

# DRAGON NEWS



BRITISH DRAGON ASSOCIATION



2010

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## BDA AGM & ANNUAL DINNER

The 2018 British Dragon Association AGM and Dinner will take place on Friday 11th January 2019 at the Royal Thames Yacht Club, Knightsbridge, London. Please do come and support your Officers and the Association by arranging your dinner table and booking your tickets now. The evening will get underway with pre-meeting drinks at 18.00. The AGM will start at 18.30 prompt and dinner will be called at 20.00. There will be a cash bar for all drinks before, during and after dinner.

After dinner we shall present the Citron Trophy and have some short speeches. There will then be time for relaxed drinks before departure at 23.00. Dress is reefer jacket or lounge suit.

Tickets, which are the same price as last year, cost £48.50 per person for the dinner which is payable in advance and

preferably by bank transfer –

British Dragon Association, Lloyds TSB Bank plc, Sort Code: 30-00-08, Account No.: 03090827

Please reference your payment with your surname followed by AGM. Cheques, made payable to the British Dragon Association, will also be accepted. Cheques should be posted to the Honorary Treasurer, Bruce Boyd. Please reference your payment with your name followed by AGM.

To reserve your tickets or for further information please e-mail the Honorary Secretary at Britishdragonsec@gmail.com with confirmation of the number of tickets you require, the names of your guests, any special dietary requirements and confirmation of the date your bank transfer was made or your cheque was posted.

## SELECTED FORTHCOMING FIXTURES 2019

Regatta	Date	Venue	Contact
World Championships	3 - 9 January	Freemantle, Australia	www.dragonworldsfremantle2019.com
Grand Prix de Cannes	2 - 6 April	YC de Cannes, France	info@yachtclubdecannes.com
Easter Regatta Burnham	19 - 21 April	RCYC Burnham	burnhamdragons@gmail.com
XXIV H.M. Juan Carlos I Trophy	1 - 4 May	Cascais, Portugal	www.cncascais.com
Classic/Vintage Championships & Medway Regatta	26 - 28 May	Medway YC	patrick@kinnordy.com medwaydragoncaptain@gmail.com
Gold Cup	9 - 14 June	Medemblik, Holland	info@dragongoldcup2019.com
Dragon Grand Prix Germany	3 - 6 July	Kuhlungsborn, Germany	www.dracheklasse.de
Edinburgh Cup & Northern Championships	13 - 20 July	SCYC Abersoch	graham@pricey.uk.com
Lendy Cowes Week	10 - 17 August	Cowes	www.lendycowesweek.co.uk solentfleet@yahoo.co.uk
Scottish Championships	24 - 25 August	RFYC Edinburgh	cathy.ogden75@gmail.com
South Coast Championships	3 - 5 September	RLYC Cowes	solentfleet@yahoo.co.uk
East Coast Championships	13-15 September	Medway YC	medwaydragoncaptain@gmail.com
90th Anniversary Regatta	TBA	Monaco	www.intdragon.net
Grand Prix Spain	4 - 9 November	Puerto Portals, Palma de Mallorca	www.intdragon.net

# CHAIRMAN'S REVIEW

MY TIME IN OFFICE began with a lively debate at the AGM in January, where we said goodbye to Tim after two years of his steady hand on the tiller as Chairman and Selina after her hard work with the pen as Hon. Secretary. Many thanks to both of them for all they did in office.

Thanks to Chris for agreeing to step in as Hon. Secretary and Bruce for agreeing to continue as Treasurer. I am also immensely grateful to Simon for stepping into the role of Vice Chairman to fill the void created by the sudden lack of availability of the proposed AGM candidate and Owen and Josy for stepping back in to run the Cowes fleet to free Simon up.

The meeting raised some rather penetrating issues which the Committee are endeavouring to take on board and I am hoping we might have a slightly more peaceful run into the Annual Dinner this January.

I trust that you have enjoyed the increased media coverage on the website, Facebook and elsewhere due to the efforts of Emma at Fresh Approach. Many thanks to all of you who supplied news, video and photos and please keep them coming.

If you have not seen the TV footage of the Edinburgh Cup produced by VRSportsTV, please do have a look, particularly the excitement of the first day: <https://vrsport.tv/vr-media/70th-dragon-edinburgh-cup-2018>.

One can see from the media posts and the articles in this magazine that fun has been had at the various regional events, although the trend continues for these events to be supported in the main by local boats, except where tied in with the Edinburgh Cup. I do encourage you all to consider visiting events held by other fleets and certainly hope Aimee can do some more domestic travelling in 2019.

As you can read in Tim's report of the Edinburgh Cup this, our flagship event, continues to attract the best of British sailors and international sailors of a very high calibre together with the traditional Corinthian spirits popping in results and propping up the bar. It was

pleasing to see how they all had fun together at the various socials described by Tim.

Our GBR travellers continue to fly the flag on the International circuit in the shape of, among others, Andy, Gavia, Klaus, Grant, Jono, Ron and Julia and Mike and Monique, all doing enough events to figure through the range in the International Ranking List.

We wish Andy, Grant, Klaus, Rob and Simon well in the Worlds in Fremantle.

In these days of scarce sponsorship, I am grateful to the organisers of the various BDA events for keeping the costs of the events under control so that no call has been made on the BDA reserves to support the running of these events this year.

The Edinburgh Cup benefitted hugely from the benefactors within the fleet, with the result that cash was not often required of punters in the bar.

Your Committee has developed a set of Regatta Guidelines. They are designed to be flexible and the aim is to:

- give the BDA Officers and regatta organisers a framework for the issues that need dealing with at an event;
- avoid an assumption that the BDA will always hand out a given amount of cash to events, as had become the expectation;
- encourage the organising of BDA events in such a way as to break even.

We still have a healthy reserve as mentioned by Bruce in his



Treasurer report, which is largely due to historical Sponsors cash, which has dried up for the moment. We are conscious that it is prudent to keep some buffer for a 'rainy day' but that there is room to do that and still target some spending on projects that could help the promotion and growth of the Class.

With this in mind, we are planning a youth boat project for the 2019 Abersoch Edinburgh Cup. You may recall that the previous Chairman worked extremely hard on the concept of the BDA supporting a loaner boat. The potential spending requirement for this proposal was not approved in 2018 but, for a much lesser cost, we are looking at supporting the expenses of the provision of a Dragon for the event and some local racing before for the use of a youth team. The team will be chosen after a suitable trial, if as we hope, we can generate sufficient interest. We are grateful to Graham Price for agreeing to make Amazon available for such purpose and hope members will welcome this development.

If other Fleets have ideas for projects that might be worthy of BDA support in the interests of the Class, please do let us know.

