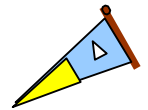


# Dinghy Cruising Association



## Solent Soundings



Issue No. 4 - Autumn 2002

E-mail: lizbaker\_sailing@yahoo.co.uk

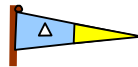
### Editorial

There's a slight change in the appearance of this edition - a small prize will be awarded at the Winter meeting to the first member to spot this - answers on a postcard please - oh - OK then - e-mail will do!

At this stage in the season I'd like to say thank you to everyone for all your support, both for coming to the rallies and also to Alan, Keith, David, Dave and Len for hosting the extra ones, thus enabling us to have two rallies a month right through the Summer. It's also been good to see a number of new faces. Although the season got off to a rather bad start with gales and rain, the latter end went very well, and the lovely sunny weather brought everyone out.

A notable absence this year until the very end were John and Jo, and for the best of reasons, for it turned out they were embarked on a really ambitious cruise across the Channel from Portland the Channel Islands, St Malo, up the Rance and through the canal to the Biscay coast and down to the Gulf of Morbihan. I'm hoping to see a write-up of that one, and they've promised to show us their photos at the Winter meeting . . .

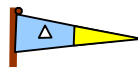
. . . which leads me on very nicely to the next subject. John and Linden Kuyser have very kindly offered to host our winter meeting this Winter at their home in Totton. This generous offer will enable it to be held on a Saturday instead of a Sunday, and they will also be able to provide a video so we can watch the film made by Orbit Productions during the course of the Kench rally last September. Yes, Len, in his 80th year, is a film star! Please see below for details.



Liz Baker

### A note from David Sumner on RDF

For anyone interested in the antique navigation system called RDF, we now have two beacons covering the Eastern Solent. IW at Bembridge Airport and LSO at Lee-on-the-Solent helicopter base. They are usually, but not always, switched on. I tried the system on a recent cruise to Langstone Harbour with encouraging results. One day if I am caught in fog it might be useful, but in the main it is just something which interests me."





## ***South Coast Winter Meeting***

Sat 8 February 2003 7 pm for 7.30 pm

**Please note change of venue!**

Myrtle Cottage  
Knellers Lane  
TOTTON  
Southampton SO40 7EB

Tel: 023 8087 1951

Hot buffet supper with soft drinks & coffee / tea  
Bring your own beer or wine

Please book and pay in advance to enable adequate catering. Map provided on receipt of booking & cheque. £5 payable to Linden Kuysen at above address (any profit to DCA). Limited overnight indoor accommodation and camping space available on request, first come first served.

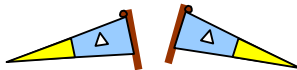
For any hardy souls wishing to sail, first HW Southampton is 15.17  
There is an excellent (free) all-tide slip at Hythe Marina.

A chance to see a video of film on dinghy cruising made by Orbit Productions during The Kench rally.

Bring & buy - bring along any unwanted sailing items - they might prove useful to someone else.

Please bring any photos or other innovations you would like to demonstrate, which you think might interest other members.

A slide projector and screen will be available.



## ***Rally News***

### **Christchurch - 3/4 August - Keith Holdsworth**

The August South Coast Rally at Christchurch Harbour in many ways encapsulated the variety of experience that is dinghy cruising.

The weather fluctuated between baking sunshine with breathless calm, dramatic sunsets, lowering skies, thunderstorms, blustery showers and winds from everywhere but in the direction of travel.

On a sparkling Friday evening, Mudeford Quay was lively with tourists, fisherman and dinghies as I launched my floating yawl rigged bed, *The Flying Pig*. Having avoided the traditional faux pas in front of a critical audience, a light wind from an indeterminate direction



spirited me across the harbour to the shelter and tranquility of Hengistbury Head where I anchored to partake of a slap up meal aboard. A full stomach, the onset of darkness and the gentle rocking of the boat brought about almost instantaneous sleep when most holidaymakers were emerging for their evening's entertainment.

