

Commodore: MARGARET SMITH  
e.mail : mihaptic@msn.com  
mob:+44 (0) 771 661 720

Treasurer: RICK HARVEY  
e-mail june.rick@sky.com



Secretary: PETER GIMSON

Tel: +44 (0) 1 202 773 749.

Mob:+44 (0) 7 971 808 777

e-mail: [Peter.Gimson@sky.com](mailto:Peter.Gimson@sky.com)

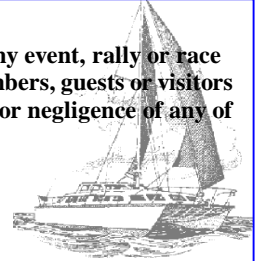
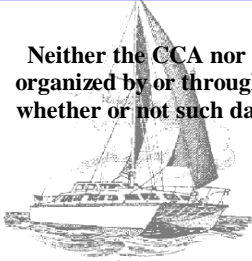
[www.bobcatandcatalac.btinternet.co.uk](http://www.bobcatandcatalac.btinternet.co.uk)

#### Disclaimer

Neither the CCA nor Committee will accept any liability for personal injury arising out of participating in any event, rally or race organized by or through the CCA whether sustained by members, guests, or visitors, or caused by the said members, guests or visitors whether or not such damage or injury could have been attributed to or was occasioned by the neglect, default or negligence of any of the officers, committees or servants of the CCA.

#### Boat Owners Third Party Insurance

It is the responsibility of all boat owners to have adequate third party insurance in respect of him/herself, vessel, his/her crew for the time being & his/her visitors.



## NOVEMBER 2009

Hi to all you Catamaran Sailors.

In last month's newsletter I wrote about the importance of being able to obtain a good weather forecast and also mentioned some of the equipment now available to achieve this.

Fog is the one thing at sea I dislike, unlike rough seas and strong winds it can, and regularly does, appear very quickly. During the summer, a cruise can within five minutes change from being a shorts and tee shirt affair to long johns and woolies. As this grey mist approaches, a rapid drop in temperature will be felt. Visibility from anyone on deck wearing spectacles will be impaired by the spectacles misting up and also from within the doghouse by the windows misting up on the outside making the overall visibility seem far worse than it actually is. A windscreen wiper fitted to the doghouse is a great asset to keep the front screen clean for anyone caught out in fog, but how many of the doghouses on our boats are fitted with a windscreen wiper, sadly very few? Any member wishing to fit a windscreen wiper should also consider fitting a laminated front screen to the doghouse as this will be both clearer to see through and is far more resistant to scratching. The scratching is usually caused when the wiper is working, by salt deposits left on the screen by the sea. The laminated screen is the expensive part of the conversion ie: approx: £150.00. If you wish to keep the polycarbonate screen that is already fitted, the wiper must only be used after the screen has been cleared of any salt deposits ie it must be washed with fresh water, other wise it will be very soon scratched by the movement of the wiper blade. Ideally you will need a wiper motor that exerts a minimum pressure to the blade. A motor fitted to a car that may be traveling at 70 mph in the rain will need to exert far more pressure to keep the wiper blades on the screen than is required to clear the screen of a sailing boat traveling at 7 kts. I found an inexpensive option in a car scrap yard in the form of a wiper motor that had been fitted into the rear door of a hatchback, which I purchased for a tenner. It has worked admirably for the past five years and I am sure it will continue to do so for many more. This is an easy and inexpensive mod, we will talk about it in another issue.

We now join "Dragonslayer" on the start of their summer cruise with a copy of an incident report he sent to CHIRP.

On Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2009, my wife and I set out from Swanage Bay at 0430 in our 12 metre sailing catamaran "Dragonslayer", on route for St Peterport, Guernsey.

