

THE 2017 AWARDS

(The Awards presentation is described by Zdenka Griswold, who together with her husband Jack had flown in from Portland, Maine to be present for the event.)

This year's AGM, Annual Dinner and Awards presentations were held in the First Class Dining Saloon aboard the SS *Great Britain* in the Great Western Dockyard in Bristol. The Dinner took place on 21st April, and photos and details of the weekend's events will be found in the accompanying *Newsletter*. Both the venue and the weather were spectacular and the event saw record participation, with 83 members present for the AGM and 133 members and guests in attendance for the Annual Dinner. As in previous years, Topsail Insurance provided generous support towards the cost of the event. Topsail's Managing Director Rob Stevens gave an informative talk about insurance in the morning and joined us throughout the day.

OCC PR Officer Daria Blackwell collected much of the information about this year's Award recipients, without which this summary would not have been possible, and Alfred Alecio served as Master of Ceremonies. The photographs taken at the Dinner are courtesy of Jeremy Firth, Kathy Mansfield (www.kathymansfieldphotos.com), Zdenka Griswold and John van-Schalkwyk.

THE QUALIFIER'S MUG

Presented by Admiral (then Commodore) Mary Barton and first awarded in 1993, the Qualifier's Mug recognises the most ambitious or arduous qualifying voyage published by a member in print or online.

The 2017 award went to **Megan Clay** for an ambitious Atlantic Circuit with her (non-member) husband Ed aboard *Flycatcher of Yar*, a Contessa 38 which they co-own with Ed's parents. Charlotte, the latest addition to the family, was entrusted to Megan's parents so her mother could attend the Annual Dinner to accept her award.



During their 400-day cruise, the majority of which was sailed two-handed, Megan and Ed covered 16,450 miles and visited 240 harbours and

Megan receives the Qualifier's Mug from Commodore Anne Hammick

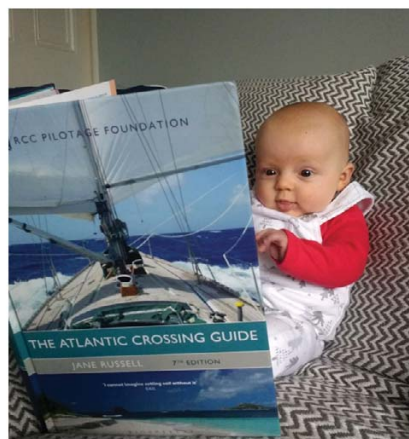


Ed and Megan paddle ashore
in western Greenland

Baby Charlotte
is clearly enthralled!

anchorage. As well as more frequented destinations, they spent time in the Gambia, penetrating some distance inland, then crossed the Atlantic from the Cape Verde islands to Barbados, a voyage of 2050 miles and Megan's qualifying passage. From the Caribbean they headed north up the US East Coast. After spending some time on the west coast of Greenland, they headed home to the UK via Ireland.

Megan wrote a memorable and highly enjoyable account of their cruise, entitled *Hippos to Humpbacks: A North Atlantic Circuit*, which appeared in *Flying Fish* 2017/1 illustrated by a number of her superb photos.



THE DAVID WALLIS TROPHY

First awarded in 1991 in memory of the Founding Editor of *Flying Fish*, this salver recognises the 'most outstanding, valuable or enjoyable contribution to *Flying Fish*'.

The 2017 award was made to **Fergus and Katherine Quinlan** for their article *The Russian Voyage*, which





Fergus and Katherine show off the David Wallis Trophy later in the evening

appeared in *Flying Fish* 2017/1. Their 109-day, 3,800 mile journey took them from the west coast of Ireland to St Petersburg, where they were welcomed by our very helpful Port Officer Vladimir Ivankiv. After an overland visit to Moscow they returned to Ireland via Finland and the Gota and Caledonian Canals. Fergus and Katherine received their award from Commodore Anne Hammick at the Annual Dinner.

Newer members may also wish to catch up on *The Origins Cruise – Circumnavigation* 2009-2012 in *Flying Fish* 2013/2, which tells how the Quinlans built their 12m van de Stadt-designed steel cutter *Pylades* at their home at Kinvara on the west coast of Ireland.