Saturday morning dawned grey and blustery but offered a perfect opportunity to test a new jib and mizzen, fabricated from a redundant poly/cotton window blind. With a bit of fine tuning, the aesthetic and propulsive effect was most satisfying.

Jay Milbourne's Startrekker was glimpsed through the distant greyness ploughing upriver for revictualling after returning from one of his extended south coast summer forays. Jay's choice of dinghy is a cabin boat with sails and outboard plus every imaginable home comfort and navigational aid. It is instantly recognisable by its many flags, including a version of the Stars and Stripes, a Jolly Roger, and even Jay's own personal ensign.

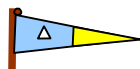
With rain threatening, sail trials were declared over and I secured an anchorage near the water's edge, at the end of the avenue of whimsical beach-houses that is Mudeford Spit. Jay eventually joined me, painstakingly selecting his position like a cat selecting the comfiest spot on the sofa.

John Kuyser, a man seemingly with a boat for every occasion, made a flying visit in his yellow kayak and was gone again before the familiar blue triangle marking the top of a Leader's sail began threading it's way towards us through the masts of a crowded anchorage. Accompanying it was the equally familiar Len Wingfield, arriving after a frustratingly windless sail from Keyhaven. Eschewing the use of engines, Len prefers to patiently extract nuggets of forward motion from still air like a prospector panning gold from a river bed.

The Saturday evening entertainment consisted of a dash up a darkened River Stour into the noise and bright lights of an open air swing band concert, followed by a fruitless search of local hostelries for the perfect ginger beer shandy.

Sunday again dawned damp and murky, but gradually the emerging sun imposed its will sufficiently to tempt me into the open for more sail trials which ultimately brought me across the harbour to a quiet inlet in the tranquillity of Stanpit Marsh. Through binoculars I picked out the blue triangle wending its way out of the harbour entrance accompanied by the Star Trekker as they set out on their return journey across Christchurch Bay towards Keyhaven.

In brilliant sunshine a leisurely lunch was consumed peacefully afloat in the final dregs of the ebb tide amongst a horde of unconcerned waders until the spell was suddenly broken by the roar of a yellow stunt biplane. With a man astride the top wing it proceeded to perform an acrobatic tour de force above the astonished spectators on Mudeford Quay. It was a fitting end to a weekend of contrasts.





### Bembridge - 17/18 August - David Jones

A dream quality rally thanks to Liz selecting a weekend with peachy winds and weather, neapish tides, Tall Ships Parade of Sail, and the Red Arrows!

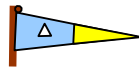
*(I thought "peachy" sounded more like a description of someone's complexion, but David tells me it's a hang gliding term - Liz)*

Attending were:

Liz Baker	Cormorant, <i>Tessa</i>
Peter Baxter	Drascombe Lugger, <i>Jenny</i>
Dave Sumner	Mirror, <i>Curlew</i>
Len Wingfield	Leader, <i>Rebel</i>
Mike and Tom Still	Coypu
David Jones	Beaufort, <i>Speedy</i>
Jay Milbourne in his	'other boat'
John and Linden Kuyser in their	'other boat'

Jay had to depart for Portsmouth on Saturday afternoon but the rest of us were able to enjoy an evening of good food, ale, chat etc in the nearby Pilot Boat Inn, which had been reccy'd the night before by Dave.

On Sunday morning, Mike and Tom were the first to leave, followed later by Peter, John and Linden. Liz, Dave, Len, and David left as a bunch after lunch. There was no stated intention of sailing in company but it turned out that Liz, Dave and David were able to keep each other in view for the whole passage and regrouped shortly after arriving at the entrance to Chichester Harbour. A pause was made inside the harbour for a cuppa with biscuits and cake to make a pleasant finish to a great weekend.