The course chosen was to pass 2 miles West of the Casquets. This course brings us close to but clear to the East of the Traffic Separation Lanes. 15 miles into the journey we ran into fog, which quickly closed in to less than 200 metres visibility. Whilst we were concerned by the conditions we had the benefit of a shipping forecast that had referred to fog patches and we had fully expected to come in and out of fog for the rest of the journey. This unfortunately did not lift until we had passed the Casquets. In any event we have had plenty of experience of sailing through fog and "Dragonslayer" is very well equipped for such an event. We have onboard AIS, Radar, VHF, two excellent chart plotting devices and an excellent radar reflector.

As we approached the West going shipping traffic we had several large ships clearly plotted on our equipment and it was relatively simple for us to establish if any of them were to pose a danger to us. We had VHF conversations with several boats, checking that they knew of our position and confirming our view that they would pass either North or South of us and more importantly would not change course towards us. Our conversations were cordial and business like and on several occasions to our surprise the reply would be to the effect that they would alter course 1 or 2 degrees to Port or to Starboard to be safe.

At about 1000 hours we notice a vessel some 12 miles to our East that was clearly heading directly for the centre of our AIS and our Radar screens. At 10.9 miles we called up the merchant ship as is our practice only to be told that we must have the wrong boat as he could not see us on his radar. Before acquiring our AIS Plotter this would have been highly likely but not now we have the benefit of viewing the boat's transponded information, this most definitely was not the case. At 8 miles we again called up the merchant ship who this time confirmed that he had us on his Radar and rang off. At 6 miles we considered the situation as becoming urgent and we needed to know what to do to best avoid a collision. Clearly both boats in dense fog had a duty to make an early decision to avoid contact. We being a relatively slow moving boat had far less opportunity to take effective evasive action than a boat traveling at three times our speed. With other boats around us and us being the stand on boat it seemed to be unwise to do anything that would be unpredictable, so we called the threatening boat again and got no answer. At 2.9 miles we eventually made contact with the captain of the boat who on this occasion made it quite clear that he had no intention of either altering course or reducing speed and that what we did about the situation was down to us. We were then completely shocked by his retort that "If you don't understand the regulations the consequences are down to you". We did not have much time left to remonstrate with him any more but to point out that he was the give way vessel as he was approaching our Port side but notwithstanding that he was bigger than we and we had no problem about turning through 180 degrees so long as he realized that we were now going to alter course for North and that he should not now steer to Starboard as had been expected. We turned our boat around and continued on a reciprocal course until the boat had crossed our intended track. Whilst doing so we duly reported this incident to Portland Coastguard less there should be any mishap.

Had the captain of the boat indicated that he was not going to alter course at an earlier stage we would have slowed down and the incident would not have occurred. Simply ignoring a situation and closing down a VHF conversation without resolving an issue seems to us to be irresponsible. To threaten to run us down if we don't get out of the way would appear to be criminal.

I enclose a photo of our AIS screen showing just how near we came to a collision and would mention that the apparent track of the boat shown represents an alteration of course by us moving North and not the Merchant ship changing course.



I would like to take this opportunity to state that this incident has not change my view that for the most part the captains of the merchant boats are very reasonable people. On the same journey we had skippers telling us that whilst we might be clear of them we should possibly watch out for the boat following on the other side. We even had one boat call us up because he had lost our radar image in his wake. We were able to confirm his safe passing and thank him for his concern.

I believe the actions we took on this occasion to be within the spirit and the letter of the regulations but being a pleasure sailor would very much like to know if we were in error.

Aleck Tidmarsh

---

**Many Thanks for your article Aleck.**

CHIRP comments on reports about close-quarters situations, and state "we endeavor not only to comment on actions that the give-way vessel should have taken but also "defensive sailing" measures that the stand-on vessel could perhaps have applied".

Below are some suggestions of basic tenets of defensive sailing which apply to all types of vessels, from large commercial vessels to yachts:

Keep A Good All-Round Look-Out

Sounds obvious, but is absolutely fundamental. Watch-keepers on commercial vessels need to bear in mind that small craft may not be easy to see either visually or on radar, especially in moderate/rough sea conditions.

This may be so even though the craft is showing lights as per the CoIRegs and has a radar reflector.

