

Irish Cruising Club

NEWSLETTER - SPRING 2017



Commodore's Letter

By Stanton Adair



Stanton Adair

May I begin by saying thank you to you all for the very great honour you have done me in electing me Commodore at the recent AGM. Pat and I will do everything in our power to ensure that this wonderful Club continues to go from strength to strength.

My predecessor, Peter Killen, was a fantastic Commodore for our Club. He not only endlessly travelled the length and breadth of Ireland meeting and socialising with members, but he and Bev were wonderful ambassadors for the ICC in the wider world. On behalf of all members may I say a great big thank you to them both.

It would also be remiss of me not to formally thank other officers and Committee members who stood down at the AGM. All of them have given unstintingly of their time and energy and contributed enormously to the running of the Club. Those who left the Committee include Vice Commodore Dan Cross and Rear Commodore Derek White plus Committee members Graham Chambers, Lynn Johnston, Philip McAuliffe, John O'Donnell and Tony Weston. Tony has kindly agreed to continue as Subscription Treasurer. Thank you one and all.

It is really great to see how well the Club is thriving. The

recent Annual Dinner weekend in Westport was meticulously organised by Vice-Commodore Peter Fernie and his team. The weather was kind to us and it was a resounding success on every front. The various activities arranged were both well supported and enjoyed by all who took part. It was a particular pleasure for me to meet so many new members. Winkie surpassed even himself at the Dinner with his most entertaining address. To sum the weekend up – a great time was had by all.

The major Club event this year, and it is a major undertaking, is the Rally in the Rias Baixas of Galicia from 16th to 27th July. The Rally has presently fifty nine confirmed boats attending and promises to be a superb event both on and off the water. Peter Haden and his team have worked tirelessly on our behalf to ensure that the event runs smoothly and is enjoyed by members and guests attending. Thank you Peter.

All four regions have this year, as in previous years, organised Rallies, Lunches, etc. They are an excellent way to continue and enhance existing friendships and make new ones. I am personally looking forward to being at as many of them as possible.

John Clementson, assisted by

Peter Mullan, has overseen a complete revamp of the Club website. John's efforts with regard to both the website and the "Green Book" are so essential to the running of the Club. We appreciate greatly the time he devotes to this on our behalf.

This year we had twenty-three new members elected. Many attended the Westport weekend and I look forward to renewing acquaintance with them and indeed existing members at Club events throughout the year.

Stanton Adair

Commodore

Secretary's Report By Alan Markey

Annual General Meeting 2017

The AGM was held on Friday 17th February at the Royal St George Yacht Club with 98 members attending and apologies from a further 65 members.

Two new Flag Officers were elected: Stanton Adair as Commodore and Tom Fitzpatrick Rear Commodore East. In addition, 6 new committee members were elected. In the North, Derek White (previously Rear Commodore), Maeve Bell and Oliver Lynas, Sean Fergus in the East, Ann Lyons in the South and Ray O'Toole in the West.

The Hon. Sec read out the names of the 23 new members who were elected at the January Committee Meeting at the National Yacht Club. The Commodore in his report welcomed the new members and looked forward to them becoming fully involved in future activities of the Club.



Presenting his report, the Hon. Treasurer stated that the Club's finances were in a healthy position and he gave a brief overview of the 2017 bursary programme.

The Commodore outlined the rationale behind the two rule amendments, which were greeted with unanimous support by the members. The amendments were to Rule 13 (iv) to reduce the subscription payment deadline from March 15th to January 31st and Rule 6 (xi) to cater for members who have resigned in good standing and are subsequently re-elected to the Club.

The Commodore, Peter Killen, concluded the meeting by passing on the Commodore's burgee to the new Commodore, Stanton Adair, and wished him every success in his new role.

On accepting the burgee Stanton thanked Peter for his tremendous leadership of the Club during his three years in office. This was met with a spontaneous round of applause from the members.

The Commodore then asked his wife, Bev Killen, to present the Club's trophies and awards, which had been organised by Ann Woulfe-Flanagan and Bill Rea and adjudicated by Cormac McHenry.

Following the prize giving, over 120 members and guests had an excellent meal in the club.

Nominations for Fastnet Award and JB Kearney Award

Nominations for these awards, both of which may be awarded outside the Club should be received by the Secretary in writing before the end of October.

New Members 2017

Daria Blackwell

Daria Blackwell has been sailing since she was 15 and in more recent times has crossed the Atlantic three times with husband, Alex (ICC) in their Bowman 57 *Aleria*. They generally sail double handed and consequently have to be equally skilful in all sailing tasks – after all as Daria says “double handed is just like single handed half the time”



Damien Cashin

Damien Cashin hails from Castlebar and is one of the driving forces behind Mayo Sailing Club in Westport. Most sailing is “between Sligo and Cork” in his Xc 42 *Xstatic* although he has sailed in two Round Ireland races as well as voyages to Brittany and the south coast of England. The plan for this year is to visit all the West coast islands.