### Hurst Point - 31 August / 1 September - Alan Glanville

Steve Bradwell	Enterprise	
George Strube	Drascombe Peter Boat	<i>Golden Eye</i>
Alan Glanville	Ness Yawl	<i>Lowly Worm III</i>
Liz Baker	Cormorant	<i>Tessa</i>
John and Linda Kuyser	23' Yacht	
Chris Jenkins	West Wight Potter AX	<i>Gispy</i>

What a cracker! A beautiful week-end in the Western Solent and a glorious anchorage with spectacular sunset and sunrise.

Chris Jenkins and WW Potter *Gispy* appeared at the slipway at Bucklers Hard as I was about to depart on the Friday. Chris spent the Friday night in the marina there and then cruised down to Hurst Narrows on the Saturday before sailing to Yarmouth for lunch. I set -off triple-reefed in a SW 5/6 and enjoyed a thrash across to Newtown. On Saturday day I visited Alum Bay and the Needles before returning to Hurst Point.



George Strube was enjoying the sunshine and sailing around the waters off Keyhaven where he had launched. John Kuyser and Linden were at anchor in their yacht, having sailed in Friday's blow from Hythe to Cowes. Steve Bradwell was the next to arrive, direct from Warsash in his Enterprise. Finally at 19.15 the brown sail of Liz Baker's Cormorant Tessa was seen over the shingle bank. Liz had cruised all the way from Cobnor, having slept aboard at a mooring on Friday. John and Linden lit their bar-b-que, and boats were discussed.... On Sunday Chris and I tacked against the gentle easterly and the outgoing tide for most of the way back to the Beaulieu River. The other sailors waited for the tide to slacken before setting off.



Liz subsequently received the following e-mail from Dave Sumner:

" Hi Liz!

I wonder if you went to the Hurst rally. Well, if you did you would not have seen me there because I thought the rally was at Langstone!! Actually, I had a lovely brisk sail from Stokes Bay to Langstone Harbour but when I could see no one I became suspicious. Unfortunately my mobile phone let me down because I entered the wrong PIN number whilst at sea and it permanently froze me out. I wanted to ring you to see if you were there. I actually camped a little further NE than the place you indicated. It was a shingle beach but a bit rock strewn. The approach was very shallow but just about OK. All night the wind howled and I wondered how I would recover the boat if it got really nasty, but dawn brought just NE F3. It was tricky getting out of the anchorage as the tide was a low neap and mud banks appeared around me which had not been there the previous night. Once at sea the wind was initially brisk, necessitating reefed mainsail plus jib, but eventually it died (just while I was crossing the swash channel) and I had to motor across Stokes Bay.

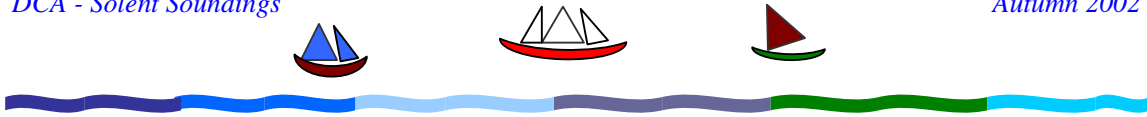
I hope everyone enjoyed the Hurst rally; although I had a good little cruise I did miss the company.

By the way, the West slipway at Stokes Bay has deteriorated considerably and I had to tow the boat up the shingle on about 40m of anchor warp. Interestingly, when I was launching, a little hovercraft turned up. I had forgotten to bring my petrol can and I suddenly realised that a hovercraft must carry lots of fuel. So I cheekily asked the "pilot" if I could buy a litre. To my surprise his support vehicle was in the car park carrying masses of two stroke fuel so they very kindly gave me a little top-up for which I payed them suitably over the odds. "



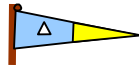
***Liz's return trip from Hurst was a bit of an epic:***

" My return trip took rather longer than the outward leg. Had Monday off and needed it - and more! Lovely leisurely beat along New Forest shore in warm sun on Sunday, but very slow and by 5pm still no further than Lepe. Wanted to cook a proper meal and get tent up before dark so went into the Hamble. Monday was more difficult with stronger winds still from NE and very slow progress in rougher seas. I was worried about a F6 in the forecast and with a very nasty sea off Pompy decided to do the Tipner route; however the very neap tide was later coming up than I'd expected and I waited till 6pm before I could get through the canal.



