



Spring 2024

Commodore's Comments

It's been a busy time since our last newsletter. Both boats have undergone extensive annual maintenance and improvements. Ploes has a new engine, bow water tank, and chart plotter, whilst Capella has a new holding tank dump valve, new stack pack, gas alarm, float switch and leisure batteries.

There are 13 weeks booked on Ploes, and there are in excess of 80 days of advance bookings on Capella. Capella is fully booked for her summer cruise to the Netherlands, so with the season barely started the bookings on both boats are looking strong.

We've completed a member's survey, the results of which have provided some pointers as to how we can evolve particularly regarding promoting Ploes and skipper/crew development.

The 2024 version of our Year Book has been produced, and distribution started at the Fitting Out Supper. If you didn't attend the FoS your copy should arrive by post in the near future.

Meanwhile, the committee has been hard at work on a range of topics and have agreed the following, which are all documented in the Year Book.

- a) A formalised Capella winter maintenance to sailing credit system
- b) A Safeguarding Policy for Children and Vulnerable Adults
- c) Clarity on how the club manages its finances

We will hold a Recruitment Open Day followed by an evening social event at Suffolk Yacht Harbour on 20th July. A request for Open Day volunteers and details of the social event will follow soon.

So in summary, the boats are in fine fettle and ready to go sailing, the management and administration of the club is progressing on multiple themes, we've reconnected with our beach sailing predecessors, and work is underway to record more of our



history. I'm feeling optimistic that our Diamond Jubilee Anniversary Year will be a special one, let's hope the weather plays its part!

Fair winds with following seas, and I hope to see you on the water or at a social function this year.



Paul

2024 Diamond Jubilee Fitting Out Supper

We marked the start of our 2024 Diamond Jubilee Season with our Fitting Out Supper (FoS) at the Royal Norfolk and Suffolk Yacht Club on Saturday 13th April. Capella, skippered by John Bird, made the trip from Levington to Lowestoft, and was used to host an informal reception on the Friday afternoon. It was a delightful event attended by around 20 including some of the surviving original beach sailors who had been especially invited as part of our 60th anniversary. Harry King-Gardiner, who was present at the inaugural meeting of Kessingland Sea Sailing Club in the summer of 1964, formally cut the beach themed birthday cake.



The FoS was attended by 40, which included some of the beach sailors. It was delightful to observe friends being reunited after decades. Our after-dinner speaker was marine author, archivist and chair of the Excelsor Trust Jamie Campbell. He gave us an interesting illustrated talk on the history of the RNSYC.



Regarding our own history, James is morphing into our archivist and has commenced a history project which will include an audio-visual record of the club's history that we will share with members at the Laying Up Supper in November.

In recognition of his 7 years as Commodore James was presented with a pair of engraved whiskey glasses, a bottle of 12-year-old single malt whiskey and a year's family membership of the Nancy Blackett Trust. Thank you, James.

Capella returned to SYH the day after the FoS, skippered by Joe Driver.

Paul

Capella

Capella is now looking ready for the new season and we have already had 11 days out on the water at the time of writing, including the very successful trip up to Lowestoft for the Fitting Out Supper at RNSYC. Many of the club's long-standing members were able to attend a reception aboard, or visit the marina and see Capella moored in prime position in front of the clubhouse. Bookings are good and the reporting systems working well to ensure that the boat is kept in good order.

If you are sailing on Capella this season, please do report any losses or breakages and repair or replace items where appropriate. The same holds true for the logbook and 'End of Booking' checklist (EOB). Skippers must complete the club logbook, in order to provide a continuous narrative of the boat's history, engine hours, fuel/oil consumption and any incidents involving "touching ground" or even the smallest knocks to the hull. This is in order for us to maintain her in the best condition and to keep track of any ongoing issues. All skippers must sign as complete the EOB checklist before leaving the boat. This did not always happen last season but is important as it will ensure that Capella is stowed and cleaned consistently and thoroughly in accordance with the expectations of the club.

The winter maintenance programme for Capella was extensive this year with numerous repairs and upgrades. The latest major items fitted since she was relaunched are new leisure batteries and a new improved stack pack, which also has a mast hood and weather protection for the zip. A total of 54 day's maintenance work was carried out by 20 members of the club in addition to the professional engine service, valeting of sails, cleaning and reproofing of sprayhood and cockpit cover, windlass and stanchion repairs. Many thanks go to all of those who contributed to works on electrics, myriad repairs and upgrades to existing kit, rigging, plumbing, cleaning, polishing, antifouling, carpentry, servicing of winches, lifejackets and a whole host of other things.

