



# Club Newsletter

## Christmas 2021

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### FROM THE COMMODORE

As it was 5 years since I last did an update of the register of members of the Aquastar Owner's Club, in the covering letter of last Christmas's newsletter I asked the 94 recipients of the newsletter to confirm if they still wished to be a member.

I received 49 confirmations and over 40 did not reply! A second email to the remainder resurrected another 11, and together with the 12 new members of this year brings the updated list of members to 72. We are a very select club indeed!

Quite a few of you kindly also informed me where you kept your pride and joy, which was in a few cases different to what our records showed from when you joined the club. Thank you for the update. With hindsight I should also have asked everyone at the same time to update me of any changes in berthing location, so if any of you who have moved since joining the club and not updated us, please do go to the trouble and drop me an email.

We were most sad to hear that Neil and Claire have had to cease the publication of their brilliant on-line magazine 'Motorboat Owner' last July. It will certainly be missed.

The July edition of Practical Boat owner has a good article on electric outboard motors for those thinking about their dinghies. Don't forget that you can still buy 2-stroke outboard motors from M&G Engineering in Guernsey. (We hope to visit them in the summer of 2022).

### Summary of Aquastar boats built.

Now that Aquastar are not building boats any more I thought a summary of boats built would be of interest. Geoff's informs me from his records:

*Aquastar 27' up to 145 built*  
*Aquastar 32' up to 242 built*  
*Aquastar 33' up to 200 built*  
*Aquastar 38' up to 210 built (150 aft cabin)*  
*Aquastar 43' to 48' up to 50 built*  
*Aquastar 57' approaching 10 built*  
*Aquastar 65' 3 built*  
*Aquastar 74' 12 built*  
*Aquastar 80' 1 built*

*Fishing Boats 150*  
*Pilot Boats 75*  
*Sailing Yachts 16*

I understand from Roger Holt that his Aquastar 430, Sandpiper, which was launched in September 2017, was the last Aquastar to be made.  
Does anyone know otherwise - if not we (all?) owe Roger a drink!

### **2021 COVID busting West Country cruise**

The French did not want us this year, and having read the horrendously onerous visiting requirements for Guernsey (thanks to David Norman of Marine and General Engineering Ltd), we decided to stay in England and 'Go West'.

With Brexit bringing VAT-unpaid boats back from the continent, and existing boat owners not able to vacate their berths to go abroad to make spaces for visitors, together with the fact that anything that could float was floated, this year's trip was indeed a case of 'every man for himself' (and women and children last).

It seemed that booking ahead was the best course of action for those few places taking bookings, and for the others ring up on the morning that we wish to arrive. If not be prepared to tie up on mid-river pontoons or buoys.

On the phone we discovered Brixham was full until August, and adjacent Torquay for the first time in my lifetime was similarly fully booked.

So we started off by booking three nights in the comfortable Weymouth marina and then enquired about the floating pontoons at Teignmouth which take 8 visiting vessels.

We had not visited there before and it's only just above Torbay anyway. The harbourmaster advised us in settled weather we could currently enter with our 1.1 meter draught at almost any stage of the tide, though perhaps avoiding low tide at springs. We intended to be rather more cautious! That would place us in a good halfway position for our subsequent planned stop of Dartmouth or Salcombe.

Star, when going west from Chichester (and also from her previous home ports of Brighton and Newhaven), traditionally spends the first night in Yarmouth to break up the journey. As Yarmouth don't take bookings any more (well they say they will take 13!) to avoid disappointment on the day as they were busy, we booked the first night of June 17th in the Berthon marina at Lymington opposite - where we could meet up with Gallant Lady, who were going to join us, at their home marina.

Star celebrated her escape by hosting a "Pimms on the Pontoon" at 6 p.m. We were delighted that another 38, Arabesque, had also arrived and joined us, also saying that they would like to go to Weymouth with us the next day.

With a force 5 gusting 7 forecast off St Alban's Head for the next day we naturally decided to stay an extra night at Lymington. It paid off as we did not have a single drop of spray on the windscreen on our delayed passage west.

Interestingly there was some debate about whether we should go right across the inner Lulworth firing range as the official phone line with the pre-recorded times was non-functional. Arabesque saved everyone's bacon by ringing channel 8 as we approached and discovered we were required to stay south of the 50 degrees 35' parallel (just below the Atomic Buoy).

After we all made a small course adjustment Star found it was cutting it rather fine as we actually passed quite close to this military ops. vessel 'Smit Wey' which was patrolling the range boundary!