THE PORT OFFICER RALLY AWARD

Created in 2017, this award recognises an exceptional rally organised by a Port Officer or Port Officer Representative.

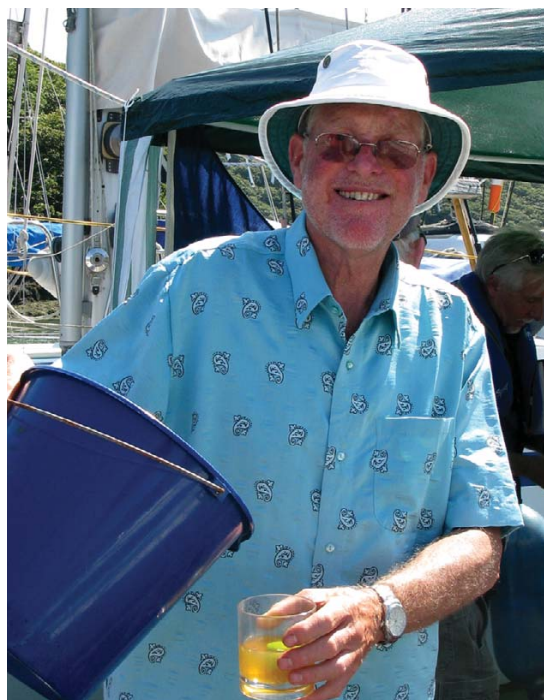
Peter Flutter, Port Officer for Falmouth, UK since 2011, with Commodore Anne Hammick



*Peter fills his glass during the
2017 Falmouth upriver party*

Falmouth Port Officer **Peter Flutter** was on hand to accept his well-deserved award for organising the annual West Country Rally. Perhaps the shortest rally in the OCC calendar, but one to which members return year after year, this event takes place every August. A jovial dinner at the Royal Cornwall Yacht Club is followed next day by a cruise upriver to a midstream pontoon for further parties, both on the pontoon itself and aboard the larger yachts, primarily Peter's own *Tyrian of Truro*.

It is not just the big, long rallies that are important – more people get to know and appreciate the OCC by attending the small ones. Our thanks to Peter for masterminding a great weekend which attracts new OCC members and goodwill towards the Club year after year.



THE PORT OFFICER SERVICE AWARD

Introduced in 2008 at the suggestion of then Rear Commodore Mark Holbrook, this award is given to Port Officers or Port Officers Representatives who have provided outstanding service to both local and visiting members as well as the wider sailing community by promoting their port, harbour or area.



This year's recipients are **Gary Naigle** and **Greta Gustavson** of Pilot House, Norfolk, Virginia on the US East Coast. Countless OCC members have secured at the OCC dock managed by Gary and Greta. Whether their visitors are staying for only a night or a couple of weeks, Gary and Greta cannot do enough for them, from organising propane bottles and laundry to helping with provisioning. Their commitment to the OCC is remarkable and their helpfulness, kindness, hospitality are second to none, as confirmed time and again by OCC members since their appointment in 1993.

Gary and Greta were unable to attend the Annual Dinner and the award was accepted on their behalf by John and Inga Chapman. They relayed Gary's and Greta's thanks and appreciation, along with Greta's message that the award is clearly given to the Port Officers having the most fun!



THE PORT OFFICER EVENTS AWARD

Created in 2017, this award is made for an exceptional single event organised by a Port Officer or Port Officer Representative.

This new award was presented for the first time to **Robert Ravensberg**, Port Officer Representative for Cape Town, South Africa. For the past four years Robert has singlehandedly organised a series of Cape Town get-togethers, including wine tastings and lunch at one of the Cape vineyards, pulling in skippers and crews from multiple marinas and managing different arrival times as the various boats navigate the often tricky passage along the east and south coasts of South Africa.

These Cape Town events are a fitting end to what for many is a difficult Indian Ocean passage, and a prelude to preparation for crossing the South Atlantic. Robert also handles a wide variety of OCC members' needs and queries, and recruits new members as qualified passage-makers arrive. Robert was unable to attend the dinner and newly elected Rear Commodore Jenny Crickmore-Thompson accepted the award on his behalf.



THE VASEY VASE

Presented by Past Commodore Tony Vasey and his wife Jill and first awarded in 1997, the Vasey Vase is awarded for a voyage of an unusual or exploratory nature made by an OCC member or members.