You are all stars!



Jo Wood, Paul Newman, Mark Barnett, Ian Winters, Colin Riding, Colin Wardell, Chris Jones, Matt Carney, Arthur Riley, Mark Crowe, Paul Sturman, Ginny Haynes, Cliff Pountney, Mark Benson, Andy Royall, Joe Driver, Lin Perry, Adrian Gregory, Richard Oliver, forgive me if I missed you out.



Gill

Capella Bookings

Capella bookings for the season are already looking very healthy, although weekend booking availability is looking scarce between now and September. So, I would respectfully suggest that those able to book mid-week should try to avoid weekends, allowing access to those members working during the week.

Currently there are 3 or 4 weekends free before September, out of 34 days total over the next 4 months. The summer cruise is fully booked, so next year we will consider how to ensure that those wanting to participate in the summer cruise get a reasonable opportunity to do so, with fair consideration for those seeking access to sailing opportunities closer to home. From September onwards there's a lot more availability.

If you're a crew looking for a skipper and crew mates, take a look at the calendar on the Go Sailing webpage, and put a range of possible dates on the KSSC Crewseekers WhatsApp group, and ask for a skipper who might be available. Hopefully a skipper will come forward, and other crew mates will join in.

Otherwise, look out for news on opportunities for aspiring skipper and crew skills development in September. You should feel confident that you will enjoy the experience and learn a lot from more experienced skippers.

Chris



Ploes

We commissioned Ploes just before the Easter break this year and she had her first booking immediately afterwards during the holiday in March. Fethiye was quiet during the week Colin (Riding) and I were there. The weather was mild, warm during the day and cooler in the evenings. At the time of writing, Ploes has 13 weeks booked for 2024, and I hope we'll have at least 15 which, although less than last year's record number, is about average for recent seasons.

Ploes is solidly booked from mid August through to early November with only one week in mid October still available. This is similar to 2023, with a busy autumn. Surprisingly it is the earlier spring and early summer months that the bookings are quieter.

Our big news is that in January 2024 Ploes had a brand new engine fitted. Last year we had £2,000 of repairs for a blown head gasket, and before that we spent over £1000 to overhaul the diesel injectors. With the excellent income in 2023 from bookings it seemed time for a replacement. The new engine has a 3 year guarantee for major failure, subject to the us using slightly more expensive Volvo Oil.

This year we also replaced the troublesome bow water tank, which leaked when full, and the 10-year-old chart plotter which had become unreliable. These were substantial expenses, but with the main components on Ploes now replaced she should be not only more reliable and enjoyable, but cheaper to maintain in the future.



Peter

Skipper/Crew Development

The recent member's survey showed that there is demand for aspiring skippers and crew to have more opportunity to develop their skills. There was also strong support from existing accredited skippers to support and develop other members to achieve their objectives.

In support of this initiative, we will offer some events in May and September that will provide hands-on confidence and experience building opportunities in a safe environment, under the guidance of an accredited skipper. The May events are diarised for 7th, 9th and 10th, whilst the aim for 7th-12th September is to do consecutive overnight trips with two or three skippers, allowing multi-day trips.

Paul



Membership Update

We start the season with a lower membership than at the end of last season, but this is normal for this time of year, and indeed our membership has already started to increase since the list was updated for the Year Book. We currently have 60 memberships, 45 of which are sailing memberships. With a number of taster sails imminent, and the July recruitment event mentioned in Paul's address, we anticipate an increase in our membership throughout the year.



Rose

Social Events

We had an excellent trip to **Radio Caroline** in February which caught some of us wading through the high tide to get to the ferry. The station was broadcasting at the time of our visit and we were able to give a shoutout for the club over the airwaves from the recording studio. Everyone found it an entertaining and interesting trip followed by a seafood feast for most at West Mersea.



The **Norfolk Wherry** trip organised by Ian Winter is coming up in mid-June and has proved very popular after the interesting talk given by Judith Keogh of The Wherry Yacht Charter Organisation at the Laying Up Supper in November.

An informal **Passage Planning Day** has recently offered the opportunity to brush up skills with some help from Phil Wallace and Dave Tonge of Adastral Park Sailing Club. Many thanks to them for their input. If you have any ideas for informal events or refresher sessions then please let me know and I will endeavour to organise for the autumn.