Our favorite Italian restaurant Enzo on the front at Weymouth was enjoyed by the 8 of us for dinner on the Sunday.

Again a force 5 gusting 7 was forecast for our Tuesday departure so Star and Gallant Lady decided to once again stay an extra night, and go the following day when a force 2 was forecast, and the 1.6 metre waves reduced to 0.5 metres. Arabesque repositioned themselves at the Portland marina so they wished to get back to Yarmouth the next morning without worrying about the Weymouth bridge opening time restrictions.



Firing Range patrol craft

We now think we understand why there is the 60/40 split for purchasing boat diesel. Never before in mid June, in fact on the longest day, have we had to have the boat heating on. We also took the opportunity with the frequent rain to find, and try and plug, a couple of small leaks between the upper helm windows and canopy with that marvelous clear silicone.

Wednesday saw us arrive at Teignmouth for one night. It was mid-flow so delicate control in berthing against the middle pontoon was required. We are conversant with swinging moorings, but have never before seen swinging pontoons! For the record both the Reeds and Shell almanacs say that when entering the harbour, the third pontoon is for locals only. In fact it is the first one which is for locals only (Newfoundland), the second and third are clearly labelled as 'visitors'.

Unfortunately when we asked the harbour master where we were supposed to moor the dingy when going ashore, he just said 'on the beach'. As we did not really fancy getting our feet wet and sandy before walking around the town, we decided to give it a miss.

A phone call to Noss-on-Dart confirmed that they were not accepting any visitors due to the reconstruction of the marina. So Star decided to go to the Darthaven marina where there were luckily still some spaces on the visitors pontoon.

Star lost its other companion Gallant Lady that morning when they opted to go to Brixham instead of Dartmouth. They liked it there so much that they decided not to go any further west, and after a couple of days returned to the Solent leaving Star to continue west on her own.



Star at Port Pendennis Marina

After two nights in the Darthaven marina, Star continued west to the Falmouth Port Pendennis marina for three nights where Star in turn decided that that was far enough west (for we had actually been to The Isles of Scilly quite recently in 2018).

First stop on the return was a glorious night at Fowey. After a leisurely trip at displacement speed we arrived at lunchtime to find 9 blue boys vacant near our boat. However

they did fill up with sailing boats at around tea time!



Star on a buoy at Fowey

We had a couple of nights booked again in Dartmouth for our return passage, but as we were passing Plymouth we had of course to stop one night at Mayflower Marina when we discovered that the club's previous commodore Tony happened to be in residence, and lurking around the marina. Jolly Jacks, as is customary for the Aquastar Club, provided the dinner venue.

Our next port of call was Poole so we took the opportunity to book two nights in advance. Our favorite town centre Poole Quay was already booked with a long waiting list, so Parkstone Yacht Haven obliged us instead. Being situated between Sandbanks and the town centre it was a 40 minute walk along the waters edge to visit the shops.

Fortunately the force 6 had moderated to a 3 so we were able to make our 3 night reservation at Island Harbour on the Isle of Wight.



Parkstone Yacht Haven from Star's pontoon

What we learnt there was that there were about a dozen fewer visitor berths available as the management had decided early in Covid-19 to change them for monthly / annual contracts.

We also nearly got caught out in the entrance channel with a misunderstanding about the depth. My records for the marina says as a guide entry is high water plus or minus 3 hours (our draught is 1.1 meters). As it was 4 hours before high water, but was neaps, I rang the marina when half way down the Medina to enquire the depth in the entrance channel. He said 1.9 meters. When we arrived opposite the marina entrance in the middle of the river the depth had risen to 2 meters. So far so good.



Newport Town Quay

However when the lock keeper then called us in to the lock, as we drove down the entrance we watched the depth slowly go down and down, in fact down to 1.2 meters.

When I queried this he said "I know - the depth I gave you, was the depth in the main river"!

In spite of being moored well inland we still experienced gusts of force 8 onboard.

On the Thursday we returned to our home berth in Chichester from what was surely the wettest and least sunny 3 week boating holiday in the 20 years plus that we have had a motor boat.

### **PRELIMINARY PLANS FOR THE 2022 'CRUISE IN COMPANY'.**

Alternating each year, as we normally do, between visiting the West Country and France plus the Channel Islands, the proposed plans of Gallant Lady and Star for the 2021 cruise in company to France and the Channel Islands did not of course take place.

