

Our Cockpit is our Clubhouse



RNSA NEWS

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Christmas 2016

News from our Vice Commodore - Phil Warwick



What a great season! As you will see as you read further into this Newsletter the Navy has enjoyed a series of successes on the water. We won the Inter-Services Offshore Regatta, J109 National Championship, Inter-Service Team Racing Regatta in J70s, 'Le Crunch' by beating the French in J70s, Inter-Service Windsurfing Championships, Inter-Service Asymmetric Championships and gave strong performances in both Cowes Week and the Round the Island Race. We also held a development weekend in partnership with the Royal Yacht Squadron to bring on new helms. The cruisers have also made the most of a fun and varied programme, making the most of some pretty good weather this season.

There is plenty happening both on and off the water. I am most grateful to all those that voluntarily give up their time to make RN sailing, delivered through the RNSA, possible. The rewards are clear but we do need to get more servicemen and women sailing across all our disciplines at all standards. This is good for our sport, their personal development and the output of the Royal Navy. The RNSA faces an important next 12 months and we have a huge amount to offer so could I encourage everyone to maintain our momentum and get happy sailors sailing.

All Members are Encouraged to attend the: Annual General Meeting

Saturday 18 February 2017 at 1700



Venue: Fisher Hall HMS Excellent
Whale Island, Portsmouth, Hampshire PO2 8ER

There will be a dinner in the WO & SRs Mess on completion. The charge will be announced when the final details are available. Members who wish to attend (including any guests) are asked to let the office know by email gensec@rnsa.org.uk or telephone 02392521100. This includes those who wish to attend the **AGM only** to give an idea of the number to cater for and security access.

Timings: AGM: 1700. Prizegiving: 1830. Dinner: 1930.

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CHAIRMAN – Commodore Richard Farrington CBE

The 2016 sailing season has been a very fruitful one all round. Elsewhere in this Newsletter you will read about the winning ways of RNSA across the gamut of sailing disciplines – testament to some great dedication, skill and a reasonable dose of luck on the part of skippers, crews, committees and the behind-the-scenes supporters who make sure that events happen as they should. Without your subscriptions, encouragement and support as Members, none of this would happen.



Julie and I took Escapade up to the west of Scotland for much of the Summer. Whilst we didn't enjoy quite the same weather that others experienced further south, we did succumb to the magic of the Western Isles, the spectacular scenery, the friendly natives and the vital business of locating visitor's moorings alongside whisky distilleries. We met a small but eclectic cross section of RNSA members whilst 'on deployment', notably the indomitable Mike Buggy circumnavigating the large island, Steve Bramley (who has clearly never quite recovered from a job in Faslane) trying to go native in Skye and Terry

Atkinson and his wife Jenny onboard the eye-catching 'Mrs Muir' – who deploy south from Shetland every year! It was also great to see HMSTYs Kukri and Redcoat, both with a crowd of chirpy Servicemen and women onboard sailing through the islands as part of 'Highland Express'.

I am pleased to report important progress with both Project Adventure and the next phase of the 'Case for Change' work. We have now ordered the first safety boats and dinghies for the Sailing Centres. We eventually selected the Hartley 15 as the replacement for the Bosun dinghy and the first tranche will arrive in February 2017. They will be available for use at the Holt Cup at Whale Island. Our focus has turned to improving the facilities for Servicemen and women on the Clyde.

After the AGM, I went away to press Navy Command to make some important changes to the Membership criteria for Service Sports Associations. I can now report significant gains as follows: the current direction that Associate Members should pay more for services than Full Members has been dropped. All Reservists who are eligible for deployment are entitled to join RNSA as Full Members (reflecting the improved status of our Reserve Forces elsewhere in MOD) and Navy Command have at last accepted that RNSA has always had Veterans at its core, so the threat to turn our Serving Personnel into Associate Members on the day they leave the Service has also been dropped. Our work is now focusing on the role and status of Branches, guidelines on what constitutes 'appropriate expenditure', the profile of RNSA in Scotland (now that I've done the recce!) and our future relationship with the Royal Marines Sailing Club. I'm looking forward to a good debate at the 2017 AGM followed by a postal/electronic vote on our future.