The IDA, in its meetings, in October approved the UK as a venue for the Gold Cup in 2023. Both Abersoch and Torquay have shown interest in hosting a Gold Cup, but Abersoch are happy to let Torquay go ahead and run it. We will thus be asking the AGM to approve taking on this prestigious event. It will have been 10 years since we held the Worlds in Weymouth and so in a way it is 'our turn' to push the boat out and it gives us an opportunity to keep the UK on the Dragon map. 2023 is the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Edinburgh Cup and Gavia already has plans to make this a very special event in Cowes. It is hoped that the prospect of these events close together will attract a good size fleet and together with the media work Emma is doing, give us a good story to tell potential sponsors. Fortunately, Torquay is a relatively low-cost venue and the expectation is that a reasonably modest minimum sponsorship target is needed to produce a good event. A realistic sponsorship target could produce a spectacular

event. It is encouraging that the 2018 and 2019 Gold Cups have each achieved major sponsorship and your Committee will immediately begin focussing on this area for these events and the lead up to them, if we are given a mandate at the AGM to proceed with the Gold Cup.

Some of you may be interested to hear the IDA AGM voted to allow nations to issue personal sail numbers. In the case of GBR, this would need to be done outside the RYA system as they would still control the measurement certificate and sequential numbering. Such personal numbers can be allowed by permission of the BDA and the owner would have to seek permission at Regattas they attended to use that number. We have already had expressions of interest from several members and are working on a proposal as to how this could work to accommodate interested members and at the same time raise some additional funds for the BDA.

You may know that *Bluebottle* is in dire need of renovation. An exciting piece of news is that she is being restored in Cowes by David Heritage with the help of his son Will Heritage, *Aimee's* crew in the last few Edinburgh Cups. Upon completion she will join *Britannia* and the other Royal Yachts in Edinburgh. It is hoped she will be ready to be in the water during the Edinburgh Cup planned to be on the Forth in 2020.

On a personal note I am continually reminded of the reach of our international Dragon community. Whilst watching a Test match in Sri Lanka in November, Graham and I were kindly hosted to dinner at the amazing house of the captain of the local fleet, Pierre Pringiers. He took a couple of hours out to take us round the factories of the charity foundation he has set up to train local young people in all aspects of boat building: <http://www.bafk.org/en>. A very inspiring experience.

I look forward to catching up with those who can attend at the AGM and Annual Dinner in January and racing against and socialising with you in 2019.

Continue to enjoy your Dragon sailing!



# Review of the 70<sup>th</sup> DRAGON EDINBURGH CUP

The 70<sup>th</sup> Dragon Edinburgh Cup was held during the first week of July in Torbay, with the Royal Torbay Yacht Club hosting both the nationals and the warm-up South West Championships. Whilst the rest of the country wrestled with intense heat and drought-like conditions, the south west and particularly the area around Torquay was wet, sometimes windy and sultry.

An excellent Dragon travellers fleet were in fine fettle for this regatta and it's fair to say that we all enjoyed ourselves very much, obeying the Dragon mantra of sailing hard and partying harder. The many family boats and large number of ladies proved just how friendly the class is and how willing we are to travel far and wide to find a good party.

The full fleet of 28 boats had some tricky sailing conditions. Although Torbay is only four miles long and two miles wide, it provides some of the most testing racing. Some experts will tell you that if you only ever go right down the course, you'll be fine. Well, there were definitely times when it paid to go left, but making that call was always hard.

The fleet included past Dragon World and National Champions, Gold Cup winners and Olympians. The Corinthian sailors found that to beat some of these experts on the water was most

satisfying. It was delightful that a Corinthian boat won the Edinburgh Cup!

In the two day, six race South West Championships, the consistent GBR815 *Alfie* with Lawrie Smith crewed by Joao Matos Rosa and Tim Tavinor were the winners, with GBR782 *Aimee* helmed by Graham Bailey with Julia Bailey, Will Heritage and Will Bedford were runners up and Corinthian winners, whilst GBR682 *Ecstatic* with the evergreen Eric Williams helming and crewed by Rory Paton and Katie Cole came in a well-deserved third place, after some tight racing.

The excellent prize giving BBQ was generously hosted by our friends in the Abersoch fleet, who were busy promoting their running of the Edinburgh Cup in 2019. The wine flowed freely, the RTYC laid on an outstandingly good BBQ and we ate al fresco in the club's evening sun trap rear garden with a wonderful view over the bay. Geoff Butcher even managed to trip up the steps, drink in hand, without spilling a drop.

So onto the main event and the keen crews were out cleaning their hulls in the foul waters of the harbour quayside. The wind was up and the rain began; definitely oilies weather. No sooner had the starting gun fired than GBR770 Storm had to retire, sitting out the first two races. To be fair it was not their fault. They



were hit by a port boat amidships, the bows of the offending, though deeply sorry, boat breaking the boom and tearing the mainsail. Fortunately helm Jono Brown was awarded average points in the ensuing, friendly protest. Meanwhile the rest of us were having a wild time, with down-wind surfing providing many whey-hey moments. The subsequent four races took place in very much lighter airs and the RTYC race team led by Bill Butcher and aided by Dragon Race Officer Gill Smith, did an excellent job to get all the races in.

On Wednesday it was the turn of the Solent fleet to entertain us, or more specifically Gavia Wilkinson-Cox, who had taken a stunning five story house overlooking the bay and hosted another fabulous BBQ in the beautiful garden. The daily prize giving took place here and it was an emotional moment to watch Teresa and Mark present the magnificent Terry Wade Memorial Trophy to Grant Gordon, the winner of Race 4. Some of us tacked home along the winding Torquay roads that night. Thursday actually dawned bright and sunny; we were in for a phew, what a scorcher. Our turn Engerland! One race was got in during the morning and the crew's race was run during the afternoon, the talented young Leo Waschkuhn, proving a fortunate winner. Perhaps more entertainingly, it was the turn of the Irish fleet to provide the goodies during the evening prize giving. More accurately, Martin Byrne donated many Guinness and Gin vouchers to the guests. They changed hands

with alacrity and by the end of the evening your corishpondent wash well and twuly pished; but that was nothing compared to Nigel Cole who, forgetting how to tack home, managed a run the whole way. With many broaches. And the odd Chinese bride. Gybe.

Friday and the last race, with all to play for. We knew we had a wonderful prize giving dinner ahead of us but there was the small matter of a race to be won. Three teams were in the running; Graham Bailey in *Aimee*, with opposition from *Alfie* (Lawrie Smith) and GBR820 *Louise* (Grant Gordon). Mmm. *Alfie & Louise*; I feel a film coming on. Anyway, Graham had to win the race to win the trophy. And, dear reader, he did! Four up, including his wife Julia, the current BDA Chairman and two teenagers, Will Heritage and Will Bedford. Lot of will power on that boat, as Graham remarked. So ended a terrific competition. The final dinner together was a splendid affair, well stage managed and benefited hugely from the very generous Peter Cunningham picking up the entire drinks tab for us all. At the prize giving most boats managed to get some glassware. It was an inspired decision to return to Torbay after 14 years, to find the racing as keen as ever and the RTYC in very good order. It is to be hope we do not wait so long until returning there.