So hopefully in 2022 we can try again. The plan, after refuelling with cheap diesel in Guernsey, is to go up and east along the French coast, instead of east and down the French coast as we did last time.

If the belligerency of the French at the time make this unattractive, we would propose to spend more time in the Channel Islands before returning home via a different route.

- Star and Gallant Lady to depart from Lymington about June 16<sup>th</sup> to Guernsey.

This will give us the opportunity to fuel up, do a few days of sightseeing and check out those crab sandwiches at the Pleinmont Beach Cafe, as well as patronise our favourite restaurant, Pier 17.

- Aquastar Owner's Club annual dinner on Saturday June 18<sup>th</sup>, at the Guernsey Yacht Club,

- Courtesy of David Norman, Marine & General Engineers Ltd have very kindly offered to show us round their works on Monday June 20<sup>th</sup>, see what they do and how they do it, and conclude with a Q & A session on boat maintenance (or indeed anything boaty).

Then either:

- Cherbourg,
- St Vaast,
- Carentan,
- Ouistreham / Pegasus Bridge / Caen,
- Honfleur,
- Refuel if necessary at Le Havre,

Or:

- spend time visiting Sark and or Herm,
- visit Jersey for a few days,
- Dartmouth, and a few other locations before

Return by July 6<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> at the latest.

We would be delighted if anyone would like to join us for some or all of our cruise. Do please register your interest with me as soon as you are able to do so, at the latest by the end of January so I can make provisional bookings.

Calling all Channel Islanders. If any of you are free at the time for the annual club dinner do please join us for the evening (and also let me know for booking purposes). At the last Club dinner in St Peter Port we had 17 at the Guernsey Yacht Club. This was followed by an after dinner quiz with prizes kindly donated by David Norman of M&G Engineering Ltd.

## NEWS FROM 'GEOFF'S YARD'

Brokerage office very busy on 33' and 38' to 70' used Aquastars, if anyone is thinking of selling their 33' or 38' or 57' please let Geoff know, we need more vessels to offer this is our main emphasis, and refit work.

## NEWS FROM THE M&G BOATYARD IN GUERNSEY

At Christmas 2020 I was sure all this Covid malarkey was finishing, how wrong I was. In 2021 we had another 6 week lockdown and an exceptionally busy work season. Boating has continued to be very popular especially for smaller boats, larger boats may not be used a lot but they still need as much maintenance. We continue to see a large number of second-hand boats being sold or arriving in Guernsey and a good number of new boats arriving of all sizes.

Guernsey had a late start for visiting boats coming to Guernsey in 2020 with a fair number of UK boats visiting, but very few from France and Europe because of our complicated Covid 19 measures.

We hope that we will see a more normal season in 2022.

My Aquastar 48 "Marauder" is out of the water for the winter and has had her engine servicing work completed. I had intended to fit a new teak deck this winter, but I was very late getting quotes, probably I will order one in early 2022 and fit it in the autumn or in two stages over two winters. I have ordered new screen covers, aft deck dodgers and a flybridge cover for the seating, due in February 2022.

A Jersey based Aquastar 38 flybridge that we have undertaken a lot of work on has done just that, winter one a new teak fore deck and coach roof, winter two cockpit and capping rails and this winter the flybridge, it's a bit easier on the pocket this way. We finished the re-powering of a local Aquastar 33 with a pair of Volvo Penta D4 230 hp and she is running very well.



My use of "Marauder" in 2021 has been minimal but we did have a week on her in Carteret which I love, it's probably my second home in a normal season being only 33 miles away. The new marina extension

opened in June 2021 exactly one year later than originally planned. This doubles the marina size with many larger berths and now accommodates 640 boats, and the sailing school has been greatly enhanced.

For those that know Carteret, the marina gates have been moved down to where the fishing boats berth by the slipway and the "Kalakaliki bar", this gives a large area of retained water for the sailing school at low water. For the best descriptions and photos see the Digimap.GG website for marina information and photos for Carteret and all other marinas in our area. See <https://www.digimap.gg/marine/marinas/carteret/>

Due to Brexit, French fishermen and their disputes, the French elections and le petit Macron etc the paperwork is now much more complicated for arriving or leaving France with a private boat than "Just turning up" as we used to do. However after sending emails and filling in forms and sending vaccination certs, scans of passport etc, three French customs officers will drive down for 45 minutes from Cherbourg to meet us at noon in the ferry terminal, armed with laptops and revolvers (I make a point of not arguing with anyone with a gun) and meet you to scan your passports and check the forms etc. I assume this then means as they are near the sacred "lunch time" they can have lunch in Carteret on expenses. The procedure for leaving is the same. It's a faff but it's doable.

