



Club Newsletter

Christmas 2017

CONTACT US

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FROM THE COMMODORE

Don't forget our newish website aquastarclub.co.uk

Any suggestions for improvements please let me know as it is a 'joint venture' between my son and myself.

The August on-line edition of the free 'Motorboat Owner' magazine will be of interest to those Aquastar owners who intend to join next year's club get-together and have not yet visited Dartmouth, and the September issue for those unknowledgeable about Yarmouth or its choice of interesting eating places.

April Adventures

Star has never been on a trip earlier than late May before, so when Ray from Gallant Lady said that they were planning a week from April 1st and would we like to join them, we put on the winter duvet, checked the Eberspacher and met them in Chichester Marina.

Admittedly they really wanted to show off their brand new replacement upper helm canvas covers as well as try out their first ever AIS system.

After a couple of nights, as we could not get into Emsworth as we were on neaps, we went to Haslar where we had the obligatory splendid supper on the old converted lightship.

If you are thinking of going up the 560 foot Portsmouth Millennium Tower - of course it had to be renamed the Spinnaker Tower as it was 6 years late in opening - do try and go up it at lunch time.

It costs just under £ 10 to go up but once up there you can have a very reasonably priced lunch (i.e. no more than a National Trust property lunch) and enjoy the spectacular view at the same time.

We had a lovely 360 degree view all round and could make out details on the Isle of Wight. Afterwards we explored the nearby Gunwharf Quays retail development where there were indeed a few nautical clothing bargains to be found.

Two days later we went to Bucklers Hard, and spent a couple of hours being educated in the fascinating local Maritime Museum, and had an exceedingly nice supper in the local 'Master Builder's House'. Gallant Lady unfortunately had to return on the Thursday, so the crew of Star took the 50 minute walk along to river up to their favourite 'Old Bakehouse' for a sandwich lunch at Beaulieu. As the picture shows we found ourselves moored in front of the famous Sir Francis Chichester's Gipsy Moth 1V 53 ft ketch (albeit it somewhat rebuilt).



Star in front of Gipsy Moth 1V at Bucklers Hard

Always wanting to stay overnight in Newtown Creek, but not daring to do it on our own the first time round, we had planned to do so with Gallant Lady. Unfortunately their early departure put

paid to this so we plucked up courage and went in on our own. Being early in the season there were plenty of buoys to choose from, so we remembered the advice given by a friendly sailor that the far end of the Clamerkin Lake reach is the most picturesque. We were lucky and picked up the buoy at the far end.

Newtown Creek from our dingy near the end of Clamerkin Lake, looking north west towards the entrance to the Solent (near high tide!).



As the sun continued to shine every day, after the one night, which gave us an opportunity to run our generator, we decided to spend two final nights at Bembridge before returning to Brighton. We had our customary supper at the 'Baywatch on the Beach' cafe

and discovered that it was the first evening that they had opened that year. The next day we learnt about the marina expansion plans and made the obligatory visit to our favourite 'Spinnaker Chandlery' - where we stocked up on some no.0, no.1 and no.2 gauge brass screws (useful for my wife's restoration work of antique mechanical music machines!).

June Adventure

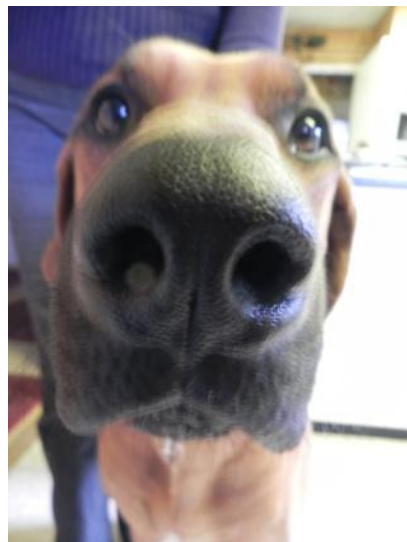
Don't copy the commodore - don't go out in weather which could get rough, however short, with less than ¼ of a tank of fuel!

Having upgraded some equipment and software and wishing to check it out before venturing across the Channel for the rally, we were returning home from Eastbourne to Brighton after an overnight stay there.