This year the Vasey Vase went to **Andrew and Janice Fennymore-White**, who spent eight years building their exquisite Van de Stadt Samoa 48, *Destiny*. This was very much a joint project which started with aluminium sheets and ended with a beautifully crafted

Destiny in Svalbard



yacht, every inch of which exudes quality, care and attention to detail. Andy and Janice have prepared their vessel and themselves for a prolonged, multi-year, liveaboard voyage in the polar regions. Their planning and obvious skills make their considerable achievements look effortless. Their article *You're not Sailors, are you?* appeared in *Flying Fish* 2017/2 and their blog can be enjoyed at www.sailblogs.com/member/destinyatsea.



Andrew and Janice Fennymore-White

Andrew and Janice have lived aboard in the Arctic for the past four years. During the winters they have explored the coast north of Tromsø on skis, and in the summers pushed north into the high Arctic, circumnavigating Svalbard in 2016. Late in that season they sailed south to their winter berth in Akureyri on Iceland's north coast. In early 2017 they sailed to Iceland's West Fjords and spent much time seeking out snug anchorages from which to ski in the wonderfully remote Hornstrandir National Park. Once the snow had receded in May they undertook an early-season circumnavigation of Iceland, returning to Isafjordur in July to prepare for a year in Greenland. In a challenging ice season, they crossed the Denmark Strait in early August to Tasiilaq, and then cruised south down Greenland's remote and inhospitable east coast. Without drama or mishap, and despite an abundance of ice, they transited Prins Christian Sund and cruised north for six weeks to Maniitsoq to seek out a suitable place to overwinter. Their plan is to get out their skis when the snow returns and explore Hamburgerland and the Eternal Fjord from their anchorage.

Andy and Janice joined the OCC in 2016. They plan a transit of the Northwest Passage in 2018 and to spend next winter skiing from their boat in Alaska. They sent their apologies for being unable to attend, along with this message:

"Wow, what an unexpected surprise! We were crewing on another OCC member's motor boat in the Marshall Islands in the Pacific when we received the notification. Our initial response was dumbstruck followed by 'Have they got the right email address?' Finally, once it had sunk in and considering all the OCC members around the world undertaking their own adventures in their vessels, we are humbled to have received the Vasey Vase 2017. So tonight we will be raising a glass to the Ocean Cruising Club and all its lovely members. Keep on adventuring.

Cheers and thank you. Andrew, Janice and Yacht *Destiny*."

THE AUSTRALIAN TROPHY

First awarded 1990, the Australian Trophy was donated by Sid Jaffe, twice Rear Commodore Australia. Carved from a solid piece of teak by Wally Brandis, it is awarded for a voyage made by an Australian member or members which starts or finishes in Australia. The winner is decided by vote of the Australian membership.

Hugh Pilsworth received the Australian Trophy for 2017 from Paul Furniss, Regional Rear Commodore for South East Australia at the OCC Sydney Dinner held on 9th November 2017 at the Sydney Flying Squadron in Kirribilli, the original home of the famous Sydney Harbour sailing skiff class, founded in 1891.



*Hugh Pilsworth (right) with the OCC Australian Award,
presented to him by Paul Furniss, RRC South East Australia*

The award recognised his circumnavigation aboard his 49ft Jeanneau *BlueFlyer*, and his contribution as a teacher of others with an interest in ocean cruising, some of whom joined *BlueFlyer* en route. The first part of his circumnavigation in 2007/8 took Hugh and his wife Val from Dublin to Melbourne, after which they settled in Australia. Sadly, during this time Hugh lost Val. He set sail again in June 2016 to successfully complete his circumnavigation.

THE VERTUE AWARD

The Vertue Award is presented to a member in North America for an outstanding voyage or for service to the Club. Named after *Vertue XXXV*, in which OCC Founder Humphrey Barton sailed across the North Atlantic in 1950, it was created in 2014 to commemorate the Club's 60th anniversary. Awardees are selected by North American Regional Rear Commodores.