The tourist industry is very unhappy about this as are the local marinas and the “Chambres de Commerces” who operate the marinas as it is damaging tourism. I hope this will be simplified and relaxed in 2022 or possibly in 2023 if travel returns to normal?

Guernsey is very much open for visiting yachts and the Harbour Authority is now investigating the building of a new marina in the Pool Area for local and visiting boats that would also give shelter to the Victoria Marina.

We would be pleased to see any visiting Aquastar Owners coming to Guernsey or to assist should you have any problems with your boats. Please note our new telephone numbers (the old ones will continue to work for a while as well):

M&G Boatyard & Service Tel 01481 200 900 Email Boatyard@mge.gg

M&G Chandlery & Parts Tel 01481 200 901 Email Chandlery@mge.gg

M&G Emergency call out Tel 01481 200 903 (diverts to a mobile).

If someone wants to talk Aquastars, boats in general, or French customs procedure please call me, David Norman, on 07781 104 411 or email David.N@mge.gg .

## FROM OUR TECHNICAL DEPARTMENT

### 1. Protecting horns from water entry.

The most common cause for your nice shiny trumpet horns stopping working is of course ingress of salt water spray from the front (but see Commodore’s Complaints below).

When we were in Piplers of Poole about 10 years ago (now Force 4) we stumbled upon a very practical solution.

Two of their standard winch covers stretched over the front, being a perfect fit, have put a stop to this problem, and they still sound!



### 2. Voltage reducer

Those of you that use the ‘Ultrasecuredirect’ mains power failure alert system for shore powering monitoring (to send a text message should the marina power fail) - see summer 2016 newsletter, may have read my ‘Commodore’s Complaints’ in my last but one newsletter.

I have solved this issue of the units rechargeable battery running flat by replacing it with this converter (see adjacent photo) so it runs off the boats domestic battery, thus giving it almost infinite life due to its very low current drain. This was purchased through ebay for £ 6.99, including postage, from [moriomonline](http://moriomonline) .



### 3) Cannot solder onto black corroded wires - one way of cleaning copper wires which have gone black is as follows:

This process uses two solutions, one is regular table salt and vinegar. Any kind of vinegar will work. Its the acidity and corrosiveness of the salt and vinegar together that you want.

The other solution is sodium bicarbonate, or baking soda, and water. This is used to neutralize the corrosive properties of the first solution, and to further clean the wires.

1: Strip the wires to be cleaned.

2: Get 2 containers, one for each solution. They can be paper cups, plastic, glass, bowls, whatever you can find.

3: Get 1 tablespoon of raw salt, and put it in one of the containers. Fill up the rest of the container with vinegar, and stir the both together. As a general rule of thumb, put as much salt in the vinegar as will dissolve.

4: Get 1 tablespoon of Sodium Bicarbonate, (baking soda) and add it to the other container. Fill up the rest with water, and stir well. Add more baking soda to make it cloudy. The amount is not important, as long as it is alkaline to cancel the acid of the vinegar solution.

5: Put the stripped end of the wire in the vinegar solution, and stir the solution with the wire. any wire you want cleaned needs to be under the solution. Movement of the wire in the liquid speeds up the process.

6: After 2 minutes or so, the wire will look very shiny and new in the vinegar solution. The acid and salt in the solution is etching away the oxides, exposing the bare metal. Make sure the metal is uniformly shiny. Leave it in longer if it is not perfectly clean throughout.

7: Once the wire is satisfactorily clean, remove the wire from the vinegar, and plunge it into the baking soda solution to neutralize the acid's corrosive properties. If the wire was exposed to the air, without neutralizing the acid first, it would quickly corrode again. The baking soda keeps it clean and shiny. Swish the wire around in the baking soda water for about 10 seconds, and then you are done!! **Shiny new wire ready for soldering, and conducting, once again!**

#### 4) Television versus Tapestry on a '38.



In the summer 2019 newsletter I outlined how I fitted a row of LED lighting behind the pelmet down each side of our saloon so we could have 'mood lighting', whereby all combinations of brightness and colour can be controlled by a remote control unit. This enabled us to dispense with the very bright 8 ceiling LED lights when entertaining or watching T.V.

However Mrs Commodore likes to sometimes spend the evenings doing tapestry work with the T.V. on in the background (which I can enjoy too of course!).