Maintain Situational Awareness

In particular, be aware of how quickly a traffic situation can change. For yachtsmen, it is useful to remember that ships travel a distance equivalent to 10% of their speed in 6 minutes.

(3) Hon. Sec. Office 196 Harewood Ave. Queens Pk. Bournemouth, Dorset BH7 7BQ

So a ship proceeding at 15 knots that appears to be some way off at 1.5 miles can be with you in 6 minutes (and less, of course, if you are moving towards it.)

Don't Assume You Have Been Seen

As per ColReg 36: "If necessary to attract the attention of another vessel any vessel may make light or sound signals that cannot be mistaken for any signal authorized elsewhere in these Rules, or may direct the beam of her searchlight in the direction of the danger in such a way as not to embarrass any vessel."

Think "What If ... "

Think beforehand what action you will do to avoid a collision.

Crossing from Cherbourg to the Isle of Wight earlier this year Sue and I had been fortunate to be able to sail all bar the first hour of our trip. We encountered heavy traffic off the Isle of Wight. The traffic was such that some vessels were hidden from our view by the vessel closest to us. The traffic consisted of both navel and container vessels their course and our crossing course such that we altered course twice to pass behind approaching vessels and also did a "U" turn to allow another vessel to cross in front of us. Having to take such avoiding action is very unusual. We have crossed the channel hundreds of times before and this was the first time we have felt it necessary to dodge two or more vessels during a crossing. It would have been great if as we were 'the sailing vessel' all the vessels under power, had altered course to allow us to continue without feeling it necessary for us to alter our course. In reality, even though you are on the water if you assume you were on land trying to cross a main road common sense would make you wait for larger vehicles to cross in front of you. I remember several years ago on a beautiful August day while crossing the channel I overheard a yacht informing a merchant vessel that he was under sail and that the merchant vessel was on a collision coarse and should immediately give way to him and alter coarse. The merchant vessel was in the shipping lanes and to be fair the lanes were busy with several ships and also it being the height of the holiday season several yachts were also crossing the channel. I had not given the conversation much thought until later overhearing broadcasts by several other yachts urging the yacht to alter his coarse. The yacht held fast until he had sailed into the side of the merchant vessel and could be heard demanding its insurance details. The captain of the merchant vessel insisting that he was restricted in his ability to manoeuvre.

The accident should never have happened, the yacht's captain was fortunate that no one on board was injured and to have only minor damage enabling it to continue on to Poole.

I can imagine the first question the yacht's insurance company asked was "what did you do to avoid the collision.

Common sense should have prevented this accident.

Remember because you are sailing do not assume that other boats will give way to you. They may not even know the collision regulations.

Always make your intensions clear and in plenty of time.

## Rumpelteazer's Summer Cruise

The Mocra 2009 Summer Cruise was planned for a Conga along the south coast and then to the Scilly Isles.

Unfortunately due to an accident Mike, Ken, Les and Rob on their new boat "Sagitta" had to pull out and cancel the Mocra Cruise.

We (as in John and Margaret Waller on Rumpelteazer) had planned to meet up with the other boats taking part in the Mocra Cruise at Dartmouth on the 23<sup>rd</sup> June.

We started our summer cruise in early June, as we wanted to go to the Channel Isles first, where we meet up with a 12 metre Catalac called "Dragonslayer", we stayed together for a few days before we made our way back to the mainland and Dartmouth.

At Dartmouth we meet up with "Sagitta" and crew and had a very nice fish and chip supper and the evening was spent playing cards and drinking wine (as per normal for Mocra cruises).

"Sagitta" and crew had planned to sail to Plymouth to meet up with the racing guys, then they were going home and planned to return to Plymouth in a couple of weeks to continue with the Conga.

"Trinity" with Peter Roberts and "Starship" with Richard and Maya arrived at Dartmouth and found a very nice anchorage in one of the little creeks just up the River Dart.