Andy and Liza Copeland of Vancouver, British Columbia were the recipients of the 2017 Vertue Award, presented to them in Vancouver earlier this year by then Vice Commodore Tony Gooch, for their enthusiastic and active membership of the OCC over many years. Andy qualified with a 1973 voyage from St Barts to the Azores in *Eileen*, a 65ft Fife-built classic, and joined in 1986. Liza became a member in 2002, her qualifying voyage having been in their own *Bagheera* from Gran Canaria to Barbados in 1985.

The Copelands have sailed extensively, including more than 160,000 miles on their Beneteau First 38 *Bagheera*, and have visited over 110 countries. In 1985 they set off with their young family on what would become a six-year circumnavigation. The voyage would eventually be documented in a series of four best-selling books which have, over the years, been of inestimable help to cruisers looking for realistic and practical advice. They have also written articles for many sailing magazines and given presentations at numerous boat shows as well as other venues. Subsequent voyages saw Andy and Liza sailing to the Middle East, the Mediterranean, West Africa, Brazil and the Caribbean.

Andy and Liza have served as Port Officers in Vancouver since 1998, during which time they have organised multiple parties and rallies, including the OCC Golden Jubilee Rally in 2004 and the Desolation Sound Rally in 2008. Their generous hospitality has benefited many cruisers from around the world.

Lisa and Andy Copeland were presented with the Vertue Award for 2017 in February this year



THE OCC BARTON CUP

The Club's premier award, named after OCC founder Humphrey Barton, was donated by his adult children, twins Peter Barton and Pat Pocock, and first awarded in 1981. This is the first year it has been open to non-members.

The Barton Cup was awarded to **Susanne Huber-Curphey**, the first woman to navigate the Northwest Passage singlehanded. She received extraordinary praise from Victor Wejer, who advised Susanne during her west-to-east transit in *Nehaj*, her 39ft (11.9m) cutter. Victor was himself recognised for his assistance with ice and weather reports by the OCC Award of Merit in 2016. According to Victor, Susanne completed her passage 'with great style, ability and perseverance, beating many experienced crew who were way ahead. She provided all support and immense friendship to others, even when her own resources were at their limits'.

Susanne was born in Ingolstadt, Germany and trained as an architect. She started sailing on the Bavarian lakes, and in 1986 singlehanded a 21ft day sailer down the River Danube from her home town to the Black Sea. Her first circumnavigation was aboard *Glory*, a 30ft Seadog. She met her future husband Tony Curphey – also a singlehander – in New Zealand and they were married in the Solomon Islands.

Susanne's second circumnavigation was in *So Long*, a Rhodes 41 built in 1964. She and Tony sailed on parallel courses, each in their own boat. They were awarded the 2008 Cruising Club of America Rod Stephens Trophy for Outstanding Seamanship when Susanne rescued her husband aboard *Galenaia*, a 27ft cutter built of plywood in 1958, when it started taking on water 29 days out of Bunbury, Western Australia. *So Long* towed *Galenaia*, with Tony still aboard, for 650 miles across the Tasman Sea to Port Nelson, New Zealand under challenging conditions.

Susanne built *Nehaj*, her 39ft Koopmans cutter, herself over a three-year period. The name has a family history, and means 'Feel safe here, Do not be afraid'. Susanne's





John van-Schalkwyk, Port Officer for Halifax, Nova Scotia, visited Susanne aboard Nehaj to present her with her plaque

journey with *Nehaj* began in June 2015 with a good shakedown sail from Holland around the top of Iceland to the Azores, followed by a 133-day non-stop voyage to New Zealand. Her only crew was 'Miss Aries', who steered *Nehaj* beautifully. In January 2017, after a loop via Tonga and New Caledonia to Tasmania, Susanne laid course across the Pacific Ocean. When she reached the Aleutian Islands, with 200,000 miles sailing experience under her belt, she decided to attempt a singlehanded transit of the Northwest Passage.

It was an easy start in the Bering Sea and across the Arctic Circle, Victor Wejer keeping Susanne informed about weather and ice. By the end of August, however, solid ice in the Franklin Strait blocked the way ahead and behind, and *Nehaj* was stuck for nearly two weeks. Susanne thought she might be forced to winter in the wilderness of the Boothia Peninsula, but managed to reach the Bellot Strait, the 'eye of the needle' in the Northwest Passage, during a brief weather window. Lancaster Sound brought freezing spray and the first severe autumn gale, and *Nehaj* sought shelter in the 60-mile long fjord of Arctic Bay. Sailing down Baffin Bay in mid-September brought more gales and, by then, dark nights in dangerous iceberg-filled waters, during which Susanne hove-to. She reports that the Northern Lights were spectacular.

