



Sovereign Harbour Berth-holders' Association

- run for berth holders by berth holders



Members Newsletter
Edition No.149 May 2020

www.shbha.co.uk

Hello Fellow Berthholders, I hope this edition of the newsletter, finds you all safe & well in these very unsure times. I have delayed going to print for as long as I could, ever hopeful of some positive news.

I cannot think of anyone who will not in some way be affected by this virus, but it is nice to now be able to go out on our boats if recommendations allow us.

I know there has been a lot of people (myself included), upset by the way Premier Mariners handled this whole situation. There certainly should have been far more communication to us, rather than the 'burying the proverbial head in the sand'. I know Sue our Chairman, was fervently fighting our cause. I personally put all the blame on Premier Mariners heads office, I do not feel in anyway Dan & his team, were responsible for the way we have been treated. They were just following instructions. & taking all the flack from us, as our first line of contact.

Anyway, on a lighter note & apologies if people are offended, we were able to go out on our boat on the 20th May, the first time since January, it was nice to be reminded of how much pleasure our boat brings.

As you are all aware, all the events SHBHA had planned, have had to be postponed, but as soon as we are allowed, we will be organising events.

I don't care if I am now going to sound over dramatic but if you want to still be allowed to your boat & don't want another lockdown will you please all

**FOLLOW ALL THE GUIDELINES, ABIDE BY THE 2MTR DISTANCE RULE & DON'T
RUIN IT FOR OTHERS**



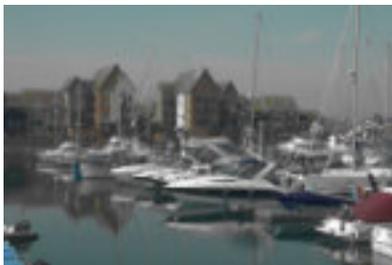
Insights to Berthing at Sovereign Harbour

I came to Sovereign a couple of years ago from Rye harbour, where you will know that boats go down on the mud twice a day on the tide; yes, the harbour dries out! The effect of this regular grounding is that it prevented the growth of any undesirable growth of weed barnacles or other boat-vermin. That was the bonus. However, the downside was that the mud proximity meant that the boat was always a challenge to keep clean.

With an Easterly wind, one day I decided to sail to Sovereign Harbour, taking 4 hours with the wind directly from Rye to Sovereign but, being December, we arrived in darkness. I checked with the harbour authorities about getting into the locks and they assured me that the lock-gates were open every half hour, on the hour.

I admit that I had failed to get the VHF for Sovereign before leaving Rye, so on arriving at the closed lock gates which failed to open, as they assured, would be open every half hour, I tried calling them up with out response, and eventually had to shout to folk on shore to get the officed to open the gates. They did and we entered.

Now, after a couple of years in the Sovereign Marina, I have discovered the significance difference between being afloat 24/7 and being at Rye, grounding twice a day. Sadly, for me the lesson of the Marina cost me £thousands. I happily went sailing and finding that my engine blew its head gasket. Then, having repaired the head gasket found that the cause was not a general normal repair, but the fact that the engine had overheated because of lack of cooling water.



I was fortunate in the main marina to have a boat owner near me that identified the reason for my engine over-heating for lack of cooling water; he had had a similar experience.

Being always afloat in the marina there is the opportunity for the growth of sponges and barnacles, and it doesn't seem to matter how much anti-foul is used. In tick-over or low revs the engine water intake copes easily but as soon as you put on higher throttle the extra suction draws in more of the sponge growth which then blocks the cooling water intake. Hence the engine overheats and the gasket blows!

This was a costly learning curve and the sort of problem never experienced at Rye in 40 years.

My boat, Caracymba, is currently out of the water having its hull antifouled by Tim Nichols, however, when we get back to normality I have asked Tim to put in an additional engine water-intake that I can scrub with a broom from the pontoon, a bit higher on the hull. Some have said that, "oh, when you heal over under sail the water intake will come out of water!"

I answer, "Who is the skipper of the boat? Who knows the boat best? And, anyway, as a skipper I would not normally have the engine running while under such good sailing conditions. Don't forget that the additional engine cooling system is "additional"; the existing intake is still functioning."

