

CONTACT US

Tony & Helen Giblett Phone : 01752 222789
74 Durnford Street Mobile: 07793 939954
Plymouth
PL1 3QW

e-mail: tony@giblett.co.uk

MY Fastflow, Berth B36, Mayflower Marina, Plymouth.

FROM THE COMMODORE

Up to the start of the rally what a brilliant summer we've had (well you have because I've been strapped up following an operation on my shoulder for most of it and unable to use the boat). Anyway I reckon I'm on the mend (to Helen's relief) and it won't be long before Fastflow and I are thrashing about.

The 2014 Aquastar Rally

Despite the challenging weather and no doubt because I was indisposed as a result of the surgery to my shoulder, the 2014 rally was a success. Particular thanks to Gavin Crick (Patience of Chichester) for picking up the reins at the 11th hour. Gavin's report follows.



The rally this year was arranged by Tony and looked forward to by at least a dozen boats at the outset. Circumstances, and the hurricane Bertha, outwitted the hardy boaters leaving a determined 3 boats to meet in St Peter Port. Tony and Helen had to hand over the reins to a second in command (who shall remain nameless) following Tony's shoulder operation and consequent sling wearing and strict consultant's instructions!

Gallant lady being gallant in the Alderney Race - Ed

The determined 3 were Patience, Gallant Lady and Star. Patience and Gallant Lady both arrived in St Peter Port, after very lumpy journeys, on Wednesday 6th August, sadly in need of a reviving glass of wine and a good catch up. Thursday 7th saw a bright and sunny day and the arrival of Anna and Ingvar on newly acquired Star. Naturally, another reviving glass or 2 were called for to celebrate the safe re-grouping of former friends.



Friday 8th wakened up to rain and the start of the high winds which were to stay with us all week. We all huddled up on our boats during the day to await the evening's entertainment. Everyone plus Stuart and Jane (Le Trois Mousses) and David and Gaynor (Alegria) crowded into Patience's saloon with lots of cheers for Tony and Helen, and a quick glass before dinner at the Guernsey Yacht Club. Stuart kindly did 2 trips in his car to beat the pouring rain and we rendezvoused at the Club for an excellent meal. The table was very prettily laid and the service was great. Portions were huge with a goodly helping of at least

2 carbs (and sometimes 3) on each plate! A resounding thanks to the team at the club for arranging a great evening.

On Saturday 9th Gallant Lady, with Ingvar and Anna, set off for a day trip to Sark whilst the crew on board Patience keenly awaited the arrival of the 4th member. Jos arrived on the Condor – rather conveniently - in time for lunch in the sunshine. Naturally, Pam, Ian, Maureen, Ray, Anna and Ingvar wished to welcome Jos – so a glass or 2 was partaken on board Star to toast our full quota of Rally attendees.

Alegria and Les Trois MousSES had both decided that the forecast was not looking great so admitted defeat and went back to the UK (David and Gaynor) or to Greece (Stuart, Jane and 3 sons). We all understood and secretly envied the Greek decision! To keep spirits up (or down as the case may be), Patience distributed a quiz on all matters Aquastar for the other boats to complete.



We were still enjoying the tail of Bertha by Monday 11th and poor Star had to brave the conditions to have a fuel pump out at St Sampsons. They confirmed, on their return, that the decision to stay put was the right decision! Whilst they were struggling with their fuel, Maureen, Pam and the Patience crew had an invigorating cliff top walk to Fermain Bay, and were excellently rewarded with fabulous crab sandwiches at the Beach Café and a sunny and sheltered beach. That same evening Patience hosted a 'chilli night' on board and we happily squeezed 10 friends into the saloon and had a very enjoyable meal and evening.



The wind continued to buffet us on Tuesday 12th so we did our own things during the day (bus trips, Aquarium...) and then got together again for a drink and to compare notes on the day on board Gallant Lady. Ian had kindly (and luckily, as it is very popular) booked a table at Pier 17 for us all that evening. The meal really was excellent – superb seafood – and the wine was acceptable too!! Halfway through the meal we all trooped out of the restaurant to see the high tide - just 10cm below HAT, which was lapping over the walls of the marina into the car park! It was also the largest moon for 20 years and was a sight to behold.

