

LEIGH CREEK GUZZLERS ASSOCIATION

'Old Cleeve'
383, Sandyhurst Lane,
ASHFORD,
Kent.
TN25 4PF

01233 623732, email clay_oldcleeve@ntlworld.com
24th November 2021

GUZZLETTER NO 118

Dear GUZZLERS.

I again say 'Hello' to all, and begin with my traditional welcome to another, hopefully back to normal GUZZLERS year. I hope that you are all well and will be able to see your friends and families at Christmas time

Members who have their annual £5.00 subs outstanding will receive a separate emailed reminder saying that they are overdue. If you know that you are owing you can either make a direct payment online, to the GUZZLERS Account number, 56032994 and Sort Code 60-17-44, or better still, set up an annual Standing Order. 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. Alternatively you can forward your cheque for £5 to me, made payable to '3rd CB GUZZLERS'.

THIS IS THE ONLY REMINDER I SHALL SEND.

We do want to retain your membership. A SO can be set up on line or by a call to your bank quoting the Account number & Sort Code above. If you are unable to do that I attach a Standing Order mandate for you to complete and send to your bank by post.

I attach the AGM Minutes from our video meeting on 5th October 2021. For those who receive the GUZZLETTER by post I will include the approved Income & Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet that was emailed out prior to the AGM. For those who attended the AGM at the Den we had a brief tour, happily given by GSL Dan Parsons which those who joined us on Zoom were able to see or at least get the flavor of. The Den has now terrific facilities and boats to inspire the young of today. As was put to me the Group are in competition with local sailing clubs for youths but has the added benefit of the 'Scouting' bit as well.

Last month (!) I received our first Christmas card. It was from Nick Martland in Australia who sends us all merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. The card showed a very seasonal scene of Father Christmas on a surfboard with 5 Koala Bears and other animals hanging on. The sun is shining though! Still priced at \$25.00 plus \$2.40 postage Got to be worth it! Thanks Nick,

Your Secretary writes:-

Some activities actually took place this year after sanctions were lifted!

Social Meeting

The (late) Summer Pub Night at the Crooked Billet on 21st August took place and as the weather was fine we congregated on the outside tables and we savoured the pleasure of drinking the health of Richard Thompson who provided ample funds for those attending to have a couple of beers each. That was a wonderful gesture from Richard as he lives in France and is unable to make GUZZLERS activities. A photo of us outside 'The Billet' was sent to Richard with our grateful thanks. Paul Burdon won the furthest travelled prize catching the last train back to 'Smoke' after we had finished drinking.

Barge Trip

The barge trip on SB Centaur to act as passenger crew for the Colne Barge Match from 9th – 11th September was in my view a spectacular success. You will find my account of the terrific long weekend

at the end of this GUZZLETTER. The photograph is of our GUZZLERS Dinner on board on the Friday night. Three of the Barge Crew were included in the meal.



Dates for your diaries in 2022

Winter Pub Night

We will meet up at The Mayflower on Tuesday 15th March 2022 at 2000

Den Day

Depending on the availability of the Den we will decide at our next Committee meeting for a suitable date depending of course on the tides.

Summer Pub Night

At the Crooked Billet Tuesday 26th July 2022 at 2000

Barge Trip

SB Centaur, The Colne Barge Match 2022, Thursday evening 1st September to pm Sunday 4th September. We have made a provisional booking for the 12 places and I will be soon sending out invitations for those who are interested to book their place, so make a note of the dates in your 2022 diary now. I thought that we got the arrangements pretty much right last year so take a look at my account below to see if you would like to take part in 2022.

AGM & Social Meeting

AGM Tuesday 4th October 2022 at The Den at 2000, this will be followed by a Pub Night at The Mayflower on completion of the AGM hopefully with a Zoom link.

Other related Group News

The Groups 90th Anniversary Dinner & Dance at The Boatyard on 20th November was really well attended, perhaps 150 mostly of young and very enthusiastic people attended. GUZZLERS with partners made up a table for 12 to add our presence to the proceedings. The meal was good and the company excellent. Short speeches were made by some worthy's, Les Davies, Group President welcomed everyone, a local Councilor congratulated the Group and an amusing 5 minute account by Dan Parsons (GSL) of the historic Den's mentioning those who in the past had made great contributions with time, notably the Boughton Smiths and their successors as Group Support. Sadly Sir David Amess was also due to attend the function. Vice President Colin Sedgwick and Lesley were seated at 'top table' but the others I didn't recognize. GUZZLERS got a mention but it was not the recruiting bonanza hoped for as we only managed to encourage Trevor Stone to put in his application to rejoin. The event was very well organized and a tribute to Marcus Dean, the head of Dauntless EDU for organizing it.