Vincent Guénebaut

Vincent Guénebaut is married to Sally Cudmore (ICC) and sails their Beneteau Oceanis 321 mainly around West Cork. Like so many sailors, he was previously a mountaineer and describes his role on a recent cruise as “Chief scallop snorkler” He reports that in 23 years of cruising “ he has had no heroic actions to report” believing that adequate foresight and a bit of luck obviate the need for heroic actions



Louis Keating

Louis Keating is based in Co. Clare and is the owner/ operator of Kilrush Marina. In addition to cruising the west coast of Ireland and the Outer Hebrides in his Sun Odyssey 37, he has chartered in Greece and last year cruised from Athens to Rhodes. This year a cruise from Kilrush to Wexford and the Barrow is planned.



Paraic O'Maoilriada

Prior to 2008 when he retired, Paraic O'Maoilriada and his wife Myra Reid (New member 2017) had no knowledge of boats or sailing. In the intervening eight years they have clocked up nearly 43000 NM on a circumnavigation in their jointly owned Amel Super Maramu Saol *Eille*, and met long distance cruising members Sam Davis and Fergus Quinlan along the way.



Duncan Sclare

Duncan Sclare began sailing in the 1970s with a home built Mirror dinghy. He went on to build several other boats, perhaps the most interesting a 30' racing boat on top of a block of flats in Hong Kong. Currently he is finishing a Paul Gartside designed 20' cutter of traditional carvel construction. Last year he joined the Jester Azores challenge but had to retire 260NM from Baltimore.



New Members 2017

Robin McElvey

Robin McElvey is based in Bangor and is a former sailing secretary of RUYC. Over the last twenty years Robin has been on numerous expeditions to Scotland and around Ireland with ICC members Maurice Butler, James Nixon and the late Bob Hutchieson. "A fine sailor, great company and quietly efficient".



Myra Reid

Myra Reid describes her sailing competence as "arriving home safely after a six year circumnavigation in their jointly owned Amel Super Maramu Saol *Eille* that now only requires routine maintenance." From zero sailing experience in 2008 and with partner Paraic O'Maoilriada, Myra covered over 42000 NM sailing from Kinsale to Kinsale via New Zealand arriving back last July.



Brian Quinn

Brian Quinn started sailing, as did many other ICC members, with Glenans in 1976 and subsequently became an instructor in Bear Island. He currently owns *Carpe Diem*, a 37' sloop which he races and cruises on the south and west coasts. Outside sailing Brian is the manager of the internationally recognised Wild Atlantic Way.



Darryl Hughes

Darryl Hughes owns the classic 43' ketch *Maybird* which belonged to a very early member of the ICC, Col. W.C.W. Hawkes. Since 2010 *Maybird* has cruised around Ireland three times as well as cruises to Scotland, northern France and southern England. Darryl has a preference for traditionally rigged wooden sailing yachts and apparently does a fine line in Victoria sponge cakes, should you be invited to tea on board *Maybird*.



Rob Kyle

Rob Kyle began sailing relatively late in life and shared various boats in Dublin Bay before buying a GP14 and really learning to sail. After sharing an Amel 14M sloop with Dennis Woods (ICC) for some time, Rob commissioned a new Amel 54 ketch, *Cleo* and took delivery in 2009. Since then Rob and his wife Molly have cruised extensively on the west coast of France and the north coast of Spain, from their base in La Rochelle.



A Flood Of Sightings

By Bob Brown



Approaching the Raz de Sein about an hour after slack, aboard Ian Stephenson's Raptor. Happily, the tide and wind were in agreement with each other this time

Tidal gates! The phrase evokes chart tables, pilot books, tide tables, and plotters, working up passage plans to coincide with the turn of some current, usually in a channel, off a headland or around a cluster of islands. The reasons for getting it right are blisteringly obvious to the august readership of this journal. A nicely timed arrival offers the pleasures of currents giving a lift up to maybe ten or twelve knots - a fierce contrast with the gloom of miscalculations. These have you punching the current, plans going awry as you slide backwards, whatever the boat speed may be, as Brian Black neatly describes in his account of *Séafra's* passage off the Faeroes last summer (2016 Annual).

Names like the Raz de Sein (Brittany), Routen Wheel (Strangford Lough), Portland Bill (Dorset), Pentland Firth, and, probably familiar to most ICC members, the Doorus Mor and the Gulf of Corryvreckan. No less in the world of fiction! Edgar Allen Poe's 'Descent into the Maelström' must send shivers down any skipper's mast: *"..the roaring noise of the water was completely drowned in a kind of shrill shriek...we were now in the belt of surf that surrounds the whirl; and I thought of course that another moment would plunge us into the abyss – down which we could only see indistinctly on account of the amazing velocity with which we were borne along.... it looked like a huge writhing wall between us and the horizon"* Having said that, when I sailed over this water (off Lofoten Islands) with Brian in 1997, it was like a mill pond!