*Tim Wilkes*

# Report of 2018 ABERSOCH FLEET

What a fantastic summer, beautiful weather for sunbathing, but generally light winds or, as we say in Wales, generally Dim Windio or blowing dogs inside out – there's no Welsh translation on that one. Missing from action in club racing was of course the *Riddler*, now on his world drive about and unfortunately, Mike Budd didn't compete in his new V6, *Harry*, as he chose the open circuit to tune up.

However, Patrick Lomax stood up to plate after buying the *Riddlers* trusty boat, renaming it *Good Grief* and got good speed winning some club races and finishing highest Abersoch Corinthian at Edinburgh Cup. The other notable speedster was Nick Whipp who bought Mike Budd's old *Harry*, renamed her *Harryot*, and romped to the front winning several club series and the big one – the Northern Championships.

The first series was the Spring Regatta, setting the tone with great weather but light winds which cut the series short. But there was good racing with rest of the SCYC classes using separate Committee boat starts and the normal Windward Leeward courses.

The results of the early speedsters were Nick Whipp in *Harryot* winning with Davies and Saunders in *Vixen* second and Patrick Lomax in *Good Grief* third.

The seasons major event was next, the Northern Area Championships and again beautiful weather but Dim Windio. However, with careful management, a good Committee boat and a skilled PRO, six races were slotted in with only one being a lottery due to the conditions. Two boats showed consistent results – the 2017 Champion Paddy Atkinson in *Seafire* and Nick Whipp in *Harryot*. The Regatta went to the wire with *Harryot* winning the last race in the best wind of the series and taking the title with 7 points to *Seafire*'s 9 points and third was *Raissa*, Cope and Price, on 18. The new caterers at the club, Dave and Owi, put on a special dinner for the class, attended by over 60 people, to celebrate in style yet another good three days racing.

The next trophy was the Champagne Series. This was cut short by too much wind, but a result was found with the winner being *Vixen*, Davies & Saunders. Six boats were then due to go to Torquay for



Edinburgh Cup but unfortunately *Harryot* had to pull out leaving five to travel. Notable results were Mike Budd winning races in South Western areas but fading in the Edinburgh Cup and as mentioned Patrick Lomax finishing highest Abersoch Corinthian for the week. The fleet hosted a drinks and BBQ evening during the week to remind everyone that **next year's Edinburgh Cup and Northern Area Championships will be run out of Abersoch during the week of 13<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> July 2019.**

The second major event of the year, the Captains Cup, was sailed over three days in mixed conditions from light through to extremely windy weather. The series also incorporated the RNLI showcase race for the first time. Despite organising the course and the racing, the early pacemakers, *Harryot* and *Good Grief*, sailed to the wrong mark in race one and finished 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> respectively after returning to the correct mark. Drama unfolded in the extremely heavy weather RNLI race, won initially by *Harryot* who then retired due to a port starboard incident.

The Event was won by Tsunami, Colin Brereton, on 17 points with three boats finishing on 18 points - positions being decided on count back with *Harryot* second and *Raissa* third. The class celebrated a good regatta at a private party for all on the Saturday, now famous for Sara's sausages and Gwyneth's copious canapes which were still being consumed at Club the day after.

The final series of year, the Aberdaron series, was interrupted by gales on one of the weekends. However great racing was held over the Bank Holiday weekend with 9 races completed. The winners were *Raissa*, Price/Cope, in second was *Vixen*, Davies & Saunders, and third was *Good Grief*, Patrick Lomax.

The highlight party of the year was held in the Cove where an excellent meal was followed by the now traditional hilarious speech from Patrick Lomax who managed to deliver his view on each Abersoch Dragon in a way only he can. You need to attend with the other 70 guests to fully appreciate it.

Finally, the boats were taken out in early September and the Class is now busy organising the 2019 Edinburgh Cup and Northern. It will be the usual mix of fantastic racing in the beautiful bay together with lively social programme in the buzzing holiday village of Abersoch. But be warned, a bumper entry is expected and having had such a beautiful 2018 summer accommodation is being booked up, so get onto booking your entry and accommodation ASAP.

*Nick Whipp*

1. Third Crews race Edinburgh Cup, Mike Cope, Rob Eldridge. 2. Northern Champs 2018, Mark Greaves, Nick Whipp, Mark McDougal. 3. Dim Windio, race one Northern Championships 2018. 4. Harry - Mike Budd.



WHAT A SUPER SEASON of Dragon Racing on the River Medway. *The glowing white sand and Palm Trees have never looked better!*

We have had many wonderful days of sailing in warm air and brilliant Sunshine. We have barely had a day of sailing in the rain. Winds have been light and crews have had to sharpen their light airs sailing skills and techniques. The Medway continues to provide challenges, with strong tidal flows, mud banks and shallows lurking to snag the unwary.

The Medway Dragon Fleet has twelve boats in total, of which six to nine boats regularly compete each Saturday. We welcomed one new boat – *'Integrity'*, owned and driven by Howard Patterson and Bill Baker. We also lost *'Dax'* owned by Mike & James Lutener. They are now sailing a Cruising Yacht.

## Report 2018 MEDWAY FLEET

### Travelling to Regattas

This year a number of Medway Dragons competed in the UK and Europe. Three boats: *FLOS*, *Suti* and *Fit Chick*, went to Ostend to compete in the Belgian Nationals. *OCD* travelled to La Baule. In September: *Fit Chick*, *FLOS* and *Suti* competed in the UK Dragon Easterns at Burnham on Crouch.

### Social Events

We held a number of events, to which we invited members of other Club Classes to join us. We once again organised a Bingo & Supper evening. This was well supported and we enjoyed much fun and laughter. There were interesting sums of cash for the winners, and one or two guests went away happy with their winnings jangling in their pockets.

In the Spring, we held a Sunday morning walk, in and around Hollingbourne. A hardy group of Dragon Fleet hikers turned up early, in the crisp morning Sunshine. We climbed up to the top of the Downs and then walked along the Ridge Way, before descending. We enjoyed fantastic views of the Weald of Kent, as the air was clear, we could see right to the horizon. The route went down into the Valley and we somehow lost the path and ended up marching around the edge of a freshly ploughed muddy field, then crossing a main railway line and then, somehow arrived at the rear of Hollingbourne Station. We wearily returned to the 'Dirty Habit' Bistro Pub for well-deserved refreshments and a hearty Sunday Lunch.

### The ups and downs – Race Reports, Issues with Class and SI Rules, Staffing the Duty Schedule, Training Days

Every year we try to be innovative and do things differently. Sometimes things go well and other times not so well. As Class Captain I have focussed on improving engagement with the wider membership of the Medway Dragon Fleet (MDF). We have a large number of supporters and past Dragoners that we keep in contact with. They may not sail regularly with the fleet, but they are still an important part of our MDF 'family'.