After negotiating the motorway tunnels, cycle track & railway bridges, I reached the final road bridge which provides the gateway into Langstone, only to find it covered in scaffolding right down to water level ... OH NO! Luckily there was a small gap through the scaffolding and ducking low and using my hands, I propelled Tessa through till we popped like a cork out of a bottle into the wide expanse of Langstone Harbour. Phew!

To save re-rigging twice, I motored across Langstone, scraping over the shallows south of the islands with heart in mouth, and was through Langstone Bridge at 8pm, managing to get Tessa firmly caught by a fishing line from the bridge. Just time to re-rig in daylight, then a wonderful night sail round Chichester Harbour in a F3, beneath a star spangled sky - so quiet, and nobody about. Wind still NE, so apart from broad reach down Emsworth Fairway I had been beating the whole way from Hurst, right into Cobnor itself, which I reached at 11 pm on Monday night. "



#### **The Kench** - 14/15 September - *Liz Baker*

This was the rally chosen by Vanessa Bird, working for a film company called Orbit Productions, to come along with her team and make a film on dinghy cruising, to be part of a series they are producing on various aspects of sailing for the Discovery Channel of multi-channel TV.

The northerly wind created gusty conditions and made our venue at the southern end of Langstone Harbour a lee shore.

The tide was still low as I approached from the direction of Langstone Bridge, slithering over the shallows in the upper reaches of Stocker Lake. I found Dave Sumner and his Mirror anchored at the outer end of the shingle spit which forms a useful landmark hereabouts. Together we meandered up the creek and spotted Keith Holdsworth (own design) and David Jones (Beaufort) anchored just out of shouting range to the west. At this stage conditions were ideal, with warm sun, calm water and a large flock of oystercatchers wheeling about. Chris Jenkins arrived in his Potter AX, and Alan Glanville in his Ness Yawl with his young grandson as crew.

There were now five dinghies lined-up, but still no sign of the camera team. I decided to phone Vanessa on my mobile and learned they were all up at Langstone Bridge filming Len, having had to wait for the tide to rise before he could sail from his favourite launching site at Warblington. Yes - that's right - Len Wingfield, in his 80th year, has become a film star!

By the time they reached The Kench, the saltings had covered and the wind increased, and our boats were bouncing about in the swell making conditions unsuitable for expensive photographic equipment. However, they interviewed several of us ashore, and were particularly interested in Alan's Ness Yawl. Len arrived and was filmed dropping anchor and raising his tent, and about the same time Tom Hart, and John and Linden Kuyser, joined us by road.

As the light began to fade several of us investigated a lagoon which had filled inshore of us as the tide rose, and in one unanimous decision, we all upped anchor and moved to its shelter before adjourning to the Ferry Inn for our evening meal.

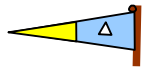


. . . and David Jones writes:

" I set sail from the Kench at 10.30 BST and arrived at the West Pole beacon about noon. That was the easy part, having set double reefed main and storm jib to be sure I wouldn't have to fight if the wind reached the forecast F5, which I don't think it did. So I had a gentle, slowish passage with almost no spray getting aboard and definitely arriving after the ebb had finished.

It then took two and a half hours to beat into the harbour and get up to Northney. There, after recovery and getting ready to trail, I met up with Keith who was also preparing for the road.