Accordingly she needed a selection of only 2 of 3 of the bright ceiling lights for her work. Unfortunately each of the switches for the ceiling lights turned on a pair - one on each side - which of course made watching the T.V. not very satisfactory.

The second photo shows the addition of three 'rocker' light switches behind the door at the top of the stairwell going down to the rear cabin, which enables one to individually turn off the three rearmost ceiling lights on the T.V. (starboard) side, leaving the port ones on where Mrs Commodore sits to do her needlepointing work.



#### 5) Bits & Bobs

When doing repairs to canvas / canopy fixings I have found the following firm (J. Clarke marine) provides those bits one cannot get elsewhere:



## 6. An alarming Volvo instrument gauge.

This is the upper helm instrument panel for many Volvo engines. We could not understand why one of ours had started to emit a constant half-volume subdued alarm type of sound.

Upon checking everything on the more comprehensive lower/main helm position, I discovered that the fault warning buzzer was going off at half cock for no reason. If I pressed the adjoining 'alarm test' button it went loud (as it should) before reverting back to the annoying low-level sound.



As our upper helm is under canvas it could not be direct water ingress, but it could still be dampness getting in. A squirt of WD40 did not alleviate the pain but after collecting from home my 40 year old can of 'Servisol Aero-Klene' electrical and mechanical contact cleaning fluid, I found a couple of squirts of this resolved the problem nicely!

## 7. Rope + Chain v Chain only.

Unfortunately we have not been as methodical as other boat owners in taking our anchor chain and rope (30 metres chain plus 90 metres rope) out of our anchor locker each year. As we had not done so since visiting the Scilly Isles in 2018, we did so onto a pallet during this spring's 'out of the water' session. After removing less than 10 metres of chain we could not get any more out. Oh dear!

A look inside the chain locker (in our 38 the 'door' is at the front of the fore cabin) showed that to our amazement instead of the chain sitting neatly on top of the rope, without asking our permission, the chain and rope had decided to swap around so the heavier chain had nearly all gone underneath the rope! If there had been an emergency we would not have been able to anchor in anything deeper than a couple of metres!

From now on we will check it each season.

It also certainly strengthens the case for chain only with no rope.

For the record if your galvanised chain appears with that whitish scale (most likely to be zinc hydroxide which forms when stored wet with little air circulation), it can easily be removed by brushing with a weak acid such as white vinegar, followed by a fresh water rinse. One old trick with old chain is to put the chain with 5 or 10 litres of cheap vinegar in a cement mixer for 10 to 15 minutes - it comes out clean and shiny!

## **INDEX OF TECHNICAL INFORMATION FROM PREVIOUS NEWSLETTERS.**

I have produced a listing of articles/snippets which I have written of a technical nature from previous issues of the newsletter and put it at the top of the 'Newsletters & Articles' page of the website. I include a copy of it here for your information: -

