



Solent Soundings



Issue No. 16 May 2006

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Why not join the <http://groups.msn.com/MICROCRUISERSUK> website so you can share South Coast rally photos and general discussion?

Editorial



I have always wanted to create a web-site for *Solent Soundings* but, up until now, was unsure how to go about it. However, this has now been accomplished and, hopefully, you are already reading this from a link in www.solentsoundings.org. I am hoping this will make it easier for people like Len, with computers too small to down-load the e-mailed version, to view it on the Internet. In future I will simply send an e-mail containing a link to the site when the new edition is available.

More popular will be the CDs of all the photos sent to me by members depicting everything that went on at the celebration last year - £3 each, postage included. Profit to DCA funds. Some people feel quite strongly that I'm not charging enough, so if you're one of those I'm happy to accept £5. Payment with orders please, to Liz Baker at above address – cheques payable to Dinghy Cruising Association.

The mid-year Anniversary Calendar is now becoming out-of-date, but if anyone would still like a copy at £5 each, I have moved the months up to run from June to June instead of April to April. It's actually quite useful to have a calendar which doesn't expire on the last day of the year.

Apologies to David Morl and John Barney for leaving the date off their Beale Park Dinghy Show advertisement last issue. They have had one volunteer to help on the DCA stand, but they would appreciate a few more. See advertisement on page 8.

Liz



David Jones has his new mast:

(He broke his old one against a tree while parking outside his house at the end of last season).

Liz, thought you'd be amused to see what one of my watercolour painting class sent me when I told her my new mast was ready!

I collected it from Needlespar on Friday and erected it on "Speedy" on Saturday and it's perfect. They must have measured and manufactured it to the exact millimetre measurements of the original mast.

Regards, David.



"David, eat your heart out, no mast needed for this vessel!"



Message from Bob Klitz

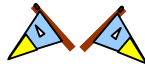
Thank you for the fascinating Calendar and discs. I have only looked through one disc as yet. They are a lovely memento of all that small boats have ever really meant to me. How I wish I had been able to attend as I had planned last year. It gives me much heart to know that there are many others who derive the same simple rewards bestowed through owning and nurturing a small boat, to harness the free natural forces at our disposal, and to

venture forth to explore and be responsible for the consequences.

If I can possibly do so, I plan to make it to Fowley Island this year in my 10ft lugger. It must be a voyage of 2 miles! I do hope I shall see you there.

Best Regards

Bob Klitz



LEN'S COCK-UP AWARD

As the Spring Bulletin put it, a tiny award for a big cock-up! It was at the 2004 Cobnor event, but no-one noticed at the time, and until now no-one had guessed what the cock-up was. I was getting away to lead the sail to Emsworth in my battered little 11ft Gull with its undersized boat jumble sails, so I carried a motor to ensure that I would keep up. The wind was very light and flukey, and the tide strongly against us. I set all sail but found I was making no progress, so got away under motor, keeping in the shallows out of the worst of the tide. Cursing the motor for its apparently sluggish performance, I had gone a quarter mile to the main channel before I realised that all this time the anchor was still down, ploughing through the mud! Hoisting the anchor on

board and switching the motor off, I redeemed myself by, with luck and local knowledge, keeping my little boat ahead of the pack..

With advancing age, I find myself increasingly forgetful. I take Ted Jones' advice: "If when going upstairs you forget what you are going up for, NEVER STOP! Otherwise you may forget whether you were going up or down!"

Congratulations to Alistair Law for working this one out, and many thanks to him for generously donating the little award to the RNLI.

PS: My son Ed guessed it too. He wrote 'You drove off with your handbrake on!

Len Wingfield

Rally Reports

Our four April rallies have all been successful despite the chilly weather. The widest range of boats, from Alistair Law's Paradox (unique in Britain) to

Mark Tinker's Hobie catamaran. Most were under sail and oar. (The way Alistair can propell his heavy boat by yuloh is incredible!)