Having set off at 20 knots through the water for the 21 mile trip, the sea state suddenly became much worse than predicted after rounding Beachy Head to such an extent that on two occasions the propellers came out of the water enough to let the engines rev fast!

Nevertheless the issue was not so much the weather but the fact that both engines started spluttering as air got into the fuel pickup pipes on several occasions so we had to delicately nurse Star to minimise the violent pitching and rolling to try and keep the fuel rather than the air flowing into the Volvo KAMD300 engines (300 by the way is Volvo speak for 285hp).

The ship's dog, a Rhodesian Ridgeback, was definitely not amused.



2017 Club Rally - aka

'What is it with old boats - why does something always have to break down'.

After a serious interest from 9 boats, of which 8 booked for our get-together, the final count was 4 vessels crossing the Channel meeting up with one whose home berth was St Peter Port. Nevertheless we achieved 15 people for the annual club dinner at the Guernsey Yacht Club with the wine consumed kindly paid for by David Norman of M&G Engineering from St Sampsons.

Alas every one of the boats which ventured across had some form of mechanical problem.

- Kapana IV, after departing from Lymington, got south of the Needles and then had to turn back due to overheating on one engine. With new water hoses fitted they arrived in Cherbourg the next day.
- Gallant Lady had to do a temporary repair on a cracked engine exhaust bend.
- Star had problems with the stern thruster, main battery bank, gas alarm, steering, radio and Ebersapcher - more about these later, but,
- Flight was the most unlucky of all when one engine shut down below Sark due to the engine oil having run into the bilges from a corroded end of an engine oil cooler. 'Thank goodness for M&G' they said.

Anyway instead of crossing the Channel on the July 20th, Star struggled across to Bembridge from Brighton in her worst trip ever on the Saturday 22nd July. On the next day Star moved on and met up with Gallant Lady and Kapana IV where they had been holed up at their home berth in Lymington. The subsequent clinking of glasses announced that the rally had officially commenced .

Day 2. On the Monday we had 'the great break-out' and left in convoy for Cherbourg at 08:45, being the optimum time bearing in mind the winds and the tides, as calculated by the navigation department of Gallant Lady.

The 20% discount on berthing fees at Cherbourg on the production of one's RYA membership card was most welcome.

Star had the rear port side saloon cupboard out for the third time in the last three days to investigate the non-functioning of the TV, radio and Navtex circuits, together with water trickling down the bulkhead wall of the aft cabin and heads. The electrical connections were found to be sitting yet again in a large puddle of water which we finally had decided was coming down the radar arch following the cabling into this space. The drastic only remaining solution of spraying expanding foam into and around these cables where they come through the hole was adopted as the creation of a large cable loop made on the rear of this bulkhead had not worked. The collection of broken or rusty connections which had been found to be sitting in water were remade and the equipment now worked again.

Day 3. After the customary foray into the local supermarket led by the Ladies of Gallant Lady, exactly at tea time Flight announced their arrival and joined Star for tea and cake on board in the afternoon sun.

As the 8 of us were having our starter in the lovely marina restaurant, we saw a very elegant Aquastar arrive in the marina - it was Kapana IV, complete with new engine hose pipes. The commodore who had been watching their progress via an AIS app. on his iphone, had typically ½ hour earlier received that message 'you monthly data allowance has now been used up' - (and of course the restaurant wi-fi was not working). There were now 11 for dinner.

Day 4. Another lovely sunny day and Kapana IV left very early for Guernsey.

Day 5. Thursday 27th. It was very dark and very quiet when at 04:30 the earth (and the pontoon) moved when the stern-thruster on Star decided to fire up right under the heads of Anna and Ingvar. Though subsequently diagnosed as a faulty electronic relay module, of course the battery isolation switch had been put under the boards under the mattress under the bed so it was several minutes before calm, and the location of the pontoon, were restored.

At 06:45 BST (boat standard time!) the three remaining Aquastars departed, being the time the navigation department of Gallant Lady had decreed as being the best time to leave to get round the Cap de la Hague and through the Alderney Race. They were, as usual, spot on, and after an uneventful passage the three of us were safely tied up in St Peter Port by 10:30.

