

LEIGH CREEK GUZZLERS ASSOCIATION

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GUZZLETTER NO 117

Dear GUZZLERS,

Your committee has had Zoom Video committee meetings on 16th February and 13th July to see what activities could take place when & if restrictions were going to change. I now see from the Groups diary that 3rd CB Scouting activities have recommenced with all sections now at Summer Camp – nice weather for a change.

Above all – I hope that you have kept safe and you are anticipating a return to things we mostly did before the outbreak.

Once again we received a Christmas card to us all from Nick Martland, in Queensland. He wishes us a merry Christmas. It all seems rather a long time ago now! Many thanks, Nick. I also had a card from Patrick Fairplay, it was of HMS Victory entering Portsmouth for the last time in 1815. No! I was not there to witness it either.

GUZZLERS membership was 52 in 2020/21 and all of those expected to continue their membership have paid up and those who haven't have not been excluded from the mailing list due to Covid-19 as I hope to catch up with them sometime. Subs for 2021 / 2022 are now due of course. In December Jon Owen who was in the Group 1977 – 88, contacted me and has joined. He now lives in Banbury and we hope to see him when he can make the journey to The Old Town to join in with activities.

Social Meeting

I am so pleased so say that the committee have decided that we should have a Summer Pub Night at The Crooked Billet on 24th August. Hopefully the Old Town will have settled down by then and any 'Youf' unsavoury activity will have finished. I have been in correspondence with Richard Thompson (1950's) in La Motte d'Aiques, France, recently. In early December he sent 100 Euros to buy some beers on him at our next GUZZLER Pub Night. This was followed by another letter saying, 'Don't en cash into £'. At first I had thoughts that perhaps they were counterfeit! Apparently, his sister, who he had also sent some Euros to, got a hefty 14% charge when she changed the money at a Rectory Grove bank. Richard, himself a banker during his working years, was much aggrieved and sent us £100.00 in crisp, new and sequentially numbered sterling notes. I have returned the Euros of course. Thanks Richard and I will look forward to holding a full glass and wishing him all the best. If you know that your subs are outstanding, maybe for two years now, you should be reminded to bring enough cash along. I will have a list of course!



I was informed that Dudley Blois, one of our immediate Post War GUZZLERS, passed away on 16th January 2021 due to cancer which had been with him for some time. According to our records Dudley joined the Group just after wartime in 1946 until 1951 when I guess he went to sea in the MN. Patrick Fairplay recalls that he once met up with Dudley in the Gulf when they were both youngsters at sea, serving abroad. Dudley announced his presence at a visit to The Den in 2010 and made contact with me & subsequently joined as a GUZZLER. As a

consequence he & Patrick were able to meet up, become reacquainted and exchange family visits, with a good amount of lamp swinging I guess after all those years.

I sent a card and letter of condolence on behalf of all of us, to Wendy, his widow

Patrick Fairplay subsequently wrote.

Dudley Blois Tribute from Patrick Fairplay

We would like to be with you on this occasion of Dudley's funeral, a sad time for family and friends.

I have known Dudley since we were about 10 years old. His family had moved to Chalkwell, Southend-on-Sea, and they lived just around the corner in Eastwood Lane. We both joined the Sea Scouts, the 3rd Chalkwell Bay Troop. So that is the cradle of our love of "mucking about in boats". It was 1945, the year that World War 2 ended, and the Sea Scouts had acquired some weary old boats discarded by The Admiralty. We all worked so enthusiastically on those ancient boats to make them fit to get us precariously afloat and splashing around Chalkwell Bay.

Later we both started a seafaring career with the Anglo-Saxon Petroleum Co. (Shell Tankers) and our lives took different paths, except for a brief meeting a couple of years later at a Kuwait loading terminal in the Persian Gulf.

