silt before settling on a firm bottom. The combined efforts of the two helpers in the water and about four of us on the yacht we were able to get him up the ladder one step at a time, by now he was breathing and spluttering. Safely on deck he was taken down below and helped out of wet clothes and wrapped in blankets.

The emergency ambulance was soon to arrive and we all discussed whether it should be stood down as he had apparently recovered. Fortunately a GP was on one of the boats and he warned that there was a risk of secondary drowning; the first responders duly arrived and checked over the casualty. They agreed with the GP and the casualty after initial treatment was taken into Springfield Hospital where he was admitted and kept overnight.

On the following morning a number of went over the incident and recognised that we had not responded as we should have. Firstly of course the casualty was amiss in not wearing a lifejacket, especially as he could not swim. Then those of us who were first on the scene should have supported him with a horse-shoe buoy, albeit that he was unconscious and underwater by then.

We have learnt lessons from the incident and are far more diligent in wearing lifejackets, taking care on deck and recognising the difficulties in getting a MOB back on deck of a short handed boat!

AGM AND DINNER

My new computer, e-mail address, ISP provider seemed to take forever to get sorted, but I think everything is now in place and reasonably well understood. Thanks to Bill for stepping in and making arrangements with the White Harte and sending out details. It appears that we'll have about a dozen of us at the dinner but its not too late to let me know if you wish to come along for a meal and a chat about all things Coaster!

Please note that I've changed the timings from Bill's draft; the AGM starts at 6.00pm and we'll sit down to dinner at about 7.30pm. . This is not an expensive evening as the meal is taken from the regular daily menu. If you want to make a weekend of it and visit the "home" of Coasters why not stay the night at the White Harte [manager is John Lewis tel 01621 782106].

MEMBERS NEWS

As you know the Club has lost another stalwart since our last Newsletter, David Turner [Maud B] passed away last year. David made great use of Maud B until his health went downhill some two or three years ago. He then moved his Coaster to the Woodbridge marina and spent much time on board keeping the boat in good order. The boat is now for sale in the marina. We are pleased that Jill wishes to remain in the Club.

After a refit at Fox's in Ipswich, Wombat is taking David and Pauline Jenkins down to the Med. The boat is now laid up in St Malo and early next season they'll continue around Brittany and presumably through the Canal du Midi and into warmer climes.

Ernie and Avril Mills decided to put Woodstar on the market and we are pleased that the boat was sold fairly quickly. We await news of the new owner and trust that Ernie and Avril will long remain members of the Club.

BOATS FOR SALE

Andamouka, Sedgley Coaster, Maud B and Tumbler are for sale, to my knowledge. Please keep me posted of new owners and of any new owners not on the Coaster Owners list.

BANK ACCOUNTS

Douglas took over as Treasurer at the last AGM. We agreed to transfer our funds to his local branch of Barclays in Burnham. After much "toing and froing" Douglas has accomplished the task. I'm sure he'll enjoy taking us through the exercise at the AGM.

PRACTICAL BOAT OWNER

Coasters had two mentions in the October issue. They ran an article on heavy displacement motor sailers in which they reviewed the Nauticat 33, the whole Fisher range, the Colvic Watsons and the Coaster. It wasn't like a Which report in that they did not select a Best Buy. But their final paragraph reminds us of the benefits of motor sailing in case we forget how cold and wet we got in our earlier craft. It reads:

"Whichever brand takes your fancy or fits your budget there are plenty of seaworthy canoe-sterned motor-sailers to choose from. You will be sacrificing cutting edge sailing performance, but will feel smug as you snuggle into your deck saloon or wheelhouse to motor or sail in the dry – while those around you get cold and wet."

The second reference was a letter from Peter Jackson [Sea Tracker] seeking advice on his Autohelm 5000 fitted with a Type 1 linear drive. Their expert advised replacing the unit with a Raymarine SPX10 course computer!

SUBSCRIPTIONS

At the last AGM it was agreed to suspend fees and subs for Members as the Club was in a good financial situation. This situation will be reviewed at the forthcoming AGM.

Details of the AGM are appended, if there are any other matters which you would like us to address then please let me know.

WEB SITE

Iain Clement is still doing valiant service as our honorary webmaster. Please look into the site from time to time and let Iain have any new pics of your Coaster plus any copy on Coasters or logs. **Another big thank you from all of us Iain.**

COASTER OWNERS

An updated owners list is attached, please keep me posted of any amendments or updates to be incorporated.

Don't forget to let me know when/if you are on e-mail, it simplifies distribution of Newsletters etc.

**Colin Palmer [Southern Coaster] Hon Sec.
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22 October 2012

COASTER CLUB

You are invited to the AGM of the Coaster Club to be held at the White Harte Hotel, Burnham on Crouch on Saturday 3 November 2011 at 18.00 hrs.

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies for absence.**
- 2. Minutes of the last AGM, 22 October 2011 [available at meeting].**
- 3. Club Captain's Report.**
- 4. Secretary's Report.**
- 5. Treasurer's report.**
- 6. Adopt fees and subscriptions for 2013.**
- 7. Election of Captain, Secretary and Treasurer for 2013.**