Happy sailing to everyone!

Tony Smith

Caracymba

G 18 Sovereign Harbour

A guide to everything you never knew about the locks!
Ever been frustrated by the wait? This may be why!

The Invisible Lock Keeper

by Dan Heckford, Marina Manager



Everyone is familiar with the Lock Keepers who manage the locks on a 24 hour basis. Each works a 12 hour day or night shift and is responsible primarily for navigational safety and the efficiency of the locks and bridges during their shift.

Behind the scenes are a number of physical and software based safety systems; the invisible lock keeper.

These systems have been enhanced and upgraded over the years. The original system simply opened the lock gates at the push of a button and you had to remember to press stop!

Not forgetting that the outer lock gates form part of the parish flood defence, Premier have a duty to ensure the operation of the locks do not endanger the local area. As a rough guide, the inner harbour water level could be as much as two meters below the average high tide height. The area surrounding the harbour doesn't grow much in height either, so a potential breach in the flood defences impacts further afield than just the harbour. This is the reason the invisible lock keeper exists. It (I can't really call it a he or a she, it's not like Alexa!) sits in the background watching and reading various sensors and switches.

Each lock has 18 proximity switches, one water level radar, oil pressure, temperature and oil level sensors, feeding back to a computer with a software program. Rather than a keyboard and mouse, the lock system is operated by a graphical touch screen which shows the Lock Keeper gate position, tide and lock water heights, navigation light sequences and alarms.

In every stage of opening or closing a gate, the invisible lock keeper choreographs the motions.

Below is a rough walkthrough of opening the outer gates seaward:

Lock keeper presses the open button

Invisible Lock Keeper checks tide height against lock water height, if the difference is below 5mtrs pumps are engaged. Gate starts to open, Invisible Lock Keeper is waiting for the gate to reach the first proximity switch. When it does, the invisible Lock Keeper stops the gate and hands control back to the Lock Keeper.



Lock keeper checks the flow rate through the lock and holds the open button to inch the gate open further. Invisible Lock keeper is watching that button hold and will only let the Lock Keeper inch the gate open if the difference in water levels is between 5 and 0.5mtrs.

The Lock Keeper will inch the gate open until he is happy he has sufficient water flow. Whilst this is happening, the Invisible Lock Keeper is checking oil pressure, oil level and oil temperature. If anything untoward shows up, it will inhibit the locks until a human can investigate any alarms.

Once the Invisible Lock Keeper is happy the difference in water levels is less than 500mm, it will give control back to the Lock Keeper. The Lock Keeper presses the open button one last time and the Invisible Lock Keeper sends the gates fully open until it sees the open position proximity switch. When it does, it turns the pumps off and hands back to the Lock Keeper.



The Lock Keeper updates his vessel log of who is going out, and once the lock is empty he will manually switch the navigation lights from red to green.

The Invisible Lock Keeper watches every button press and action on the touch screen. It is linked to the bridges and locks by fibre optics, each connection is backed up with an automated battery power supply should the mains power fail.

During the marina top up, the Invisible Lock Keeper goes into overdrive protecting the harbour from flooding. It alarms every 60 seconds. If the human Lock Keeper doesn't cancel the alarm, the Invisible Lock Keeper gets really angry and closes the gates on its own. If the inner harbour level goes too high during top up, the Invisible Lock Keeper steps in and closes the gates.

Equally, should the tide height go above our safe maximum, the Invisible Lock Keeper downs tools and inhibits the opening of any gates until the tide drops.

It also acts as a sense checker for the Lock Keepers. It won't let you open both ends of the same lock at the same time without jumping through pass worded hoops, for obvious reasons!

We test the various safety features on a quarterly basis, along with a full review and upgrade of the software should it be needed on an annual basis.

Recent upgrades included a 10 second close timer. Once the lock keeper presses close on a gate, the navigation light automatically turns red and the touch screen counts down from 10 seconds. Only once it reaches zero can you then close the gate. This is to reduce the risk of smaller boats running red lights out of sight of the lock keeper against a closing gate.