I will be stepping down at Easter, in preparation to sail off into the sunset (well, the Caribbean, anyway). I hope that the bulk of the Case for Change work will be complete and the future of RNSA will be clear for all. My relief should have a clear run through - I just need to find him...!

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CRUISING – Commander Tim Clark

I do hope that you had an enjoyable season, and I know, by the number of draft articles for the next Journal that I have seen, that some of you have had 'adventures' this season! My only adventure this year was again participating in the Round the Island Race, which took place in blustery and rough conditions and witnessed one sinking, a couple of dismasting's and a lost rudder! Sadly, I did not do as much as I would have wished in my own boat, VIVACIOUS – the penalty of having a wife, bless her, who isn't into sailing unless it's very flat and warm, not enough time off work and the fact that this year the bad weather seemed to occur disproportionately at weekends! But there's always next year! VIVACIOUS has been back in her cradle for a month now, and I still have not drawn up the 'wish list' of jobs to do!



I would like to take this opportunity to publicise Supported Chartering once again, because there were no takers this year. Remember, it is open to every member and offers you the opportunity to sail somewhere different, to be subsidised for it, and to tell us all about it in the Journal. All you have to do is to decide where to go, and which members will go with you, what the objectives of the event are and how your proposals match them, and to submit the application to me through RNSA Central.

Next a very warm welcome to two new Cruising Secretaries, Paul Williamson for Clyde Branch, and Mark Hocking for Plymouth Branch. It is some time since either of these Branches had a Cruising Secretary, and I am sure that both will generate lots of activity to rejuvenate their respective Cruising Groups.



Finally, and now in my 'hat' as Veterans' Champion, you will all be aware of the impending vote at the next AGM to hold a ballot on the future of the RNSA. I am pleased to say that the last Central Committee at the end of November agreed that a second option should be put to you, the membership, and tasked me with the job of developing it into a mature proposal by 2 February next year. In essence, we would fulfil the Navy Command requirement that the Navy's Service Sports Authority for sailing should be delivered by a charity, by creating a small charity to conduct all in-service competitive sailing, in all of its forms. That charity would have the closest possible relationship with the RNSA, which would continue to provide financial support. As well as meeting the Navy Command requirement, this option would preserve what is best about RNSA as it is now, maintain the current position of veterans and retain that vital link between the Navy and its intensely loyal veteran supporters.

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3 Peaks – Martin Pound

Next year sees the 40th Anniversary of the Three Peaks Yacht Race. Over the 39 years of the race a total of 784 yachts have taken part while a total of 183 yachts have been forced to retire. 1,198 runners have made it to the top of Snowdon, Scafell Pike and Ben Nevis. It is a great race and superb training for the military, police and fire service who have all competed over the years, as well as a superbly enjoyable and rewarding event for anyone who does take part. The 2016 race, which saw two ladies' teams led by Pip Hare and Dee Caffari, is to be televised on Channel 4 on 17th December.



In 2017 the race starts on Saturday 17th June from Barmouth, lasts 4 to 5 days and finishes in Fort William. It is hoped to have 30 monohulls and 10 multihulls for this 2017 anniversary race. If you haven't done this race before then ask yourself 'If not now, then when?'

There are two other marvellous versions of the 3PYR. On 19th May 2017 is the 34th Scottish Islands Peaks Race. 40 yachts take part each year over a long weekend, starting in Oban and sailing to Mull, Jura, Arran and Troon. 5 Service yachts took part in 2016. On 9th June is the SW 3 Peaks Yacht Race, starting in Falmouth, then sailing to Penzance, Fowey and finishing in Plymouth. Ideal for the Royals from Lymington and RN from Culdrose. Again hope to see you there in 2017. I promise you that you will enjoy these races which is why so many of us return year after year!