Len Wingfield

Early Season Rally, Chichester Harbour – 8/9 April 2006 by Cliff Martin

Attending:	Len Wingfield	Woodnut Sloop,	<i>Bluey</i>
	John Lidstone	Outrigger Sailing Canoe	<i>Geese</i>
	Cliff Martin	Mirror	<i>Daydream</i>

The *official* rally was to be a day-sail on the Sunday hosted by David Sumner, but Cliff Martin decided to make a week-end

of it, and has contributed his own account of events:



After a lot of arm twisting and bribery in the form of a purchase from the RNLI jumble, Len agreed to join me if I could help him launch the Woodnut. We found John Lidstone sailing in the Bosham Channel in the belief he was attending a DCA rally. It's probably as well we were there or he'd have got a bit lonely.

Len and I met at Ichenor late morning on Saturday 8 April. Len had brought a car and boat trailer, both of which looked fit to use, and Cliff's Mirror had gained 8 ft oars in proper carriers and (at last) a bow fairlead. There was some doubt whether the Mirror would float after some hull repairs that hadn't gone very well, but Len offered psychological assistance and, in the knowledge that a drying anchorage would let the water back out again we set off to Bosham in the search of food. We met John Lidstone in the Bosham Channel and tried to find an anchorage from which to visit the village. The water was too rough so we settled for the sheltered foreshore at Cobnor and watched sailing school boats capsize a lot while we had our picnic.

The beat down to East Head was in lively conditions with the spray breaking over our heads and we pulled into Snowhill Creek to anchor-up. Len and I went for a walk and failed to buy a coffee (again) and returned to find John loitering within tent

East Head day-sail – 8 April – by Len Wingfield

The season got off to a good start with David Sumner's day sail actually starting a day early with Cliff Martin (11 ft Mirror) and myself (1958 Woodnut 14) launching at Ichenor. Both were reefed down in a full F5. John Lidstone in his 16 foot outrigger canoe was met going down channel. He hadn't realise he was a day early! Carrying only a tiny scrap of sail,

on his beautifully constructed Geese.

We made our own coffee and in the evening sailed up to the Thorney Channel in much easier conditions. We scraped around in some very shallow water looking for a sheltered anchorage and eventually found one in the eastern creek by the sluice. Len and John demonstrated how not to equip a dinghy for overnight cruises, while I made a donkeys breakfast of anchoring and discovered some new techniques with ground tackle.

After setting the boats up for the night Len and I went in search of "a really good café" but failed to find it, so we cooked on board.

It got rather cold overnight but the earth spun, the sun reappeared and everything was alright again with a truly beautiful sunrise showing an anchorage littered with boulders. I stumbled around in the mud and retrieved the four warps and two mainsheets I had used for anchoring and everyone packed their gear while the tide gradually returned.

A North westerly breeze sprang up and one by one the 'sailors' left to join the DCA daysail.

Cliff Martin

his outrigger nevertheless soon left *Bluey* way behind (I am too old to sit-out, and with a bitterly cold sea could not afford to take chances). After a spell at East Head we sought a more sheltered spot for the night and eventually found it at Nutbourne, at the eastern head of the Thorney Channel. There was ice on our tent-covers in the morning.

L.W



East Head Rally – 9 April 2006 – David Sumner

Len Wingfield
 Cliff Martin
 John Lidstone
 Steve Skinner, with crew Sherry and Mike
 Mark Tinker
 Chris Jenkins
 David Sumner

- 14 ft traditional dinghy *Bluey*
 - Mirror *Daydream*
 - Outrigger sailing canoe *Geese*
 - Wayfarer
 - Hobie *Mirage*
 - A special canoe
 - Mirror *Curlew*

It was intended as a gentle day sail to start to the season - to prove that the boats would still float and that we could remember how to sail them, at least in rudimentary fashion. In the event, three boats camped the previous night in very cold conditions, frost forming on the tents and possibly on the occupants. Len Wingfield in *Bluey* had a tent open at the aft end, whilst John Lidstone, in his outrigger canoe, had a tent covering just the forward half of the boat. On the other hand, Cliff Martin in his *Mirror* had the sort of tent that Margaret Dye might call the Albert Hall type, covering the entire boat. Even so, he was cold.