The navigation lights on the outbound lock used for top up at that time now flash red giving a visual warning that a top up is in progress.

Both of these recent software changes were introduced as risk controls from previous near miss incidents.

Calm 2 Storm,

What a difference 12 hours can make!

One minute the Eastbourne crew were assisting with Water Safety advice and tuition at Sovereign Harbour Berth Holders' bi annual Splash! event in the comfort of Eastbourne College pool: the next they were, at the request of HM Coastguard, responding by launching into the teeth of Storm Ciara.



This year's Splash! event gave members another opportunity to test their life jacket and experience its inflation. Prior to this the procedure to enter the water was demonstrated by the lifeboat crew. Once immersed they then found out the best techniques for survival by floating in huddles and crocodiles. They were able to see their lights working, blow on their whistles to attract attention, wear their spray hoods and generally experience the impact of being in the water. They felt safe in the knowledge that they had received help beforehand on the fit of their lifejacket and crotch straps from the Water Safety teams from Eastbourne and Dungeness who were also able to give advice on operation, maintenance and in some cases how to care, re-pack and re-arm this valuable life-saving aid.



Following on there was a demonstration by the crew members on the release and inflation of a life raft. Once inflated participants then took control of the life-raft by righting it before climbing onboard. Squashed in they realised what could await them in a real emergency. They evaluated safe operation of the raft and its contents.

Coxswain Mark Sawyer added further advice by demonstrating the items you would expect to find inside the life-raft but stressed it would be useful to also have ready a grab bag with personal items including medication, glasses, a hand held radio and mobile phone etc. Better to be prepared than panicking.

Also present were East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service who provided water safety education by giving one to one tuition on throw line techniques. Lots of wayward throw bags soon became accurate rescue aids.

This event successfully brought together the berth holders and two emergency rescue services in a practical, safe and warm learning environment.

Within the hour the Berth holders received an email saying 'Thanks for a brilliant afternoon. A very worthwhile event'. Lots more positive comments were given to those offering tuition by those taking part as they wearily made their way home. It seems a good time was had by all! Even the lifeguard on duty found the experience helpful and interesting.

Some twelve hours later the same crew were paged just after 06.00am to another shout! All in another day's work!

*Photos courtesy of Dave Clare and David Phillips



Fuel For Thought

Whether you use a motor cruiser or sailing boat nothing will focus the mind more than when you are trying to get home and low on fuel, and suddenly lose an engine due to diesel bug blocking your pre-filter.

Here are a few simple tips that if followed, will avoid that unwelcomed situation.

Diesel bug tends to favour the water/fuel interface (Fig.2) to breed in one's fuel tanks. Eliminating or removing the ingress of water will significantly decrease or eliminate the chances of losing an engine due to blocked pre-filters.

Fuel Cap

Normally sited on a deck, rain water seeping in can contaminate your fuel tank(s). The preferred design is one that is slightly raised from the deck rather than flush fitting as this channels water away from the base of the cap mostly. The cap will have a nitrile O ring seal and usually be threaded. Replace the seal every two years as they get deformed and can perish and crack. In addition, lubricate the cap threads and seal with Vaseline or silicone grease. This should be part of your annual maintenance procedure as it acts as belt and braces to keep water out.

Keep Tanks Full

There is always a balance between weight of fuel carried and the air space created in the tank as the fuel is used. Air space is a sailor's enemy as humid air will condense water vapour in your tank when it cools which will settle at the bottom below the fuel. I have full tanks over the winter for this reason and top up as needed throughout the season.

Fuel Tank Drain Cock

It is imperative that your tank(s) has a ball valve fitted and not just a blanking plug as some boats are supplied with only that as standard. This is THE most important design factor in managing water in your tanks. If you haven't got a valve, then get one fitted. If you use it to drain off around a litre of fuel 3 times a year, then you will get a good idea how much water or not is appearing in your tanks. This will very much discourage or eliminate bacterial growth. See Fig.2.