At 6 p.m. it was Pimms o'clock on board Star for the 11 from the three Aquastars present together with the past commodore Nichola who had timed her short holiday in Guernsey to coincide with our visit. The commodore collected the berthing fees from the boats and was able to make the one payment to the berthing master in order to obtain the 25% discount previously negotiated.



Day 6. At 11 am the 11 of us arrived by bus at the Aquastar Yard at St Sampsons for a tour conducted by Carl. It was interesting how many and diverse questions were asked and several interesting tips were also received. The attached photo shows the 'AOC Compound & Polish' that Aquastar currently use on their boats. Lee even dug out original drawings and specifications to answer one query we had. We saw a 430 Hardtop in its finishing stages.

We also learnt that for each new boat designed it would typically require the sale of 7 to 10 of these new boats to recoup the costs of the hull moulds.



Star had been having over the last day a few so called 'false alarms' from its engine room gas detector. In fact we were foolish to disregard them as such as when we returned to her for lunch Mrs Commodore commented on an unpleasant smell and went round opening all the windows. Mr Commodore had to check the fuel filters so he rolled back the carpet and lifted the central floor hatch. Upon stepping on to the lid of the battery compartment in his socks he exclaimed 'it's hot'! What had happened is that one of the batteries was red hot due to one of its cells short circuiting inside it and spitting out the fumes and acid.

4 new domestic batteries were ordered from M & G for collection from their pontoon on the Monday morning. Though the old ones had been showing 100% charge that morning, leading us to assume they were in good condition, they were indeed 12 year old lorry batteries and had done jolly good service - but it was a dangerous way to let one know that their time was up. In future we will pay more attention to the gas detector!

Having just cleaned himself up in time the commodore arrived at Pier 17 ready for an excellent dinner, with the wine of course chosen, as has now become the custom, by the club's resident sommelier, Ray, from Gallant Lady.

Day 7. A most jolly evening was had at the Guernsey Yacht Club where they looked after us all very well. A toast was made to our previous commodore Tony Giblett, as well as David Norman of M & G who most kindly provided the wine for the dinner. Geoff Willson and Christina just made it in time in spite of Spanish air traffic control's best endeavours to delay them.



We discovered that several other rally's over the last couple of weeks had been cancelled due to the weather. Interestingly one of these was Princess Yachts so well done to the Aquastars who had not been deterred and kept their flag flying!

Day 8. Sunday. The crew of Star and Kapana IV hopped onto the bus to Pleinmont where we had a 'good walk' up to the German observation tower to admire the views. This was followed by the customary crab sandwich and double magnum (of the ice cream variety) at the brilliant cafe close to the Pleinmont bus stop. We then enjoyed for another £1 the sightseeing trip back round the whole of the rest of the island to St Peter Port. Flight kindly hosted drinks on board that evening.

Day 9. Gallant Lady was the first to refuel at St Sampsons, followed by Star then Flight. Star had another problem - no steering - but this was quickly resolved when it was discovered that the engineer who had kindly looked at the stern-thruster (and confirmed that indeed it was the relay that was faulty) had knocked the hydraulic steering bypass lever sideways! At 44 pence a litre this was an opportunity not to be missed. Star then moved on to the nearby M&G pontoon to remove the three remaining domestic batteries and install the 4 new ones. The proposed overnight stay on a buoy off Sark was called off as upon inspecting it was deemed too bouncy for a good night's rest.

Day 10, August 1st. Flight left first, but unfortunately only got as far as Sark when one engine packed up. The cause was the engine oil escaping into the bilge because one end of the engine oil cooler end caps had corroded sufficiently to allow the end cap seal to dislodge. Fortunately M & G were on hand yet again to assist and fitted two new engine oil coolers. Gallant Lady and Star left soon after and had a smooth and sunny passage to Carteret having agreed that the wind was in the wrong direction for mooring up in the harbour at Alderney.

Day 11, Carteret. Heads down all day as raining most of the time. Considering the marina access dries out for much of the time, like we found on our last visit 2 years ago, we cannot understand why the local lifeboat is moored inside the marina.

Day 12, Carteret, Not so wet but still windy, and as the local village market was in full swing this had to be visited. Mrs Commodore did some Christmas shopping and the Commodore found a bottle of fantastic value 20 year old local Calvados AOC brandy. He now wishes he had bought a barrel of it.....it was agreed by all that it was the best French market ever seen.