The lesser mortals, being made of softer (though generally warmer) stuff, launched at Itchenor the following morning. We had bright sunshine and a strong wind, with forecasts of W 3-5 veering N 4-6, with wintry showers and thunder later. It was good to see new members Steve Skinner, and crew Sherry and Mike, in a wooden *Wayfarer*. The Harbour Patrol very kindly fitted a new inner tube when one of their trolley wheels suffered a puncture. Chris

Jenkins had his new canoe, a Hobie *Mirage*, which can be paddled conventionally or driven fast by pedal-operated flippers. It looked a most interesting and well equipped boat. Whilst rigging my own boat I lost a halyard up the mast, forcing me to be reefed all day. This immediately caused the wind to drop to F2. Even King Canute, in this same harbour, failed to command Nature to such effect. Nevertheless, winds were fresh, averaging F3/4 during the day.

Five boats gathered for lunch in Snow Hill Creek, John Lidstone having needed to leave early. Sunshine, clear water and sparkling blue sea gave us a taste of delights-to-come in the summer. In the afternoon, Steve Skinner's boat explored the Thorney Channel, whilst I explored the Emsworth Channel. We both ended up completely becalmed, but with dramatic "cu-nimb" visible 20 miles north and coming our way, so a constant weather-eye for squalls was needed. Finally, a brisk SW wind gave everyone an exciting run back to Itchenor, just ahead of the dirty weather. DS

Dell Quay - 22/23 April 2006 – Len Wingfield

The others all sailed from Dell Quay or Itchenor, these launching points being far less restricted by tides, but I sailed my *Woodnutt 14* as planned from Emsworth down channel with the ebb to the rendezvous point at East Head. The Saturday weather was light to moderate winds and brilliant sunshine, if rather chilly. Stopping over in Oare Rythe I found an Atlantic seal bull basking with one of the harbour seals, the first time I have seen an Atlantic seal on the South Coast. At East Head I met Cliff Martin with his 11

foot *Mirror*, and Alan Glanville in his 19 foot *Ness Yawl*. A superb Joel White double-ended lugsail yawl also arrived. The owner was not a DCA member however, so a 'sales pitch' was made. Taking the new flood up to Dell Quay, the sailing club very kindly allowed us to moor on their jetty and use their toilets. The meals in the pub overlooking the water were excellent and their prices modest. The Sunday morning dawned calm and wet, but a stroll past the traditional boatyard and up towards Fishbourne was



interesting. We set off down channel with the ebb. In the light airs and rain we had no more than steerage way at times but this had its compensations, since it gave time to concentrate on the countryside and inspect the massive array of boats off Itchenor. At East Head we met Duncan Searle (he is re-joining the DCA) with crew Charlotte in a GP14. Steve Skinner also

arrived with a crew of three. Steve's rebuilt Wayfarer carries sail number 84, but it is believed to be earlier, in the 60's, built about 1950, older even than my Woodnutt 14. I took the last of the ebb back to the Emsworth Channel and picked up the new flood home, again with little more than steerage way at times. It was wet but well worthwhile. *LW*

Christchurch Harbour - 14/15 April 2006 – Keith Holdsworth

Keith Holdsworth - The Flying Pig
Alistair Law - Paradox
Mark Tinker - Hobie Cat

Keith Holdsworth - The Flying Pig
Steve Bradwell - Enterprise
Len Wingfield - Gull

Those of you familiar with 'Supermarket Checkout Syndrome' will know what I mean.

You spot a vacant checkout. You head for it. You are nearly there and within the space of the last few metres 3 customers with loaded trolleys appear from nowhere and beat you to it. In the same way I check daily the 5 day weather forecast in the run up to a rally. Seemingly without fail the early indications are good. Then, as the days pass the sun symbol acquires a cloud, which then becomes grey and finally on the day of the rally it acquires a big black raindrop.

Even the ultimate forecast could not match the grim conditions that faced me as I launched from Mudeford Quay. A chilly North West wind gusted occasionally to force 5 under a threatening sky. I fed my coins into the parking meter with apprehension. The wind direction precluded our usual safe anchorage in the lee of Hengistbury Head, so with the wind astern, 'The Flying Pig' flew, like a pig, upriver into the shelter of the reed beds.