Pre-filter Set-up

This can range from a simple single solid bowl with drain valve to a pair of duplex filters with changeover lever, clear bowls, heat shields and water detection contacts with alarm per engine (one bowl shown in Fig.1). Large motor boats tend to have the latter but are expensive at £2800 per engine! Having clear bowls is the second most important design aspect after a fuel tank drain valve. This is because they can easily be checked when doing pre-trip engine room checks and if diesel bug or water is present, then they can be seen immediately. A potential life saver in my view.

Use the drain valve at the bottom of the pre-filter to drain any water or flush the filter element by pushing it in and turning the valve to open once or twice a year. Any water will flow out first and as the filter is back flushed, any debris present will emerge after about 10 seconds. Drain into a suitable container, not the bilge and take to the marina's disposal point!

Treating Your Fuel

For the 3000 litres of fuel my boat carries, as the cost of the inventory of quite substantial, I take no chances. I treat the tanks with Starbrite Startron Enzyme Diesel Fuel Treatment near the end of the season each year when the tanks are fully topped up. This inhibits bacterial growth and keeps the fuel in good condition. This is one of my standard fuel maintenance tasks and costs around £50 to treat 3000 litres.

If It All Goes Wrong

If you are unfortunate to get diesel bug biomass in your tank(s), if it is a mild infection and discovered early enough, then you can self treat the fuel with a biocide to kill it off. The biggest problem is getting rid of the dead black growth as shown in the illustration Fig.1. This will lodge in your filters and be suspended in your tank. You can either drain it out via the tank drain cock (best after the boat has been standing for a week) and change and clean your pre-filter more frequently. This is done over a period of time, but it's a pain. If it is a major infection, you will need the services of a specialist such as 'Express Lube' fuel doctor who can come to Eastbourne and will pump out your tank and filter out the biomass from the fuel (called polishing).



Fig.1 Shows diesel bug growth trapped in pre-filter cyclones



Fig.2 Typical fuel/biomass and water transitions

About the author –

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Yachtmaster Offshore (motorboat) since 1991 and Professional Engineer. Experienced in both sail and power.



When we purchased our Solway, Morning Mist, SY7, back in 2007, we couldn't understand why the anchor and chain were stowed in the cockpit locker, such a long way to drag it if needed. Our surveyor did mention, in passing, that he'd heard that Solways had a tendency to dip at the nose when they dry out. We thought no more about it, we were in love, even though she needed so much work doing to her. During her extensive refit returning the anchor gear to its correct home at up for'ard was one of the minor tasks.

The Solway, along with the Galway, the aft cockpit version, were the largest bilge keel boats that Westerly produced, with a draft of just 1.4m.

Although a bilge keeler was our yacht of choice we had little opportunity to take to the bottom over the next few years as we spent extensive time cruising her in Holland and along the south coast of England. Only drying out alongside the quay at Bosham, in Chichester harbour, to service the prop and scrub the hull. Being based in Eastbourne marina we were only lifted out for 8 weeks each year.

Five years later, the nose dipping comments totally forgotten, whilst on a trip to the Solent we decided to dry out at East Head, just inside Chichester Harbour. This had been a favourite spot of ours when we had our Konsort.

Early one morning, with the sun rising, we motored in to the beach, well above the low water line. Dropped the anchor, took transits happy she was holding we sat back in the cockpit to enjoy the sun and a bacon sandwich. Quite soon she took to the bottom, we just relaxed discussing which tools we needed to do our jobs whilst we waited for the tide to go out sufficiently to service the prop.

Imagine our surprise when we decided it was time to get to work and found that she had dug the front of her keels into the sand, almost dipping her head so that we could easily climb over the bow, onto the anchor and so get ashore. It made life so much easier. Now we understood!

We still dry out but make sure that the water tank is only half full and our bicycles are moved aft. We sleep in the aft cabin but she will still 'dip' and we wake to a climb up through the saloon to the heads! It certainly gets the attention of those around us but now we just have the look of people expecting it to happen.

Gill and Dave Clare, Morning Mist



What's been going on?



Clearly with the lockdown introduced in March meetings have been put on hold but I can report the following:

Internet access on the pontoons is now fibre connected and hopefully, when we are allowed back on the harbour, the signal should be better.

The bird netting problem was back on track with a new contractor but again the virus has done its best and held up the project which seems fated. However, the floor and columns have been washed with the scrubber.