Please keep your diaries free for our **Open Day event on 20th July** as part of our Diamond Jubilee celebrations. We will be inviting people to come along during the day to view Capella on her mooring at Levington where we can showcase the



opportunities that KSSC offers with boats in Suffolk and in Turkey. We need a host of friendly faces down at the boat to chat and offer refreshments to visitors who may wish to know more about the club before booking a trial sail with us. The Haven Ports (Lightship) are providing their private room for a Club Dinner in the evening which is open to all members and their families. This is the opportunity for all of us to celebrate the club's 60 year history with some surprise entertainment! Booking details will follow by email.

On **Sunday 21st July Capella** is booked for club social sailing and, as we did last year, we would like to give as many people as possible the chance to get out on Capella, particularly if you have not had the opportunity to meet other members of the club and wish to make connections for crew/skipper matching. We are hoping that the weather will be kind to us all weekend and that you will join in the events planned.

Gill

Treasurer's Report

The club remains in rude financial health following the work on both yachts over the winter months. This has included the new engine in Ploes which has been material investment for the yacht. Bookings for Ploes are not yet at the level of last year, although stronger for the period after August, and Capella remains popular in line with her first year with the club last year. However, we have to look to the long term and the club now has £30k of loans from members. We will need to repay these and build up reserves for yacht replacements or major overhauls in the future. But I am confident that we can manage these future liabilities in the ordinary course of the club activities. So the focus now is to get the boats on the water during this years' sailing period, which means members making plans and then making bookings.



David

Club Merchandise

Many members are now wearing different items of club merchandise and have been pleased by the quality of the products. We have commissioned a 60th anniversary logo as well as the standard logo which can be embroidered on to any of the items ordered. It looks particularly attractive on a plain crew or V neck T shirt. The link to our catalogue is below as well as the anniversary logo. Please do let me know if you wish to order anything as an order of 10 plus items attracts a 10% discount.

<https://www.zoomcats.com/flyer/kssc>





Gill

Safeguarding, Good Practice & Code of Conduct

As part of our affiliation with the RYA it is important that we have in place their specified policies. Please note 3 documents that are now part of the club's documentation and can be viewed by scanning the QR code on page 2 of the 2024 yearbook, or visiting the KSSC [website policies section](#).

Skippers will need to confirm that they have read these documents before making their booking in future, particularly the requirements when sailing with children and young people.

When KSSC bought a Lamborghini

As a part of our diamond jubilee activities I have been collecting facts, stories, photos and reminiscences from the members of the original beach sailing club. We all benefit from the marvelous legacy we have inherited and whilst we focus on improving the club, it's right that we should remember the hardy souls who launched from and landed on the beach at Kessingland.

I began by setting up interviews with the existing members from those days: Paul Noton, Harry King-Gardener, Sid Pretty and Richard Debenham. All have great stories and are a mine of information. John Bird brought along Billy Nichols, whom I had not previously met. But John, through Billy's contacts, brought together 8 other sailors from that time. Suddenly we had an event. Derek Lyne travelled from Liverpool and was at the original meeting at The Sailors Home pub in Kessingland. He was responsible for the design of the club house. Paul Parrivani (Commodore in 1979) came with his sailing partner, Malcolm knight and had much to tell about the operation of the club in the earlier days. Chris and Lynn Addison, and Len and Gwyn Thurston also had many recollections to share. Gwyn was one of the women who took to the water in the boats as was of course Pam Pretty. Ian Garrett gave a



unique insight into being one of the children who grew up in the club. His father, Eric, was Commodore in 1978. The evening finished with a convivial meal.



Since the meeting, documents and photos have been coming in. Three of the original beach sailors have expressed an interest in re-joining the club. It's clearly going to take a while to collate and format this fascinating material but I hope to make a presentation at the Laying Up Supper in November. I will produce a DVD and a document in some format. Of course, the bare bones of the history of the club are set out in the yearbook but it's been a real pleasure putting flesh on those bones.

The Lamborghini? Well as the sea receded more effort was required to get the boats to the water, so a tractor was purchased to pull the boats along the lengthening beach. Who knew Lamborghini made tractors- not me!



An Open Day of the original Kessingland Sea Sailing Club.