OFFSHORE – Warrant Officer Mark Durkan

What a brilliant season

As the season draws to a close, and the winter lay-up work begins, I am pleased to reflect upon what has perhaps been the most successful Offshore season the RNSA has enjoyed for some years. Action packed and with some statistics to rival any sailing organisation. With over 1,000nm raced, 70 Days of competitive sailing, over 100 serving personnel have represented the RN in the sport. Participating in 12 high profile events, 1 international event, 1 Inter-services event, plus over 200-man hours of boat maintenance. We have also recruited 20 new members to the RNSA! The acquisition of a set of 'rugged' sails, sees our ever popular Wednesday series, able to introduce complete novices to the water without the eye watering costs sometime attributed to inexperience.



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RN Offshore (not so) synchronised swimming team New Zealand 2016

I think you'll agree that the offshore community has been busy. Our list of 2016 achievements include: Tri Nation Champions (Exercise Kiwi Magic) RN/RNZN/RAN, J109 National Champions, Inter-Service Offshore Champions, Strong results in RORC Easter Regatta and Cowes Week (both key training regattas).

2017 is a FASTNET year and also the Royal Navies turn to organise the tri-service regatta, we are determined that with an extensive winter lay-up package, Jolly Jack Tar will be able to maintain the impetus of success and compete equally with the best J109s in the world.

RNSM- Commander Wayne Shirley

RNSA Boats Update

In the last newsletter I told you about the exciting work the RNSA Office and I are involved in to replace the MoD dinghies and Powerboats, that are being withdrawn from service, with new RNSA funded boats. I also promised that I would keep you abreast of the progress of, which is part funded and wholly managed by the RNSA. Progress has been really go so far. We have managed to gather together all of the funding from the RN Sports Lottery and the RNRMC and added it to the allocated RNSA funding. As a bonus, we have managed to 'pass across' some other dinghies from HMS Temeraire to the RNSA on the understanding that they are sold and the monies added to the RNSA Boars 'War Chest'. With the money secure we have placed orders for 4 new ribs from Ribcraft, 6 Rigiflex 400 coach/safety boats, 4 Hartley 15 training dinghies together with the associated trollies and trailers. We are also going to be ordering 2 new 2000 dinghies for the racing team who have not seen a new boat for 15years. So, all in all, great progress which will see new assets arriving in the Sailing Centres and a more secure future for RN Sailing.



The next task on the horizon is to start the process of building next year's Business Case for the 2017 round of boats which will complete the safety fleet and start to increase the number of training dinghies, which will include some new single boats.

Clyde Branch - Paul Williamson

'One watch at a time' was Skip Novak's mantra as he skippered Simon Le Bon's 78-foot Maxi racing yacht, Drum, in 1985's Whitbread Race round the world. So okay, we were never going to be looking to our skipper for words of that type of reassurance when we recently had the chance to crew Drum in the relatively safe waters of the West Coast of Scotland, but none the less, the experience felt just as exhilarating!

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In 1988 Sir Arnold Clark bought Drum from Simon Le Bon and continued to sail her in many more races around the globe. But as the years passed and Sir Arnold Clark's business grew, he found less and less time to race her. Today, she is mostly chartered around the coasts of Scotland and Northern Ireland, giving many people the chance to experience sailing a round-the-world Maxi racing yacht.

The idea was to put together an event that would form part of a long term initiative to encourage sailing amongst RNSA cruising members in Scotland and was organised by Paul Williamson. Myself, and ten other members met Paul at James Watt Dock Marina, Greenock - where Drum is now berthed - at 0900 hrs on a crisp cold beautiful autumn morning.



When we headed down the pontoons to climb aboard her I was struck at the sheer size of her mast, her flat decking and enormous winches. After a coffee and safety brief on board we were given a walk round the boat by our skipper for the day, Cameron. A relaxed and assured skipper, his knowledge of the boat was excellent. It was amazing for myself to recall the various dramas Skip Novak and his crew experienced in the Whitbread as Cam showed us the different sections of the yacht. Lifejackets on and we cast off!