Perspex to make some of the gate areas more secure has arrived and a multi-tool to fix this has hopefully been secured by now.

A new bin contract started on 1st April!! How ironic! Something we have fought hard for and now there is no rubbish! Hopefully we should see the level of service improve once we are all back in action along with improved recycling solutions. The bin area in the central harbour should also be cleaner too.



A member had noticed a member of staff checking the trip switches on the electric bollards. These have to be checked six monthly as part of the regular routines that are carried out to set schedules.

The crown of thorns in the west harbour by gate 4 needs some welding.

A new contractor for pontoon cleaning had been appointed.

The car park at the end of Atlantic Drive will become multi user in the near future. It was agreed at an on site meeting that at least half would be designated for berth holders. The markings will be in a

different colour to easily identify who should park where. Dan Heckford is looking into a sticker or ID method that can be used by members.

A new map outlining the placement of safety equipment and local defibrillators should be out soon.



The fencing around the boat yard was meant to be improved just as the lockdown began. £53K will be spent securing the gates with fob only access and installing the same metal spiked fencing that is already down the side that runs beside the public footpath.

Plans to have additional temporary boat yard area between October and March are currently at the consultation stage. If this progresses it will become operative in the winter of 20/21.

The new hoist now has all of the latest software and it can now weigh your boat accurately as the problem with the load cells has been solved. The hiab is also operational.

The Fisherman's Quay project has been signed off at Premier's end and I saw in the local papers that some funding has also been approved by EBC. Hopefully we will soon see some improved facilities in this area which I believe will include a wet fish shop.



On the subject of fishing boats (all types and sizes): Gutting is not allowed in the locks or other areas of the marina. If you see this antisocial activity going on please report it at the time. There is a reporting, escalating and enforcement policy in place and offenders will be dealt with.

A High Time in Boulogne

A good alarm clock would help.

'I didn't know you were going this early' I muttered to myself as I poked my head out of the companionway. The unexpected sound of a crew laden Bavaria 34 motoring swiftly past the stern of a still moored up Piquant, not really what I wanted to hear. Scrambling to untie the ropes and get going I still missed the lock. Leaving Sovereign Harbour's entrance behind some forty minutes later, a small collection of masts I had planned to be part of were somewhat distant. I won't be catching them I thought. Not a good start to my solo Channel crossing.

One thing I like about 'Cruising in Company', is that if you are single handing, there is normally someone ready to take a mooring rope or two when you arrive. My morning lie in had certainly guaranteed that, or so I thought. Looking ahead again to the early risers, it appeared their course to Boulogne was via Dungeness, going straight across became my considered decision.

The July Friday wasn't bad. Lovely blue sky, sunny, warm, little sea running, no wind unfortunately but motoring I made good progress. Crossing the English shipping lane, slowing for a massive container ship the only activity. From at least two miles away in the almost flat calm, the wake generated streamed back in a huge six foot high V, a quick up and down and that was it. Overall though, extremely pleasant if not a little soporific, even with the engine noise. Another good slap of suncream, a tasty pizza fresh from the oven, a nice cooling drink, all adding to the relaxing time.

With my equally relaxed Piquant carving a beautifully straight path through the gently heaving water, at about a quarter of the way to go, despite my struggling to stay open eyes, I still managed to catch the slightest of flutterings in the dropped down sprayhood. Standing up to study the now well risen French coast ahead, the sight of a tickling jib sheet soon vitalised my attention, a wispy bit of wind getting up just enough to give me a decent sail in.

Calling up the Marina office I explained I was part of the Sovereign Harbour cruise but it didn't seem to register. I received a berth number anyway and after saying I was solo a rather strapping young gel came down to meet me. Good job too. The position they gave me must be the most awkward, worse position in the whole Marina. Difficult to turn into, a fair bit of tide running and with a finger pontoon little more than half the length of the boat, a real struggle to get tied up. Where are the others I wondered. Then of course it dawned on me. I was the first one to arrive. Mmm, I thought, these Vancouvers are faster than they look!

