

# SCUTTLEBUTT

SUSSEX POLICE OFFSHORE SAILING CLUB



## NEWSLETTER

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## “MY VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY”

### A thank you to SPOSC from Terry Clothier

It was back in 1990 that I took my first sailing course, ‘competent crew’, with the Westerly Sailing School based at Hamble Point Marina. That really whetted my appetite for sailing and the Sussex Police Offshore Sailing Club certainly gave me the opportunity to satisfy my hunger. Sailing on owner’s rallies, crewing on both race boat and support boat for PSUK race series at Cowes, Plymouth and the West Coast of Scotland merely increased my desire, leading to Day Skipper and Coastal Skipper qualifications. Former SPOSC member John McKinney passed my details to a friend of his, yacht delivery skipper Lionel, and a phone call invited me to join a delivery, taking a 47’ Bavaria from Sparkes Marina, Chichester, via the Kiel Canal to Gothenburg, Sweden. I could hardly refuse, and obviously coped tolerably well as I was asked by Lionel to accompany him on further trips, including recovery of a Moody from La Corunna, Spain, delivery of a Southerly 115 from Chichester to Scotland, an interesting experience with the owner on board, and a trans-Atlantic from the Caribbean island of Tortola, via the Azores to the Hamble with a Bavaria 38’. The latter trip accompanied pre

Azores by whales and dolphin, post Azores in rather more demanding conditions watching fish swim past through waves fifteen feet above the deck. A Yachtmaster exam and a Yachtmaster Ocean shorebased course saw me attain Yachtmaster Ocean certification in 2000 enabling me to spend the next nine years working part time for Sussex Police while delivering yachts to or from France, Spain, Portugal, Gibraltar and Croatia, visiting Wales, Ireland and Scotland. I entered some fantastic harbours and met many interesting and delightful people. I served as Chairman of the SPOSC and following the sad demise of Roger Dice had the honour of being elected Commodore as well as taking on the role of editor to Scuttlebutt. My voyage of discovery has been a steep learning curve, but oh so rewarding. I owe a great debt of gratitude to my wife, who paid for many of the courses I undertook and also to the Sussex Police Offshore Sailing Club for affording me the opportunity to achieve my goals. I have learnt a lot about the sea and myself, while having a great deal of fun. ENJOY YOUR CLUB, I have!



### Editorial Note

Please remember that this is your magazine and should reflect your views and experiences for the benefit of other members. If you have any comment, articles or photographs you feel are appropriate for inclusion then please forward them to me [terryclothier@hotmail.com](mailto:terryclothier@hotmail.com) for publication.

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# SCUTTLEBUTT

## Sussex Victorious at Police National and World Sailing Championships!

By Brian Donald

Hey, guys! What about this? I was asked to sail for Sussex in the Police National AND WORLD Sailing Championships. Now, I know what you mean, when you talk about the Veld. But a river with only one bank? ..... So, naturally, I accepted.

Lodestone Lee, First-Mate Kev and I met the rest of the team, Captain Dave, Main-sheet Bob, Darling Annie, AJ and Rich at Port Solent, to pick up our yacht, a Sun Fast 40, named 13 ..... What did I say? Named 13. Is that a problem? I've never heard of a boat named 13. Surely you're not superstitious, are you? Who? Me?



Anyway, these guys had it all organised. We had a support boat that cooked our food, did our washing, tucked us up in bed at night. The plan was that, after an early breakfast, we would be out on the water with time to perfect our spinnaker hoists, gybes and dumps. (That's what they said)

By the time we got out there, we thought we probably just had time for another cup of tea, before the start and dehydration can be a real problem, said Cap'n Dave. In any case, we only had time for one hoist and if we couldn't dump it in time, it would mess up our upwind start and dent our confidence.

Well, as it happened, we didn't need a spinnaker to mess up our start, we did that pretty well without one. I think I may have been pushing, instead of pulling! At the end of Race 1, I counted two, possibly three boats that finished behind, giving us an optimistic and suitable 13th place. I was surprised and saddened to see that we were placed 16th for Race 1. There's more to sailing 13 than meets the eye, touch wood.



As the week progressed, we did improve, but so did everyone else. 13 seemed pretty good at pointing, but things would unravel once we got that big spinnaker up. This didn't work until, on the Wednesday, Annie suggested to Cap'n Dave that we should gybe the Pole before the Main (her words! I knew AJ was half-French, but I thought the rest were English). This worked a treat. We rounded the first mark in third position, the second in first and were increasing our lead heading for the third. Unusually, the entire fleet seemed to be heading off in a different direction.

Commendably, the Lodestone held his nerve, the others had got it wrong! What? .....All of them? sensibly the Lodestone popped back into the cabin to check, popped out, popped down, like a gopher. Someone shouted 'ALLAN!' He popped out again looking sad. We had a lot of water to cover to make up and to his credit, we only just came last. This world of charts is a tricky business. We weren't

merciless, but you can't waste ammunition like that, can you?

