



Dates for your diary

Sunday 3 April 2005 – Engine overhaul

Ever wanted to know what makes up an Outboard motor? Come along on Sunday 3rd April. The PFYC Guardboat Engine is having an op to change its gear change shaft. A guided tour of the engine will be given, explaining what the major bits do with some supervised hands-on activity. It'll take two 1.5 hour sessions over lunch. Contact Malcolm on 01847 896885 or Steve on 01847 895959 for more information.

Monday 18 April 2005 – Gaidhealtachd Sailing launch

1830 Dingwall Mart, Humberston, Baileichaul Road, Dingwall. 'Gaidhealtachd Sailing' (GS) was created to serve the needs of sailors of all disciplines in the Highland Council area, and is believed to be an important forum for the sport of sailing in the Highlands, giving all sailing clubs and associations in the area the chance to be represented at the right levels. If anyone is interested in attending, please contact Jane Scott (Development Officer RYA Scotland) by emailing jane.scott@rya-online.net, or by calling 0131 317 7388 during working hours by Monday 11th April if possible.

Sunday 24 April 2005 – First dinghy racing of season

Normal format, 2 races, with the first starting at 1400.

Saturday 30 April 2005 – Cruiser craning in

Provisional date, start 0900. Thanks once more to Alan Doull for organising this.

Saturday 4 June 2005 – Mission Fayre/Raft Race

As for last year it has been decided that these two events will be combined again. Coastguard Raft Race will start at 1300, followed by the Mission Fayre. Offers of assistance will be gratefully received. We will be looking for a guard boat team, servers of hot drinks in the clubhouse for cold wet rafters, people to man a stall at the mission, contributions for the stall, and any other offers of assistance. Any offers of help please contact Mark Raffle (01847 894132 or commodore@pfyc.org.uk)

Sat/Sun 18/19 June 2005 – Midsummer Regatta

Further details to follow, but likely to be similar to last year (better weather I hope) – that is 3 races each day with a social on the Saturday evening.

Saturday 25 June 2005 – Monday Club BBQ/Karaoke

The Monday Club is a voluntary organisation for people with learning difficulties. They usually meet on Monday evenings, but this is their end of summer session party. We have previously given the occasional use of the clubhouse for other Monday Club events. PFYC members are also invited to join the party, 1200 – 1800.

Saturday 16 July 2005 – Town Improvements Race

As for last year, the Town Improvements Cup will be awarded for a race organised by Town Improvements for gala week. Details to follow, but race will be in the vicinity of Thurso beach and harbour. Other watersports are being invited to participate on the day.

Other social events – Please let us know if there is anything else you would like to see organised as social events.

Contacts

E-mail addresses – To receive rapid communications, please send yours to commodore@pfyc.org.uk

Newsletter contributions – Send to Mark Raffle by the means of your choice, but preferably by e-mail to commodore@pfyc.org.uk.

I'd be pleased to receive comments on anything else you'd like to see in the newsletter. Contributions always welcome.

Dinghy training course

The club's beginners training course has traditionally been held in April/May time and approaches have been made to people on the list who have expressed an interest. There are a few still to approach but, as usual, lots of the people are not taking up the offer. It is therefore desired to gauge further interest.

We are looking for people over 12 years of age, who can swim and are keen to try a new sport (and ideally get hooked!).

Please ask around and contact Malcolm Lord if you have friends who are interested. Malcolm can be contacted at vicecommodore@pfyc.org.uk or on 01847 896885. Very limited number of places left now – contact Malcolm very soon!

Committee

Thanks to Steve Mowat, who has volunteered his services as a committee member. The offer was gratefully accepted.

If anyone's interested ... we still need a Training Secretary...

Accounts

Auditing of the 2003 - 2004 accounts has now been completed. Copies are available on request.

Clothing

We are considering purchasing club clothing, but will only do this if there is sufficient and definite interest to generate a viable sized order. We do also still have a small number of items remaining from previous years. Anyone interested in club clothing of any variety, please advise Mark Raffle (01847 894132 or commodore@pfyc.org.uk)

Powerboat courses

It is planned to offer further Level 2 National Powerboat Courses at the start of the sailing season – anyone interested please contact Mark Raffle (01847 894132 or commodore@pfyc.org.uk)

Talmine cruise

George Gunn is trying to organise a cruise to Talmine. He would be pleased to hear of any other cruisers wanting to take part, or anyone interested in crewing. No fixed date yet – that will depend on other interested people. Please contact George on 01847 895864 or georgegunnwalling@hotmail.com.

Free safety checks

Seachek is a voluntary system affiliated with RNLI. Cruisers can get a free safety check of their boats. The scheme is informal, and you will get practical advice on anything which may need improvement. The local Seachek rep is John Faulds, who can be contacted on 01847 891489.