I had the boom tent erected and the tea brewing just as the rain started. Half a novel later the drizzle was still coming in fits and starts so I decided upon an exotic meal to raise the spirits. Let this be a warning to all DCA members. I had

stocked up with a variety of tinned ready meals for just such an occasion. This tin was enticingly labelled 'Bombay Balti', but curried baked beans and sausages would be a fairer description. The only saving grace of 'Bombay Balti' is that it does not linger for long in the digestive system.

By this time evening was drawing near and, with the rain easing off, I headed back to the rendezvous point. It was desolate and empty of all human life. Not even a DCA member was to be seen. I made heavy weather of another few chapters of the novel, which I was not enjoying, but had renewed twice so felt obliged to finish it, then it was time to climb the headland for signs of any lost DCA souls. As I made to exit the boat the



Sheltering from the weather at Christchurch
Photo by Steve Bradwell



clunk of oars heralded the arrival of Steve Bradwell. Steve had launched from Keyhaven and had the good sense to make a call on his mobile to check the weather forecast before entering Hurst Narrows. Unfortunately the rip current took control of the situation during the course of the call and Steve was through the Narrows and on his way across Christchurch Bay just as the forecast was warning him that it was not a wise thing to do.

With Steve's arrival we now had an officially a rally and the decision to repair to the nearest pub was a formality. A pleasant meal of the local ale and local crab, laced with much fantasising about the ideal cruising dinghy, was eventually

terminated by the influx of a gaggle of androgynous Romans in unconvincing togas.

Sunday morning brought sunshine and a lighter wind from the west, albeit with the uncertain promise of rain later, so the fleet tacked up the River Stour to sample the delights of Christchurch. Having lost the wind and tide, the last half mile was a battle against the current which was won only by the sheer bloody mindedness of the DCA. The reward was a '99' ice cream cornet in a pleasant riverside park bustling with visitors basking in the warm sunshine.

Suddenly, and surprisingly, the rally had become an enjoyable experience. *KH*

PS from Steve Bradwell

I had a good sail back. Killed time, so as not to get to Hurst Point too soon, by walking up onto Hingistbury Head. Then later stood and watched the flow of water coming strongly back into Christchurch Harbour halfway through the ebb tide. The tide table posted on the harbour info hut showed a very pronounced double high tide. Returning to my anchored boat I found it now in deep water. So any impatience to set off early was impossible without a swim.

The sea looked fairly flat from Christchurch but the seas and wind built up steadily as I got further into the bay which makes sense given the wind direction. I reefed the mainsail twice before dropping it in favour of my larger jib. I averaged about 4 knots over the ground.

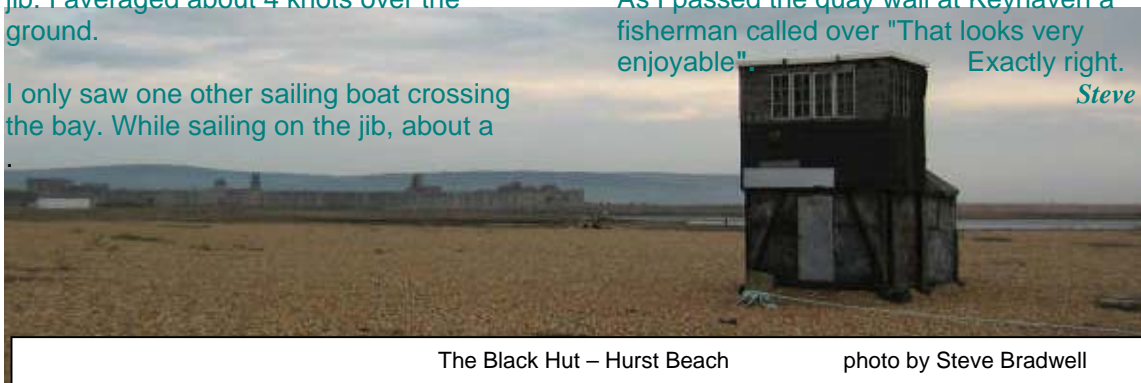
I only saw one other sailing boat crossing the bay. While sailing on the jib, about a

mile out from Barton on Sea a 35 ft cruiser coming the other way tacked to pass about 50 meters from me. I tried to look as relaxed as possible in case the other skipper had any concerns. He gave me a cheery wave.