The next race..... We came eighth ..... In the WORLD!!!!!!

On Thursday we sailed around the Isle of Wight. This is where you get the river with one bank. We had RAIN, fog and LIGHTNING! From the cabin, we could just make out Cap'n Dave's and Mainsheet Bob's faces peering out from under their storm hoods, like two well-nourished, but gloomy meerkats. True to form, we came 13th.

Friday gave us our windiest race and we finished the competition 13th in the world and ninth in UK. If you think I have overhyped the title of this piece, let me explain.

Wednesday night was the dinner. We all bought raffle tickets in aid of Ellen McArthur's Trust. Alan, an Egyptian Landlord, Greek yacht charterer and worthy member of our support crew won five.....no, FIVE of the ten prizes! Thus giving Sussex Police an unassailable lead in the World Police Sailing Championships raffle!

All thanks are due to the crew of the Support Boat, Owen, Dusty, Jim, Alan, Hannah, Kevin for their gentle banter and keeping us fed. Thanks, too, are due to 13s crew, for carrying me so ably. Can I come play next year, please?



Photo's by Stuart Regler

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## Bright Future for Sailing in Worthing After New Clubhouse Opened

### *Sussex club celebrates with plans for expansion*

Worthing Sailing Club is looking ahead to an exciting future after the grand opening of its new clubhouse on Saturday (12 July).

More than 80 people, most of whom had never tried sailing before, took advantage of the opportunity to get a free taste of sailing after Sir Peter Bottomley, Worthing West MP, did the honours on cutting the ribbon on the new clubhouse at 1 Sea Place.

The new facility is the first part of a comprehensive plan to get even more people within the local community sailing regularly.

Popular Worthing SC already has 400 members, and offers free training and use of the club boats to its adult members while the club's junior section, 'The Bug Club' also benefits from training from RYA approved instructors at no cost.

With the aim of becoming a recognised RYA Training Centre in 2015, negotiations for an extension of the boat compound to accommodate the expansion of the membership underway and the new clubhouse providing greater capacity than ever before, the future for sailing in and around Worthing is very bright.



*Frank Hooper*

## The Best Laid Plans etc., 'tales of derring do' by Frank Hooper

As with most sailing tales, this is a story of 'the best laid plans etc etc...' which only goes to prove how stupid were those people who wanted yachties to fill in a form online prior to crossing the ditch, as if we knew when and where we were going.

The origins of the trip was to provide an opportunity for practical passage planning and extra sea miles for those wishing to gain RYA qualifications. Bravely, or whichever noun you may wish to apply, Alwyn agreed to skipper the trip and throw the chalk at the blackboard as and when necessary, accompanied by Chris Gillings who is working towards his Yachtmaster ( he may deny this but ignore him), Eamonn O'Dwyer who had yet to cross the Channel in his own boat but wanted the experience of seeing others mess it up, Dave (Harry) Mallon who can be relied upon to produce a mean mess of pottage when required, the young Colin Jaques whose main purpose was to reduce the overall age of the group below 60 and to take the wheel when the rest had given up for their afternoon nap, and lastly the scribbler of this article.

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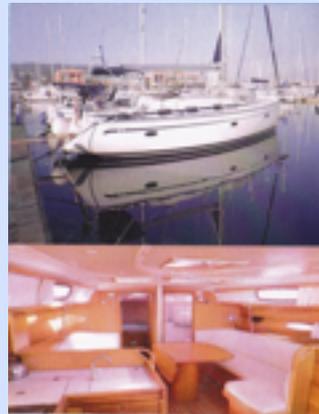
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**Sussex Police - retired**

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**continued**

We gathered at Port Hamble Marina on Sunday 6th April. Alwyn had booked a Beneteau Oceanis 43 for our discomfort, finished in an attractive shade of blue which made it easier to find in the marina among the white goods.

The plan - pause for laughter - was to either go for an overnight run across to Cherbourg/Alderney Race or if the weather was unhelpful, which of course it was, head down to Yarmouth for the night with the certainty of good food and shelter - neither of which transpired - and an easy run into the Needles Channel the next morning. Everybody had been looking at the weather in the run up, and, no surprise, by Sunday we and the Met Office were none the wiser other than it was going to be nasty for between 1 - 3 days after which a big hole was going to appear in the heavens into which all the wind would disappear.