Hope all you demountable mast types had a good sail back through the bridge. "



#### **Bursledon** - 28/29 September - *Liz Baker*

As I had to collect a new mast on the Saturday morning, there wasn't time to sail from Cobnor, so I launched at Swanwick rather late in the day and rowed across the Hamble to Lands End Hard where I found Tom Hart and crew (Wayfarer) and Dave Sumner (Mirror) who had sailed from Langstone and Chichester harbours respectively, John and Jo, who had just returned from an ambitious cruise to France, George Strube (Drascombe Peter Boat) and Len with "Bluey". This must be a record for an end-of-season rally, but the sunny weather had encouraged us all onto the water. Chris Jenkins came by road and joined us in The Jolly Sailor.

On Sunday morning David and Tom set off back towards their starting points. The rest of us waited for the tide to turn, and then proceeded through the bridges to the peace of the upper Hamble. We were enjoying our lunch on a sunny bank when Roy Rolfe sailed up in his beautifully built Praam dinghy, and he and George Strube realised they'd met before at Beale Park Boat Show, where they had both won well deserved prizes for boatbuilding.

Once the tide has risen sufficiently, we continued upstream to Curbridge where we enjoyed a pint in the pleasant little pub there before returning. Half-way up the Curbridge arm an oak tree leans across the river, which becomes more difficult each year to get past without lowering one's mast. You've heard of it raining "cats & dogs" . . . well . . . this time it rained acorns . . . thousands of them!

From Dave Sumner . . .

I hope you had a nice cruise to Curbridge and got back OK. I wish I had come with you but I was a bit anxious to get home. I set off at about 8am and motored at tick-over all the way to Warsash, passing Tom, who was ghosting along under sail, on the way. What a lovely peaceful scene. We ended up tacking all the way down the coast in calm water, in sight of each other all the time.



Near Solent Breezes I noticed Tom had stood well out to sea and was storming away from me. The Wayfarer likes a stiff breeze and the waves did not bother the longer boat. Rounding Hillhead Beacon I came out of the shelter of the land and the wind and waves piped up. Now I was battling against sea and wind - I suppose it was SE 4 and waves occasionally up to about a metre high. I was a bit anxious about making my destination or finding shelter anywhere should it prove necessary.

I decided to cross over to the Wight, as it might be a bit more sheltered, and stood out across the tail of the Brambles to Osborne Bay, where I anchored at 11.25 after a rough crossing. The bay was really beautiful and sunny with no waves but still breezy. Here I ate half a Mountbatten cake, had a drink and an apple, and tidied up all the equipment.

At noon I set off due East towards Gilkicker Point, which I could just lay, with the option of diverting to Wootton or maybe Stokes Bay if necessary. It was really rough and a few times the sea hit the boat and threw a bucket of water in my face. I really felt I was reaching the maximum for the boat, and would have to heave-to if it got worse. I hung a smoke signal round my neck and also the VHF, with it switched on. I was on the point of reporting my position to the Coastguard as a precaution. Yachts containing complete families were coming to have a look at me and some of them gave me the OK sign\*. Waves were starting to break slightly around me.

*I expect they were saying, "Hey, isn't that the boat we read about in PBO?" - Liz*

When abeam of Stokes Bay I could see dinghies being launched at the club house so I called it a day and went in. They lent me a trolley and helped me to get the boat up. I rang my son to come down to bring my trailer, and I spent the afternoon on the beach sun bathing and recovering the boat, which involved countless miles of driving.

Whilst I was watching the dinghies sailing at the club, a man launched a Mirror with two small girls aboard and sailed half way over to Ryde and back !!!!!. Anyway, at least I am a fairly old sailor, if not a bold sailor, as they say. I was really surprised how well everyone else was coping with the conditions but I felt really battered. I suppose the thought of crossing Portsmouth Entrance (a lee shore) and trying to make Langstone or Chichester was not to my liking. Maybe the locals were only going a short distance, with a safety boat nearby, and had no need to thrash to windward into unknown waters. "



*While many of us are laying-up our boat for the Winter, Dave Sumner continues to write about his adventures afloat . . .*

" I went sailing on Saturday 19 Oct in Chichester harbour. It was a day with a SW wind about F2 and a chill in the air, but fairly clear skies, just a little high cloud indicating the approach of bad weather on the Sunday. My ambitions were to sail out to the Winner Buoy and back, as a navigation exercise.