After 3683 miles north of the Arctic Circle, often too close to land and in too shallow water, Susanne successfully completed her Northwest Passage transit. Following a 2000 mile latitude race southwards to Nova Scotia, Susanne overwintered aboard *Nehaj* in Lunenburg, NS, a lovely town with a rich maritime history. *Nehaj* by then had 42,800 miles under her keel.

THE OCC JESTER AWARD

The Jester Award, first presented in 2006, recognises a noteworthy singlehanded voyage or series of voyages made in a vessel of 30ft or less overall. It is open to both members and non-members.

The Jester Award for 2017 was presented to **Josh Ghyselincks** for his 24-day, 2900 mile solo passage from Mexico to the Marquesas Islands in *Mastral*, an Arpege 29 designed by Michael Dufour and built in 1967.

Mastral was the first ocean-going yacht owned by former Vice Commodore Tony Gooch and his wife Coryn, who covered some 65,000 miles in her. Josh bought her a few years ago with the dream of offshore sailing. Sadly *Mastral* had been neglected by later owners, and by the time Josh bought her was even more basic than when the Gooches cruised her. She had no inboard engine, just a 9hp outboard, no windvane self-steering, and very little navigational or communications equipment.



Mastral steering herself under poled-out storm jib



Tony Gooch, himself a singlehanded non-stop circumnavigator, explained that 'Josh uses the poled-out storm jib method for self-steering ... plus bits of string and shock cord. Josh's voyage is taking him from Victoria across the Pacific to New Zealand (sometimes solo, sometimes with crew). What he really wants is to find a singlehanded girl going his way'. Trevor Leek, current owner of the Folkboat *Jester* from which the award takes its name, added: 'Josh has my blessing – I'm particularly impressed by the lack of self-steering'." (*Jester* is steered by a vintage Haslar SP windvane.)

In expressing his appreciation for the award, Josh noted that, 'It is no small feat to take to the open sea, no matter the vessel or crew. Long distance cruising presents challenges and lessons that can't be found anywhere else. Thank you to all those who have dared before me and planted the dreams in my head. Thank you to the Ocean Cruising Club for recognising such feats and more importantly, continuing to foster this exceptional community of offshore cruisers'. Tony Gooch accepted the award on Josh's behalf.



THE OCC AWARD

Dating back to 1960, this award recognises valuable service to the OCC or to the ocean cruising community as a whole, and is open to both members and non-members.

The OCC Award went to **David Register**, lead developer of the OpenCPN chart plotter and navigational planning software. Dave initially created OpenCPN for his own use back in 2009, because he wasn't satisfied with commercial products. When other cruisers learned what he was doing they asked for copies, and it has been developed by a team of active sailors using real world conditions for program testing



Dave Register at his computer

and refinement – their motto: ‘We’re boaters; we’re coders’. There are now tens of thousands of users worldwide.

OpenCPN, which is still free of charge, is now available for Windows, Mac and Linux. An Android app version can be purchased for a small fee in the Android app store, and there is even a version for Raspberry Pi. The system, available in 20 different languages, is constantly being improved and updated to keep up with ever-evolving charting systems and user requirements. It now incorporates AIS, routes, tidal support and weather, and plug-in modules are available for climatology, weather routing, weatherfax, Google Earth, Voyage Data Recorder, AIS-radar, SAR, sQuidd.io, Radar Overlay, Logbook, and many more.

A network of more than forty volunteer software coders now work to improve the product, update it and expand its capabilities. Dave continues to co-ordinate this work from his floating home, the aluminium motor vessel *Dyad*, which he calls the ‘Big Dumb Boat’ (www.bigdumboat.com).

Open CPN has made a magnificent contribution to the enjoyment and safety of cruising sailors, and Dave deserves great credit for his invention and his ongoing efforts.



THE OCC SEAMANSHIP AWARD

Donated by Past Commodore John Franklin and first presented in 2013, this award recognises feats of exceptional seamanship or bravery at sea. It is open to both members and non-members.