The run down to Yarmouth was enough to convince us that the correct decision had been made with a strongish SW wind in our faces forecast to back further south and strengthen. Yarmouth was fairly empty which probably reflected the forecast as well as the early season. Unfortunately those responsible for the itinerary had left it rather late and we only just made the Kings Head before they stopped serving food, some wished they had. Fed watered and so to bed to listen to the shriek of the wind in the rigging - great for getting to sleep unless you have to decide what to do the next morning. There

had been some discussion during the evening of options for Monday as a Channel crossing appeared unlikely. Chris, who was doing the passage planning for this part of the trip together with Colin, had set up for a crossing doing all the tidal differences as per the RYA requirements, now had to hurriedly change plans looking at the options for going west as the wind seemed to be set more in the south thereby giving us a decent angle. The options boiled down to staying where we were, going to the most expensive marina in the world at Poole, or the more pleasant but more distant Weymouth. The weather made the decision as it so often does.

Monday dawned - not literally as no one on board was up that early - with a very fresh SSW Force 5-6 and a bit more at times, and as there were no masochists aboard, a quick blat to Poole seemed to be in order. It was a reasonably interesting surf with the tide into Hurst narrows and a handbrake turn to starboard into the North Channel, a most useful shortcut especially when it is a bit bumpy at the SW Shingles. The close reach to Poole Fairway was not uncomfortable as the boat rode the seas well and without further excitement we were soon into Poole. The marina was not crowded by any stretch of the imagination, but they still contrived to allocate us a starboard to berth with another boat alongside and a strong wind broadside blowing us onto it. A rapid conversation with those in authority led us to the adjacent port side to empty berth, a far easier and safer proposition for parking.

The early afternoon arrival gave the planners plenty of time to dream up things for the next day as the forecast was still far from clear. There would either be a sailor's gale or we would have to get the oars out. One of the few good things about Poole are the ablutions, so after the required nap for the senior citizens use was made of them before painting the town red. First stop the Lord Nelson - stopped serving food at 7pm - that's enterprising. On to the Jolly Sailor who were still serving food, at which point we lost the will to go further and re-victualled there, followed by the usual evening of 'lamp swinging' aboard. And so - with apologies to Samuel Pepys - to bed.

What can I say about Tuesday. It was daylight which is always a plus, it didn't seem to be blowing quite as much as forecast - a bad omen - so Skipper Chris decided that we would set out for Euro land. In no time there was all this rag hanging from the mast, people were winding winches and it had all the appearance of sailing. Alright there were a few nasty gusts coming off Studland Bay and there were a few white horses ahead.

Clearing Handfast Point soon put that complacency in its place. The mainly westerly wind rose to a good Force 5-7 bring the seas with it. In rapid succession first and second reefs went in together with commensurate genny furling. It didn't make much difference, the cabin assumed the guise of a washing machine in mid programme and water was hitting the spray hood with increasing intensity. From my (dry) perch in the companionway

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## continued

I observed a number of question marks appearing on the face of the crew bravely facing the elements in the cockpit - stay out of it when it is wet is my advice. At the risk of being too serious - it won't last long- you haven't been anywhere unless you have been faced with the big question. Do I go on or do I run for shelter? It is also one of the most difficult decisions to make when you have a boatload, all salivating at the prospect of moules mariniere or whatever. Actually it is also the easiest decision. Just like putting in a reef, do it when you first think it may be necessary, so if the choice is shelter or 12 plus hours in washing machine do what Chris did, a sharp about turn and lets get the hell back to shelter and safety, even if it is Poole.

I don't think the marina had noticed that we had left and we just went straight back into the hole recently ( about 6 hours) vacated. Always good to get into port especially to avoid an unnecessary pounding, there is always another time. The day was salvaged by an evening at home with a gourmet meal provided by Messrs Mallon and Jaques, wine by Messrs Tesco and conversation by 'the grumpys' with the occasional lucid intervention by young Colin. And so....

It's Wednesday and this boat has to be back in the Hamble by Friday or Alwyn will lose brownie points. But Wednesday looks like a nice days, some blue stuff up there, breeze not gale so off we go. Know our way by now, fourth traverse of the harbour so

we make it out okay. Lots of sail up, out with the reaching kite, this is going to be a fast crossing. Kite goes up with minimum twisting which is more than we usually manage on the boat I race on. Handfast Point again kite setting, oh no it's not. What they call a wind shift in some circles but to most of us is a b...dy pain in the neck. Wind on the nose or close to on the starboard bow, kite down, will the genny hold? No it won't, down with that, suddenly all that nice white stuff over our heads is somewhat reduced. Still there is a large lump of metal under our feet and a full tank of diesel. Motor sailing is the order of the day thus completely upsetting the careful tidal calculations of the after guard. An extra knot per hour plays havoc with the final landfall after the tides have done their worst, so any number of course corrections had to be made to finally bring us into Cherbourg around 1800 hours. Of course the French still haven't worked out where the Greenwich meridian is, so another hour has to be added making it a little late. The marina looks like a building site, nothing open and more importantly a total absence of officialdom to give us the code to the showers. Nothing else for it but to head into town looking for a restaurant that Harry and I had previously frequented and enjoyed. I found the wrong one, but the intrepid Mallon was not so easily put off and disappeared into the distance while we had the first beer. He was soon back with goods news having found the correct watering hole. Off we went, much to the dismay of the young lady at bar number

one who had identified a good evenings takings suddenly slipping away. Suffice to say the move was the best decision made all week, excellent food and wine and so...