Dudley and I caught up with each other again about nine years ago, when he came across the 3rd Chalkwell Bay Old Boys' Club, The Guzzlers (the name has something to do with an initiation tippie). It sounds somewhat ridiculous, but it is a group of old 3rd Chalkwell Bay pals keeping in contact with several beery evenings and sailing events, and raising a bit of money for the Troop. Like Dudley, many of the "Guzzlers" have been achievers, and can probably add some credits to their names. But membership of The Guzzlers is personal, and as such is highly valued.

Dudley and I have met and kept in contact regularly over the past nine years. With Wendy and Nicola we've had some very enjoyable times. Dudley was interested in everything, and I'll just pick out one entertaining outing, when he found out about his possible royal connections. Dudley and Wendy were staying with us in Norfolk and the four of us visited Sandringham House. Browsing through a book on royal lineage in the souvenir shop we discovered that the royal dynasty which reigned in England after 1066 was described as "Norman, Angevin and Blois". Apparently John of Blois had a fiefdom in the King's Lynn Region around the beginning of the twelfth century. Dudley was instantly on the case. "I had an old auntie somewhere up here," he said, and bought the book. Irresistible – there was even mention of a coat of arms. I think he wanted to go back and have another, proprietorial look at the royal cars on display - Bentleys, Rolls, maybe a posh Humber.

I am sure members of the family are going to recount his achievements, his technical and teaching career, and his offshore sailing. Nicola and I will miss him, and always admire his quiet uncomplaining battle with his illness.

Eight Bells Dudley, time to turn in. God bless.

Boat Trip-

You will know that during the lockdown we followed up and secured a booking on SB Centaur, running from Maldon, over three days between September 9th – 12th incorporating the Colne Barge Match. I am pleased to say that the charter has just been confirmed by the TSBT so I will be calling for final balances shortly. There are 9 GUZZLERS going, with the other 3 made up from family & friends. My view is that by crewing the barge for the race it does bring added purpose to our trip and provides much more of a guarantee of getting the sails up to go forth with haste! Maybe we will avoid the mainly late September gales which the last two weekends in the month sometimes bring. It was difficult at first to get 12 committed as a number of functions were running in parallel but all places are filled, so the cost per head is reasonable.

AGM & Social Meeting

I give formal notice of our 2021 AGM on Tuesday 5th October 2021 at 2000, which will be held at The Den. If we can get some technical help there is a chance that we may be able to put it on ZOOM for those who are unable to be there. These people will unfortunately be unable to follow us to The Mayflower on completion! Please put the date in your diaries now and if there are any items for inclusion in the agenda or revision of Aims do advise me before the end of September. Dan Parsons sends out an invitation to have a look round The Den beforehand to see the improvements that have taken place during the lockdown for ourselves.

Other news:-

We are looking to provide financial and practical assistance to update the Honours Board which we presented to the Group in 1988. It has had additional names entered on it, but some have been taken off when the board was updated some time ago. I feel quite pleased with myself as I have been able to unearth a photo from GUZZLETTER No. 22 dated 29th January 1988 and Frank Bentleys draft plan and additional comments. Members had been asked previously for any authentication or other inclusions. We will take this information to the Group and come up with a suggestion of perhaps additional board(s) made to meet their needs and requirements.

We have made an offer to provide a replacement banner with '3rd Chalkwell Bay Sea Scout Group' as the current one was in need of replacement. However we await information on the required dimensions, colour and wording which is to be agreed by the Group Scout Leaders.

Whilst the Den was shut for scouting activities the underside of The Den has been renovated. There is a new training room, replacement windows all round and a re-jig of the changing rooms and toilets. The Wardroom & Galley have also had makeovers. We, The GUZZLERS have provided the funds to have an up to date sound system installed for both safety and social benefits. We may see it in operation when we look round at the AGM. Work also continues on the slipway & davit, the new building and concreting the yard.

The Groups website <http://www.3rdcb.org.uk> contains up to the minute news. Do take a look and explore it, especially the impressive 'You tube' clips.

Our GUZZLERS details are included on the website and there is access to all the recent GUZZLETTERS.

All that remains is for me, on behalf of your committee to wish you all well and very hopefully we will be meeting up soon.

Regards,

Stuart Clay

Secretary