

LEIGH CREEK GUZZLERS ASSOCIATION

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17th November 2014

GUZZLETTER NO 104

Dear GUZZLERS.

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

Those who have subs outstanding will receive a separate emailed reminder saying that they are overdue, so if those people wish to be included in future correspondence, please forward your cheque for £5 to me, made payable to '3rd CB GUZZLERS'. You can otherwise make a payment online, or better still, set up a Standing Order to the GUZZLERS Account number, 56032994 and Sort Code 60-17-44. If you choose either of these methods please send me an email to alert me to the fact that you have made the electronic transaction. THIS IS THE ONLY REMINDER I SHALL SEND.

We do so much want to retain your membership and our challenge is to chase up those who have not yet paid their subs and to retain our new members. I attach a Standing Order mandate for you to send to your bank by post should you wish to do so. Otherwise a SO can be set up on line or by telephone by your bank to the Account number & Sort Code above

I attach the AGM Minutes from our meeting on 6th October 2014. For those who receive this by post I have included the Income & Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet that was approved at the AGM.

GUZZLER Committee member Peter Jacob writes:-

Guzzler Boating and Recruiting Day – Saturday 14th June

The weather overcast and the fear of rain upon us mixed in with the talk of last year's wash out day, this did not deter the men and women of the Leigh Creek Guzzlers Association coming down The Den for the annual Guzzler boating and recruiting day. With a barrel of ale tapped and a crate of lager chilling in ice, plus the one box of white wine, just in case any of our female members fancied it, as in true scouting fashion 'be prepared', we were ready for anything!

As the younger Guzzler's were preparing the RIBS 'Rodney' & 'Grafton' to take out, myself and the older Guzzlers prepped to set sail from The Den on the Gig 'Frank B'. This was the first time the Guzzlers have ever sailed the Gig since the group has had it for over 10 years, the last time Guzzlers were onboard they were pulling it at Frank Bentley's ashes scattering, so there were a few puzzled minds (including mine as I hadn't taken her out for over a year) on how to get her rigged. After we cast off from The Den and while discussions on how the main sail goes up taking place, we started to drift in style (the exact words from our own chairman Martin Blackett) and with the combined 'wise' knowledge of over 200+ years onboard, we worked it out and began to sail under the command of Dave Packer (the same man who tried to put on a small child's buoyancy aid back onshore).

The rain held off and a nice wind picked up we took the Gig out on a great sail out to the Ray while chatting about old stories from the Troop. Colin Fraser who took his boat out with John Blackburn onboard as cabin boy soon caught up with us, with both of the RIBS checking up on us to make sure we hadn't sunk! After a great sail we returned to The Den, where we fired up the barbee and enjoyed the sun which came out from behind the clouds. The day was a great

success with new and old members chatting away together and increasing our membership numbers.

Huge thanks goes to John Blackburn who ordered the beer and managed to haggle the price down. Let's hope next year we have blue skies and warm weather for a change!

The Summer Pub Night at The Crooked Billet, on 15th July was exceptionally well attended with at least 17 coming along. It is an event that is really well worth repeating. We sat outside on a calm & mild evening, some in shorts, on Osborne's tables and beer was flowing freely. Patrick Fairplay won the furthest travelled prize having come down from Cley next the Sea, Norfolk. Fish & Chips were available from a stall under the flyover and Neil Paxman was kind enough to get extra chips for all tables! Good time had by all.



Frank B 'drifting' at the beginning of the Den Day

The trip on 'Calypso' on Friday 25th July to the Whitstable Oyster Festival went ahead and Andy Clapham reports:-

The Guzzlers trip to Whitstable this year was conducted in brilliant sizzling sunshine from start to finish. We left Leigh on the first of the tide, ploughing a furrow in the mud to get out and went to Faversham. The crew were Andy Clapham, Nick James, Neil Paxman, Roy Salter, Emmet Perry and 1 non Guzzler.

The delights of Faversham were enjoyed to the full and an awning had to be rigged to protect us from the sun.

After a leisurely breakfast we went back down Faversham creek and along the coast to Whitstable. We (literally) inserted ourselves into the harbour amongst the fleet of the barge match and traditional boat festival.

The place was buzzing and all were out to have a good time. The Neptune, the pub on the beach ran out of beer at 1500 on the Saturday afternoon, which was very disappointing but I am still unsure if it was down to bad ordering or too many customers. Luckily other establishments were fully stocked.

The evening was barmy and warm, the restaurant we chose was adequate, no return planned, but still we had fair scoff to fill our bellies, and then the town was enjoyed, about twice the sensible number of people had turned out, but it made for an interesting night.

Sunday morning we had our now traditional breakfast of fried potatoes, chorizo sausage and fried eggs in the café and then passage back to Leigh.

Arriving at high tide was perfect and a couple of beers in the Billet sealed the deal.

The Merrilyn trip September 7th – 14th. From West India Dock and Andy Clapham

writes:- There were 13 due to sail on Merrilyn, but regrettably Roger Pickford had to drop out due to ill health so 12 of us arrived in the West India Dock in East London on the Sunday.

