

LEIGH CREEK GUZZLERS ASSOCIATION

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GUZZLETTER NO 98

Dear GUZZLERS.

Firstly I apologize for the lateness of this GUZZLETTER. We had to cancel our planned Committee meeting on November 8th for a variety of reasons and we could not re-plan until Tuesday 6th December.

So I again say 'Hello' to all, and begin with my traditional welcome to another GUZZLERS year.

If you have a red * at the top RH corner of this letter then your subs are outstanding. If you wish to be included in future correspondence, then please forward your cheque for £5 to me. THIS IS THE ONLY REMINDER I SHALL SEND.

Our membership remains at about the same level as last year, 44 at latest count, so please send me your subs if they are outstanding, we do so much want to retain your membership.

To those who receive the GUZZLETTER by email I will send out a separate reminder requesting your subs if you are overdue.

I attach the AGM Minutes from the meeting on 4th October and some press cuttings.

Early in the summer I had a message from Ian Johnson saying that it had been arranged for Franks ashes to be scattered on Sunday 5th June at the Den, HT 1537.

Kath had expressed a wish to go afloat with some of the family for the ceremony. The plan was to embark the family at Essex Yacht Club onto the Gig (Frank B) and move down to the Den area escorted by the Peter R and one or two ribs. After the service we would return to EYC, unload the passengers then return back to the Den for refreshments, It was suggested that the GUZZLERS might like to provide a pulling crew for the gig. Four oarsmen plus one coxswain were required.

Volunteers were easy to come by and a Boats Crew was selected. Rig for boats crew was Jackets, GUZZLERS tie, & light coloured shirt or Uniform.

Ron Cox, our President was pressurized to act as Cox'n for the event.

M. Blackett, D. Clark, P. Cottrell, N. James .R. Salter, A. Clapham & S. Clay formed the crew with D. Packer as spare number!

Martin Blackett was able to dig out the following instructions which was more or less my recollection.

**Boat Drill – Pulling Orders
Sea Scouting – Tom Brown 1951**

Fenders in – Ship crutches

Shove off forward: Oars out! The bowman shoves off. The rest of the crew get their oars out and place them in the crutches horizontally athwartship and feathered and the bowman does the same.

Give way together! Or Give way starboard! Or Give way port! As necessary.

Easy! Means *Pull* easy if at sea, but means *Stop pulling* in river orders.

Easy starboard! Or Easy port! If for one side only.

Hold water! All stop pulling with oars square athwartship and not feathered, then lower the blades cautiously into the water, taking care not to be thrown backwards by the loom of the oar.

Back together! Or Back starboard/port as required.

Give way together! Or just **Together!** to resume normal pulling

A common way of dealing with an obstacle is to give the order:

Look out for your starboard/port oars! leaving it to the discretion of the oarsman to shorten in their oars or to swing them fore and aft.

Swing your starboard/port oars! To avoid an obstacle let the oars indicated swing fore and aft in the crutches by leaning back and letting the loom pass over the head.

Be prepared to lift the oar in board.

Oars! The crew stop pulling and rest, with the oars athwartship and feathered

Bow! Is the order given a few strokes before coming along side, on which the bowman lays in his oar blade forward and gets out his boat hook preparatory to getting a suitable hold.

Way enough! This is the order to stop pulling. In single bank boats such as whalers, the crew lie back and let the blades go aft. In double banked boats the oars are tossed.

Boat your oars! Lift the oars in board and stow them as in the first instance.

Fenders out! Crutches in!

It should be noted that in every case where an order is given to the crew while they are pulling, the order should be given when the blades are in the water and one more stroke be given before the order is carried out. The only exception is the order **Hold water!** which is obeyed at once. It is normally preceded however by the order **Oars!**

The Gig is 25 ft long and can be pulled as per a whaler and so we met at The Den at 1400 on Sunday 5th June and once afloat went out for a practice all the way (!) to EYC. After some liquid refreshment on the Wilton the crew again embarked, along with the Bentley Family, at EYC and was pulled, at sedate pace, to a position off the Den, accompanied by RIBs with other observers, where Franks Ashes were scattered. Ian Bentley conducted the ceremony and the family were well looked after. The Boats crew returned the family to EYC and we all walked back to the Den where there was a small reception after which we had a couple of beers in The Smack before going our own way.

I thought that it all went very well. Not too solemn, just right, a bit of light hearted talk from the crew while we rowed was welcomed. I said that I thought the lads on the balcony of the Den provided a really nice backdrop. It later turned out that the balcony was manned by the Ranger contingent! Sorry girls!

We received a thanks card from Kath that includes the Group and Guzzlers which was pinned on the board in The Den for all to see.

Some photos were taken and a remark from David Knapp, Scout Leader, who was in Australia at the time was:-

I don't think I've ever seen the gig so low in the water before! Frank would've laughed to see all those old boys crammed in like that! Thanks for keeping us posted, hope all is well back home.

Thanks David!