The OCC Seamanship Award for 2017 was presented to **Lisa Blair** for her solo circumnavigation of Antarctica, which included a dismasting. She had sailed three-quarters of the way around the world singlehanded, non-stop and unassisted, when her mast came down in storm conditions. After a four-hour battle in freezing temperatures she was able to save her Open 50 yacht *Climate Action Now*, and her life. She transmitted a PanPan, then motored toward Cape Town to effect repairs. An attempt to transfer fuel

Lisa Blair aboard Climate Action Now



from an 80,000 tonne container ship resulted in a collision and further damage, but again she saved her boat, constructed a jury rig, and continued towards Cape Town. Two months later she returned to her circumnavigation attempt and

Lisa in the Southern Ocean

became the first woman to complete a solo circumnavigation of Antarctica, with one stop. Her time at sea totalled 103 days, 7 hours, 21 minutes and 38 seconds.

Born and educated in Australia, Lisa began sailing professionally in 2006 and has since clocked up more than 50,000 ocean miles. She uses her yacht *Climate Action Now* to promote awareness of how the actions of individuals can help towards a solution to climate change by drawing media and political attention to the problem. Visit her website at <https://lisablairsailstheworld.com/>.



THE OCC LIFETIME CRUISING AWARD

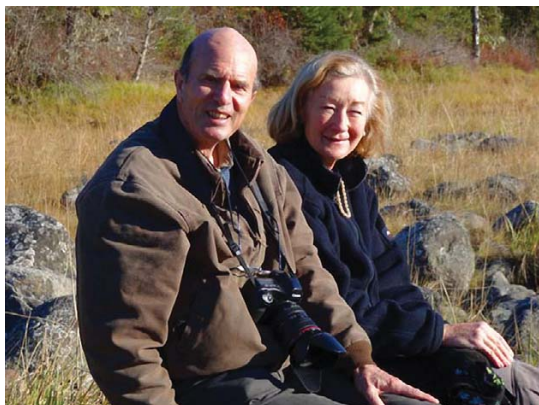
The OCC Lifetime Cruising Award was presented for the first time this year. Open to both members and non-members, it recognises a lifetime of noteworthy ocean cruising.

The OCC Lifetime Cruising Award was presented to British sailor **David Scott Cowper** for tackling the world's most difficult sea routes while completing six circumnavigations. Following three circumnavigations under sail he turned his attention to the high latitudes and has made several Arctic crossings, via the Atlantic Arctic Circle and the Pacific Arctic Circles, in 1986 aboard his converted RNLI lifeboat *Mable E Holland*, and in 2001, 2009, 2011 and 2012 aboard his 14.6m aluminium motor vessel *Polar Bound*. His most recent Northwest Passage transit took place via the Hecla and Fury Straits, making David and his son Fred the first to navigate this passage since



*Polar Bound wintering
in the Arctic*

its discovery in 1822. He has been the recipient of several awards, including The Cruising Club of America's Blue Water Medal, and the Seamanship Medal and the Tilman Medal, awarded by The Royal Cruising Club.