During my Captaincy, we sought to increase involvement by communicating on a regular basis. After each Saturday (*when we have managed to race*), I published a 'Race Report' high-lighting how the day went, who did what and any other observations. This may be about the 'wild Life' we come across on the river, and sometimes details of less than friendly run-ins with local fisher-men, jet skiers and other marauders! Occasionally, I even manage to write an interesting and hopefully humorous piece.

Staffing the Dragon Duty Rota is potentially problematic, but it has been achieved successfully this year. All the Dragon Duty Days have been on a Sunday and we have covered twelve days of the Sailing Season. With the exception of one or two hic-ups, we have managed quite well. I thank all the Dragoners for turning up to do a duty. We do organise the Duty Rota on a per 'boat' basis. This seems to work



quite well. If you have not been allocated a duty day – *rest assured you will be in the 2019 Season.*

One of the successes of the 2018 season was the training weekend that we held on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> May. For the first time in probably ten years, we asked an external coach to join the Fleet and provide intensive coaching and training. We focussed on boat management, sail trimming and race technique. We engaged Martin Payne (Stavros) to come along to the Club over a Saturday and Sunday and run the training and coaching session, which he did very effectively.

We had an excellent combination of Class-room theory and on-the-water-practice. Bruce Boyd kindly provided his rib and enabled Martin to get up close to and observe each boat that took part. Over a series of short practice races, Martin was able to pin-point issues and make suggestions that helped each boat crew to climb their personal learning curves and improve performance.

### The AGM, Next Year and Change of Class Leadership

Next Year, we have indications that perhaps two new boats will come to the Club. Around six to eight Classic Dragons are expected to join us for the Medway Keel Boat Regatta, to be held at the end of May. Later, we look forward to hosting The Dragon Easterns in September 2019.

My last Duty as Class Captain will be at the AGM on 19th January, when I will hand over the leadership batten to a new Class Captain and Vice-Captain. I thank all members of the MDF for their support throughout my term. I also wish to thank Susan as 'Mrs Class Captain'. Without whose assistance and help, I would not have been anywhere near able to keep on top of all the emails and things to do. My thanks also go to Bruce Boyd and Pepita Ratnage for supporting me, and being there, in the absence of a Vice Captain.

*David Harris*

# The Brown's Swiss Adventure

In 2017 David, Jono and Fred went off to Switzerland for the Dragon Europeans while I was off in one of my trekking adventures. Being the lovely wife and mother that I am I duly arranged their travel, accommodation, entry and everything they might possibly need and prepared a fool-proof guide to the event in a lovingly prepared instruction folder.

The 'boys' apparently did not listen when I ran through the arrangements, or even hear me detail the contents of the folder. Other than throw said folder onto the back seat of the car, its entire existence seems to have been shrouded in mystery...

They subsequently ad-libbed and bluffed their way through the entire trip and when, on the last day, they suddenly found out they needed to pay for their accommodation in cash, slight panic set in.

They had wrongly assumed I'd already paid and of course, if they had listened to the pre-trip briefing or even looked into the folder, they would have been aware of the existence of an envelope marked 'CASH PAYMENT FOR ACCOMMODATION' and stashed with 2,000 Swiss francs.

So off they trundled to find cash machines to assemble the required payment. They soon realised that the maximum of 100 francs per withdrawal transaction would swallow

every debit and credit card they had between them if used too often so ended up visiting every cash machine in Thun to put together 2000 francs.

Anyway, that is a long story to explain why we had 2,000 Swiss francs to either re-exchange in England at a huge exchange rate loss or use when next in Switzerland.

So, this year David and I left Medemblik after the Dutch nationals and headed south to San Remo for our next event thinking we would take the scenic route through, yes you know already, Switzerland.

I had booked a hotel on the edge of Lake Lucerne for our halfway stopover and had been assured that there was lots of room to park our car and boat. No one really gets that do they? Can we park our boat? Sounds such a simple request until they see the Dragon.

So far so good, except the journey had taken longer than we expected, it was getting dark, it was late, David had been driving for nine hours, we were getting low on fuel and we were both getting irritable. We had to drive through the centre of Lucerne to find the hotel which was on the far side of the lake. I do hear Lucerne is a beautiful city.

The parking space for the car and Dragon at the hotel was woefully small and right on the edge of a main road and some distance from the hotel so, heads in hands, we bailed

and drove back around the lake intending to stop at the next hotel we came across.

That was when the excitement really started. Having escaped Lucerne we were met on the road by roadworks in the pitch black, with workmen waving neon batons directing traffic. 'Which road' David asked to which I replied something along the lines of 'not sure actually' (insert your own text here as you wish) so we just picked a lane and carried on and on, and up and up, and the road got narrower and narrower, and steeper and steeper, and each bend after relentless bend became increasingly more difficult to navigate. 'We don't want to be on this road' I said helpfully and the realisation that "there was no way of turning our car and Dragon combo round and no way other than forward" sank in with a feeling of our being in deep 'do do'. The headlights behind us were gaining in number with every turn and snaked out eerily behind us and still we climbed with each turn becoming tighter and tighter. The on-board computer was shouting 6 miles to the gallon and the Sat Nav altitude reader was rising and rising until we were suddenly at 5,000 feet and the sign in front of us read 'Welcome to Ski Resort Andermatt'. Well, sometimes life just throws you moments to treasure.

We took a turn signposted to the village centre and drove into an extremely pretty ski village, passing ski lifts and a cable car station until we stopped outside the Ski Club Hotel.

We certainly weren't going back down the mountain in the dark and we were tired, hungry and more than a little confused, so I got out of the car into 4 degrees wearing shorts and tee shirt and walked into the reception of the hotel. I explained that we had taken the wrong road and

didn't actually mean to be there, but did they have a room for the night please. I then tried to explain that we also needed to park our car and trailer, only to be met with blank expressions. 'Ah ok', I said, 'come with me I'll show you'.

The owner followed me outside and she looked at the car and the Dragon and then back at me and then at the Dragon again and said nothing – then she put her hands on her hips and said – and try to read the next comment in your mind using an Allo Allo type accent - 'Oh, you aff a sheep' I just replied 'yes, we do indeed have a ship'. Well what would you have said!!

Two Scottish chaps drinking and smoking outside the hotel joined in at this point 'don't think you meant to be here did you' they chortled.

We manoeuvred the Dragon into a parking area trying to make it look as inconspicuous as possible, a feat we failed at miserably if the people taking photos of it the next morning were anything to go by. There was quite a crowd waving us off after breakfast...



The Brown's and Storm at this year's Edinburgh Cup



Views from the 2017 Europeans

# Dragon Fleet Report

## BURNHAM-ON-CROUCH



The 2018 season for Dragons in Burnham was a busy one. Of the British Fleets, we start earlier in the year and finish later, racing both Saturdays and Sundays. The fleet was up in number for the second year in a row with two new entrants *Anarchy* and *Dax*, Chip Cole returning after a break of 30 years and David Smith a Dragon newbie.