Scary stuff but there are many enjoyable moments to be had. They are much more than navigational features; they are places of drama and interest in their own right. Often they are relatively shallow, with uneven outcrops and massive boulders on the

sea bed. These give rise to the powerful turbulence that Poe describes so well. As the current flows over them, a series of vortices are created, throwing massive upwellings and whirlpools up to the surface, these tug or thrust a boat, one way and another – usually any way other than the desired course.

They are rich in wildlife, and many have various types of protection zones designated. The currents and the turbulence circulate plankton and nutrients, sweeping fish and shellfish up to the surface, and microscopic plants down to the sea bed where there's little sunlight, little or no other plant life, and most of the animal communities depend on filter feeders like sponges, anemones and molluscs. I had the good fortune to have a dive to the bottom of Strangford's Routen Wheel some years back. We timed our descent for slack water at ebb tide, with a line and surface marker buoy to allow our support boat to track us. It isn't very deep here, and we soon reached the bottom. In the hazy plankton-filled water, we could see cottage-sized rock outcrops projecting high above the sea bed; between these, tucked away from the strongest currents, was coarse white shell-sand.



A Manx shearwater gets its act together: at the time of writing they are overwintering somewhere off Brazil - lucky them!

But it was the rocks that held the greatest interest – they were carpeted, completely covered in a fuzz of small green-grey hydroids, relatives of the sea anemones, their tiny tentacles extended to trap small food items drifting past. In the clefts there were multi-coloured sponges and small crabs scuttling between. We were barely exploring for more than ten minutes, before the so-called 'slack' ended, and we found ourselves with fingers clinging onto a boulder to avoid being swept away in a wild current. Even this strategy soon failed, and finally we let go, slowly working our way to the surface,



The Gulf of Corryvreckan

finally meeting our boat and distraught boatman Eric Rainey about a mile downstream.

Viewed from a yacht, these places can be downright busy. The abundance of fish attracts porpoises, dolphins and seals. The giant basking sharks find themselves swept in. For them all, drifting along in an 8 knot current is a twice-daily routine. The wealth of plankton attracts vast numbers of sand eels and herring fry - small silvery, finger-size fish. In turn (no pun intended) the terns hover in noisy quarrelsome flocks over the surface, plunging in for prey to deliver to their young back at the nest. (How do you shout abuse at your mates holding a sand eel in your beak? I don't know, but they can) Look for clouds of these elegant little birds as they spot concentrations of fish, for there may be the chance of spotting something much larger below them, homing in for the bonanza. In north Atlantic waters, these are also the places to look out for Manx shearwaters, gliding almost effortlessly across the waves – poetry in motion!

Sailing in settled weather towards the Raz de Sein aboard *Raptor* with Ian Stephenson in 2006, the wildlife became conspicuously richer as we

approached – the influence of these sites extends well beyond the actual rapids. We were treated to sightings of numerous storm petrels, tiny dark seabirds with a swallow-like flight. Named after St Peter's famous water-walking efforts, they dip and patter along the wave surfaces, looking for tiny food items amongst the Manx shearwaters gliding past. And at the other end of the scale, they were accompanied by a school of dolphins, too far off to identify properly, ignoring our boat, probably decimating some unfortunate shoal of fish.

A decent bout of passage planning is always needed in these places, of course, plus some nifty helming. But for a real engagement with these turbulent channels, scan the waves and find who's sharing the tide with you.

Photographic Competition 2016

By David Beattie

Winner



*Winner of the ICC Photographic Plate for 2016
'Ice, fog and a narrow passage – time to turn around'
– by Brian Black*

Second



*Second
'Boreray' by Robin and Denise Wright.*

Third



*'Annabel J at anchor'
by Maire Breathnach*

Fourth



*'Dawn on the Ijsselmeer'
by Fergus Quinlan*

The standard of photographs entered in the annual photographic competition as a result of being submitted with logs and Dunn's Dittys is rather uneven. It is very clear that some members are excellent photographers and others have a crew member of similar ability. Others, I'm afraid are not so gifted or blessed. Of course, illustrating a log that is designed not only to entertain, but also to instruct, often means that photographs are chosen for their subject rather than for their composition or artistic method. Its not always possible, or easy, to photograph an obstruction to sea room or an approach line in as manner that is both instructive and artistic. That having been said it was clear from this year's competition that the Club has several members with a very good eye for composition and balance as well as an

ability to use photographic editing techniques to good advantage, thus achieving both instruction and artistic merit. On the other hand there are a few others who could do with learning the fundamentals of balance, composition, cropping, levelling etc. One of the great joys of this new digital photographic world is the ability to apply what used to be darkroom techniques by use of a mouse.

