

**LEIGH CREEK GUZZLERS ASSOCIATION**

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

01233 623732, email clay\_oldcleeve@ntlworld.com  
23<sup>rd</sup> November 2022

**GUZZLETTER NO 120**

*Dear GUZZLERS.*

I again say 'Hello' to all, and begin with my traditional welcome to another, GUZZLERS year. I hope that you are all well.

**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 '3<sup>rd</sup> 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 (do have a read of the details) from our Den / video meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2022. 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. Whilst visiting we did notice the recent addition of a rather large boat davit recently installed on Victoria Wharf to allow the vroom vroom to be hoisted inboard. GSL Dan Parsons kindly set up the Zoom facility for those in foreign lands to attend.



Since the last GUZZLETTER I have received a notice of Roy Salter's death. His funeral was on 22nd June 11am at St. Mary Virgin and Mother Church, Capel St. Mary and some GUZZLERS were able to attend. Messages of condolence and some recollections of their father were passed to Roy's daughters Julie & Kim. Frank Bentley's 1989 history of the 3rdCB records that Roy held a warrant as a Senior Scout Leader in the 1950's or early 60's, and latterly became a GUZZLER between 1990 and 2016 until ill health prevented him coming down and enjoying the GUZZLERS Pub nights in the Old Town. He also took part in adventurous training. Participating as crew for GUZZLERS annual boating trips to the near continent on the London Sailing Projects 'Rona', 'Helen Mary' & 'Merrlyn' and made many new friends during this time. An anecdote I remember Roy telling us; was that when he was running the older scouts, one escapade he organised was that as he had a car, he would blindfold his charges, take them out into the countryside at night and drop them off telling them to then find their way back to 'The Den' which at that time was the down platform at the Old Leigh Station. Maybe they had a compass but certainly no 'Sat Navs'. Such tests were considered fine activities for young men in those days!

Colin Waller reminisces that he used to see him often about the time he was courting his future wife. Before he was married Roy bought a new fangled washing machine, a twin tub I think, which he would hire out by delivering it to people's homes and collecting after use. Of course customers later bought their own machines. Shortly after he married he let me build an early Mirror Class dinghy in his garden at Ashingdon.

A letter of condolence from the Group was also sent to Roy's daughters Julie & Kim.

I have also received information Patrick Fairplay that Ian Bentley, who was a clergyman in the Kings Lynn diocese, passed away in July. Some of our members may have known Ian who was one of Frank Bentley's sons, but we had no further details.

**Your Secretary writes:-**

### **Social Meeting**

The Summer Pub Night at the Crooked Billet on 27<sup>th</sup> July took place but the weather was horrid. It must have been the only day it rained last summer! Attendance was understandably affected, some having given their apologies previously. We did have the chance to meet up and have a natter and a beer. Andy Bull coming from Plymouth won the most travelled prize easily beating Paul Burden 'training it' from London. Local Police were noticeable on patrol but that did not stop a very inquisitive fox from adopting the same patrol. Can't say that I have ever seen a fox in the Old Town before!

### **Barge Trip**

The barge trip on SB Centaur to act as passenger crew for the Colne Barge Match from 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> September was another spectacular success. You will find an account, this time from Robin Stephens of the long weekend at the end of this GUZZLETTER. The photograph, below, is of the GUZZLERS Dinner on board on the Friday night with Tony De Winter (Skipper) and Steve De La Salle (Mate) attending. We are suitably dressed in our Barge Match polo shirts organised by Bert Frame. Thanks to Paul Burden for the snap!



### **Dates for your diaries in 2023**

#### **Winter Pub Night**

We will meet up at The Smack on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2023 at 2000

#### **Den Day**

Depending on the availability of the Den we will decide at our next Committee meeting for a suitable date sometime in July depending of course on the tides. It is likely to be in conjunction with the Groups Open Day as planned for 2022. It would give us the chance to see all the new equipment in action.

#### **Summer Pub Night**

At the Crooked Billet on a Tuesday TBA in July 2023 at 2000

### **Barge Trip 2023**

The Colne Barge Match 2023 from Thursday evening 7<sup>th</sup> September to pm Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> September. We have made a provisional booking for the 12 places and I will be sending out invitations in the New Year for those who are interested to book their place, so make a note of the dates in your 2023 diary now. I think that we have got the arrangements pretty much right in the last couple of years so take a look at Robins account below to see if you would like to take part. The overall cost per head will increase (of course) and is will be in the region of £300+.

### **AGM & Social Meeting**

AGM Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2023 at The Den at 2000, this will be followed by a Pub Night on completion of the AGM hopefully with a Zoom link set up for those unable to practically attend..

### **Other related Group News**

See the attached invitation to attend The Groups 2022/23 Presentation Evening on the 4<sup>th</sup> February 2023 at 1900 at Leigh Road Baptist Church.