You must have all been moved to see that the 3rd CB Scouts lined the route into St. Mary's Church on 22nd November where David Amess was laid to rest. I cannot remember the 3rd CB ever appearing and being mentioned on the evening TV news before and also being in pictures in the national press. David

was often attending the Group's activities over the years in his position as the MP covering Leigh on Sea. Group Officers also attended the Memorial Service at Westminster Cathedral.

Colne Barge Match 2021

As you will know we were the passenger crew of SB Centaur for the Colne Barge Race Thursday 9th September – Sunday 11th September. There had been a number of withdrawals along the way for various reasons and others were press ganged but the crew was finally made up of Andy Clapham, Mick Wilkinson, (Andy's co owner of Calypso), Paul Cottrell, Keith Paxman, Neil Paxman, Mark Paxman (Neil's son), Will Green (Marks mate, an Assistant Professor of Urology or Assistant to the Professor of Urology depending if you believed Mark!), Steve Driscoll, Bert Frame, Jason Bennett (my son-in law) and me. Unfortunately Martin Bridges had to withdraw at the last moment due to illness.

I can say that the weekend absolutely surpassed my expectations and completely worth doing. Firstly we had an additional day, the whole sailing experience had purpose by witnessing the use of ancient standing and running rigging of a 1895 barge which maintained its historic way of sailing, being in a Match (not race we are informed!), tacking, reaching and running to demonstrate the difficulties that 'in trade' (this we learned was the expression to denote a working vessel), had. Great photographic opportunities occurred with the sight of 7 barges and 30+ gaffers in sail all at once during the Match. We had the enjoyment of meeting up with old friends having had no opportunity to meet up recently. The food was excellent, the beer & wine added to the enjoyment. The only minor downside was on Sunday as we made our way back to Maldon, hoping to do a bit more active crewing, we were in the doldrums all day, having to motor the final 5 miles. Whoever organised that should be sacked! That's sailing for you!

We all made our way separately to The Hythe, at Maldon on Thursday and met with Simon, the Mate, who was in attendance to welcome us and suggest which bunk we might like. Martin Blackett & Paul arrived with the provisions almost at the same time as Neil was unloading his purchases of 2 x casks of beer from Nethergate brewery for the bar: 36 pints of Suffolk County & 36 pints of Stour Valley.

Maldon Council no longer allow overnight parking, let alone for 3 days so the TSBT had arranged with Tesco Extra, to allow 4 cars to park in their car park, during our time away, at no charge and just over a half mile from Hythe Quay. Additionally Bert got the prime space at Hythe Quay and acted as a ferry when necessary, Great organisation by the TSBT.

I booked a table at The Queens Head, on The Hythe for 3 of us on the Thursday at 1900. Our crew was told that this could be extended so if they phoned the pub by using the code 'GUZZLERS' (of course) Ann will extend the size of the booking. All 9 of us turned up! After eating and a beer we made our way back on board. The bar was opened!

2100 – We had a Safety Briefing by the Mate & met Skipper Tony de Winter. This was important for Simon to deliver as part of his job, so we wanted to give him our support. As the beer was ready to pour we had a nightcap (!) and settled down for the night. Out pipes was at 2330. Secure for sea!

10/9/21 - 0200 – SB Centaur (Skipper + Mate and two volunteer Guzzlers) leave Hythe Quay under motor and anchored in the Blackwater while the other 8 were the weary sleeping passenger crew.

0500, Call the Hands, tea, breakfast, set sail in light winds, (all 5 sails intricately hoisted and set up, including the 'large' staysail) - then on passage to the Colne and Brightlingsea. A few going abouts & gybes were practiced to prepare for racing activity

1400 ish, on arrival at Brightlingsea, Bar open, lunch and anchored out in the trot. Some made up for lack of sleep during the lazy afternoon

1700 The barge boat was sent inshore with Skipper & Mate for the Match briefing at the Brightlingsea Sailing Club. They met up with Will Green, our 11th crew member and all returned afterwards by barge boat.