We arranged to meet up with them the next day and go further up the Dart to Totnes. We all tied up against the wall at the boat yard, which was very reasonable and close to the town.

"Trinity" and "Starship" were going to Plymouth the next day, because they needed to go home. "Trinity" was intending to return to Plymouth to catch up with "Sagitta" and the rest of the group to continue to the Scillies.

We decided to stay a bit longer in the Dart, it's a very pretty river with lots of birds and nice countryside.

The original plan was to meet up with the others in Plymouth and then to sail on to the Scillies together, but we decided that we would make our own way as we knew the others would catch us up very quickly.

Our first stop was at Newton Ferries and the River Yealm, where we were going to meet up with the previous owners of Rumpelteazer, on the way we managed to catch enough mackerel for a fine fish supper for us all. Another boat suggested that the Yacht Club was well worth a visit for Sunday Lunch, this proved to be correct and we had a very good and inexpensive BBQ lunch.

Next stop, Fowey for a couple of days and then on to Falmouth, we have only been to Falmouth a few times and each time as we enter the harbour it starts to rain. The showers facilities at Falmouth are excellent and as we anchor in the harbour the town is nice and close. Next we headed for Newlyn, this was a bit expensive and the facilities are dire, but a couple of crabs from a fisherman made up for this, unfortunately the pressure cooker had been left at home, so it was a case of borrowing a large sauce-pan from another boat, so that we could cook the crabs for dinner. The fishermen are very friendly and will often offer fish etc. To the yachties.

Now we were ready to make the crossing to the Scillies, the conditions were favorable and off we set. The weathermen got it wrong again and we had to motor sail into a head wind, which made Margaret ill (wrist bands didn't work) so in desperation a Boot's own brand seasick tablet was taken, this proceeded to make matters worse. So we headed to St Mary's harbour thinking this would be a nice calm place – wrong. The harbourmaster was very sympathetic and suggested tying up against the harbour wall and that's where we stayed for a few days.

St Mary's is a lovely Island, with shops and lots of nice places to visit, there is a lovely garden (free entry) and although it's not as manicured as Tresco gardens, it has a charm of its own. The old tour bus is a must, the commentary that the driver gives is very good and so amusing.

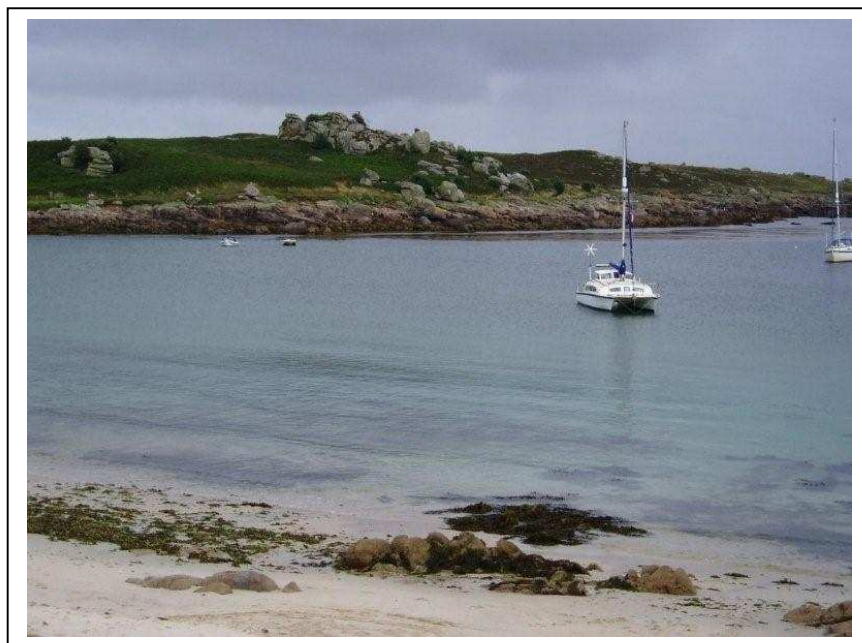
Some friends on a monohull suggested that St Martins was a good anchorage so we left St Marys and made our way to St Martins for our first BBQ of the cruise on the beach.