The weather stayed immovable so we carried on making the best of our time in Guernsey and on Wednesday the Patience crew took a bus ride round the Island stopping off at a lovely, old fashioned, country show. Lots of wine and chatting rounded off the day on board Star. The traditional Rally glasses were distributed to participants and prizes awarded for answers to the quiz. Discretion prevents the recording in this report of the final scores, so let us just announce that Star pipped victory by one mark!



We keenly watched the weather constantly and early on Thursday morning the male contingency had a man 'conflab' resulting in fingers crossed for a passage the following day. We optimistically had a farewell drink on Gallant Lady and went to bed with high hopes of the morrow. Friday 15th did bring a slight lessening of the wind so we bade farewell to our fellow Rally attendees and Patience set sail for St Malo at 8am, closely followed out by Gallant Lady and Star both heading back to Jersey for the final rally dinner at St Helier Yacht Club. A heavy swell and choppy seas ended another wonderful, if slightly unusual, Aquastar Rally. It can now be truthfully said that more wine than fuel was consumed on at least one Aquastar Rally!

Here's to next year.

Gavin, Caroline & Alice
Patience of Chichester

Sorry, no picture of Alice but she will be with us on the stand at the Boat Show. - Ed

Perhaps now is a good time to consider what we should do next year. Several members who were unable to attend this year have been in touch with me to say that they would like to join us. This is your opportunity to help us decide where to go.

As a starting point I am including Ingvar's (Star) useful comments to me recently:

Re. next year it could start in your home town but don't forget that it takes 6-8 days of holiday for us to just get to Plymouth and back in the first place, and Patience are in Chichester and Gallant lady not much nearer to you in Lymington! Having said that you could start there or more north of the Channel Islands say

Kingswear marina @Dartmouth.

Anyway I think the rivers and creeks are what really got people excited last year, though a few days in the Scillies would in my view top everything.

We have only done a dash there for one night and back with Motor Boat Monthly so a proper stay and exploration would be the ultimate goal as my choice. I do not think there would be time for rivers and creeks as well as The Scilly Isles and as we did the former last year we could perhaps aim for the Scillies next year with the rivers and creeks up our sleeve if the weather becomes inclement.

Helen and I love Westcountry cruising and last year we failed to make Fowey, Falmouth and the rivers around. A dozen Aquastars in Polperro, the Yealm or Mevagissey would certainly turn a few heads! However we appreciate the distances boats have to travel to get here so we are amenable to moving further to the east if that is what you prefer. So let's get the debate going!

News from the Yard

With the workforce just back from the Summer holidays, the next two 430's are in build for the winter with their launching next spring. A number of winter refurbishment projects are going ahead including servicing in general, new teak decks and a number of other jobs are also booked in.

Work is progressing well with the first 570, which will be launched at the end of September.

Club Reception at the Southampton Boat Show 20th September

We are off to the Southampton Boat Show with the AS 430 and 490. The 430 has been kindly lent by David and Gaynor Wheeldon who were at the rally this year. We will be hosting a reception for club members on the second Saturday from 5.30pm until the show closes and hope as many of you as possible will join us. Please let me know if you intend to be at the reception so we can plan. We'll have ties, burgees and membership application forms available if you need them. Of course if you can't make the reception we'll be happy to see you at any time during the show.

Membership News

We are pleased to welcome the following new members to the club:

Nathan & Kirsty Cope – AS48, High Flyer;
William & Susan Grant – AS38, Symphony of Herm;
Ross & Sarah Hamilton – AS33, Aqua Santa.

As usual I have attached an up to date membership list. Whilst stuck indoors with my shoulder I have been sorting out club records and you will see in the list there is a new column showing the year in which members joined. Some of the records are a little vague and where I can't see what year a member joined I have inserted 'Pre 2011' (the year I took over). Please check your own entry and let me have any amendments or corrections, particularly if you can update me on the year you joined.

Regalia



We have arranged for some very good quality new club ties and these are available either by post or if you like you can collect yours from us at the show. Design is shown and the logo is woven into a dark blue tie and is very smart. Price is £15.

Burgees are still available at £15 for the small ones and £20 for the larger ones. These are also well made, sewn and come with the toggle and braid for attachment to your boat.

The Technical Forum

Bug 'ed in Guernsey

Having just sold our Aquastar 33 and upgraded to the 38 foot grown-up model, Star - built in 2002, in spite of the very short time left we were determined to have her ready for this year's Aquastar rally (the highlight of the boating calendar in our view).