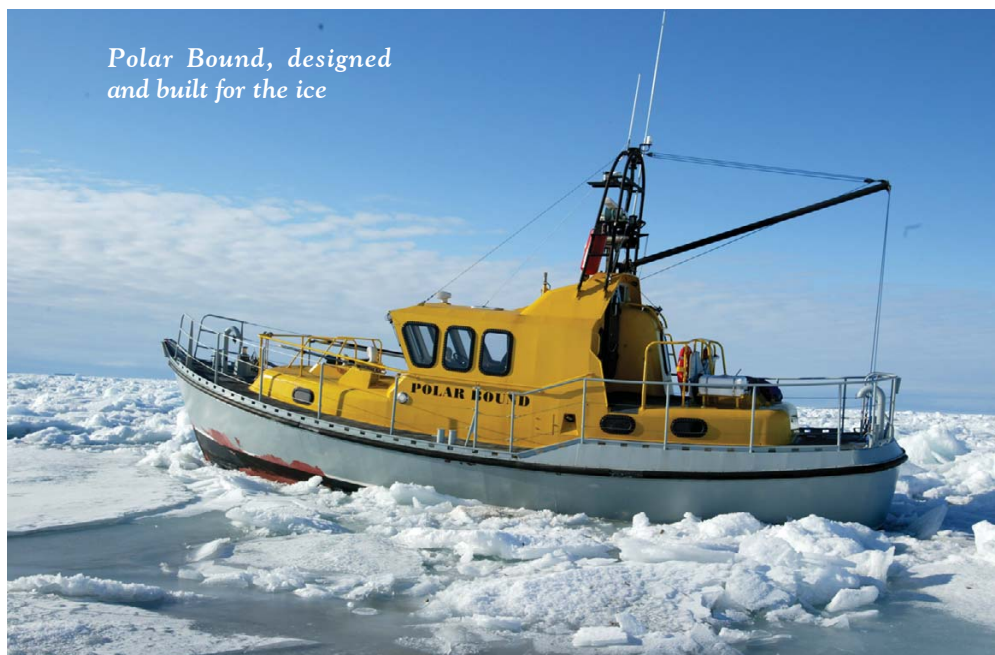
David with long-term crew Jane Maufe

David Scott Cowper was born in 1942 and educated at Stowe School. He lives in Newcastle upon Tyne and is a Chartered Building Surveyor and a Fellow of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. He became well known in sailing circles in the 1970s and '80s for competing in the Observer Round Britain and Ireland Race

and the Singlehanded Transatlantic Race (OSTAR) in *Airedale*, his 29ft 6in Laurent Giles-designed *Wanderer*. In 1982 he completed two circumnavigations in his 41ft Huisman-built Sparkman & Stephens sloop *Ocean Bound*, and became the fastest person to sail singlehanded around the world in both directions, breaking Sir Francis Chichester's record by a day and Chay Blyth's by 72 days.

His move from sail to power in 1984 was due to his interest in the Arctic, where exploration often takes place under power. His preparatory cruise around the world via the Panama Canal in the *Mabel E Holland*, a converted 42ft Royal National Lifeboat Institution wooden lifeboat, achieved him the honour of being the first person to circumnavigate solo in a motorboat, and the first to do so under both sail and power.

In 1986, he embarked on a circumnavigation via the Northwest Passage which lasted for four years. He departed from Newcastle in July to make his way across the North Atlantic and up the west coast of Greenland to enter Lancaster Sound, eventually reaching Fort Ross at the east end of Bellot Strait. Due to heavy pack ice and the start



Polar Bound, designed and built for the ice

***David Scott Cowper
holds his audience
spellbound at the OCC
Annual Dinner***

of an early winter *Mabel E Holland* remained in the ice, and when Cowper returned the following summer he found the boat waterlogged, so spent the short summer beaching and repairing her. In 1988 he managed to reach Alaska, and in August 1989 sailed the *Mabel E Holland* into the Bering Strait, becoming the first person to complete the passage singlehanded as part of a global circumnavigation.



In 2012 he made the passage again but via the McClure Strait, the most demanding and northerly of the seven known routes.

Subsequently Cowper commissioned *Polar Bound*, which he took around Cape Horn and up the west coast of the Americas. In 2002 he planned to attempt the Northeast Passage over the top of Russia but was refused permission by the Russian authorities. Instead he turned east and, over two summers, sailed the Northwest Passage again from west to east, becoming the first person to have completed singlehanded transits in both directions.

In August 2009 he began what was to be his sixth circumnavigation. He departed from Maryport on England's northeast coast and by 6th September 2009 was in Cambridge Bay, halfway through the Northwest Passage. Eighteen days later he reached Dutch Harbor in the Aleutians, completing the passage singlehanded for the third time. From Dutch Harbor he sailed to San Francisco, and from there headed south for Chile and Antarctica, continuing via the Falkland Islands, South Georgia Island, Tristan da Cunha and Cape Town. From South Africa he sailed to South Australia and across the Pacific Ocean, returning to Dutch Harbor via Fiji and Hawaii, finally transiting via the Northwest Passage back to England to reach Whitehaven on 5th October 2011.

The Frozen Frontier: Polar Bound through the Northwest Passage, by David's companion and co-adventurer Jane Maufe, was reviewed in *Flying Fish* 2017/1 and has sold over 10,000 copies. We were delighted to welcome David and Jane to our Annual Dinner where, after accepting the OCC Lifetime Cruising Award, David told a spellbound audience about some of his many adventures.