The first Dragon news the Burnham fleet can look forward to in any new year is the performance of Rob Campbell in the Prince Phillip Cup – the Australian National Championship. Rob improved on his 2017 third place finish to move up to second behind the amazing Gordon Ingate.

Mark and Mandy Wade in *Avalanche*, much to their surprise, picked up the Citron Trophy at the very well attended BDA AGM and Dinner in Knightsbridge in January. It hadn't been on their mind that they were in contention for this trophy, so genuine delight at winning for the first time.

Fourteen boats raced for the Royal Corinthian Yacht Club Easter Trophy with the event schedule reduced to three days, allowing for some family time on the Bank Holiday

Monday. Mark Wade in *Avalanche* won on countback with crew Mandy Wade and Nigel Cole.

The Spring Series saw twelve boats participating in the series with up to ten racing at any one time, and race wins shared amongst five different boats. Racing from the Royal Burnham Yacht Club at Whitsun was a small fleet of four while a number of teams made their annual trip to La Baule. The Whitsun racing was tight with four races and four race winners – *Avalanche* victorious overall.

Into the Summer Series and the numbers racing drop slightly as some boats travel; however the racing was always entertaining, with great camaraderie amongst the fleet and most boats sailing regularly with boys and girls on the crew. It was encouraging to see new crews being blooded regularly, increasing our pool of sailors familiar with the ways of the Dragon.

The social side has been strong, with Dragons joining the Royal Burnham One Design Fleet for an up river picnic, party and Hog Roast in July. In August, a small but friendly delegation of Dragon sailors from Bodrum,

Turkey, experienced racing in the confines of our river and the excesses of our annual summer party where they were our guests. We look forward to a return trip in the future.

Burnham Week was a sunny affair with twelve entries. Counting three third places, Dan Wastnage in *Sabbatical* with Harriet Davies and Mark Hart took the Bank Holiday prize. The top spot, for the week overall, was won by Rob Campbell, Katie Barr and others in *Quicksilver VI*.

The Royal Corinthian Yacht Club played host to a home fleet of nine, and three very welcome visiting boats from the Medway, for the 2018 edition of the East Coast Championship. We were pleased to be the best attended regional championship not immediately preceding the Edinburgh Cup. Great competition was had in six races over two days with *Avalanche* again picking up the silverware.

Our travelling boats this season were *Storm*, *Scorpio*, *Avalanche*, *Flame Again*, *Ganador*, *Quicksilver VI*, *Pageboy XI*, *Hands Off*, *Danish Blue* and *Dublin Bay*. Dragon venues visited by our fleet members this

year included Metung (Australia), La Baule, Deauville, Ostend, Cork, Cowes, Cannes, Medemblik, San Remo and Torquay. Jono Brown in *Storm* picked up a good second place in La Baule and was top Corinthian at both the Grade 1 San Remo Grand Prix and Regates Royale in Cannes. Poul Hoj Jensen in *Danish Blue* picked up a second in Deauville. Noddy and Katie Cole crewed Solent legend Eric Williams to victory in Cowes Week.

Sadly we lost our friend and Dragon sailor Martyn Fogg (GBR597 *Hat Trick*) who succumbed to cancer in September. 'Foggy' was the epitome of the amateur club racer, from the Corinthian backbone of the Dragon class. Rarely travelled, but always on parade at home.

As our season extends into November we look forward to our travellers returning to swell the fleet and round off a busy year. Many thanks to all involved in organising sailing in Burnham this year.

Andrew 'Noddy' Norden





Tschuss

# Review of 2018 CLASSIC & VINTAGE DRAGONS

## Classic Dragons

The Classic scene in Britain has continued to evolve slowly. There are about 50 Classic Dragons whose whereabouts are known to me in Britain or which have British owners. These range from Ivan Bradbury's highly successful *Blue Haze*, competing in major events, mostly in France, down to some whose future is highly uncertain, and which may indeed have rotted away without my knowledge. Could I make a plea to all BDA members to tell me about any Classics whose whereabouts they know so that I can keep the Class's records up to date.

A number of boats have changed hands and are now more likely to reappear in commission. *Monica* (GBR449), a 1964 Borresen boat, has been bought by Ian Gould. *Karen II* (GBR377) and *Whirlwind* (GBR359) have both been bought by Joe Irving or his friends on the Humber and are now being restored. I believe that *Polly* (GBR 11), but actually a 1966 Borresen) has finally been found a home in which to repair the damage caused by a falling tree. I hope that we will see these boats in action next year. Much of this development has been brought about by the irrepressible Tim Street, who has used exceptional energy and contacts to achieve it.

## Vintage Dragons

The position of the Vintage boats is slightly different. There were about 140 UK sail numbers issued between the date of the first GRP boat and 1993. However, there are now only below 50 known to the BDA and it isn't clear where many of the others are. While the Classic boats may well sit in barns awaiting an optimistic restorer the same incentives aren't really there for the GRP boats so it is a mystery.

There continues to be some development of a racing circuit for Classics and Vintage boats. Some of the events are restricted to them. Others such as Aldeburgh Week

and Burnham Week have strong representation and can be considered in the same group, while the Royal Forth fleet is very largely Classic or Vintage. In the Solent a select group of Bill Daniels (*Mistress*), Adrian Green (*Aurora*), Tim Street (*Tschuss*) and the visitor Mark Dowie (*Wanderer*) held three events at Yarmouth, won by *Mistress*, Cowes Classic Week, won by *Mistress* and at Hamble Classics won by *Tschuss*. The Household Division regatta was unfortunately cancelled due to a gale.

The BDA Classic and Vintage Championships took place at Aldeburgh in June. *Basilisk* helmed by Patrick Gifford with Tom Stewart and Martin Spall won the event easily and took the Vintage Championship from *Panther*. *Harkaway*, helmed by Tim Hannon with John Chalker and John Bourke, narrowly won the Classics, needing to finish ahead of *Kestrel* with her mast in an unusual position to secure overall victory. In total six boats took part - three Classics and three Vintage.

In unrestricted events, *Basilisk* won Aldeburgh Week, and *Scorpio* (Ian Gray) and *Sabbatical* (Daniel Wastnage) were consistently among the leaders in the Burnham fleet. The Scottish fleet's contingent of Classic and Vintage Dragons competed with some success against Richard Leask in his much newer *Kestra II*. Meantime *Full Speed* (Martin Payne) campaigned near the front of several Continental European events and Mark Dicker took *Rackham* to the Belgian Championship to finish fourth.

It is clear that both Vintage and Classic boats can be pretty competitive, certainly at Club level, often at National level and occasionally in the IDA's top events. Because the Dragon is a relatively heavy boat and generally very well built in a highly competitive class these boats do last very well if properly looked after. They can also be revived at some expense and overall they offer cheap and highly enjoyable racing. Let's hope that the gentle revival of 2018 can gather pace next year.

# and it all happened in ALDEBURGH

It's been a good year for the Aldeburgh Dragon fleet. Most of the focus was on the Classic and Vintage Championships and the Aldeburgh Regatta.