Due to the tide and her mooring position, we had to cast off and leave 10 minutes after arriving so a bit of a leap into the deep end for me as I had not driven Merrilyn for 2 years and for everyone else who had never even seen her before.

Anyway the Guzzlers triumphed and we set off under power with most of the ebb under us at about 1500. It was intended to stop at Southend pier to wait for the flood to go through, but in fact we held tide in our direction till after 2200.

We got wind in our favour off Margate and sailed the rest of the way to Dieppe, (27 hours – 170 miles) arriving around 1500 Monday.

Dieppe welcomed us, traditions were observed and before and after a meal onboard, beer was consumed.

Next day after fuelling up we left Dieppe around 1100 and sailed to Honfleur, one of our most favourite ports in France. I have to report that one member of the crew was decidedly green all day, but as it was a self inflicted excess of beer, little sympathy was offered.

We locked in at 2100, after an excellent roast lamb onboard in the River Seine and moored smack in the middle of town. We were pleased to find a couple of bars open to cap the day.

Nick woke me up at about 0230, he was a bit puzzled. I was more than a bit puzzled as we appeared to have drifted down the harbour 300yds and moored next to some motor boats.

It transpired that someone had let off most of our lines and cut one loose, luckily it was a still night and our fenders had done their job. We don't think it was directed at us personally or that because we were British as a French yacht was let off too, but nasty anyway.

Next morning found me in hospital with an eye infection, but the service was excellent and I was on my way with drops well before lunch.

Honfleur was enjoyed for the rest of that day and night, and we locked out the next morning and crossed the Channel back to Blyth, sailing most of the way.

The ports of the Solent were tested for their hospitality over the next few days, including Gosport, Yarmouth, Beaulieu and Southampton. Sailing was leisurely enjoyed every day.

After cleaning the boat and getting off, an excellent breakfast was had by all in Universal Marina before our private minibus brought us home.

Merrilyn was voted the best boat of the fleet for our purposes, and as a result she is already booked for next year. One of the best trips we have had.

PS. I understand that Bert's mast climbing abilities were tested each evening at sea with Andy's command 'Rig the Emergency Steaming Light', as Bert had to shin up and reset the adapted bunk light so it would come on!

At the AGM / Pub Night on 7th October, there was a reasonable turnout of 15. All business was concluded by 2042 as you can see from the minutes. More turned up at the Smack after the AGM was concluded!

Scout Leader, Ian Johnson, informed the meeting of the closing of SRS Solebay and the opening of another Scout Troop, 3rd C B (Solebay) for the girls, which will meet on Mondays. It was apparent that Scouting had more activities to offer than Rangering and at this moment it was a very sensible move for all concerned after opinions had been sought from all of the Sea Rangers. John Whiteley reported on the groups' ongoing proposals for the new facility on Victoria Wharf. Full Planning Permission is hoped to be granted on 17th November.

Your Secretary writes:- I met the GUZZLERS President, Ron Cox, in Faversham on August 22nd prior to him and some cronies from Anglesey, North Wales providing the crew for Barge 'Repertor' in the Thames Barge Match on Bank Holiday Sunday. Ron had contacted me previously to explain that the club had a project to renovate a 1907 lifeboat 'Charles Henry Ashby' which was taken out of service in 1932. See <http://www.cemaesclassiclifeboat.co.uk/> for all the details. If you run the clip you will not fail to be impressed with the condition and the sailing ability of the boat. Anyway, some 10 ladies & men from the club were to crew 'Repertor' and, as I was 'local', I made arrangements for them to eat at the Shipwrights Arms, which surely must have housed smugglers in the dim & distant past, right on the Faversham / Oare Creek and adjacent to Ham Wharf, Hollowshaw, where 'Repertor' was moored. So after what must have been an everlasting journey from Anglesey, in a Scouts Mini Van, picking up the crew en route, they duly arrived at 1930 and Carol & I had a very entertaining evening with them all. Ron told me that after the race they anchored off Southend Pier and went to the Naval & Military club, in Royal Terrace, for the prize giving. After safely returning to Faverham on Bank Holiday Monday they went back to Wales visiting the Historic Dockyard at Chatham on their way home on Tuesday eventually arriving back at 0100 on Wednesday. Sounds like an exhausting Bank Holiday!

Old Leigh Regatta Sunday 22nd September – Jon Whitely ASL writes:-

Last Sunday, the Old Leigh Regatta ran with great success. We had our usual Tea Tent as well as stalls consisting of Teddy Tombola, Face Painting, Hook a Duck, Darts and Bowling. We also had Scouts and Rangers doing the usual collections with the tins.

The total amount raised from all of the above was £2,766. This is an amazing amount, especially from just one day, and we would like to say a huge thank you to the many parents and helpers that came down to support the tea tent, stalls and work on the barriers. Without you we could not have run our side of the Regatta and raise such a high amount.