Eating breakfast on the move, we headed west and hoisted Drum's massive sails. The trade-off for a beautiful morning was the light North-Westerly winds but despite this she sailed along quite nicely. We headed South after Cloch Point, out into the Firth of Clyde and sailed down till we were abeam of Kip Marina where we had to turn about and start to head back to James Watt Marina. Although winds were far from gale force we had ample for a great day's sail, out and in. Drum sails superbly well and all members had a chance to operate the pedestal winches, raising and lowering sails, and all enjoyed a spell helming her. As the sun went down, we all enjoyed a barbeque at the Marina and raised a few well-earned glasses to a great day's sail on board an iconic British yacht.



EAST COAST BRANCH - Gale Bryan

The year that was: Another year has passed. Armed with 2017's Almanac we have studied the tides and selected a programme for consideration at the AGM. 14 events in 2016. Only one did not run. An excellent barge trip courtesy of Bridger Jones Associates. Thanks Chris. The raw statistics don't go anyway to reflect the enjoyment and comradeship gained by the attendees. We reported to the Branch AGM and reviewed the grass roots activity using the web news notes. I am time expired this year so the branch elected a new Chairman and Branch Captain. Gale Bryan was a popular choice and can build on the improvements made whilst he was our Secretary.

AGM Highlights: Whilst Branch events are well supported by sea and land the AGM is less popular. This reduces the field for succession. Our Secretary reported on the year gone and difficulties caused by the day job. The Secretary and Treasurer were elected. The accounts were abled for approved. Thanks to John Dinnen who provided the independent examination and Mrs Vivienne Ryser for keeping the books and compiling the balance sheet. We need to consider how much support we need from Central funds and how to best use the support in furthering our branch Objectives.

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Next Year: More combative sailing in the local Two Rivers cruise. Seamanship, cunning and brute strength will be needed to show the locals how it should be done. Training opportunities have arisen, details from our Secretary. A member north of the patch suggested a visit to Lowestoft. Considered long and hard. The last time we ventured to the north only one local turned up. Whilst Lowestoft is feasible from the Orwell it is a long hike from the Blackwater, Colne, Crouch and Thames. Not the most attractive spot once there. We aim to make Southwold on our annual 'foreign Cruise' so look forward to seeing Norfolk members there. Dependent on support Lowestoft will be considered again in 2017. The full programme is on our Branch Events page within the main RNSA web site. 2017 is the 350th anniversary of the Dutch Invasion when De Ruyter swept the River Medway clean. Towed the English Royal yacht back to the Netherlands. Describe as the Dutch Trafalgar. We have noted the likely dates and will be developing some involvement as time passes.



Safety: Boaters still lose their lives due to carbon monoxide poisoning. Fit and regularly test a CO alarm. Contrary to SOLAS Chapter 5 on the question of passage plans. Life itself does not always need a plan. Sometimes you just need to breathe, trust, let go and see what happens.

Medway Branch - David Cokayne



What a great year it has been on and off the water and although your committee weren't responsible for the glorious weather (though some might claim otherwise!) they were responsible for the transformation to our facilities and for the great social events we experienced this year. I thank them all for the great work they have put in and thank them even more for volunteering to do it all again next year! I would also like to welcome David Holley to the committee. David is going to look at getting us out of the Medway for some longer distance cruising.



We are filling the moorings quite nicely. We still have a few vacant. Please spread the word. It would be nice to fill them. In January we will be commencing our bi-annual mooring safety check. The Foreshore team have done a brilliant job this year with special thanks going to Bruce for finishing the Wardroom and building the Shower Shed. Thanks to Rod and his JCB which made much of the work possible.

Membership is buoyant but there is plenty of room for more, whether for the sailing or just the social. The committee will have membership at the heart of next year's work. It's been a good year for our social activities starting with the first social gathering at the Tudor Rose for a pre-season meal. It was good to see so many newer members attending. We managed two BBQs during the Hovercraft week and one for ourselves in August. Thanks to everyone who helped out and those that provided the delicious food. It was great to use the new marquee and expand our outdoor space. Night time fireworks over Rochester Castle and a fly past from the Red Arrows really made for a special summer.