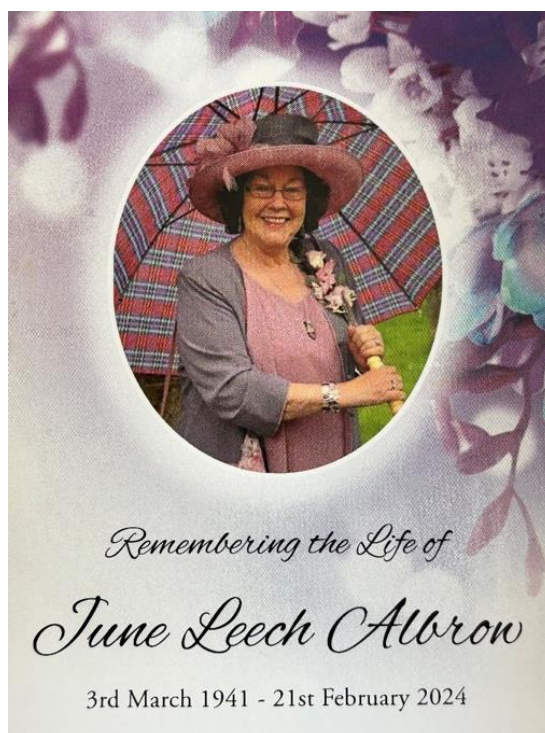
James



Obituaries

Sadly, this year we have lost 2 of our current and former club members.

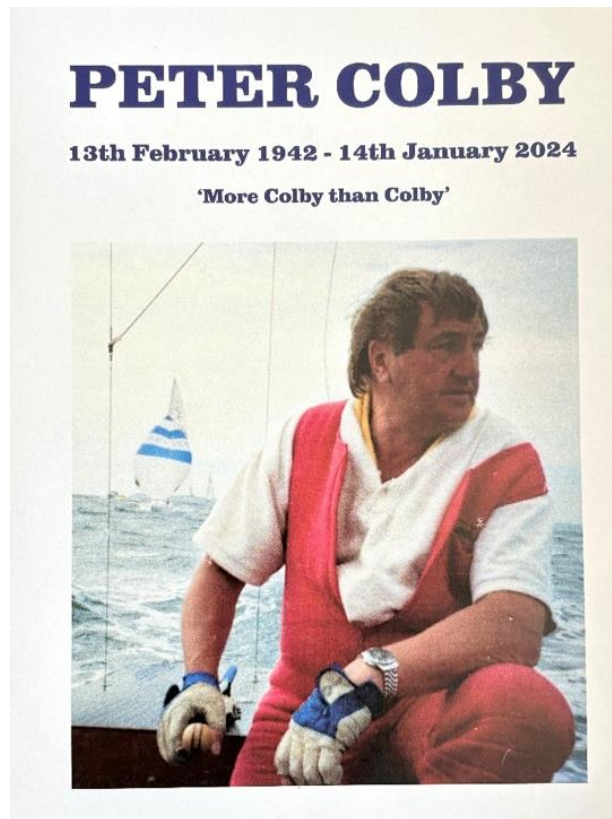
June Albrow R.I.P.



June was a long-standing member of Kessingland Sea Sailing Club having joined in the early 1990's when the Club started its venture into 'big boat' sailing. She frequently sailed on Explorer and moved on to Edna May in the late 1990's. She loved sailing from the Algarve in Portugal on Edna May in company with Sid Pretty, Jenny Down and Tommy Knott, occasionally as joint-skipper. She was a KSSC Committee Member for about 15 years and Honorary Secretary for much of that time. June will be fondly remembered for her excellent quizzes at the annual Fitting-Out and Laying-Up Suppers. June remained a loyal and active member of the Club right up to the end. She made a valuable contribution to the Club in so many ways and will be sadly missed by all that knew her.



Peter Colby R.I.P.



Peter was one of the founder members of Kessingland Sea Sailing Club in the mid 1960s and sailed a variety of dinghies off Kessingland Beach. The Club soon expanded and thanks to Peter a plot of land was acquired on the adjacent seafront and a new purpose built Clubhouse constructed and formally opened in 1974. Peter contributed in obtaining 10 new 'Fireballs' at near cost price to encourage more competitive class sailing. The Club went from strength to strength promoting and hosting dinghy regattas up to a national level. Peter was Commodore in 1970 & 1973 and was elected President in 1975. He remained a full member for the next 25 years. In the early 1990's Peter and his lifelong friend, Richard Debenham were behind the concept of 'big boat' sailing and purchased the first Club cruising yacht, Explorer - a Contessa 32 at an MoD auction. He was also influential in acquiring the first Club overseas yacht - Edna May sailing out of Vilamoura on the Portuguese Algarve. The Club owes a huge debt of gratitude to Peter for his foresight, his generosity and his business acumen without which we would not be the Club we are today. His legacy will live on.

John Bird