I reached Hurst Point at slack tide as hoped and landed on the lee of the shingle beach near the black hut to have a walk. I had the best sail of my weekend from the black hut to the Keyhaven hard. Sun setting and just after low tide I sailed in on full mainsail only following the narrow channel with only inches of water at times. The wind direction was perfect to follow the zig zagging channel without any beating.

As I passed the quay wall at Keyhaven a fisherman called over "That looks very enjoyable". Exactly right.

Steve



The Black Hut – Hurst Beach

photo by Steve Bradwell



Keyhaven - 29/30 April 2006 – Keith Holdsworth

Keith Holdsworth - The Flying Pig
 Alistair Law - Paradox
 Mark Tinker - Hobie Cat
 Len Wingfield - Gull

True to form, the 5 day weather forecast gradually lost its early promise and delivered an iffy day with an unseasonably cold wind.

Keyhaven is a maze of channels among salt marshes. Fun to explore but not to be stranded in by a falling tide. Tempted into the maze by 2 'experienced' looking mariners in a Mirror dinghy, I followed them at a distance along an ever narrowing creek, in search of a route to the open water just a stone's throw beyond. When the Mirror stopped and was manhandled the last few yards over the salt marsh to the open water, I promptly dropped the sail and made a cup of tea, looking for all the world as though that had always been my intention. Having failed to find an alternative exit from the maze, a severe attack of discretion took hold of me and I made my exit by the way I came in.

Approaching the Keyhaven River entrance I spotted the unmistakable green hull of Alistair Law's Paradox being joined by Mark Tinker in his Hobie Cat.

The usual landing spot on the shingle beach was feeling a little exposed to the chilly westerly so off I went to scout for a more comfortable anchorage. A quiet area with calm water under the shelter of the big shingle bank that is Hurst Spit, looked an ideal spot. A leisurely cup of tea seemed appropriate before I returned to the lads with the good news. How often has a leisurely cup of tea changed the course of history? Not often it seems and certainly not on this occasion, but the receding tide took no such leisurely



Mark Tinker and Hobie Cat with Alastaire
 photo by Keith Holdsworth

attitude and dumped me on thick glutinous mud just metres from the firm shingle. Experienced dinghy cruisers will not need a description of the gruesome details of negotiating the ooze which was unfortunately necessary to deliver the news that I had found the ideal overnight anchorage which was now inaccessible. I broke the news gently but did not escape a little derision.

Mark Tinker's Cat is a fast boat but does not offer many luxuries when it comes to sleeping aboard. The stores are extracted through small holes in the hull like winkles from a shell and a tent is ingeniously erected on the trampoline like an accommodation module on an oil rig.

The day was rounded off by the obligatory evening visit to the pub at the cost of a two mile hike around the perimeter of the harbour.

Saturday night brought a volte face in the wind with the consequence that instead of being sheltered, I drifted silently onto the



shingle bank and was left stranded at high water mark. With difficulty I dragged the boat some way down the shingle but the great ooze prevented any closer approach to the approaching tide. A hearty breakfast and a patient wait ensued before I was able to sail back to the harbour entrance rendezvous, by which time the Alistair and Mark were heading back to their respective launching sites at Portsmouth and Calshot.

The high tide offered an opportunity for a bit more creek crawling and I set-off to explore a backwater route into Keyhaven. At about this time I was passed by Len Wingfield returning from Yarmouth in his Gull, but failed to recognise him despite exchanging greetings.

Things were looking promising with my destination in sight, but then the creek narrowed and the water started dropping at an alarming rate. First it became too narrow to tack, then too narrow to row. Plan C, the outboard, was invoked and brought me to within yards of open water before it died. Plan D was panic. How much was I looking forward to a night in a muddy ditch? My mechanical genius was quickly mobilised and soon grasped that the outboard would run only on full choke. (I mention this because I hope that I will be inundated with technical advice . . . please . . . thanks. It got me home but the adrenalin was exhausted and it only remained to recover the boat before the customary rain set-in.



Pangbourne Boat Show

9-11 June 2006

at Beale Park,
Pangbourne, Berkshire

Camp on your boat or ashore.

We have been before and had a great time.

More importantly, it is very good publicity for the DCA.