A while later, after finally being happy with the cat's cradle holding my boat in place, going to the office and other places, returning to the boat I recognised a voice on the VHF. I'd left the radio on so I could listen for the 'late arrivals'. Noting the berth number given I made my way over. 'Me meeting you guys is not how it's supposed to work', I called out, taking a rope. 'How long have you been here then?' they asked. 'Oooh, a good couple of hours at least.' I replied. 'No you haven't' they chorused back at me. 'Yeah, Ok' I rather generously conceded, 'I've only just arrived'. I hadn't the heart to tell them I'd actually been in Boulogne for a good hour and that after leaving 40 minutes later than they did. Satisfying though.

The marina office did offer me a relocation, (now they advised me), to the designated area for the Rally, but after all the effort and creative ropework I preferred to stay put. Big mistake! As later that evening I found out. One of the main, marina security lights was directly above me and at night the interior of the boat was lighter than during the day! A trifle annoying, and the ten per cent discount given not really compensating, but in the event, a couple of spare sleeping bags stuffed against the forepeak windows did the trick well enough, so it wasn't really a problem. Every cloud has a silver lining they say, my arc lamp lit version was to prove no different, albeit a bit bright.

What's that for?

There is an open, rectangular stretch of water, about 100 yards wide, between the last line of pontoons, where I was, and the roadway bridge that incorporates the lock to and from the inner marina. Over this water, a long, steel cable had been stretched, running from the top of a temporary support mast that had been erected on the quayside just along from the Marina Office. Then slowly rising, roughly parallel to the bridge, up over the road and shops opposite on the other side, to a rather steep finish at the roof of a block of flats which stand back overlooking the marina. Pretty high as well. Parked a short distance away from this mast was a sizeable mobile crane, I assumed it was left over from the

construction phase. Enquiring at the office I learnt the cable had been installed for a highwire act and that the performance itself would take place this coming Sunday evening when it began to get dark. 'For ze lighting effects.' she said, rather attractively.

'Are you staying for the show?' I asked the others. 'No we have to get back for work.' the fairly common response. 'Well I think I will.' I said, 'I've never seen anything like this before.' and booked another night on my well lit pontoon which now, remember that silver lining I referred to, was one of the best seats in the house!

Teaming up with some of the other berth holders, a thoroughly enjoyable evening and Saturday ensued. Sightseeing and then agreeing which restaurant to book for the evening, from the many that are available, very much part of the fun. Reasonably priced but still excellent meals, the French reputation when it comes to cuisine well deserved. A very sociable occasion all round. Waving the last boat away Sunday morning, once again I was on my own, most of the others had gone before I got up. Mind you, that's not too difficult as you probably guessed!

The rest of the day passed very quickly. A tour of the sprawling Sunday market that filled most of the main shopping areas, buying some fresh bread, a check over the boat and a fuel up saw the evening, too soon, arrive.

The Performance. (or, Is funambulism fun?)

The show took place about 10.30 in the evening, French time, beginning with some operatic music, broadcast over the area as a whole to get people's attention and help create an atmosphere. Twenty or so minutes went by during which a substantial crowd of spectators gathered, especially along the bridge, many people standing on their boats in the marina for a better view. Then, with the daylight fading, the real performance started.

Suddenly, from some large, black speakers, the sound of a piano literally booms out over the water, I now realise what the crane is for. Slowly, rising higher and higher into the twilight, together with its seated and playing figure, is a full size, lid up, all in white grand piano. Picked out by powerful spotlights, in the dim, low light it looks exactly as though it is floating in mid air. Small coloured lenses bathe it in constantly changing colours, red, orange, green, blue, yellow. The effect is quite spectacular.

The piano playing, loud and increasingly dramatic, rapidly builds an infectious sense of anticipation, but there is not long to wait and after only a few minutes more, the crowd craning their necks to see, the high wire man finally appears. Climbing to the top of the wire support mast, his white clothing reflecting brightly in the lights, he raises himself up and waving to the large number of people who have come to watch, a somewhat reserved applause gently ripples round the extensive and well spread out spectators, now stretching all the way along the bridge and quaysides. Bending down, he picks up a long, white painted balance pole. Testing its weight and adjusting his grip, he returns to standing upright. Taking a few moments to settle and compose himself and with the eyes of everyone fixed upon him, he places his first steps on the wire. No showmanship, no exaggerated movement, just an even, steady pace, the complete absence of a safety net or even a safety lanyard, dictating his regular, careful tread. I found it mesmerising.