Classic Cruising Book Review

Reviewed by Philip McAuliffe

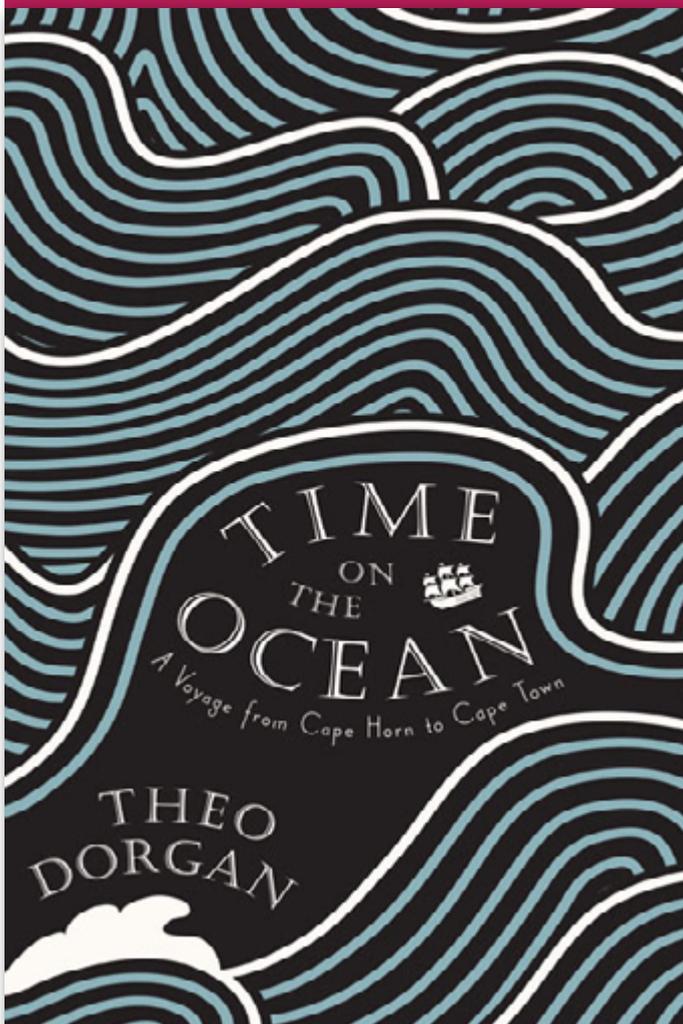
Time On The Ocean

A Voyage from Cape Horn to Cape Town

Theo Dorgan

Published by New Island

ISBN 978-1-90549-075-7 Euro 15.99



Theo Dorgan is someone we associate with poetry, and so I think that this gem has been missed by many Irish sailors...

Time on the Ocean is an exciting account of a sailing adventure on *Pelagic Australis* from Punto Arenas in Chile, down the Beagle Channel, around

Cape Horn, on to the Falkland Islands and, via Tristan da Cunha, to landfall in Cape Town, South Africa.

Pelagic Australis is a 22M aluminium yacht designed for high latitude sailing and part of the Pelagic Expeditions fleet founded by Skip Novak <http://www.pelagic.co.uk>.

Underscoring the narrative, is the story of author Theo Dorgan's great-grandmother, who died in childbirth off Cape Horn and was buried at sea.

Dorgan is better known as a poet, editor, translator, librettist, and broadcaster. He tells a very good yarn, and through the adventure, the reader will appreciate the word pictures of the small comforts amid the many wet and cold discomforts experienced.

Time on the Ocean will appeal not only to the sailors amongst us but also those that love an inspirational story.



Pelagic Australis

In the wake of Harry

(Notes on a Short Cruise in the Venice Lagoon)

by Dick Lovegrove

I have always remembered the story of Harry Cudmore sailing in to Venice in his *Shamrock*, shortly after completing the Half Ton Cup, and thinking "Ooooh! I'd like to do that". A couple of years ago, I discovered that it was possible to visit Venice and cruise the Venetian Lagoon on a charter boat hired from either Locaboat or Le Boat, and I filed this away at the back of my mind. At the end of August last, I thought that an autumnal week somewhere warm and interesting would do both Heather and I good and I remembered Venice and Harry. I made some preliminary enquiries, mentioned it to Eric and Margaret Hill who were enthusiastic and it didn't take long to tie up the loose ends.

On Saturday the 1st October, we flew to Treviso, which is Ryanair for Venice, but the timetable was such that there was a chance we wouldn't get to the Locaboat base at Chioggia, before it closed at 1800. In fact, with the help of a following wind both in the air and on the ground we just about made it. A pleasant girl who had stayed behind to show us to our boat (a Europa 400 named *Cygnus*) and who also reviewed the navigational challenges of the Laguna Veneta met us. Perhaps the best advice she gave us was to eat that night in the El Fontego restaurant in Chioggia, which was excellent, and as we walked back through the very attractive streets, we decided that the holiday had got off to a good start.