Next year will hopefully be back to both days and we will need help again from parents. Many of you on the day said that you would be happy to help and get involved. More information will be given out as and when things develop for next year's event. Again, huge thanks to all involved.

I note that this event was likely not to take place but efforts of the Leigh Lions together with the Old Town Scouts enabled a last minute reprieve, and the weather was good!

Royal Navy Inspection took place on Saturday 11th October 2014

Lieutenant Commander David Gray RN Inspecting Officer

High Tide 15:08 6m

Order of Events

13.00 - Boat crews going afloat are to be at the Den at 1300 in sailing kit. Bring full uniform on a hanger and hang it the changing rooms. Boats are to be afloat by 1330.

14.30 - Lieutenant Commander David Gray RN arrives at The Den to be met by the GSL Carol Tissington, Group President Les Davis, Group Chairman Colin Fraser and Group Treasurer Brenda Ayling.

15.00 – Lt Cdr. Gray will be going afloat with Chris McHugh in Grafton. Lt Cdr. Gray will then sail with the Scouts & Rangers and change boats.

Sea Rangers, Sea Scouts and Explorers not involved in the water activities are to arrive at the Den in full uniform and assemble on Victoria Wharf to be prepared and checked by their section leaders at 15.00.

16.00 - Boats to return to the shore or as instructed. Boats are to be removed from the water and placed in Knapp's yard and the drive way. Dads who have kindly volunteered will be there to assist with getting the boats out of the water, de-rigging them and moving the boats round to The Den.

Lt Cdr. Gray meets with the Beavers and Cubs in The Den hall.

Boat Crews are to change into uniform ready for the parade and meet with their section on Victoria Wharf.

16.30- Sections to be inspected on parade by Lt Cdr. Gray on Victoria Wharf.

After the parade Lt Cdr. Gray will give de-brief on events of the afternoon. Following the de-brief boat crews are to ensure that all boat gear is put away if not done so already and we should be finished between 17.30-18.00.

Summary:- by the Inspecting Officer was:-

3rd Chalkwell Bay Sea Scouts and Endeavour ESSU successfully completed their RN inspection afloat at their HQ on Saturday 11 October 2014.

Conclusion:-

You are a very highly performing Sea Scout Group and Unit.....It was very easy indeed to renew your Royal Navy Recognition.

So well done all those concerned

Neil Paxman took it upon himself to arrange a Trafalgar Night Dinner at 'The Swan', Lavenham, Suffolk on Saturday 25th October 2014 for the 209th anniversary of the battle. At this point I don't know how the festivities went.

At the committee meeting on November 11th we discussed arranging the activities over the coming months, some of which were raised at the AGM.

Days Out:- (for inclusion in your 2015 diaries)

On February 10th 2015 we will visit the Imperial War Museum, meet outside at 1100. Drinks & lunch will be enjoyed locally afterwards of course. Full details will be sent a week before the visit.

Social Meeting 1

The Winter Pub Night is on Tuesday March 3rd 2015 at The Smack at 2015. The venue was requested at the AGM.

Recruiting / Den Day

This will be planned for a Saturday in June so those recently and newly recruited GUZZLERS will be able to join with the rest of the membership to display their boating talents as they did when 'youfs'. We want current GUZZLERS to be around to welcome other people who might like to recreate the fun they had in days gone by and to see & use the boats and facilities at The Den. BBQ & liquid refreshments will be available and as a contribution to the cost to cover overheads a charge of £5.00 will be made.

Social Meeting 2

Summer Pub Night 14th July – Crooked Billet at 1900 to take in the sun and have a beer. Fish & Chips was available last year from a Fish Bar under the Flyover.

Boat Trip 1:-

What is definitely being arranged is another trip on 'Calypso' to Whitstable for the Oyster Festival departing from Bell Wharf on 24th July, returning on 26th July.

Boat Trip 2-

GUZZLERS sailing on RSP 'Merrilyn', 28th August – 4th September. She is a Ocean 62 schooner which we be chartering. Those wishing to go should register their interest straight away with Andy Clapham by sending an email to andy.clapham@yahoo.com or calling 07952 923251. Priority will be given to those who crewed in 2014.

Social Meeting 3:-

AGM Tuesday 6th October 2015 at The Den at 2000, this will be followed by a Pub Night on completion of the AGM.

Boat Trip 3

We will look into what arrangements can be made to book up a trip on PS Waverley; Southend to London, on the cards for late October 2015

Social Meeting 4

Shall we have a local Trafalgar Night in 2015? Please discuss it at the Winter Pub Night and make your suggestions to one of the committee. We have another Committee Meeting in April to discuss such matters. We know that some of our members are keen on repeating the function locally which would include our other halves as well.

I am told that the Group is keen to recruit an additional person to work with the Cubs. If you feel that you have the spare time and would be interested, please send me an email and I will pass it on to the Group.

All that remains is for me, on behalf of your committee to wish you all well for 2015, and best wishes for an exciting Christmas with your families.

Regards,

Stuart Clay
Secretary