Being aware of the diesel bug horror stories going around, and the fact that even though we had the fuel and tanks of both of our previous boats cleaned soon after purchase, I made a preliminary enquiry about the cost of doing so for our new acquisition. It was not so much the uncertainty of the cost that put us off but more the fact that the company said they would need to cut a good half a dozen holes all over the top of each of our fuel tanks in order to get to both sides of all the baffles!

Time was pressing on anyway so we just added a killer dose of Marine 16 to ensure that everything possibly present was dead before we set off from Brighton. With hindsight as the boat had been languishing for about a year and a half in a marina with a 'For Sale' sign on it and we believe had not moved, I should have done more research. Yes I might have now killed any bug but as I soon was to discover it was the dead bacterial sludge which was to come and haunt me after quite a bumpy channel crossing which of course completely churned up the bottom of the tank. How we discovered we had the bug evolved as follows. We were still a little way to go to the Casquets lighthouse when we heard a squeak beginning to emanate from the front of the starboard engine. As we had just had the engine serviced and the belts specially adjusted I said it must be a bearing so we decided to shut down that engine. Shortly after that the port engine started varying its speed and then completely slowed down. Oh dear - time to start the starboard engine again, squeaks and all. After a bit of coaxing we got both engines running again, though below cruising RPM, without too many squeaks, and arrived at St Peter



Port safely.

The next day the nice man from the local Volvo agent Marine & General came to sort out our squeak, complete with the spare idler bearing kit. To my surprise he found the problem was in fact a loose alternator belt, not a bearing. A bit embarrassed, as only 7 hours had elapsed since it had been adjusted prior to leaving, I thought I would also mention the loss of power on the other engine to make his visit more worthwhile. I added it could not be dirty fuel as the plastic bowl below the filter was completely clear. How wrong I was!

The nice man from Volvo politely suggested that despite my thoughts he would still like to look at the paper filter insert a rather more expensive 'oh dear' was the conclusion. Instead of a nice pink colour it was all black with a black treacly substance over much of it - it was the dreaded diesel bug and its sludge. He added that he was surprised that any fuel was even getting through it - we had evidently been motoring on borrowed time

The nice and helpful man from Volvo said that back in St Sampsons they actually had the specialist kit to pump the fuel out and clean it and re-circulate it back into the tanks. To ensure we actually got there on our own engines he changed the filters there and then and kindly made an appointment for us for the Monday morning.

Even though the trip to St Sampsons is a very short one, and it was extremely windy thanks to Hurricane Bertha we played safe and only ran both engines for a few minutes for the initial manoeuvring out of our marina, until we arrived there, thus keeping one engine in reserve.

Another very nice man from M & G helped us tie up at 9 a.m. at their hammerhead and the day's work began. We were lucky as one of the jobs we had done after purchasing the boat was to have a small inspection window added at the top of each tank (I never really trust the fuel gauges). These made it possible to access the tanks easily with a pipe and swish around the contents for sucking out. The fuel was

then passed through large filters, and returned through the deck fillers. Seven and a half hours of engineer's time later the job was complete, the fuel treated with Grotamar 82, and with 8 spare fuel filters on board we were ready to depart on the evening tide. The managing director of M & G, David Norman, helpfully advised us that after every journey we should change the fuel filters until they no longer showed any black residue. After the ensuing trip to Jersey they were 5/8 black, after the return trip to Guernsey 6/8 black (a more bumpy ride), and then after the long journey back to Cowes a most definite 100% black. Here we purchased more Racor filters at £10 each (the same ones in the blue Volvo boxes cost £ 21). Back in Brighton things are beginning to look brighter.

We have since discovered that though Grotamar 82 is brilliant at killing diesel bug, because it is only a biocide it does nothing about the water which is the cause of the diesel bug in the first place. Bearing in mind that it is unlikely we will ever see water in the clear bowl of the Racor filter until there is at least one inch of water in the bottom of the fuel tank we will therefore as well as the Grotamar, continue to use the Fuelset (which we have successfully used for over 10 years) which actually emulsifies the water so it can be removed and burnt off with the fuel.

What really goes on in your fuel tank

Diesel fuel "bugs" are actually micro-organisms comprised of fungi, yeasts and bacteria which live mostly in the diesel / water interface inside the diesel tank. The common diesel 'bug' is the fungus *Hormoconis resiniae* that can produce a large biomass of mycelia (fungal matting) in a short period of time if the conditions are favourable. *Hormoconis resiniae* is called "diesel bug" in the diesel fuel industry and "jet fuel fungus" in the aviation industry.