Approaching halfway across the water, in perfect view from where I was standing on Piquant, out in the open and away from any backdrop, you could now fully appreciate what you were seeing. Brilliantly illuminated, the wire lost in the gloom, it was almost unreal to see this diminutive human figure, framed against the darkening sky and seemingly just walking along, high in the air.

Stopping for a moment he drops down on one leg, sitting on the wire The crowd applauds. He then lays on his back along the wire, the applause more enthusiastic but still rather tentative. He gets up and carries on. A surprise gust of wind catches him. Stalling for a moment, he moves the pole around to manage his balance, then carefully, he steps forward again. It's very windy up there, his loose clothing flapping in the breeze. As the cable steepens, rising towards the top of the tower block, you can actually feel the atmosphere change, the crowd become tense. The piano playing heightening the mood even more. Still the regular, steady pace.

You can't fail to notice the upward climb is more demanding, his steps slowing, more measured. Why doesn't his feet slip on the wire you think. The tower block itself is now all lit up, a light show playing against the façade. This small, white figure, he seems incredibly high. As he nears the roof of the building, the tension in the air you can touch. The wind catches him again, the balance pole moves

sharply, side to side, one end up the other down, his momentary struggle clearly apparent. For God's sake don't fall now you can't help thinking. He makes it. Disappearing for a moment he then reappears standing on the parapet, arms outstretched to a generous but still somewhat stilted applause, relief as much as admiration. The piano music stops and it's all over.

I thought it was fantastic, I had never seen anything like it before. The pictures taken by the small pocket camera that I found purely by chance on Piquant totally fail to do his performance justice. The nervy, fixed attention and tenuous applause from the audience was understandable and also, why the chatty German lady in the boat next to me did not want to watch. To witness a fall would certainly stay in the memory. Compelling, riveting, but not particularly enjoyable perhaps. For me though, well worth staying the extra day.

Another Sail, another motor?

Monday started bright and warm again and this time with some decent wind, but as it so often happens, from the wrong direction. Contrary to what I was worrying about earlier in the morning, untying Piquant and motoring astern into the fairway went a lot easier than expected. However, a brief lapse in concentration when negotiating the outer harbour, the result of which would have almost certainly meant my staying yet another night, soon checked any hubris. A grounding avoided but the momentary heart race served to fully wake me up. Necessary too, arriving at the harbour entrance, I found a fair old sea running. No dozing off on this return journey I thought. Four to five on the nose was the forecast, occasionally six as closer to the English side I progressed.

Quickly deciding that a sail back to Eastbourne was not really an option. Possible of course, but for me, one taking far too long. I might sail single handed on occasion but I'm no purist. Decision made. I eased a few more revs from the engine.

A careful all round sighting revealed little in the way of maritime activity, only one other yacht and that was heading away. The sprayhood lowered on the way over to improve visibility I quickly raised. In fact, I would say that until I neared Eastbourne, apart from some long distant shipping I was the only boat out there. Not surprising. A nice bright day but very lumpy conditions, windy and wet from continual spray. I must say I am very impressed with Piquant's ability to keep going when motoring into a lively head sea.

With no ships to avoid in the shipping lanes and nothing else to watch out for either, the tempting and increasingly inviting saloon kept me down out of the weather for a few minutes longer each time. For lunch, I ate a whole large tin of creamed rice! (I had warmed it up in a saucepan, not cold out of the tin!)

Deciding to bear away when crossing the English shipping lane, I did manage to get the sails up for a brief, if somewhat overpressed episode, mainly to see what heading I could achieve, but half an hour was about it. Despite pinching up as much as I could in the good, strong breeze, the tide had turned, running East, and together with the wind direction I found myself sailing more towards Dover, so back on went the engine. A bit disappointing but nevertheless a welcome respite. At times I was doing over 7.5 knots, unfortunately in nothing like the right direction!