The following Sunday morning, we were barely up and functioning when a young man arrived to show us the technical and mechanical workings of *Cygnus*. Fortunately, while he took Eric and I for a fairly perfunctory trial spin, Margaret and Heather went in to town, found an open supermarket and made some basic purchases. And so it was that by mid-morning, we found ourselves motoring out of the

harbour of Chioggia, remembering all the questions that we had meant to ask, but hadn't, (how do the heater/air con and the inverter work?), and trusting that all would become clear in due course!

The Venice Lagoon is a salt water basin comprising about 550 square kilometres and is bounded on the west by the Italian mainland and



on the east by a chain of long low-lying fully populated islands which separate it from the Adriatic Sea. Between these islands are deep water channels which admit ocean going vessels of all sorts and also a tidal stream which gives rise to a surprising current as well as a rise and fall of up to a metre. When you first see The Lagoon, it looks like a considerable expanse of water, which indeed it is, but it is only when you look at the chart that you realise that most of it is only a metre or so deep. To transit it, you must avail of the extensive network of deep water canals which are effectively dredged by the tidal stream. In addition to the islands which face the sea, The Lagoon also contains a number of other fully developed islands, including Venice itself and the two other major tourist destinations of Murano and Burano. These, together with the rivers flowing in to The Lagoon, combine to make it a fascinating and challenging

cruising area with a large resident fleet of motor and sailing leisure craft as well as many commercial vessels of all sizes, shapes and speeds.

Pilotage in the Lagoon is a tad quirky for the newcomer and requires concentration. At our request, the Locaboat lady had mapped out a rough, week-long itinerary for us and she emphasised that straying from the canals would almost certainly mean running hard (or more correctly, soft) aground and having to be hauled off, and that would be expensive! So, our first priority was to find our way from the base in Chioggia to the entrance of the "Canale di Caroman" which leads in to a series of canals which run inside the length of the barrier islands, and this we successfully did, though not without some nervous moments. Large wooden tripods called "briccolas" which are numbered in sequence mark the canals themselves. If all the briccolas were intact and if all the numbers were visible, this would be an easy way of fixing your position on the rudimentary chart, which we were, advised to buy in advance. This was not always the case. Junctions in the canal system and "gateways" in to adjoining canals are marked by "damas" which are large wooden tripods, similar to briccolas but with an additional wooden pole sticking up vertically through the centre. As well as a number, the vertical pole has red and green markings, which indicate on which side it should be left. Of course as we got used to it,



Crew and *Cygnus*

this system became easier to follow, but on day one, we moved cautiously and it was just as well.

A canal system leads in an almost straight line from Chioggia to the island of Le Vignole, where we planned to spend our first night. We had been advised not to enter the Canale delle Scoasse, which forms part of this system but instead to detour to port and head towards Venice on the Canale di Spirito. At the junction where we had to make this turn, it seemed to both Eric and I that the numbering of the briccolas and damas as it appeared on the chart did not conform to the numbering as it was "on the ground". We gave it a lot of thought and eventually, with much trepidation, Eric, who was on the helm, opted to ignore the chart and head for the channel as he thought it actually was. I am delighted to report that shortly afterwards, Eric was totally vindicated when we saw that, on the side of the briccolas where the chart would have brought us, the seagulls were paddling!



Briccolas

And our first day frights did not end there. The detour, which we had been required to make, took us close to the east end of the island of Venice and across the entrance to the Bacine di San Marco which leads to the famous basilica. In this area, the traffic was worse than the M50 on a Friday night and was moving a lot faster, with all the flair and panache that you would expect of Italian drivers. In to this maelstrom, Eric and I blundered with our L plates still up! There were small local cargo vessels, fully laden barges, fishing boats, and leisure craft, as well as the powerful waterbuses (vaporettos) and the high speed and very elegant water taxis. They came from every direction and passed very close to us at speeds of

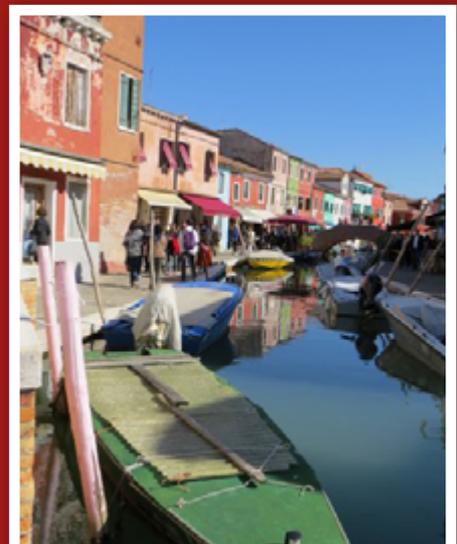
anything between five and twenty-five knots. The combined effect on an otherwise calm day, was to throw up a severe chop which had Margaret and Heather running from side to side down below trying to stow the crockery and the saucepans before they hit the floor! Added to this, in the open waters of this part of The Lagoon, without the aid of GPS or any other instruments, even though the visibility was perfect, it was difficult to know precisely where we were and where we wanted to go. Anyhow, as before, we worked it out slowly and in due course we made our way up the narrow channel, which traverses the island of Le Vignole and tied up at the section of the bank reserved for Locoboat boats.