Eight Dragons started in the Regatta this year, it should have been nine, but with a new member of team *Kestrel* due at any time during the Regatta, she stayed on her mooring. Isaac Lingley was born the week before the regatta as it happened, and his father managed to get some Laser sailing in!

The racing for the week was dominated by Patrick Gifford in *Basilisk* who started with two clear cut wins on Sunday and the unusually scheduled Orford Day on Tuesday. He fell from grace on Wednesday by erroneously answering a recall signal and then never managing consistently to re-establish his position.

The race was won by Mike Hayles in *Naiad* from Tim Hannon in *Harkaway* who had led for most of the race. Thursday and Friday again fell to Patrick though his win on Friday was a scrambled affair.

On handicap *Harkaway* won easily with a score of 5 points. *Basilisk* was second with 9. *Harkaway* continues to be hard to beat, especially with a shiny new mast!

Next year we will be running a Dragon open on the 1st and 2nd of June, following on from the success of this year's Classic and vintage Championship, but this time with all ages of boat (and crew!) welcome. Please consider coming to join us....racing on the river is a different challenge to where most Dragons are sailed, and our socials are always entertaining!

Momentary Lapse of Reason



Wanderer



Harkaway

# The 2018 BDA EAST COAST CHAMPIONSHIP

Twelve boats competed for the 2018 BDA East Coast Championship hosted by the Royal Corinthian Yacht Club, Burnham on Crouch on the weekend of 15/16 September; the last of the British Dragon Association 2018 regional championships.

Under the stewardship of PRO Edwin Buckley and his team on *Phoebe*, six scheduled races were completed in a variety of conditions. Race One saw Ian Gray and his crew of Alex Burnett and Rene Nel in *Scorpio* establish an early lead and take the first bullet. *Ganador* with Martin Makey on the helm, Tim and Teresa Wilkes crewing, showed a great turn of speed to win Race Two before team *Avalanche* Mark, Mandy and James Wade won Race Three. The overnight leader, without a race win, was *Beauty and the Beast* steered by RCYC Commodore, Peter Marchant, with crew Katie Cole and James Howard, counting two third places and one second place.

Sundays first race, Race Four in the series, was well won by Chip Cole, David Smith and Rob Drumgold on *Anarchy*, keeping them very much in the hunt for the overall win with *Avalanche*, *Scorpio* and *Beauty and the Beast*. The intensity of competition turned up a notch for Races Five and Six and

it was the battling Wade family in *Avalanche* who got the better of *Anarchy* in Race Five to record their second race win, before going on to hound a determined *Beauty and the Beast* downwind in race six. Although *Beauty* held off that challenge to win the race, the second place for *Avalanche* was enough to take the championship from *Beauty* by a single point, with *Anarchy* one point further back in third. *Avalanche* also retained the Corinthian trophy they won in 2017 ahead of *Anarchy* in second and *Ganador* in third.

Race winners, and a few lucky others, received beanies and neck gaiters kindly donated by Essex Embroidery and Print – useful as the season in Burnham continues deep into November. Petticrows, the leading builder of International Dragons globally, opened the doors to their workshops on Saturday evening to show off the latest V6 Dragons in production and reveal a few details of how they make a thoroughbred racing yacht.

Events like these do not happen without a huge contribution from a team of volunteers who run craning in/out, competitor registration, race management, mark laying and trophy presentation. During the prize giving, the fleet



showed their appreciation to all those that helped make the weekend a success including the popular and professional team at the Royal Corinthian Yacht Club.

Anyone interested in racing Dragons at Burnham on Crouch can email the Burnham Fleet Captain [burnhamdragons@gmail.com](mailto:burnhamdragons@gmail.com).

*Andrew 'Noddy' Norden*

Overall			
1 <sup>st</sup>	Avalanche	GBR 722	Mark Wade, Mandy Wade, James Wade
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Beauty and the Beast	GBR 746	Peter Marchant, Katie Cole, James Howard
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Anarchy	GBR 825	Chip Cole, David Smith, Rob Drumgold
Corinthian			
1 <sup>st</sup>	Avalanche	GBR 722	Mark Wade, Mandy Wade, James Wade
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Anarchy	GBR 825	Chip Cole, David Smith, Rob Drumgold
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Ganador	GBR 704	Martin Makey, Tim Wilkes, Teresa Wilkes

Full results can be viewed at <https://royalcorinthian.co.uk/result/2018-5-1046-0>



# SOLENT FLEET

## Report

SUMMER 2018 was the year for 'leaving the oilskins ashore' and slapping on more sunscreen. Here on the Solent the season was hot and sunny, with light winds.

### Kicking off the season

A Solent spring can be cold, wet, and windy and some races are generally lost to too much wind, but this spring some races were lost because of flat calms!

The regulars made an early showing: the Spring series was won by *Furious* followed by *Supremacy* and *Bertie*. (*Supremacy* is now co-owned by Richard Cullen and Andrew Millband who have been enthusiastic regulars this year. They have recently purchased *Dark & Stormy* a much newer boat.)

In early June we start the Mid-Season Series, and the tropical weather continued. Fortunately we did get a bit more wind; even a force 5 one day - my kind of sailing! As usual, as the season progressed, more boats brushed off the cobwebs and joined the racing. This series was dominated by *Bertie*, who sailed a faultless series; followed by *Furious* and *Supremacy*.



### Summer in the Solent

July sees the start of the Summer Series, which takes us up to Cowes Week, which was won by *Furious*, followed by *Bertie* and *Aimee*.

The summer series is always interrupted by the Edinburgh Cup. Six boats from the Solent Fleet went to Torquay to fly the Solent flag. *Aimee* were deserved winners of the Cup yet again. But the competitiveness of our fleet was highlighted: four Solent boats were in the top eight.

The South Coasts were hosted by the CCYC on 21-22 July. The weather was gorgeous, and we managed to run all 6 races in the very light conditions. The race team at CCYC led by Richard Palmer did a fantastic job.. Six windward / leeward races and an excellent dinner at RORC- what else could you ask for? The racing was close with *Jerboa* beating *Aimee* on count back, with *Bertie* in a close third. Particular thanks to Jolliffes Chandlery for their very generous sponsorship.

### The Cowes Week racing (and partying)

For those of you who have come to Cowes Week in the past there has been a huge improvement in the course setting technology, and the introduction of professional support for the race teams so, the courses are now excellent.

The Dragons were a little disappointed in turnout with some of our usual visitors absent, due to inconvenient things like Weddings and Birthdays, but the competition was outstanding as usual. It's a 8 day stretch so stamina and consistency are crucial. The Morgan family's *Christianna* laid an early marker by winning the first two races but *Ecstatic* was hanging on with two second places. As the week went on other players intervened with wins for other boats including *Bertie*, *Full Speed* and *Sankher*, but *Ecstatic* and *Christianna* were definitely the ones to watch with *Jerboa* still keeping her hopes alive.