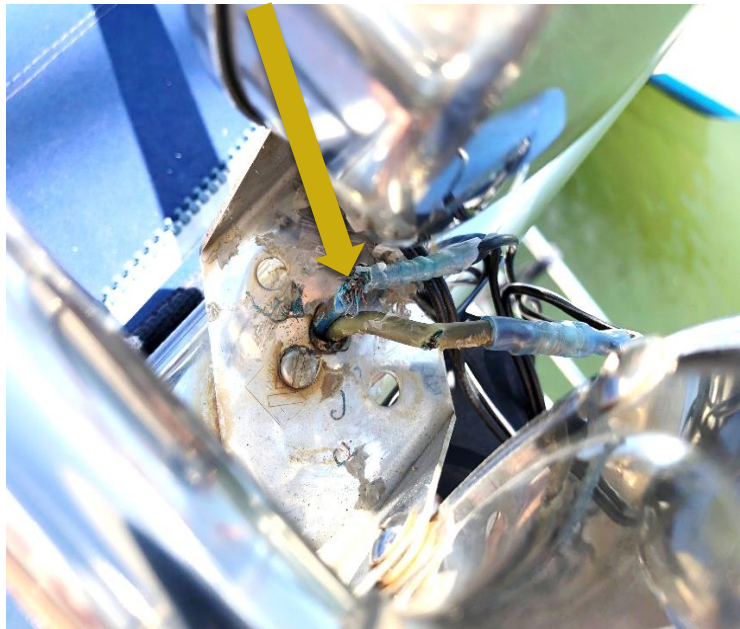
- |                |   |
|----------------|---|
| Christmas 2020 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Window catches / opening stays</li><li>- Electronic antifoul</li><li>- Primary fuel filtration change-over system</li><li>- Voyage tracking app</li><li>- Outboard motor stand</li><li>- Synthetic teak decking</li></ul> |
| Summer 2020    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Synthetic teak decking</li><li>- Care of GRP; cleaning, polishing &amp; waxing</li><li>- Aquastar 38 fuel consumption</li></ul>   |
| Christmas 2019 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Where to buy a 2-stroke outboard engine</li><li>- AIS &amp; satellite AIS</li><li>- Volvo EDC control unit repair</li><li>- Fuel bug - again</li></ul>  |
| Summer 2019    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- cleaning heat exchangers</li><li>- bilge pump</li><li>- supercharger/turbocharger issues</li><li>- fresh water filtration</li><li>- LED lighting</li><li>- Volvo KAMD300 heat exchangers</li></ul>                        |
| Christmas 2018 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Fuel polishing systems &amp; fitting</li><li>- gelcoat polishing</li><li>- Bembridge Bar</li><li>- wi-fi booster</li></ul>  |
| Summer 2018    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- steering column oil leak</li><li>- fresh water accumulator pressurising</li><li>- 'Scare Gull' v 'Gull Sweep' update</li></ul>  |
| Christmas 2017 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- rudder stock greasing</li><li>- 'Aspen' premixed 2 stroke petrol &amp; ethanol in fuel</li></ul>  |
| Easter 2017    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- replacing a sliding door lock on a 38</li><li>- water injection bends (on KAMD 300)</li><li>- renovating black powder coated engine controls</li><li>- 'Borocol' teak deck treatment</li></ul>                            |
| Christmas 2016 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- shaft brushes</li><li>- 'Plastimo' anemometer repairs</li><li>- ships radio and AIS interfering</li></ul>   |
| Summer 2016    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- fuel consumption of clean v dirty hull</li><li>- battery monitor issues</li><li>- shore power monitoring update</li></ul>   |

- Easter 2016        - 'Scare Gull' v 'Gull Sweep'
- Aquastar 33 fuel consumption curves
- Volvo KAMD 300 fuel flow monitoring kit
- December 2015   - fridge - mains v 12 volts supply update
- AIS signal monitoring software
- shore power monitor
- 12 volt relay issues
- January 2015     - fridge - mains v 12 volt supply issues
- September 2014   - fuel bug

## COMMODORE'S COMPLAINTS

### 1. HORN - if God had intended us to sail he would never have given us motor boats.

It's always useful to have a working horn! This was brought home to us as we have recently been 'cut up' by a grown-up man in a very small sailing dingy not much bigger than him - and blissfully unaware of /ignoring the Colregs (as well as common sense) in the sometimes narrow and shallow channel from Chichester marina to the Solent.



When you have a 12 ton boat moving along slowly increasing its 'restricted in ability to manoeuvre' in this narrow channel it does of course take a few yards to stop. This so called 'sailor' just tacked - from going away from us to going right in front of us - so that we could not even see him under our bow.

We do not understand how we did not actually hit, or even sink, him. To makes matters more 'interesting' he then started to send semaphore signals to us with some of his fingers!

I do periodically test our horn. When I tried it (in the marina) last May it just gave a small click. Oh dear, was that an expensive sounding click I wondered?

With hindsight I should have looked at the horn itself first but decided to go to the relay which links the lower helm button with the upper helm button which is situated just below the upper helm, and has the main supply feed. Alas though the problem was not found there I did notice that the cable from the relay up to the horn through the radar arch was covered with black powdery surface corrosion as marine grade (tinned) wire had not been used. But there was still a good connection and a reasonable voltage at the relay contacts.

Getting the extending 'surveyors' ladder out from the front wardrobe I looked at the horn itself. Having taken the end of the horn off I discovered the voltage at its terminals there was 5 volts instead of around 12 - 13 volts. I then looked at the cable coming out of the (un-rubber-grommited) hole from the radar arch and when I bent it to look at the joints with the horn cable the insulation cracked off and as you will see from the picture the blue wire in fact had only about three of the strands left. This was the cause of the voltage drop which rendered the shiny horn useless and also where the water was getting into the wire to make it corrode all along its length.

Half a day later, with the help of Mrs Commodore and plenty of Fairy Liquid, we managed to get a new (marine grade) cable up from the upper helm relay through the radar arch and connected to the horns.