There are a number of major commercial marinas (including three in Venice itself) within The Lagoon and of course we could have pulled in to any of them. We were warned, however, that they are very expensive. In addition the chart shows a large number of public mooring places where one can tie up free of charge either overnight or on a short-term basis. The Locoboat lady had told us of two mooring places, one on the island of Le Vignole and the other on the island of Burano, which are both owned by the charter companies and which are unmanned and unserviced except for water. They are available without charge to their customers. She strongly recommended that we should use the berth on Le Vignole for an overnight stay and that we should hop on a vaporetto from there to Venice to do our sight-seeing. It was this suggestion that had brought us there. We knew that there were no shops on Le Vignole, and that it was very sparsely populated, but both the chart and the lady had indicated that there were two restaurants. Unfortunately, when we went to make a booking, we discovered that both of them had closed two days ago and wouldn't re-open until April 2017! Not daunted we could catch a vaporetto to Venice and eat there. We did stand at the vaporetto stop for a while until it slowly dawned on us that it was Sunday evening and that we had no way of knowing when (or if) the last return vaporetto would

run. We walked back to *Cygnus*, resigned to pretty meagre pickings on board. Fortunately we met a nice Swiss couple from the only other boat moored there who donated a packet of pasta and a clove of garlic to us. These, when added to the tin of tuna, tomatoes, onions and cheese which we already had on board and combined with our only bottle of wine, actually made a very good meal. And anyhow, we needed an early night after a successful, if demanding, first day!

After the first day, with one exception, things definitely became easier. Next morning, we caught a vaporetto to Venice; got help with the timetables at the tourist office; had a wonderful day sightseeing; got a gondola to the marvellous Peggy Guggenheim Gallery and rounded the day off with a great dinner and several (sic) lemoncellos before catching the 2240 vaporetto back to Isola di Vignole.

The only other problem of the holiday occurred on the next day (Tuesday 4th). We needed to attend to domestic issues: shopping, water, rubbish and batteries. This meant a marina and the nearest marina according to the chart, was on the island of Murano which is famous for its glassware and which we wanted to visit anyway. On the short passage to Murano, there was one truly scary moment. Eric had once again drawn the short straw and was at the wheel



Main street Burano

when we attempted to turn to starboard at a multiple intersection. There was a vaporetto catching us quickly from astern, a heavily laden dredger with virtually no freeboard coming head on and two water taxis, one on either side, approaching us at very high speed from the channel we were trying to turn in to! I just shut my eyes and waited, but Eric held his course and his cool and, of course, apart from the wash, there was no problem. The real problem was the marina we were headed for.

In the first instance, we had difficulty locating it. We could see a single pontoon projecting from what looked like a derelict industrial estate, but there were no boats, no breakwaters, no signage and no sign of life. Eventually we came in and tied up, although there were no bollards and we had to bring our lines across the pontoon and around the piles to which it was attached. I went ashore and searched through the buildings until I did find someone who assured me that we were in the right place and that the price per night was €50 which included water and power. At least it was not dear, although the power kept on tripping until we finally found someone to fix it, and we did succeed in filling up with water and dumping all our rubbish. Also, once we walked away from the immediate vicinity of the marina, Murano proved to be a most attractive island, with small canals, and vibrant and colourful shops, cafes and restaurants. We had a lovely lunch and did a major supermarket shop and the place appeared to be buzzing.

That night we learned a useful lesson in that when we went back down town to eat, we found it still very beautiful but almost totally deserted. When we did find a restaurant that was open, we were told we must be out by 2100, and the staff made sure that we were. It seems that the day time buzz is provided by tourists who come from Venice by vaporetto and return in the evening. However, if the tourists go home at night, the waterborne traffic definitely does not and we had a most uncomfortable night on the unprotected pontoon, caused by the constant wash from passing barges and work boats. Murano is a really attractive place and should not be missed, but the advice must be to join the other tourists, leave your boat either at the berth in Le Vignole or on a marina in Venice and travel by public transport.

From then on it all became easier. On Wednesday, we visited Tintoretto's painting of the virgin in the beautiful cathedral of Santa Maria Assumpta on the island of Torcello, and then spent the night at Portegrandi on the Rive Sile. Thursday saw us heading west again to the island of Burano, which is a colourful tourist destination based on a long-standing lace making tradition and has elegant shops as well as excellent restaurants and is definitely not to be missed. Like Le Vignole, it has a basic but very useful berthing area owned by the charter companies for the exclusive use of their customers. It is subject to through traffic from small fishing boats so there can be some wash at night, but they didn't disturb us. And finally, on Friday, we made the long passage back to Chioggia, which with the benefit of a week's experience

was a thoroughly relaxed and enjoyable passage.