For more information and to book your place as soon as possible, please contact:
John Barney



For Sale

Drascombe Peterboat: LOA 16 ft (4.9m), beam 6 ft, designed by the late John Watkinson. Constructed of clinker marine ply glued with SP Systems epoxy.. Received an amateur boatbuilding award in 1999. Gunter lug sloop rig. Floorboards can be raised to rest on thwarts where an inflatable mattress provides a comfortable night under a boom-up cover. Can be rowed by one person, or sculled with a rowlock set on the sternpost. An outboard can be mounted on the port quarter, or within the inboard trunking. Recently refurbished trailer, two tents and an inflatable dinghy are also available. £3,500.
Tel: Gillian Strube - 01293 612900



REMAINING RALLIES 2006

Liz Baker has to reduce her DCA work-load, so I have taken over rally co-ordination on a stop-gap basis. (Liz continues to do the clever stuff with Solent Soundings.)

Please note that rally hosts accept no responsibility for safety of participants - skippers must decide for themselves whether they and their boats can cope with prevailing and forecast conditions. We usually have arrived at the rendezvous by 7pm. Some cook on board, and some prefer to eat at the nearest pub, to which most of us usually adjourn around 8pm. At a few venues it is possible to camp ashore, but in tidal waters it is easier to camp on board. It is best not to wait until the day before to enquire about a rally because by then your host may already have launched. In the event of a forecast of Force 6 or worse rallies will be cancelled or changed to be held in sheltered waters only.

Len

June 3 /4 **Oxey Lake** OS ref 196/ 330 936 (just to west of Lymington River) Discreet camping ashore. David Sumner Home 01403 730152 Mobile 0781 880 1657. Sat HW Portsmouth 04.46 BST

9 / 11 June – **Pangbourne Boat Show** at Beale Park. Volunteers needed to help run the DCA exhibit. Please contact John Barney 01628 484079 for information or to book your place.

June 24/25 **Bembridge** OS ref 196/ 641 887 (sandy beach, to port just inside harbour entrance.) David Jones Home 01403 266800 Mobile 0781 884 5618 Sat HW Portsmouth 11.21 BST

July 8/9 **Beaulieu River** OS ref 196/ 408 002 (Buckler's Hard pontoons) - Steve Bradwell Home) 01252 724854. Sat HW Portsmouth 10.06 BST

July 15/16 **Ashlett Festival of Sail**. OS ref 196/ 468 033. Events for boats under about 20feet. Details www.ashlettsc.com. Ashlett Sailing Club organiser Dawn Minard Tel 02380 899437. *Our 'Cruise with Cliff'* week follows:

July 16/22 DCA **Cruise with Cliff**. Cliff Martin intends stay on after the Ashlett Festival until the Newtown rally the following weekend. Why not join him for a day or for all week? Venues are to be agreed by those taking part, so please phone him beforehand.

July 22/23 **Newtown Harbour** (just above Shalfleet Quay, OS ref 196/ 415 903) David Jones Home 01403 266 800 mobile 0781 8845613. Sat HW Portsmouth 10.12 BST

Aug 5/6 **Sinah Warren (The Kench)**. OS ref 197/ 694 999. David Sumner Home 01403 730152 Mobile 0781 880 1657. HW Portsmouth 08.19 BST Discreet camping ashore is possible.

Aug 19/20 **Wootton Creek** (Wootton Bridge) OS ref 196/ 547 921. Liz Baker Home 01323 842124 Mobiles 07957 945523 or 07584 652554 HW Portsmouth 08.59 BST

Sept 2/3 **River Medina** (Folly Inn) OS ref 196/507 930. Liz Baker Home 01323 842 124 Mobiles 07957 945523 or 07854 652554 HW Portsmouth 06.10 BST

Sept 16/17 **Ashlett Creek** OS ref 196/ 468 033. HW Portsmouth 07.20 With sail up to Marchwood or Eling on the Sunday morning? Host to be announced in next issue .

Oct 7/8 **Fowley Island** (OS ref 744 044) **lunchtime meet** (Island accessible only within 2 hours of HW) with optional sail down to East Head. (Could overnight there or return to Emsworth pub and overnight at Fowley). Len Wingfield Home 01483 563422, mobile 077486 70155. HW Portsmouth 12.04 BST