### **Colne Barge Match 2022 (Account by Robin Stephens)**

See full 'blog' with many photos:- <http://robinsbloggins.blogspot.com/2022/09/leigh-creek-guzzlers-colne-barge-match.html?m=1>

*For me, the opportunity to sail on a Thames Barge was a dream come true. To sail in an east coast barge match was wonderful, but to be able to do this with some of my closest and oldest friends, and fellow Leigh Creek Guzzlers was just perfect.*

*We sailed on the SB Centaur, which was launched in 1895 - a very fine old lady, owned and operated by the Thames Sailing Barge Trust out of Maldon, Essex.*

*We met on Thursday evening. After loading our kit onboard and being allocated our bunks, we had a fine meal ashore in the Queen's Head, followed by a few beers onboard.*

*Some of the crew mustered at 04:00 on Friday morning to slip and leave the river on the tide. Personally, I was one of the slackers who only emerged on deck once it was light, the sails were hoisted and there was a brew on the go! We had a wonderful day sailing out of the river Blackwater, up the east coast past Mersea Island to Clacton. The wind was a very pleasant Force 3 to 4. We were gently introduced to the technicalities of sailing a traditional sailing barge. After a splendid time at sea, we came into the river Colne off Brightlingsea and masterfully sailed up to our anchorage without using the engine. A magnificent meal onboard was enjoyed by all, followed by beers and a nightcap.*

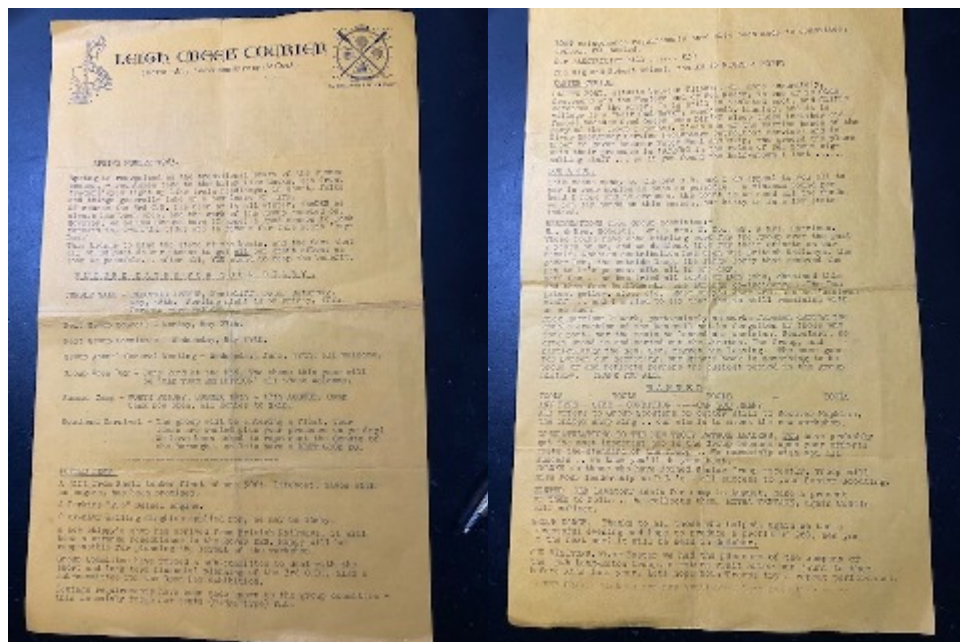
*Early on Saturday morning we had a fine breakfast, then went on deck to prepare for the Barge Match. In the river Colne there was a profusion of the most beautiful traditional sailing craft - barges, smacks, bawleys and various others. The wind was very light and the race start was delayed until a breeze came in. Jostling for the start line amongst so many lovely boats in a confined space was both magical and, at times, a little tense. Centaur steadily made her way towards the first mark as most of the rest of the fleet got away from us. We had a great time, but steadily the wind diminished and the tide turned to push against us, with ever reducing chance of us getting around the course. Poor Steve then had an altercation with a steel lee board winch handle, which was considerably harder than his nose. At that point we decided to retire from the race and get him off to hospital. Thankfully they were able to patch him up and he was waiting for us smiling, with a pint in his hand, at the Brightlingsea Sailing Club by the time that we got ashore for the prize giving supper.*

*There were a few sore heads on Sunday morning. After yet another fine breakfast onboard, we sailed off the anchorage, again without engine, and had another great day's sailing. We steadily made our way back to the Blackwater. Tony, the skipper, demonstrated his immense skill in sailing Centaur right upriver into Maldon. With absolute calmness, we reduced sail and tacked across the narrowing entrance to Maldon, dropping anchor close to the other moored barges to swing around then gently motored the final few feet to come alongside. It was a masterclass of seamanship, cool headedness and lifelong experience.*

*It was a truly splendid trip. Thanks to Tony and the crew of the Centaur, Stuart, Martin and Paul for organising everything, and for all my Guzzler shipmates for a marvellous time. I can't wait to go again!!*

Mike Riley has passed on this copy (below) of a 1963 Leigh Creek Courier, I will attach it for those with emails. It shows what a shoe string we operated with then! £60 needed for boat maintenance and £30 for the electric bill. Colin Sedgewick needs toilet seats for summer camp! How times have changed! Mike says:- We went places by ourselves, crossed the creek to bail old boats, had jumble sales to raise

a few pounds and prepared boats over winter for summer sailing. Now they have RYA instructors to teach, roar around in super ribs, have davits to launch, order boats 6 at a time and a DEN with heated his and hers loos in changing rooms. Ah!!



All that remains is for me, on behalf of your committee, to wish you well for 2023, and send you all best wishes for a Christmas with your families.

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/](https://facebook.com/groups/leighcreekguzzlers/).

Regards,

*Stuart Clay*  
Secretary