To sum up:

- This is a beautiful, and fascinating sheltered cruising area, but quite unlike any other inland waterway system which I have visited. The buoyage system is unique but adequate when you get used to it. The volume of traffic can be daunting, but again, you do get used to it. Surprisingly, because this is, by and large, a highly developed area, the facilities for hire boats, with the exception of the eating facilities, are very under developed. Admittedly, we did not visit any of the major marinas, but nowhere did we find toilets, showers, power, water, rubbish disposal or even basic mooring facilities of a standard you would now expect at almost any town or village on the banks of the Shannon. Only up the River Sile did we totally escape from the irritant of wash from passing traffic.
- Would we go again? Definitely. There is a lot of the Lagoon and the surrounding waterways which we didn't see, and Venice is always breathtaking, but armed with the knowledge which we gained this time, I would approach it slightly differently. I would still charter a boat, but I would consider parking her and if necessary paying the charges for two or three nights, and using her only for sleeping on, while we did the tourist thing by vaporetto.
- We had largely good sunny weather, but it was colder than I expected, particularly at night, so maybe I would go a couple of weeks earlier, say, mid September.
- The boat was excellent. I had taken some trouble to select her from the brochures, because most of them are designed for families. *Cygnus*, however was designed for two couples and had just a large double cabin with shower room ensuite forward and a similar cabin also with ensuite facilities aft. Amidships was a very comfortable saloon and an excellent galley. She was built in 2007 and considering her age, lifestyle and that it was the very end of the season, she was in good condition and spotlessly clean. We may not have sailed in to Venice like Harry, but *Cygnus* was probably a lot more comfortable than a racing half tonner!

If anyone is interested in further information, please don't hesitate to get in touch

Any seafaring children out there?

by Sally Cudmore



Do you like sailing, navigating, fishing, keeping a log, snorkelling, rowing, watching wildlife, sing songs, exploring islands, hiking...? If your answer is YES to many of the above, then you must read on because the Irish Cruising Club is looking for young cruising sailors (young in this case is under 16...not under 60!).

If there is enough interest, the ICC is considering the introduction of a cadet section that would arrange some activities each year for younger cruising enthusiasts.

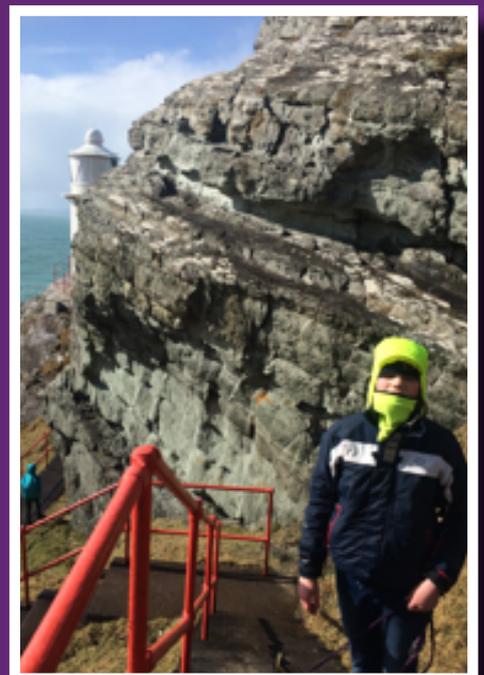
Suggested activities include:

- **Cadet-friendly activities at ICC cruises in company** (e.g. treasure hunt for items/information to collect while on cruise, beach activity afternoon)
- **Dedicated table for cadets at ICC dinners** (cruises or annual ICC weekend)
- Award for the best children's log and/or photo
- **A biennial "Swallows and Amazons" weekend** (similar to the RCC) for children and their parents/grandparents in a safe environment, where the children can swim/sail safely, along with BBQ, roasting marshmallows, camping or sleeping onboard etc.

The Cadet Committee would have both cadets and adults agreeing and organising suitable activities, either as part of ICC events, or separate dedicated events. There would be many advantages to such a scheme: welcoming children may encourage younger membership (from families with children); exposure to the ICC from an early age may inspire participants to become full members; it would make ICC cruises more enjoyable (i.e. less boring) for younger guests and provide young people to carry out repairs at the tops of masts that septuagenarians may not wish to climb!

To parents and grandparents:

Would your offspring have any interest in becoming a cadet member of the Irish Cruising Club? If yes, please e-mail sallycudmore1@gmail.com with the name, age and gender of enthusiastic cadets, as well as a name and contact details for their parent/grandparent ICC member, so that we can get a sense of the level of interest, and any suggestions of possible activities.