Membership

We would be grateful for payment of any outstanding membership fees and boat storage. For those with internet access, membership forms can be found on the club website at <http://www.radit.org.uk/pfyc/club/index.htm>. Anyone requiring a printed copy, please contact Phil Galvin (01847 890789) or Mark Raffle (01847 894132).

Dinner dance & prizegiving

This year's event was held in the Park Hotel on Friday 25 February 2005, with 50 people attending. A list of trophy winners will appear in the next newsletter, but here they are:-



The Tall Ships Race - Aalborg 2004

Ishbel joined the Swan for a week cruising in company with the Tall Ships, in between the racing weeks ...

As I stepped from the taxi in the centre of Aalborg I realised that I might have a bit of a problem finding my home for the week – the gaff ketch Swan, a 100 year old restored fishing smack from Shetland. There were tall ships and boats of every kind stretched out along both sides of the Limfjord as far as the eye could see. I hoisted my bag and immediately set off in the wrong direction. About an hour later with the help of a couple of L.O.s (Liason Officers) I found the Swan berthed outside the tall ship Oosterschelde at the bottom of a rope ladder. I chucked my bag (by now weighing a ton) on deck, followed it down and introduced myself to the rest of the crew – all Shetlanders – who had already been aboard for a couple of weeks taking part in the first leg of the Tall Ships Race from Antwerp.

The first two days were spent visiting other ships, exploring the town and generally soaking up the atmosphere as thousands of people wandered along the quays enjoying the music from several open-air stages along the seafront, or sitting on deck basking in the beautiful sunshine. A Shetland group called Rock, Salt and Nails were playing each evening to a capacity audience in a nearby warehouse/folk club and our crew would hang out there before continuing the music on board as we had our own group of talented musicians among the crew.

On the last night in Aalborg there was a fantastic display of fireworks over the fjord and hundreds of small local boats filled the water around us to watch. Next morning the parade of sail got under way as the ships started to move out en route for Norway. As we pulled out from our berth and cruised along the quayside the musicians played some lively reels on deck and the locals all cheered and clapped on the shore.

We motorsailed out of the fjord (this leg wasn't a race – more of a cruise in company) and turned north along the coast of

Denmark as the sun started to go down. I had a fairly early night as I was on watch at 4am. My inner alarm clock woke me at 3.30 and I made a pot of tea before going on deck to see the sky just starting to lighten as the sun rose through a band of cloud on the horizon. We made landfall late afternoon at Lillesand in Norway where some of the crew bought a kid's inflatable boat and had a swim in the sea. They said it was warm but I wasn't tempted (I had swum in Norway before and remembered it to be freezing!) After tea we moved on west to spend the night at Kristiansand, which turned out to have a nice town centre although the docks area seemed quite industrial.

Next day we threaded our way through the narrow channels and rocky islets dotted with colourful houses each with its own jetty that surround much of the south coast of Norway. We stopped to catch some fish but gave up that activity rather quickly when a submerged rock connected briefly with our keel. Unfortunately one of the crew fell over and cut her head during the collision so we administered first aid and headed for the town of Mandal so that she could have medical attention. I was relieved not to find the mate dishing out buckets for bailing – no serious damage had been done to the boat.

Mandal turned out to be a lovely old town with white wooden houses and a concert going on in the town square. Luckily our casualty seemed fine after she had five stitches put in at the local clinic. As usual our musicians drew a crowd as they played on deck in the evening and we got the locals doing a strip the willow on the quayside!

Time was getting on and we could only make one more stop on the way to Stavanger. We had a long day's sail in scorching sunshine, spotting one square rigger and a couple of big schooners under sail in the distance – stopping a couple of times to fish when the skipper thought the conditions were favourable. He seemed to be right as over thirty mackerel were hauled up in just a few minutes, gutted on the spot ready for the barbeque a couple of hours later. We tied up to the quay in Egersund for the night and cooked the fish on deck. They tasted amazing, and since it was my turn in the galley that day I'd made apple crumble to follow, which I was quite pleased about as it was the first time that I'd cooked something under way. That evening some of the locals paid the musicians to keep playing, until someone eventually paid them to stop!

The last day dawned and we headed north to Stavanger. The scenery changed and became less rocky and wild, appearing more cultivated with gentle rolling hills. We stopped briefly for lunch at the little port of Tananger and pulled into Vagen, the harbour at Stavanger in the late afternoon. Some of the tall ships were there before us but we got a berth on the quayside, which was good for the musicians and as usual in the evening a crowd gathered drawn by the lively Shetland tunes. We got people to join in an eightsome reel and a Boston Twostep and the boys played on 'til dawn.

My flight was leaving next morning so I was up fairly early to catch the bus to the airport. I said goodbye and wished them well for the next leg of the race to Cuxhaven. The trip had been fun and all too short – but I guess its only a year 'til the next one!

The Swan has its own website which can be found at <http://www.swantrust.org.uk/>