There was only one other boat launching on the hard at Itchenor, a Laser 4000, and it took us the same time to get rigged, more than an hour. I did explain to the Laser



skipper that at least my boat was equipped for an Atlantic crossing! How quickly the dinghy sailors give up in the autumn. With good, warm clothing it was a good day for a sail, but my clothing was unfortunately to prove that it was not in this category.

The wind was very light at Itchenor so I used the Iron Topsail to take me down the harbour a bit, as far as Chalkdock Beacon. Then it was a case of tacking, with the tide doing its bit by taking me along like a magic carpet. From the vicinity of Ella Nore I could lay a westerly course and reached the Fishery Buoy on a single board. Some of the yachts seemed about the same speed as me in the light conditions, and one of them very nearly put himself onto the Stocker Sands trying to race me, because his yacht did not point as high as a Mirror. As I passed the Mid Winner I could feel our own small "Maelstrom" - the whirlpools twisting and pulling the boat first one way then the other. And in the tiller I could feel the tremor in the sea, vibrating in the boat and in my hands.

By this time I was feeling very cold. My ideas of going out on the open sea now seemed unwise because not only was I feeling lithargic with the cold (something I noticed from the sound of my voice on my tape recorded log), but I had met fishermen at Itchenor who were coming in because of the impending weather. I was cold because I had used the old helicopter drysuit I bought from Aberdeen Airport, but it needed more layers underneath. I decided to stop on the beach at Hayling Island SC to put on a jumper under the suit, and headed directly towards it. But the stream was flowing south across my path at a rate of several knots, and as I approached the shore it gradually became faster, so that whilst I was initially able to stem the tide by steering north a few degrees, the angle had to be progressively increased. By the time I was about 25m from the shore the boat was pointing North and just stemming the stream using every ounce of speed; progress towards the shore, zero. The stream was running like the Amazon! So I decided to start the engine and, to avoid risking damage to the prop by approaching the shallow shore, to head back to East Head for my break. This gave the engine yet another Italian Tune-Up, because the tide was ebbing fast and I had to motor-sail hard to make any progress.

As I approached the East Head Buoy I saw a football in the water, and picked it up. I turned to face the expansive stage of East Head, with the ball held high as in the World Cup, waiting for someone to wave and claim it. No one did, because everyone on the shore thinks they are the only one in sight. But soon a family did call to me, and I put the boat alongside the beach very nicely under sail and handed it to them, then managed to bear away again without needing a push. This could be my MOB exercise for the day!

I now anchored for lunch and to put on warmer clothes, using the little Danforth anchor, which dug-in very well on the sandy bottom. I have noticed in a book called *Single Handing - a sailor's guide*, the author, Tony Meisel, recommends doing all anchor work under headsail alone, and I must try it next time because the boom is a real nuisance if you come head-to-wind. It is very easy to get tangled up when anchoring.



Now it was a gentle goosewing all the way back to Itchenor with the young flood just setting in, watching the sea birds feeding along the shore and with very few boats around. The day's sailing, although not at all adventurous, had introduced me to this season's autumn conditions, and had tested my clothing and the boat. I was pleased that the boat, although looking decidedly scruffy, did not leak and all her gear functioned as intended. I still have a few problems with the mainsheet catching on the outboard, but it is not as bad as it sounds because it is the standing part of the double mainsheet which tends to catch, so the boom will always release

*. . . and now I hear he's signed up as crew on the replica of Captain Cook's ship, Endeavour for a November cruise from Bristol to Jersey - so watch this space for the next exciting instalment! Liz*