Day 13. With better weather an escape was made. At our second waypoint outside Carteret we had a surprise hail on the radio from Marauder (David and Nicola Norman of M & G, obviously still keeping an eye on the rally participants!), who was almost on a reciprocal course into Carteret. After a surprisingly fair passage through the Alderney Race Cherbourg was reached.

Day 14. The last day in France was blessed with glorious weather, and Star and Gallant Lady celebrated with the last evening drinks together.

Day 15. Both vessels left at 7 a.m. to make best use of the weather and the currents for their respective destinations, the home port of Lymington for Gallant Lady, whilst Star was tied up at Bembridge by 11 a.m. for a 24 hour stop over before returning to Brighton.

Go West, young man, Go West or the 2018 'CRUISE IN COMPANY'

With due respect to the famous words of Horace Greeley, and not having been totally put off from boating by this year's problems, Star (from its new home berth at the Chichester Marina) plans to meet up with Gallant Lady and Kapana IV at their home port of Lymington's Berthon on June 29th for a two to three week excursion.

The plan is to aim for the Scilly Isles, though be grateful if we get as far as Falmouth with the vagrancies of the British weather. Enjoyment rather than distance is of course the overall aim.

As we consistently get a low numbers of boats actually turning up 'on the day' for the annual rally's, and for the commodore doing the organising it gets rather embarrassing having to contact several restaurants, clubs and marinas each and every time someone has to pull out, we have accordingly agreed that it would be simpler and more efficient if we assemble a nucleus of interested boats and then inform those others who may be interested of our provisional plans giving them the option of joining us for some or all of the time.

Marina accommodation, revictualing, places of leisure and refuelling can then be arranged as the need arises with a minimum of pre-organising (and multiple post cancellations!).

We will however continue to alternate for the foreseeable future each year between the Channel Islands + France and the south coast of England as this was the desired consensus from the survey of member's wishes I did a couple of years ago. However should there be significant interest in alternative arrangements do please pass this on to me.

If you are interested in joining us, even for part of the time, do please register your interest with me as soon as you are able to do so.

Don't forget there is also the facility on our website where members going on a trip can post their details on the confidential 'Member's trips' page should they want to advertise their plans and wish for company.

NEWS FROM 'GEOFF'S YARD'

"430 Hardtop" now based in the Hamble, the crafts name is "Sandpiper"
Launched in September 2017.

There has been some publicity in the Guernsey press about the closure of Aquastar Ltd. and the sacking of all its staff. With deference to Mark Twain's famous quote "The reports of my death have been greatly exaggerated" I have spoken to Geoff who has asked me to insert the following:

New drive for local boat designer/builder.

Aquastar International will be concentrating on the brokerage pre owned sales and forward order new boat sales for year 2018 build programme.

The Aquastar Guernsey office is strong in the market place for reselling brokerage Aquastar motor Yachts.

New build orders for Aquastar motor yachts will be planned for the mid-2018 and 2019 boating season, with planning to build in Series, to be cost effective in the market.

"Bespoke byword" the Boatyard mid Manager being replaced with working team leaders. The company has been outsourcing more work over the last two years with joinery and electrical contractors, who are now part of the outsourcing manufacturing team, makes for a leaner keener working.

The customers of bespoke Aquastar sea-boats regularly plan months ahead, giving the clients time to sell their existing craft.

The company will stay very active in forward order boat sales, new and brokerage now and going forward into 2018, with the new design product/model range.

The workshop will see new head of teams being set in place in the New Year and models next planned for building will be the new 430 Hardtop, new aft cockpit 430 and new aft cockpit and fly bridge 430 and others to follow.

E & OE Aquastar International

NEWS FROM 'M & G's YARD'

We re-engined the Jersey Aquastar 38 aft cockpit "April Rose" last winter with a pair of Volvo Penta D6 370hp she tops out at about 28 knots!

She also had a new wooden dash, new shafts, props etc.

For those who do not know, mechanical work is part of our work and we do as much boat care that is not mechanical as is. Pressure washing, antifouling, cleaning and polishing, glass-fibre work, stainless steel welding, carpentry etc.

TECHNICAL TIPS

Rudder stock greasing access.