ScuttleButt



Dennis Faulkner who was Vice Commodore from 1967-69 and Commodore from 1969-72 passed away in December. Sir Dennis's father, Jim Faulkner presented the Faulkner Perpetual Challenge Cup, the Club's premier trophy, to the Club in 1931. Sam Davis who was awarded the Faulkner trophy in 2013 took the opportunity to photograph Sir Dennis with the trophy in 2014.

New Marina in Bantry

When the new Bantry Marina facility is completed in Q2 2017 it will be able to accommodate up to 40 ten meter vessels. The marina facilities will include water, power 220 volt, toilet, washing facilities and waste disposal. It will also have ample secure car parking. Fuel and groceries are available just across the road at the Maxol station. The marina berths themselves will have -3 meters depth at low water springs, and so be more than adequate for most large coastal sailing vessels.



Your Web Editor John Clementson has radically updated the website. The new website no longer includes a forum which has now been taken over by our 'closed group' Facebook page which acts as a useful and interesting Forum for its participants. John encourages you to join. You have to join Facebook first (www.facebook.com) where you have only to tell them your name and email address. Then go to <https://www.facebook.com/groups/747784068667343/> and ask to join the group - you will be accepted!. What you see there and what you write there is seen only by its members who are all, like you, members of our club. 121 members have joined up so far - please join them and add your contribution to the pages.

Why the ICC provide bursaries for sail training

A letter received by Sail Training Ireland from one of their trainees



"Sail training changed my life entirely. It gave me purpose, direction and a sense of clarity. In 2015 I was a young man fresh out of school working in a TK Maxx and utterly clueless about what I wanted to do with my life. By September of that same year, I had moved to Co Cork for the start of 1st year of a degree in Marine Engineering in the National Maritime College of Ireland. And all of this, because I had the incredible opportunity to sail on board the *Spirit of Oysterhaven* from Dun Laoghaire to Warren Point. Those days spent on board are etched on my mind to this instant. The cold spray of Dublin Bay in my face as I made my first ever attempt to helm a vessel, my fingers feeling frozen against the metal helm as I tried to get a feel for the vessel. It was beyond incredible and is a memory I will carry in my soul until the day I die. Every aspect of the voyage was challenging, exhilarating and interesting and as the week drew to it's inevitable close

I made a choice, the same choice made by the untold thousands who like me have felt the calling of the seas. For the first time in my life I knew where I wanted to be and what I wanted to do and so I joined the merchant navy as an engineering officer cadet. My involvement in sail training grew towards the end of my first year in NMCI. The summer of 2016 saw me serve as a volunteer watch leader on board the *Spirit of Oysterhaven* and as the aid to a woman named Mandy who was visually impaired on the brig *Morgenster*. My experiences during this time, which totalled five weeks spent at sea, were no less incredible than my first trip. However I found my ambition and enthusiasm being tempered into a more refined adoration and passion for the sea. Sail training has helped me grow, helped me conquer fears and helped me understand so much more about myself than I ever thought possible. When I am at sea I am more confident, more sure of myself and more content than I have ever been.

The next step for me is to complete my sea phase with Chevron Shipping the company that have taken me on as a cadet. On the day of writing this email I received some details on my first potential professional ship assignment to the 'Neptune Voyager' which I will be boarding in Los Angeles in July. This assignment will probably last between 4 and 5 months. Once I am qualified I hope to continue my involvement in sail training well into the future. In the future, I hope to obtain a Yachtmasters certificate and take more of a mentoring role similar to that I have already been doing on the *Spirit of Oysterhaven*

The reason that I need a bursary to take part in a sail-training voyage before joining the Neptune Voyager rests in some of the difficulties I have had in getting as far as I have. When I attended a seafarers medical in Glasgow I was informed that my visual standards had declined to the point of being considered permanently unfit to go to sea. Thankfully, permanently was a bit of an over statement; however I have had to pursue corrective surgery on my eyesight in order to hold onto my cadetship. This is an expensive option. The alternative is to give up on going to sea entirely and give up on my degree. The financial burden while substantial is bearable; however it leaves me little to fund taking part in any voyages this year and any assistance that can be offered would be greatly appreciated."

Westport 2017

The annual dinner weekend was held in Westport during the last week of March. The weather was unusually benign with clear skies, light winds, calm seas and sunshine. Seventeen new members joined us and were presented with their cufflinks or brooches by Stanton Adair at the Friday evening reception. On Saturday over eighty went out to Clare Island; others cycled from Achill; an active group climbed Croagh Patrick whilst a gentler walk wound around the Westport greenway. Beverley Killen

won the golf trophy. In excess of 250 members and guests sat down to dinner on Saturday night and, postprandially were regaled with an exuberant and hilarious address from Winkie Nixon. Nikolay Litau from Moscow attended with his family and was presented with the Fastnet Award and Medal for his polar exploits over the last 20 years. Many photographs were taken and most can be found on the website – a few follow to whet your appetite. Thanks to Alex Blackwell and others for photos.