As the racing was hotting up our long hot Summer broke, and we had some less clement racing conditions. The weather turned dangerous on the Friday with a race completed in winds gusting to 42 knots. Fortunately all of the Dragon fleet made it home safely, sadly others were not so lucky.

Nail biting stuff: Going into the final race on Saturday there were still 3 boats who could win the week. *Ecstatic* had a small points buffer as *Christianna* and *Jerboa* had retired in the survival conditions on Friday. *Ecstatic* won the last race sealing their victory. Congratulations to Eric Williams, Katie Cole, and Noddy Norden for a hard fought win. Eric should be used to it as this is his 10<sup>th</sup> Cowes week victory (according to Yachts & Yachting) but I think that Eric has won it more often than the press are crediting! [Fake news].

Cowes Week isn't just about the sailing of course, and we had a lovely barbeque dinner on the Sunday night at RORC. Eric and Mary Williams Dock Party alongside their lovely motor boat *Harmony* with a SIGNIFICANT infusion of Gin and Tonic, generously supplied by Fever Tree that Gavia had sourced. So... it was rather a good party. Many of the Dragon family and friends turned up for the Party, including the crew of *Winsome*, and we were sinking the dock at times! There were some very fragile heads on the race course next day.

### ... there is life after Cowes Week

After Cowes Week we drew breath with a couple of weekends off. club racing started again on the first week in September with the late series which takes us to the end of September. The weather settled down once more and we had some of the best sailing of the year; warm with wind. *Furious* won the series, with *Supremacy* in second and *Fanfare* in third.

In parallel to our Dragon series, the keelboat racing is divided into 'round the cans' racing and six weekends dedicated to the Cowes Keelboat Championship, which is a chance to participate in windward / leeward races on the Bramble Bank; with two races a day. *Furious* managed to win this series with *Bertie* in second and *Aimee* in third.

Counting all races through the season the Championship was won by *Furious*, followed by *Bertie* in second and *Supremacy* in third.

Overall this was a very clement season which allowed some of us to perfect their light wind skills and suntans.

Owen Pay

# Dragon Report

## SCOTTISH FLEET ON THE FORTH

OUR SMALL BAND of Granton harbour based Dragons has had a very full racing programme this year along with some historical landmarks for the club. The Royal Forth Yacht Club celebrated it being 150 years since it was founded as the Granton Sailing Club. It is pleasing that Dragons have been based at Granton for more than half the life of the club and *Solan* K65, our oldest local boat, is now 80 years old.

Our patron, HRH The Princess Royal, helped us celebrate the 150th anniversary event and the Dragons all took part in a 'Parade of Sail' and were able to fly spinnakers as we passed HMS *Archer* to take the royal salute. Many of our fleet were able to be present earlier in the clubhouse to each meet Princess Anne and she was very entertaining and perceptive with shared tales of sailing experiences.

Our other big celebration event at the club was a 150th Anniversary regatta in late June which was held in perfect conditions with a steady Westerly and warm sunshine for the whole event. Three of our Dragons raced in a mixed fleet but held their own very well with Richard Leask and his crew winning 4 of the 6 races in the hotly contested Dayboat fleet. Placed 5th was *Wizz Too*- Helen Horsfall and Henry Boyd with *Kismet*, Cathy Ogden and Sheena Kerr in 6th. In addition to the regatta there was a dinner dance held in the Royal Scots Club. The very long history of Dragon sailing in the club meant the room was full of old and new Dragon sailors and I am pleased to say the dragon fleet held its own on the dance floor and were very much last to leave.

Our racing programme ran through the year from April until October this year and was extensive with 21 evening points races, 32 Saturday points races, 4 regatta events and 7 other trophy events. The club prize-giving held on 17th November featured prizes for 4 out of the 5 Dragons in the fleet and a lot of the silverware going to

one Dragon in particular as *Kestra* - Richard Leask, Vanessa Leask and Willie Adams have been consistent and very competitive all season, in all weathers.

Our Scottish Dragon championship was run alongside other classes as part of a One Design weekend. We enjoyed a 2 day race program, cramage, pontoon berthing, race team support and kept all the crews fed, watered, entertained and finally rewarded. Four races were held on the Saturday with a gusty south easterly breeze

varying from 14 knots to 24 knots which caused damage to both boats and some competitors. As the PRO elected to set short and sharp windward/leeward courses of approximately 45 minutes in length it proved important to get on and off the line quickly. In the end *Kestra* mastered the conditions better than most to generate 4 bullets with the *Kismet* team of Cathy Ogden and Sheena Kerr who were always in very close contention gathering up four second places.

Light winds with an east coast drizzle welcomed in Sunday with the PRO starting and abandoning race 5 before giving in to the wind gods and

bringing the week end to a close without any further racing.

Congratulations go to Richard Leask, his daughter Vanessa and Willie Adams who retained the Scottish Dragon Championship title for 2018; *Kismet* - Cathy Ogden and Sheena Kerr were placed second with Peter Cooke in *Meteor* in third.

Our 2019 season is in the planning and proposed dates for our Scottish Championship are 24th and 25th August. This will coincide with the last weekend of the Edinburgh Festival and the end of the Festival Fireworks concert is on the Monday 26th, so I hope you can join us.



1. Rob Brown and Dorothy Pollett at the RFYC 150th Anniversary dinner. Photo: Denise Thomas
2. Vanessa Leask at the RFYC 150th Anniversary dinner. Photo: Denise Thomas
3. *Kismet* and *Wizz Too* close racing at the RFYC 150th Anniversary regatta. Photo: Dr Charles Morton
4. HRH The Princess Royal visiting RFYC and meeting members in the clubhouse. Photo: Fleet Regional Photographic Office (North)
5. Scottish Dragon Champions 2018, *Kestra*-Richard Leask, Vanessa Leask and Willie Adams. Photo: Cathy Ogden

# SOUTH WEST FLEET REPORT

Numbering 1 at Falmouth – maybe 2 with Echidna

*Snap* is still the only Dragon racing at Falmouth Week. We did send e-mail invitations and a movie clip, to all of the S.W. people to join us, but no interest I'm afraid.

As a fellow Classic racer, I am in touch with Tim Street on a regular basis, but he concentrates on building up the Classics on the Solent and doesn't have time to travel... although he would welcome us there.

Tim has introduced me to Joe Irving who has made 'Merithe, a beautiful reproduction of a carvel built P and T. (See pic below). I will be visiting Joe soon at his workshop under the Humber bridge.

I recently spotted a wooden-sparred classic Dragon on a swinging mooring at Flushing. Her name is *Echidna*.. so, if anyone knows who she belongs to, that would be useful. I am trying to contact the owner via Falmouth Harbour.

So rather than travel to join the already popular locations, we are wedded to staying at Falmouth and allocating our limited time to building some interest in the class via our efforts with *Snap*

With the new deck and new ribs, she became a different boat, and, seemingly, quite competitive, getting us a first last year, and a second over the whole week.