Our President added 'Back home now after a very enjoyable weekend (apart from the purpose of course) it all went very well and I am sure Kathleen felt the same. As for me it brought back memories, the main difference being of course the shape, the size and the grey hairs of the crew. Ron added 'I must say guys you did well. Not sure about the bowman tho' were his eyes open?'



For a number of reasons we had reluctantly had to cancel the Ray Day on Friday 22nd July. Calypso was not going to be available and the weather outlook did not forecast the dry, hot & sunny day we thought of when we planned it in March! Sorry to put off those who had made plans for the Ray Day, but under the circumstances it was the most sensible course of action to take.

However the Calypso trip on Friday went ahead, departing from Leigh at 1700, with about 5 crew members staying on board overnight and they undertook a most enjoyable trip to Whitstable coinciding with the annual Oyster Week. They had an overnight stop, sampling the delights of Chatham Marina as well. They returned at about 1930 on Sunday 24th July

There was a good turnout at the AGM / Pub Night on 4th October, all business was concluded very quickly as you can see from the minutes.

The Group had an 80th Anniversary Dinner and Dance on The Wilton, Essex Yacht Club on 8th October but I have not heard how it went but you may have noticed that I have attached a press cutting that Barry Sullivan cut out of the local 'Christmas Times' which drew attention to the anniversary with salty tales of past adventures. Life must have been dangerous in those wartime days but not nearly as complicated as it is now.

On November 17th six of us visited HMS Belfast and had a very interesting tour of the ship. I noted the electrical layouts and Gyro's were the same as in my day and Colin Waller took interest in the comm's gear as he was an RO in the RN during his national service. The visual AA (Anti Aircraft) gunnery direction equipment was the same that I had maintained but 15" Surface guns were much bigger than my 4.5". Hands to Dinner was at 1330 and we lunched at The Horniman at Hays, good grub cheap beer, merry GUZZLERS! We could have spent much longer on board but some people were pressed for time and so it was necessarily curtailed. Alan Stone noted with some consternation at the time the work that was taking place on the struts on the covered gangway. The angle iron was being cut through. On November 29th this happened. Click on the link!

<http://travel.aol.co.uk/2011/11/29/170-evacuated-as-hms-belfast-gangway-collapses-into-thames/>

At the committee meeting we discussed arranging some different activities over the coming months, some of which were raised at the AGM. So, in chronological order:-

Day out:-

Firstly we will visit Churchills War Rooms on March 1st as a bunch. The address is: Clive Steps, King Charles Street SW1A 2AQ. Meet outside at 1115 and we should be able to pair up and do a 2 for 1 making £8.00 each. We can select somewhere for food & a beer afterwards.

Social Meeting 1

The Winter Pub Night, for inclusion in your 2012 diaries, is on Tuesday March 6th 2012 at The Crooked Billet at 2015.

Boat Trip 1:-

What is definitely being arranged is another trip on 'Calypso' to Whitstable for the Oyster Festival on 28th & 29th July.

Boat Trip 2:-

Now that trips on Rona seem not to interest sufficient numbers to make it feasible to crew up, we thought that something should take its place. To celebrate the GUZZLERS 30th year we are asking who would be interested in coming on a chartered narrow boat on the Midlands Canals (Rugby / Oxford) for a week or long weekend in mid September, when the kids have returned to school? If there are sufficient numbers we will investigate further.

Boat Trip 3 :-Another activity we are looking at is that now Andy Clapham has become a nominated Skipper on Sailing Fishing Bawley 'Endeavour' there is the possibility to take her away for a day, from Leigh with GUZZLERS on board.

Social Meeting 2

Shall we have another Trafalgar Night in 2012? As our committee meeting had to be hastily convened at The Elms, whilst we were there, we asked the management if they would be able to lay it on for us on Saturday 20th October. The Manager was most interested and was only too delighted and might be able to lay on a visit from a beer rep. so sampling can take place. Roast Beef meal for £10.00 a head. Seems too difficult to turn down! We would like to include our wives as well.

Social Meeting 3:-

Pub Night & AGM Tuesday 9th October 2012

Would you please email me to let me know if you are interested in the narrow boat charter and Trafalgar Night by the end of December so we can decide at the next Committee Meeting if it is worth pursuing the arrangements.

Final details will be posted in the next GUZZLETTER.

The Groups website <http://www.3rdcb.org.uk> is now up and running but has not too much content at present. GUZZLERS details are shown but there is not much in the way of news.

I received an email from Dave Taylor recently and he says that both he & Wendy are both keeping well. They have not been around much in the last few years as they have taken the boat across to Calais each spring, wandered around the inland European waterways and returned in the autumn. This year, however, they decided to leave the boat over in France for the winter, near Dijon on the River Saone. They will return to the boat in March and venture again down the Rhone and the Canal du Midi then probably bring the boat back to Levington on the Orwell the year after to probably use it as a floating caravan.

All that remains is for me, on behalf of your committee to wish you all well for 2012, and best wishes for an exciting Christmas.

Regards,

Stuart Clay

Secretary