The fungal spores are carried by air and water, entering your fuel system via filling ports and vents. The air space above the fuel in tanks contains water vapour. The walls of the tanks are cool and the water vapour condenses on these surfaces. This water subsequently accumulates and sinks to the bottom of the tank creating an ideal environment for the growth of fungi.

Propagating quickly in warm, humid climates diesel bug generates acids that pass through the fuel filters and corrodes the highly polished metal surfaces found on the inside of fuel injection pumps and injectors.

This corrosion can over time lead to fuel leakage past the plungers and into the engine's oil system compromising oil viscosity. That may result in crankshaft and/or main bearing failure. These acids can also break down weaker tank material such as aluminium.

Biocides will not remove the water that the bug needs to survive. As long as water remains in the tank, the bug will re-infest.

As the diesel bug thrives at the fuel / water interface, using oxygen in the water to "breathe", if this water is removed the bug cannot take up residence or survive. A treatment such as Fuelset or Aquasolve works by removing water from the fuel, thus slowly suffocating the bug, dissolving and dispersing the dead cells so they can pass through the fuel filter.

If a biocide has already been used, an additive such as Fuelset can still be used alongside it to provide these additional benefits. The products act differently so will not cause a harmful reaction. However such an additive cannot be expected to clear up a huge mass of dead cells instantly, as its water removing, surfactant action works over time to break down the biomass.

Another method of controlling diesel "bug" growth which is reportedly used by several air forces and navies, is by the use of a magnetic unit, (Volvo market theirs as a 'QL fuel decontaminator').

Finally - old diesel fuel.

Diesel "bugs" should not be confused with the chemical sludge compounds formed as diesel fuel ages. This sludge can also cause fuel filters to block with subsequent engine malfunction, or worse still, engine stoppage.

Diesel fuel degrades with time (faster at higher ambient temperatures), often forming these insoluble asphaltene compounds through an oxidation process. The use of fresh diesel fuel reduces this possibility, which may mean keeping fuel tanks only partially full if they are not used frequently. This can be a "Catch-22" situation, as condensation (water) is more of a problem in partly full tanks. Oh dear!

Ingvar Svenson (Star).

Keeping Calm



Roo Redwood (Water Bear) and I often go cruising together with our wives and sometimes we anchor rafted up alongside each other in one or another of the lovely spots around Plymouth (yes, I know you also have lovely spots near you). So long as we are in a well sheltered spot we make do with just one anchor which prevents the inevitable tangling of anchor chains when the boats swing round.

The only problem we have is if a boat passes at speed its wash causes a lot of snatching with short lines holding the boats together. Roo came up with the solution you can see in the photograph. You simply double up the line between the boats and suspend a fender from the rail so it sits between them. When the sudden load comes on the lines they squeeze the fender, which dampens out the snatching. Simple!

Tailpiece- a note from Ray and Mo Grimwood on Gallant Lady



Arrived home safely from Cherbourg, crossing a little choppy. Just off the Needles we had a request from the Coastguard Rescue Helicopter to assist in training, which is the second time it's happened to us but all good practice. We were informed that on this occasion it was the helicopter skipper who was under training! They managed to land a man on the port side of our bathing platform on the third attempt which was remarkable considering the platform is almost completely covered by the dinghy and there was a stiff breeze blowing.

PAYMENTS TO THE CLUB

Payments made electronically are convenient, much appreciated and keep our costs down. Please add a note to any payment confirming what it relates to (e.g. burgee, tie, subscription etc.).

Name of Account: The Aquastar Club, Sort Code: 20-68-10, Account Number: 43945057.

ARE WE ADDRESSING YOU CORRECTLY?

Email is our preferred means of contacting you, it significantly reduces our costs and minimises the work required of your lazy Commodore to put the newsletter together and to provide attachments and it saves trees! So if you've received this newsletter through the post it means that **we don't have your up to date email address**. If that is the case we would be grateful if you would kindly let us have it (send it by email!).

Yours Aye

Tony

Data Protection Act 1998

We hold information on our members in electronic form in compliance with the Data Protection Act for the purpose of running the club. To help us comply please check your details and let us know of any errors or changes required (including if you wish to be deleted from the register of members). Information we hold is shared with other members of the club but will not be disclosed to parties outside the club except with the express permission of members affected.