## 2. Volvo replacement ECU.

We have already had to replace a burnt out electronic clutch on one of the superchargers on our KAMD 300 engines (Volvo-speak for 280 hp); (details of symptoms and diagnosis is on pages 2 & 3 of my Christmas 2018 newsletter).

For those interested in these, and similar Volvo engines, the supercharger is powered off an engine belt. It has an electromagnetic clutch which disengages at around 2400 RPM, when the turbocharger takes over; and for those very interested the supercharger does not run at idling or in neutral if the engine is warm).

The supercharger forces this compressed air via a one-way flap through the turbocharger hence creating more torque at low engine revs.

In my Summer 2019 newsletter I commented (Commodore's Complaints no.4) on how I was getting a bit concerned about how one of the engines would hunt at around 2600 rpm. Subsequent investigation confirmed that this was due to the supercharger cutting in and out when it should have remained off. Further cruising in this engine range would sooner or later have resulted in a further costly clutch replacement.

So after various checks, including the operation of this non-return flap, and more recently by swapping the engine ECU's (electronic control unit) over between engines, and finally discussions with Volvo Penta, it was reluctantly decided to replace the troublesome ECU at a cost of £ 2600 (inc. labour and VAT) in April of this year (and that was after a 10% discount!).

We had decided not to risk a second-hand ECU (none were on the market anyway when we looked) as it is electronic, not mechanical, and a new one would come with a full warranty as well.

N.B. If anyone does need to replace a Volvo ECU, if is able to find, and wishes to risk, a second-hand unit, the following additional steps over and above that required for a new unit would be required:

- the old ECU hardware number would need to match the replacement ECU hardware number (and the ECU software made compatible with the boat software),
- the replacement ECU needs to be reprogrammed so that the Chassis ID corresponds to the one on the existing engine driveline. Only Volvo Penta dealers can do this, and even then only those that still have access to an old programming system called PEPS.

## 3. Wasps.

Is it us or just our boat?

Some of you may remember my Christmas 2018 newsletter which mentioned that Mrs Commodore discovered an abandoned wasp starter-nest in our galley sliding cupboard on the second day of that summer's excursion.

Well during this years spring 'out of the water' session the two of us were replacing the 4 leaking bolts that holds the Eberspacher's exhaust outlet on the hull, when to our amazement on two occasions that afternoon a wasp flew straight out of the pipe when we were refixing it. Fearing the worst we gave the heating system a nice hot run and then put a bit of kitchen paper in the hole to stop it returning - and left it there till we were ready for our summer trip to the west country.



#### 4. Another blocked pipe.

The loo in our aft cabin had been getting slightly more difficult to flush into the holding tank each year, but we had thought that this was just old age (its or ours, we were not sure). However not having used it for over 1 year due to Covid, this year, when in Dartmouth, we found that we could not flush anything into it at all.

After checking that the carbon granule filter was not stopping the air flow (as when it once got wet it expanded, started disintegrating, and blocked the pipe) we thought that the next thing was to take apart the joint where it goes into the holding tank and then work forward or backwards, as appropriate, to discover where the blockage was.

After purchasing a large enough pair of adjustable water pump pliers from the local Travis Perkins in Dartmouth - for £39, to our horror this is what we found; the pipe was completely blocked by a hard, almost dry, cake.



Probing with the boat's 1 metre long bendy wire enabled us to conclude that the best course of action was actually to replace it, together with the waste pipe out of the holding tank, with fresh new sanitary 'low odour' waste hose. That would have to wait till we got home!

#### FROM OUR MEMBERS.....

JOHN MARTELL writes:

##### Flight's cooling problems - the de-coking solution

We took our Aquastar 38 for its early season testing run into the Estuary at Chichester. We have twin Volvo Penta KAMD 44 Compressor engines, circa 2002. These had had very little exercise in the past year. A few miles into the Estuary just past Itchenor, there was a very loud piecing warning sound, one we all dread and just can't ignore. Yes we were overheating. The port engine was switched off and we returned on starboard only.

We considered the usual overheating suspects:

1. Impellor naff (inspected and found to look fine)
2. Sea water not circulating sufficiently strongly
3. Failure of oil cooler, exhaust cooler etc.
4. Problems with the fresh water system (say pump failure)
5. No doubt several others.

Back in the marina we observed the raw water intake through the sight glass. The port engine flow was not as strong as it should be. We swapped the inlet pipes to check there was no external blockage to the flow from say a plastic bag. Again the port engine flow was in the same sad state.