"Trinity" with Peter sailed all the way from Plymouth to St Martins and we had our second BBQ on the beach.

From St Martins we went to the island of Bryher, next to Tresco, where we met up with another Trimaran with Richard and Antha. Here we caught, cooked and eat shrimps, very nice and over wine (as normal with Mocra summer cruises) the subject of seasickness was raised and different tablets were suggested to Margaret, which have proved very beneficial. It is surprising just how many people suffer with seasickness, but still keep on going sailing.

The gales and rain started and we couldn't get away from Bryher, "Trinity" and Peter had already left to get back to Plymouth as he needed to get home. We put on our wet weather gear and walked round the Island. I think we could walk round Bryher with our eyes shut. Eventually it cleared up a bit and we went to the Island of Samson in the dingy. The people that used to live here were evacuated because they were starving, the houses are now becoming ruins, it must have been very difficult life.

The weather was not good enough to leave the Scillies, but we decided to give St Agnes the once over.



The causeway linking St Agnes to Gugh was a nice bit of shelter, but during the night the wind changed and in the morning we found ourselves sitting just nicely on the beach. When we were able to float off we made our way back to St Marys for an up-to-date weather forecast and a few more supplies, another boat followed us and when we were all tied up, they commented about how nice it must have been for us to be so close to the beach at St Agnes, John did explain that it hadn't been intentional.

The weather forecast was good for us to make a run for home, and one of the fishermen at St Mary's advised us to anchor up in Watermill, as this would be a good place to make a quick getaway when heading for the mainland.

Mike and crew on board "Sagitta" unfortunately had an accident, so the Mocra summer cruise had to be cancelled. Our best wishes go out to Ken, Les and Mike and we are all so pleased that everyone is getting better and look forward to seeing them again soon.

“Gem” with David and Mary were due to join up with the summer cruise, but were unable to move due to the weather.

In the morning we made a fairly early start for either Newlyn or Falmouth depending on the weather, Falmouth was reached, where again it started to rain just as we entered the harbour. Then the next day onto Milbrook, in Plymouth, where we met up with “Trinity” and Peter again. The Multihull Center is very interesting, with all sorts of multihulls in different states of repair, some are obviously project that haven’t been finished, there something very sad about seeing boats that have been left, unfinished and in need of some TLC.

Left Plymouth heading for Salcome or Brixham, sailing nicely, then of course things change and we end up doing 13.5knots in gusts of 30 knots. And that’s some going for our little slow coach.

Dartmouth was closest so that’s where we went quickly. We anchored in the quite little creek that Peter had told us about.

Next day we intended going for Weymouth, but due to the race around Portland, we decided to head for Swanage. Our engine had started to splutter, so we carried on to Studland (with hindsight we must have picked up some petrol with water contamination and although there is a filter on the engine and the petrol is always put through another filter while being poured into the tank, we believe that with the rough seas the water had been able to get into the engine.) The engine would still run if pressed, so when we had to slow down to anchor in Studland, it just stopped, luckily there were not too many boats anchored and we were able to drop the hook and get our heads down.

As we sailed passed Swanage, there was a firework display which was great and also it meant that we had some other boats to follow round Old Harry rock and into the bay at Studland.

John filtered the petrol in the tank and cleaned the carburettor etc. Until at last the engine was ok again. A petrol filter system is next on the list of must haves for the boat.

Arrived home (Christchurch) next day, the Mocra conga (for us) was a very interesting summer cruise, we hadn’t intended sailing back so quickly, but due to the weather in the Scillies we had run out of time and had to make a dash home but otherwise it was very good.

---

## Catamarans Through the French Canals Part 1.

Many Catamarans have past through the French Canal systems over the years, many just to gain passage to the Mediterranean others to enjoy the French countryside and the French way of life, moving leisurely from lock to lock, canal to canal.