1930 GUZZLERS Dinner for 15, lamb shanks & lemon tart, (Photo above) all washed down with a selection of beers and wine. A superb meal cooked by all three Paxmans, (excluded from the photo as they were 'staff' and ate on the job) ending with a port toast in GUZZLERS glasses, then remembering specific absent friends, speeches and memorable tales on completion, settled down for the night ready for the big day. Out pipes at 0001.

Saturday 11/9/21 - 0500. Call the Hands! After embarking the 'Mainsheets man', (an extra skipper required by the organization), early morning tea, secure for sea, clear away and up sails for racing, prepare for the start! Will Green set to time the practice start in light airs (drifting!) then a 10 minute horn and 5 minute horn.....

0700 – Starting Horn & we are off! The Colne Barge Race commences with us in prime position for the award of 1st over the start line. (More later)

0800 – Breakfast as we sail, we are doing well, a good South Westerly to a mark off Clacton pier, then to the wind farm, another couple of marks & then we are headed up the Colne for the finish. There were three Sailing Matches running concurrently; Barges, Smacks & Bawleys which started at 0730 and other Gaffers at 0900. It was such a picturesque sight with the vessels which started after us overtaking but we were still making good way in the f3 or f4 and holding up quite well, the Skipper making strategic and economic tacks so we were not that far behind. As we were rounding one mark we had one feisty female crew in an open boat shouting 'Water!' But there really was loads of room for them to round the mark inside of us. However, they stalled, went about and spent 5 minutes recovering their track. Tough! Down below there was hardly a sign that you were under way so stable was the barge whilst sailing.

1150 SB Centaur crosses the finishing line, last of 7, yes, but as I stressed we experienced the longest sail. SB Centaur has the habit of coming well behind the others. On completion we anchored in the trot and were ferried ashore by barge boat for the dinner at the Brightlingsea Sailing Club.

1900 – The after race dinner, bangers & mash & apple pie, all part of the package, some had custard, some ice cream, me, I had both having lied to the kitchen staff that I was on a wager to get both. (See my book on how to nicely con others). The clubs bar was open and the boats whip covered the first two rounds. The presentation followed and we 'wos robbed'. The trophy for the first across the starting line was won by another barge which had a bowsprit and was going over the line sideways. We think the judges were biased and this vessel had masked out the true winner. At about 2100 we were safely ferried back on board by a tired Mate who had such a lot of trouble restarting the outboard which had been stuck about a foot in the mud as the tide receded from our position on the hammerhead jetty and was well knackered when the No.3 Paul had to give a hand. SB Centaur Bar was then 'Open'! More Port drinking and other efforts to consume the delightful beers Neil had provided.

11/9/21 – a leisurely 0800 for Call the hands! Then breakfast. Up sails then up anchor (manual Sunday morning exercise) in hardly a breath of breeze. Yesterday's had left us for all of the day so tea & cake, all varieties that people had had brought, stopped the monotony. We were hoping for a whiff of a breeze to come up but it was not to be. Bert got his hands on the wheel but quickly handed over to me for photos then Jason, who confided that it was a much more sensible activity than going below to try to finish off the beer! Lunch was served before we got to Maldon. We presented Tony, Simon & 3^d man Paul with a bottle of port each and professed our absolute pleasure for giving us the experience of the weekend. Tony in turn suggested that we had done our bit to make it a great weekend for them as well

1500 we arrived at Maldon, having had an hour 'Clean Ship' and then collect our cars, say final farewells before sadly dispersing.

We learned that in his 'yout' Keith Paxman had been a Mate on such vessels for a while and he reminisced that a Tate & Lyle barge that he was on was used to take a cargo of sugar to the Isle of Wight from the East Coast area.

As we had had such a good time we told Tony, at the time that we would donate £100, which was excess barge money, to the trust and on the back of that I was able to pencil in a booking of SB Centaur for 2022, all being well and said that If there is additional interest and more people want to go, SB Pudge, which is undergoing a renovation, could also be available Pudge is being modernised internally with a shower (!) and 6 x 2 man cabins and could be the charter of choice for 2023. Pudge will remain however all traditional on the outside.

All that remains is for me, on behalf of your committee, to wish you well for 2022, and send you all best wishes for a Christmas with your families as I hope that there will be no further restrictions. GUZZLERS activities will recommence in the New Year.

The Groups website <http://www.3rdcb.org.uk> contains up to the minute news. The GUZZLERS details are included and there is also access to recent GUZZLETTERS.

Register and keep track of the Guzzlers' activities by following our Facebook Group at facebook.com/groups/leighcreekguzzlers/.

Regards,

Stuart Clay
Secretary