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PLYMOUTH BRANCH - Shane Doran

The RNSA Plymouth Branch has had a most successful 2016 season and I am very happy to report that the vast majority of planned events took place despite the best efforts of the weather to interfere. Looking back on my first six months as Branch Chairman, may I say that it is an honour to work alongside a fantastic bunch of volunteers who are determined to promote RNSA for all members and within the wider Port of Plymouth yachting calendar. Surg Capt Rory Rickard is now firmly in the seat as Branch Captain and we both look forward to providing both Service personnel and the wider membership with a varied programme on and off the water.



The Branch Prize Giving, held at RWYC on Thu 10 Nov 16 was a superb evening and a great way to round off the 2016 season – as always Ray Bailey deserves our thanks for all his hard work as Socials and Trophies; this was his 26th year on the Committee with his efforts very much being appreciated by all. The 2017 dates are currently being finalised and the committee should be able to go firm in print in the next journal although I would point everyone to the RNSA website and RNSA Plymouth Facebook page for the latest news, announcements and photos.



The singlehanded series, undoubtedly the most popular series in the port with at least 20 yachts entered in every race, will run a similar schedule next year with Francis Douglas planning on holding races to Salcombe, St Mawes, Roscoff, Dartmouth and Fowey. Additionally, RNSA will run a singlehanded race as part of the Port of Plymouth Regatta – the plan is to start around the breakwater and most likely use the Eddystone / Hands Deep as a mark but more detail will be published once the Port of Plymouth Sailing Association finalise the regatta programme.

We hope to run 2 offshore races next year, St Peter Port over the 2nd Bank Holiday in May and Salcombe in early September. Again dates will be published early in the new year but more importantly the Plymouth Branch is looking for a new Offshore Secretary. Lt Ed Pearson has done a fantastic job in resurrecting offshore racing, RNSA is now the only organisation in Plymouth running a cross channel race, but sadly must depart on appointment and return to sea. We wish Ed well with his upcoming move and may I appeal to all to step up and volunteer to ensure that this cornerstone of RNSA activity in Plymouth continues.

I am very happy to announce that we have had a volunteer to run the branch's cruising meets – Cdr Mark Hocking, having recently left the Service and moved back to the Westcountry, has kindly volunteered to oversee activities. I imagine that a full programme will be published once he has got his feet under the table but would again ask all our cruising sailors to help Mark, as and when required, to ensure that a full and varied cruising schedule is reinstated. The first date in the diary will be Fri 5 May 17 when we will hold the Annual Branch Dinner in the Yealm Yacht Club but hope to see many members arrive by sea. I again remind both local and visiting RNSA yachts that the Branch continues to offer a subsidy through Mayflower Marina on production of your RNSA card - discount is currently £20 per day for local members and £10 per day for visiting yachts up to a maximum of 2 days per year. As ever, payment for use of the mooring in the River Yealm is paid directly to Central.

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Roger Irvine continues to run a most successful dinghy series at the Camber with the dates now set for next year – please see the website for more information. It is also hoped to run a junior singlehanded series in Picos next year alongside the traditional crewed series in bosuns. May I reassure all that despite the announcement to close RM Stonehouse and relocate the RM Staff into the Naval Base, the Camber and sailing school will remain in situ and be very much open for business.

Finally, I again stress that the Branch relies on volunteers to run the various activities throughout the year for the benefit of us all. The committee needs an Offshore Secretary as well as a Committee Secretary for next season - demand on your time is minimal, job satisfaction is immeasurable and I am very happy to chat through the fine detail with any potential volunteers – please e-mail on seedoran@hotmail.com / shane.doran555@mod.uk or call me on 07802 415162. Here's to 2017, make the most of the winter refit opportunity and I look forward to meeting as many as possible on the water next season.