It's Thursday and it's early morning. Yes 0630 is early by anybody's standards, the bacon is on and the sun is shining, and the hole in the heavens is well and truly here - no wind. However we have an objective. Eamonn has done nothing but bang on about having a curry. We have identified an establishment in Cowes High Street that may fit the bill. So it's full speed ahead courtesy of the on board propulsion for the Needles. Hardly an exciting crossing, a few passing ships to gaze at, the usual false sightings of everything from great whites to submarines symptomatic of a degree of boredom, but good for a bit of bulkhead surveying for those needing to top up their sleep. Early evening and a welcome ( I jest ) from Cowes Yacht Haven conveniently situated for the aforementioned curry house. Eamonn's wish is at last satisfied, considerable quantities of various foodstuffs with different names, but looking the same, all appeared and were consumed amid much lamp swinging and dissection of the week which had brought the full variety sailing has to offer. It would be true to say that everybody had taken a lesson from the week, proving the point that you never stop leaning when it comes to the sea and sailing, and you only have to ask Colin what lessons he learnt about over indulging on curry to understand that.

Frank Hooper July 2014

# SCUTTLEBUTT



Jim Smith

Dusty Miller

Hannah Willard

Kevin Claxton

Owen Poplett

Alan Costello

## The PSUK Support Boat a story from Jim Smith

On a warm Sunday evening in May I travelled to Gosport to join the crew of our support boat for the PSUK World Police Sailing Championships. I have been a dinghy sailor for many years but this was to be my first outing on a yacht with a crew. On arrival I met the skipper, Dutsy Miller, and the rest of the crew. Having read previous Scuttlebutts, where they were described as the cast of Dad's Army, I have to say this summed them up, although this time as I was considerably younger than the rest I would fill the role of Pike – "stupid boy Pike"

I didn't know what to expect, a week at sea with people I had never met in circumstances alien to me was at first daunting. The guys could not have been more welcoming and it quickly became apparent that the week would evolve around food and drink with a hint of sailing! I was to share a cabin with Kevin Claxton, a retired Inspector. A thoroughly nice chap with a dark secret..... snoring, never before had I heard one man make so

much noise through his nose! It was clear that sleep was not going to be on the menu!

The following morning we set sail for Cowes for what was going to be an amazing week in the Solent. We were extremely fortunate to have Alan Costello on board who I learned quickly had a never ending knowledge of sailing and all things nautical. Within a few hours we seemed to be a functioning crew, everyone pitched in and with the expert guidance of Dusty, Alan, Owen, and Kevin I quickly began to pick up knowledge and skills. The support boat does exactly what it says on the tin, support and cater for the race boat. We provided them with hot meals, daily lunches and supplies. Like a well oiled machine our crew ensured the race boat was given a first class service everyday. This was made so simple by our on board chef, Owen. That man can perform minor miracles with a single frying pan!

Once the race team had set off we were free to spend the day motor cruising, oh sorry sailing! For Hannah and I this gave us an opportunity to learn new skills and

brush up on old ones. It wasn't long before we were both taking turns at the helm. We visited several ports during the week, some more eventful than others, and had a good tour of the Solent.

PSUK held two evening events during the week. The first was a formal dinner, where Alan won 80% of the raffle prizes. The second was a BBQ at the UK Sailing Academy. Due to rain of biblical proportions this was held inside. The other evenings were spent consuming your own body weight in cheese washed down with gallons of Port and Whisky! Not to mention the endless banter, I can honestly say there wasn't an hour that went by where the crew weren't laughing about something.

I was convinced to sign up by Anne Darling, possibly one of the most forceful people I have ever encountered! I can honestly say that I am glad I did. The SPOSC offers fantastic opportunity for all and the people could not be friendlier and more inviting. If you have ever considered sailing, or you're an ocean going hopeful, please consider joining the club. I guarantee you won't regret it!

### **SPOSC BBQ & Regatta**

*11am 6th August, 2014 @ Lancing Sailing Club, Lancing Beach. Then Regatta from 7pm.  
All welcome!*

### **October Charter**

*There could be an October charter from 13th to 17th October, 2014. To support the Met race boat and then spend time cruising. Contact Anne Darling.*

### **Met Police Race Series**

*12th to the 14th October, 2014  
Skipper Steve Rigby with First Mate Alwyn Evans.*