Not so good this year, due to illness of regular crew, although we got a second and a third. We had a really great replacement crew, but we didn't have time to establish sufficient liaison for managing the kite... which cost us minutes and places.

However, we are having lots of kite practice, and hope for good results next year.

We seem to be getting a bit of attention in the area, so think it best to raise the profile of the class by getting the best possible results at Falmouth. Our replacement crew normally sails on the Solent and Aldeburgh and was very impressed by sailing conditions in Carrick Roads, particularly the amount of space, absence of other traffic... the quality of light and, of course, the beauty of the location.

We have also taken a couple of people out on our 'Try a Dragon' initiative...(see attached), so hope to be gradually getting some renewed interest in the Class.

Anyone who might be interested in joining us at Falmouth in 2019 would be made very welcome.

**Great sailing in Carrick Roads and in the Bay. Great restaurants, pubs, beaches and surfing for the crews and families.**

**Travel at night when M5 is empty**



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## Report from YOUR TREASURER

Season's greetings to all members, I hope you have had great sailing in the fantastic weather we have all enjoyed this year.

When writing here last year, I was faced with the tricky situation of attempting to balance the budget of the 2018 income and expenditure account. The loss of approx. 30% of previous years' annual income was a bit of a challenge. The Committee's proposal at the January AGM to increase membership subs by an unprecedented 40% was therefore a bit a tough call. Yours truly had the dubious pleasure of proposing the increase to the AGM. In retrospect I probably should have been wearing a hard hat on the day, as there was fierce opposition from one or two members. Anyway I was pleased that the vote was carried by a substantial majority. At the time there was a risk that we might lose more than we gained. However it is good to see the increased budgeted income has been achieved. This has gone a long way to offsetting the loss of income.

During the year we have seen a move to encourage organisers running events to become less dependent on BDA support. This initiative has been driven by Julia with a great deal of success. It has also had a considerable impact on our 2018 accounts.

Currently your Committee is looking to hold the 2023 Gold Cup in UK, subject to ratification at the 2019 AGM. Well that's light years

away, so why worry about that? This is one of the most prestigious events in the IDA calendar and has a big requirement for a lot of cash. It's on a par with the 2013 Worlds that we held at Weymouth. That event had to fund £133K of expenditure, although it could have been held for considerably less on an 'austerity' basis.

Even on an austerity basis with our limited funds as backstop support at a level to be approved by the AGM, this will be a considerable challenge to the organisers. If the AGM decides to go ahead with this event, the Committee will be seriously focussing on achieving major sponsorship for and leading up to the event. This does not seem to have been a problem for Finland in 2018 and Medemblik in 2019.

Subscriptions for to 2019 will probably remain unchanged for those paying by direct debit (DD). At the January AGM I will be proposing that the premium for paying subs by any alternative means to DD will be increased. Also, if a member defaults on a DD draw-down or cancels a DD mandate, the right for reinstatement will be lost. I will also be proposing reduced fees for Classic Dragons and crewing at Classic events.

I look forward to seeing you at the 2019 AGM in January.

*Bruce Boyd*

# RIDING FOR HELP FOR HEROES



The author standing in front of the line of trees representing Forgans Trench, the site of Lt John Barrett's VC winning action

The cycling over the next few days took us to many sites of the war. We held poignant services to remember the fallen at several memorials, including Thiepval. We visited the magnificent Canadian Memorial atop of Vimy Ridge, entailing a hard climb on our bikes.

THE TERENCE CUNEO PICTURE ABOVE is of Lieutenant John Cridlan Barrett, The Leicestershire Regiment, winning his Victoria Cross at Pontruet in September 1918. As an impressionable young boy I can remember gazing up at the heroic subaltern, Webley service pistol blazing as he charged down upon an enemy machine gun post. It inspired me then and it inspired me during my army service, in what was left of the same county regiment. It was natural to me that one day I should therefore make the pilgrimage to the very spot where Barrett enacted that charge.

Early in 2017 I was chatting to a fellow Leicestershire veteran, my friend the late Major Julian Pollard, about whether or not after ten years we would still be capable of emulating our bicycle ride in 2008, when we were part of the inaugural Big Battlefield Bike Ride, set up to raise money for the then newly formed Help For Heroes charity. We both decided we could do it and began to make plans for joining the 2018 tenth anniversary ride. Very sadly Julian passed away that July. I mulled over whether or not to continue with the plan to ride. I mentioned all this to Julian's widow, the redoubtable Sandy. I was both surprised and delighted when she said that she would ride with me, in memory of Julian. I also asked a fellow Burnham Dragon sailing friend of mine, Nick Hyde, to join us and thus the Three Mustardeers were formed. Our team name was in reference to Julian and Sandy's food dressings business, Scarlet & Mustard.

So it was that the three of us set off one grey June Monday morning from the Glade of the Armistice at Compiegne in Northern

France in the company of 150 Big Battlefield Bike Riders. Earlier, I had been delighted to learn that we would be passing close by two personally important places; Pontruet and Cerisy, where my great uncle, who had served with the 16th Northumberland Fusiliers, was buried. So it was that, after a cup of decent French coffee on the Tuesday, the three of us remounted our bikes in the pouring rain and diverted less than a kilometre off our designated route, into the small village of Pontruet.

Little has changed over the last century. A few dozen more houses, a village war memorial, a small housing estate on the outskirts. The largest change was the imposition of the A26/E17 Autoroute des Anglais, running broadly north to south, to the east of the village, right over the site of Forgans Trench, where Barrett had seen so much action. However, we were able to follow the line of advance that 1/5th Leicestershire Regiment took, from their forward trench on the Hindenburg Outpost Line, down the valley towards their twin objectives of Pontruet itself and the heavily defended Forgans Trench. We stopped briefly at the war memorial for me to brief the team on the battle and to show them the Cuneo picture of the action, before taking a small track off the road, which led to a field of ripening winter sown barley. On the far margin of the field ran a line of trees, behind which the autoroute could be heard. It was as close as we were able to get to Barrett's battle site. We had a few moments of remembrance, then took a quick photo in the pouring rain, before remounting and joining our cycling colleagues.



The Three Mustardeers at the imposing Vimy Ridge Canadian Memorial. L-R Tim Wilkes, Sandy Pollard, Nick Hyde

By the last day we had travelled into Belgium, toward our final destination of Saint Symphorien, just outside Mons, close to where the final shots of the war were heard. On the way we paused in the large civil and military cemetery at Tournai.

At the end of our cycle ride we were tired but quietly satisfied to have completed our task. We were kindly and generously supported by many, including Dragon sailing friends, in raising nearly £15,000 for Help For Heroes. Thank you. Along the way we paid our respects to but a small percentage of the fallen and gave thanks for their sacrifice in this centenary year of the Armistice.

*Tim Wilkes*

# SOME RUNNERS AND RIDERS



# Introducing the new Petticrows v6+ Dragon



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