WANTED: *A volunteer to take on Plymouth Branch Secretary roles*

PORTSMOUTH BRANCH - Chris Hodgkinson

With our sailing summer drawing to a close, here's a round up of the active season we have enjoyed and a look ahead to what's in store for the rest of the year

CRUISING by Haydn Chappell: A late start from Yarmouth during our visit (2-3 July) meant time to take the open-topped bus up to the Needles Old Battery to watch the round-the-island race. The day was crystal clear with a blustery SW wind force 5 – 7. After a fortifying coffee in the National Trust tea-shop with excellent views of the Needles, we sat on the grass and watched competitors struggle round the lighthouse and reach towards St. Catherine's. It was too cold for a pontoon party that evening so we supped wine and tucked into small eats aboard SEVERN LADY followed by an excellent meal at the Royal Solent Yacht Club. This year's Big Buoy Challenge (16 July) was a version of "Pot Black" which proved to be popular last year and is more challenging than just rounding buoys for points. Winner of the over 30ft LOA class was ELECTRON V and FABROSA won the 30ft and under class. There was again a welcoming drink and a Hog Roast in the evening at Hornet, which was well supported. September saw a successful series of events with varied weather conditions including a lively passage into a strong wind from Southsea to Cowes and a pleasant following wind back to Gosport. Pontoon parties were enjoyed at Southsea and Port Hamble with excellent food at the Bombay Bay and Ginns Farm together with good value, as usual, at the Folly. The Laying-up Supper was held at the Haslar Lightship. Our guest speaker was Perrin Towler who talked about his experiences as editor of Reeds Nautical Almanac.

Racing by Lew Lewis: This year has been a busy year for RNSA(P) yachts and can I take this opportunity to thank all those involved in helping with the various events both behind the scenes and on the coalface. We have had success both with cruising and racing this season, my personal highlights have been the Yarmouth "Race" which is a great chance for racers and cruisers to get together. It was also great to retain the ILEX trophy despite the last minute organisation of the event resulting in the RN team only



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having 2 yachts. Next year it is our turn to show the Army how to organise the event, so if you are interested in being part of the committee please put your name forward. The Wednesday racing continues to be successful in getting novices afloat and helping them to catch the sailing bug. The RNSA website and RN team Facebook page have been great for communicating events and crew availability. As the winter nights draw in we will be sorting out a varied program for next year, please keep your eye on the website for the program and any opportunities to get out on the water.

DINGHIES by Ruby Murray:

The dinghy sailors have had a busy summer in and around Portsmouth competing in a number of events as well as the huge amount of training that took place at the RNSC. July saw the now annual charity sail organised by Lee



Bichard, which saw 4 boats sail nonstop for 24 hours to raise money for the RNRMC. In September the re-run of the Fleet Commander's Cup took place with some fierce competition despite the low turnout but was eventually won by the CSAV team from Navy Command. The Frostbite Series will be running again this winter with one day of handicap racing per month (Oct, Nov, Feb & Mar), for more info please contact Lee on navyexcellent-rnsc1@mod.uk

THAMES BRANCH - Chris Thompson

After the early season lunch at the Angel on the Bridge in Henley the next opportunity for the Branch to get together was for a beer at the Thames Traditional Boat Festival Rally on Saturday 16 July at Fawley Meadows. The weather was brilliant but sadly, due to CAA restrictions imposed post-Shoreham, much of the planned historic flying display had to be cancelled. However, the BBMF Spitfire

and Hurricane were able to perform, MTB 102 was amongst the large number of Dunkirk Little Ships, the Branch was represented by boats in at least one category and the Queen's Row Barge GLORIANA added her own special elegance to the proceedings. Our Tower Bridge visit on Saturday 27 August was almost fully subscribed and we enjoyed a truly excellent guided tour of the iconic landmark including the twin towers, the overhead pedestrian walk ways and the now redundant, but still immaculately maintained, Victorian stationary steam engines that used to power the (now electrified) hydraulic rams that raise and lower the famous bascules. After the tour we enjoyed a most sociable lunch at the Perkin Reveller restaurant, close by both the Bridge and the Tower of London itself,



where we were very well looked after. Our final event of the year was the Branch End-of-Season lunch and AGM which, this year, was held at the Waterman's Arms in Eaton on Saturday 26 November: a well-attended and lively lunch was enjoyed by all!