Mid afternoon saw me off Fairlight then Hastings, the sea by now rising substantially. The occasional bigger waves faltering but thankfully failing to stop my very determined Piquant. When I actually did sit in the cockpit, I could never quite steel myself enough not to duck each time as yet another great splat of water hurled itself against the sprayhood, wondering what it would be like if I still had the tide with me! Nevertheless, and maybe a little slowly, Eastbourne drew ever nearer.

Eventually, in early evening I arrived. Making my way into the outer harbour, and for once actually looking forward to it, finding the enclosed shelter of the inbound lock a welcome experience. Back again tied up at our own pontoon and with a nice cup of tea in my hand I reviewed the weekend. Easily deciding that although the last few hours were somewhat boisterous, the word slog coming to mind, it wasn't too bad a crossing. After all, it had been a very pleasant and sunny day, just a bit wet!

As a solo crossing I suppose it qualifies, shame I couldn't have sailed more of it. If I had made my return on the Sunday I would have done so, cheaper too. Never mind. Overall though, a very satisfying and enjoyable few days.

Steve Collett

Defibrillator Training



Way back in January (which seems ages ago as so much water has passed under the bridge since then!) we held three sessions of training on this important bit of kit. Those attending ranged from 12 to 70+. Everyone joined in with the preliminary CPR session and moved onto how to use the defibrillator on a non-responsive casualty. The amazing device is simplicity to use. It does the diagnosis and then instructs you in what to do and when. It will not let you 'shock' someone who doesn't need their heart restarting.

Guy Emery, our trainer for the sessions, talked individuals through the system using a dummy model. It was so easy to follow what had to be done and everyone was surprised and re-assured by the chance to use it.

WELL DONE TO ALL ATTENDEES WHO RECEIVED A PERSONALISED CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION.



There are at least two defibrillators around the marina (one under the Lock Control steps and the other on the wall by 4Seasons).



We hope they don't need to be used.....but rest assured there are now 30 more trained people out there who can help if they do.



Fact File



An **automated external defibrillator (AED)** is a portable electronic device that automatically diagnoses the life-threatening cardiac arrhythmias of ventricular fibrillation and pulseless ventricular tachycardia, and is able to treat them through defibrillation, the application of electricity which stops the arrhythmia, allowing the heart to re-establish an effective rhythm.

With simple audio and visual commands, AEDs are designed to be simple to use for the layperson, and the use of AEDs is taught in many first aid, certified first responder, and basic life support level cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) classes.

The first use of an external defibrillator on a human was in 1947 by Claude Beck. The portable version of the defibrillator was invented in the mid-1960s by Frank Pantridge in Belfast, Northern Ireland, a pioneer in emergency medical treatment.

Passage Planning

'I had a dream' so goes the song. Well, the group of people who turned up to passage planning at the beginning of March did have a dream- learning how to get from A to B safely and in a timely manner. Finding out about the important considerations in addition to tides and weather was a learning curve for some.



After initial discussions on roles and responsibilities, listing things to think about and do before leaving, giving a skipper's briefing and a host of other practicalities they actually were then presented with charts and passage plan proforma.



In small groups they decided on their waypoints, measured distances, checked for dangers, made plans for escape routes should something drastic happen and sought information about telephone numbers and radio channels.

Hopefully they got a taster for the important task of preparation and will be engaging in this on future trips. Some may also be inspired to follow up our idea of taking a day skipper course.



All left feeling better prepared for heading off and hopefully once life settles to some sort of normality, they will enthusiastically set off out to sea in search of pastures new.



Your Officers and Committee work voluntarily to help you enjoy Sovereign Harbour. We ask you to encourage others to join and keep the Association strong.

Chairman & West Harbour Rep	Sue Sydney	(WS17)	Sovereign Star
Vice Chairman & Central rep	Gill Clare	(G23)	Morning Mist
Membership Secretary	Nigel Dumbell	(F30)	Tipsy Tart
Secretary	Paul Bedwell	(SY 02)	Pale Moon
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All members of the committee and officers can be contacted via the website



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and on a final note....