On most, if not all 38s, and maybe other sizes too, for some reason there were no grease nipples on the glass-fibre tube holding each of the rudder stock assemblies. Instead, unless already replaced there is a ¼ inch plug.

A perusal of the A.S.A.P. catalogue brought up the Stauffer Greaser Cups with ¼" BSP threads, part number 807253. We bought two to replace the plugs.

After an initial liberal injection of waterproof grease, it is now comparatively easy to turn them a bit in order to inject more grease when one wishes to do so.



COMMODORE'S COMPLAINTS

Why do fuel hoses perish always at the wrong time - at least this one was not on our Aquastar but on our old faithful 4 HP 2-stroke OMC-Johnson outboard motor last April when we were moored to a buoy in Newtown Creek and wanting to go out to the local pub for dinner.

Asking around I have since discovered that using an alkylate petrol such as 'Aspen premixed 2-stroke' would have prolonged the life not only of the fuel but also the rubber hoses and connections on our outboard motor. This is designed especially for non-regularly used machinery and fuel which may remain around for a long time. This alkylate petrol keeps the engine cleaner and gives better running protection, better performance and a longer service life. The principle is that the cleaner the petrol, the less damage to the engine. Compared to pump fuels, alkylate petrol keeps for approximately 10 times longer and alkylate petrol can be stored for 3 - 5 years without losing quality; you don't have to run your machine dry before winter and it will start much easier after long periods of being stored. Many engine manufacturers now recommend that their engines only be run on alkylate petrol. The following is from the Aspen web site:



'Aspen 2 is the cleanest petrol that you can use. Aspen is made from alkylate petrol which is made from the gases from the top of the distillation tower which is then synthetically modified into a liquid again. The result is a petrol that is totally free from sulphur, benzene and aromatics (solvents). It is chemically inert meaning that you can leave the fuel in the machinery and your lawnmower will start next spring again. An added bonus is that it does not smell, the exhausts does not smell, it will not smoke and you are breathing a much cleaner air.'

We have bought ours off Amazon for £ 31.50 per 5 litres delivered (we ordered two cans).

For 4 strokes it is now advisable to buy the higher octane petrol; it won't improve the performance but will last longer. Premium fuel often still contains the dreaded ethanol, though sometimes in lower concentration.

The pump should display the ethanol content by way of an 'E' rating. E0 is ethanol free, whilst most fuels will be either E5 or E10, which is 5% and 10% ethanol respectively.

REGALIA



We have some very good quality club ties and these are available by post. The design is shown here and the logo is woven into a dark blue tie and is very smart. The price is £15.

Burgees are also available at £17 for the small ones (13") and £22 for the larger ones (19"). These are also well made, sewn and come with the toggle and braid for attachment to your boat.

Payments made electronically are most convenient, and help keep our costs down. Please send an email so we know we are to expect a payment, and to what it relates, (burgee, tie etc.):

Account: The Aquastar Club;
Sort Code: 20-68-10;
Account Number: 43945057.

MEMBER'S NEWS

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

Mr Gerde Jonge - Aquastar 38, Dauntless, moored at Rotterdam.

Mr John Martell - Aquastar 38, Flight, moored at Chichester.

Mr John Chadder - Aquastar 33, Just a Star, moored at Brighton.

Mr James Maxey - Aquastar 74, Silver Echo, moored at Antibes, France.

Mr Roger Holt - Aquastar 430, Sandpiper, moored at the Hamble.

Mr Gerry Jackson - Aquastar 48, Lady Daphne, moored at Sant Carles de la Rapita, Spain.

2) Message from Neil Herring of 'Victoria Marie' (Aquastar48)

Hi, just thought I would share with you and other owners our latest refurb. Had the blue stripes and logo redone, it was getting faded and tatty in places, Olly at Velociwrap in Hamble has done an excellent job, highly recommended.

Olly@velociwrap.co.uk 07766 647722 he travels all over, reasonable prices but obviously every job is different, are there 2 Aquastars with the same striping ?

QUOTES FOR BOATS

Do you remember The Seven Seas? They are the:

Arctic

Antarctic

North Atlantic

South Atlantic

Indian

North Pacific

South Pacific

And finally:



Happy New Year,