This article is really just to help those of you that are contemplating a journey like this and to give you links to information from those that have gone before.

There are a number of important things to consider and we will try to go through them 1 by 1.

I suppose that first we must consider, the boat and is she up to the journey? The main item being the engine/s, as you will need reliability to get you safely to your destination, so make sure that they have been well serviced and are ready for the job ahead.

Check and service your steering and rudders.

Check your batteries: have you sufficient battery power at least 3 batteries and replace any that are 5 or 6 years old, you are going to be using your engines quite a lot, which should keep them well charged.

Check your mast, cable connections, tabernacle bolt, stays and shroud fittings and bottle screws, also 2 x A frames to support the mast when lowered and you may need to set up an aerial for your VHF Radio if you have not got a handheld, and make sure that you have the tools that you may need to do these jobs.

The Documentation that you need to get sorted out, starting with **Passports** and **EHIC** which replaced the E111, health document.

Have you passed your **Cevni** qualification to obtain an **International certificate to operate a pleasure craft**, obtainable through the RYA and also your own certificate of competence if you have one. [www.rya.org.uk/](http://www.rya.org.uk/)

A certificate of registry for the boat, again the **SSR** (small ships register) is available from the RYA. Proof of vessels VAT status. This can be a problem for a lot of owners and more information can be found out from the RYA. Perhaps a Bill of Sale will help, not often asked for but could prove VAT paid. **Ships radio license** and **operators license**, and your **insurance document**.

Note: have you notified your insurance company what you plan on doing?

You should have a **Log Book**, that you enter crew details in, including name, passport numbers and boat movements.

**It can be quite a decision deciding where to enter the canal system**, there is a lot of information on the net so have a good look before buying your books and charts.

**3 things to consider** at this stage, is the canal system you are going to enter and the facilities available for lowering the mast (crane hire can vary a lot price wise ) Check the planned route for “Chomages” this is for lock and river repair and maintenance. Available through [www.vnf.fr](http://www.vnf.fr) this is in French but is fairly strait forward, a good language conversion site is <http://uk.babelfish.yahoo.com> if needed and of course you will need to obtain your “**Vignette**” or boat license.

Look at the **vnf** site, you will find an owners section that will lead you to Boating Tariffs to select what type of license you will need. I believe that you now have to buy a license for use on consecutive days. These can be purchased by post or by Internet, or on arrival in France.

Right, I hope you are still with me, as I am now going to cover a few things that may be helpful on route. Fuel may or may not be a problem but you should carry a Good size & strength container and a trolley to carry it on.

A good pair of **Binoculars** is very helpful when approaching the locks. 4 car **tyres** are very useful for using in tunnels or mooring but should have a cover on them to prevent black marks on the fiberglass, they should not be used in locks.

**Calor Gas** can some times be a problem, it depends on the type of cylinder you use, the small **camping gaz** is usually available but if you are going to be in France for some time it is probably worth considering changing to a French type with their regulator and fittings. Garages that are able to top up Calor Gas cylinders are very few and far between.

The other thing is **Water**. Carry a good strong & Clean Container that can be carried on your trolley also have a good length of hose and various clips and fittings that you may need to connect to a tap, there is usually a tap at each lock but you wont be very popular if you keep a lock open and other boats are waiting to enter, also water in France is often not as good as in the UK! It’s a good idea to check before you fill, have a glass container fill with water, **Look, Smell** and **Taste**, if in doubt, leave it till you can try somewhere else, also have some sterilising tablets or powder that you can mix up and add to your tank/s and its always best that if its for human consumption boil it first.

**Chandleries** shown on the charts are not always very good. You will not be able to get what you want, so you may want to set up a postal link with the UK, this does still work fairly well. Have fun and enjoy.

**Bob Freeman 8m “Think Again”**

**Many Thanks for your article Bob.**

**Members please send your articles ready for next years newsletter's.**

(8) Hon. Sec. Office 196 Harewood Ave. Queens Pk. Bournemouth, Dorset BH7 7BQ