The Commodore gently asked when the engines were last de-scaled. He was met with a dumb silence from me. Apparently, they should be descaled every few years. I rather doubt if ours had ever been descaled/decoked, certainly not in the last 5 years of our ownership.

YouTube was consulted and had plenty to say. Basically there are two methods of descaling. Firstly to introduce a descaling solution into the raw water cooling system in a one off fashion by, say, putting the descaler in the raw water at the filter, turnover the engine for a few seconds, hope it stays in the system and leave overnight to descale. Secondly continuously pump the solution around. I went for the second, which seemed to be the better job.

I used a 15 litre plastic container as a sump, connecting the raw water inlet pipe to a small bilge pump and the raw water exit pipe was disconnected and fed to the sump. I used a small 12 volt battery (scavenged from a lawn mower) for the power, which I reckoned was easier than finding a 12 volt source. There is a YouTube video actually based on the Volvo CAD 44 engine showing this. The layout was different to mine in that they were able to connect into the system after the impellor. I had to remove mine to ensure a circuit.

I used "Rydlyme" as the cleaning agent (5litres per engine). It seemed to claim to do it all and, of course, would be friendly to the environment. I used 5 litres per engine adding it to some water already in the sump. I pumped in a stop start fashion for a couple of hours, left the solution in the engine overnight and pumped again next morning, before reconnecting the various pipework.

There was one distinct difference from the video which stated the solution colour went from dark green to dark black in that mine very much went from dark green to colourless over the period.

As a result I now have that warm feeling that my raw water cooling channels and tubes are as clean as new. Oh and the engines run fine now.

As a result I now have that warm feeling that my raw water cooling channels and tubes are as clean as new. Oh and the engines run fine now.

John and Sue from Flight.



PAUL BLAMPIED writes:

Solution to Aquastar Gebo opening portholes, which let rain water in whenever you forgot to close them.

MoonSpirit our 33ft Aquastar is now fitted with eyebrows, An aluminum door draft excluder brush is a perfect colour match for the Gebo port holes.

A brush bar would not be the first thing you think about as something to stop water, but the tightly packed soft bristles, just like a thatched roof don't let water through.

Cut the bar to length of the oblong port hole and round off the ends.

(The standard door length of draft excluder is long enough for two portholes)

Screw it onto a piece of scrap wood to hold the bristles bent at 90 degrees & pour on a kettle of boiling water, let it cool down then poured on a second kettle of boiling water (just so the bristles get the hang of how they should be bent) once cooled remove from the scrap wood. As expected the 90deg bend partly sprung back out leaving the bristles with a 45 degree bend

Stuck onto the window frame with some double sided spongy tape, then finished off with a small bead of silicone. You now have now have a smart looking water deflector. Unlike a solid gutter there is nothing hard to catch legs or ropes on, just soft bendy bristles.



## MEMBER'S NEWS

**We are pleased to welcome during 2021 the following new members to the club:**

Mr Richard Stephens, Fast Flow, Aquastar 38, berthed in Chichester.

Mr Jeremy Clarke, Bellini, Aquastar 33, berthed in Portsmouth.

Mr Neil Cotillard, Joie De Vivre, Aquastar 38, berthed in Jersey.

Mr Iain Crosbie, Artemis, Aquastar 38, berthed in Largs.

Mr Craig Faulkner, Venture Lady, Aquastar 38, berthed in Lymington.

Mr Matthew & Mrs Joy Squibb, Lady E, Aquastar33, berthed in Gosport.

Mr Alan & Mrs Sheila Hensler, Beebok, Aquastar 48, berthed in Lymington.

Mr John Hawker, Lady Rose, Aquastar 27, berthed in Lymington.

Mr Richard Williams, Crossbow, Aquastar 38, berthed in Deganwy, Wales.

Mr Nicholas Carter, Odin, Aquastar 38, berthed in Harwich.

Mr Adrian Turner, Kayber Star, Aquastar 33, berthed in Southampton.

Mr Stuart & Mrs Jill Merrilees-Adams, Star of Arne, Aquastar 43, berthed in St Jean de Losne.

## 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 £18 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.

**Don't forget our website: [aquastarclub.co.uk](http://aquastarclub.co.uk)**

## QUOTES FOR BOATS -

How happy is the sailor's life,  
From coast to coast to roam,  
In every port he finds a wife,  
In every land a home.

**FINALLY SOME LIGHT RELIEF** - taken at the Babbacombe Model Village whilst visiting Torquay:



*Nguyen.*